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Lessons from the Chinese Academy

Ruth Hayhoe

This book has been about the dialogue among civilizations that has blossomed over the last decade, since the end of the Cold War. The volume began with a series of challenges presented to the knowledge patterns which had become established in the Western university, and spread around the world over the recent two centuries of its colonial and postcolonial influence. This was followed by several rich expositions of the historical contributions of Eastern civilizations to the knowledge content and institutional patterns of modern higher education. The central section of the volume is taken up with analyses of some of the problems and imbalances that have arisen in the historical and contemporary process of knowledge transfer across cultures, also with ways in which these could be mitigated, through policy decisions and choices open to participants on both sides of the transfer process. This was followed by a set of papers discussing ways in which modern knowledge and modern institutions can retain and strengthen their links to the diverse indigenous cultures where they are located, thus fostering a healthy balance between openness to the global community and rootedness in local understanding.

The final section of the volume has given close attention to Chinese civilization, and its interactions with the Western world, both historically and in the contemporary period. As explained in the introduction, our journey began with China and with a set of practical considerations arising out of educational exchange and collaboration. It is thus fitting that the volume should end with a focus on China. We have seen some of the rich contributions made by traditional Chinese science and arts to the world community, as well as the difficulties faced by Chinese scholars and thinkers in the modern period, when the roles were reversed and China found itself a recipient rather than a donor of advanced knowledge in science, technology, and even the arts. Both Chinese and Western perspectives on these interactions between

China and the West are provided by the different contributors to this section.

The second last chapter, by Professor Wang Yongquan, looked at the Chinese university, and the ways in which its development over the century was shaped by a sense of threat coming from external pressures. One of the most striking results of this was a tendency for knowledge to be organised into highly specialised categories, along lines related to specific national development goals. This went deeply against the grain of China's cultural and epistemological traditions, yet it was a logical necessity of late modernization, under considerable external threat. Only after the Cultural Revolution, Wang suggests, did it become possible for Chinese universities to develop a coherent and integrative framework of knowledge in the curriculum. This represented a distillation of elements from China's own cultural traditions, and elements which Chinese scholars have selected from a range of Western influences introduced at different times over the century. This was the final chapter in our original volume, and might have been the final chapter in this new edition.

However, I was persuaded that this narrative account of the development of the European university, and of Chinese higher learning institutions, might complement Professor Wang's chapter, and add something to the concluding section of the volume. The intention is to look back in search of ways to understand the deep rooted differences in values and epistemological orientation in the two traditions. It is also to look forward and consider what the values and patterns of the Chinese academy might contribute to global higher education.

The narrative begins with the introduction of the European university, and its core values and knowledge patterns, to China in the early 17th century. The patterns of Chinese traditional higher learning institutions are then compared with those of the European university. The third phase of the narrative traces the development of four modern versions of the European university in the differing modernisation contexts of Germany, France, the Soviet Union and the United States. In spite of differences in political ideology and socio-economic development, certain core values, held in common, continued to find expression in each of these modern versions of the university. The fourth phase of the narrative considers the evolution of modern universities in China, and the ways in which each of these Western models exerted an influence at different times over the century. The narrative concludes with some reflections on ways in which the values and patterns of China's rich scholarly traditions, which have finally been given space to reassert themselves in the modern Chinese context, may contribute to global higher education in the 21st century.

CORE VALUES OF THE EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY

The emergence of universities in 12th century Europe marked the end of the Dark Ages, and the beginnings of a renaissance of culture and knowledge that was to have a wide reaching impact around the globe. Although these early universities were essentially international institutions, open to scholars from all parts of Europe, it was several hundred years before the first contacts took place with scholarly institutions in China, which had developed over an even longer period. The Jesuit mission to China, which began in the 16th century, opened up channels for communication both ways[1], and it was a Jesuit missionary from Italy who first provided a detailed introduction to the university for Chinese readers. In 1622, Giulio Aleni, published *A Summary of Western Learning* [*Xixue fan*] in Chinese.[2] In it he explained to Chinese scholars the character and achievements of the then 400 year old universities of Europe. Naturally, his picture was informed by the patterns of Aristotelian and Thomistic thought, that had shaped the university since its emergence in the 12th century. The focus was on knowledge and categories of knowledge, and his ability to use appropriate Chinese terminology in translating Western concepts showed his remarkable linguistic achievements, and the understanding he had developed of the Chinese scholarly context.

Aleni depicted a hierarchical structure of knowledge in the university with the arts at its base, *philosophia* in the next tier, and the two professional fields of *medicina* and *leges* (laws) above this. At the apex of the structures was canon law, and supreme above all, *Theologia*. Aleni gave a detailed introduction to European knowledge achievements in each of these categories, showing how one led up to the next, and how *Theologia* integrated all other fields of knowledge, and gave meaning and direction to human life. The Chinese translation he chose for theology, the Heavenly Learning or *tianxue*, was particularly apt. "Without Heavenly Learning to show one the beginning and end of all things, the origin and destination of humankind, and the grave matters of life and death, all the human studies would be just like fireflies, unable to compare with the sun in the power of illumination," he commented.[3]

From this account, we can clearly recognise the institution which had come to birth in Bologna, Paris and other medieval cities of Europe in the 12th century. A common curricular structure emerged over subsequent centuries, with faculties of arts, philosophy, medicine, law and theology. The core values of the university have often been

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[1] D.E. Mungello, *Curious Land: Jesuit Accommodation and the Origins of Sinology* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989).

[2] Bernard Hung-Kay Luk, "Aleni Introduces the Western Academic Tradition to Seventeenth Century China: A Study of the *Xixue Fan*," in Tiziana Lippiello and Roman Malek (eds.), *"Scholar from the West" Giulio Aleni S.J. (1582-1649) and the Dialogue between Christianity and China* (Brescia: Fondazione Civilta Bresciana and Sankt Augustin: the Monumenta Serica Institute, 1997), pp. 479-518.

[3] *Ibid.* pp. 509-510.

identified as autonomy and academic freedom. Autonomy was protected by a set of structures derived from three important medieval institutions: the monastery, the guild and the church. From the monastery, came the tradition of distance from the immediate demands of society and the pursuit of learning for its own sake and for the long term. From the guild, came the pattern of a self regulating community of masters, the *universitas*, setting the standards as to who could enter as students, and regulating the life of the community by internally agreed criteria. From the church, came a papal charter, granting all members of each university community the *ius ubique docendi*, the right to teach everywhere, and giving them protection from interference by local ecclesiastical or political authorities. In the early years, the most potent way of expressing resistance to such interference was simply *migratio*, a move to another city, or *cessatio*, a kind of medieval strike of all university members working in local religious or political institutions.

An institution had thus taken shape, the *studium*, which found independent ground between *imperium* and *sacerdotium*, the other great powers of medieval Europe. Academic freedom was protected by a far sighted Papal initiative, the university's charter, which protected scholars in debates over all kinds of questions, even those which were highly sensitive to local religious or political leaders. Theology put certain limits on the pursuit of knowledge, yet it also had an important integrative role, which contributed to the advancement of knowledge. The great British historian of the university, Hastings Rashdall, expressed this point in the following way: "Theology remained Queen of the Sciences, but a grander and nobler conception of theology arose.... theology became not merely the Chinese mandarin's poring over sacred texts, but the architectonic science whose office it was to receive the results of all other sciences and combine them into an organic whole...."[4] Rashdall drew particular attention to the liberating role of the theologians of the University of Paris, who provided a context where religious and social disputes could be argued through on the basis of reason, rather than finding expression in the bloodshed which characterised the Inquisition in southern Europe.[5]

While specialism of knowledge was an important element in the university's tradition at this phase, it was moderated by the integrative role of theology, linking all knowledge to commonly accepted ethical and spiritual directions. For this reason, the concept of "intellectual freedom" may better depict this medieval period, while "academic freedom" might best be reserved for a later phase of the university's development. In this period, before the emergence of modern science, the issue of value neutrality had not yet arisen. All of the university's

[4] Hastings Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), Vol. III, pp. 442.

