

SWK 6061: Comparative Social Security System

Lecture 1: Comparative Social Policies and Comparative Social Security

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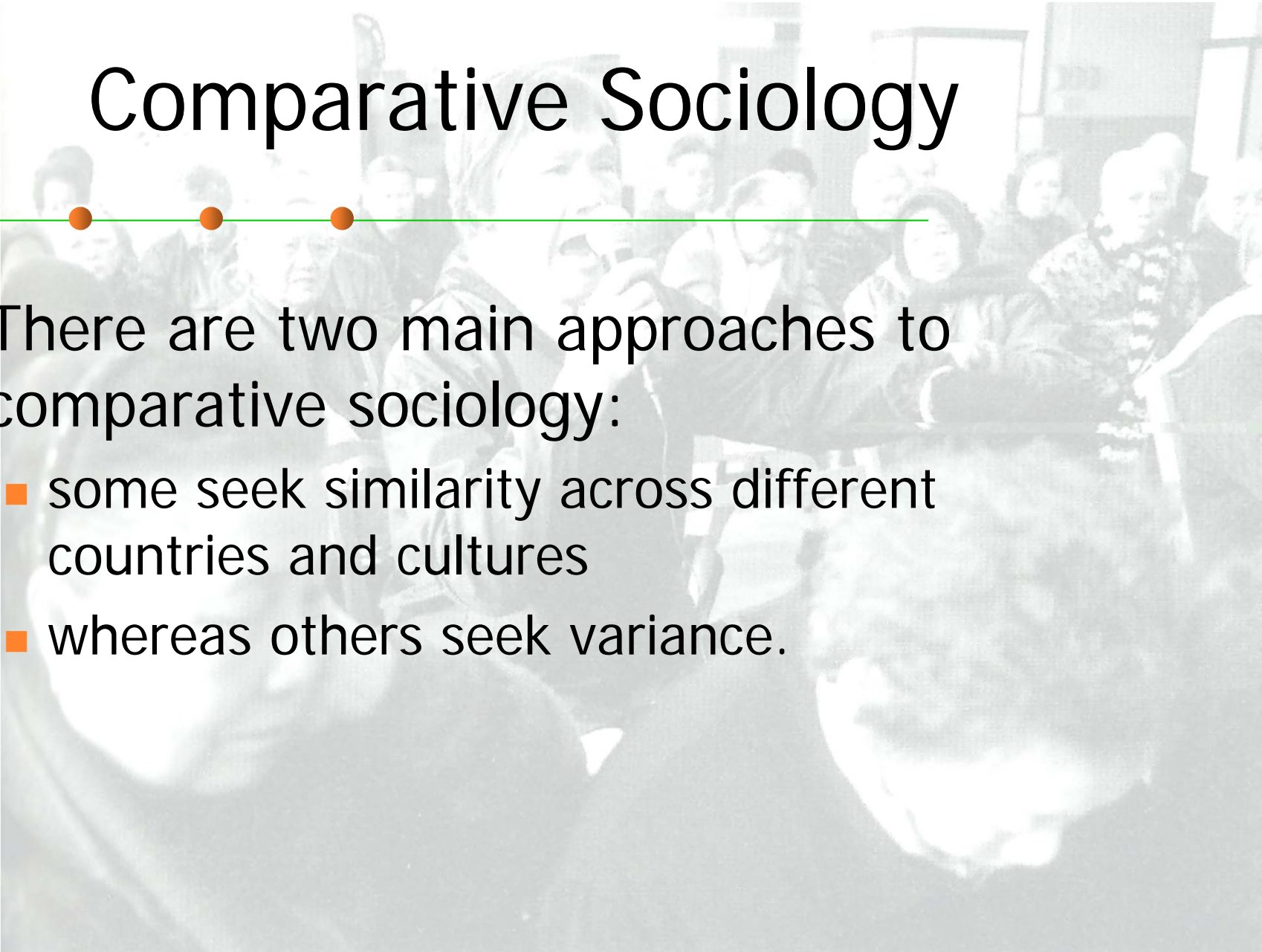


Comparative methods

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- Comparative Social Policies
 - Comparative Social Security



Comparative Sociology

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- There are two main approaches to comparative sociology:
 - some seek similarity across different countries and cultures
 - whereas others seek variance.



