Introduction and Acknowledgements

Ruth HAYHOE

This book has been truly a collaborative effort, with four scholars in the inner circle of our efforts to understand China's universities as they have been transformed through the massification process of the early 21st century, and many other scholars contributing in diverse ways. In the autumn of 2005 we made application to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for funds to enable us to study the changes that had come about in Chinese higher education between 1990 and 2005, and we are most grateful for the support they provided us. As we put together our research proposal, three questions stood out as being of greatest importance, both for China's own socio-political, cultural and economic development, and for a wider global community with which China is interacting in more and more significant ways. It is appropriate to begin this introduction by presenting these questions, since they have shaped the research methods we adopted and the results that are presented in this volume:

1. What kinds of cultural resources are Chinese universities drawing from their own civilization and how do these inform their activities, as they move onto a global stage?
2. How has the move to mass higher education stimulated civil society and the emergence of forms of democracy shaped by Chinese civilization?
3. How has the move to mass higher education affected the diversity of the system and what have been the consequences for equity of access and provision?

These questions immediately tell the reader something about the four co-authors of this book, their background experience and intellectual interests. Ruth Hayhoe has dedicated her scholarly career to researching and reflecting on the cultural values that have undergirded modern Chinese universities, in their evolution over the 20th century. While their development has been strongly influenced by Japanese, German, French, American and Soviet university models at different periods, the heritage of cultural values associated with China's civil service examination system, and with the independent academies or *shuyuan* that flourished

between the 9th and 19th centuries, have continued to shape contemporary universities.[1] This has been especially evident in the period of reform and opening up, from 1978 to the rapid move towards mass higher education between 1999 and 2005. As China's economy has grown dramatically, and its leaders have taken new directions in political diplomacy, strengthening their ties with Africa and Latin America, as well as engaging pro-actively with Europe and North America, we felt it was important for us to reflect on the role of her universities. For the first time in the modern period, an active program of cultural diplomacy has been launched, with the establishment of several hundred Confucius Institutes for the dissemination of the Chinese language and culture around the world.[2] Given the unique arms-length arrangement for the management of this program, under the Office of the Chinese Language Council International, universities in China and abroad are playing a significant role in the development of these institutions.[3] This is a minor dimension of the global activity of China's universities in the 21st century, but it leads us to ask what values they will bring to global engagement, and what dimensions of Chinese culture will shape their interactions with universities around the world. Will they be in a position to contribute new ideas or initiate new ways of looking at global issues, given the resources of a civilization that is quite distinct from that of the Western world?

Our second question might be seen as equally important for China itself and for countries around the world seeking to understand and engage with her. In the short span of time from 1990 to 2005, the number of higher education students in China increased from under three million to around 23 million, putting enormous pressures for democratization and the development of civil society on China's highly centralized one-Party political system.[4] Universities are key actors in the democratization

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[1] Ruth Hayhoe, *China's Universities: 1895-1995: A Century of Cultural Conflict* (Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre, The University of Hong Kong, 1999).

[2] Rui Yang, "China's Soft Power Projection in Higher Education," in *International Higher Education*, No.46, Winter, 2007, pp.23-24.

[3] Ruth Hayhoe and Jian Liu, "China's Universities, Cross-Border Education and the Dialogue among Civilizations," in David W. Chapman, William K. Cummings and Gerard A. Postiglione (eds.), *Crossing Borders in East Asian Higher Education* (Hong Kong: Comparative Education Centre, The University of Hong Kong and Springer, 2010), pp.76-100.

[4] Jun Li and Jing Lin, "China's Move to Mass Higher Education: An analysis of the policy making from a rational framework," in D.P. Baker and A.W. Wiseman

and opening up of society, with a huge number of graduates now seeking employment across all sectors of society, including graduates of newly burgeoning private universities, and an increasingly highly educated population demanding accountability from their government at all levels.

Jing Lin has devoted much of her scholarly career to understanding the contribution of education to the dramatic social changes taking place in China over recent decades, including an important volume entitled *The Opening of the Chinese Mind*,[5] and a series of studies on private schooling and private higher education.[6] She has explored notions of social capital and civil society in a Chinese context and explained some of the unique connotations these terms take on in a society that now defines itself as one of market socialism, yet that is also still profoundly influenced by Confucian familial and social values.