[5] Hastings Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936), Vol. 1, pp. 548-549.

knowledge was to serve the moral and spiritual directions defined by theology.

CORE VALUES OF THE CHINESE ACADEMY

Let us now turn to the Chinese scholarly institutions and values which were predominant in the early 17th century. By an interesting coincidence, Chinese classical institutions of higher learning had also reached their definitive form in the 12th century, at around the same time as the universities in Europe came into being. This was largely due to the emergence of Song neo-Confucianism as the dominant form of scholarship, and the work of several great scholars, most notable among them Zhu Xi. In 1190 C.E. Zhu had standardised the canon of knowledge used in the imperial examination system in the form of Four Books and Five Classics, a canon that was to persist up until the end of the last imperial dynasty, the Qing, in the early 20th century. The formal pole of traditional Chinese higher learning, imperial institutions at capital, provincial and prefectural levels which administered the civil service examinations, had reached institutional forms that were relatively stable – the *taixue*, the *guozijian*, the Hanlin academy. In addition, Zhu Xi made important contributions to the emergence of non-formal scholarly institutions, the academies or *shuyuan*, which grew up from libraries and Buddhist monasteries in quiet rural settings, where scholarship could be pursued outside of the ambit of the imperial bureaucracy and its examination system.

Four major divisions of knowledge dominated the Chinese traditional curriculum, from the 12th century up to the late 19th century: the classical canon and commentaries (*jing*), history and related subjects (*shi*), philosophy (*zi*) and the arts, or belles lettres (*ji*). "This system was based on the Confucian approach to scholarship - the Classics express the Way in words, history in deeds, while philosophers and literary artists illustrate various other aspects of the Way."[6] In his introduction to the European university, Aleni had noted that these four knowledge categories all fell into the category of arts, at the base of the curriculum in the European university. In fact, however, studies in medicine, law, engineering and agricultural sciences had also long been developed in China, though they were not regarded as high status knowledge, nor were they tested in the imperial examinations. Rather they were treated as technical knowledge, to be regulated and supervised by scholar officials in order to serve the common good.

China's traditional curriculum was not characterised by the same degree of hierarchy as has been noted above in the European curriculum, where theology was the reigning science, responsible to regulate and integrate all other subjects. For Chinese scholars, "the

[6] Bernard Luk, "Aleni Introduces the Western Academic Tradition..." pp. 486

transcendant and the mundane were complementary parts of a universe that was an organic unity."[7] There was no theology as such, but rather a commitment to the independence and integrity of the moral self, and forms of self-cultivation that would awaken, extend, and actualize the goodness immanent in one's nature.

The structure of traditional higher learning in China was shaped by the imperial examination system, which allowed the Emperor to select scholar officials to administer imperial rule from all parts of the empire through a meritocratic system of study. The content of knowledge to be examined was regulated by the Hanlin Academy, and the examinations focused on the Four Books and Five Classics. The administration of the examinations was under the Board of Rites, which was responsible for education offices at prefectural and provincial level where aspiring scholars were registered to take part and move up through several levels of examination, before reaching the capital and palace examinations. Those who were successful in this exacting progression became scholar officials within the imperial system, with a close network between successful examinees and the scholar officials who examined them, also among candidates selected in the same year. It was, in many ways, a more influential community than that of the students and masters of the European university.

The Hanlin Academy could not be described as having the autonomy enjoyed by the university. However, it exercised a scholarly monopoly over the whole empire, as an integral part of the imperial bureaucracy.[8] Only those who mastered the standards of knowledge it set could serve as administrators of the empire. The Jesuits of the 17th century were impressed by the remarkable way in which scholarship was recognised and rewarded in China, and one admiring British visitor of the 19th century described China in the following way: "The whole of China may be said to resemble one vast university which is governed by the scholars who have been educated within its walls."[9]

Members of the Hanlin Academy, and of the wider scholar-official bureaucracy, did not enjoy the kinds of intellectual freedom, valued by scholars within the European university, yet they had a remarkable level of intellectual authority. This extended even to the responsibility of remonstrating with the Emperor himself, if his policies or actions were seen to be out of line with the truths of the classical texts. The absence of the tension between *imperium* and *sacerdotium* which Rashdall noted in Europe, meant a degree of integration between spiritual and political authority quite different from the European scene. In addition, the economic influence of the merchant city and of guilds of craftsmen, was relatively modest in China, where

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[7] *Ibid.* pp. 511-512.

[8] Adam Liu Yuan-ching, *The Hanlin Academy 1644-1850* (Connecticut: Archon Books, 1981).

[9] Quoted in Teng Ssu-yu, "Chinese Influence on the Western Examination System," in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol 7, No. 4, 1942, pp. 290.

medieval cities remained rather bureaucratic in composition.[10]

At the opposite pole to the Hanlin Academy, with its remarkable degree of intellectual authority and the scholarly domination it exercised throughout the empire, were the informal academies or *shuyuan*. These were locally based, often located in remote areas and originally associated with libraries and Buddhist monasteries. There scholar-officials who fell out of favour with the Emperor, or who did not wish to serve a new dynasty at a time of transition, gathered to pursue research and reflection in a community around a library. The content of study in these *shuyuan* tended to be broader than that represented in the canon for the imperial examinations, often including Buddhist, Daoist and other heterodox works. The patterns of study were largely informal, with one leading scholar often acting as *shanzhang* or master of the academy, and mentoring a large number of younger scholars in their own individual regime of study. These were often centres of lively debate, including criticism of the imperial government, also places were new knowledge could be debated and integrated into traditional canons.[11]

The autonomy enjoyed by these *shuyuan* was considerable, at certain periods of time, but in times of crisis or political change, the tendency was for imperial authority to seek to coopt them into the service of the examination system, or force them to close down, as potential centres of political dissent. It was thus a fragile autonomy, never benefitting from the protection which the papal charter provided to European universities, nor able to build an independent community of scholars which extended throughout the empire. Similarly the intellectual freedom they enjoyed at certain times was wide-ranging, and important to the revitalisation of scholarship, yet it was vulnerable to imperial suppression at other times.

The core values and patterns of the Chinese academy were thus quite distinct from those of the European university. Chinese scholars enjoyed a remarkable degree of intellectual authority and the capacity to dominate the empire in their role as officials, yet their institutions of independent scholarly learning had a somewhat fragile intellectual freedom and a fragmented local autonomy. Structurally, there was no clear dividing line between political power and scholarly knowledge, but rather an ongoing creative tension between an informal locus of power rooted in the integrity of the scholar qua scholar and a formal locus of power in the recognised status of the scholar qua official. Epistemologically, there was no single discipline, such as theology, which ruled all subordinate disciplines, integrating them into an agreed

[10] William Rowe, *Hankow: Commerce and Society in a Chinese City, 1796-1889* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984); William Rowe, *Hankow: Conflict and Community in a Chinese City, 1796-1895* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989). These two volumes provide a rich and textured challenge to the longstanding Weberian thesis about the bureaucratic nature of the Chinese city, yet they do not entirely negate it.

[11] John Meskill, *Academies in Ming China* (Tuscon, Arizona: University of Arizona Press, 1982).

moral and spiritual direction. Rather the four areas of knowledge, classics, history, philosophy and literature, all supported the scholars' task of self-cultivation and the life-time pursuit of virtue and spiritual fulfilment.

