



THE OUTCOMES OF HIGHER EDUCATION

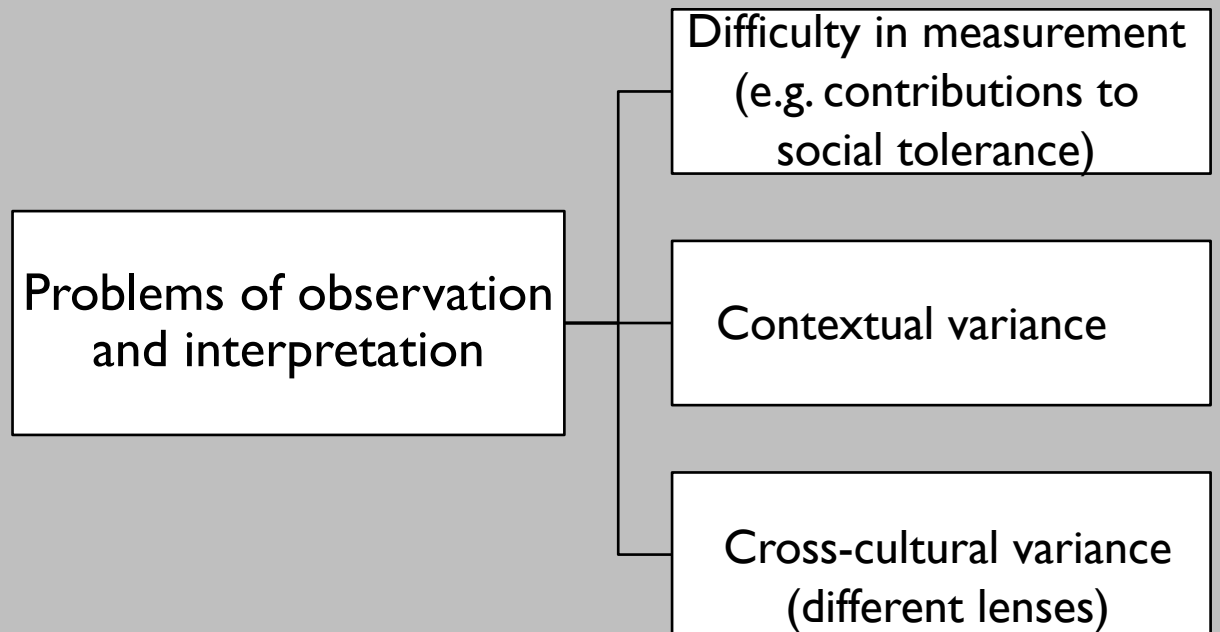
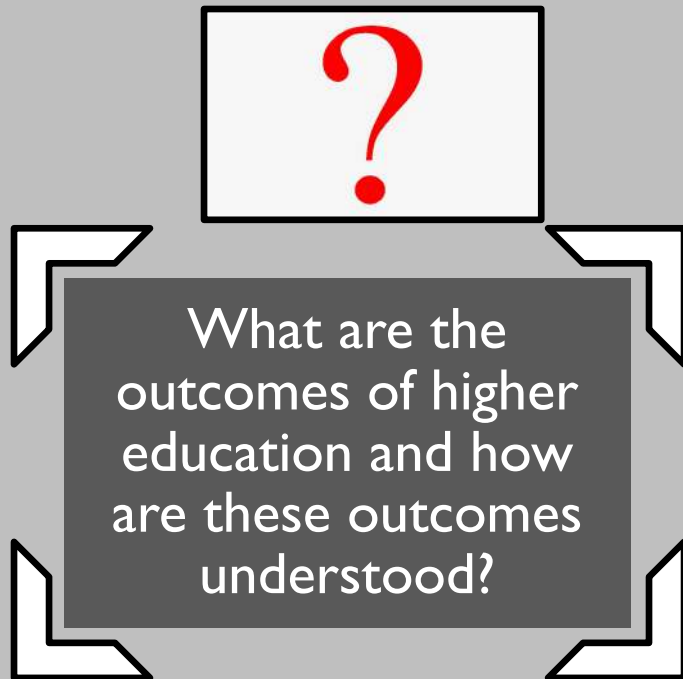
A CROSS-CULTURAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN
THE ANGLO-AMERICAN AND CHINESE WORLDS

Simon Marginson and Lili Yang, University of Oxford

CGHE Webinar 25 November 2021

Marginson, S., & Yang, L. (2021) Individual and collective outcomes of higher education: a comparison of Anglo-American and Chinese approaches, *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, DOI: [10.1080/14767724.2021.1932436](https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2021.1932436)

HIGHER EDUCATION PRODUCES BOTH INDIVIDUALISED AND COLLECTIVE OUTCOMES



TRANSPOSITIONAL ANALYSIS

- ‘Observations are unavoidably position-based, but scientific reasoning need not, of course, be based on observational information from one specific position only. There is a need for what may be called ‘trans-positional’ assessment – drawing on but going beyond different positional observations. The constructed “view from nowhere” would then be based on synthesizing different views from distinct positions ... A trans-positional scrutiny would also demand some kind of coherence between different positional views.’