Jun Li has published extensively on classical Chinese educational history, with a first doctorate in this field from China.[7] He also has a second doctorate in international education policy and considerable experience in the study of citizenship education in East Asian contexts.[8] As a postdoctoral fellow working full-time on the project from 2006 to 2008, he has played an important leadership role in our explorations into the first question on the cultural resources Chinese universities are drawing upon as they take up a global role. He also contributed greatly to our reflections on the second question: how are contemporary China's universities, with their hugely increased student numbers, contributing to civil society formation and incipient forms of democratic development?

Our third question brings us into the dimension of comparative studies of the massification of higher education around the world, with its focus on issues of diversification, access and equity in the change process. Qiang Zha developed a strong interest in the comparative theo-

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(eds.), *The Worldwide Transformation of Higher Education* (Oxford: Elsevier Science Ltd., 2008), p.271.

[5] Jing Lin, *The Opening of the Chinese Mind* (New York: Praeger, 1994).

[6] Jing Lin, *Social Transformation and Private Education in China* (New York: Praeger, 1999).

[7] Jun Li, *Xuanrufodao jiaoyu lilun bijiao yanjiu* [A Comparative Study of the Educational Theories of the Schools of Metaphysics, Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism] (Taipei: Wenjin Press, 1994), 512pp; Jun Li, *Jiaoyuxue zhi* [A History of Chinese Thought on Education] (Shanghai Peoples Press, 1998), 461pp.

[8] Jun Li, "Student achievement in social studies in urban public schools: China and Japan," in *Education and Society* (Australia), Vol.23, No.3, 2005, pp.35-54.

retical exploration of the diversification of higher education systems in his doctoral thesis, putting the Chinese higher education system under the scrutiny of Western theoretical frames, and examining its diversification process through a range of quantitative measures.[9] He has drawn upon perspectives from organizational theory such as population ecology, resource dependency and institutional isomorphism in identifying similarities and differences between the Chinese and the international experience. He is also experienced in the analysis of educational policy making processes, and has applied that skill to an exploration of the policy development process in China's move to mass higher education.

Research Design

Given the breadth of our three research questions, we developed a research design that had three major phases, and would be carried out over a period of three to four years. The first phase involved a careful study of the policy development process for China's move to mass higher education at the national and local levels. Special attention was given to the different roles of senior government figures, scholars, scholarly institutions and regional government offices. Qiang Zha and Jing Lin carried out a series of interviews in Beijing, Shanghai, Xiamen and a minority region of Southeast China in December of 2006, in order to see what could be gleaned from conversations with officials and scholars, that might fill out the analysis of the policy process found in the research literature.

Chapter 1 of this volume, by Qiang Zha, presents various aspects of the policy study. One of its interesting findings is the significant role played by scholars and researchers in the policy process, both as individuals and through major state funded research projects. This indicates the persistence of a pattern long noted in Chinese society of "establishment scholars" offering their knowledge and expertise in direct service to the state, paralleling the role of scholar officials in traditional China. The policy study also uncovers dimensions of the change process

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[9] Qiang Zha, "Diversification or Homogenization: How Governments and Markets Have Combined to (Re)Shape Chinese Higher Education in Its Recent Massification Process," in *Higher Education: The International Journal of Education Planning,* Vol.58, No.1, 2009, pp.41-58; Qiang Zha, "Diversification or Homogenization in Higher Education: A Global Allomorphism Perspective," in *Higher Education in Europe*, Vol.34, Nos.3/4, 2009, pp.459-479.

relating to the structure of the higher education system, access, equity and quality that are illuminated by the comparative literature on higher education massification. [10] At this point we would like to acknowledge the work of five graduate students who contributed significantly to the study through the literature review work that they carried out as graduate assistants at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) of the University of Toronto: Jian Liu, Marina Ma Jinyuan, Yuxin Tu, Lijuan Wang and Xiaoyan Wang.

