

In the face of such quickening change as higher education experiences currently it is important to look back and learn from the views and analyses previously held and provided in order to look forward. Coming from the core of higher education research, the contributions in this volume focus on changes in higher education systems around the turn of the millennium.

Higher education reforms in the recent years have gone further in the direction of a growing complexity in systems configuration. Among the features of the shift towards stronger market orientation is a mixture of convergence and differentiation. Therefore, concerns about quality and equity in the face of an increasingly vertical differentiation of higher education form one of the four major topics of this volume. Others include questions of academic capitalism in research and research training under conditions of new managerial approaches and of changes in the structure of studies and degrees according to new study models. Acquisition of qualifications and competencies for transition into the labour market and their utilization in employment was and continues to be high on the agenda of higher education research and policy. The volume closes with an overarching view on global trends in higher education and formulates a historical critique.

Barbara M. Kehm
(ed.)

Looking Back to Look Forward

Analyses of Higher Education
after the Turn of the Millennium

Werkstattberichte 67

WERKSTATTBERICHTE

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the Turn of the Millennium

International Centre for Higher Education Research Kassel
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Higher Education Research at the Turn of the Millennium: Dimensions and Issues

An Introduction

Barbara M. Kehm

The contributions to this book originate from a workshop held by the Centre for Research on Higher Education and Work at the University of Kassel in October 2002. The occasion was a celebration of Ulrich Teichler's 60th birthday. Many friends came from near and far to honour him by presenting their thoughts in four thematic areas which form the different parts of this book.

Due to a variety of reasons the plan to publish the contributions from that workshop, which by the way was entitled "Universities: Fit for the Future?", never came about. But we believe that the topics which we had chosen shortly after the turn of the millennium for a forward look continue to be important for future research on higher education. Therefore, and for the following reasons we have decided not to update the contributions and to go ahead with the publication:

- We want to return the honour so generously given during the workshop to those who have contributed.
- In the face of quickening change it is important to look back and learn from the views and analyses previously held and provided in order to look forward and consciously shape a future which is not ahistorical.
- The contributions focus on changes in various higher education systems around the turn of the millennium and thus can form the basis for an assessment how far we have come in only five years. They are not mere snapshots but also include thoughts about the future.

The book is divided into four parts and framed by two contributions, one at the beginning and the other at the end, which provide a more overarching perspective.

The first part deals with concerns about quality and equity grappling with the issue that in the face of an increasingly vertical differentiation of higher education quality assurance serves to demonstrate differences among institutions while at the same time having to assure acceptable standards across the system. This tension is still very much in the foreground of today's reforms. The second part moves to the question of academic capitalism in research and research training under conditions of new managerial approaches and institutional market orientation. The third part takes a closer look at changes in the structure of studies and degrees according to the tiered model of Bachelor and Master. Examples are provided from Australia, a country which always had the tiered structure, and from Germany, a country which is introducing the tiered structure in the framework of the Bologna process. The fourth part looks into the acquisition of qualifications and competencies for transition into the labour market and their utilization in employment first by noting systemic issues, then by providing a comparison of two countries (Japan and Germany). The final contribution by Guy Neave takes an overarching view on global trends in higher education, i.e. a development with which we are continuously faced, and formulates a historical critique. Here as in the first contribution by Peter Scott we are presented with a veritable form of looking back to look forward.

Peter Scott in his contribution starts out by noting the tensions between notions of convergence, differentiation, and a mixture of both. Using British higher education as an example, he identifies an evolution from pre-binary to binary to unified, and finally to a market system as a trend which can be observed in other countries as well. Analysing this evolution, the notions of convergence and differentiation acquire two dimensions, i.e. as a development taking place at national and at supra-national levels. The shift towards unified systems tends to lead to what Scott characterises as a mission stretch as part of the escalation of expectations of what higher education systems should deliver. In order to overcome the problem of mission stretch differentiation within (unified) higher education systems takes place. The same evolution can be observed at the European level. From the movements towards harmonisation of study structures and degrees in the framework of the Bologna process which increasingly is blurring the boundaries of different institutional types within binary systems Scott notes an emerging trend towards growing diversity between higher education systems. The higher degree of complexity in the order of systems then leads to specialisation within a system-wide as well as European division of labour and functions accompanied by the emergence of market oriented systems. Thus, the evolution from unified to market systems of higher education introduces a mixture of con-

vergence and differentiation within and among systems of a more complex and higher order than in binary and unified systems of higher education.

The first part of this book consists of two articles focusing on issues of quality. The first analysing tensions between quality and equity in the United Kingdom, the second – using the Netherlands as a case study – describing the spread of external quality assurance and development and analysing the tension between quality assurance and accreditation.

In his contribution, *John Brennan* revisits the key features of Trow's distinction between elite, mass and universal higher education and points out that these are not evolving phases but that the social selection function of higher education enables elite higher education to exist within mass and even universal systems through the increased diversity and hierarchy of institutions in such systems. Typically tuition fees are used as a way of differentiating among higher education institutions in a unified system and act as determinants of a given institution's 'worth'. However, in order to guarantee that all higher education institutions in the United Kingdom have an acceptable quality standard rigorous quality assurance arrangements were introduced leading to what Brennan terms the "growth of the quality assurance industry" in the UK. Through an analysis of the contributing factors to the growth of this industry as well as its function Brennan concludes that quality assurance in the UK does no longer serve to guarantee the comparability of quality and standards across the system but has acquired the role of demonstrating the differences between institutions of higher education which in turn is popularised in rankings. Brennan's analysis of the role of quality assurance in UK higher education arrives at two overall conclusions. First, quality assurance must balance the power between outside and inside interests, and second, it must legitimise an elite sector within mass or universal higher education systems. In the UK, the process of admission to higher education today has taken over a role that was previously assigned to the secondary school system, namely to function as a broad sorting process because the type of course and the type of institution to which a young person applies and is admitted will determine and limit his or her future life chances.

Ton Vroeijenstijn describes the evolution of the Dutch quality assurance system. An external system of quality assessment was implemented in the Netherlands in 1988. It was first directed at the quality of degree programmes but spread to an assessment of research quality five years later. With the advent of the Bologna reform process another element was added to the system of quality assessment in the shape of accreditation. This added complexity to the existing system because the demarcation between quality assessment and its functions on the one hand and accreditation on the other had to be newly defined. When accreditation entered the scene of quality control and accountability there were already discussions ongoing in the Netherlands that there had emerged a notable

tendency towards standardisation due to quality assessment procedures. Thus we have another case of a unifying movement. With the higher degree of complexity that emerged through quality assessment plus accreditation the Dutch system of higher education is gradually moving to a more market oriented system with blurring boundaries between universities and HBOs while at the same time the increased importance of benchmarking leads to a stronger vertical differentiation.

The second part of the book also consists of two articles focusing on the notion of academic capitalism, i.e. a market orientation of researches themselves, and how this impacts choice of research lines and topics on the one hand and research training on the other.

Uwe Schimank uses a six country comparison as a basis for his analysis of academic capitalism in the German university system. He observes that academic capitalism was triggered by the sciences because of their use of commodified resources as production factors. New Public Management (NPM) approaches in university governance are seen as an integrated approach to more market because most countries with mass higher education systems could no longer finance these expanded systems in a welfare state mode. Schimank notes, as does *Välimaa*, an increasing pressure on researchers to become more flexible in the face of market pressures. Carefully contrasting the positive and the negative consequences of the NPM approach in university governance on research he comes to the conclusion that the sciences or mode 2 subjects profit from NPM while the humanities and to a somewhat lesser extent the social sciences or mode 1 subjects fare less well in this new configuration.

Jussi Välimaa uses Finland as an example to show how institutional entrepreneurialism and market orientation has influenced doctoral education and training. The economic crisis in Finland in the early 1990s has led to the fact that universities are seen as a component of the national innovation strategy. As a result the training of future researchers as generators of new knowledge and innovation was reorganised to become more efficient. This entailed a change from the traditional master-apprentice model of the Humboldtian university ideal to the establishment of graduate schools which were supposed to organise throughput and output in a more efficient way. *Välimaa* points out that the model of the graduate school is in fact a network organisation and thus a structure from which the sciences benefit more than the humanities. After contrasting the main features of the traditional model (humanities, master-apprentice) and the modern model (sciences, graduate school) of doctoral education and training he notes that in reality both models are in operation because the strategically thinking university continues to rely on the self-training and flexibility of doctoral candidates in the traditional model because it requires fewer resources and the doctoral candidates rather than the institution have to be entrepreneurial and find their own funding through part-time work and sequences of short-term contracts.

While the second part of the book looked at the emergence of the neo-liberal modernisation agenda in higher education and its impacts on research and research training, the third part of the book takes a closer look at the system of teaching and learning. Again we have two contributions providing contrasting country examples.

The contribution by *Craig McNinnis* and *Felicity Jenz* provides an Australian perspective. Australia derived its system of study programmes and degrees from the United Kingdom, i.e. the tiered structure of Bachelor and Master programmes and degrees, but adapted it over time to fit the particular Australian developments. One of the newer developments in this respect is the fact that due to an ever diversifying student population whose motives and interests might change over the course of studies for personal or changing labour market reasons the combined undergraduate degrees have become more and more popular. Combined degrees, i.e. the study of more than one subject area provide more room for shifting interests and newly emerging fields and thus a higher degree of flexibility for the institutions as well as for the students. Universities can better manage short-term shifts in demand and respond to new developments, students can keep their options open and remedy uninformed choices made at an earlier stage. However, this increased flexibility has also led to problems which the authors identify as an undermining of the coherence of a degree and of the learning experiences and a weakening of the sequential nature of a degree programme. In short: the provision of choices raises the expectations of more choice and runs into the danger of becoming a cafeteria type of provision. The proliferation of choices also has impacts on the quality of student support services and course advising. On the one hand it has shifted away from the academics and become more professional, on the other hand the many choices require a high level of expertise and knowledge which might not be provided by those who are not intimately involved in teaching and research. The contribution closes with some lessons from the Australian experience addressed to Europe where the Bachelor and Master structure is currently introduced and one of the frequently heard arguments is that it will provide more flexibility and more student choice.