– Amartya Sen (2002), *Rationality and Freedom*, Harvard University Press p. 467

Step I: reject
comparison based
on a single
cultural position



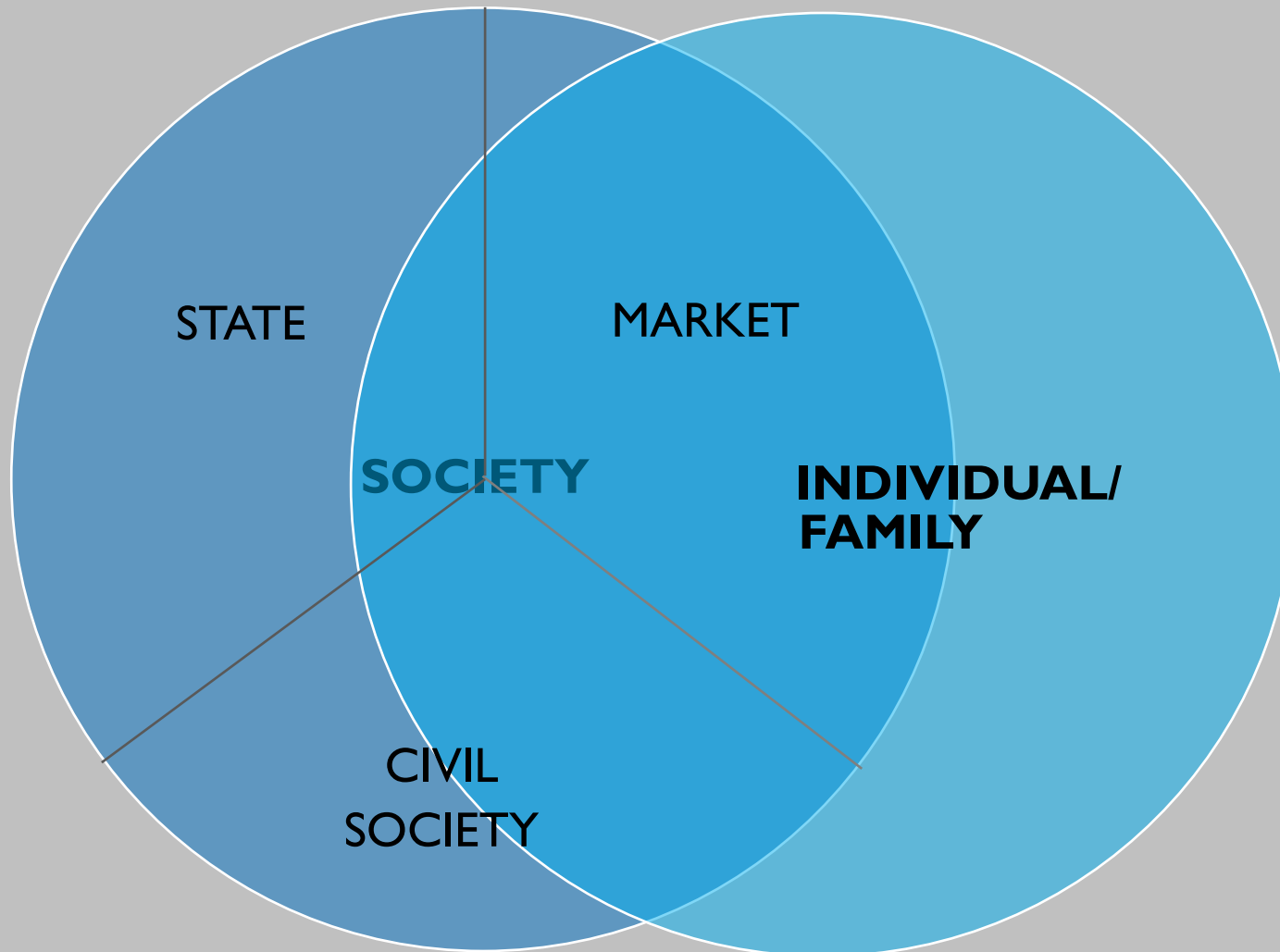
Step II:
observation based
on multiple
positions



Step III: trans-
positional
(combinatory)
assessment

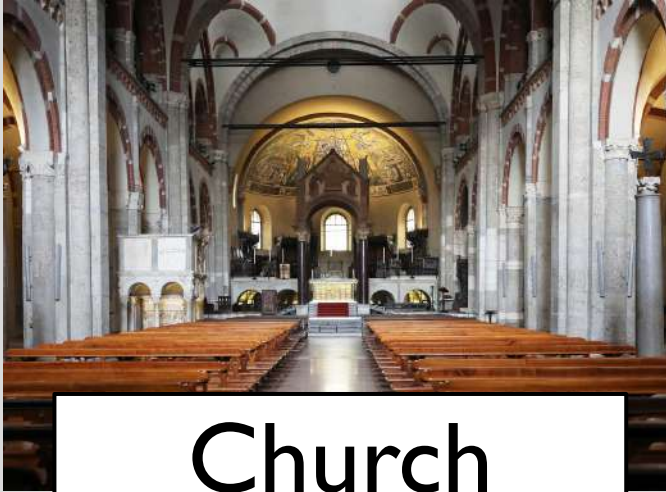


ANGLO-AMERICAN SOCIAL-CULTURAL IMAGINARY



- Division of powers
- The limited state (contested, tense and unstable boundary between the state and other spheres)
- Ill-defined normative primacy of the individual
- Negative freedom overshadows positive freedom.