The role of scholar officials within the imperial government was to ensure that all scientific, technical and professional knowledge was developed in ways that served society's greater good, while pure scholars in the *shuyuan* exercised a critical scrutiny over the government from a distance, ensuring both the continuity and ongoing revitalisation of the canon. This set of patterns was successful in fostering a scientifically rich civilization, admired both in the region and from afar, up to the mid to late 18th century.[12]

The one point of confluence between the Chinese academy and the European university, as they took form in the 12th century, was the exclusion of women from formal participation in scholarship. It is a remarkable historical coincidence that this seems to have happened at the same period in both civilizations. In the case of Europe, David Noble has documented the process whereby women became excluded from intellectual life at the time universities were first established, due to the dominant role of a celibate clergy. This stood in striking contrast to an earlier period when women abbesses and scholars had played a visible role in church institutions.[13] The best example is, perhaps, Hildegard of Bingen, whose scholarly treatises on cosmology, ethics, and medicine, together with her extensive correspondence with several popes and monarchs on topics of scholarly and social importance, had put her in the mainstream of scholarship in the period shortly before the emergence of universities.[14]

In the case of China, the Tang dynasty, 698-907 C.E., had been a period of remarkable openness in Chinese culture. Buddhism, introduced earlier from India, had reinforced certain liberating Daoist ideas from China's own philosophical heritage, and women found themselves able to play an active role in religion and scholarship, particularly through the opportunities provided by Buddhist nunneries.[15] In the 12th century, however, the great neo-Confucian scholar, Zhu Xi, had taken a stand against Buddhism in the restoration of Confucian philosophy to prominence. This had included laying down clearly circumscribed duties and study tasks for women within the family, and strongly discouraging women from taking up religious or scholarly roles as Bud-

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[12] Joseph Needham, *The Shorter Science and Civilization in China*, edited by Colin Ronan, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).

[13] David Noble, *A World Without Women: The Christian Clerical Culture of Western Science* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1992).

[14] Peter Dronke, *Women Writers of the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 144-150.

[15] Kathryn Tsai, "The Chinese Buddhist Monastic Order for Women: The First Two Centuries," in Richard Guisso and Stanley Johannesen (eds.), *Women in China: Current Directions in Historical Scholarship* (Lewiston, New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1981), pp. 1-20.

dhist nuns.[16] Nevertheless, the patterns of knowledge that persisted within neo-Confucian philosophy were less alien to women than the increasing specialism and the embrace of value neutrality which came to characterise the European university's development. A revisionist historical approach to women's history in China has recently uncovered some of the ways in which women scholars subsequently developed active roles as itinerant teachers, and in the publication of poetry and scholarly works, in settings they organised for themselves, particularly in the prosperous region of southern Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces.[17]

In the 16th and 17th centuries, China was widely regarded as a model for Europe.[18] This was not only for the achievements of traditional science in areas such as agriculture and engineering, but also for its tolerance of religious difference, and the secular character of the state, as Gregory Blue has argued in chapter 20. Its porcelain, furniture, silk wallpaper, architectural styles and other aesthetic treasures were also exceedingly popular in Europe, as Swann has shown in chapter 19. Over this period, China enjoyed a favourable balance of trade with Europe importing silver for its porcelain, silks and teas, until the British turned this around through the Opium Trade.

The development of modern science and the industrial revolution in Europe was to change this situation fundamentally, leaving China in a position of backwardness and vulnerability by the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Many scholars have speculated over the question why modern science developed only in Europe, not in China or any other Eastern society, which had contributed significantly to the rich heritage of traditional science.[19] That question goes beyond the scope of this paper. Nevertheless, as we compare university and academy, it is important to remember that the European university has not always been regarded by historians as the leading institution in the scientific revolution. Alternative institutions, such as academies of science, also played an important role.

Still, the university became the intellectual institution most closely associated with the modernization process. By virtue of its perceived importance for successful modernization, it was transplanted to almost every society throughout the globe, no matter what had been their traditional approach to higher learning. This was done either through colonialism or by the proactive efforts of modernizers in coun-

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[16] Bettine Birge, "Chu Hsi and Women's Education," in W.T. de Bary and J. Chaffee, *Neo-Confucian Education: The Formative Stage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), pp. 325-367.

[17] Dorothy Koh, *Teachers of the Inner Chambers: Women and Culture in Seventeenth Century China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995)

[18] L.A. Maverick, *China: A Model for Europe* (San Antonio, Texas: Paul Anderson Co., 1946).

[19] In chapter 7 of this volume, Len Berggren emphasized the point that medieval Islam made active and important contributions to the sciences it had adopted from Greece, and described some of its fine scientific achievements.

tries such as China, Japan and Thailand.[20]

FOUR MODERN VERSIONS OF THE WESTERN UNIVERSITY

The patterns of the modern university that developed in Germany, France, the Soviet Union and the United States, set widely emulated models for both capitalist and socialist modernization processes. The focus in this third part of the narrative will be on these four cases, since these were the models that had the greatest impact on China over the 20th century, as its leaders sought first to join the capitalist world under the Nationalist regime, then to join the socialist world under a Communist system. The core values of autonomy and academic freedom were maintained and transformed in different ways in these four distinctive contexts.

The university of Berlin, founded by Wilhelm von Humboldt in 1810, had the greatest influence worldwide in the 19th and early 20th centuries.[21] Under this model, philosophy replaced theology as queen of the sciences, and academic freedom, both the freedom to teach, *Lehrfreiheit,* and the freedom to learn, *Lernfreiheit*, was maintained in a relatively autocratic state. University scholars dedicated themselves to the advancement of theoretical knowledge in the basic disciplines of the arts and sciences, and largely refrained from direct interference into the political life of the state.[22] While the traditional professions of medicine and law remained within the university, new applied professions such as engineering and commerce were developed in separate Technische Hochschulen which were closely allied with government and industry's efforts at economic modernization.[23]

The autonomy of the university was protected by the state on a principle similar to that of the Papal protection of the medieval university's autonomy, in the belief that the advancement of basic theoretical knowledge was of ultimate importance to the health of the state. Thus university scholars enjoyed considerable prestige and social influence as civil servants yet largely refrained from direct involvement in political or social action. The flowering of scholarship in 19th century Germany, in both the pure and applied sciences and such areas as literature, history, philosophy and the arts, attests to the strengths of this model. It produced kinds of knowledge that had practical application to

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[20] P. Altbach and V. Selvaratnam (eds.), *From Dependence to Autonomy: The Development of Asian Universities* (London: Kluwer, 1989)

[21] Wilhelm von Humboldt, "On the Spirit and the Organisational Framework of Intellectual Institutions," in *Minerva*, Vol. 8, April, 1970, pp. 242-250.

[22] Fritz Ringer, *The Decline of the German Mandarinate* (Cambridge, Mass.: 1969), especially chapters 1-3.

[23] Isolde Guenther, "A Study of the Evolution of the German Technische Hochschule," unpublished PhD thesis, University of London Institute of Education, 1972.

economic modernization tasks, yet also maintained space for any question, no matter how fundamental, to be raised and debated within the university.

However, the inability of the university to stand up to the rise of Hitler and his fascist agenda in the 20th century has raised deep questions about the adequacy of moral and spiritual knowledge in the university, which have been addressed by scholars such as Frederic Lilge, in *The Abuse of Learning*.[24] The Kantian distinction between fact and value freed scientific and social enquiry from the constraints of theology, and allowed philosophy to become an arbiter and integrator of all kinds of knowledge, while leaving the ethical directions of society open to democratic debate.[25] Weber's famous essay "Science as a Vocation" gives a vivid picture of both the possibilities and constraints of a university knowledge which was called on to be neutral in terms of spiritual, ethical or political direction.[26] The academic freedom of the university was somehow predicated on a value neutrality, which made it difficult to deal effectively with a challenge such as fascism. Weber's principled refusal to deal with the substance of moral or spiritual issues was a characteristic of academic freedom in the 19th century that distinguished it from the intellectual freedom identified earlier in the medieval university.

