

Tsinghua University Institute of Education
Seminar 2 on 26 June 2019

Is there a Chinese 'Idea of a University'?



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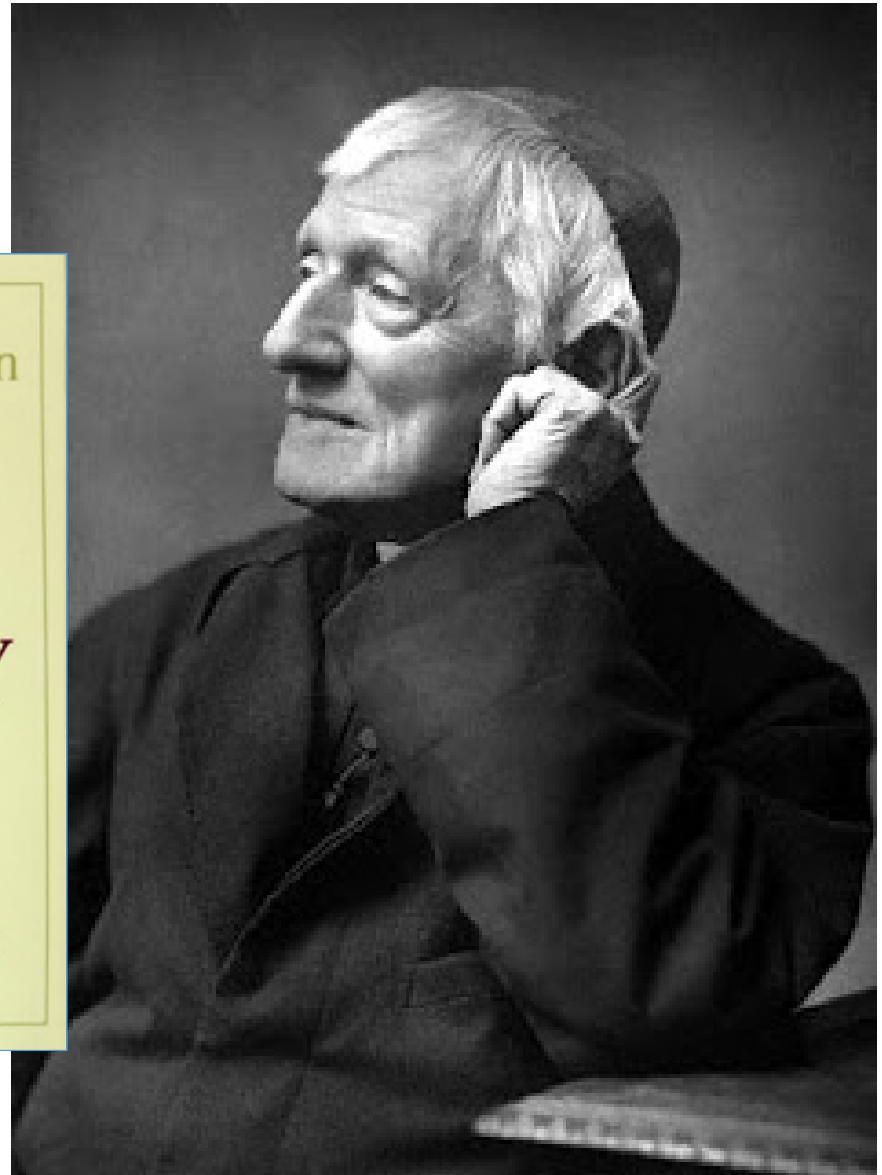
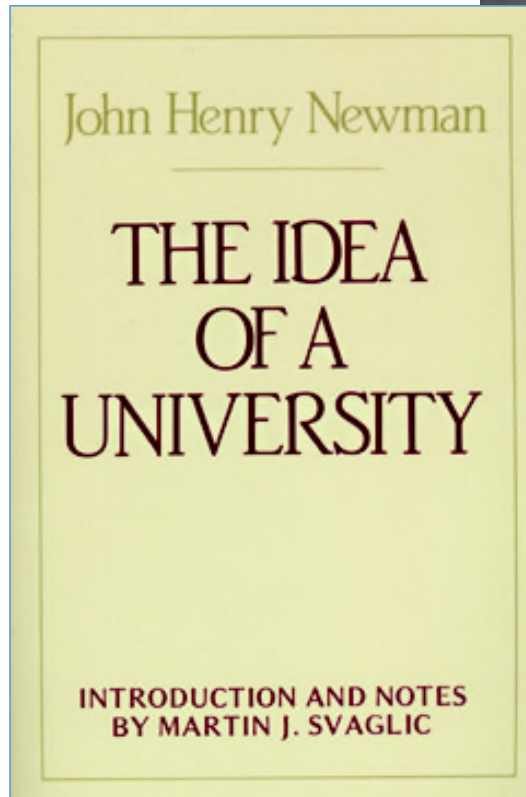
Is there a Chinese 'Idea of a University'?

