

NRU Higher School of Economics
X Russian Higher Education Conference (RHEC)
Moscow, 23-25 October 2019

The Contributions of Higher Education:

What are they, how are they valued, and how can their value be enhanced in Russia?

Simon Marginson

University of Oxford, UK
NRU Higher School of Economics

The Contributions of Higher Education:

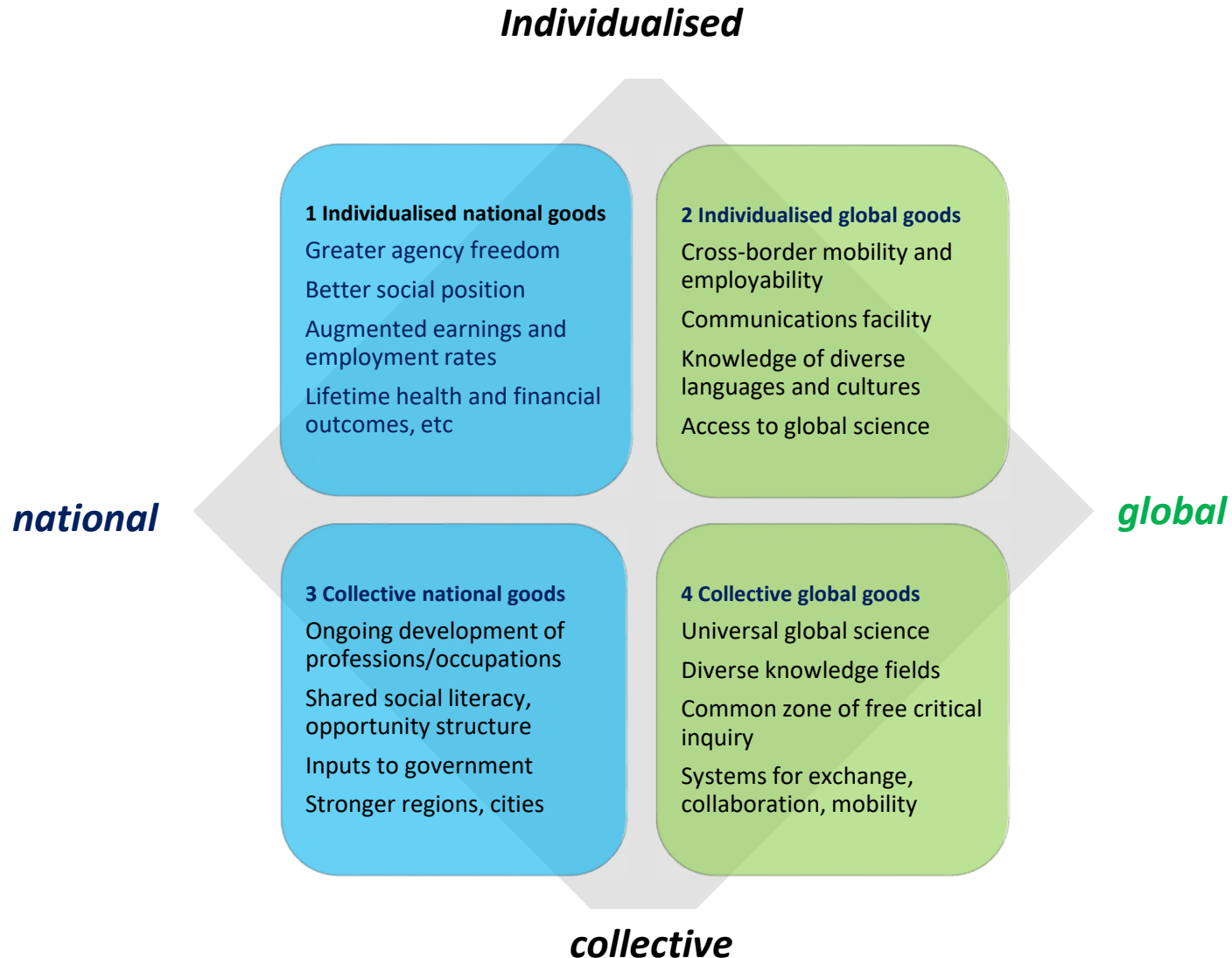
What are they, how are they valued, and how can their value be enhanced in Russia?

1. The contributions of higher education (CHE)
2. Problems of existing ideas about CHE
 - Limits of the dominant economic model
 - Limits of a state-centred approach
 - Problems of the WCU movement
3. How ideas about CHE vary according to the political culture: America, China, Russia
 - CHE in Russia
 - CHE that are common to different political cultures



1. THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Multiple contributions of higher education: Individualised and collective



1. Individualised national-local goods

goods of self-formation in shared national society

[bold = measurable]

- Augmented earnings and employment rates
- Better social position
- Lifetime health outcomes
- Capability in personal financial and career management
- Greater agency freedom, the capacity for confident autonomous action
- Capability in negotiating states, markets, institutions
- Augmented social-relational capabilities – capacity to communicate, use technology, understand and tolerate cultural difference, trust other people
- Augmented political participation

Greater individual capability and agency freedom gained in higher education lasts a lifetime



