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Foreign Influences on Japanese and Chinese higher education: A comparative analysis

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Abstract

Two forces shaped Japanese and Chinese systems of higher education. These include the impact of foreign influences on the basic academic model; and the indigenization of the universities as part of the national development processes that took place in each country. Japan and China share significant similarities in the patterns and process of their adoption of foreign influences. This essay, however, discusses through comparison the underlying differences behind the perceived similarities between the two countries in borrowing and adopting foreign forms of higher education. The author argues that Japan followed a bifocal approach to the appropriation of foreign ideas in relation to the development of its higher education system. China, in contrast, adopted a go it alone policy, as it was unwilling or unable to abandon some of its deeply held traditional beliefs. The author therefore concludes that Japanese higher education succeeded in drawing a distinction between imported innovations and original ethos, while Chinese higher education failed to adapt innovative foreign models to its traditional patterns.

Résumé

Deux forces principales ont contribué à la formation des systèmes d'enseignement supérieurs de la Chine et du Japon. Elles comprennent l'impact des influences étrangères sur le modèle académique de base, et l'indigénisation des universités en tant que processus de développement national de chaque pays. La Chine et le Japon partagent des similarités importantes dans leurs tendances et processus d'adaptation des influences étrangères. Cette rédaction discute à l'aide d'une comparaison les différences sous-jacentes derrière les similarités perçues entre les deux pays en empruntant et en adoptant des formes étrangères d'enseignement supérieur. L'auteur affirme que le Japon a suivi une approche bifocale de l'appropriation des idées étrangères en relation au développement de son système d'enseignement supérieur. Par contraste, la Chine a décidé de faire à cheval seul, puisque elle ne voulait pas ou était incapable d'abandonner certaines de ses croyances traditionnelles fondamentales. L'auteur conclut donc que l'enseignement supérieur au Japon a réussi à faire la distinction entre des innovations importées et l'éthos original, alors que l'enseignement supérieur en Chine n'a pas réussi à adapter des modèles étrangers innovateurs à ses caractéristiques traditionnelles.

Introduction

TWO BASIC FORCES shaped the Japanese and Chinese higher education systems. These include the impact of foreign influences on the basic academic model, along with the indigenization of the universities as part of the modernization process. The two countries share significant similarities in the patterns and processes of adoption of foreign influences. Japan chose a variety of external influences after the Meiji Restoration in 1868, among which the German impact remained the greatest, until the United States tried to reshape Japanese institutions after World War II (Altbach, 1979, p. 28). China was subjected to significant foreign influences from Germany, France, Britain, Japan and the United States in the early Republican period. It later came to favor European modes, which were strongly dominated by the German articulation of academic organization. This continued throughout the Republican and Nationalist periods, as well as the 1950s when China carried out a total reorganization of its higher education system in close imitation of the Soviet pattern which itself included German features^[i] (Hayhoe, 1989a, p. 20). The two countries, which both upheld the Confucian tradition were never formally colonized. It is therefore fair to say that they used independent judgment in adopting foreign structures and models of higher education.

However, these similar patterns and processes led to very different results for each country. Japan has become an advanced scientific power, with a highly developed university and research system. It is now one of the world's most important academic systems, while China remains peripheral to global centers of excellence in higher education. This essay takes a comparative approach towards understanding the underlying differences behind the perceived similarities between Japan and China in borrowing and adopting foreign higher education ideas. As it is impossible to fully explain the adoption of foreign models in both countries in this short essay, specific periods of time are chosen from each country to contribute to the discussion.

Foreign models of higher education were adopted in different modes in Japan and China depending on the period of time under discussion. The first is the window-shopping^[ii] mode in which complete freedom was retained on the part of the recipients, Japan and China, in selecting any one of a number of foreign models. The second is the involvement^[iii] mode in which a specific foreign model was appropriated by each of the two countries, whether on a voluntary or involuntary basis. In the history of Japanese and Chinese higher education, the first examples of the window-shopping mode occurred respectively in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, within the periods of the Meiji Restoration in Japan and the early Republican China. The involvement mode would be best illustrated in the post-World War II Occupation period in late 1940s in Japan and early post-revolutionary period in 1950s in China. In the following section the author uses as categories of comparison and analysis the window-shopping mode and involvement mode on the basis of those periods of time concerned.