The evolution of modern universities in France took quite a different form than in Germany, with academic freedom becoming associated with a high degree of specialization of knowledge, and the scholar viewed primarily as a *spécialiste* or *scientifique*. Traditional universities were abolished around the time of the French Revolution, and the Napoleonic system which replaced them early in the 19th century was characterised by a rational distribution of traditional faculties of medicine, law, arts and sciences in each *académie* or academic district of the country, headed up by a university council in Paris which gave direction to the whole system. New fields of knowledge such as engineering, commerce and administration, necessary to the modernizing state, were placed in *grandes écoles* which had higher prestige than the universities and opened direct access into leading positions in the civil service.[27] The famous *concours,* for the selection of an elite of future civil servants in these institutions had been inspired by aspects of

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[24] Frederic Lilge, *The Abuse of Learning: The Failure of the German University* (New York: McMillan and Co., 1948).

[25] Paulsen, Frederich, *Immanuel Kant* (London: John Nimmo, 1902), describes Kant's achievement in this way: "This gives to knowledge what belongs to it - the entire world of phenomena for free investigation; it conserves, on the other hand, to faith the eternal right to the interpretation of life and the world from the standpoint of value." (pp. 6)

[26] Max Weber, "Science as a Vocation," in H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967).

[27] Frederick Artz, *The Development of Technical Education in France 1500-1850* (Cambridge Mass, and London, England: The Society for the History of Technology and MIT Press, 1968).

the Chinese civil service examinations.[28]

The strength of the French version of the modern university lay in its uncompromising rationalism and secularism, and the ways in which specialist knowledge in traditional disciplines and professions, as well as new applied fields, served the modernizing state. In terms of autonomy, the university has been described as *l'Etat enseignant*, claiming the right to regulate all aspects of education, not in subservience to successive governments but in loyalty to the long-term interests of the state.[29] Academic freedom was associated with the highly specialised nature of modern knowledge, and the demands of the scholar specialist, rather than with pure theoretical knowledge, as in the case of Germany.[30] Wang Yongquan has shown why this approach to modern higher education was appealing to China, both in the 1930s and in the 1950s.

The Soviet model of the university owed a great deal historically to the influence of both France and Germany, but it was the French patterns of increasing specialization of knowledge which came to characterise it most strongly.[31] After the revolution of 1917, a new socialist system of higher education was established, with a certain number of major universities under the ministry of higher education, including polytechnical universities similar to the French model of the *école polytechnique*, and comprehensive universities close to the model of the University of Berlin. In addition, a large number of specialised institutions in specific fields of engineering, industry, health and agriculture functioned under specialist ministries of the Soviet government. This system took the specialization of knowledge to an extreme, as it endeavoured to provide higher training for an increasing cohort of the population in ways that could fit precisely into the nation's macro economic development needs.[32]

Given the highly centralized and controlling nature of the Soviet state, one would assume that the values of autonomy and academic freedom could not survive in such a system. In fact, however, the leadership recognised the need for specialist knowledge at a very advanced level in the natural sciences and engineering, and provided a degree of freedom to the scientific community that far exceeded that enjoyed by ordinary citizens. This specialist knowledge was integrated into a whole by the Marxist-Leninist teachings, which also made a clear connection between scientific analysis and the moral political directions of state and society. The Marxist dialectic provided ground, in theory at

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[28] Teng Ssu-yu, "Chinese Influence on the Western Examination System".

[29] Pascale Gruson, *L'Etat Enseignant* (Paris: Mouton, 1978).

[30] *Ibid.* pp. 91.

[31] William Johnson, *Russia's Educational Heritage* (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Carnegie Press, 1950), especially chapter 3.

[32] Nicholas Dewitt, *Soviet Professional Manpower* (Washington, D.C.: National Science Foundation, 1955); Alexander Korol, *Soviet Education for Science and Technology* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, and the Technology Press of MIT, 1957).

least, for unitary moral and political directions for state and society. Its role had some similarities to that of theology as queen of the sciences in the medieval university, though it turned out to be more arbitrary and repressive.[33] In retrospect, the collapse of the Soviet state has shown how tenuous were the links between fact and value, and how much outright repression on the part of the state they sanctioned.

The final case for reflection is the American university model, which had its origins in the patterns of the college, inherited from Britain and closely linked to Protestant Christianity. The early American colleges were small communities of scholars, dominated by young men planning to enter the ministry in local Protestant churches. There was little science or professionalism, rather a focus on general knowledge in the arts and in practical subjects, as needed for service to the local community, with the moral directions set by Christian theology.[34] The development of science in 19th century America, and the strong influence of the German university model upon the emergence of graduate schools, brought about important changes in the American university. A system emerged, whereby undergraduate education remained broad and liberal, with efforts to ensure that all students were exposed to the arts, social sciences and natural sciences, whereas graduate education integrated teaching and research in basic sciences, humanities and the traditional and new professions.

The colleges had had little autonomy, as their governing boards were dominated by members of the local religious and political community. However, universities began to gain autonomy in the late 19th century, with the development of basic scientific research and the emergence of specialist disciplines. Still, the struggle for academic freedom, in the face of strong religious opposition to the teaching of controversial topics, such as evolutionary theory, presented a remarkable contrast to Germany, where academic freedom flowered under a relatively autocratic government. This situation may also have been linked to the dominance of a philosophy of pragmatism and problem solving, in both social and natural science, reflected in the work of philosophers such as Charles Peirce, William James and John Dewey. This made the dualism between theory and practice, fact and value, that shaped the European university, less acceptable in America.[35]

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[33]L.G. Churchward, *The Soviet Intelligentsia* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973).

[34]Richard Hofstadter and Walter Metzger, *The Development of Academic Freedom in the United States* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1955)

[35]Joseph Ben-David, *American Higher Education: Directions Old and New* (New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., 1972), pp. 75 gives the following explanation: "The assumption...that it was not the task of the college to provide moral guidance to its students, and that the students had to be treated as responsible adults and left to their own devices did not fit the American situation. it did not quite fit the situation in Germany and the other countries in Europe from which the idea was copied either, but it fitted the United States situation least of all. The political and moral order of American society, as was shown by de Tocqueville, was based on the moral authority of local communities and religious groups, and not on the ideal of a self-directing moral personality, or the authority of a national elite serving as a model for

American scholars were struggling for a broader intellectual freedom, one might argue, rather than the academic freedom associated with pure theory and highly specialised disciplines of knowledge in the European context. They could not easily detach themselves from pressing political and social concerns nor abandon the forms of integrated knowledge that had characterised the early colleges. For this reason, the American university model had a certain attraction for Chinese scholars, given core values of scholarship which never tolerated narrow specialism and viewed all knowledge as infused with values and judged by its effectiveness in practice.[36] This point comes across in Wang Yongquan's reflections on the concept of general education in Chinese universities in chapter 24.

There are striking commonalities among these four versions of the Western university, rooted in the core values of the medieval university they inherited. There are also important differences, which affected greatly the ways in which they interacted with Chinese higher education over the twentieth century. One point which all four shared in common was the fact that women had been largely excluded from their development up to the 19th century. The approaches to knowledge and institutional organisation had come from a predominantly male world of science and scholarship. At the time of the university's greatest triumph, when it was being transplanted to all parts of the world as an essential agent of modernization, women were just beginning their long struggle, first for equal access to the university as students, then as professors.[37]

Once accepted within the university, women began to look at structures of knowledge and patterns of governance, and realise how alien these were to their ways of knowing and interaction.[38] Scholars such as Sandra Harding[39] and Carolyn Merchant[40] have critiqued the linear and mechanistic character of its rationalism; its espousal of a dualism of facts and values as a solution to the need for freedom of scientific inquiry; its concern with objectivity and the resultant isolation of the subject from the objects under scrutiny; its embrace of metaphors drawn from the mining of natural resources and subjugation of "irrational" forces in nature. Recently these concerns have been given wider attention in a critical literature on universities by scholars such as Bruce

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everybody."

