

BECOMING AND BELONGING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE
HOLD, AND HOW CAN WE
MAKE IT OUR FUTURE?

Simon Marginson
Education, University of Oxford

*Imperial College London
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TRADITIONAL
INSTITUTION-
BOUND HIGHER
EDUCATION IS

...DYING??

Popular Latest

The Atlantic Sign In

EDUCATION

Here's How Higher Education Dies

A futurist says the industry may have nowhere to go but down. What does the slide look like?

By Adam Harris

A black and white photograph showing the silhouettes of two people sitting at a table in front of a large window. They appear to be students in a library or study area, focused on their work. The window looks out onto a bright, possibly outdoor setting. The scene is captured from a low angle, emphasizing the shapes of the people and the table against the light coming through the window.

STUDENTS
REALLY
WANTED TO
GET BACK TO
CLASSES

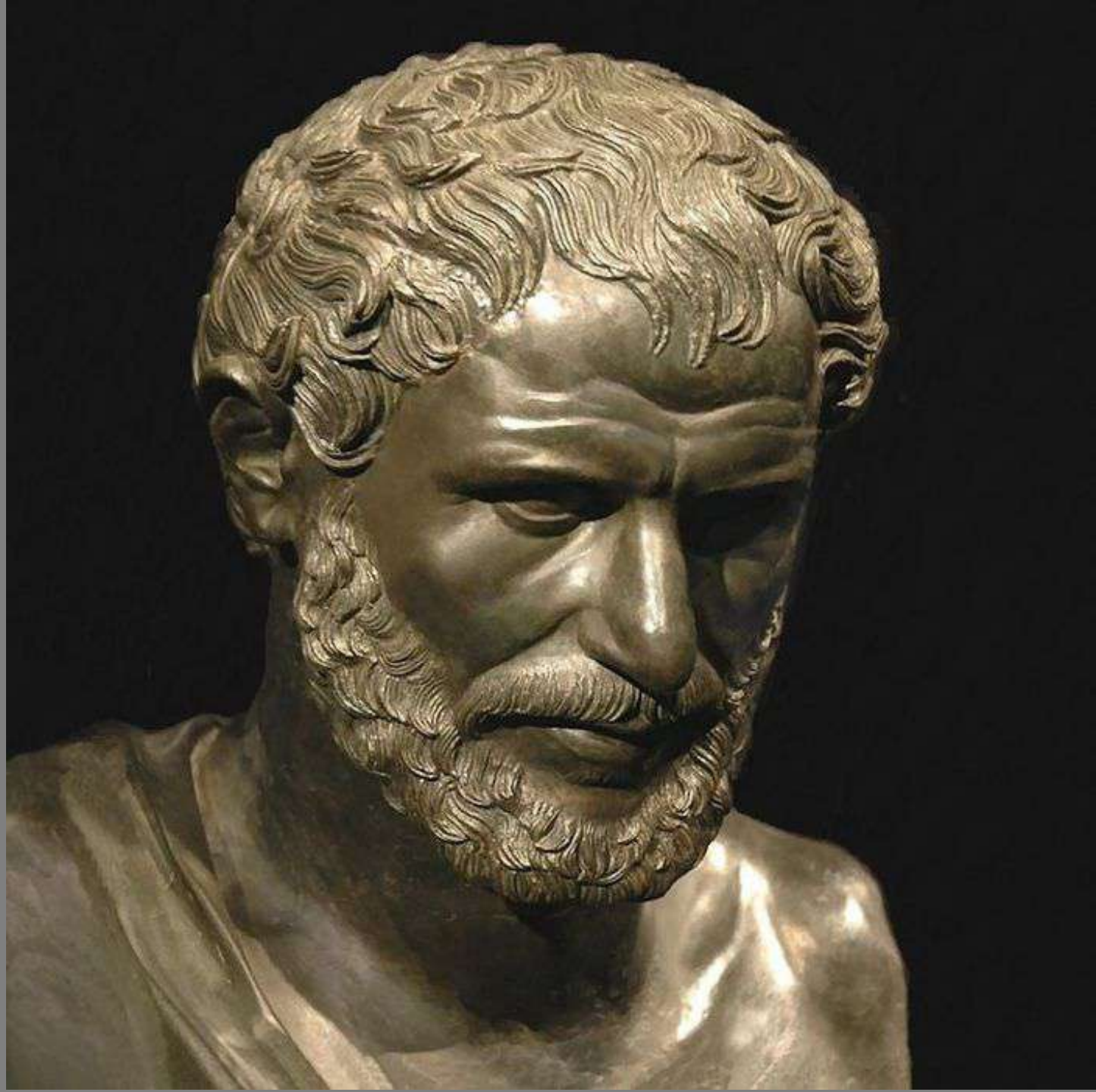


PATTERNS AND
PREDICTIONS ONLY WORK
WITHIN CLOSED SYSTEMS

THE WORLD IS AN OPEN
SYSTEM

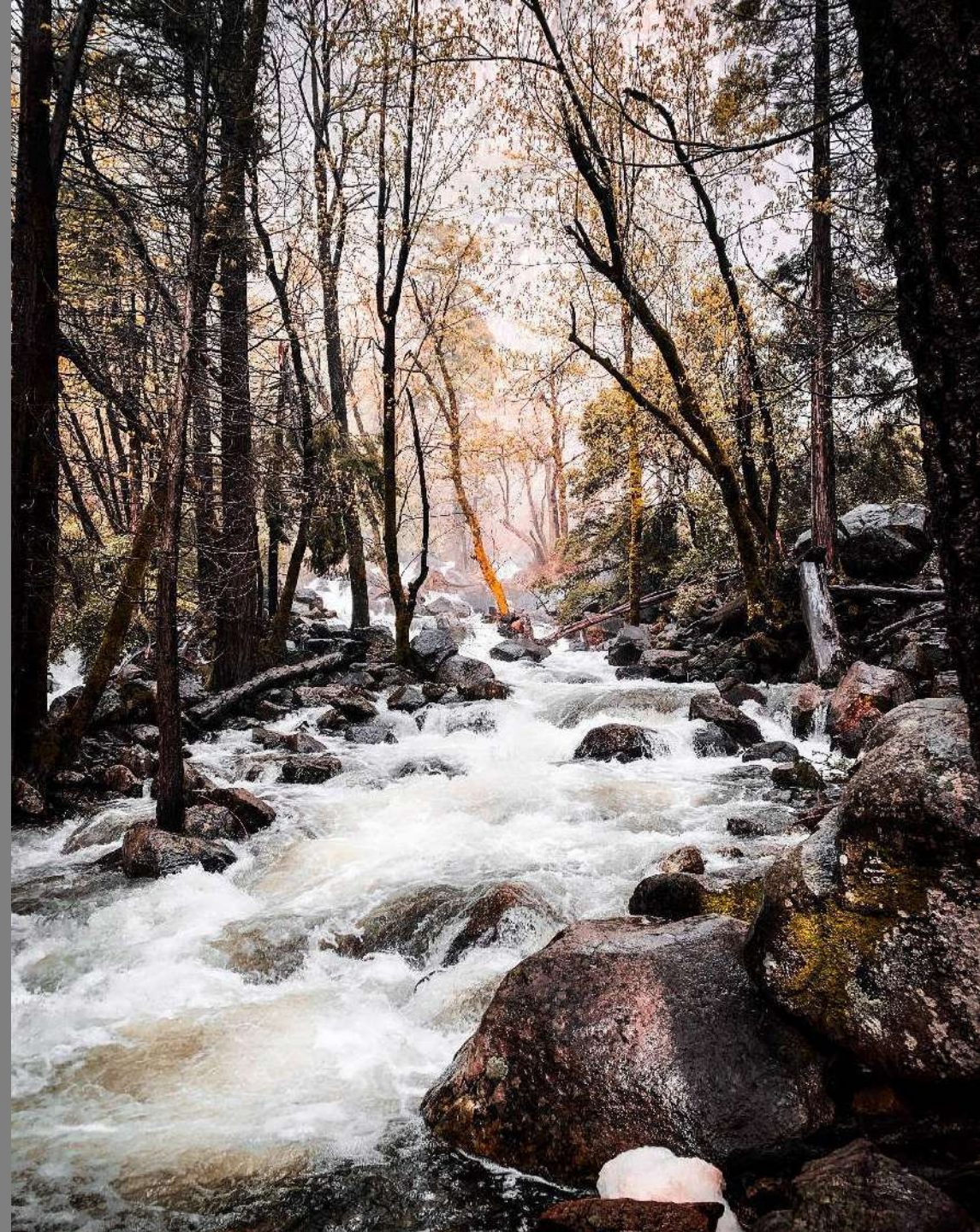


HERACLITUS OF
EPHESUS
(544-484 BCE)



‘ALL THINGS ARE IN FLUX,
LIKE A RIVER ...
EVERYTHING FLOWS’

‘WHOEVER CANNOT SEEK
THE UNFORESEEN, SEES
NOTHING.
THE KNOWN WAY IS AN
IMPASSE’



THE NEXT
PHASE OF
HIGHER
EDUCATION



GROWING IMPACT OF GEO-POLITICS

- Nativist politics: pushback against 'globalism' and in some countries, international students
- Brexit takes out Erasmus and Horizon, weakens academic recruitment
- US-China decoupling in science
- 'Securitisation' in science takes priority over collaboration, university autonomy and academic freedom
- Ukraine universities hit by invasion
- Russia closes up and breaks with international university networks



'Scientific discovery, which is fundamentally borderless, is being politically bordered. Geopolitical tensions between the United States and China have spilled over into academic science, creating challenges for many scientists' ability to fully engage in research and innovation' – Jenny Lee and Xiaojie Li, *Racial profiling among scientists of Chinese descent*, 2022

THE SLOW DRIP THAT
WEARS AWAY THE
STONE:

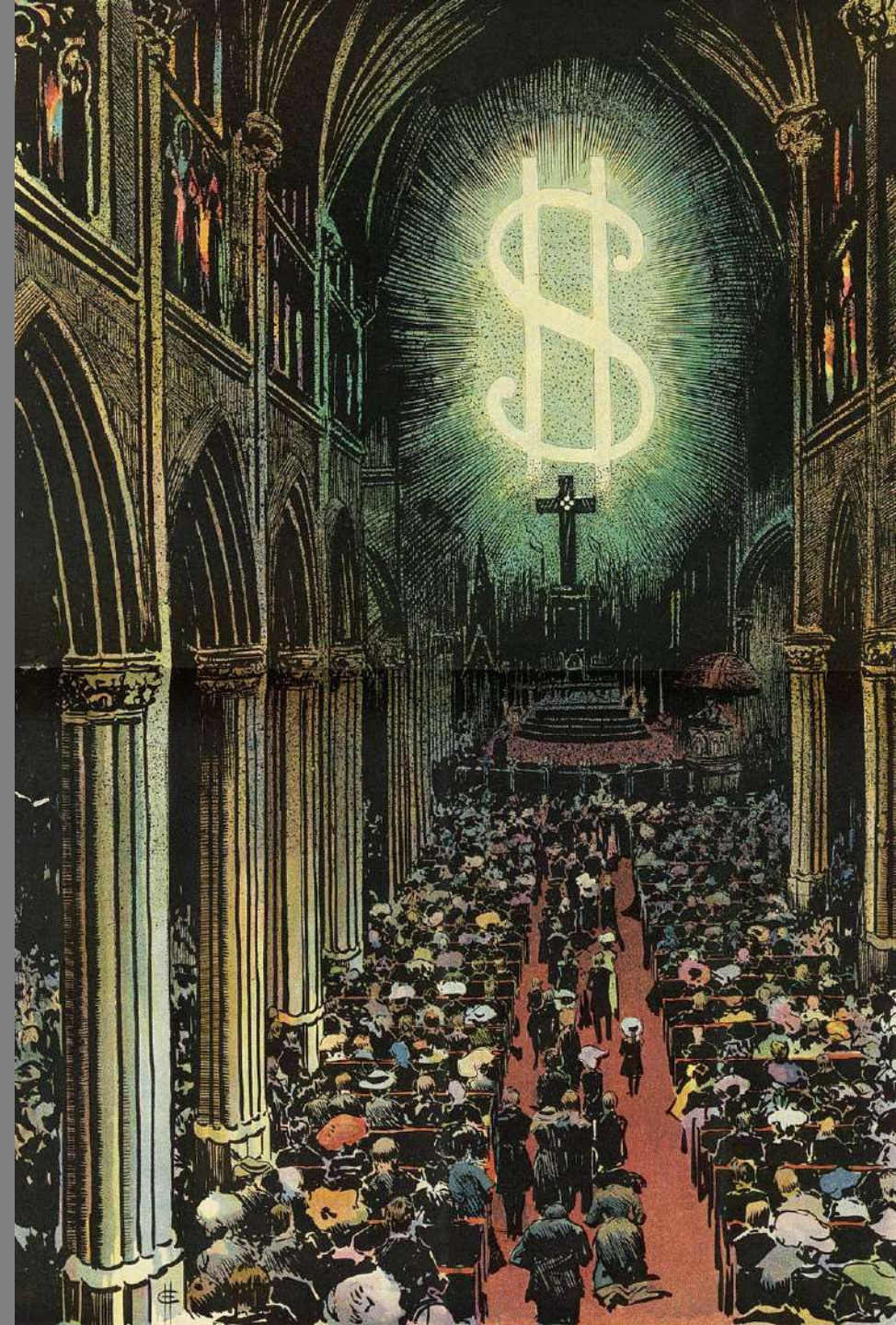
EROSION OF
RESOURCES IN
HIGHER EDUCATION



IN ENGLISH HIGHER
EDUCATION THE FUNDING
OF PUBLIC GOOD IS
PUSHED TO THE MARGINS



ARE WE FOREVER STUCK
WITH THE MARKET MODEL
OF HIGHER EDUCATION?



'EMPLOYABILITY'



**'EMPLOYABILITY' IS A
TRAP**

**HIGHER EDUCATION IS
MADE RESPONSIBLE BUT
CANNOT CONTROL
GRADUATE OUTCOMES**



DEVELOPING A
MORE POSITIVE
UNDERSTANDING
OF HIGHER
EDUCATION



OUTCOMES OF HIGHER EDUCATION

- Higher education generates *direct* effects or outcomes in its own right in two main ways –
 - education
 - production and communication of knowledge