THE UNIVERSITY: PART OF THE DIVISION OF POWERS



Church



State

- Partial institutional autonomy
- Monopoly of scholarship evolves into academic freedom

Medieval
university

THE WESTERN INDIVIDUAL AND INDIVIDUALISM

- The ‘free and autonomous individual separated from roles and communities’
 - Bell, D. A. (2017). ‘Against individualism: A Confucian rethinking of the foundations of morality, politics, family, and religion by Henry Rosemont Jr.’ (review). *Philosophy East and West*, 67 (2), p. 565-568
- The individualist vision: ‘... the actual or imminent realisation of the final stage of human progress in a spontaneously cohesive society of equal individual rights, limited government, laissez-faire, natural justice and equal opportunity, and individual freedom, moral development and dignity’
 - Lukes, S. (1973). *Individualism*. Oxford: Blackwell, p. 37.
- **A leap of faith** - self-regulating liberal individuals will sustain self-regulating communities (if they want to ...)



THE TWO MEANINGS OF 'PUBLIC' I: PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE (ZERO-SUM DUALISM)



Political dualism:

Public = state/government

Private = spheres of home, family,
economic market, corporate sector

Economic dualism:

Public goods = non-excludable or
non-rivalrous goods, can't be
produced profitably in market

Private goods = everything else

THE TWO MEANINGS OF 'PUBLIC' II: THE COMMUNICATIVE INCLUSIVE PUBLIC



Public as a social relation

- Broad and inclusive, universal assembly (the public, public opinion etc)
- Open communications ('going public', public media, public relations etc)

Emphasising the normative and agentic:

- The universal public good and common good (UNESCO, 2015)

GLOBAL PUBLIC GOOD AND COMMON GOOD



- The United Nations (UN) Development Programme's definition of global public goods:
'Goods that have a significant element of non-rivalry and/or non-excludability' and are broadly available on a global scale

Kaul, I., Grunberg, I., and Stern, M. (1999). *Global Public Goods: International Cooperation in the Twenty-first Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 2-3

- Given the public/private dualism, public goods require a state, but there is no global state. Are global goods merely an outgrowth of nations?
- How do we understand the world as a whole and the global good?

A SUMMARY OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN APPROACH

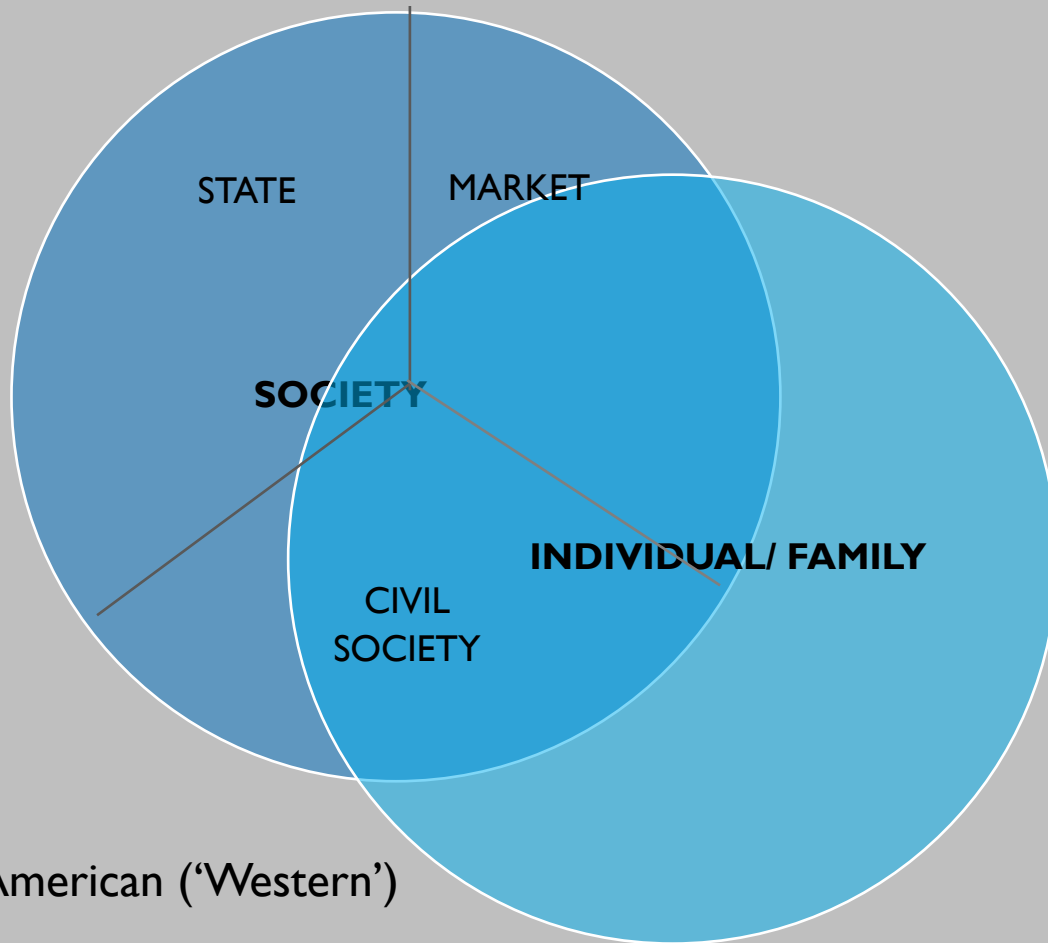
Loose ill-defined primacy of the individual