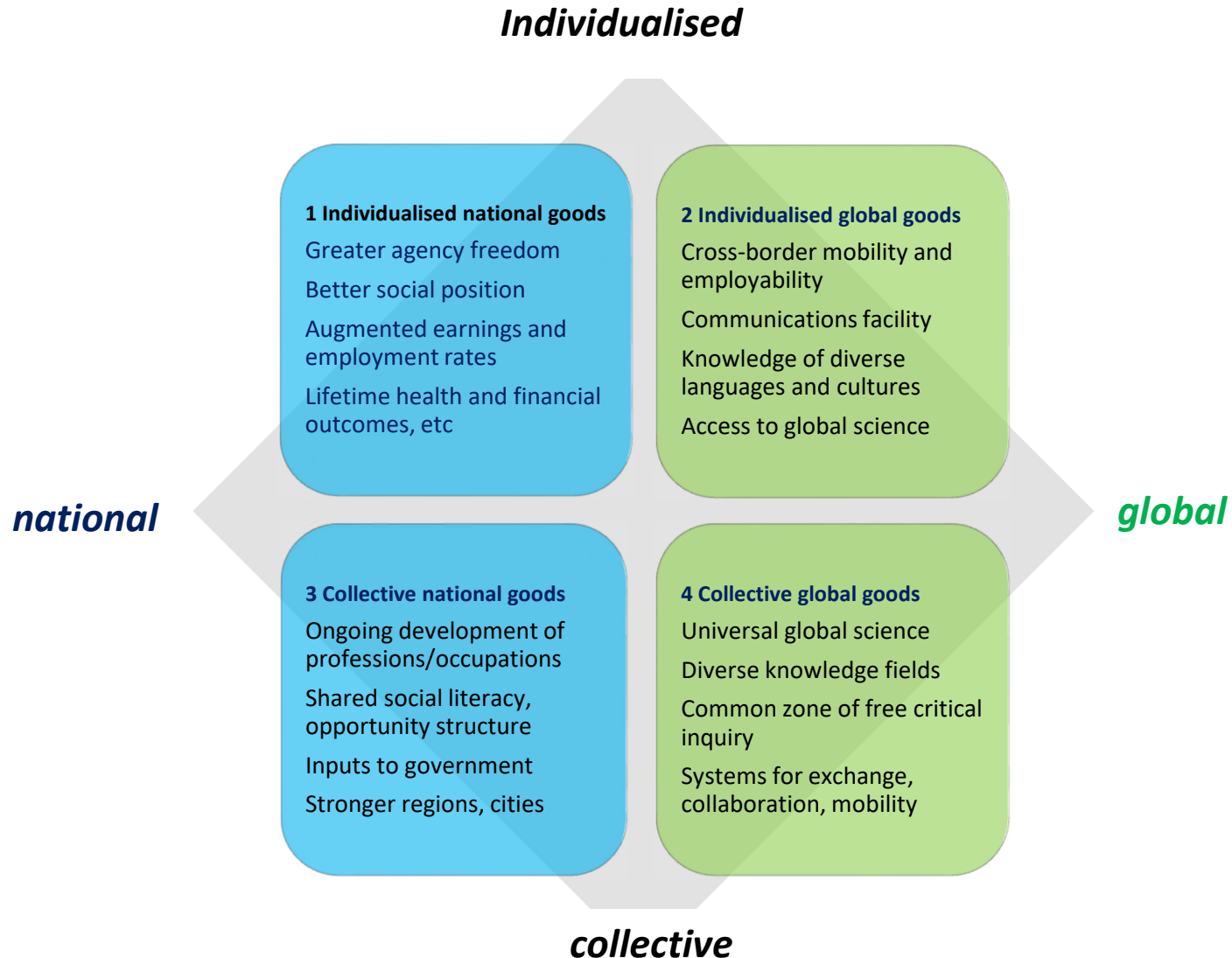
2. Individualised global goods

Goods of self-formation in global society (global knowledge and mobility)

- Greater agency freedom, the capacity for confident autonomous action, in global society
- Capacity for cross-border mobility
- Negotiation of unfamiliar sites and institutions
- Global employability and augmented earnings
- Facility in cross-border communications and cooperation
- Knowledge of diverse languages and cultures
- Other global competences including understanding, tolerance and negotiation of cultural difference
- Access to global science and other knowledges



Multiple contributions of higher education: Individualised and collective



3. Collective national-local goods

Goods that are jointly consumed (some of which are jointly produced)

- Shared social literacy
- Nationally-specific knowledges (e.g. in professional fields such as law)
- Higher education as an opportunity structure which [is meant to] deliver just outcomes
- Academic inputs to government policy and regulation
- Economic, social and cultural building of localities, cities, regions [but unequalising]
- Ongoing development of the professions/occupations as cooperative social activity
- Graduate work as constituting common social benefits (e.g. health care, education)



In most countries it is becoming harder for the poor bright student to enter elite universities