- Higher education is also associated with *indirect* or *mediated* effects which rest on its interactions with *other social sectors*, and where the value of the activity is externally defined. These outcomes include the production of skilled labour power (employable 'human capital'); the allocation of opportunities and credentials across populations; the formation of citizens of a polity; contributions to tolerance, international relations, etc. Higher education alone cannot create these outcomes; it does so in partnership with other



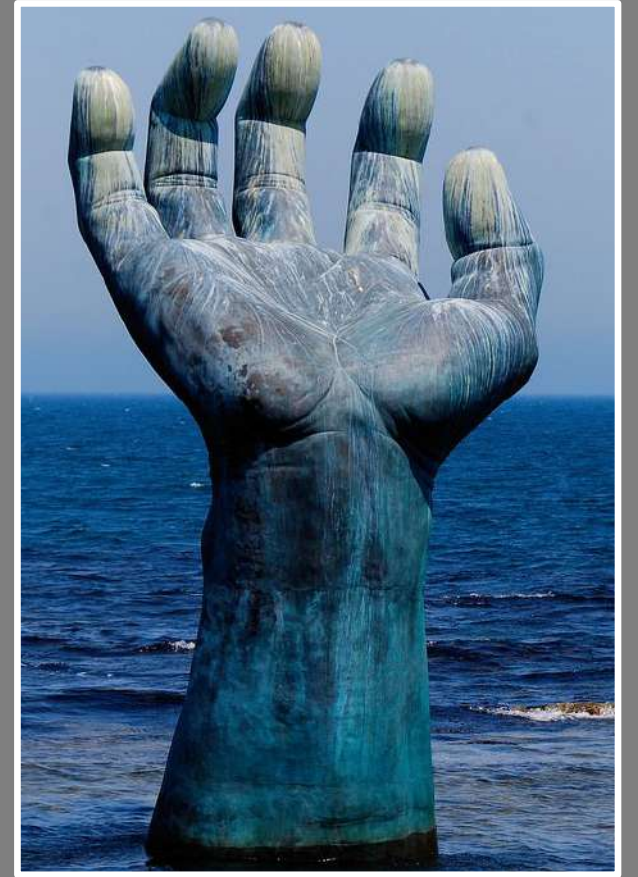
HIGHER
EDUCATION AS
STUDENT
SELF-FORMATION:

A MORE
AUTHENTIC
STUDENT-CENTR
EDNESS

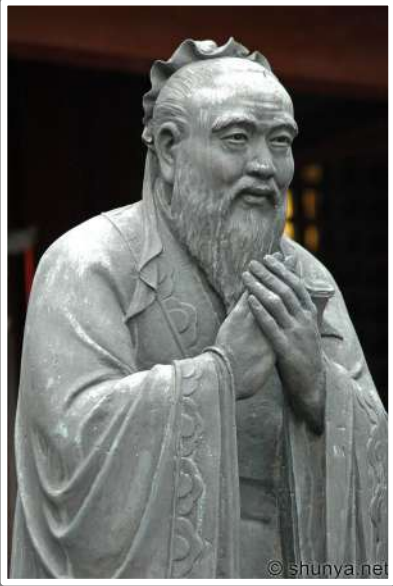


STUDENT SELF-FORMATION

- Only the learner does the actual learning, becoming.
- When going well, higher education is a reflexive process of self-formation and deepens, ongoing self-making, grounded in self-aware agency. When this happens it is deeply empowering, throughout life
- What distinguishes self-formation in higher education from self-formation in other domains is (a) the immersion in *knowledge*; and (b) for full-time students, numerous opportunities for varied sociability and encounters with multiple ways of seeing
- Essential elements of higher education as self-formation, which are integrated, are **(1) the autonomy of the learner, (2) reflexive**



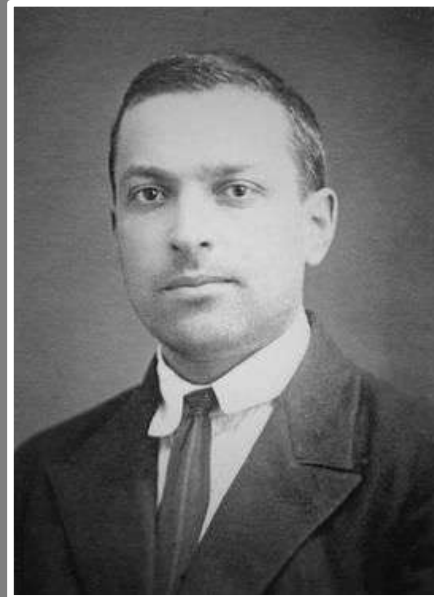
ANTECEDENTS OF REFLEXIVE AGENCY IN HIGHER EDUCATION



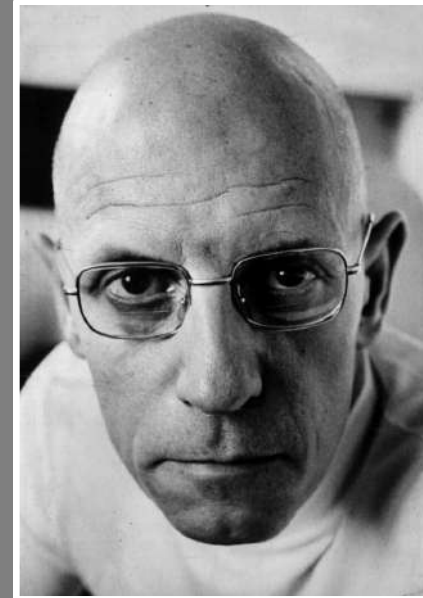
Confucius:
The Confucian learner is engaged in a continuing and never finished process of self-perfection, explicitly informed by moral and ethical dimensions