It is too early to draw lessons from the German experience of implementing the Bachelor and Master structure, but *Ludwig Huber* in his contribution describes the changes accompanying this undertaking for teaching and studying in German universities. He collects a number of arguments by reform supporters as well as reform opponents and arrives at a first conclusion that also carried weight in the contribution of McNinnis and Jenz, namely that the Bachelor and Master structure enforces the trend to turn away from the discipline and the subject matter as organising forces in the construction of a degree programme. Huber also comes to another conclusion which McNinnis and Jenz have pointed out for Australia, namely that the system of modularisation weakens the existing

system of advice and counselling while the necessary new support structure is not yet in place. So there are indeed lessons to be learned from the Australian experience.

The fourth part of the book focuses on first in a more general way on issues of research about the relationships between higher education and the world of work and then discusses competences and qualifications of graduates necessary for employment comparing Japan and Germany.

The contribution by *Ulrich Teichler* is an account of thirty years of debates about the relationships between higher education and the world of work in which he was not only closely involved through his research biography but which he has considerably shaped as well. Here we have a formidable look back analysing how political debates, e.g. concerning “oversupply” of graduates in the phase of higher education expansion, have shaped the research agenda in this field and how careful and complex analyses could influence the political agenda in turn. After providing an overview of the public debates about relationships between higher education and employment in various phases of higher education development and the respective research approaches and results, Teichler takes stock of what has been achieved and what remains to be done by formulating a tentative research agenda for the future. He emphasizes that a further increase in the complexity of the research design will most probably not lead to the kind of results and information which are needed to improve the dialogue between researchers and practitioners. Instead, apart from improving this dialogue as such, three tasks remain for the researchers: First, to develop subject specific yardsticks to determine the links between the subject studied and occupation or knowledge acquired and work tasks; second, to develop more sophisticated and valid measures to determine job requirements and competences acquired during the course of study; third, to develop methods to measure the relative weight of various study elements for the acquisition of competences and their utilisation on the job.

Keiichi Yoshimoto extracts a comparison of graduates’ transition to the labour market between Japan and Germany from a larger comparative study involving 12 countries altogether. He analyses how the growing diversification of subjects not only upset the traditional faculty structure in the Japanese higher education system but also led to an increase of study programmes without any clear indication of future opportunities for professional work and questionable labour market relevance. This in turn led to a growth in graduate unemployment and longer periods of instable employment. An additional analysis of the “work vision” of Japanese youths was able to show that a new type of graduate had emerged that avoided work and employment after graduation. As a consequence higher education reforms in Japan are putting more emphasis on key qualifications and generic skills necessary to achieve a higher relevance of study programmes for the

labour market. In comparison to Germany Japanese graduates enter the labour market about five years earlier than German graduates but in both countries they have reached approximately equal career stability around the age of 30. That means that in Japan the transition period into stable employment is much longer than in Germany and Yoshimoto describes it as a two stage model in which the first phase consists of job rotation, in-house training and selection while the second phase is final placement and the start of a career. In comparison, Germany is described as having a sandwich type model of transition of graduates into the labour market which shows a clear sequence of layers. Yoshimoto's recommendation is that higher education reforms in Japan should concentrate more on providing a variety of short-term but targeted internships to familiarise students with the world of work and improve their "work vision".

The final contribution by *Guy Neave* on global trends in higher education and the notion of globalisation challenges us to become involved in an interesting thought experiment. Of course, as a historian he can not do so without looking back first in order to draw conclusions for contemporary developments. After arguing that the analytic separation of internationalisation and globalisation in higher education produces epistemological difficulties, Neave proposes not to look at the impact of globalisation on the university but rather at the university globalising. By that he means the geographical and spatial expansion of the institution across the world during the latter half of the 20th century. During that time we can see the advent of mass higher education in the highly developed regions of the world and the establishment of universities on a mass scale in the less developed regions to support nation building after the end of colonialism. Neave takes a truly global view on these developments differentiating the particular developments of higher education in various world regions. A first conclusion is that the growing demand for higher education after the Second World War in Europe and the United States which has now reached the periphery is related to globalisation but exists independent from it and is part of long-term social and demographic changes. Furthermore, the growth in demand for higher education can not be satisfied by the existing mainstream of given systems and institutions which has led to a growth in private higher education or – as Neave calls it – complementary sector institutions to pick up the slack. Here again he identifies demographic changes and rising social expectations as the driving forces of the developments rather than globalisation. Neave's second conclusion drives the thought experiment further by adding internationalisation as a further aspect to the university globalising. Internationalisation of higher education has been most developed in Australia, the UK and the USA, countries which have decided early on that attracting international students into their systems would not only make up for declining birth rates in their own countries but that international students should pay full cost fees. By discovering the higher education

markets outside their own nations and generating revenues by satisfying social demand for higher education in other world regions these countries have managed to further increase their cultural, political and diplomatic capital or in other words, a modern form of colonialism.

As the editor of this book I would also like to draw some conclusions for the purpose of providing more coherence among the different parts of it. Although the emerging picture looks somewhat bleak, the recent developments in terms of modernisation of higher education in research, teaching and governance were certainly necessary to overcome the existing inertia and make higher education institutions more aware of their environment. As for Europe, we can learn some lessons from those countries which have already gone further down the road, i.e. Australia, USA and UK, in order to avoid the graver mistakes and not compromise the core functions of universities. That does not only imply to look back in order to look forward but also to look left and right.

First of all we can note that higher education reforms in the recent years have gone further in the direction of a growing complexity in systems configuration with a mixture of convergence and differentiation as a feature of the shift towards stronger market orientation. Although the claim sometimes seems to be that increased quality assurance and evaluation is a solution to all problems of monitoring, control and accountability, the procedures and processes have their downside as well by implicitly supporting trends towards steeper institutional hierarchies. The growing market orientation of higher education systems and institutions leads to new forms of academic capitalism and institutional entrepreneurialism. These require more individual flexibility and also longer periods of unstable employment and insecure academic career paths than ever before. But it is not only academic work which is affected by this requirement of more flexibility. The system of tiered study programmes and degrees according to the Bachelor and Master model is also known for its increased flexibility and higher degree of student choice. The downside here is that there is a notable trend towards more cafeteria style provisions which lack the coherence of a degree programme and are unable to produce the quality of "graduateness" in their students.

Whether this lack affects the transition of graduates onto the labour market is, for the time being, a still unanswered question. But it is certainly worth to analyse in the future what type of graduates a changing society and a changing labour market will need and how this should or will affect curricula and study programmes. Entrepreneurial universities will certainly find their niches and participate in a globalising world by globalising themselves. The growing heterogeneity of the student body has already necessitated a growing flexibility in provisions to cater for many interests and motives. And perhaps internal and external differentiation is indeed the only possible way towards universal higher education and a highly qualified society.

Back to the Future? The Evolution of Higher Education Systems

Peter Scott

1. Introduction

Convergence or differentiation – or both? Over the past three decades, there has been sustained debate, in both academic and policy arenas, about which of these three words best describes the evolution of higher education systems (Teichler 1989, Enders and Fulton 2002, Kogan and Hanney 2000). The first word, convergence, sums up an account of that evolution that emphasises the erosion (or perhaps fuzziness is a more accurate word) of the traditional distinction between classical universities, engaged in the reproduction of social, cultural and political elites and committed to the development of scientific knowledge and traditional scholarship, and other types of postsecondary education institution, generally more open in terms of student recruitment and more oriented to vocational and professional education.

In some countries such as Sweden and Britain, this has taken the full-blown form of the establishment of unified higher education systems. In other countries, typically the rest of Europe, convergence has taken the more dilute form of the creation of common legal and administrative frameworks for both universities and other higher education institutions, while binary distinctions have been maintained (although sometimes with difficulty). In other countries again, notably in the United States, convergence has taken the form of the development of multi-campus universities and state-wide systems in which different campus or institutional missions have been retained but links have been articulated through credit systems and progression pathways. In all countries, the growth of more intrusive forms of accountability – in particular, more standardised quality as-

insurance systems – and of more sophisticated, and professionalised, forms of institutional management have encouraged convergence of structures and practices.

The second word, differentiation, sums up an account of the evolution of higher education systems that emphasises the multiplication of missions (between institutions) and proliferation of roles (within as well as between institutions). Often more attention has been paid to the first trend than to the second. For example, the desirability of concentrating research and scholarship in a small number of research-led universities has been emphasised by many Governments, thus calling into question the integration of teaching and research which is at the heart of the formulation of the classical university. The assumed policy consequence is that less research intensive universities, the majority must concentrate on other aspects of their mission such as high-quality teaching, knowledge transfer or community outreach. However, much less emphasis has been placed on differentiation within institutions – between more and less research intensive departments or between high-demand and low-demand subjects. Also in most countries all institutions have been encouraged (even pressurised) by Governments to take on new roles – for example, in widening participation or technology transfer. The result has been mission stretch, and even mission overload, that has threatened institutional coherence and integrity.

A further dimension of differentiation is the increasing impact of the market on universities – for example, in terms of higher tuition fees which have been introduced (or are under active consideration) in many countries or of commissioned research on which even the most traditional universities have become increasingly dependent, as state sponsorship of ‘pure’ research has dwindled. The growing importance of the market in higher education can be interpreted in two ways. The first is to associate state action with convergence – the development of unified systems and creation of common frameworks and structures – and the influence of the market with differentiation. But this interpretation underplays the role played by Governments in promoting differentiation, notably through selective funding regimes, and the (homogenising?) impact of market forces on all higher education institutions whatever their label. The second interpretation acknowledges the role of the state in differentiation and emphasises instead the sequencing of the process of differentiation within higher education systems. According to this interpretation, the state provided the main impetus in the 1980s and 1990s, and the market has become the main driver in more recent years. But this interpretation too runs into difficulties. Fine-grain empirical accounts of the evolution of higher education systems highlight the inconsistencies of both state action and market influences. Both have promoted and eroded convergence, encouraged and discouraged differentiation, in complex and unpredictable ways.