Window-Shopping by the Japanese Meiji Government and by the Chinese Republican Modernizers and Nationalist Reformers

THE PROTOTYPE OF MODERN Japanese universities, the University of Tokyo, was created in 1870s by the western-oriented Meiji Government. As an indispensable sub-department of the then Japanese bureaucracy, the University of Tokyo, essentially the model of the modern Japanese universities, traces its origin back to ancient or medieval Chinese institutions, rather than to the medieval prototype from which most Western universities originated (Nakayama, 1989, p. 98-99). The teaching and administrative staff of the university were actually government employees of the Ministry of Education. As Nakayama explains, this often conflicted with the free and self-generating intellectual activity of faculty members (1989, p. 99). The University of Tokyo's faculty-department structure was modeled after the departmental hierarchy of bureaucratic machinery, making interdepartmental mobility of both teachers and students extremely difficult (Nakayama, 1989, p. 99).

What is particularly fascinating is the fact that these features of the modern Japanese university bureaucracy, derived from the Chinese tradition, are in fact still problems facing current higher education in China while they no longer plague Japanese higher education.

Around 1870, the Meiji Government examined Western educational literature as a means of identifying and adopting the best elements of each model into its own system (Amano, 1979, p. 12-13). On the basis of these investigations, a crude plan for imitating Western educational systems was formulated, and in order for this to be implemented the Japanese government sent students to study abroad in a variety of western nations. In the 1870 draft rule for sending students abroad created by the Meiji Government, the following catalogue identifying the subjects that different countries excelled in was created:

Britain: machinery, geology and mining, steel making, architecture, shipbuilding, cattle farming, commerce, poor-relief;

France: zoology and botany, astronomy, mathematics, physics, chemistry, architecture, law, international relations, promotion of public welfare;

Germany: physics, astronomy, geology and mineralogy, chemistry, zoology and botany, medicine, pharmacology, educational system, political science, economics;

Holland: irrigation, architecture, shipbuilding, political science, economics, poor-relief;

U.S.A.: industrial law, agriculture, cattle farming, mining, communications, commercial law (Nakayama, 1989, p. 100).

A reading of the history of nineteenth century science indicates that the Meiji government's assessment of the intellectual expertise of the various countries was largely correct. This is generally how western science was imported to Japan during the 1870s and 1880s. The influence of each country upon Japanese higher education corresponded with the discipline in which that particular country excelled. The German influence, for example, was seen in medical schools and later in law schools, the British in engineering education, and the French in the early law schools (Amano, 1979, p. 12-13).

It became clear to the Japanese that they needed to find an appropriate model of higher education in order to rapidly develop a university system suitable specifically for their national development. The Japanese government decided to draw from elements of the German university since nineteenth century Germany was close to Japan in terms of its goals for social and economic development (Altbach, 1979, p. 28). In 1881, the Meiji Government decided to transform its institutional model, which was a mixture of influences

from a variety of western countries, to a strictly German model. This was not only because the German university was seen to be one of the most innovative in all of Europe at the time, but also because the Japanese government admired the modern German government bureaucracy, which was dominated by law school graduates, and wished to copy it (Albach, 1979: p.28; Nakayama, 1989, p. 103-104). Thus it was ultimately primarily the German model of higher education which impacted Japanese higher education during the time of the Meiji government.