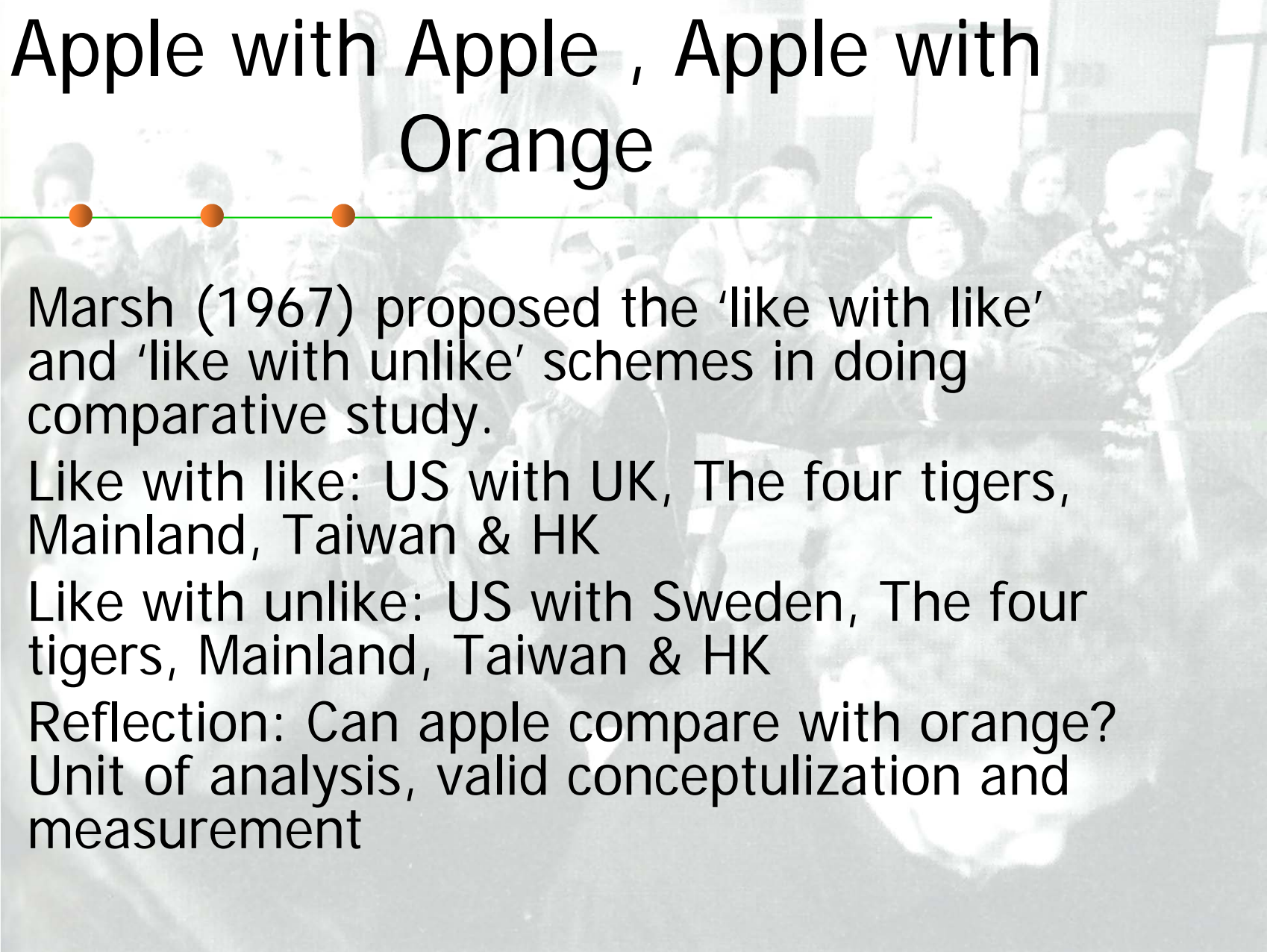
Covegence vs. Divergence



- Structural Marxists attempted to use comparative methods to discover the general processes that underlie apparently different social orderings in different societies.
- The danger of this approach is that the different social contexts are overlooked in the search for supposed universal structures.
- Max Weber employed comparative methods to understand variance whose studies attempted to show how differences between cultures explained the different social orderings that had emerged



Apple with Apple , Apple with Orange

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- Marsh (1967) proposed the 'like with like' and 'like with unlike' schemes in doing comparative study.
 - Like with like: US with UK, The four tigers, Mainland, Taiwan & HK
 - Like with unlike: US with Sweden, The four tigers, Mainland, Taiwan & HK
 - Reflection: Can apple compare with orange? Unit of analysis, valid conceptualization and measurement



Comparative research



- it is in our everyday practice of comparison. Like cases are treated alike, and different cases are treated differently;
- the extent of difference determines how differently cases are to be treated.
- The point here is that if one is able to sufficiently distinguish two cases, comparative research conclusions will not be very helpful




Hills, M. (2006) Social Policy in Modern World



- What is social policy?
 - Distinction between economic and social policy is based on the assumption that free play of economic forces creates diswelfares which social policies then need to correct
 - However this assumptions are only partially true at particular times in particular places.




What is social policy?

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- Social policies may enhance welfare but they may equally enhance diswelfare
 - Source of welfare: state action/ inaction as well as families'and communities' action /in action