The third word(s) – both (convergence and differentiation) – suggests an account of the evolution of higher education systems that attempts to address this complexity. This account emphasises the synergy between these two, apparently contradictory trends. Modern higher education systems have coped with complexity by adopting a variety of strategies. One has been to conceptualise higher education as an integrated, or at any rate coordinated, system rather than as a historically contingent collection of individual institutions. This has tended to highlight the forces of convergence. But another strategy has been to emphasise the differentiation of institutional roles and missions within these larger systems. Because institutions are no longer regarded as free-standing organisations but as components of systems it is seen as less necessary that they try to do everything. Instead they are able to specialise within a system-wide division of labour. This third account – convergence and differentiation – suggests that the evolution of higher education is too complex, too ambiguous and too volatile to be described in directional terms.

This paper attempts to discuss these tensions (and synergies?) between convergence and differentiation in the evolution of higher education systems – from both an empirical and theoretical perspective. It covers three main topics:

- (1) First, the development of British higher education over the past decade is used as an empirical case-study. The British example is illuminating for two reasons. The first is that it is the only large-scale European system that moved decisively from a binary to an (apparently) unified structure. This happened at the beginning of the 1990s when the distinction between universities and polytechnics was abandoned. So Britain, apparently, offers a model of convergence. The second reason is that more recently in Britain renewed emphasis has been placed on institutional differentiation both through state action (more selective funding regimes and more proactive steering of institutional missions) and by giving freer rein to market influences – and so provides evidence of regression to a more stratified system and/or movement beyond the unified system established a decade ago;
- (2) Next, a more theoretical account of the evolution of higher education systems is suggested – from pre-binary, through binary and unified, to post-binary and beyond. Here, a distinction is drawn between what may be termed ‘external conditions’ – the different historical, cultural and administrative regimes that have shaped the development of higher education in different countries – and the ‘internal dynamics’ – the common factors that are influencing the evolution of all higher education systems (and which reflect socio-economic and scientific and cultural change);

- (3) Finally, the empirical and theoretical accounts are woven together to offer a general prognosis about the future evolution of higher education, rather than a firm prediction about which of the various post-binary scenarios outlined is the most plausible. A 'single path' future is the least plausible. The interactions between higher education, society (and science) have become too intense – and also too volatile – to justify a deterministic account of the future of the university.

2. British Higher Education 1992-2002

The past decade has been a turbulent time for higher education in the United Kingdom (Scott 2001). Two things have happened. First, a unified system has been established (at any rate in name); the former polytechnics became universities in 1992 and all higher education institutions from Oxford and Cambridge to the smallest college are now funded according to a standard pattern and subject to the same accountability regimes. Second, a very substantial expansion of student numbers has taken place. British higher education, once regarded as more selective and elitist, has ceased to be exceptional in European terms. Participation rates now equate to, or even exceed, the European average. Both factors make Britain a particularly interesting case-study: the first because, arguably, it means that British higher education is more advanced in its structure than other European systems (only Sweden has a similarly unified system), and the second because it is no longer possible to dismiss Britain as an exceptional case. Moreover, an empirical account of the development of British higher education since 1992 tends to support the tentative conclusion that neither convergence nor differentiation in themselves offer an adequate description of the evolution of modern higher education systems. During the past decade British universities and colleges have experienced both convergence and differentiation – but, just to make things more difficult, it could be argued that they have also experienced neither. The post-binary world is indeed a complicated place.

In the two decades leading up to 1992, British higher education seemed to offer a text-book example of convergence. In the 1960s, a new category was 'invented' – higher education – to embrace what had previously been separate worlds – universities, advanced further education (higher technical education probably provides a better generic European description) and teacher training (for all teachers apart from those destined to teach in grammar schools, gymnasia) (Robbins 1963, Shattock 1996). Although there were still parts of post-secondary education that were excluded – for example, the education of nurses and other healthcare workers was not embraced within higher education until the mid-1990s, the definition of higher education adopted in Britain during the 1960s was by contemporary

European standards exceptionally exclusive. Whether this was an example of premature development – in the sense that most other European systems have now adopted inclusive definitions of higher education, embracing both classical universities and higher technical schools – or another example of British ‘exceptionalism’ (because of the lure of the United States) remains an interesting question.

However, for the purposes of this discussion, the reasons for this remarkably early adoption of an inclusive definition of higher education are more interesting – made all the more remarkable because of the social elitism and academic selectivity that still characterised British higher education in the 1960s. Three possible reasons can be suggested. First, despite this elitism, the foundation of new universities such as Sussex or Warwick in the 1960s did initiate a process of (cautious) democratisation within the British higher education system (Beloff 1969, Briggs 1964 and 1991, Sloman 1963). Because entirely new universities were established, rather than simply expanding existing universities, there was a greater impetus to fresh thinking about the future development of higher education – and that fresh thinking, inevitably, questioned the old exclusive (and exclusionary?) ideas of what constituted the university. The establishment a few years later of the polytechnics which were from the start associated with the traditional universities in the wider higher education system, but also more open to radical experimentation, may have intensified this effect (Robinson 1968, Pratt 1997).

A second reason is that Britain was perhaps more exposed than other European higher education systems to the American experience – and during the 1960s American higher education was entering a particularly dynamic phase of development. Although great care has to be taken about drawing too sharp a distinction between so-called ‘Anglo-American’ and ‘continental European’ models of higher education (because the British system is just one of several variants within a broad European university tradition), the lack of linguistic barriers and the intensity of personal interaction do mean that Britain is probably more exposed to American influences. It may also be worth adding that the British idea of a university has always perhaps been more adaptable; it was never expected to uphold high Humboldtian ideas to quite the same extent as the German university or to reflect the uncompromising meritocracy of the French *grandes écoles*. A third reason may have been that the barriers between universities and higher technical education were lower in Britain than in the rest of Europe – and in the United States. The basis of demarcation was primarily administrative – universities were national and autonomous institutions, while colleges of technology, art and education (soon, of course, to become polytechnics) were local, and controlled by local government – rather than educational.

For example, non-university institutions in Britain had offered PhD programmes as long ago as the 1940s.

As a result, the British system may have been particularly disposed to adopting an inclusive definition of higher education at a comparatively early date. The subsequent development of the binary system between 1970 and 1990 certainly seemed to bear this out. The newly established polytechnics went from strength to strength – expanding at a much more rapid rate than the traditional universities, shifting their academic centre-of-gravity from diploma courses for technicians to standard honours degrees, developing postgraduate programmes and research. In a very real sense, the dynamism of the polytechnics made their demise (as polytechnics) inevitable. What is remarkable about the decision in 1992 to abandon the binary system and turn the polytechnics into universities is that it provoked no real opposition; instead, it was generally acknowledged that the polytechnics had already, in effect, become universities some time in the 1980s. As a footnote, it is also worth noting the influence of the polytechnics in the rest of Europe. In Germany, *Fachhochschulen* began to describe themselves, in English, as ‘universities of applied technology’; in the Netherlands, the HBO (or higher professional) schools went a stage further – and actually appropriated the ‘polytechnic’ label during the 1980s. In France, the *Instituts Universitaires de Technologie*, uneasily yoked to the traditional university faculties, formed new alliances with English polytechnics. This influence suggests that the creation of the polytechnics within an inclusive higher education system in the 1960s and 1970s may indeed have been an example of premature development, later followed by many other European systems, rather than of ‘Anglo-American’ exceptionalism.

However, the creation of a unified post-binary system and the ‘promotion’ of the polytechnics to university status in 1992 have had ambiguous effects. To express it crudely, had the polytechnics ‘won’ or had the traditional universities had their ‘revenge’? After all, one reason for establishing the polytechnics rather than to expand the existing universities in the late 1960s had to be to create an alternative, even rival, to the traditional university. That project was given up in 1992 and the British system came to be dominated by a single institutional type – the university. Three trends may be particularly significant. The first is that, arguably, the former polytechnics – now labelled the ‘new’ or ‘post-1992’ universities – have tended to lose momentum. Or some ‘new’ universities have, sadly often those which most defiantly represented ‘polytechnic’ values and practices such as commitments to much wider access, vocationalism and community engagement. Other ‘new’ universities have been able to exploit their more favourable market positions to compete with the traditional universities on their own terms. As a result, a bi-polar them-and-us binary system has been replaced by a spectrum of institutions – or, more accurately, a reputational hier-

archy. The effect may have been to reduce the radicalism, and dynamism, of the British system.

The second trend – in an apparent contradiction to the first – is that the ‘old’, or traditional, universities have taken on wider roles, some of which were once ‘reserved’ to the polytechnics. For the ‘old’ universities the existence of the polytechnics, as a powerful ‘other’, had tended to reduce their capacity for innovation and inhibit their developmental instincts. Since 1992, those inhibitions have been removed. As a result, ‘old’ universities now engage in a range of activities such as widening participation or technology transfer which a decade ago they would not have regarded as part of their mission. For example, in its latest strategic plan the Higher Education Funding Council for England has indicated that all universities should engage in four core areas – research, learning and teaching, knowledge transfer and widening participation – although with different degrees of intensity (HEFCE 2003). Activities which were once peripheral activities have now become part of the core (although it is also important to take into account social and scientific dynamics that are influencing all higher education institutions; neither the ‘external’ environment nor the ‘inner’ life-world of higher education have remained unchanged). The key question is whether the dampening-down of the radical instincts of the former polytechnics since 1992 has been more than compensated for a freeing-up of the traditional universities’ capacity for innovation.