No essential primacy of state, market and civil society, varies by polity

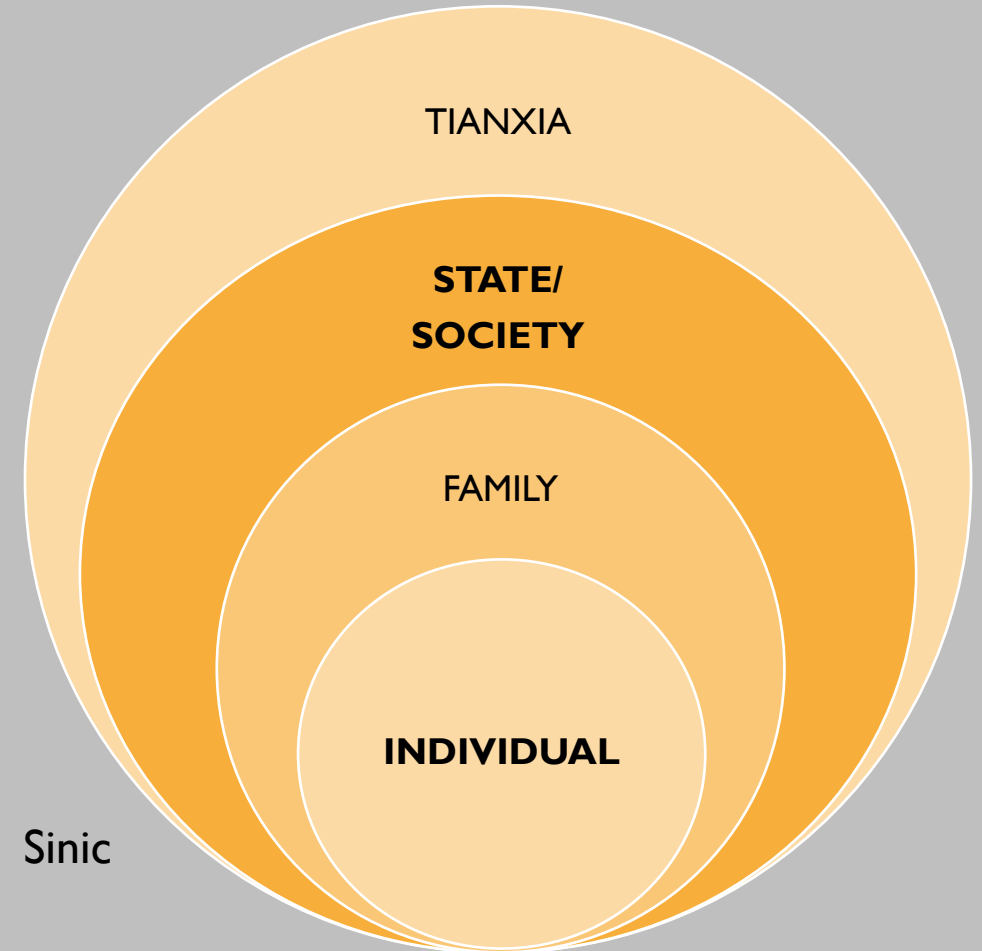
In higher education, the economics of private/public goods forces a trade-off between individual benefits, and joint and collective benefits

The core responsibility of the state is reduced to residual collective goods. The rest is private goods. The only exception in higher education is policy on social inclusion

EURO-AMERICAN AND SINIC POLITICAL CULTURES



Euro-American ('Western')



Sinic

THE CONFUCIAN INDIVIDUAL

- ‘Confucian “individualism” means the fullest development by the individual of his creative potentialities—not, however, merely for the sake of self-expression but because he can thus best fulfil that particular role which is his within his social nexus.’

- Bodde, D. (1957). *China's cultural tradition, what and whither?* New York: Holt, p. 66.