The second phase of the study involved a series of case studies of different types of universities in different regions of the country. We wished to present a lively picture of how different institutions are dealing with the opportunities, threats and challenges of rapid massification since 1999, also how their visions for the future, strategic planning and key decisions are reflecting different elements of the Chinese context. In choosing the case study institutions, we made a conscious decision to select nine public institutions and three private institutions, since around 12% of enrollments were in private higher education when we began the study, and this percentage increased to increase to 19.4% by 2008.[11] China has a tradition of excellence in private higher education both in the Nationalist period, and over its long history, particularly that of the classical academies or *shuyuan*. Although private higher education was abolished after the revolution of 1949, it re-emerged in the 1980s, and has benefited from the new opportunities provided by the massification policy. A few outstanding institutions show promise for scholarly leadership in the longer term future, even though they are in an entirely different league from the major public universities at the present time. These institutions have tended to draw upon powerful and colourful cultural symbols to raise their profile in Chinese society: "Yellow River," always thought of as the heartland of Chinese civilization, "Turning Fish into Dragons," a phrase associated with the civil service examinations during the Tang dynasty when Xi'an was the imperial capital and "Blue Sky," a concept associated with openness and inclusivity to those suffering social disadvantage.

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[10] Qiang Zha and Jing Lin, "China's Move to Mass Higher Education: The Policy Process," forthcoming in *Higher Education Policy.*

[11] Jun Li and Jing Lin, "China's Move to Mass Higher Education," p.272; Jian Liu and Xiaoyan Wang, "Expansion and Diversification in Chinese Higher Education," in *International Higher Education*, No.60, Summer, 2010, p.7.

It will become very evident in the analysis of the policy process and the structural changes in China's higher education over the period of massification that it is the provincial and local level institutions, also private institutions, which have carried the major burden of expansion, while top-tier public universities have seen more modest expansion and in some cases focused on increases only in graduate enrollments. They have also benefited from significant funding from the national government to enable them to maintain their elite standing and strive for world-class quality. Given our interest in the potential cultural contributions which Chinese universities will bring into the global higher education community, as expressed in our first question, we decided that our focus should be on institutions that are in a position to be global actors. Seven of the nine institutions are thus part of the elite 98/5 project, launched at the time of Peking University's centenary in May of 1998, which provides significant additional funding to 43 top institutions, while another two are part of the earlier 21/1 project, launched in 1993, and giving priority funding to about 100 universities nationwide. In selecting the three private universities, we also tried to identify those which have potential for a global role in the longer term future.

A second consideration that influenced our selection of cases was that of geography. We wanted to ensure that the twelve institutions were spread over all major regions of the country. China's rapid economic development has been uneven in terms of region, with the major coastal areas moving ahead most quickly. Thus location has tremendous importance for higher institutions in the Chinese context, and differing regions of the country have different economic conditions, as well as unique elements in their historical experience of higher education development.

Thirdly, we wanted to ensure that all main types of university were represented in the selection of our case studies. Thus we have chosen several major comprehensive universities, as well as two universities of science and technology and one university of agriculture and forestry, both of these being institutional types that emerged with the establishment of the socialist planning system in the early 1950s.[12] We also selected one normal university, with a historic mandate for teacher education, and one university mainly serving a minority population. A further consideration that affected our choice of institutions was the wave of mergers that has been encouraged by the Chinese government in

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[12] See Ruth Hayhoe, *China's Universities 1895-1995,* pp.77-80.

the process of expansion and the upgrading of an elite group of institutions to global standards. In our choice of institutions we made sure there were some that have embraced a major merger, others that rejected merger entirely and yet others which made their own choice of partners for merger, rather than following Beijing's directives.

The map in Figure 0.1 shows how the twelve universities are distributed throughout China's heartland, and we list them here in the order in which the case studies are presented. Part Two of this volume includes three major comprehensive universities: Peking University (PKU) in Beijing, Nanjing University (NJU) in Nanjing, Jiangsu province and Xiamen University (XMU) in Xiamen, Fujian province. Part Three presents three universities with a strong orientation towards education: the East China Normal University (ECNU) in Shanghai, Southwest University (SWU) in the major city of Chongqing and Yanbian University (YBU) in Yanji, Jilin province, the only institution in China's Northeast, and one that serves a minority Korean population. Part Four sets out case studies of three universities of science and technology: The University of Science and Technology of China (USTC) in Hefei, Anhui province, the Huazhong (Central China) University of Science and Technology (HUST)