The German model continued to dominate Japanese higher education until the end of World War I. Yet, while this is true a closer inspection of Japanese higher education during this period will show that the application of the German model to the Japanese context reflects in many ways differences from the German model. In other words, the Japanese system, because of its cultural context, was not an exact replication of the German system. The basic structure of the Japanese university in 1890, for example, consisted of six schools. They were law, humanities, science, technology, medicine and agriculture (Nakayama, 1989, p. 102). While this arrangement was borrowed from the faculty structure of the modern German university, a noteworthy difference is that in the Japanese university science was independent of the humanities (philosophy). The subjects had not yet been separated in nineteenth century Germany. In addition, the traditional vocational subjects of the modern applied disciplines, such as technology and agriculture, were, in contrast to the set up of western higher education at this time, elevated to the university status. Some scholars argued that this was because the utilitarian materialist Meiji Government had eventually incorporated American, British, and even French models within a predominantly German prototype thereby creating uniquely Japanese institutions (Nakayama, 1989, p. 104, Wu et al., 1989, p. 164) Japan was thus able to build a particularly Meiji-type of institutional paradigm, which was instrumental in Japan's development as a major power. This development also facilitated the training of a new generation of bureaucrats who gave shape to Japan's modernization.

In contrast to Japan's active approach the window-shopping mode occurred passively in twentieth century China. The missionary movement introduced to China a variety of western university models through the creation of missionary institutions. Examples of American forms developed in the Tsinghua University, the German Humboldtian pattern in the Peking University, the German *Technische Hochschule* format in the Tongji University, and the French model in the *Aurore* University (Hayhoe, 1989a, p. 15). With the abolition of the imperial examination system in 1905, the popularity of missionary higher education among Chinese youth grew enormously, and with it the number of missionary institutions. In 1917, missionary colleges and universities accounted for 80% of the Chinese higher education institutions. By 1921, China had only one national university (Peking University), one provincial university, and 5 private universities. In contrast, there were 16 missionary colleges and universities in all of the major Chinese cities (Zhou, 1988, p. 93-94).

Under the crumbling republican and warlord regimes prior to 1927, most of the missionary institutions were chartered with American state governments and headed by American missionary presidents (Hayhoe, 1989b, p. 34). From 1919 onward an Association for Christian Colleges and Universities regulated academic standards for all of the institutions. Eventually, most were funded on the American side by the United Board for Christian Higher Education in China which was based in New York City (Lutz, 1971). This explains how the American liberal arts college became the dominant model introduced by these mission institutions (Hayhoe, 1989b, p. 34). In contrast, the Chinese modernizers of the late Qing and early republican periods did not look to the missionary format of higher education for inspiration for their reforms. Their own conception of change for higher education consisted of a deep-rooted hostility toward western economic and political domination, thus reflecting the political temperature of this time period.

Out of the confidence that western techniques could be absorbed into a revitalized Confucian empire, enabling it to deal effectively with foreign incursions, the Chinese modeled their educational reform legislation of 1902 and 1903 closely on the Japanese education system of the time, which, influenced in turn by the German model, seemed to offer a formula for modernization that allowed for the preservation of Confucian values. Zhang Zhidong, an active scholar-bureaucrat at the time who played an important role in drafting this legislation, is well known for the slogan Chinese learning as the essence, Western learning for its usefulness, which guided the overall thinking behind this legislation (Ayers, 1971, p. 159-160, 253-254). The idea seems to have been that Western knowledge, which was divided epistemologically into specific areas of expertise, should be mastered and applied to specific purposes while a Chinese essence should remain at the core, directing the choice and orientation of those purposes. The Imperial University, founded in 1898, was at this point modeled somewhat after the University of Tokyo, closely linked to the Ministry of Education and supposed to have a kind of supervisory role over all levels of the education system.