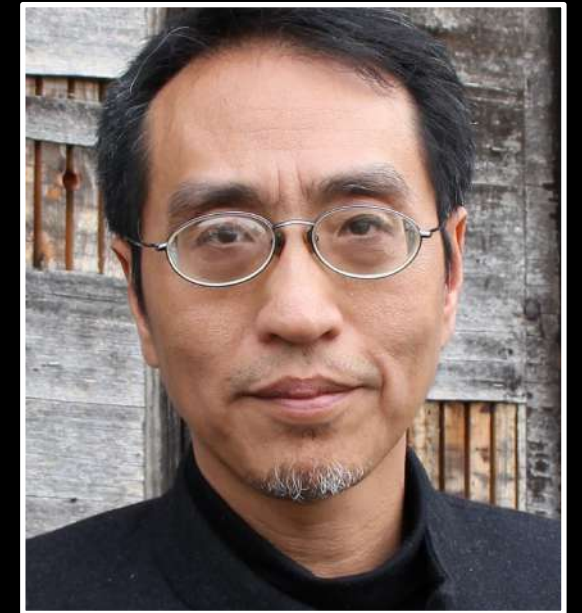
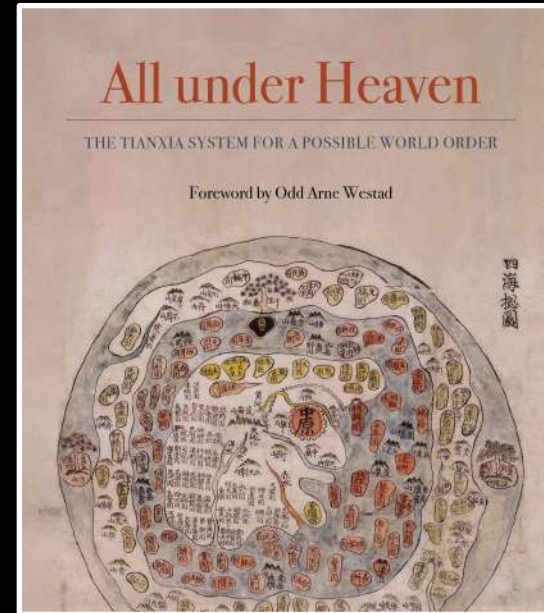
THE STATE IN CHINA: NOT SMALL AND NOT SHY

- Comprehensive and centralising
- Supreme over all other social sectors
- Must deliver order, defence and prosperity to retain legitimacy
- Civil society is smaller, more intermittent and managed by the state
- Uses deep devolution nested in central authority (e.g. in higher education)
- Higher education traditionally nested in state and state purposes
- Leninist state in continuity with Imperial state but exercises closer micro-control