The third, and most recent, trend is that there is growing concern, especially in political circles, about an (alleged) loss of diversity which was an important policy consideration in the recent White Paper on Higher Education (Department of Education and Skills 2003). The ‘alleged’ qualification is an important caveat, because the empirical evidence suggests the opposite – that British higher education in 2002 is much more diverse than it was ten years ago, although its diversity no longer corresponds to clearly demarcated institutional missions but, rather, is reflected in mission-spread, or mission-stretch, within institutions. This, probably misplaced, concern has several sources

One source arises from the scarcity of resources because so-far modest increases in tuition fees paid by students and the general increase in private funding have not been sufficient to compensate for the real-terms decline in public funding for higher education. As a result, some argue that more rigorous rationing principles need to be (re)imposed if the quality and standard of Britain’s ‘best’ universities are not to be undermined. A comparison with much better funded American universities is often drawn in this context. A second source of the concern about declining diversity is the desire to return to more traditional conceptions of the purposes of the university. One motive is to protect the ‘old’ universities from competition with the ‘new’ universities (for example, in research funding); but another motive is to ‘save’ the ‘old’ universities from them-

selves (because they seem to have taken on too many 'polytechnic' roles). A third source of concern is the opposite of the second, namely the belief that within a unified system a traditional academic culture has come to dominate (most notably in relation to the – allegedly – lower priority attached to teaching). This belief is especially strong among those who argue that universities have a key role to play in 'modernisation', which has become a pervasive but also highly charged term in Britain. Modernisation has both normative and functionalist dimensions; it is a project designed to sweep away anachronistic attitudes but also to upgrade skills in the workforce and accelerate the application of scientific research.

None of these sources is totally persuasive; yet the concern about a loss of diversity remains. There may be two deeper sources. The first is that, since the abandonment of the binary system ten years ago, British higher education has had to live with a greater degree of normative dissonance. It is both *élite* and mass. The British system has retained many *élite* qualities; a good example is an obsession with student wastage, despite the fact that at 20 per cent it is one of the lowest in the world. But at the same time it has acquired many of the characteristics of mass, even universal, higher education. For example, Britain now has the largest output of graduates of any European country – which, paradoxically, is also largely explained by much lower wastage rates than in the rest of Europe. A fundamental quality of British higher education in the first decade of the 21st century is that *élite* qualities and mass characteristics are intertwined in complex synergies. This means that politicians and policy-makers who seek to (re)impose a simpler taxonomy of institutions with clearly demarcated missions are likely to be disappointed. There is no road back to the old binary world.

The second reason flows from the first. The preoccupation with diversity, it can be argued, is a symptom of the escalation of expectations of what higher education systems can – or should – deliver. Social change, and also radical changes in the ways in which knowledge is defined, generated and used, are placing an ever-greater burden on higher education systems. As a result, it is almost inevitable that the performance of higher education will always lag behind its perceived potential – which is seen as almost boundless. This explains the endemic concern that existing higher education systems are not sufficiently diverse. In order to develop this line of argument further would require more detailed consideration of the larger phenomena of 'knowledge society', 'risk society' and other theoretical accounts of social, economic and cultural change, which are outside the scope of this paper. However, these larger accounts are relevant to a discussion of the second topic of this paper, an attempt to conceptualise the synergies between convergence and differentiation in the evolution of higher education systems from a more theoretical perspective.

3. The Evolution of Higher Education Systems

In constructing a typology of higher education systems it is possible to identify four main types – or developmental phases. On balance ‘types’ are to be preferred to ‘developmental phases’ because the latter implies a temporal sequencing and chain of causality that are not really justified by empirical accounts of the evolution of higher education systems. These types are (1) pre-binary systems; (2) binary systems; (3) post-binary, or unified, systems; and (4) differentiated, heterogeneous or even ‘market’ systems. The ‘market’ label can be disputed on the grounds that ‘market’ suggests the abandonment of ‘public’ values and an acceptance of models of economic rationality, neither of which may be a feature of this fourth type of higher education system. Even if this fourth type of system does contain distinctive ‘market’ elements, it may also contain other elements that embrace notions of wider knowledge distribution (and production), more direct social engagement and democratic entitlement.

Pre-binary systems

Pre-binary systems compose the first type (or developmental phase). It is justifiable with pre-binary systems to refer to ‘developmental phase’ as well as ‘type’, and also to use the past tense, because there are almost no extant examples of truly pre-binary systems. In this pre-binary phase, a sharp distinction was maintained between university education and other forms of post-secondary education. Indeed typically the latter were not regarded as truly post-secondary at all but merely as an alternative form of secondary education. Perhaps to talk of ‘maintaining a distinction’ is itself misleading, because that implies some sense of relationship between classical universities and other institutions. In fact, in most pre-binary systems there is no such relationship. It may even be misleading to describe pre-binary systems as ‘systems’ because that, too, implies some degree of connection between various elements. In the pre-binary phase there is not a system.

The logic of, or rationale for, such a configuration (rather than system) was two-fold. First, it was possible to draw a sharp line between academic, or scientific, education on the one hand and vocational, or technical, education on the other. Admittedly, there were some forms of professional education that could be associated with academic education – such as law and medicine – first, because of their social prestige and, second, because of their strong links with basic science (at least in the case of medicine). The second logic, or rationale, was that more advanced forms of scientific and technical education grew out of two quite separate, even incommensurable, patterns of secondary education – ‘academic’ schools, whether grammar schools or gymnasia on the one hand, and ‘vocational’ schools on the other.

However, neither assumption has gone unchallenged. First, the demarcation between academic, or scientific, education on the one hand and vocational, or technical, education on the other has become increasingly fuzzy. The former is now seen as increasingly contextualised – that is, implicated in practical applications; and it is also accepted that students following such courses must acquire (probably explicitly and in a structured fashion) generic and transferable skills. This is a requirement that grows out of the reductionism of science and the increasing turnover of expert knowledge. At the same time, vocational courses have become infused with scientific principles. So this is no longer a distinction that makes sense in modern higher education systems. The second assumption – about twin-track secondary schooling – has also been largely invalidated. In many countries, comprehensive forms of secondary education were developed in the 1960s (in the United States the public school system has always been essentially comprehensive in structure). Although there has been a revival of more specialist forms of secondary education in many countries (certainly in Britain), these do not correspond to the old academic-vocational distinction. So, on both counts, higher education must now incorporate both traditions – academic and vocational; élite and popular. There is no way back. It is reasonable therefore to argue that pre-binary ‘systems’ of higher education have become an anachronism; their limited persistence can be regarded as conclusive evidence of underdevelopment.

Binary systems

However, the second type (or, less certainly, phase) – binary systems – cannot be regarded as anachronistic. On the contrary, they represent the majority of higher education systems. Binary systems take both a classical European form (universities on the one hand, *Fachhochschulen* or their equivalents on the other), and a modified American form, as in the California (or other State) master-plans, which divide higher education systems into three strata, typically research universities, four-year colleges (plus Masters programmes) and two-year community colleges. Of course, this categorisation of American tiered higher education systems as binary systems can be challenged. They are not – literally – binary systems because, in almost all cases, there are more than two tiers. But they are binary systems in spirit, because they imply a clear division of institutional roles.

Binary systems continue to reflect some of the organisational assumptions made in pre-binary systems; first, that a (reasonably) clear distinction can be drawn between scientific education as provided by classical universities and vocational, or professional, education as provided by higher technical institutions; and, second, that secondary education is differentiated into academic and vocational streams (or that, within comprehensive secondary education, there continues to be a significant differentiation of courses – and so of outcomes).

However there are two important differences. The first is that these assumptions have been modified. It is no longer necessary to insist upon a clear-cut dichotomy between academic and vocational courses, but rather to emphasise the need to maintain diversity of provision within higher education. Consequently, it is regarded as important to maintain alternative forms of higher education to the classical university. Also, to the extent that a differentiation into institutions with a scientific orientation (in other words, classical universities) and those with a more professional orientation is maintained, it is expressed in terms of differential engagement with research (especially basic research). Binary systems are also justified in terms of the need to reflect the diversity of secondary education.

The second difference is that the articulation of binary systems recognises that higher education systems comprise more than just classical universities. Those institutions which were once defined as higher technical schools – in other words, an extension of secondary education – must now be recognised as part of higher education. From this recognition flows the need to regulate the relationships between various parts of a now extended higher education system, i.e. classical universities and non-university institutions. This recognition takes various forms. In much of Europe until recently the emphasis was on differences, separations even – while in most American state higher education systems the emphasis is on connections, articulation and progression. One way to describe this variety is to regard most European systems as ‘closed’ binary systems, and most American systems as ‘open’ binary systems.

Unified Systems

In post-binary, or unified, systems these two features of binary systems – the growing fuzziness between scientific (or academic) education and vocational education; and the more deliberate articulation of all (or most) post-secondary education institutions within a common ‘system’ – are intensified. But there are many reasons why this evolution from binary to post-binary systems occurs. One may be a deliberate attempt to ‘modernise’ traditional universities by exposing them to direct competition from other higher education institutions. Another is the drive towards standardisation – of funding systems and quality assurance regimes (which is supported by the parallel drive towards transparency). A third certainly is the desire to optimise outcomes, whether in terms of appropriately qualified workers or of the most efficient use of resources.

However, it may be misleading to describe this third type of higher education system as ‘unified’, in the sense that many secondary school systems are now ‘comprehensive’. The two ideas are distinct. ‘Unified’ higher education systems (maybe post-secondary education systems is a better label, because they embrace a wide variety of technical and adult education institutions as well as universities and quasi-university institutions) are characterised by hierarchies of esteem,

inevitably so given their diversity. They are also more exposed to the pressures (and vagaries) of consumer choice than binary systems where institutional types and student categories are more deliberately matched. It is the system that is 'unified', not the institutions within the system. Although there are convergent pressures in post-binary systems (such as the drives towards standardisation and transparency and the desire to optimise outcomes), there are also divergent pressures as institutions attempt to develop distinctive 'brands' within these much larger (and more inchoate?) systems. In binary systems, for example, traditional universities are defined in terms of their membership of a particular class of institutions; in post-binary systems they have to construct more specific and individual identities. The same applies to (formerly) non-university institutions such as the polytechnics in England and Wales, which can no longer rely on 'given' identities.