4. Collective global goods

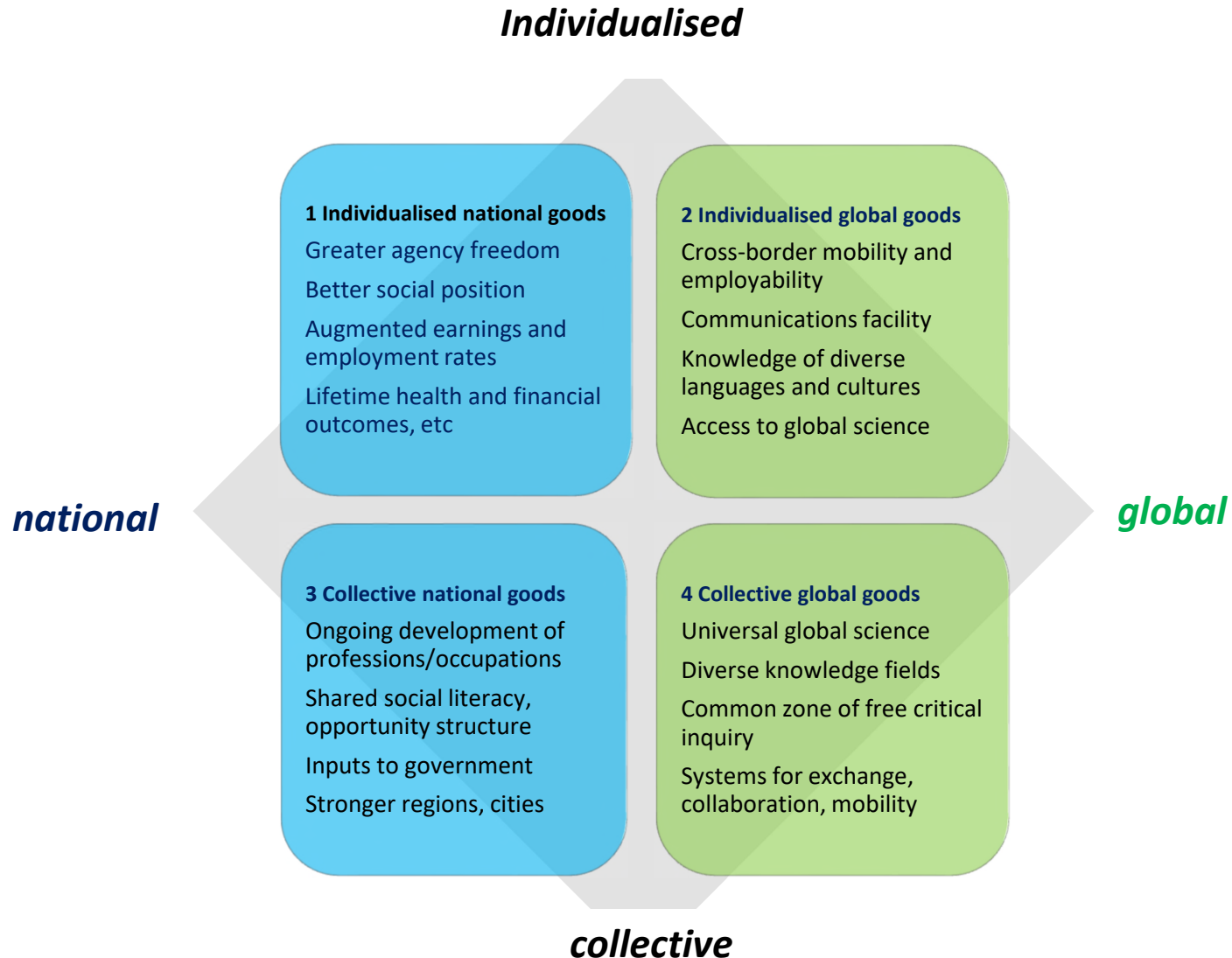
Goods that are jointly consumed (some of which are jointly produced)

- Global knowledge, in diverse fields especially in science [but biases, omissions]
- Systems of universal global science, including publishing, certification protocols
- Fostering of global cooperation in research including that on common global problems
- Common global zone of free critical inquiry, sustained by cross-border disciplinary networks
- Systems for international collaboration, exchange, mobility between universities (recognition protocols, Erasmus, etc)

The global research system is growing more rapidly than national research systems. Increasingly the global system sets the scientific agenda



Multiple contributions of higher education: Individualised and collective



CHE: We need

1. A robust theory of CHE in society
2. An explanation of cultural variation in CHE that distinguishes between CHE that vary by country and CHE that are common across the world
3. Reliable metrics of CHE that can be used for comparison, including the monitoring of improvements over time