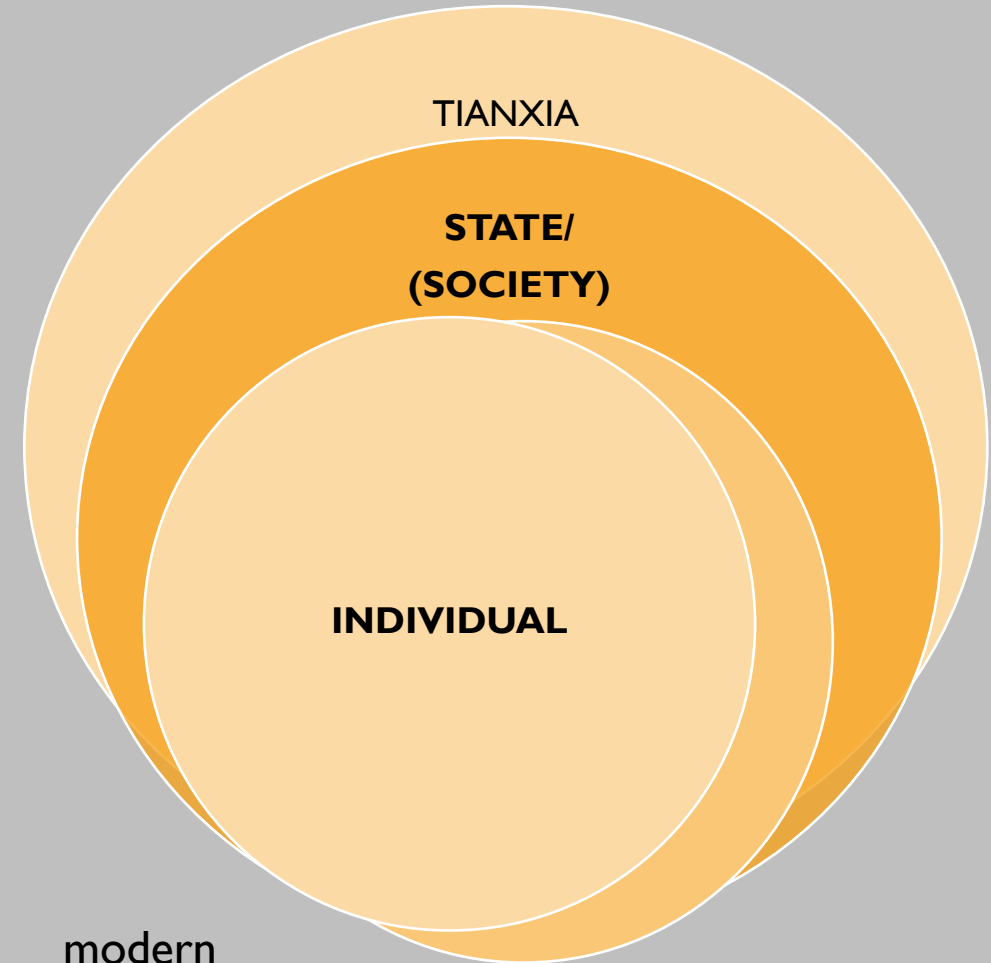
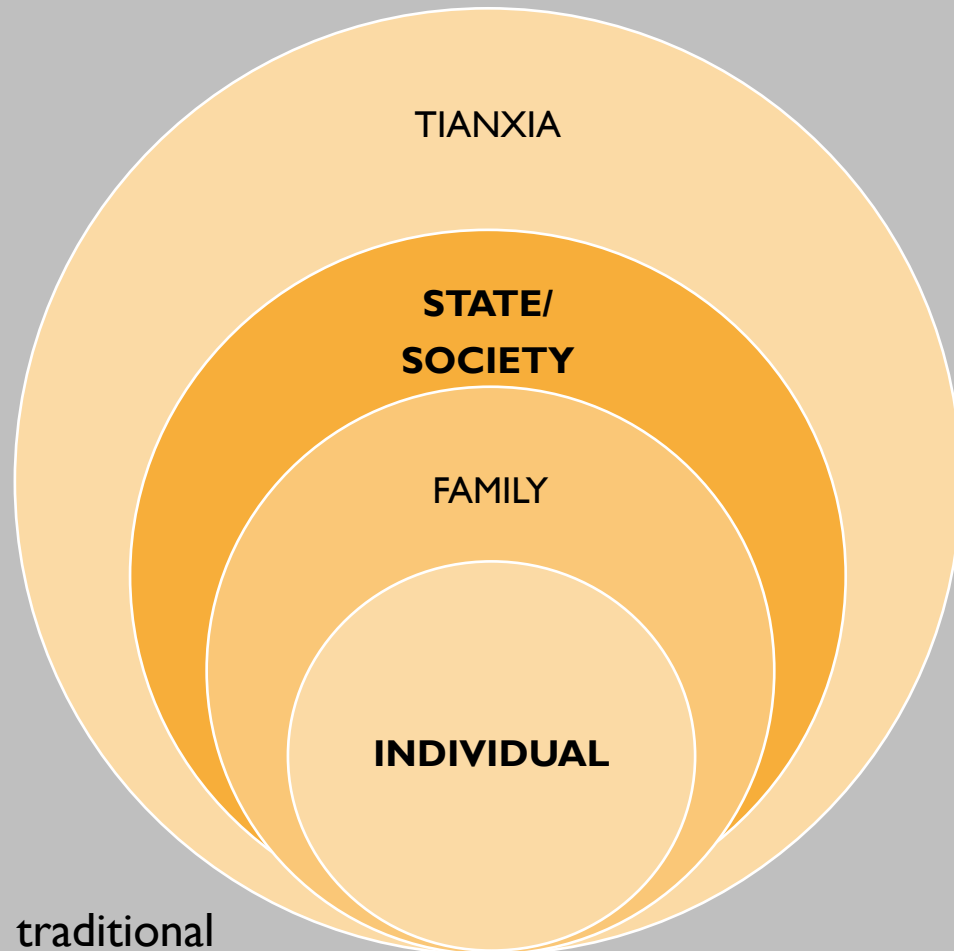
TIANXIA: 'THINKING THROUGH THE WORLD'

- The unified human and natural sphere, an ecological imagining
- 'Thinking through the world', the world as a political subject (Zhao Tingyang)
- As a mode of governance, held together by culture and values not force, unity in diversity (*heer butong*)
- The whole world - or Chinese civilisation and beyond, with China at the centre?
- *Tianxia weigong*, 'all under heaven belongs to all', suggests the global common good



Zhao Tingyang, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, modern expert on *tianxia*