As a result, post-binary higher education systems have two important characteristics. The first is they have much greater potential for redefining the territory of higher education – and, within that, the mission of the university (which in almost every case remains the dominant institutional type). That territory can more easily be expanded – for example, to embrace 'corporate' universities. That mission can also more readily evolve – for example, to embrace technology transfer or work-place learning. Neither territory nor mission is so categorically defined as in a binary system. Also in contemporary society, which is itself characterised by increasing uncertainties (both opportunities and risks), higher education systems, sectors within these systems and individual institutions are no longer so well defined. As a result, administrative categories and institutional roles and identities need to be constantly refreshed. This is probably easier within dynamic (perhaps chaotic) post-binary systems than within more tightly regulated binary systems. The second important characteristic is that institutional roles become more fluid, and universities as organisations can become more adaptable. In this respect, they have much in common with other institutions and organisations, subject to the same processes of normative dislocation and managerially inspired 're-engineering'.

'Market' systems

Despite the misgiving expressed earlier in this paper, the fourth type of higher education is most conveniently described as a 'market' system within which 'entrepreneurial' universities have been encouraged to develop (Clark 2001). But this label can be misleading if it is taken simply to imply the abandonment of academic values and their replacement by 'business' values or the re-definition of higher education systems as 'market' arenas populated by producers, customers, brokers and entrepreneurs or the re-engineering of the university as a 'business' organisation, because the articulation between the state and the

market within modern higher education systems is complex and poorly understood (Middleton 2000). A combination of much wider forces is at work – the impact of new communication technologies, globalisation, the democratisation of learning, the ambiguous processes of de-institutionalisation (so-called ‘hollowing-out’), the wider diffusion of knowledge production (so-called ‘Mode 2’) – all of which potentially contribute to a fundamental redefinition of higher education. This redefinition is not simply of organisational structures and social practices – the so-called ‘public life’ of higher education – but also of its cognitive structures and intellectual values – its so-called ‘private life’. So, in this fourth phase, it is no longer possible to talk simply of systems, or of sectors within them, labelled pre-binary, binary or post-binary; instead the whole life-world of the university is implicated.

Indeed it may no longer be possible to speak of higher education ‘systems’, because ‘systems’ imply a regularity and permanence that can no longer be guaranteed. Instead, contemporary higher education systems comprise a heterogeneous and unstable aggregation of institutions. If they are ‘systems’ at all, they are only ‘systems’ in the context of ephemeral (but intense) political discourses (for example, of ‘modernisation’ and / or ‘reform’) not of well-regulated bureaucratic regimes. And institutions themselves have taken on ephemeral and insubstantial qualities. Often they are no longer institutions within which authority has been devolved to basic units (Faculties and Departments) but which nevertheless are held together by shared professional norms and a common scientific culture, as classical universities have always been conceived. Instead, they have become de-centred organisations in which fluid forms are taking over from these traditional Faculty and Departmental structures – and which are held together, to the extent that they are held together at all, by an ideology of ‘strategy’ backed up by powerful management systems.

Two qualities of such ‘market’ systems are perhaps worth emphasising. The first is their openness. Their boundaries can no longer be defined – or defended. Some time in the 1960s and 1970s, the category ‘universities’ was replaced by a more capacious category ‘higher education’ – which, in turn, has been superseded in the 1980s and 1990s by even more diffuse categories such as ‘post-secondary education’ or ‘lifelong learning’. Today, an even more radical transgression of categories is under way (which reflects the erosion of the great categories of modernity – the State, the Market, Culture, Science). Higher education has become part of a wider universe which it shares with workforce development, community empowerment, social inclusion, even so-called info-tainment. The second quality of ‘market’ systems is their differentiation. But this differentiation can no longer so easily be calibrated in terms of institutional types and missions. Instead, it has taken on an almost random quality, occurring between and within institutions, disciplines and professions.

4. Conclusion

It would be satisfying to be able to conclude this paper with a clear prognosis of the future evolution of higher education systems. Satisfying but also difficult to achieve – for two main reasons. The first reason is that it is far from clear that a linear account of the development of higher education that emphasises successive phases (or types of system) offers the best description. Of course, it is possible to plot historical and evolutionary connections. For example, the growth of higher education from the 1960s onwards probably made a shift from pre-binary to binary systems inevitable, because it became increasingly anomalous to treat universities and higher technical schools as incommensurable sectors. More speculatively, it can be argued that the shift from binary to post-binary (and then ‘market’) systems – to the extent that such a shift has actually taken place – reflects the declining capacity (inclination?) of Governments to plan overall ‘systems’ in a welfare-state mode. But deterministic teleological models are difficult to reconcile with the much more random, and politically contingent, development of actual higher education systems as revealed through empirical descriptions. The key-note remains diversity – and probably growing diversity – within and between higher education systems (Pratt 2001)

The second reason is that it is difficult to align this typology of different types of higher education system with a clear historical sequence – and not simply because of the contingencies to which particular systems have been subject; but also because these different types are themselves ambiguous and complex constructions, constituted of ‘dominant’ and ‘recessive’ features which are never totally absent from any higher education system. Also, the instability of this typology increases with each new ‘type’. The most ambiguous, complex and instable ‘type’ is the last – ‘market’ systems of higher education. Of course, arguably, ‘market’ systems can be regarded rather like the ‘End of History’; their openness and fluidity make it possible to conceive of, and devise, so many different forms of differentiation that there is no need to move on to a new ‘phase’ of higher education development. Also, the very concept of ‘prediction’, in the sense of careful extrapolation from existing trends, has itself become problematical. But neither reflection is much help to university leaders or national policy-makers faced with the need to articulate assumptions, make projections, manage risks – which is impossible without some working understanding, if not sophisticated conceptualisation, of the ‘direction of travel’ of modern higher education systems, of the over-arching context.

Ultimately, any attempt to link the two parts of this paper – the empirical analysis of recent changes in British higher education, with the more theoretical account of successive phases of higher education (or types of system) – is justified by this need. The British case-study illustrates the potential for regression,

the desire to re-impose regularity (in the form of clearly demarcated institutional mission) on a system that is showing alarming signs of resisting such regularity. But it also illustrates that regression, in the sense of a re-imposition of the binary system abandoned ten years ago, is highly implausible. These, rather different, messages are both consistent with my more theoretical account – first, because pre-binary, binary and post-binary features coexist in complex combinations in most higher education systems; they do not represent successive organisational paradigms which supersede each other in an orderly progression; and, second, because what may appear superficially to be regression (the concern about diversity) can just as easily be described in terms of differentiation – in other words, a shift from a post-binary to a ‘market’ system of higher education.

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I
QUALITY AND EQUITY

Equity, Quality and Employability – Lessons from the United Kingdom

John Brennan

Mass and Elite

It is now thirty years since Martin Trow made his celebrated distinction between elite, mass and universal forms of higher education. With many developed countries now near to achieving 'universal' higher education, it is timely to revisit some of the key features of the three forms for what they might tell us about the social role of the contemporary university. The argument of this paper will be that the role is a somewhat contradictory one, at least from the evidence provided by the recent history of higher education in the United Kingdom.

Trow saw the functions of higher education in its three forms as being: (1) *elite*: shaping the mind and character of the ruling class; preparation for elite roles; (2) *mass*: transmission of skills; preparation for a broader range of technical and economic elite roles; (3) *universal*: adaptation of the 'whole population' to rapid social and technological change (Trow 1974). These formulations of the functions of mass and universal higher education do not sound out of place some thirty years on. And while his description of the functions of an elite higher education has a rather old-fashioned flavour to it – with justifications of elite forms today tending to stress research rather than teaching and to provide an ultimate economic rationale in terms of increasing global competitiveness – it should be remembered that several studies during the 1990s (one thinks for example of Bourdieu (1996) and Brown and Scase (1994)) have conceptualised higher education's social role predominantly as one of 'elite reproduction'.

It is sometimes forgotten but Trow did not see these three forms of higher education as necessarily mutually exclusive. In particular, the elite form could survive

into the mass and universal stages. This appears to be an important aspect of the UK experience.

As Trow himself argued, a key feature of mass systems of higher education is their inner diversity. This is certainly true of the UK system, despite the creation of a so-called 'unitary' system with the abolition of the binary division between universities and polytechnics and other colleges in 1992. While universities dominate the present system – there are more than 100 of them and they cater for over 80 per cent of the student population – there are large differences between them. This is only partly due to the incorporation of the polytechnics. Strong traditions of university autonomy have permitted individual institutions to develop distinctive profiles and reputations, reflecting their origins (most universities have been created out of some other type of educational institution), their location and the aspirations and values of their senior members. In seeking to expand higher education still further, the present Government has emphasised the need to strengthen diversity, to create new forms of higher education to meet new, mainly labour market, needs (Department for Education and Skills 2003).

With diversity has come an increasing sense of hierarchy. A small number of elite research universities sit at the apex of the system. They not only dominate research production in most fields and receive funding which seems lavish to those in less-favoured institutions, but they play a key role in the identification and reproduction of political, economic and cultural elites in British society. A high proportion of their students come from private secondary education (the 'public' boarding schools) and the social mix of their students is skewed heavily in favour of the middle and upper classes. These institutions fit the social and cultural reproduction role so well described by Pierre Bourdieu in France (Bourdieu 1996). A well-known study in the UK by Brown and Scase applied Bourdieu's perspectives to British graduates and reached broadly similar conclusions (Brown and Scase 1994). The best jobs and the most influential positions in society are disproportionately filled by graduates from the two ancient universities of Oxford and Cambridge in particular and from a small number of 'top universities' in general. For these reasons, equality of access to these elite institutions has been given serious attention by the present Labour Government, committed to notions of meritocracy and equality of opportunity in a society where inequalities of wealth and income have been rising in recent years. Yet notwithstanding this heightened political attention, an advisor to the Government could recently write:

"It none the less seems possible that the present education system actively entrenches the advantages of the privileged and prevents the poor from ever catching up" (Piatt 2003).