[36] David L. Hall and Roger Ames, *The Democracy of the Dead: Dewey, Confucius and the Hope for Democracy in China* (Chicago and Lasalle, Illinois: Open Court, 1999).

[37] Suzanne Stiver Lie and Virginnia O'Leary, *Storming the Tower: Women in the Academic World* (New York: Kogan Page, 1990)

[38] M.F. Belenky, B.M. Clinchy, N.R. Goldberger, and J.M. Tarule, *Women's Ways of Knowing* (New York: Basic Books, 1986)

[39] Sandra Harding, *The Science Question in Feminism* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1986); Sandra Harding, *Feminist Epistemology: Social Science Issues* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1987); Sandra Harding, *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? Thinking from Women's Lives* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1991)

[40] Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1980)

Wilshire[41] and Mark Schwehn,[42] who have focused on the inadequacy of university's epistemological patterns and institutional structures for dealing effectively with moral and spiritual questions.

In the opening chapter of this book, Hans Weiler has identified a series of major challenges to entrenched patterns of knowledge in the Western university, and this narrative has given some insight into the ways in which they had become entrenched, and the deep roots that have rendered them resistant to change. Clearly, they played a vital role in the process of modernization, yet they have made it difficult for the university to deal effectively with some of the important cultural, spiritual and environmental challenges arising in that process.

This narrative may set a context for us to see the university as a product of its time and civilization, and appreciate some of the rich possibilities coming from other civilizations, for transforming universities in the 21st century. Various contributors to this volume have opened up a wide range of reflections on this subject: Ji Shuli, in his depiction of Sinic science, Al Zeera in her alternative Islamic paradigm for the social sciences and Kirkness and Barnhardt, in their comments on the heritage of spiritual understanding which First Nations young people would like to bring to the university community.

The narrative now continues with an overview of the development of modern universities in China, showing some of the conflicts that arose as distinctive Western versions of the university were transplanted into a Chinese cultural and epistemological environment. Only toward the end of a century of experimentation and change have universities emerged that are able to combine features of China's own cultural heritage with patterns introduced from abroad in institutions that may have important contributions to offer to the global dialogue on higher education in the 21st Century.

MODERN CHINESE UNIVERSITIES IN A CENTURY OF CONFLICT

Modern universities emerged in China under conditions entirely different from those prevailing in Europe and North America early in the 20th century. A long and proud tradition of academies and civil service examinations was abolished in 1905, as the last imperial dynasty, the Qing, faced collapse and the revolution of 1911 became imminent. The decision to create universities along Western lines was a matter of national survival, in times of great difficulty. Many of those leading this development had qualified for political or educational office within the

[41]Bruce Wilshire, *The Moral Collapse of the University: Professionalism, Purity and Alienation (*Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), pp. xxiii.

[42]Mark Schwehn, *Exiles from Eden: Religion and the Academic Life in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) pp. 40

traditional imperial knowledge system. In contrast to the atmosphere of confidence and even triumphalism that prevailed in Europe of the time, their mood was close to despair, as they saw China falling farther and farther behind the Western powers.

Several of the progressive Chinese intellectuals who led China's early universities were active feminists. Some had come to believe that since Chinese women had suffered humiliation for centuries in traditional Chinese society they would best be able to understand the sense of humiliation and powerlessness they experienced in a world dominated by imperialist powers. One wrote the first history of Chinese women, which was published in 1928.[43] Women thus entered modern Chinese universities as students under circumstances where they faced less opposition than their Western sisters had done. One might also argue that they found themselves in a less alien environment, since the patterns of knowledge associated with modern science and industrialism, introduced to the Chinese context from abroad, had not penetrated deeply into the culture. The persistence of holistic and integrative patterns of knowledge from China's academy tradition in the emerging modern universities made them places where men and women together addressed the intellectual, moral and spiritual tasks of developing new forms of knowledge that could contribute to modernization and national salvation.

We have noted earlier that four versions of the Western university had the most significant influence in modern China - the German, French, American and Soviet - at different time periods. This brief overview will focus on Peking University, showing how it was shaped first on a German model, then modified through influences coming from the progressive traditions of the *shuyuan*, as well as the American university model. Our narrative will begin with Cai Yuanpei, a kind of modern Chinese counterpart to Giulio Aleni, in his comprehensive knowledge of the academic philosophy and institutional patterns of the German and French university traditions.

Born in 1868, Cai Yuanpei gained a thorough grounding in Chinese classical scholarship through study in a traditional *shuyuan*. He also took the civil service examinations, achieving the highest honour as Hanlin Academician in 1892.[44] His first guide and mentor in Western academic traditions was a former Chinese Jesuit, Ma Xiangbo, who taught him Latin and philosophy while he was a teacher in the Nanyang Public Institute, one of China's first modern higher institutions.[45]

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[43] Chen Dongyuan, *Zhongguo funu shenghuoshi* [A History of Women's Lives] (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1928). See pp. 366-68 for discussion of an article written by Chen Duxiu, in *Xin Qingnian* [New Youth] in 1916, where he made the point that Chinese women could best understand the sense of oppression that Chinese men then felt in the face of global imperialist pressures.

[44] William Duiker, *Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei: Educator of Modern China* (University Park and London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1977)

[45] Lu Yongling, "Standing Between Two Worlds: Ma Xiangbo's Educational Thought and Practice,"

Subsequently, he spent two lengthy periods in Europe, from 1906 to 1911, and from 1912 to 1917, studying in the universities of Leipzig and Berlin, also helping to foster a Sino-French university in Lyons, France.[46]

His influence on Chinese higher education can be seen most strikingly in the ways in which he reformed Peking University between 1917 and 1923, when he became its Chancellor on return from his second stay in Europe. Convinced that autonomy and academic freedom, close to the German model, were essential to the development of modern scholarship in China, he reorganized the university's style of government to ensure that professors rather than government officials should rule the university [*jiaoshou zhixiao*]. He appointed scholars of the highest standing who represented many divergent points of view, in order to encourage lively debates. The phrase he used for academic freedom [*jianrong bingbao*], conveyed a sense of all ideas being tolerated and allowed to compete for attention.[47] It was actually closer to the concept of intellectual freedom, as one can see from the following self-written inscription from his memoirs.

> I am open to all scholarly theories and incorporate learning from diverse sources, according to the general standards of the universities of all nations and abiding by the principles of freedom of thought. Regardless of which school of thought, if their words are logical, those who maintain them have reason, and they have not yet met the fate of being naturally eliminated, and even if they are mutually contradictory, I will still allow them to develop freely.[48]

Along the lines of the German tradition, Cai adhered to the notion that pure theoretical knowledge should be separated from practical and applied fields. He reformed the university curriculum, moving engineering and law to other specialist institutions, and focusing on basic disciplines in the arts and sciences. Philosophy and psychology were to be the integrating disciplines which all students should be exposed to. Deeply concerned with moral issues, Cai saw them as intimately connected to aesthetics, rather than to either state Confucian beliefs or other religions. He believed that moral direction for society

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in R. Hayhoe and Y. Lu (eds.), *Ma Xiangbo and the Mind of Modern China* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1996), pp. 158-159.

[46] R. Hayhoe, "Catholics and Socialists: The Paradox of French Educational Interaction with China," in R. Hayhoe and M. Bastid (eds.), *China's Education and the Industrialised World: Studies in Cultural Transfer* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, Toronto: OISE Press, 1987), pp. 109-112.

[47] Document 58, "Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei's policy for Peking University," in John Fairbank and Teng Ssu-yu, *China's Response to the West: A Documentary Survey 1839-1923* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press,) pp. 238-239.