Figure 0.1: The Geographical Location of Our 12 Case Study Universities
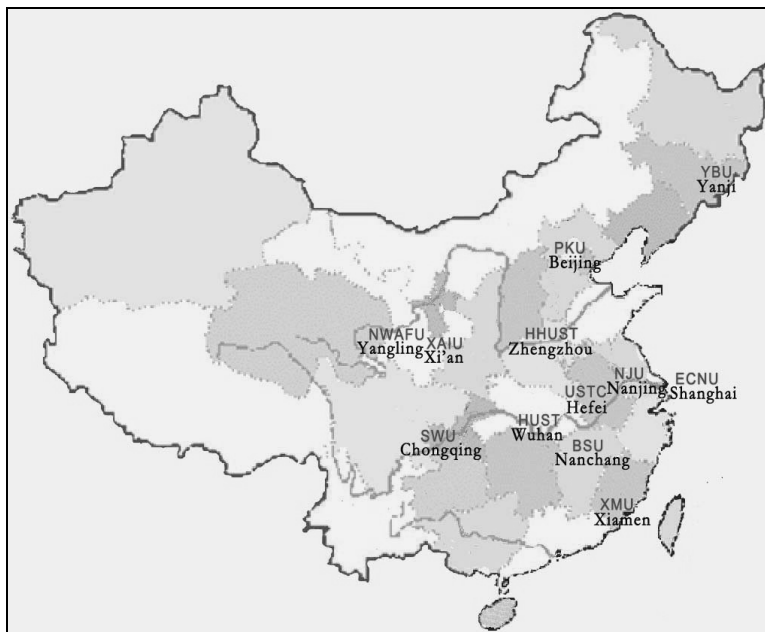
in Wuhan, Hubei Province, and the Northwest Agriculture and Forestry University (NWAFU) in Yangling, Shaanxi province. Finally, Part Five includes the three private universities which we have selected for the study: The Yellow River University of Science and Technology (HHUST) in Zhengzhou, Henan Province, the Xi'an International University (XAIU) in Xi'an, Shaanxi province and the Blue Sky University (BSU) in Nanchang, Jiangxi province.

Willingness to participate was another important factor in our selection process, and a few changes had to be made from the original list of institutions we drew up. Nevertheless, we were able to maintain the principles of selection in terms of types of institution and a broad spread of geographical location. At this point we would like to express appreciation to two academic advisors who were visiting scholars at OISE over the 2006/2007 academic year, attended our project meetings regularly and helped us in important decisions over the selection of institutions. Professor Huang Mingdong of Wuhan University and Professor Zhou Guangli of the Huazhong (Central China) University of Science and Technology in Wuhan also gave advice over the design of a set of base data tables, whereby we gathered information on changes in enrollments, curricular patterns, faculty profiles and finance and budgeting over the period from 1990 to 2005. The collection of this data has served to provide an empirical basis that is roughly comparable for each of the twelve institutions.

Another invaluable advisor and mentor to the project has been Dr. Julia Pan, Senior Coordinator for International Initiatives in the Dean's Office at OISE and a constant encourager to all of us. Some time before the project was born, she assisted in a set of pilot interviews with university leaders in Shanghai and Hangzhou, and she has continued to take a strong interest in the research.[13] We were also privileged to have Dr. Cristina Pinna, a postdoctoral fellow from the University of Cagliari in Sardinia, Italy, spend two autumn terms with our project team, as she carried out research on academic relations between China and Europe.[14]

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[13] Ruth Hayhoe and Julia Pan, "China's Universities on the Global Stage – Views from University Leaders," in *International Higher Education*, No.39, Spring, 2005, pp.20-21.

[14] Cristina Pinna, "EU-China Relations in Higher Education" (paper presented at an international workshop on "The Dynamics of Transformation in East Asia",

She spent the two spring terms at Peking University, where we linked up with her when doing our case study research there in May of 2008 and our culminating workshop in May of 2009.

