

***To see others –
not as we see ourselves***

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- **A few words about making cross-cultural comparisons**
- **Point of reference: Chinese study of top 500 universities of the world**
- **Study in response to decision of Chinese Gov't to transform higher education;**
- **goal is: 100 universities to be the top of the world**

Results of the study:

- of the top 50 – 35 are US universities
 - of the top 100 – 51 are US universities
 - of the top 500 – 169 are US universities
 - 42 universities are British
 - 43 universities are German
 - 35 are Japanese
 - 22 are Canadian
 - only State Univ. of Moscow in top 100
 - Charles Univ. (318)
 - other Central European universities (lower half):
Univ. Szeged; Jagiellonian Univ.;
St. Petersburg State Univ.; Univ. of Warsaw;
Budapest Technical Univ.; Eotvos Lorand Univ.
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What does this study tell us?

- 1. H.Ed involved in global competitiveness**
- 2. Unprecedented changes (exogenous and endogenous)**
- 3. Singapore delegation in US**
- 4. Funds for H.Ed. only one issue:
governance
culture**
- 5. Knowledge is more than subject-matter:
perceptions, skills, application;**
- 6. Knowledge about system, context, change,
leadership**
- 7. Rankings not precise – but powerful:
reputation**

Exceptionalism of U.S. H. Ed. system?

- Most common errors with comparisons
- importance of “context”
- uniqueness and universality
- historical roots
- paradox: generally low ranking in primary and secondary schools
- historical factors
 - no U. S. University
 - intellectual ideas: pragmatism, Humboldtian model,
 - by “accident” separate structure for Graduate Schools; graduate assistants



Cultural factors

learning by doing

experimentation

emphasis on problem-solving

learning by making mistakes

value success, achievement

develop people

**responsibility for one's education:
individualism**

future orientation; search for “new”

Governance

- **also cultural issue – people organize the way they think**
- **each institution its own governance**
- **representing lay interests**
- **relevance to employment; transition from school to work**
- **“profession” of educational administrators**

Conclusion

- **In comparisons avoid uncritical acceptance**
- **“Importing” macro concepts that fail**
- **Strength of U. S. H. Ed. :
giant experimental laboratory**
- **Co-existence with “liberal education”**
- **new fields and intellectual competencies:**
 - knowledge management
 - skills: systems thinking,
creative thinking
anticipatory “future” thinking
- **traditional disciplinary education based
on what is already known**

- **In my study of 15 educational systems plus World Bank, OECD, UNESCO, and now Bologna – all undergoing massive changes**
- **all have structures set up for “self-reflection”; self-examination**
- **all focus on nexus of research and teaching**
- **few study nature of “competition” and theories on which based**
- **importance of trust**

- **Theoretical disagreement whether “competition” creates economic development**
- **Studies show it does if managerial (organizational) capabilities exist**
- **Competence based theory of competition:**
 - * **requires system thinking**
 - * **strategic thinking also requires system thinking**
 - * **continuous renewal**
 - * **meta-learning**