1. Successive European-American 'Ideas of a University' *that shaped higher education in many countries*: JH Newman, Kant/von Humboldt, Clark Kerr, Triple Helix,
2. Comparison of Western and Chinese traditions in governance and higher education
3. China's present dynamism in higher education
4. Similarities and differences between modern Western and Chinese universities
5. China's distinctive system of governance in universities, based on effective integration of devolved autonomous universities into state policy and strategy
6. An answer to the question

Ideas of a European-American University

- JH Newman: 'The Idea of a University' (1852)
- Wilhelm von Humboldt and the University of Berlin (1809)
- Clark Kerr: The Uses of the University (1963)
- Henry Etzkowitz and Loet Leydesdorff (1995)

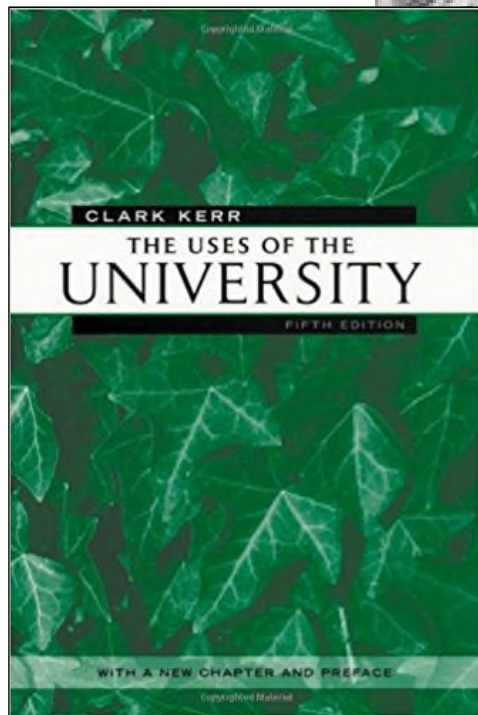




John Henry Newman

Wilhelm von Humboldt