Research for the case studies was carried out in the spring of 2007 and 2008, with two members of our core team spending four to six days at each university, interviewing a range of university leaders, and holding focus group meetings with faculty and students. We sought to gain as many insights as possible into the way in which each institution had handled the change process, also to explore their emerging ethos. Gaining institutional permission for these studies and making all the logistical arrangements was a demanding process, and we decided to invite a scholar with experience in higher education research at each university to partner with us. Thus we would like to acknowledge a debt of gratitude to thirteen collaborating scholars from our case institutions, following the order in which the portraits of their universities appear in this volume: Professor Yan Fengqiao of Peking University, Professor Gong Fang of Nanjing University, Professor Xie Zuxu of Xiamen University, Professor Li Mei of East China Normal University, Professor Liu Yibin of Southwest University, Professor Piao Taizhu of Yanbian University, Professor Cheng Xiaofang of the University of Science and Technology of China, Professors Chen Min and Zhou Guangli of the Huazhong (Central China) University of Science and Technology, Professor Niu Hongtai of the Northwest University of Agriculture and Forestry, Ms Tang Baomei of the Yellow River University of Science and Technology, Professor Wang Guan of the Xi'an International University and Professor Xu Xiangyun of Blue Sky University.

The members of our focus group meetings with faculty and students were selected to represent different disciplinary fields in the university: humanities, social sciences and natural sciences and technology. The collaborating scholar from each institution played a key role in selecting individuals who were willing to join a focus group meeting, and comfortable with providing the individual consent necessary in our ethical review process. For faculty members, an effort was made by the collaborating scholar, in cooperation with one of the vice-presidents or the higher education research institute, to select faculty members who would be interested in the questions we wished to discuss,

the University of Edinburgh, October 24-26 2007) and published in *The Asia-Europe Journal*, Vol.7, Nos.3-4, December, 1009, pp.505-527.

as these had been provided well in advance. For students, our ethical protocol specified that they would be identified through consultation with the student government, but we imagine our collaborating scholars were also influenced by practical concerns of student availability and political concerns, in some cases, that the students chosen should represent their institution appropriately. Thus there were a few institutions where the student focus group members seemed to be well connected with the Communist Party or the Youth League, but this was not the case for all institutions. We can say that a wide range of disciplines were represented in the members of faculty and student focus groups, and many interesting and candid views were expressed, though we cannot claim these voices to be "representative" in any rigorous sense.

The third phase of our study involved a survey of students in all twelve of the case study institutions. We felt it was important to hear the voices of students in this way, and not only through the focus group meetings. They were asked to respond to questions relating to issues of equity and access, also to give their observations on how the transition to mass higher education affected teaching quality and campus culture, and their ideas on and experiences of civil society and civic participation. In each of our case study institutions we selected three classes of third year students, one from the humanities, one from the social sciences and one from sciences and technologies, with about 60 students in each class. All were invited to fill out a questionnaire which had been developed and pilot tested by the core research team in the early months of our project work. In spite of the sensitivity of the questionnaire, we were pleased that all twelve case study universities gave permission for the survey to be administered, and data collection was completed in the spring and summer of 2007. This made possible the inputting of all the survey data over the summer and autumn of 2007, with significant assistance from our team of graduate students at the University of Toronto.

In Chapter 2 of this volume, Jun Li presents the major findings of the survey and interprets them through a comparative analysis of core concepts in the Chinese and Western literature. We believe this chapter provides a helpful backdrop for the case studies, and particularly for the findings from the student focus group meetings which were held on each of the twelve campuses. I would also note that Dr. Li has published two articles in international refereed journals that go into greater depth on the

survey findings, and that two of our graduate students are using the survey data in doctoral theses now in process.[15]

Portraits of 21st Century Chinese Universities

The main body of this volume is made up of twelve portraits of contemporary Chinese universities in the context of China's move to mass higher education. In crafting these case studies we were inspired by the work of Burton Clark in his influential volume on the entrepreneurial university.[16] Clark selected five institutions in the Northern European countries of Holland, England, Scotland, Finland and Sweden on the basis of their reputation for an entrepreneurial spirit and their success in self-initiated change that took them from being entirely dependent on state funding to a situation where a significant percentage of their funding came from non-governmental sources. He was particularly interested in innovative features of their curricula, research, and service to local and regional economic development.

Clark studied these five institutions through the collection of documents about their development, both historical and contemporary, and through visits which allowed him to carry out interviews with members of the leadership at various levels. He also observed administrative practices, curricular and research innovations and initiatives whereby the institutions were responding to a local and regional public. After immersing himself in the data he had collected, he came up with what might be described as a grounded theory about the conditions that nurtured these entrepreneurial institutions: a strengthened steering core, an enhanced development periphery, a discretionary funding base, a stimulated heartland and an entrepreneurial belief, that had transformed institutional culture towards the valuing of openness and change over tradition.