As with Japan during the Meiji era a growing number of Chinese students were being sent abroad to attend foreign institutions of higher education. The first group consisted of 120 young boys sent to the United States between 1872 and 1875, and continued with small numbers being sent to European countries. It culminated in what was almost a mass movement of study to Japan between 1900 and 1911. By 1906, there were 7,283 Chinese students and intellectuals in Japan pursuing various forms of higher education, the majority preparing to be teachers in the modern institutions that were formed after the legislation of 1902 and 1903 (Abe, 1987, p. 73-79, Chen & Tian, 1991, p. 686-689). The large number of returnees from Japan was an important channel of influence. In this way, the Japanese achievements and models had a dominant influence over practical Chinese educational thinking. It also propelled the creation of a modern school system during this period (Bastid, 1988, p. 44-50). Ultimately however, the Japanese influences were abandoned when the threat of Japan's imperialism became more and more evident.

By 1910, there were only three government universities in China. They were oriented towards studying classics and technologies (Hayhoe, 1989b, p. 38). Most modern Chinese higher education during this period was carried out in gentry-supported colleges, provincial higher education institutions and missionary institutions. In this period of political confusion, educators found themselves with the greater capacity to participate in the decision making process. This led to the new educational legislation of 1922 and 1924, in which a new set of standards, as opposed to educational aims, was put forward. Such standards were developed following the American university model. The characteristics of this type of higher education involved adapting to the evolution of society, subscribing to the notion of education for life, universalizing access to education and being flexible in giving space to local initiatives. All higher education institutions of adequate academic standards were to be called universities, whether their curriculum was broadly academic or specifically professional. As a result, the number of institutions calling themselves universities grew from 8 in 1917 to 35 in 1923 (Hayhoe, 1989b: pp.39-40). In spite of limited funding and chaotic political conditions, this was a period when Chinese universities found a modern identity, as faculty and students supported the kinds of scientific study which would contribute to the needs of national development.

With the accession of the Nationalist Party to power in 1927, the new government wished to see a scholarly community which used its intellectual authority to support and legitimize the political order in an uncritical way. It looked to Europe for ideas about reform, and prepared for the greater integration of university faculty into the bureaucracy. Thus in 1931, a League of Nations Mission of Experts, which consisted completely of European experts, was invited by the Nationalist Government to do a thorough review of all aspects of the Chinese education system. They made the following recommendations for reform: the establishment of academic chairs in place of the college and departmental organization, clear national procedures for monitoring all academic appointments, and a comprehensive examination at the end of each university program to ensure a basic foundation in a discipline. In the legislation passed between 1933 and 1936 many of these recommendations were adopted, resulting in a greater measure of centralized governmental control over higher education.

The European model, however, proved to be a two edged sword in the hands of the Chinese government. While it contributed to modern Chinese scholarly development by improving the quality of science and scholarship, the European model also echoed, in certain ways, aspects of the Confucian tradition, which the Nationalist Government wished to use to its own political ends. The strict faculty appointment conditions, and the regimentation of a standard examination at exit, enabled the government to hide political repression under the guise of academic requirements. As university intellectuals became more and more critical of the Chinese governments inadequate response to Japanese aggression, and its failure to address fundamental problems of rural development, it responded with increasingly repressive academic and administrative policies. The conflict of the scholarly community with the Nationalist regime eventually constituted one aspect of a set of conditions that favored the final victory of the Communist Party.

Involvement with the American Model in Post-War Japan and with the Soviet Model in Post-Revolutionary China

ALTHOUGH THE POST-WORLD WAR II Occupation Forces consisted of representatives of several Allied powers, the occupation of Japan was administered almost exclusively by the United States. Thus the model for post-war reform with respect to a variety of public institutions was purely American. Extraordinary pressure came from the Occupation Forces for replacement of the existing Japanese higher education system with the American model. Following the recommendations made by the American Educational Mission, the Occupation Forces introduced a series of measures to the Japanese government to carry out an educational reform, among which democracy, decentralization, general education and lay control signified typical American style.