Clark Kerr

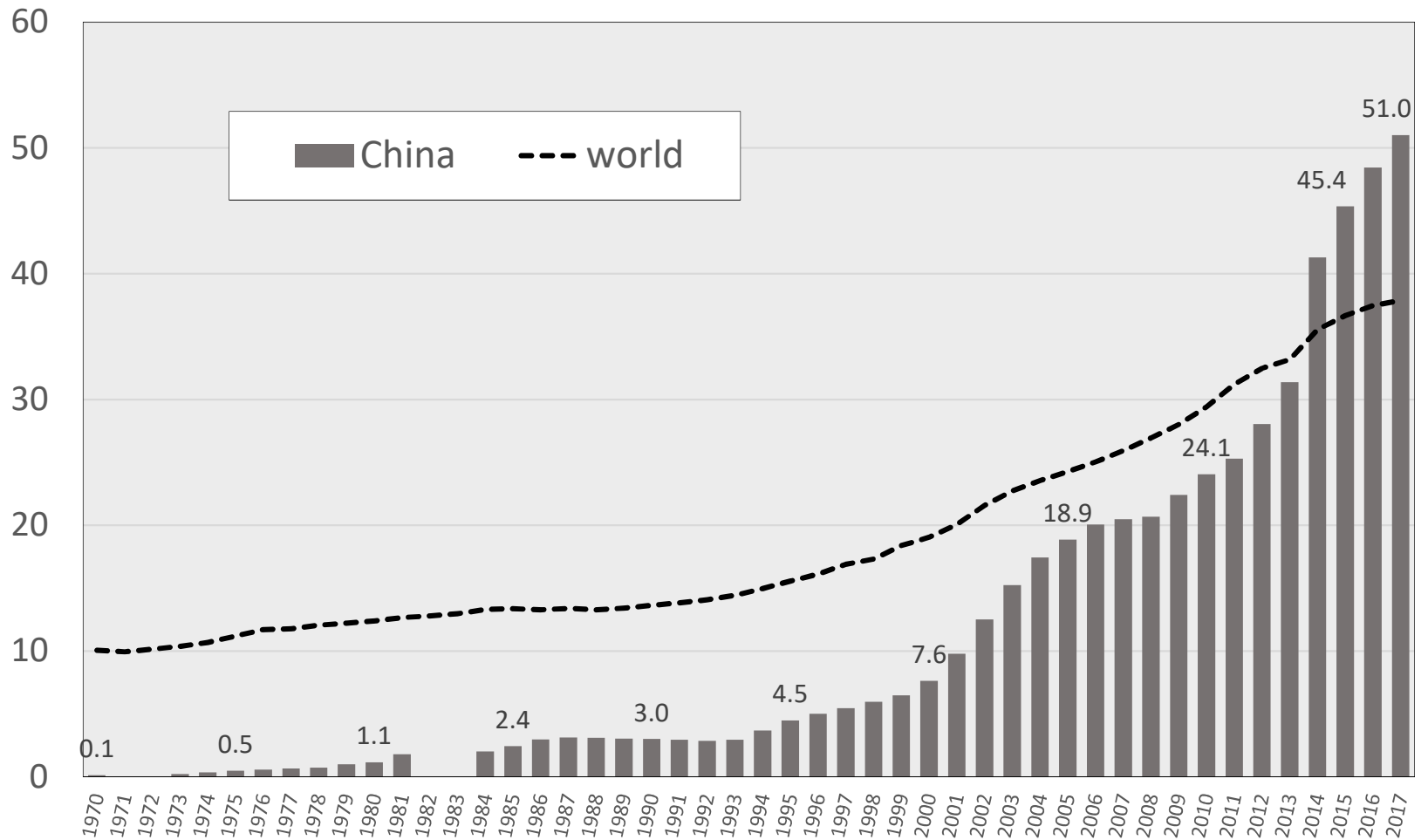


Henry Etzkowitz and Loet Leydesdorff

Comparison of East and West traditions in governance and higher education

	East (China)	West (e.g. France and England)
State	Centralising, comprehensive, always the strongest element	Episodically centralising but more contested. Division of powers
Other social elements	Subordinated to the state, which intervened at will	Church, nobles, merchants, towns had independent authority
State strategies	Managed decentralisation, training of own officials	Manage the aristocracy, negotiate within division of powers
Knowledge	Partial truths. Practical. From time to time, synthesising	Universalising, specialist. High status theory often separate from practice
Higher education	State sponsored training of officials in academies	Incorporated universities partially independent of church and state