[48] Wen Rumin, Zhao Weimin (eds), *Peking University* (Beijing: Peking University press, 1998), pp. 27.

would come out of intellectual debates that spurred both self cultivation and social advancement, in a broad Confucian mode. The spirit could be nurtured through a revitalisation of aesthetics, from literature to the visual arts. An agnostic himself, Cai favoured tolerance of all religions, and had great respect for his Roman Catholic mentor, Ma Xiangbo, who was known for opposing any concept of a state religion.[49]

Cai's commitment to the advancement of pure theoretical knowledge in the university, following the German model, meant that he encouraged some distance from political activism on the part of university scholars. When the lively debates he had fostered among scholars of different persuasions erupted in the May 4th movement of 1919, he supported the commitment to revolutionary change in the cultural and literary areas, but opposed political activism on the part of students. Deeply troubled by what he perceived as the university's direct involvement in politics, he resigned his chancellorship in protest, asking the students to refrain from political action and commit their efforts to longer term social development.[50]

Cai had been a strong advocate of women's education from an early period. In 1902, he had founded a patriotic girls' school, and as minister of education in 1912, he had promoted coeducation and improvements for women's education. In 1920, he opened Peking University to women students, the first government supported university to do so in modern China. When he became minister of education again in 1928, he gave priority to removing barriers to women's education at all levels.[51]

Cai was also a great admirer of the French model of the university, seeing its leadership over the whole education system as important in protecting schools from political manipulation.[52] As Minister of Education, he tried to introduce the French pattern of university districts, with all schools in each major district under the guidance of the university.[53] When this failed, he established the Academica Sinica as a high level and independent centre of scholarship for the whole country. Earlier, in the 1920s, he had helped to create the *Université Sino-française* with campuses in Beijing, Shanghai and Lyons, France.

As Chinese universities developed during the 1920s and 1930s, the other major influence was the American. One of the influential scholars whom Cai appointed as Dean of Arts at Peking University in the mid 1920s was Hu Shi, an American educated philosopher. He believed that the scholarly community should dedicate itself to identi-

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[49]Ma Xiangbo, "Should a Head of State preside over religious ceremonies?" in R. Hayhoe and Y. Lu, *Ma Xiangbo and the Mind of Modern China*, pp. 241-252.

[50]Cai Yuanpei, *Cai Yuanpei xuanji* [Selected writings of Cai Yuanpei] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959), pp. 98. See also Duiker, *Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei: Educator of Modern China*, pp. 69-74.

[51]Duiker, *Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei: Educator of Modern China*, pp. 10, 64-5

[52]R. Hayhoe, "Catholics and Socialists", pp. 109-112.

[53]Allen Linden, "Politics and Education in Nationalist China: The Case of the University Council 1927-1928," in *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 4, August, 1968.

fying and solving problems in the economic, social and political spheres, and thus serve China's long-term development. Moral and political direction would arise from broad social debate, and could not be pre-determined, either by a revival of state Confucian values or by a modern "ism" such as Marxism.[54]

During his years as Dean of arts at Peking University, Hu Shi supported Cai in the development of a research institute for national studies, which was dedicated to a critical interpretation and assessment of China's classical literature, philosophy, history and canons. Students and professors worked independently, according to their own timetable, in the spirit of the traditional *shuyuan*. Beijing's other major university, Qinghua, invited Hu to design a similar research institute, where four of China's greatest scholars in history and humanities were appointed as tutors. The focus of their work was on an integration of scholarship and ethics, in developing a critical understanding of China's classical knowledge, and applying this to contemporary issues in social and political development.[55]

Among the new universities and colleges established between the 1911 revolution and the Japanese invasion in 1937, there were public and private institutions, national, provincial and local, over 100, with a wide variety of models and types. The political chaos of the warlord years, and the limited capability of the Nationalist government established in 1928, meant that the main constraints on their development were economic. Generally, American influences tended to be strong, but there were significant European influences as well. Of particular interest are the 16 Christian universities, developed by missionaries from North America, which were involved in social development projects, agricultural renewal, medicine, education and even famine relief, in some cases.[56] As early as 1928, a Chinese woman who held a doctorate in chemistry from the United States, Dr. Wu Yifang, became president of one of these, Ginling Women's College.

Generally these institutions shared the spirit of liberalism first fostered at Peking University by Cai Yuanpei and further developed by Hu Shi and many other American returned scholars. The conflict between scholarship and political activism which had so concerned Cai at Peking University, gradually found resolution in an increasing emphasis on applied knowledge that could make a practical difference in social,

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[54] Hu Shih, "The Significance of the New Thought," Document 62 in Fairbank and Teng, *China's Response to the West*, pp. 252-5. See also Jerome Grieder, *Hu Shih and the Chinese Renaissance* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970)

[55] Ding Gang, "The Shuyuan and the Development of Chinese universities in the early twentieth century," in R. Hayhoe and J. Pan (eds.) *East-West Dialogue in Knowledge and Higher Education* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1996), pp. 218-244. Hu Shih was later to serve as Ambassador of the Republic of China to the United States, from 1938 to 1942, and as the last president of Peking University under the Nationalist regime, after it returned to Beijing in 1945..

[56] Jessie Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges* (Ithaca, New York and London: Cornell University Press, 1971).

economic and even political terms.[57]

During the Sino-Japanese War, from 1937 to 1945, Peking University, Qinghua University and the private Nankai University were combined to form the Southwest Associated University (*Lianda*), and continued to function throughout the war in the remote southwestern city of Kunming, close to Burma. The vitality and outstanding scholarly standards of this institution, functioning under the most difficult of circumstances, illustrates the enormous potential of a melding of values from the German and American academic traditions with aspects of the Chinese traditional *shuyuan*. John Israel's recent history of *Lianda*, provides copious information on the richness of its intellectual life, as Chinese traditional literature, history and philosophy was rethought in terms of the dilemmas of modernization and war, as Western style social sciences were adapted to Chinese social and economic realities, and as the scholarly community took up the role of both academy and university. The quality of research in basic sciences, under extremely difficult and restrictive circumstances, was also remarkable. Two later Nobel prize winning physicists had their initial university education there. In addition, considerable work was also done in engineering, including a focus on aeronautical engineering needed for the war-time effort.

Physical distance from the war-time capital of Chongqing, and the protection of a provincial governor who was not easily controlled by the Nationalist Party, assured the university considerable autonomy. The focus on basic research in theoretical fields gradually shifted to a greater and greater concern to do teaching and research related to practical issues of national development and even national survival. In a moving way, Israel charts the shift from a pure liberal approach to knowledge, that might be associated with academic freedom, to a more contextualized one that fits better with the concept of intellectual freedom. "In sharing poverty for the sake of education, faculty members and students felt drawn to each other, and a sense of community emerged. It was more akin to that of the traditional *shuyuan*, than to that of the status-conscious universities of pre-war days. The existence of a 'vital, upbeat, creative spiritual life' was a matter of pride and satisfaction for those who survived the mid-war Lianda years."[58] The combined strength of progressive Chinese, European and American scholarly values made this an oasis of cultural, social and scientific thought within a desert of war-time devastation and political-economic collapse.

The political and economic crises that succeeded the Sino-Japanese War was such that a gradualist approach to social and economic change gave way to all out revolution under the leadership

[57]Yeh Wen-hsin, *The Alienated Academy: Culture and Politics in Republican China 1919-1937* (Cambridge, Mass: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1990) gives a detailed and contoured picture of the development of universities over this period.

[58]John Israel, *Lianda: A Chinese University in War and Revolution* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1998), pp. 331-2.

of the Communist Party. In some ways, it was no surprise that Marxism-Leninism should have gained wider and wider support in China with China's urgent concern to be able to stand up to external aggression. There was also a real appeal in its confident assertion of a set of moral-political directions made certain by a unified modern science.

The establishment of a People's Republic that could finally stand up in the world, in 1949, was a moment of great importance. Many Chinese university scholars had welcomed the revolution, hoping universities could contribute to a rapid socialist modernization process, while still maintaining the role of critical reflection necessary to an authentic modern cultural identity. Among them was Ma Xulun, a philosopher and the first minister of higher education after 1949, Ma Yinchu, a distinguished economist and graduate of Columbia University, who was appointed president of Peking University, and Liang Shuming, sometimes called the last Confucian for his tenacious belief in Confucian self-strengthening.[59] Given that Mao himself had been a great admirer of the *shuyuan* tradition[60], they believed the best features of Western patterns introduced over recent decades could be combined with progressive features of the *shuyuan* to serve China's socialist construction.