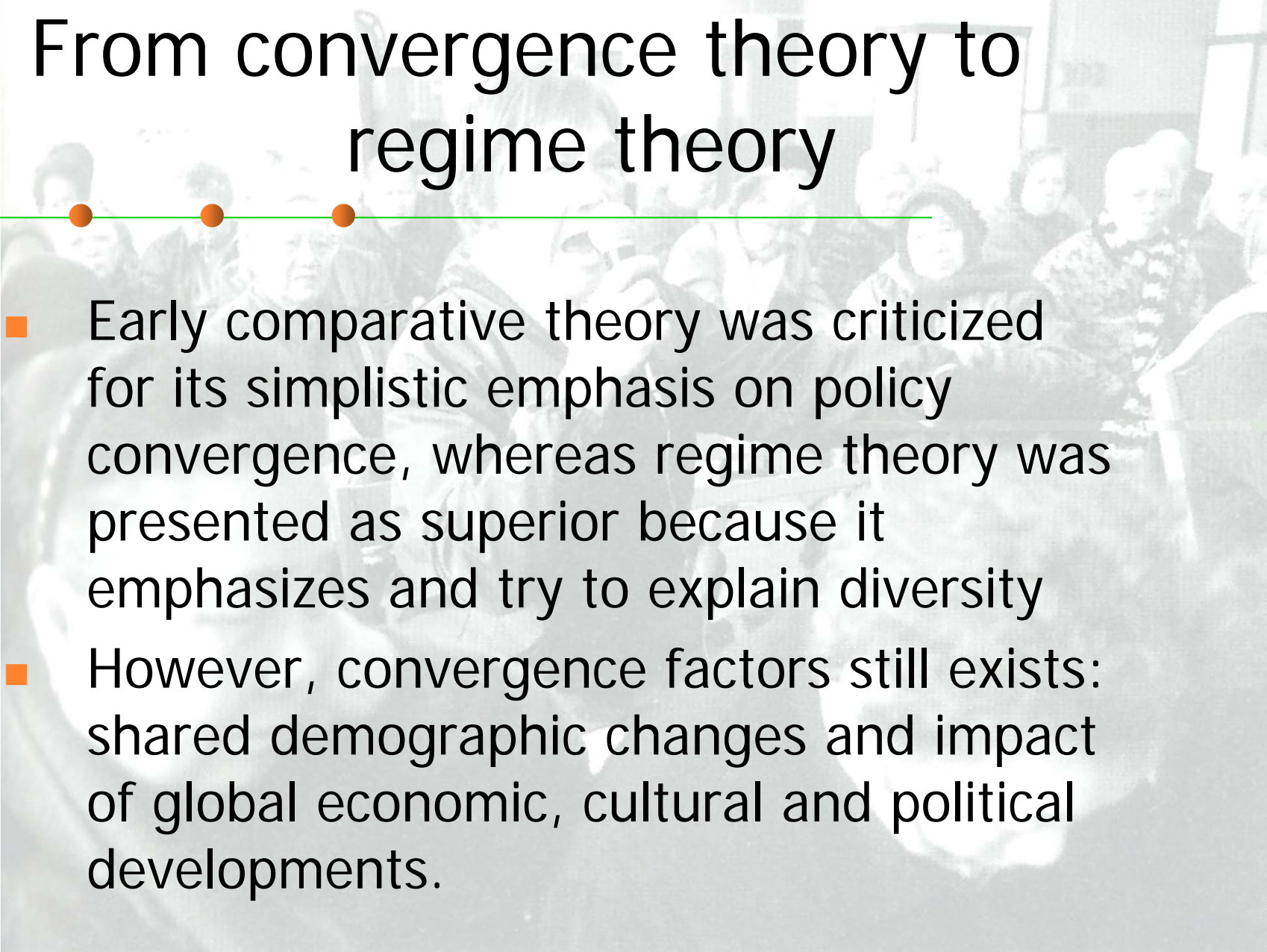


Multi-actors and multiple roles

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- Alternative Roles for individuals, families, communities, markets and the state may be embodied in framing social policy



From convergence theory to regime theory

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- Early comparative theory was criticized for its simplistic emphasis on policy convergence, whereas regime theory was presented as superior because it emphasizes and try to explain diversity
 - However, convergence factors still exists: shared demographic changes and impact of global economic, cultural and political developments.



Dixon (1999) Comparative Social Security



- Scope: describing, analyzing social security programs, so as to enhance understanding of the development and nature of social security systems in a comparative setting



Development



- early 1960s: specific social security policy (e.g. old age and retirement, employment injury) across countries
- 60s to 70s: regional and global comparison
- Mid-1960s: explore national social security systems (sss) relationship to a variety of socioeconomic phenomena
- 1970s to 1980s: target groups across countries (rural workers, atypical workers)



Approaches



- inputs (ss receipts or expenditures as % of GDP, ss receipts or expenditures per capita)
- efficiency (adm cost per unit of ss dispersed)
- performance (coverage, benefit adequacy measures, satisfaction)
- design features (rating the adequacy of their design features)



Individual programmes



- Old age and retirement,
- Disability
- Survivors'
- Sickness,
- Maternity
- Employment-related temporary injury and disease,
- Employment-related permanent injury and disease
- Employment-related survivors'
- Unemployment
- Family and child benefits



Strategy

- Coverage requirements
 - Urban / rural
 - Employment related? Industry / occupation?
- Benefit-eligibility requirements
 - Universal vs. selective (mean-tested)
- Benefits provided
 - Cash vs. goods/ service
 - Lump sum vs. continuous income



Evaluation

- Based on the judgment about what design features make a social security program “more acceptable” or “less acceptable”
- These judgements can be based on the ILO’s convention on minimum social security standards- that can be applied to national social security systems on a global basis.