2. PROBLEMS OF EXISTING IDEAS ABOUT CHE

THE DOMINANT ECONOMIC MODEL

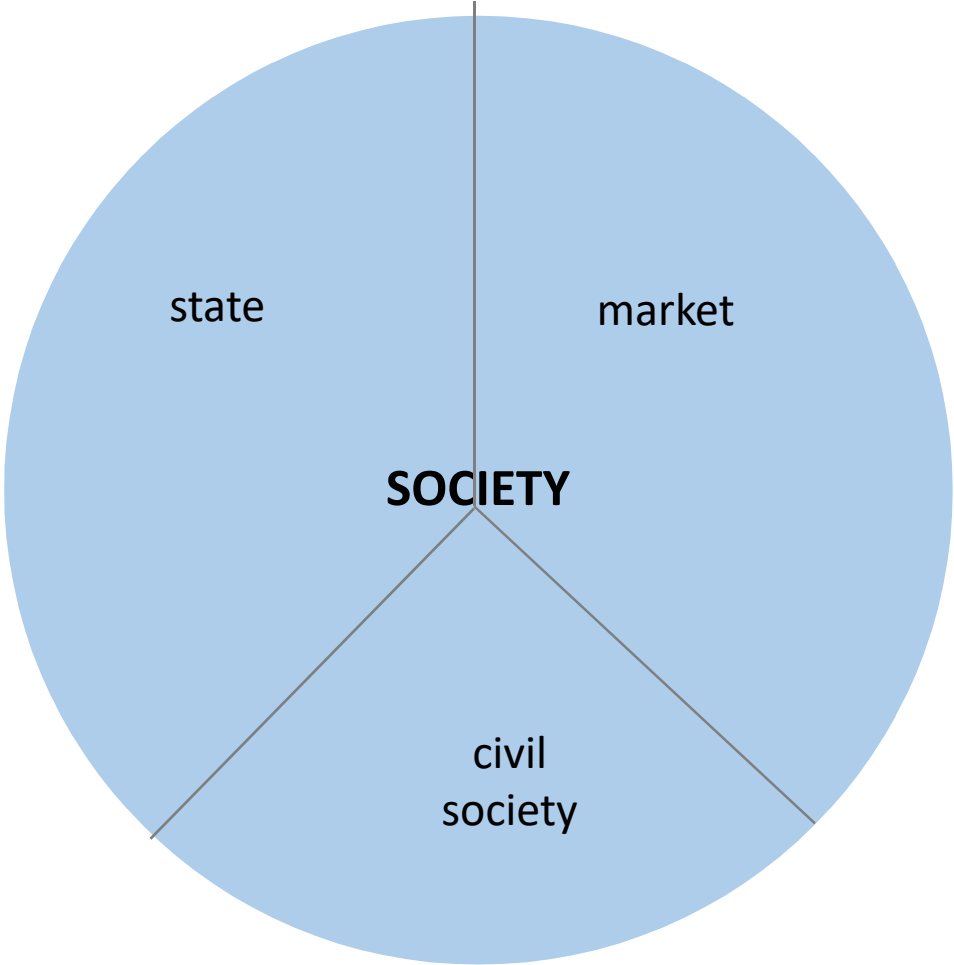
Western political imaginary 1



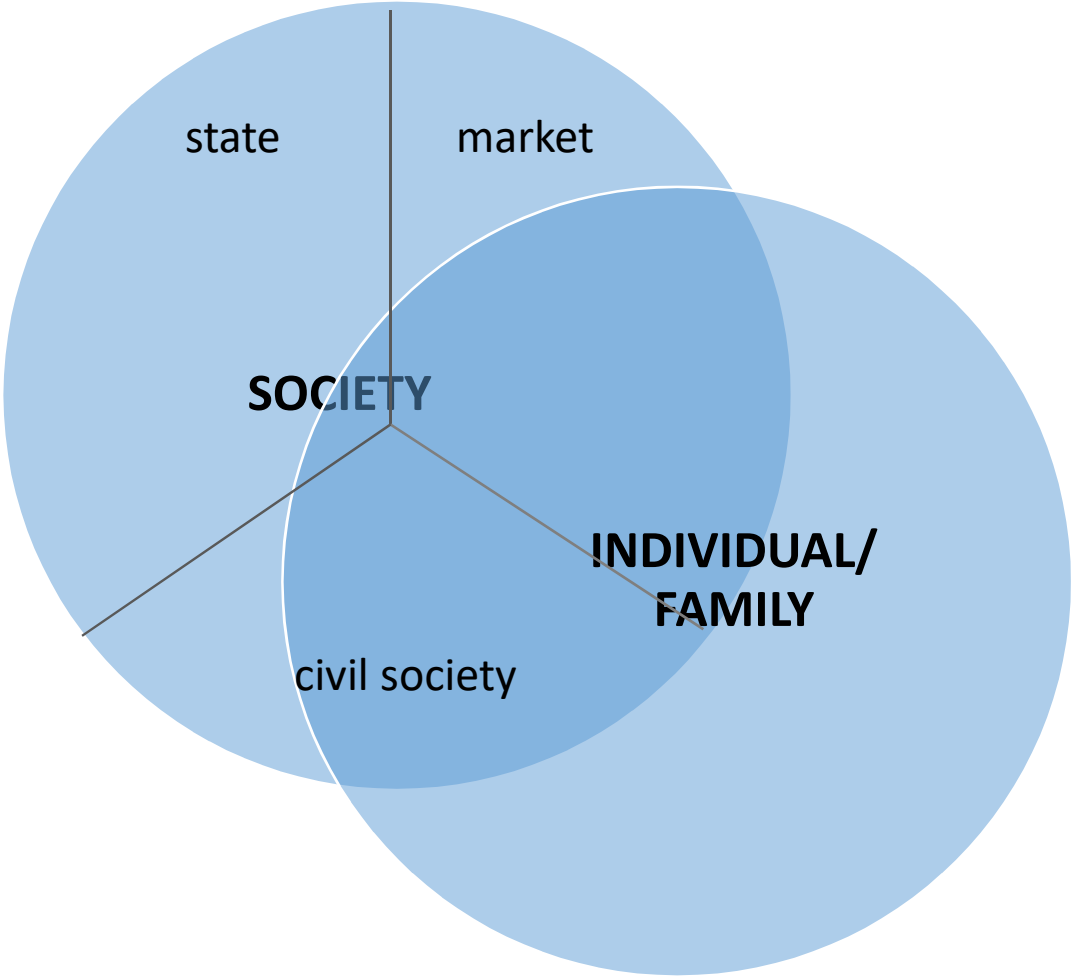
SOCIETY

**INDIVIDUAL/
FAMILY**

Western political imaginary 2



Western political imaginary 3



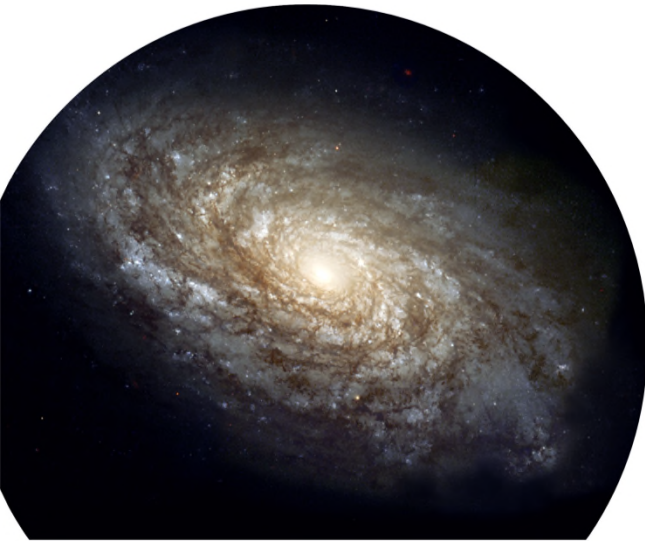


- **Analytic:**
public versus private

Western concepts of 'public' and 'private'



- **Communicative:**
public networks private



- **Universal:**
public contains private

CHE must be one or the other?

Public and private goods as zero-sum

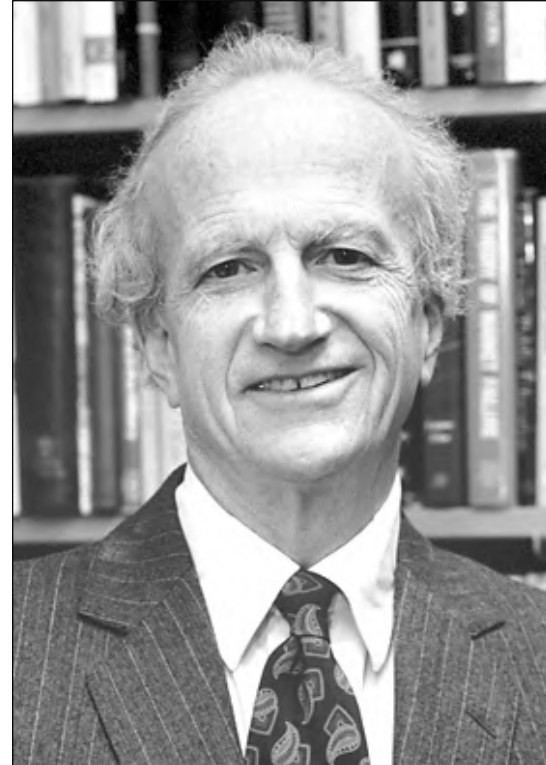


What kind of benefits for individual students does higher education create?



Bildung

Immanuel Kant 1780s



Human capital

Gary Becker 1960s

Bildung: Education as self-formation

- In Bildung the role of education is to cultivate the inner self in intellectual and ethical terms, to form citizens in public rationality for the emerging civil society. Kant emphasised that Bildung would not occur by itself, it required education.
- The aim of education is “the active autonomous person within the framework of social life”, a rational subject who uses reason in a public way and “lives in the public sphere among other individual beings.”
- Here education helps students/graduates to *form themselves*. This connects with the Confucian idea of self-cultivation.

Kivela, A. (2012). From Immanuel Kant to Johann Gottlieb Fichte – Concept of education and German idealism. In Siljander, P., Kivela, A. and Sutinen, A. (eds.) (2012). *Theories of Bildung and Growth: Connections and controversies between Continental educational thinking and American pragmatism*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, p. 59

THE STATE-DOMINATED APPROACH

The state as sole custodian of the public good?



Beyond the state-centred understanding of public good

Common goods in and from higher education

- Common goods are collective, relational social goods. They are about shared community, e.g. social solidarity, equality, human rights and self-determination, social and geographic mobility (free movement), shared knowledge and conversation
- They can only be produced jointly. Some are experienced by individuals (e.g. human rights) and some by groups (e.g. laws)
- ‘The shared action is intrinsic, as well as instrumental, to the good itself and ... its benefits come in the course of that shared action. Goods of that kind are, therefore, inherently common in their “production” and in their benefits’

– Severine Deneulin and Nicholas Townsend (2007). Public goods, global public goods and the common good. *International journal of Social Economics* 34 (1/2), pp. 19-36