Tragically, however, the opposite occurred, triggering a set of conflicts that reverberated up to the 1980s. In their hurry to achieve socialist construction within a decade, the new leadership invited Soviet experts to mastermind a total overhaul of the higher education system along Soviet lines.[61] This resulted in a huge number of highly specialist institutions under specific ministries, a small number of so-called comprehensive universities, which had departments only in basic arts and sciences, and polytechnical universities mainly focusing on the engineering sciences. All of the universities which had evolved over the first half of the century were thoroughly restructured to fit into the new system-wide configuration. The system was, in turn, integrated into a process of nation-wide manpower planning for five year periods.[62]

The intellectual authority and monopoly of knowledge-power that had characterised the traditional civil service examination system now came to shape the new socialist system. People's University was created as "our very first modern university" intended to lead the new system by educating "the cadres who will serve the people," according to Liu Shaoqi, China's state premier. Under it were institutes of political science and law in each region which were described as "of the

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[59] Guy Alitto, *The Last Confucian: Liang Shu-ming and the Chinese Dilemma of Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), especially pp. 322-324.

[60] Ding Gang, "The Shuyuan and the Development of Chinese Universities," pp.235-237.

[61] Deborah Kaple, "Soviet Advisors in China in the 1950s," in Odd Arne Westad (ed.), *Brothers in Arms: The Rise and Fall of the Sino-Soviet Alliance 1945-1963* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Centre Press and Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998, pp. 117-140.

[62] R. Hayhoe, *China's Universities 1895-1995: A Century of Cultural Conflict* (Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre, The University of Hong Kong), 1999, chapter 4.

quality of a political training class." Supporting People's University at the regional level, their task was "to destroy China's old ideology and old organizations."[63] Liu was the author of a highly influential volume entitled "How to be a good Communist," which laid out a program of self-cultivation for loyal Party members in terms replete with classical references that emphasized discipline and obedience.[64]

People's University was set up with only eight departments: finance, trade, economic planning, cooperatives, factory management, law, diplomacy, and Russian. It was placed at the apex of the new higher education system, with the task of leading the training of cadres to manage the whole socialist system. The sciences and other fields were to be left to subordinate institutions, since Liu had proclaimed that bourgeois science was not really different from proletarian science in his speech at the university's opening on October 3, 1950.[65] In effect, People's University was to become a new style Hanlin academy, arbitrating the canons of ideologically correct knowledge, and dominating the teaching of political theory and all other social science fields. It appeared that two deep concerns could be met at the same time in this Soviet model of modern higher education - to catch up with the developed world through training specialists for rapid modernization, and to have a commonly shared set of moral-political directions which could replace traditional Confucianism. In terms of the first concern, remarkable achievements in economic development were made in the 1950s, as a modern higher education system was finally spread throughout China's hinterland, in a realisation of Cai Yuanpei's dream of French style university districts. There was also a growing representation of women in higher education, including a relatively large ratio in the basic and engineering sciences, which dominated enrolments.

In terms of the second concern, however, the apparent link between scientific analysis and moral-political development provided by Marxism-Leninism soon gave way to destructive intra-party power struggles, in which Mao's radical vision for social transformation came into direct conflict with Liu's Soviet-oriented approach. The conflicts that ensued in the educational revolutions of 1958 and 1966 were deeply destructive, especially for the intellectual community. In certain ways, the Soviet style university of the 1950s had values and patterns that harked back to the medieval university of Europe. Marxism-Leninism had replaced theology as queen of the sciences, proclaiming its authority on the basis of a unified science of history. Liu

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[63]Liu Shaoqi, "Speech at the Ceremonial Meeting for the School-Opening of Chinese People's University, " in Union Research Institute (ed.), *Collected Works of Liu Shao-ch'i 1945-1957* (Kowloon: Union Research Institute, 1969), pp. 235, 236.

[64]Liu Shaoqi, "How to be a good Communist," in Union Research Institute (ed.), *Collected Works of Liu Shao-ch'i Before 1944* (Kowloon: Union Research Institute, 1969), First version, 1939, pp. 151-218, Revised version, 1964, pp. 219-283.

[65]Liu Shaoqi, "Speech at the Ceremonial Meeting for the School-Opening of People's University," pp. 237-238.

Shaoqi's confidence in this "truth" had a similar ring to that of Aleni in proclaiming the truth of theology in the early 1600s. All other knowledge areas were clearly subordinate to its authority, giving it a position parallel to state Confucianism which had been used by a succession of emperors for the suppression of dissent.

Sadly, Marxism Leninism did not have the flexibility of theology, nor could it tolerate open debate. Thus intense conflict escalated between those in the party following the Soviet road and radicals supporting Mao's vision for China's socialist development. The conflicts could not be contained within reasoned debate, either in or outside the new university system, but broke into open and violent conflict, culminating in the Cultural Revolution of 1966. The dream of clear moral and political directions, and a prosperous and unified modern socialist state, failed. It was a dream emanating from a science fundamentally rooted in the European enlightenment, and linked back in certain ways to the earlier role of theology in European scholarly thought.

Only in the early 1980s, when Deng Xiaoping declared China would open its doors to modernisation, the world and the future, could the rich experience of modern university building in the pre-1949 period be recovered, and reforms be undertaken that have allowed diverse influences from the outside to interact with new developments in China's higher education. It is also only most recently that scholars within China have been able to join their voices with a large Chinese diaspora which has undertaken to introduce a "Confucian project" in dialogue with western critics of the Enlightenment project such as Juergen Habermas.[66]

One event in the two decades since China opened up to the world has demonstrated most vividly the degree to which the rich legacy of a century of experimentation with European and American models of the university has remained alive, in spite of determined efforts to destroy both ideology and organisations in the early 1950s. That is the famous democracy movement of 1989, which culminated in the tragic events of June 4th. It is not surprising that the movement started at Peking University, where intellectual freedom had been institutionalized 70 years earlier by Cai Yuanpei, and where the May 4th tradition of cultural transformation and social advancement through critical debate and the tolerance of all views had never been wiped out.

There are many other evidences in the rich intellectual life of contemporary China of the heritage of a melding of China's progressive traditions of the *shuyuan* with dimensions of the European and American university model developed over the century. Most recently, there has been a strong movement towards a restructuring of the Chinese university through large-scale mergers, that would integrate the various fields of knowledge, which had been separated under the Soviet system.

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[66]Tu Wei-ming, "Toward a Third Epoch of Confucian Humanism," in Tu Wei-ming, *The Way, Learning and Politics* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), pp. 141-159.

Specialist medical and agricultural universities are being merged with comprehensive universities, sometimes in a reversal of history, as narrowly specialist institutions that had been separated out from universities in the Soviet-inspired reorganisation of 1952, are reunited into their original intellectual home.[67] Qinghua University, designated a polytechnical university in 1952 and deprived of its departments in humanities and social sciences, has now re-established a centre for integrated studies of Chinese philosophy and thought which aspires to recapture its past glory, while Peking University has regained its lost faculty of medicine.

To what degree do China's universities now enjoy autonomy, and intellectual freedom, such that they may be a vehicle for communicating China's rich civilizational heritage to the global community? There are certainly continuing constraints, related to the political system, yet the celebration of the 100th anniversary of Peking University on May 4th, 1998, signified the new status enjoyed by major universities within China and in the global community. The event was held in the Great Hall of the People and over 100 university presidents from major universities around the world came to pay their respects. This was the first time in modern history that the whole of the Chinese Communist leadership, every member of the Party's influential Politbureau, sat through a ceremony in honour of its premier intellectual institution. In the speech given by Communist Party Chairman Jiang Zemin for this occasion, the central phrase was "Science and Education to Revitalize the Nation," and the leading role of major universities in China's next phase of development was clearly acknowledged.