While it has been the elite sector of Britain's mass higher education system which has been getting most attention from government and the media – quite a lot of it critical attention: admissions are extremely socially skewed – the vast majority of

students study elsewhere in a wide variety of higher education institutions, both universities and colleges. There is a strong status hierarchy beyond the elite institutions encompassing the ‘old’ universities created prior to the 1992 Act, the universities established from the former polytechnics and colleges sector, the existing colleges of higher education and a substantial amount of higher education provided by institutions that are otherwise engaged in ‘further’ – i.e. lower level post-school – education.

The social mix of students attending different types of higher education institution in the UK is provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Relationship Between Type of Institution and the Background Characteristics of Graduates (%)

	Institution		
	‘Old’ university	‘New’ university	HE College
Parental occupation			
clerical/manual	41	44	15
Prof/managerial	51	37	12
Age of entry			
below 21	54	36	10
21-24	28	53	19
25+	39	46	16

The above figures taken from a survey of a nationally representative sample of graduates in 1998 show quite a complex picture¹. Students from professional and middle class backgrounds are much more likely to attend an ‘old’ university (51 %) than a ‘new’ one (37 %) whereas the situation is reversed for students from working class backgrounds (41 % at ‘old’ universities against 44 % at ‘new’). A similar pattern is discernable according to age. Mature or ‘second chance’ students are more likely to go to a ‘new’ university (53 % of the 21 to 24 year olds and 46 % of the over 24s) whereas younger students are more likely to go to an ‘old’ university (54 % of the under 21s as against 36 % of them who go to ‘new’ universities and 10 % who go to colleges).

If we look at the nature of the employment experiences of this sample of graduates, we find that on some measures there is little or no difference between

¹ The survey was undertaken as part of a larger international study of graduates, partly funded by the European Commission. The international study, Higher Education and Graduate Employment in Europe, was directed by Ulrich Teichler at the University of Kassel. The data used in this chapter are drawn from Brennan and Shah, 2003.

graduates from different types of institution (for example, 9 % experiencing unemployment regardless of the type of university attended) while on others there is a distinct advantage from attending an 'old' university (for example, in terms of salary). Table 2 compares the employment experiences of graduates from different universities in terms of four measures of success.

Table 2: The Relationship Between Type of Higher Education Institution and Selected Indicators of Employment Success

	Unemployed In 'graduate job'		Don't feel	Salary
	once (%)	(%)	overqualified	(£k)
			(%)	
Institution attended				
'Old' universities	9	73	82	20.8
'New' universities	9	71	76	19.2
Colleges of HE	11	68	67	16.7
Numbers	2,834	2,591	2,528	2,339

None of these differences is substantial but they are all in the direction of an advantage from attending an 'old' university. A similar pattern is discernable if one looks directly at the relationship between graduates' background and selected indicators of employment.

Table 3: The Relationship Between Graduates' Background and Selected Indicators of Employment Success

	Unemployed		In 'graduate		Don't feel over-		Salary	
	once (%)		job' (%)		qualified (%)		(£k)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Parental occupation								
Clerical/ manual	15	8	74	65	76	73	21.1	17.5
Profess./ managerial	10	7	76	69	79	79	22.1	18.6
Age of entry								
Below 21	11	8	75	68	78	76	21.9	18.2
21-24	10	6	86	68	84	83	22	18.0
25+	18	9	67	65	73	73	18.9	17.4
Numbers	1167	1667	1092	1499	1059	1469	1011	1328

The graduates from working class backgrounds are more likely to experience a period of unemployment and earn an average of £1000 a year less than graduates from middle class backgrounds.

We might summarise the social role of the contemporary university in the UK as follows: on the one hand, middle class students maintain (and legitimise) social advantage by obtaining high value qualifications from high status institutions while, on the other hand, working class students achieve upward mobility by obtaining vocational qualifications from lower status institutions.

Such generalisations should, however, be treated with care. Aggregate data of this sort inevitably disguise all sorts of individual trajectories. Also, the institutional categorisations are very crude. So-called ‘old’ universities differ considerably in their social prestige and labour market pull. Institutional differences should also be combined with subject differences in order to obtain a fuller picture.

The combination of class reproduction and upward mobility is of course to be expected in a period of changing occupational and class structures. Over the last twenty years in the UK there has been a sharp absolute decline in the numbers of jobs in the manual and clerical worker categories and a large increase in the numbers in professional and managerial categories (Heath and Payne 2000). This has clearly provided substantial opportunities for inter-generational upward mobility and an expanded higher education system has been a principal social mechanism for achieving it.

However, while opportunities for upward mobility have increased in absolute terms, they have hardly changed at all in relative terms. The greater number of professional and managerial jobs has reduced the risk of downward mobility for the middle class as well as providing greater opportunities of upward mobility for the working class. Consequently, the relative chances of children from middle class and working class backgrounds making it to the middle classes have changed little (Heath and Payne 2003). The role of education in maintaining this state of affairs is widely acknowledged. A former government minister for education remarked that “What we have to face up to in education is that the class divide gets worse as you go through school” (Estelle Morris quoted in Piatt 2003).

The UK has expanded its higher education system enormously over the last fifteen years and further expansion is planned. While it is acknowledged that people from working class backgrounds have much lower chances of getting to university than their middle class peers, in absolute terms their opportunities have increased substantially. Yet, as we have seen above, obtaining a higher education does not of itself achieve equality of opportunity in subsequent employment. In the UK, where and what you have studied are crucial to subsequent life chances. Using Martin Trow’s terminology, not only is an elite system of higher education to be found embedded within a mass system but that mass system is itself highly differentiated with institutions regularly ranked in the popular press on the basis of official data on their supposed quality and reputation. These rankings effectively inform both

students and employers about what different students are 'worth' and what opportunities they can expect to have in employment and in life generally. In so doing, they ensure that the provision of opportunities for upward mobility for at least some people from working class backgrounds is not at the expense of reproducing the privileges of those from middle and upper class backgrounds. Legitimising the differentiated (and hierarchical) nature of UK higher education is a necessary part of pulling off this particular trick.

Differentiation and the 'UK Quality Wars'

The UK government is now aiming for around 50 per cent of all 18 to 30 year olds to experience some form of higher education. The current figure is 44 per cent. However, 'some form of higher education' are the operative words. Emphasis is being placed on short-cycle vocational programmes as being more suited both to the needs of 'new kinds of students' and the requirements of the labour market – 'great for other people's children' as one commentator has observed (Wolf 2002).

This has brought a much greater emphasis upon diversity – in institutional forms, in types of programmes, as well as types of students and labour market needs (Department for Education and Skills 2003). This has involved concerns to preserve and strengthen elite forms, partly in terms of their research functions with a determination that they be 'world class', but partly also to preserve the elite socialisation route into leading social positions. The recent highly controversial political debate about 'top-up' fees arose entirely out of this differentiation agenda. The opponents rightly detected that differential fees would consolidate the emerging hierarchy of institutions, with the levels of fee charged indicating to the world at large the social and economic 'worth' of the qualifications gained from different institutions. On the other hand, supporters of the fees policy had a strong argument that social justice would be served by making a higher proportion of the costs of higher education borne by the people who would benefit from it. (The universities themselves sat fairly quietly by during this debate – whatever the ethics, it meant more money for them.)

Yet the use of funding arrangements is not the only way of differentiating between different forms of higher education. National quality assurance arrangements also have a part to play.

Higher education in the UK has witnessed a fast changing succession of quality assurance bodies and procedures since the ending of the binary divide between universities and polytechnics in 1992 (Brown 2004). The reasons for what have recently been termed the 'UK quality wars' (Dill 2004) are complex and cannot be levelled totally at the problems posed by increasing diversity and differentiation of British higher education. But nor can they be completely separated from them. Six contributing factors to the growth of what many would describe as a quality assurance 'industry' in the UK can be detected.

- First, the shift from ‘elite’ to ‘mass’ higher education raised two sorts of issues for how quality was seen in higher education. One issue was that quality control by restricting university entry to students regarded as the very ‘brightest’ (whether or not this was true is another matter) was no longer a viable option². The second issue was that expansion raised the visibility and the costs of higher education and, in so doing, questions of the value obtained for the public monies invested.
- The second factor stems directly from the increasing differentiation of higher education. Making sense of the variety of forms of higher education that were now available was an important part of ensuring their legitimacy. In particular, new forms of higher education courses and new types of non-university institutions probably needed some form of external scrutiny if their graduates and qualifications were to gain respect. The important point to note is that the objective of quality assurance here was to ensure *comparability* of qualifications in a differentiated system. Subsequently, its objective came to be to demonstrate the *differences* between them.
- A third and related point was the decline in resources available to higher education. Few countries have been able to afford ‘mass’ higher education at the same unit of resource as was provided to ‘elite’ higher education and the UK has been no exception. Thus, some form of quality assessment was necessary to ensure that ‘cheaper’ higher education was nevertheless higher education of an acceptable quality.
- A fourth and rather different point is the growing internationalisation of higher education, especially in relation to the mobility of students and of graduate labour. The need to both understand and to give credit for studies undertaken and qualifications gained in other countries provided an added impetus to developments that attempted to make explicit the arrangements for guaranteeing the quality and standards of higher education courses.
- These trends were not restricted to higher education. A fifth factor has undoubtedly been what has been known as the rise of the ‘evaluative state’ (Henkel 1991, Neave 1998). This refers to the practice of governments to introduce new forms of regulation of state-funded public services, replacing explicit controls with delegated authority to service providers. Coupled with the delegation of authority was the introduction of evaluative systems to check what had been done with the new autonomy.
- A final point is really a development of the above one. The introduction of market competition in many areas of public service has brought with it a call

² It is worth noting however that quality of ‘input’ is widely regarded as the best indicator of quality of ‘output’ in the UK and other higher education systems.

for better information about service quality so that consumers could take it into account in exercising their choice of service – whether electricity supplier, hospital or university.