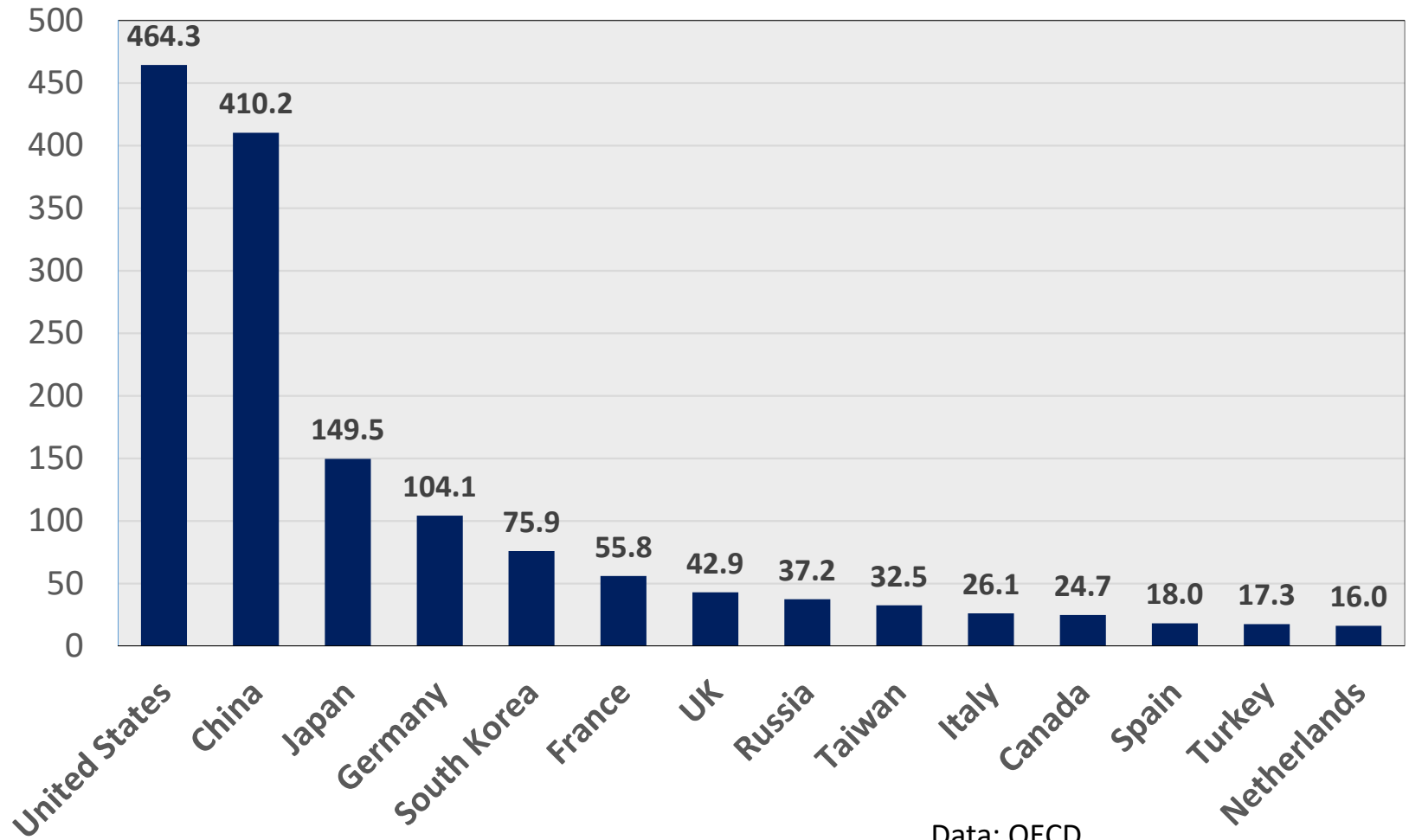
Gross Enrolment Ratio (%): 1970-2017



Data: UNESCO

National investment in R&D, 2016

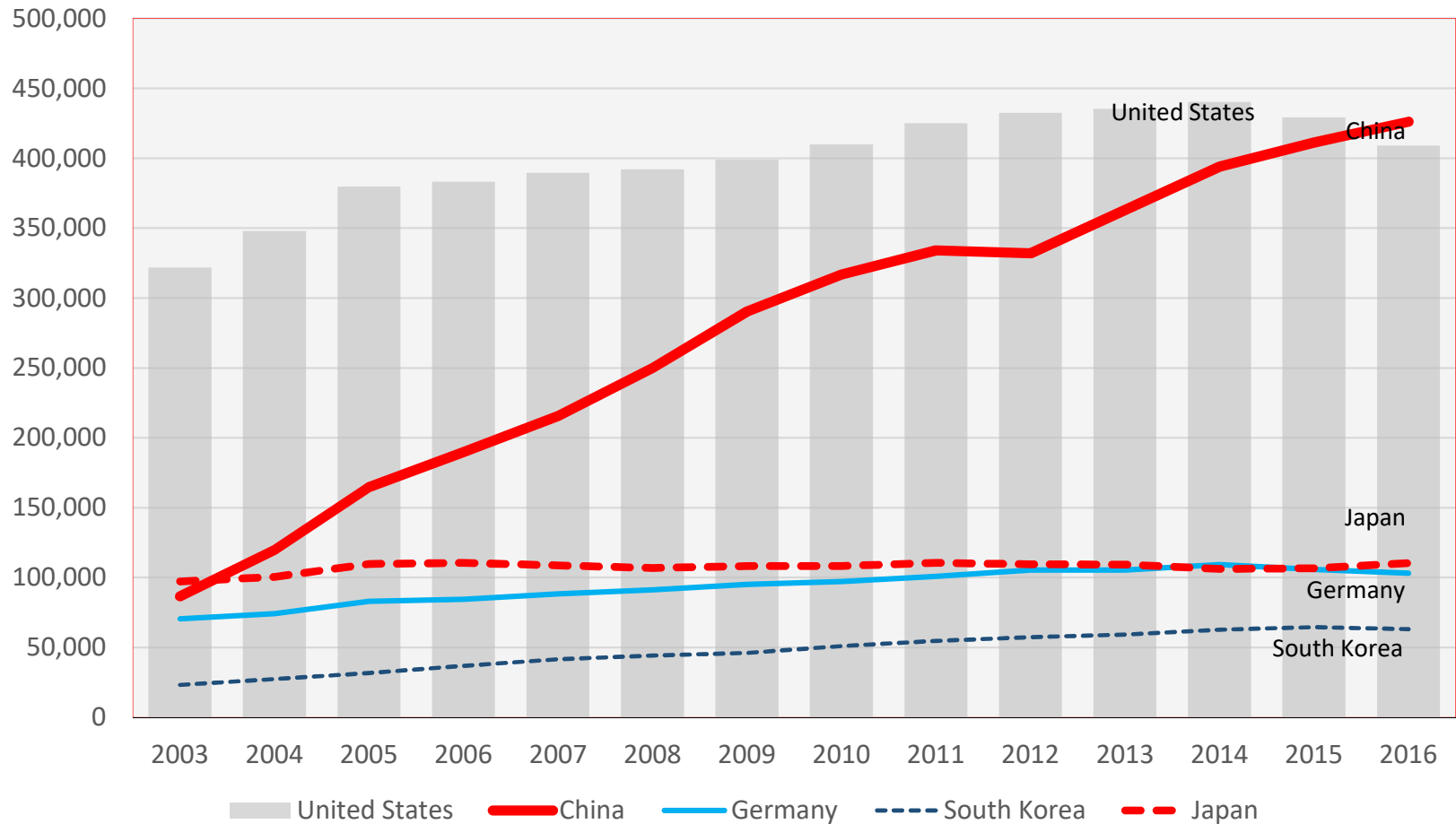
OECD data, \$s billion, constant 2010 USD PPP



Data: OECD

Annual number of published papers

US, China, Germany, Japan, South Korea: 2003-2016



Data: US National Science Board

Top universities in STEM research

(1) physical sciences and engineering, and (2) mathematics and complex computing, Papers in top 5 per cent of their field by citation rate, World: 2014-2017

University	System	Physical sciences & engineering
Tsinghua U	CHINA	776
MIT	USA	691
Stanford U	USA	598
UC, Berkeley	USA	580
Harvard U	USA	552
Zhejiang U	CHINA	509
Nanyang TU	SINGAPORE	503
U Science & T.	CHINA	452
U Cambridge	UK	449
Shanghai JTU	CHINA	398
ETH Zurich	SWITZERLAND	394
Peking U	CHINA	389
Imperial CL	UK	388
NU Singapore	SINGAPORE	384