The other point that is noteworthy in contemporary Chinese higher education is that women now participate more fully than ever before, with 48% of university teachers under 30 being women and 36% of all teaching staff.[68] Women's more integrative and cross-disciplinary approaches to knowledge are increasingly finding their way into curriculum development, and women are in the forefront of new approaches to disciplines such as sociology and anthropology.[69] Also the number of women scholars in fields such as basic sciences and engineering are relatively high, by global standards, due to the fact that women were strongly encouraged to enter these fields in the 1950s. As the Chinese university enters into more and more extensive dialogue with universities in the global arena, it is in a situation where women as well as men are active interlocutors.

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[67]For a few examples, see R. Hayhoe *China's Universities 1895-1995*, pp. 259-260.

[68]Department of Planning and Development, Ministry of Education, People's Republic of China, *Educational Statistics Yearbook of China 1998* (Beijing: People's Education Press, 1999), pp. 32

[69]Christina Gilmartin, G. Hershatter. L. Rofel and T. White (eds.) *Engendering China* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1994).

LESSONS FROM THE CHINESE ACADEMY

This chapter has traced the first contacts between the European university and the Chinese academy, then sketched out contrasts between the institutional patterns, organisation of knowledge and core values in the two traditions. It has then outlined the ways in which the European university transformed itself in four differing modern contexts, while still maintaining core values of autonomy and academic freedom. Despite the remarkable successes of the modernization process, the university's tendency towards increasing specialisation, a dualism in epistemology and value neutrality has given it certain limitations in dealing with the moral and political dilemmas of the 20th century. The ways in which the four Western versions of the university exerted their influence on modern Chinese higher draws attention to the issue of values and the relationship between moral-political, spiritual and academic knowledge. The simple conclusion which I would like to try and elaborate here, is that there are lessons we may be able to learn from elements in the epistemology and institutional patterns of the Chinese academy that have persisted or re-asserted themselves in modern Chinese universities which could enhance the capacity of the university to deal responsibly with the challenges of the 21st century.

With the increasing plethora of information that is part of the internet age, and the remarkable possibilities of modern scientific knowledge in fields such as genetics to transform fundamental elements of human life, the choices open to human decision multiply. What is the university's role in moral decision-making? How can it help us to judge what is of ultimate value in the masses of information readily available? Can it offer guidance for the pursuit of spiritual development amid a world whose material structures and patterns are increasingly transparent? There is much in Christianity and Judaism, also in Western philosophy, which addresses these questions, yet the epistemological orientation and institutional patterns of the university have not always facilitated this type of inquiry. It may thus be worthwhile considering how China's traditions of the academy and its philosophy of Confucianism may enrich the university and enhance its capacity in this area. The focus in this chapter has been on China, but the traditions of other Eastern civilizations also have much to contribute, as we have seen earlier in this volume.

The American philosopher, Robert Cummings Neville, recently noted that "for the first time in history it is possible for any self-conscious participant in a world-wide philosophical culture to speak of Confucianism in the same breath with Platonism and Aristotelianism, phenomenology and analytic philosophy as a philosophy from which to learn and perhaps to inhabit and extend." The entry of Confucianism into the world culture of philosophy is an historic moment, made possible by scholars from the Chinese diaspora such as Tu Weiming. Neville notes that "world society will never be civilized until

a genuine world culture is developed that respects the diverse cultures and harmonizes them to make crucial response to such issues as care for the environment, distributive justice and the meaning of human life in the cosmos."[70]

While noting that social sciences in the West have tended to be "lame and stumbling over normative matters," Neville suggests the possible redemptive value of Confucianism. He calls attention to "a profound Confucian tradition of more than two millennia that reflects on the differences between civilized and barbaric rituals, between better norms for personal and social life and worse ones, between better conventions and worse ones."[71] He notes how this may overcome the dualism that has tended to be prevalent in Western social sciences: "Western ethical theory has tended to focus on individual acts and the principles or goals of such actions; Western political and social theory has focused on actual historical institutions and social structures. Ritual conventions lie between these two and embrace much of what is normative in both."[72] "A new Confucian theory of ritual convention as constitutive of humanity in both personal and social dimensions provides an even more effective approach to norms in an age of pluralism, social disintegration and conflict."[73]

The leading figure in introducing Confucianism to a wider global community over recent decades, Tu Wei-ming, has depicted the dilemma of the Enlightenment in terms of a set of values of instrumental rationality, individual liberty, calculated self-interest, material progress and rights consciousness. He suggests that these have made possible remarkable prosperity yet, at the same time, disturbing social and environmental problems. In a recent volume on Confucianism and the environment, Tu gives the following succinct summary of the process and relationships of learning within Confucianism, which he views as a response to this dilemma of the Enlightenment:

> The Confucian way is a way of learning to be human. Learning to be human in the Confucian spirit is to engage oneself in a ceaseless, unending process of creative self-transformation..... The purpose of learning is always understood as being for the sake of the self, but the self is never a isolated individual (an island); rather it is a centre of relationships (a flowing stream). The self as a centre of relationships is a dynamic open system rather than a closed static structure. Therefore, mutuality between self and community, harmony between human species and nature, and continuous communication with Heaven are de-

[70]Robert Cummings Neville, "Tu Wei-ming's Neo-Confucianism," in the *International Review of Chinese Philosophy and Religion*, Vol. 5, 2000, pp. 163, 169.
[71]*Ibid.* pp. 187.
[72]*Ibid.* pp. 188.
[73]*Ibid.* pp. 190.

fining characteristics and supreme values in the human project.[74]

These values of connectedness and integration have long been associated with women's ways of knowing on both sides of the globe. It may therefore be appropriate to conclude with some thoughts from a distinguished woman sociologist, living and working in China, who brings a uniquely feminist angle to the view of how Chinese scholarship may contribute to the global community:

> The birth and development of women's studies itself is a kind of "revolution" against traditional scolasticism....Women's sensitivity, sympathetic nature and excellence in listening attentively to others' opinions, their desire to avoid and resolve conflict as well as their intuition about and experience in the world, the ease with which women connect to one another, their courage in earnestly practising what they advocate all bring a special vigour to women's studies….. Contemporary Western sociology, with its advocacy of precise science and technology and dry mathematics, can offer scant help to women's studies. Anthropology, by contrast, with its attention to cultural difference, its in-depth inquiry into the rich and varied lives of different peoples, and its simple and unadorned theory, methods and results, is worthy of study and use…..[75]

What is the main lesson to be learned from the Chinese academy? Above all else, I would suggest, it is a restoration of a sense of connectedness, between theory and practice, fact and value, individual and community, institution and political-social-natural context. The core values of the European university, autonomy and academic freedom, were of crucial importance to the emergence of modern science and industrialism. Yet the institutionalisation of these separations has given Western universities great difficulty in dealing with modern crises in value, from fascism to environmental destruction. By contrast the Chinese world of scholarship, both in terms of institutional structure and epistemological tendency, has been more fluid, less absolute in the lines it drew to separate itself from the natural environment, the political system, and religious authority. This may have made it more vulnerable to conflict, as seen in the modern history of Chinese universities, yet it has also been less prepared to relinquish moral, political and spiritual responsibility and engagement. Its values of intellectual freedom and a kind of scholarly localism, even fragmentation, linked it closely to local social, political and spiritual struggles. It could not rise

[74]Tu Wei-ming, "Beyond the Enlightenment Mentality," in Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Berthrong, *Confucianism and Ecology: The Interrelation of Heaven, Earth and Humans* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Centre for the Study of World Religions, distributed by Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 13-14.

[75]*Ibid.* pp. 78.

above, but had to be immanent in its environment.

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