PROBLEMS OF THE WCU MOVEMENT

WCUs often empty out the value of other institutions

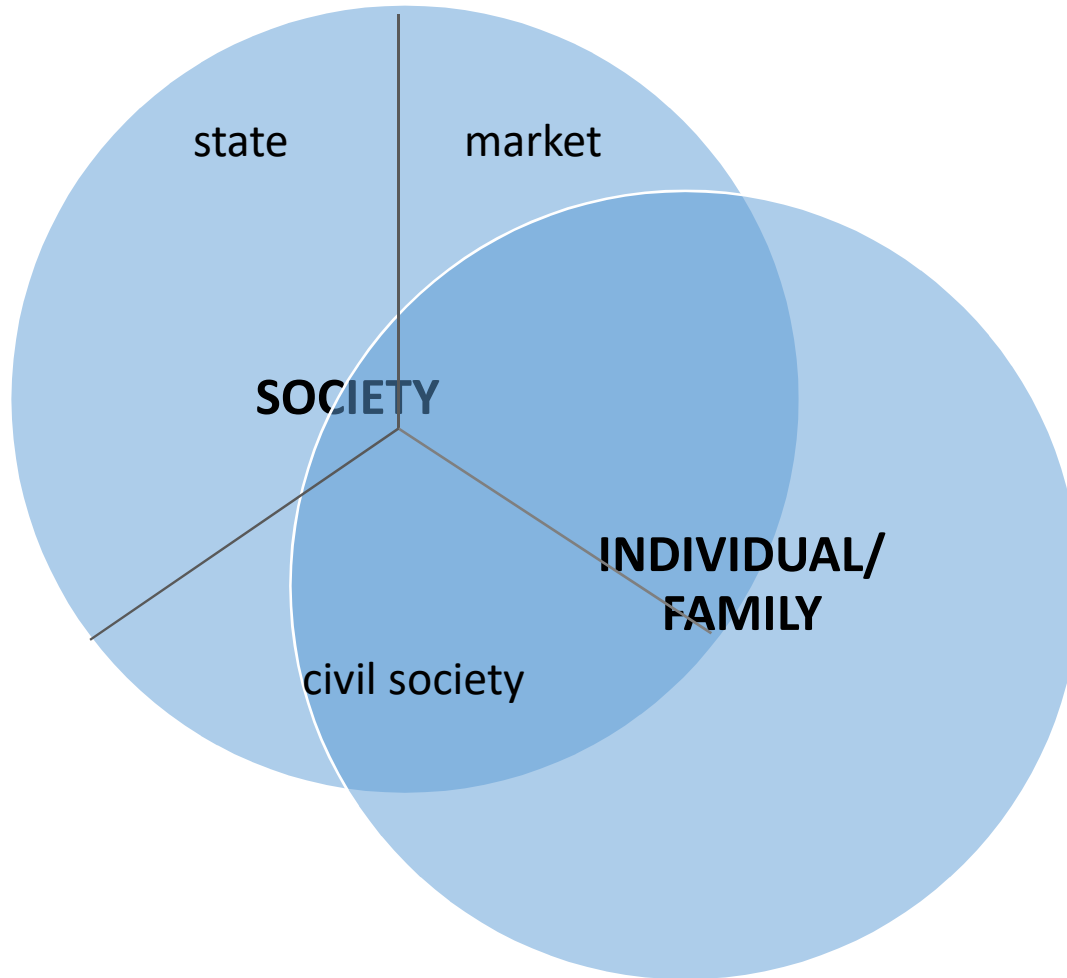


3. HOW IDEAS ABOUT CHE VARY ACCORDING TO THE POLITICAL CULTURE

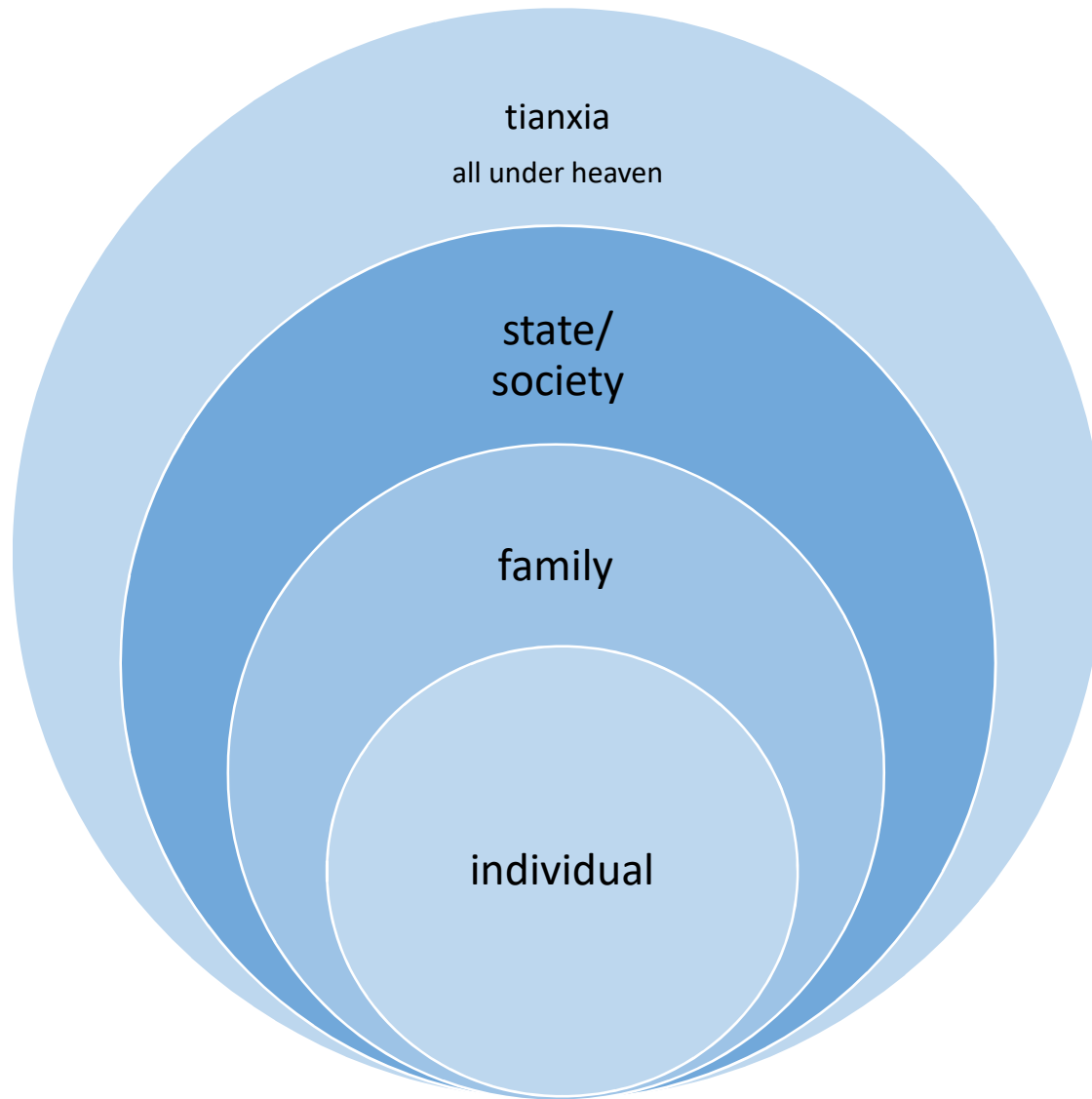
Intellectual and policy judgments about CHE vary across the world, according to