GONG AND SI IN MODERN TIMES



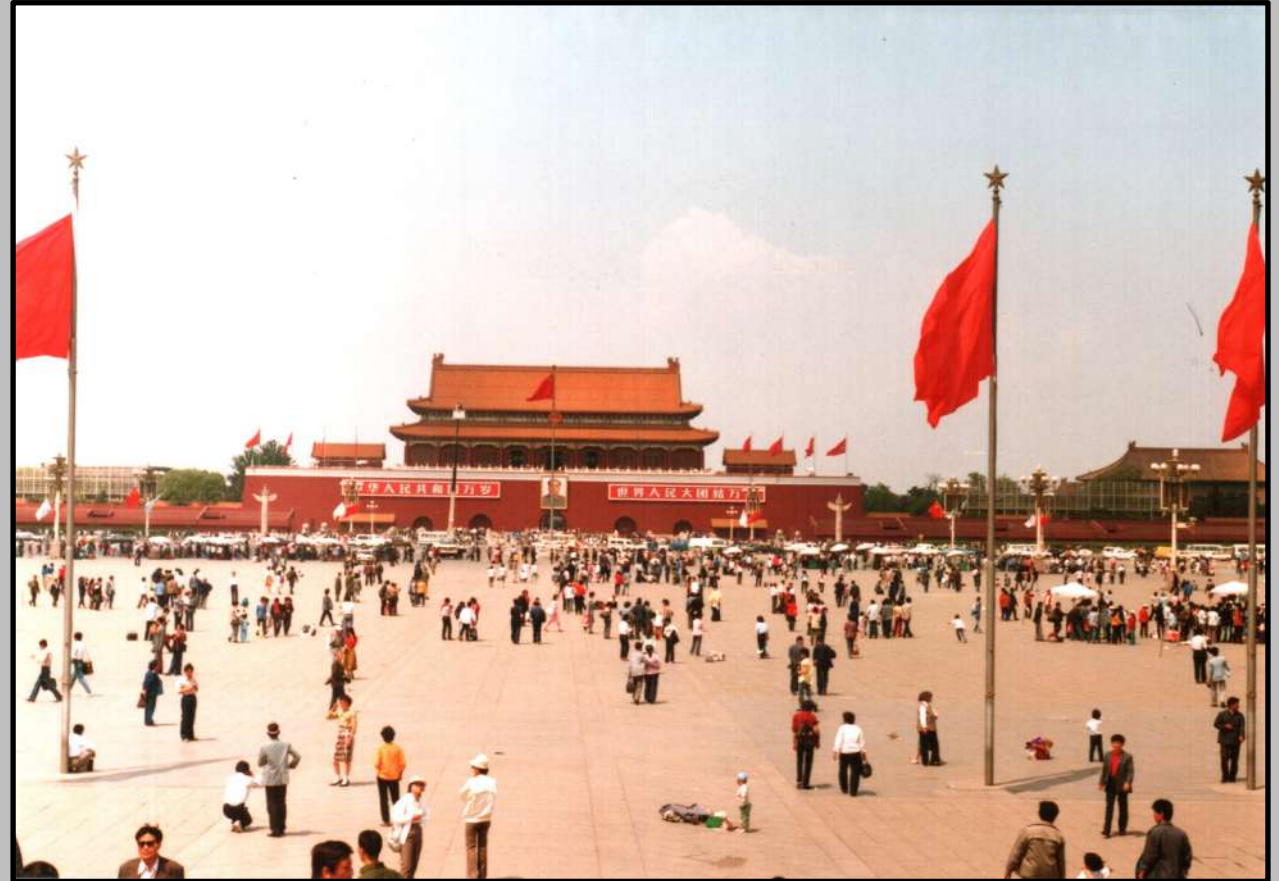
HIGHER EDUCATION IN CONTEMPORARY CHINA

- A Western-Sinic hybrid under Leninist management
- Anglo-American university forms: corporate universities, Western disciplines, academic ranks, degrees, PhDs
- But as in Imperial times, higher education is integrated into the state, and produces scholar-officials and applied research for nation-building purposes
- Elements of traditional Sinic Imperial governance in universities: deep devolution, central training and allocation of leaders, dual authority system
- Boundary between central state and autonomous university is *within* the state
- Tensions between Chinese culture and Western culture are determined by the state



HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE 'PUBLIC' MISSION


- Public mission in universities identified with state – no discursive limit on the state's capacity to produce collective goods in higher education
- Anglo-American idea of public/private dualism has only modest recognition – fees and stratification not seen to impair public obligations of state
- Little sense of role of higher education in larger communicative society and only intermittent involvement of faculty and students in public politics




ANGLO-AMERICAN AND CHINESE APPROACHES TO SOCIETY AND HIGHER EDUCATION

	Anglo-American	Chinese
Normative primacy	Individual separated from society	Individual <i>si</i> contained in collective <i>gong</i>
The state	Limited, contested, division of powers	Comprehensive, centralised, free to intervene
Civil society	Inclusive, open, subject to social inequalities	Smaller, fluctuating and state supervised
Global	Under-developed, seen as outgrowth of nation	<i>Tianxia</i> , all inclusive natural and human realm
Higher education	Humboldtian, semi-autonomous, broad links	Western-Sinic hybrid embedded in party-state
H.E. and state	Regulated autonomy, arms length, tensions	Boundary is within state, freest criticism inside
H.E. and civil order	Open-ended active relations, public criticism	Constrained by state supervision of both
Individual outcomes	Graduate earnings and social status	Confucian person, social position, employment
Collective outcomes	Limited: social access/equity (=mobility), research	Open, but as defined by state as national benefit