In pre-war Japan, college graduates comprised fewer than 7 percent of the corresponding age cohort (Nakayama, 1989, p. 106) and hence Japanese education was naturally elitist in nature. The Americans strongly urged the Japanese to expand their higher education sector to the extent that each of the 46 prefectures would have its own university (Kitamura, 1979, p. 66-68). In spite of the economic hardship that prevailed after Japan's defeat in the War, a significant expansion of expensive higher education was proposed by the Ministry of Education. Many *senmōgakko*, junior professional colleges, and normal schools took advantage of this opportunity and sought to raise their status to university level. As a result, 201 universities and 149 junior colleges were created in place of the 45 universities and 177 colleges that existed before the War. The admission rate to universities and junior colleges increased to 17 percent of the appropriate age cohort by 1955 (Kitamura, 1979, p. 67, Aimoto et al., 1993, p. 163).

It is probably fair to say that had the elitism of pre-war Japanese universities still continued in the 1960s and 1970s, higher education would have become obsolete in the face of the rapid growth of the country's economy at the time. In addition, the student revolts of the late 1960s in western industrialized countries were interpreted to a certain extent in Japan as being due to overcrowding in universities. In this sense, Japan suffered less than its European counterparts, because the expansion had started earlier and facilities were more adequate.

The Occupation Forces were also enthusiastic about introducing the American ideal of general education (Nakayama, 1989, p. 108), in which the trinity of course arrangements—humanities, social sciences and natural sciences—was adopted. This innovation stood in contrast to the original Japanese set up whereby the university curricula was designed for the education of specialists. With the pressure from the Occupation Forces, the Japanese translated this trinity ideal into practice, by creating a system whereby the first two years of university consisted of a general education. This ideal was taken further later on, when the University of Tokyo created a new faculty in the College of General Education, where a new program of general education was designed and experimental interdisciplinary subjects such as area studies were incorporated (Nakayama, 1989, p. 110). The Americans viewed the Japanese pre-war educational system as one that was too centralized, and thus proposed in 1947-48 to delegate supervisory power of universities to local prefectural educational commissions, like the state universities in the U.S. This move was met with strong opposition from the Japanese policy makers as they felt that local governments had neither the experience nor the resources to handle matters of higher education (Nakayama, 1989, p. 107). In the face of this opposition, the Occupation Forces gave up on this issue.

In addition to the centralization of the Japanese education system, the Americans viewed the internal governance body in major Japanese universities, referred to as Faculty Conferences, as too complacent and isolationist. Therefore, in 1950, the Americans proposed to introduce the American style Board of Trustees as the governing body of Japanese national universities (Nakayama, 1989, pp. 107-108). This time an even stronger opposition came from the Japanese, and finally the proposal to create a board of trustees for the Japanese universities was withdrawn. Consequently, the Japanese did not duplicate the American university system, but carefully planned the indigenization of the American model, adapting it to suit Japanese national needs and realities. After the withdrawal of the Occupation Forces in 1952, the Ministry of Education gradually regained control of higher education. Instead of returning to the old pre-war model, which was established in the late nineteenth century and in need of a reform to meet the new demands of the mid-twentieth century, it initiated the process of internalization (in other words, domestication of the external American model) to absorb useful elements from the American model and avoid those which were incompatible with the Japanese cultural and social context (Kobayashi, 1979).

All of these resulted in a Japanese higher education system that reflects some elements of its nineteenth-century origins as well as considerable qualities from American higher education. It is currently a very large and diverse system composed of both highly selective and mass-oriented universities. These many sectors do not simply exist side by side with a parity of esteem. Rather, they are placed within a hierarchical ranking, that originated in the nineteenth century with the government's intention to train a highly competent elite at the imperial universities (Aimoto et al., 1979). This intention was institutionalized, and has persisted and conditioned the rest of the system even as diverse sectors have emerged and the system has swelled greatly. The Japanese degree of monopolization of elite placement by a small peak of the hierarchy can be paralleled in the West only by the Oxford-Cambridge top of the British system, which is still staffing the British cabinet and the upper echelons of the civil service.