- . . . the underlying assumptions, for example the meanings of ‘public’, ‘public good’, ‘common good’ and such terms in other languages - which often have rather different meanings
- . . . political culture, including the role of state/ government, scope for the individual, responsibilities of higher education
 - Differing national political cultures lead to divergent ideas about CHE, between countries, in some areas, e.g. the degree to which institutions directly follow state agendas. However, in some other areas the different countries have similar views e.g. the value of free scientific research

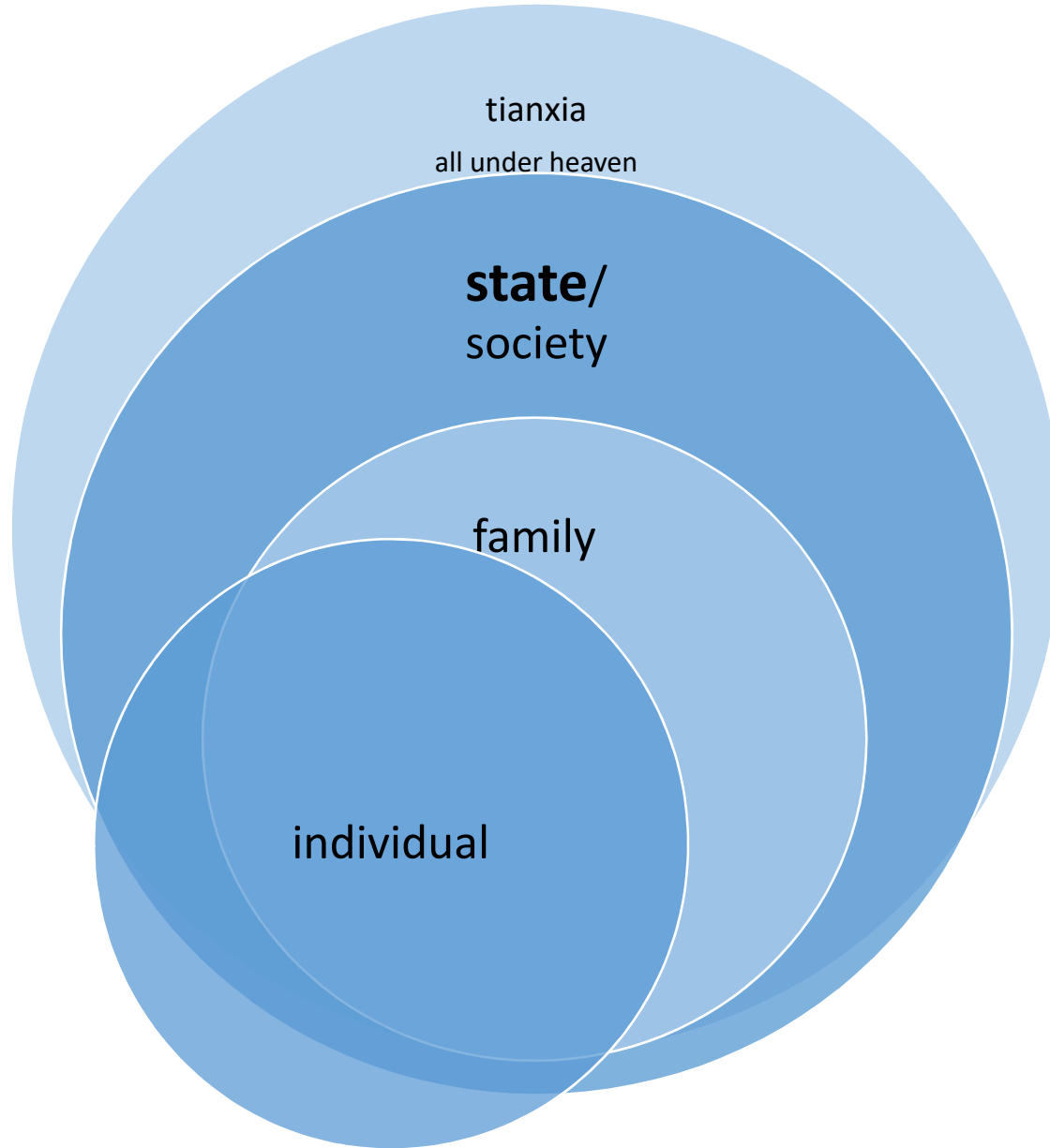
Western political imaginary



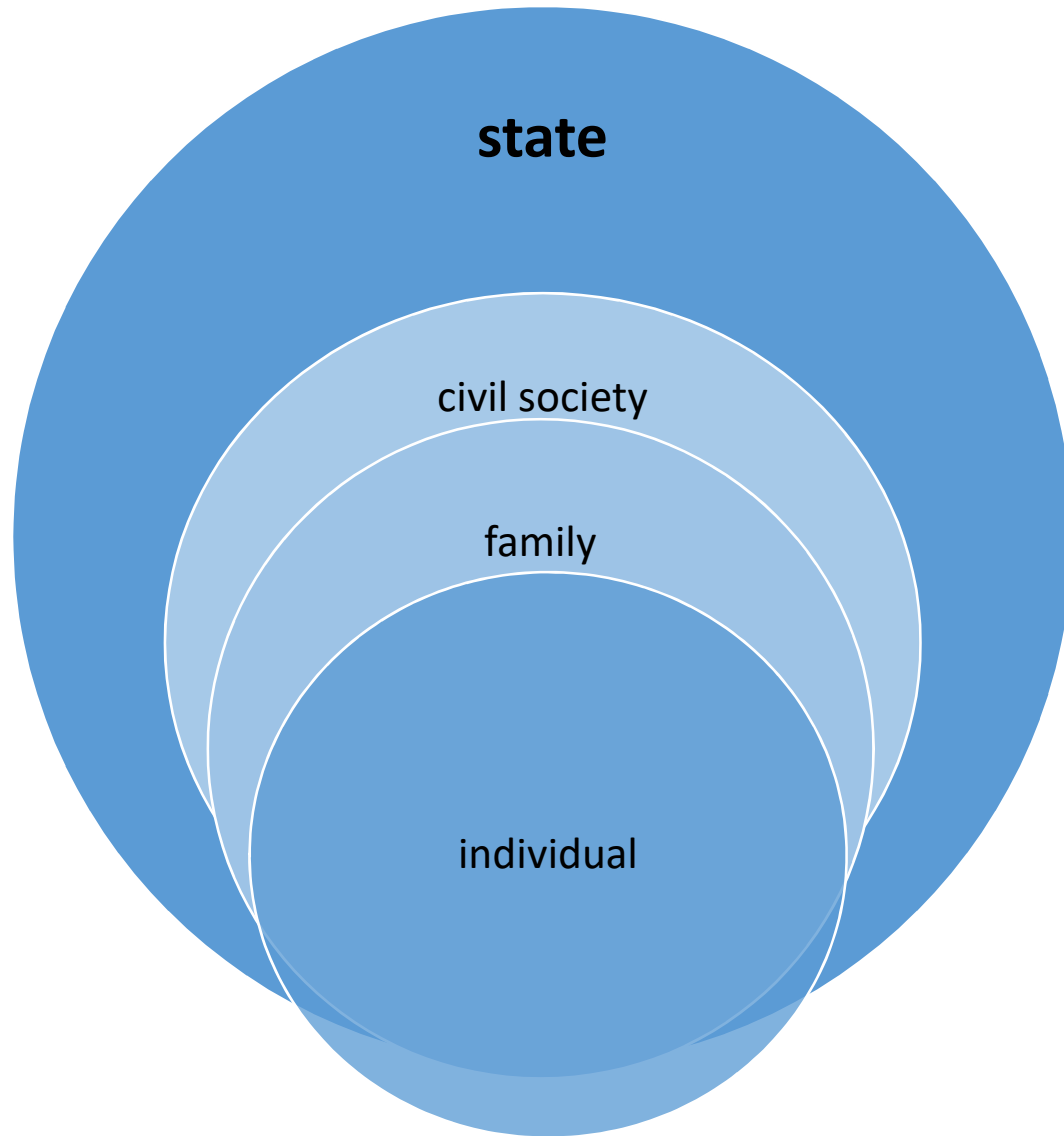
Confucian political imaginary



Post-Confucian political imaginary



Russian political imaginary?



CHE IN RUSSIA



GLOBAL COMMON GOODS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

What in higher education might be common across the political cultures?

- Nation-building role of higher education
- Networked global research system
- Partial institutional autonomy
 - Norms of freedom of research and scholarship
 - Norms of freedom to teach and learn
- Cross-border academic and student mobility
 - Norms of free mobility
- Definition of 'higher education'
 - Norms of adequate quality higher education
- Social equity in access to higher education

[common definition is a challenge]

Thank you!

simon.marginson@education.ox.ac.uk