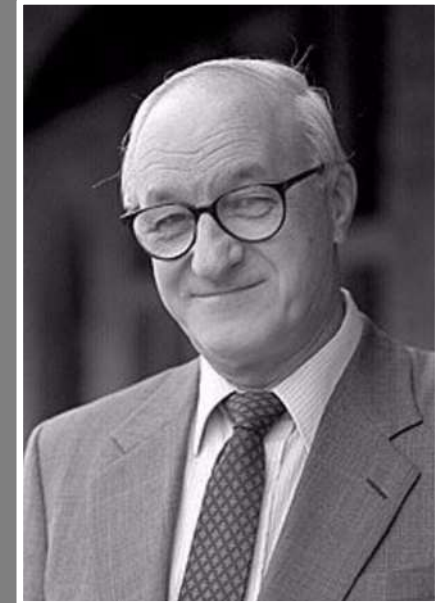
Immanuel Kant:
Bildung and Enlightenment: 'man's release from his self-incurred tutelage through the exercise of his own understanding ... without direction from another' (Kant 1784/1992, p. 90)



Lev Vygotsky:
'The true development of thinking is not from the individual to the social, it is from the social to the individual' (1986, p. 136)

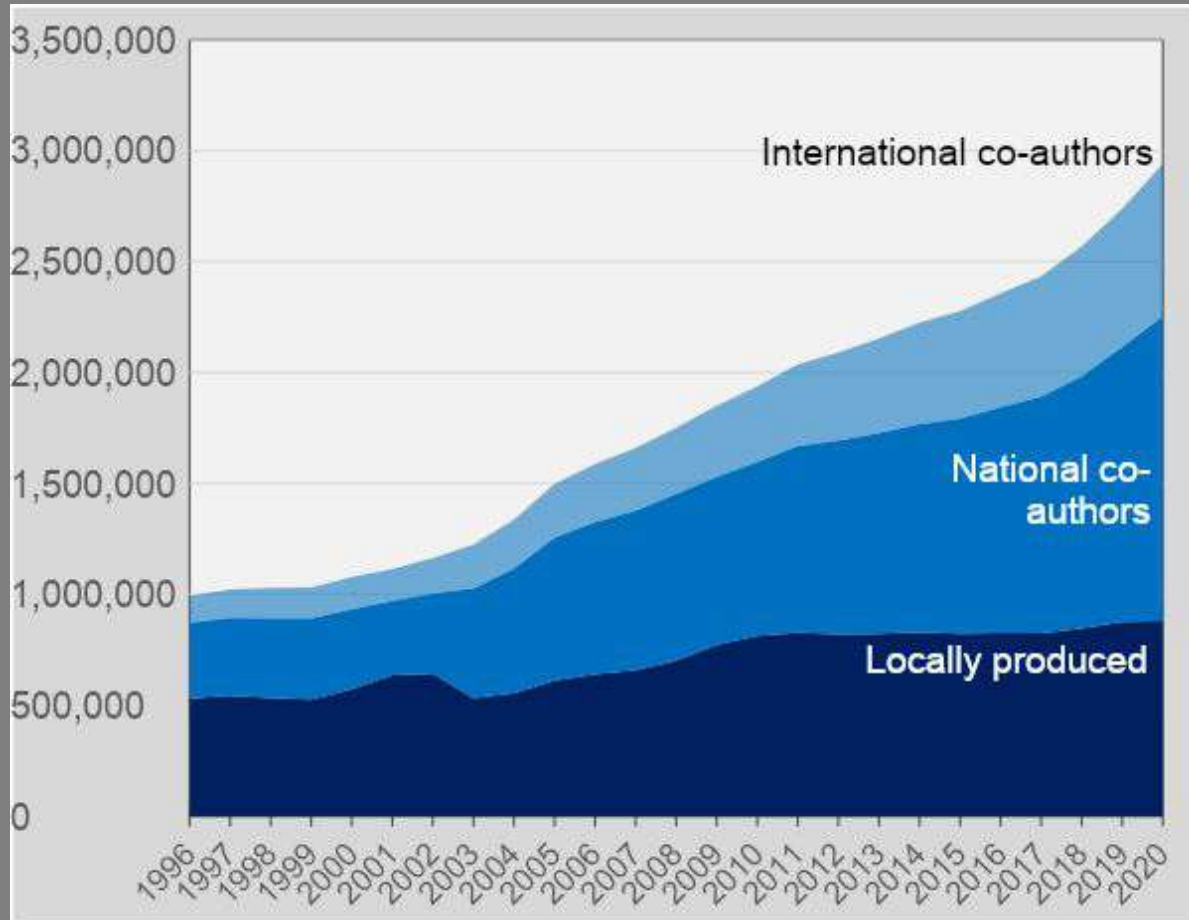


Michel Foucault:
The self is the only object we can freely will 'without having to take into consideration external determinations' (2005, p. 133)