While post-war Japan, encouraged by the Occupation Forces, reformulated American forms of higher education to suit their own indigenous system, Chinese policy makers reacted in a different manner to their new political circumstances. In China, when the Communist Party achieved victory in 1949, the new leadership viewed higher education with a new political vision. A decision was made in 1952 to reorganize Chinese higher education in imitation of the Soviet model. Within this model, the Marxist-Leninist ideology guaranteed training to individuals to serve the objectives of a socialist state. The inherited educational system from the Nationalists was not suitable to the new government as it was viewed as borrowed from Western imperialists.

Between 1950 and 1960, a total of 1,200 Soviet educators were sent to China, among whom 654 worked as consultants assisting in the organizational aspects of higher education reform. The remainder served as faculty members teaching on Chinese campuses. At the same time, about 7,324 Chinese scholars and students completed their study programs with proper qualifications in the Soviet Union (Orleans, 1987: p. 188). In the light of the Soviet articulation of the socialist higher education system, as Hayhoe explains, a mixture of persisting features of European academicism, most notable in the conception of a comprehensive university as an institution devoted to pure science and arts disciplines only, and socialist economic planning which decreed the close integration of all professional training into the development plans of each major economic and bureaucratic sector (1989b, p. 45). China's existing 207 higher institutions were dismantled and all private and missionary universities were reabsorbed into 181 new institutions.

A newly established Ministry of Higher Education directly administered 14 comprehensive universities. These universities took up the basic arts and science departments of all the old institutions to produce strong departments which were able to play a leading role in advancing these disciplines. The ministry's new innovations also included 6 major teachers universities, which had both departments of education and fine arts, in addition to basic arts and science departments, plus about 10 most distinguished polytechnic universities and a small number of foreign language, fine arts and physical education institutes. Another 28 engineering universities belonged to other central ministries such as metallurgy and machine building, while 26 agricultural institutes, 29 medical institutes, 4 institutes of political science and law, and 6 institutes of finance and economics were administered by their respective central ministries. In addition, there were some teachers colleges administered by the provincial higher education bureaus.

The Ministry of Higher Education was also responsible for making detailed and nationally standardized curricular plans in support of the projected manpower needs for each sector and sub-sector of the economy. It regulated the preparation of teaching plans for a set of narrowly defined specializations which grew from 215 in 1952 to 323 in 1957, as more and more specific definitions were given to manpower profiles (Orleans, 1987). The teaching plan for each specialization included the purpose of formation, the organization of time, the structuring of all the required courses and the arrangement of the teaching environment. It was supplemented by detailed course outlines and standardized textbooks which ensured high academic and political standards throughout the country. Within each institution it was the specialization, rather than the department, which was the most important

academic unit, and its entrants programs and graduate job assignments were all centrally regulated.

The reformed system was designed to produce technical experts who would be slotted into appropriate lifelong posts within the socialist governmental bureaucracy, and were expected to apply their skills to socialist modernization, without being critical of the system. Its structure and the organization of knowledge both contributed to and reflected a sense of rigidity and was a reflection of the whole sociopolitical system. Not only were classification and ranking strong, but a hierarchical structure of curricular knowledge, with the highest prestige going to pure fields, was also present.

Some scholars argue that, on a deeper level, this authoritarian regimentation of the higher education system reflected the persistence of Confucian knowledge patterns. These patterns exalted pure classical knowledge and made all other areas of knowledge in applied scientific fields subordinate to it. In this case however, Marxism-Leninism replaced the Confucian classics as the knowledge of the highest prestige and all forms of learning subordinated to it (Hayhoe, 1989a, p.20, Orleans, 1987, p.184-185). Nevertheless, the Soviet-inspired higher education system played a major role in China's rapid industrialization in the 1950s by producing a large number of technical personnel. On the other hand it tended towards sterility. After the Sino-Soviet dispute, however, Soviet patterns of higher education were viewed as elements of Soviet penetration and efforts were thus made first to modify the Soviet model and then to develop a radical approach—the Cultural Revolution—to detach completely from Soviet influences. This was done through the dismantling of the existing intellectual system in hopes of creating truly independent institutions. This proved ultimately unsuccessful and some would say disastrous.