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[15] Jun Li, "Fostering Citizenship in China's Move to Mass Higher Education: An Analysis of Students' Political Socialization and Civic Participation," in *The International Journal of Educational Development*, Vol.29, No.4, 2009, pp.382-398; Jun Li, "The Student Experience in China's Revolutionary Move to Mass Higher Education: Expansion, Transformation and Policy Choice," under review; Ji'an Liu, "Equality of Educational Opportunity in China's Move to Mass Higher Education since the 1990s" (PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 2010); Yuxin Tu, "A Chinese Civil Society in the Making? Civic Perceptions and Civic Participation of University Students in an Era of Massification" (PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 2010).
[16] Burton R. Clark, *Creating Entrepreneurial Universities: Organizational Pathways of Transformation* (Oxford: Elsevier, 1998).

In Yin's classic work on case study research, he has noted that case studies may be exploratory or explanatory, depending on the situation.[17] Clark's cases demonstrate elements of both, as he explores and defines the emerging concept of an entrepreneurial university, while also explaining the changes in management, organizational structure and financial provisioning that made them possible. He developed a broad theoretical frame applicable to all, yet also identified historical and geographical factors and curricular characteristics in individual cases that made a specific contribution to their entrepreneurial identity.

Thus for Chalmers University in Sweden, the fact that it had been founded in the early 1800s as a private institution dedicated to technical education and only later incorporated into Sweden's public higher education system may have accounted for some aspects of its entrepreneurial success. The fact that Strathclyde University in Scotland had been founded in 1796 in protest against the academicism of the University of Glasgow, with a conscious emphasis on "practical arts for practical students," [18] was an equally significant element in its history. Geographical factors also played a role, particularly for Twente University in the Netherlands which had been established as a technological university in a remote eastern part of the country in the 1960s, and for Joensuu in Finland, also in a geographically remote area and with a curriculum that focused on teacher education.

In depicting how each of the case universities rose from marginal status within their national systems and became institutions with a high academic standing and innovative orientation, Clark highlighted one or two major initiatives that gave concrete expression to the unique features of each case, while bringing out elements that were common in the transformation of each case. His open-minded exploratory approach reminded us that it was important to listen intently and observe carefully when we carried out our case study visits, and avoid imposing our own pre-conceived theories or hypotheses. His work also reminded us of the importance of institutional history and of geography.

Our core question in studying twelve Chinese universities in the early 21st century was naturally quite different from that of Clark. We wanted to see if the contours of an emerging Chinese model of the university might be found and whether it could be interpreted in relation

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[17] Robert Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (London: Sage, 1989).

[18] Clark, *Creating Entrepreneurial Universities*, p.61.

to persisting elements of China's cultural and scholarly traditions. Our first question focused on the cultural contributions Chinese universities might make to the world community, and led us to a series of questions around vision, mission and strategic planning with leaders at different levels. It also led us to reflect on particular aspects of each institution's history, and to examine recent curricular developments, the organization of teaching and learning as well as research policies and practices, in order to see how the emerging ethos was expressed in these core areas of the university's work. We tried also to discern how far faculty members and students were aware of their institution's vision and mission, and how they related to its history and culture.

In addition to collecting relevant documents, such as mission statements and teaching evaluation reports, developing a set of base data, and collating the information we were able to glean from interviews, we wanted to find visual expression for the university ethos. Therefore we asked leaders, faculty members and students which building or which part of their campus space best expressed its spirit. This has enabled us to include three or four photos from each campus in our portraits, with some comments from university members on why these had become "places of the heart." There were also interesting differences of view in some cases!

Our second question related to the development of civil society in China and how the expansion was affecting relations between the university and government, also the attitudes, expectations and activities of faculty and students, both within the campus and in the wider society. We asked leaders to tell us what it meant for the university to have the status of a legal person, recently enshrined in the 1998 Higher Education Law, and the extent to which there was democratic participation in major decision-making processes. We asked faculty and students about their views of civil society and their opportunities for participation in decision-making processes on campus and in formal and non-formal political or social organizations that linked them to developments in the wider society.