University	System	Maths & computing
Tsinghua U	CHINA	236
Harbin IT	CHINA	182
Zhejiang U	CHINA	155
Huazhong U S&T	CHINA	153
U Electronic S&T	CHINA	143
Xidian U	CHINA	142
Beihang U	CHINA	141
MIT	USA	138
Nanyang TU	SINGAPORE	137
NU Singapore	SINGAPORE	137
Shanghai JTU	CHINA	130
City U HK	HK SAR	124
South East U	CHINA	123
Stanford U	USA	119

Top universities in Biomedical and Life/Earth

University	System	Top 5% papers in Biomedical and Health Sciences	University	System	Top 5% papers in Life and Earth Sciences
Harvard U	USA	2935	Harvard U	USA	261
Johns Hopkins U	USA	1085	Wageningen U	NETHERLANDS	253
U Toronto	CANADA	1071	U Washington Se.	USA	231
UC San Francisco	USA	967	ETH Zurich	SWITZERLAND	227
Stanford U	USA	915	UC Davis	USA	227
U College London	UK	850	UC Berkeley	USA	223
U Pennsylvania	USA	782	Cornell U	USA	206
U Michigan	USA	766	U Oxford	UK	200
U Washington Se.	USA	719	U Queensland	AUSTRALIA	187
U Oxford	UK	718	Stanford U	USA	187
Columbia U	USA	689	U Wisconsin-Madd.	USA	180
U Texas HSC Hou.	USA	667	U British Columbia	CANADA	170
Yale U	USA	661	MIT	USA	162
UC San Diego	USA	635	Ghent U	BELGIUM	161
UC Los Angeles	USA	602	Zhejiang U	CHINA	160

Chinese and Euro-American universities

	East (China)	West (e.g. USA, UK, Germany)
External governance	Integration of autonomous institutions into state strategies and policies via dual governance	Similar level of institutional autonomy as in China with a lesser level of integration into state
Internal governance	Increasingly takes corporate forms, strong authority of leaders	Corporate and strong leaders in US/UK, more faculty-based in Europe
Academic freedom	Emphasis on responsibility. Social respect. High performance stress	Emphasis on freedom from interference. Performance stress
Knowledge	Western not traditional Chinese epistemology, high priority STEM	Western disciplines, more focus on non-STEM disciplines than in China
Curriculum, pedagogy	Western curricula, underpinned by Confucian self-cultivation	Western curricula, weaker learning tradition with less student work
Social relations	Focus on relations with industry and provincial cities/authorities	US state sector outreach, shift in most countries to industry/external links
International	High internationalisation: language, benchmarking, research, students	Internationalisation varies (language in Europe not US/UK), students in UK

RED = features distinctive to China

Governance of universities and research

- Devolution policy and dual authority systems created by Deng Xiaoping have long and effective tradition in China.
- Shift from from state leadership/control to state facilitation and supervision. Autonomy of university leaders has grown.
- Universities firmly nested in government policy, strategies.
- Dual authority system secures working relations between party-state and university. Facilitates state-driven outcomes of autonomous university, state political control of university personnel outside university. Some party secretaries are state agents, others are university agents in state, some are both.
- Increasingly, devolved autonomy takes corporate neoliberal form: sharper competition, targets, hyper performance.

Conclusions

- China is comparatively dynamic in higher education development.
- The modern Chinese university is still pursuing its foundational (late Imperial/Republic) project of a force for modernisation partly external to China. Leading universities are very internationalised.
- The traditional role of faculty and Confucian self-cultivation in learning continue. However, orthodox Western disciplines frame knowledge, synergies with Chinese tradition are under-developed.
- International benchmarking, corporate universities may weaken potential for synergy with scholarly tradition. *Faculty are the key.*
- China has a strong 'Idea of a University' in one area, *governance* of higher education. Focused state, combined with autonomous disciplinary science in corporate universities, regulated by dual university/state authority, delivers very strong outcomes. This 'Idea' may appeal to emerging countries but is hard to import.