TRANSPPOSITIONAL: INTEGRATED ANGLO-AMERICAN AND CHINESE OUTCOMES OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Social domain	Collective outcomes of H.E.	Individualised outcomes of H.E.
Individual person	Relational attributes of graduates e.g. Confucian personhood, citizenship, tolerance, cross-cultural competence	Graduate earnings and social position, formation of personal agency immersed in knowledge, lifelong learning capability
Family and horizontal sociability	Family-based and <i>guanxi</i> -based social networks with shared cultural resources and attributes	Realisation of combined family investment in social esteem and reproduction of family
State (government)	Faculty contributions to policy and regulation, all levels of government and its goals (order, prosperity) via training, research and advice	 <p>[The one element in the two traditions that is not included in this transpositional summary of the outcomes of higher education is the idea from Anglo-American economics of a dualistic zero-sum relation of 'public' and 'private'. This reduces the potential for collective outcomes]</p>
Economy	Knowledge, skills, entrepreneurship, coordination, etc., in all sectors	
Civil and communicative society	Inclusive opportunities, social literacy, urban communities, civil activity, free social criticism	
<i>Tianxia</i> (whole human and natural world)	Engagement in cross-border relations; global knowledge and research; ecological science	



Epistemic diversity and cross-cultural comparative research: ontology, challenges, and outcomes

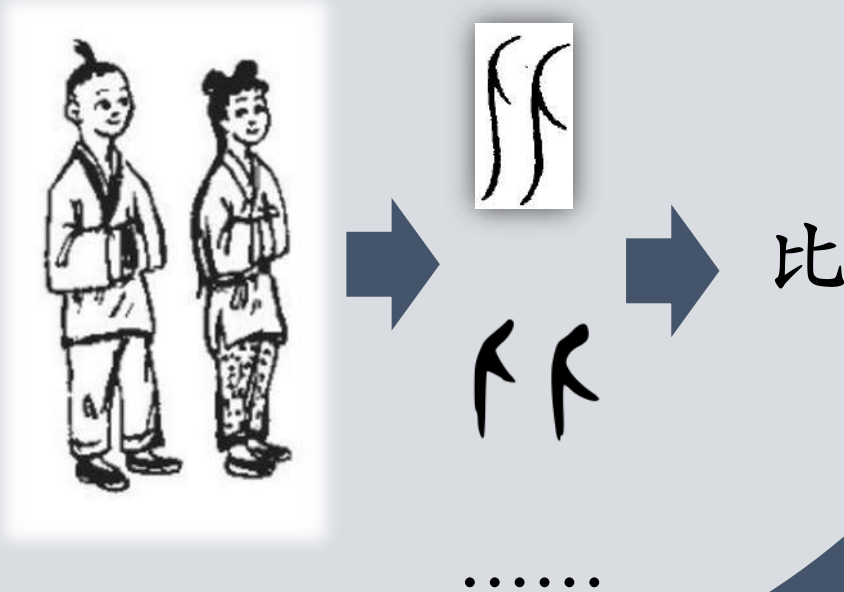
Xin Xu

**Department of Education
University of Oxford
xin.xu@education.ox.ac.uk**

24 November 2021



- Compare :
com ('together') + *par* ('equal')
- 比 (*bi*, meaning 'compare')



Value of cross-cultural comparisons



Structure

Scholarly indices
Publishers*
Research universities, institutions, centres*
Research funding and infrastructure
Policies and regulatory frameworks
Research cultures
Doctoral education
Scholarly associations*



Knowledge

Languages
Episteme
Publications and citations
Translations



Agents

Authors
Co-authors
Editors
Peer reviewers
(Global mobility of) academics/students

Demonstrations of epistemic hegemony and inequity in global research

Adapted from Xu, X. (2021). Epistemic diversity and cross-cultural comparative research: ontology, challenges, and outcomes. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 1-13.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2021.1932438>

Challenges in cross-cultural comparisons

- **Generalisation** of each culture, which is intrinsically complex, evolving over time and diffusing across borders.
- **Deductive applications** of comparative results to individuals.
- The question of **justice and ownership** of knowledge in the comparison – *whose* knowledge is legitimated, valued, and respected? By *whom*?
- Seemingly **universal** concepts do not mobilise easily across **specific** cultural contexts.



Outcomes of cross-cultural encounters

Possible outcomes	Assimilation	Being Different Together			Immiscibility
		Unity in diversity	Harmony in diversity	Together with diversity	
Outcomes of differences	Disappear	Remain	Remain	Remain	Remain
Possibilities of integration	Unification	Unification	Non-unified but with a certain level of harmonious integration	Co-existence with a certain level of non-unified and non-harmonious integration	Impossible for integration

Table adapted from Xu, X. (2021). Epistemic diversity and cross-cultural comparative research: ontology, challenges, and outcomes. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2021.1932438>



Moving forward

Epistemic diversity exists not only in normative appeals, but also in a reality we all share responsibilities to create.

Reference: Xu, X. (2021). Epistemic diversity and cross-cultural comparative research: ontology, challenges, and outcomes. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 1-13.
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