Our third question was the most wide-ranging, covering issues of structure, equity, access and quality. In talking to leaders we were interested in their attitudes towards institutional merger, their approaches to the reconfiguration of campus space, and their decisions regarding whether or not to establish independent second tier colleges as a way of enrolling additional students at higher fees, as well as their

views on many other strategic issues. In talking to faculty members and students, we wanted to understand how they perceived these decisions, and how their teaching and learning experiences and their life opportunities were being affected by the move to mass higher education.

Over our four to five days of listening, observing, discussing and debating,[19] we tried to formulate a holistic portrait of each institution, and then encapsulate that in written form at a later point. This involved immersing ourselves in the base data tables that had been provided, the relevant institutional documents and our extensive notes from interviews and focus group meetings. In some cases we listened to tapes of the interviews and meetings in order to recreate the experience of our visit in a vivid way. For each case, we had a lead author, whose name is given first, and who crafted the first draft of the case study, before seeking inputs from the other core member of the research team who had participated. After that the draft was shared with the collaborating scholar of each institution in China, for their feedback and any corrections or amplifications they might with to provide. In addition, we invited all of them to a workshop held at Peking University in May of 2009, so they could offer constructive criticism on the first draft of Chapters 1 to 14 of this volume, and suggestions for the final chapter. We were delighted that ten of the thirteen collaborating scholars were able to come, together with several other scholars doing related work in Beijing. We had three intense days of dialogue, sharing and comparative reflection, with each of the scholars giving detailed attention to two or three of the draft chapters. We have since sought to incorporate their perspectives into the book, as far as has been possible. We have also invited four of them to provide written reflections on our portraits, following the grouping of four distinct types of institutions in the book. We were delighted that all four were able to participate in the Annual Meeting of the Comparative and International Education Society in Chicago in March of 2010, where their papers provided interesting feedback on the findings of the project from the perspective of scholars working within Chinese universities. They will be published in a special issue of *Frontiers of Education in China* in December of 2010.[20]

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[19] In many cases institutional members, whether leaders, faculty or students, had studied our questions carefully in advance, and thanked us for stimulating them to think about these issues.

[20] *Frontiers of Education in China,* Vol.5, No.4, December 2010.

Our purpose in presenting these portraits is not to measure Chinese universities against others around the world or to examine how far their patterns conform to international theories, norms or expectations. Rather it is to give them space for a self-depiction of the kind of university they envision themselves becoming in the 21st century. In Western scholarship, criticism is seen as a sine-qua-non of excellence and reliability, and we acknowledge that the way in which we have organized this study may have blunted some of the normal possibilities for critical analysis. However, we have tried to be attentive to the debates and divergent voices that were heard in almost all institutions, and to include them in our portraits. We also believe the pro-active support of university leaders, which was essential to our ethical protocol, and the direct involvement of collaborating scholars in each institution, brings authenticity to the portraits, an advantage that may compensate for the absence of a purely objective external scrutiny.

In the end, it is you the reader who will judge whether these portraits give you insights into an emerging Chinese model of the university in the twenty first century, and whether they succeed in showing the diversity of pathways that have been chosen by institutions with distinctive histories, curricular constellations and geographical settings. We hope you will see these universities as personalities, that share a common source of civilizational values, yet have responded differently to the opportunities, threats and challenges of the massification process.

Not long ago, I published a book entitled *Portraits of Influential Chinese Educators*, which told the stories of eleven influential Chinese educators, and interpreted them in the context of Confucian educational values and ideas, broadly defined.[21] Each of the educators was a unique individual, who had made remarkable contributions in both educational thought and action. They had grown up in different time periods and different regions of China, and had served within different institutions in all the major regions of China. Their lives and educational ideas were thus quite diverse, yet there were certain threads that bound them together, reflecting their shared educational heritage. I hope this book can serve a similar purpose, presenting portraits of twelve contemporary universities, which have certain common features that may be inter-

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[21] Ruth Hayhoe, *Portraits of Influential Chinese Educators* (Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre, The University of Hong Kong and Springer, 2006).

preted by reference to their shared heritage in classical Chinese civiliza-tion, while also having diverse characteristics that reflect the different visions and strategies that have been adopted in the increasing autonomy from central government control they have enjoyed in recent years.