Differentiation has been one factor in the UK ‘quality wars’ but it has been a decisive one in affecting the evolution of quality assurance methods over the last fifteen years or so. At the start of the 1990s, the aims of quality assurance – the external examining system in the universities coupled, in the polytechnic sector, with the peer review procedures of the Council for National Academic Awards – were to ensure that threshold quality was achieved across all of UK higher education, that students, employers and the general public could expect to find comparable academic standards operating throughout UK higher education. Gradually through the 1990s, the aim changed – almost to the opposite – to show that there was not comparability of standards across UK higher education, that some courses and institutions were better than others and that able and ambitious students and ‘top’ employers needed to have good information about which were the ‘best’ universities and courses. Once again, equity was to be replaced by meritocracy, not just in relation to individuals but in relation to institutions. Of course, the ‘rules of the game’ ensured that meritocracy was more apparent than real and quality assurance became turned into a ‘user guide to the inequities of UK higher education’.

It was necessary for quality assurance to differentiate. The peer review system in place in 1992 did not do that. So it was replaced. The key differentiating process during the rest of the 1990s was a process first called ‘teaching quality assessment’ and then ‘subject review’. This was a peer review system managed on behalf of the higher education funding councils.³ It resulted in the public grading of all subjects at all institutions. The grades were seized upon by the media as the basis for the construction of ‘league tables’ of the best universities and courses. Combined with the results of the parallel assessment exercise for research, these public gradings allowed the legitimisation of a hierarchy in British higher education. Where previously, there were polytechnics and universities – with the latter roughly stratified in terms of how old they were – an institution could now refer to being in the ‘top 10’ or ‘20’ or ‘30’ (according to how well the institution had done in the gradings – beyond 30, it was wisest to keep quiet about them!)

The subject reviews were much criticised – and yet much used – within higher education institutions. They could be used in marketing and as a management tool to reward some and punish others. The criticisms stemmed in part from the resources the assessment exercises consumed and in part from the view that they compromised the traditional independence of British universities. The reviews were eventually replaced but not until another differentiating device had been found (Brown 2004).

3 Separate councils and systems existed in England, Scotland and Wales.

A key feature of the present quality assurance arrangements in UK higher education is the emphasis given to what is called ‘teaching quality information’ or TQI. TQI consists of published information, much of it quantitative, on all higher education programmes. It includes such things as the typical entry qualifications (how difficult it is to gain a place), completion rates (the likelihood of gaining a qualification) and the employment records of the graduates (the demand from employers). A national survey of graduates has also been introduced. This will produce public information about how graduates view the quality of the courses they have recently completed (Higher Education Funding Council for England 2004).

The evolution of quality assurance in the UK is summarised in Table 4. It is by no means a simple or one dimensional story. It reflects a continuing balance of power between interests outside higher education, most importantly the state and employers, and interests within higher education, most importantly subject communities and institutional leaders.

Table 4: The Evolution of Quality Assurance Methods in UK Higher Education

Type 1 ‘Academic’	Subject focus – knowledge and curricula Professorial authority Quality values vary across institution
Type 2 ‘Managerial’	Institutional focus – policies and procedures Managerial authority Quality values invariant across institution
Type 3 ‘Pedagogic’	People focus – skills and competencies Staff developers/educationalist influence Quality values invariant across institution
Type 4 ‘Employment focus’	Output focus – graduate standards/learning outcomes Employment/professional authority Quality values both variant and invariant across institution
Type 5 ‘Consumerist’	Student focus – student satisfaction Authority of the marketplace Quality values vary across institution

Public needs have been seen to be about differentiation: the need to distinguish ‘top universities’ and the ‘best courses’. Referring back to Trow’s typology, quality assurance needed to both signpost and legitimise an elite sector within the expanded higher education system.

Conclusions: Managed Inequalities

Bourdieu and other writers have described the ways in which higher education operates so as to reproduce social elites. In the UK case at least, we may be able to extend this analysis to describe how a systematically differentiated higher education system is able to reproduce and legitimise social hierarchies more generally. Some groups in society have ready access to educational routes that serve to reproduce their elite status. But others, if they have access to anything, are more likely to have access to routes that lead to intermediate positions and statuses, to jobs which have more routinised work tasks. 'Knowing your place' has always been an important feature of British society and 'knowing your place within a differentiated higher education system' is today an important aspect of it.

Quality assurance has become increasingly intertwined with 'employability' agendas. Especially for some institutions, courses and students – on the whole outside the elite places – a variety of initiatives have been put in place to 'help students to become more employable'. These include changes to curricula which emphasise employment skills, greater use of work placements, new kinds of support from careers and other student services. The rationale for such initiatives has been entirely benevolent: to ensure that extending educational opportunities would also extend employment opportunities for the many 'first generation' students who were now entering higher education (Brennan and Shah 2003). They may also have served to manage the expectations of such students, i.e. making them 'more realistic' as well as better prepared for the 'non-elite' jobs they were likely to obtain.

There has, however, been some doubt about the effectiveness of some of the schemes to increase employability. A recent study by Mason et al. (2003) has suggested little or no long term benefits from these initiatives although they may make a contribution to the ease with which a first job after graduation is obtained.

Returning to the employment data presented earlier in the paper, we can at least question the extent to which this increasingly formal differentiation of higher education is achieving differentiated outcomes. Of course it is true that graduates from some backgrounds and institutions appear to do better on average than others. But the differences were not so large. They were certainly not as large as public and political perceptions would have them be where, as some commentators have remarked (e.g., King 2004), it sometimes seems as if failure to obtain a place at a 'top' university would make it pointless to go into higher education at all. However, the data used in this paper were collected at the end of the nineties from graduates who had studied in British higher education at the start of the decade. It remains to be seen whether the repeated assessments and gradings of higher education have changed public perceptions and created a hierarchy which is both neater and more rigid than existed previously.

If so, we may have reached a new stage in higher education's services to re-producing inequality. Whereas in an elite system, admission to any form of higher education represented a gateway to elite positions, in a mass system, admission to higher education is part of a much broader 'sorting process' whereby the type of course and institution attended will largely determine – and limit - future life chances.⁴

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4 This is of course a function played by the secondary school system in the post-war period when students, at age 11, were sorted between the 'academic' grammar schools and the 'vocational' secondary modern schools with crucial consequences for life chances. It is therefore perhaps somewhat ironic that many of the so-called new universities (former polytechnics) have chosen to call themselves 'modern' universities.

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External Quality Assessment in Dutch Universities: Past and Future

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1. Introduction

The universities in the Netherlands were one of the first institutions of higher education in Europe confronted with external quality assessment. In 1985, the Minister of Education published the document “Autonomy and Quality”, promising more autonomy to higher education and demanding the assurance of quality. This was the start of the External Quality Assessment (EQA) by the Association of Universities in the Netherlands. According to the first protocol, “this system is not aiming at accreditation”. Nobody could foresee that nowadays a law on accreditation has been accepted and the National Accreditation Organisation (the NAO) has been established. In the first part, this article describes shortly the current system of EQA for Dutch universities and in the second part, the developments on accreditation.

2. External Quality Assessment of Dutch Universities 1988-2002

2.1 The Beginning

The year 1985 meant a break-through in the way of thinking about quality assurance in Dutch higher education. Until 1985, evaluation took place in the institutions themselves, unwittingly for the outside world. It was often done on ad hoc bases and often in an unstructured way. The new philosophy of the government regarding higher education policy (stepping back and providing more autonomy to the institutions) forced higher education to organise a structured system for

quality assessment and quality assurance. In an agreement with the Ministry of Education and Sciences, the institutions of higher education were made responsible for the internal and external assessment of the primary processes of the higher education institutions: the teaching/learning process and research.

The agreements were fixed in the Higher Education and Research Act (Ministerie van O&W 1992). Article 1.18 reads:

“The administration of an institution shall ensure that arrangements are made, as far as possible in collaboration with other institutions, for regular assessment, partly by independent experts, of the quality of the institution's work. The assessment of higher education institutions shall include the opinion of students on the quality of teaching in the institution. In so far as the assessment is carried out by independent experts, the results of the assessment shall be made public.”

In 1988, a system for external quality assessment was introduced for the university sector, coordinated by the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU).

2.2 Some Characteristics

Looking at the Dutch system, one will see some characteristics that are common with EQA systems in other countries; other characteristics are typical Dutch:

- The Dutch universities, looking for the best external quality assessment-system (EQA) in the Dutch situation, did not opt for institutional assessment or audit like it was done by the Committee National d’Evaluation in France or by the former Higher Education Quality Council in the UK. A discipline approach has been chosen and the assessment of degree programmes. This decision is based on the idea that the quality of an institution depends on the quality of its educational and its research programmes. The institutional audit is seen to be the responsibility of each university individually.
- The functions contributed to external quality assessment are
 - quality control and
 - accountability.

Quality Control

The most important aim ascribed to EQA is to contribute to quality maintenance and, if necessary, improvement by quality control. The function quality control has three sub-functions:

- *Assessment of quality and providing recommendations for improvement:* For quality control an institution needs the opinion of outsiders about the pro-

gramme; institutions also need recommendations for enhancement. Therefore, experts are ‘hired’ as consultants.

- *Benchmarking or determination of its position, nationally, but especially internationally*: Universities need information about similar programs elsewhere (at home or abroad) to determine their own position in the field.
- *Self regulation*: Universities need information for proper policy making and management; e.g. does this programme fit in the mission of the faculty or university?

Accountability

When the discussion about EQA began, the autonomy of the university has been taken as starting point. However, autonomy and accountability are two sides of the same coin. Government, but also students, parents, and employers have the right to know if the university concerned is providing quality or not. In this respect, EQA plays an important role. The minimum outcome of an assessment is a statement like “this programme has quality”. However, a general statement is not sufficient. Statements about several aspects are wanted, like a statement about goals and aims, about the content of the programme, about student counselling and about study load. In the framework of accountability, external quality assessment offers the outside world insight into quality.

- The Dutch system is characterised by separate assessments of educational programmes and research. The assessment of degree programmes is carried out since 1988. In 1993, the Dutch Association of Universities, VSNU (*Vereniging van Universiteite*), took also responsibility for the assessment of research programmes. There are several reasons for a separate approach:
 - the assessment of an educational programme is more process-oriented, the assessment of research more output-oriented;
 - organisational developments in education and developments in research organisations are different, therefore, they also ask for a different approach of external assessment;
 - the assessment of the educational programmes asks for an other type of expertise than does the assessment of research programmes.