Conclusion

A COMPARISON OF THE HISTORICAL development of higher education in Japan and China reveals how their different approaches to foreign models of higher education have impacted their higher education and even their epistemological systems. Japan followed a bifocal approach to borrowing foreign ideas and developing its higher education system, looking both to the foreign models and to its own earlier patterns of university development while China adopted a go it alone policy, unwilling or unable to abandon some of deeply held traditional beliefs. Thus, Japanese higher education has followed a unique course of development by adopting a variety of foreign models while establishing its own indigenous organizational structure. In contrast, China was less successful with their experimentation with a number of foreign models and a radical indigenous approach. The Chinese have now returned to the window-shopping approach with the West for ideas about academic development. In other words, Japanese higher education succeeded in drawing a distinction between imported innovations and original ethos, while the Chinese failed to adapt innovative foreign models to their traditional patterns. Consequently, Japan was able to borrow a number of higher education ideas from other countries and adapt them to suit Japanese national needs while China was exposed to and adopted a range of foreign influences over time and that confusion, conflict, and at times, failure has been pervasive.

The German sociologist Max Weber identified a lack of rationalization as the major obstacle to China's modernization (Weber, 1964). This can be applied to China's higher education development, in which the moral or political concern always made it impossible to form a clearly unified policy for the direction of educational and scientific development along with the adoption of foreign ideas. Within Weber's framework, the rationalization of the state, often resulted in a definitive separation of the spheres of science, morality and culture. He argued that it created the social conditions needed for the emergence of an impersonal and fully calculable system of rational law. This in turn prevented social lag from occurring when traditional beliefs hamper the introduction of new institutions from outside the society. Following this theory, Japan has followed a rational approach in achieving success, not only in relation to higher education but also with respect to various other aspects of society. China could blame its resistance to the full rationalization of the state for the failure in its modernization process, not only confined to higher education.

As the Cultural Revolution in China saw a strong revival of moral fervor, it is doubtful whether it really dissolved Chinese Confucian traditions. Thus, while China now truly attends to innovation in higher education without the emotional or political objection to foreign influence in the semi-colonial period, more attention should be paid to persisting patterns that might be antithetical to those foreign models and innovations necessary for developing centers of excellence in Chinese higher education.

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[1] Some sort of periodization is needed in laying out of this complexity. The first one, the late Qing period, is roughly between the 1860s and 1911, when the traditional institutions gradually faded out, and modern universities and colleges developed, while the legislation was designed to integrate attractive external patterns within an explicit and persisting set of Chinese definitions. The second one, the Republican period, is from 1911 to 1927, a time of revolution followed by near anarchy, which gave considerable space for experimentation at the levels of policy, legislation and practice in higher education. In many ways, the May 4th Movement of 1919,

the center-point of this period, was more important for the establishment of modern universities in China than any other single event. The third one is the Nationalist period (1927-1949), the first unified political context in China, when universities were seen as essential accoutrements of state building. Post-revolutionary Chinese higher education development (1949-) exhibits a mix of East-West interactions. The new Communist government simply replaced various Western institutional and curricular models with Soviet ones in 1950s. After the Sino-Soviet dispute, efforts were made to modify this model and develop a distinctive Chinese approach to higher education. However, these experiments proved unsuccessful and were followed by the massive disruptions of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). In the most recent period (1978-), China has again looked toward the West for ideas about academic development and is currently engaged in a process of significant higher education reform.

[ii] This rhetorical term is used to indicate certain limitations in understanding and replicating Western institutions, because universities are so deeply rooted in tradition that many of the culture-specific elements are filtered out of newly created non-Western institutions. Consequently, the adopted model often exhibits indigenous traits as well as the most up to date trends, which have not yet found their way into Western institutions.

[iii] This rhetorical term is used to indicate that ties are very close between Western and non-Western countries as evidenced by the exchange of faculty members and students, and similar degree programs, etc.

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