The use of the word autonomy at this point is almost sure to bring certain questions to the mind of readers of this volume. How much genuine autonomy do Chinese universities have in the contemporary period, and how far are they able to enjoy the kinds of academic freedom that are considered essential to scholarly excellence in the Western context? It has already been noted that Chinese universities were given the status of "legal persons" in the 1998 Higher Education Law,[22] the first to be promulgated in China since 1949. In the same law, the governance system of Chinese universities was defined as "a system of presidential responsibility and accountability under the leadership and guidance of the Chinese Communist Party."[23] While Chinese universities enjoy a growing measure of autonomy over matters such as student enrollment, curricular development, research, international partnerships, mergers and property development, as will be evident in many portraits in this book, there are clearly certain political constraints. These are related to the role of the Communist Party Committee on each campus, with the Party Secretary functioning almost as a Chairman of Council and the President responsible for all major academic decisions. Governance remains a fairly sensitive issue, but readers will find quite a detailed depiction of how this system functions in the portrait of Peking University in Chapter 3.

In my research on Chinese universities over the past twenty five years, I have continued to puzzle over how far the iconic terms "univer-sity autonomy" and "academic freedom" from the Western tradition can be used to represent or reflect on the core values of traditional and contemporary Chinese universities. My sense is that it has been impor-tant for Chinese universities to gain the protection of law for their action as legal persons, and they have benefited greatly from efforts to introduce the Western principle of autonomy ever since the early experience of Peking University under the influence of Cai Yuanpei, a Chinese scholar who spent many years at the Universities of Leipzig and

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[22] "Higher Education Law," *Chinese Education and Society*, Vol.32, No.3, May/June 1999, pp.68-87.
[23] *Ibid.* Article 39, p.78.

Berlin. Nevertheless, the Chinese term for autonomy as "self-mastery" (自主) is more often used in discussions about autonomy within China, than the term for autonomy as "self-governance" (自治) which has the connotation of legal or political independence. Chinese universities have always had a closely interactive relation with the state, which arises from the strong tradition of the civil service examinations and the scholar's sense of direct social responsibility. This will be evident in some of the portraits, and will be discussed in greater detail in Chapters 1 and 15 of this volume. Western readers will need to open their minds to grasping some of the subtleties around this term, rather than simply assuming it means subservience to the state.

Similarly the term "academic freedom" (學術自由), which is used to denote a kind of freedom particularly appropriate to the university in the Western context, and which arose from the dominant epistemology of rationalism and dualism in a European context, is not a good fit for China. On the one hand, Chinese scholars enjoy a greater degree of "intellectual authority" (思想權威) than is common in the West, due to the history of the civil service examinations and the close links contemporary universities have with major state projects. On the other hand, there is a strong tradition of "intellectual freedom" (思想自由) in China, which is rooted in an epistemology quite different from that of European rationalism. It requires that knowledge be demonstrated first and foremost through action for the public good, also that knowledge be seen as holistic and inter-connected, rather than organized into narrowly defined separate disciplines. Chinese scholars find it difficult to limit their criticisms to theoretical debates, but feel called upon to demonstrate them in action, and many have paid a high price for this. Similarly they are not likely to stay within the parameters of their particular discipline, but claim a much wider ground in expressing criticism of authority.[24] In this, there are interesting parallels with American pragmatism and the

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[24] These distinctions have been elaborated in detail elsewhere. See for example Ruth Hayhoe and Jian Liu, "China's Universities, Cross-Border Education and Dialogue among Civilizations," pp.77-100; Jun Li, "World-class higher education and the emerging Chinese model of the university," *Prospects: International and Comparative Education Quarterly*, 4/156, December 2010.

ways in which academic freedom has developed since the statement put forward by the American Association of University Professors in 1916.[25]

I close this introduction with a simpler yet somewhat symbolic aspect of the interaction between Chinese and Western academia – the ordering of personal names. Chinese always places the surname first, and most Chinese show their respect for Western custom by turning their name order around to suit the Western reader. We felt it would be both unnatural and inappropriate to subject all Chinese names in this study to such a distortion, and so have retained the Chinese name order for historical figures and all those living in Mainland China.

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[25] R. Hofstadter and W. Smith, *American Higher Education: A Documentary History* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1961), Vol. II, p.874.