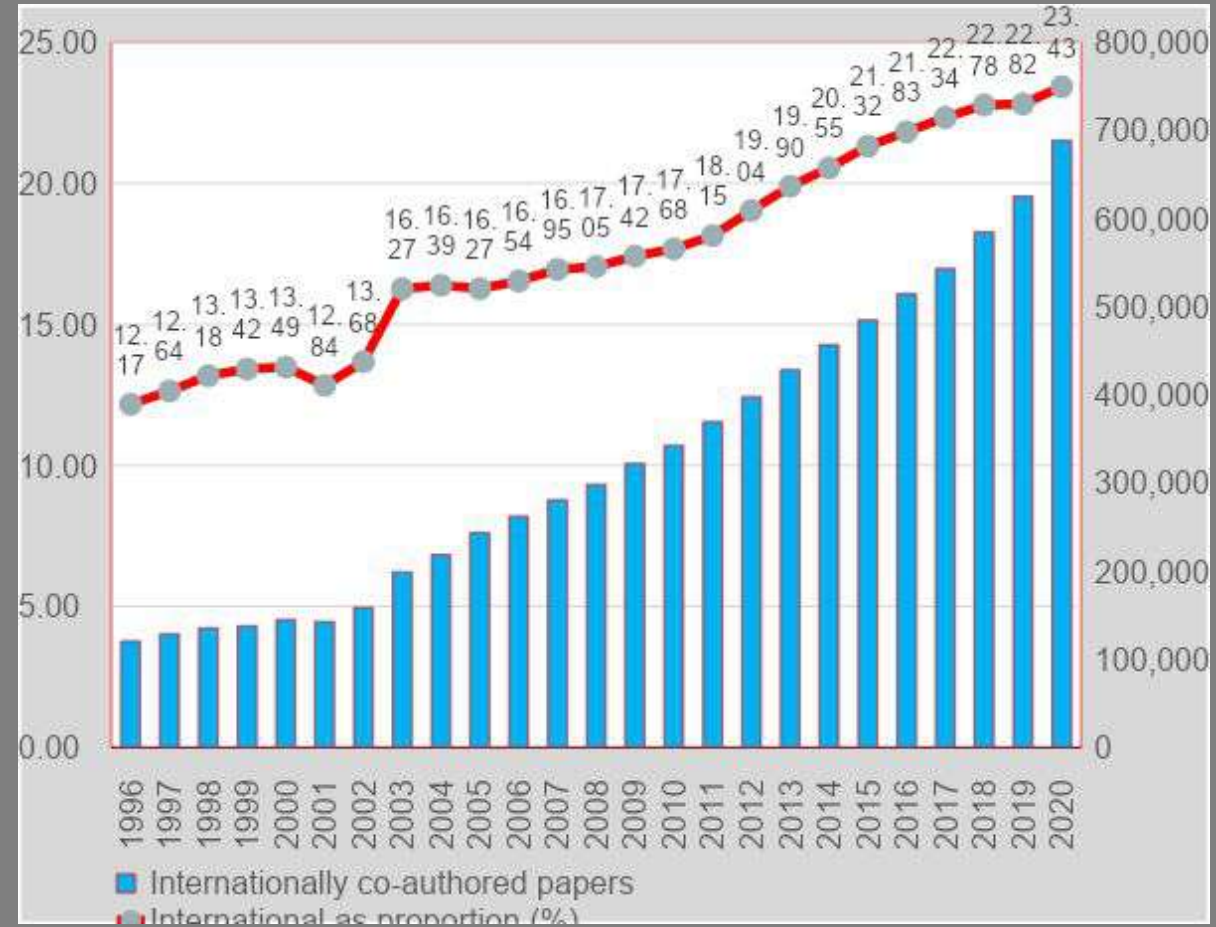


Albert Bandura:
Self-belief, and 'the most distinctive human characteristic is the capability for reflective self-consciousness' (1986, p. 21)

NUMBER OF SCIENCE PAPERS IN SCOPUS (NSF 2022), BY TYPE OF COLLABORATION, WORLD: 1996-2020



GROWTH IN NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF INTERNATIONALLY CO-AUTHORED PAPERS, WORLD: 1996-2020



INTERNATIONALLY COLLABORATIVE PAPERS: 2016-2019

| university | country | Cross-border papers | Cross-border % 2006-09 | Cross-border % 2016-19 |
|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Harvard U | USA | 44,071 | 36.0 | 53.4 |
| U Oxford | UK | 28,903 | 54.6 | 70.2 |
| U Toronto | CANADA | 27,583 | 43.7 | 58.2 |
| U College London | UK | 27,194 | 50.4 | 67.5 |
| U Cambridge | UK | 24,954 | 50.7 | 70.9 |
| Imperial College London | UK | 22,749 | 53.9 | 70.6 |
| Sorbonne U | FRANCE | 20,970 | 54.0 | 68.3 |
| U Copenhagen | DENMARK | 20,427 | 55.5 | 66.6 |
| Johns Hopkins U | USA | 19,835 | 33.3 | 46.2 |
| National U Singapore | SINGAPORE | 19,575 | 46.6 | 69.0 |
| U Melbourne | AUSTRALIA | 19,143 | 40.9 | 58.2 |
| Stanford U | USA | 18,714 | 31.8 | 46.9 |
| U Sao Paulo | BRAZIL | 18,638 | 31.0 | 48.2 |
| U British Columbia | CANADA | 18,391 | 46.8 | 61.5 |

SHARED
OUTCOMES,
SHARED
RESPONSIBILITY



INEQUALITIES ARE
DEEP-SEATED AND
CANNOT BE OVERCOME
BY HIGHER EDUCATION
ALONE

THEY NEED A WHOLE OF
SOCIETY APPROACH



CONCLUSIONS

1. The pandemic deeply confirmed the value of on-site learning and human relations in higher education.
2. We cannot know or predict the future in universities.
3. However, we can we reasonably sure that geo-politics will disrupt higher education and science to ar least some degree, placing university autonomy and academic freedom under pressure, in the UK and many other countries.
4. Resources will become tighter in UK universities.
5. We will continue to be plagued by myths, that higher education determines graduate employment, and determines social equity in the sector. We need to emphasis shared social responsibility for both these outcomes.



CONCLUDING CONCLUSIONS

6. Our positive vision of higher education should be grounded in the core activities where we have sole responsibility and accountability: education, and the production and communication of knowledge.
7. We can rework learning and teaching using the student-centred lens of higher education as self-formation through immersion in knowledge. Suggests a strong focus on reflexive student agency.
8. Education and knowledge are the foundation of higher education's many indirect contributions, including preparation for work and careers. Higher education generates indirect outcomes in partnership with other organisations, including employers and professions. This shared responsibility must be made clear, but is a good story to tell – all support social engagement and partnership.



Dicksonia Antarctica

YOU ARE KIND TO LISTEN TO
MY POOR THOUGHTS

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE
DISCUSSION ...