



Book Review

Chinese Universities and Colleges, 4th edition, Compiled by China Educational Association for International Exchange, Higher Education Press, China, 2004, ISBN 7040159309.

This book reflects the tendency of Chinese Education to be more and more included in the global educational system. The fourth edition describes 1,070 out of more than 2,000 existing higher education institutions in P. R. China.

It gives addresses, contact telephones, emails, and websites of these universities and colleges. It also gives information about administration, students and faculty members, colleges and schools within these institutions. Also it shows all undergraduate and graduate programs.

It is astonishing to see such an extension of education opportunities. In 2003 in Chinese universities and colleges were listed 749,000 faculty members including 73,000 full professors. For comparison we can mention that in the USA it is listed 1,175,000 faculty members at the universities and colleges of higher education during period of 2003-2004 (Digest of Education, US, Dept. of Education, 2005). Taking in consideration that major expansion of higher educational institutions in China started at the beginning of 1990th one can see that such numbers are at least comparable with the US numbers.

In 1999 the “project 985” had been started by the Chinese Ministry of Education. This project was devoted to the development of international first class universities. It has three stages: At the first stage the main support was directed to the Peking University and Tsinghua University; at the second state this list included Nanjing University, Zhejiang University, Fudan University, Shanghai Jiaotong University, University of Science and Technology of China, and Harbin Institute of Technology. At the third stage the development of other 30 universities are supported. Among them are Renmin University of China and Beijing Normal University. It is interesting to note that, for example, Beijing Normal University in 2003 had around 7,000 undergraduate students including more than 2,000 foreign students. It says about the success of the “project 985”. Foreign students less likely would come to study to the lower class university. They rate highly their time and money.

One of the important issues that need to be mentioned is that Chinese Ministry of Education develops together with the universities the state-level top-quality courses and make them available to all Chinese universities by Internet. This action introduces the high quality courses literally to each university or college that want to implement them.

Another important feature that worth to be mentioned is tendency to decentralization of education. The higher vocational (junior) colleges now are accredited not by the central government but only by the regional (provincial) governments.

The number of Chinese students and scholars studying abroad is around 700,000. They have been sent to study in over 108 countries and regions. Around 400 Chinese higher education institutions enroll foreign students. Chinese government signed very important “Regional Treaty on Asia-pacific Area Mutual Acknowledgement of Higher Education Certificate, Diploma and Degree” with the countries of Asia-Pacific region. Also there are agreements on mutual acknowledgement of higher education diploma and degree with: Germany, France, United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand.

Important part of modern development of education in China is establishment of private educational institutions. China implemented a special “Law on Private Education Promotion” that covers these issues. Also the book mentions the special regulation devoted to “Sino-Foreign Joint Running of Schools”. All of these features are significantly different from the former orthodox concepts of Chinese education.

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