It should be mentioned that the correlation between education and research is certainly part of the assessment of the educational programmes, because without good research there will be not be good education (as we will have no good research without good education).

- The Dutch system is nationwide and covers all programmes. Nation-wide means that the same committee will assess all similar named programmes in all Dutch universities. This is not so difficult because the Netherlands count only 14 universities, and the maximum load of one committee will be ten or

eleven visits. Sometimes the load is higher because the Flemish speaking universities from Belgium are included. Nation-wide means, there will be one committee for history, one committee for economy, etc. The system is also an overall system which means that all programmes at the university are being assessed without any exceptions. The basic ideas behind the Dutch system are similar to those other assessment agencies have formulated:

- the VSNU acts as an intermediate body;
 - the faculty carries out a self-evaluation,
 - followed by an external assessment by independent experts during a site visit;
 - the outcomes are made public.
- The VSNU always has emphasised the importance of a clear and strict protocol and guidelines for self-evaluation and external assessment. Every faculty, every programme which is being assessed has the right to be assessed in an equal way and has the right to know according to which rules it will be assessed. However, the strict rules for the self-assessment are important too to lighten the burden of the expert committees.
 - The above mentioned precaution for equal treatment is also very important because the Dutch system is a comparative system too. The expert committee not only publishes the findings of the individual assessments, but in a special chapter a comparative picture of the discipline is given, using a number of quality aspects.
 - The system is based on two important pillars: on self-evaluation and on peer review. After the self-evaluation, the faculty or department will be visited by “peers” during a visit of 2.5 days. Regarding the word “peers”, it should be mentioned that it does not mean peers in a strict sense. Besides academics, who are invited, also experts from the side of the labour market or from professional organisations participate in those committees and also a student member.
 - During the visits, interviews are held with students, staff, committees, executive board, etc. The committee will look at the facilities, study books, and lecture materials. Beforehand, the committee has studied and assessed final essays (thesis work) and examination papers. The committee does not attend lectures.
 - The system is cyclical, i. e. every programme will be assessed every six years.
 - The Dutch system does not have a direct link with funding. Of course the assessment may have final consequences for detaining the funding if lack of quality will not be restored.

- In the Netherlands the universities themselves pay for the assessments. Every faculty receives an invoice after the assessment, giving the expenses made by the VSNU for running the system. Only for the participation of the student members some outside money is involved.

2.3 A Critical Reflection on the Current System

After 14 years of EQA, one may conclude that the external assessment has become an intrinsic activity in Dutch universities. The universities consider EQA as a valuable instrument to maintain quality and where necessary to improve it. Although it is very difficult to prove that Dutch higher education in general has been substantially improved since the introduction of EQA, one finds many hints and indicators that it has contributed to keeping the quality. This is also the general opinion of the inspectorate and the minister.

Some positive effects may be mentioned. 14 years of EQA:

- have put quality on the agenda at every level in the university. Quality has continuous attention of policy makers, managers and staff;
- have contributed to the development of internal quality assurance mechanism by which universities are able to guarantee the quality of the programmes offered;
- have achieved that not only research output is taken into account in the career of academics, but also teaching qualifications and efforts put into teaching. Teaching is getting more or less the same weight as research;
- have influenced discussions on the development of higher education. Discussions are more and more based on facts and less on prejudices;
- have made the total offer of programmes more open and transparent, including more clearness about profiles and quality.

However, the analysis of the current system shows also some topics that need reconsideration and ask for changes:

- the current system is too much driven by accountability. There is still a tension between improvement and accountability;
- the current system shows too much a tendency towards uniformity of programmes and is threatening to make all programmes in the country uniform;
- the system still needs more orientation towards providing insight into quality to prevent unwanted rankings and league tables;
- the pressure on the system to provide information for students and employers is too high;

- the question whether the system should be seen as an accreditation system or not is still unanswered;
- the analysis shows that the system is seen by the universities as too rigid. More flexibility is wanted;
- EQA is too much national-oriented and has still too little international orientation.

3. Call for Accreditation

3.1 The Origin

The Netherlands has an effective system for external quality assurance that also enjoys international recognition. However, national and international developments necessitate that the system of external quality assurance is rounded off by the introduction of accreditation and by an accrediting body.

The discussion started in 1998, when the VSNU pleaded for a change of the informal accreditation system of the inspectorate. The inspectorate handed out, spoken in soccer terms, a yellow or red card if quality was below the expectations. In case an institution did not get a yellow or red card, it could consider itself as accredited. Since the criteria for the yellow and red card were not always clear, the VSNU saw the importance to set up an independent validation council. However, at that moment, time was not given for such council.

In the Higher Education Policy Plan of 2000, the Minister of Education introduced the discussion on international accreditation, based on the Bologna declaration. All stakeholders in Dutch higher education took part in this discussion and the outcomes were sent to the Parliament in the policy document “Keur aan Kwaliteit” (“Accreditation in Dutch Higher Education”) (Ministry of Education, Science and Culture 2000):

The reasons for the introduction of accreditation were, as indicated in the above mentioned policy document:

- international recognition for Dutch higher education,
- encouraging international benchmarking,
- encouraging transparency of the quality of the programmes offered,
- reinforcing the independence of the quality assessment,
- clarification of the management consequences in case of lack of quality.

In the law on accreditation of higher education and in the explanatory memorandum to the law, the context within which the accreditation should take shape is sketched.

In November 2000, the Minister of Education, Science and Culture installed the Committee for Accreditation of Dutch Higher Education. In September 2001, this committee published its final report “Activate, Achieve and Advance” (Ministry of Education, Science and Culture 2001). In general, one could say that the ideas of the committee are characterised by a top down approach. The current quality assessment system does not look like functioning well and it is not satisfactory. The committee regards accreditation as a new system and as panacea more than as the “finishing touch” of the current system. The committee sees an important role for the National Accreditation Organisation (NAO).

In the memorandum “Toward a hallmark for Quality” (VSNU 2001), the Association of Universities in the Netherlands developed a proposal for the establishment of accreditation in Dutch higher education, also taking into account the law on accreditation. The principles concerning the accreditation system are:

- it must further build on the document “Accreditation in Dutch Higher Education”, which is endorsed by all parties;
- it must be efficient, simple and introduce as little bureaucracy as possible;
- it must build on the existing external assessment system;
- it is coupled with international developments, especially with developments in Europe;
- it is acceptable to all those involved: government, students, higher education institutions, potential employers.

3.2 Accreditation as a Validation of External Assessment

In the explanatory memorandum to the law for the introduction of accreditation to higher education, accreditation is described as “granting of a hallmark that shows that certain qualitative standards have been met”. The universities endorse the idea, laid down in the Memorandum of Explanation, that accreditation must be seen as the granting of a formal quality hallmark after verification and validation of an external assessment.

In most cases, the accreditation councils such as ABET organize the external assessments and appoint committees of experts who assess the quality of a study programme on the basis of a given protocol. On the basis of the advice from this committee and its report, a decision is taken on accreditation. In the Netherlands, it has been decided to place accreditation and external assessment in different hands. Whichever system is developed for accreditation, it will always have to be based on the opinion of the external experts. Quality control, quality assessment and accreditation will always remain a matter of trusting this opinion. A modicum of suspicion is appropriate, hence the verification and validation of the external judgement is by the accrediting body.

3.3 Requirements for the External Assessment

Accreditation is based on the external assessment by experts. In order to enclose the external assessment with as many safeguards as possible and to give a clear framework for verifying and validating the assessment, the Netherlands Accreditation Organisation (the NAO) will define requirements for the external assessment based on an accreditation framework. The accreditation framework is the context within which the external assessment will take place.

The most important requirements to be satisfied by an external assessment are:

- independence of the judgements,
- transparency of the protocol, process and working method,
- protocols must guarantee that the quality is assessed in the correct manner (completeness, argumentation, consistency),
- public access to the results.

The accreditation framework will provide guidelines for tackling the external assessments. For this reason it is important that the accreditation framework is consistent with international developments in the area of accreditation and external quality assessment.

3.4 The Netherlands Accreditation Organisation (NAO)

The following principles apply to the development of jobs, tasks and organisation of the NAO:

- the object of accreditation is the study programme;
- the NAO does not itself carry out assessments;
- the NAO is completely independent.

According to the universities, the job of the NAO is (by granting the quality hallmark):

- to reinforce and confirm the independence of the assessments;
- to contribute to the recognition of the quality and quality assessment abroad;
- to contribute to the transparency of the quality of the education offered;
- to provide a clear basis for management consequences.

The main task of the NAO is in the opinion of the universities:

- to verify and validate an external assessment on the basis of the accreditation framework;
- to grant a formal quality hallmark (accreditation) to those study programmes for which the external assessment has been validated;

- to grant provisional accreditation to new study programmes.

3.5 The Accreditation Framework

For the purpose of validating the external assessments, the NAO will have to develop an accreditation framework in order to check the validity of the external assessments and to decide whether or not to grant a formal hallmark on the basis of the results. The accreditation framework will have to provide answers to the following questions:

- Has agreement on the assessment method and criteria been reached in advance with the agency that organized the external assessment? *Has the quality assessment been arrived at independently?* Questions that then need to be answered concerning:
 - the way in which the committee was put together;
 - the expertise of the committee members;
 - the absence of conflicting interests;
 - independent operation of the committee.
- *Does the report satisfy the agreed requirements?* (If it concerns a report from a foreign agency, the question is whether this report contains the same information as the Dutch version.)
- *How has the opinion about the level (bachelor/master) and profile (academic/professional orientation) been arrived at?*
 - What kind of framework has been used to check the level?
 - Have the descriptors for level/profile been correctly assessed?
 - Do the formulated objectives satisfy the level and profile requirements according to the assessment?
- Is there sufficient evidence that the objectives will actually be achieved?

In order to assess this aspect of the accreditation framework, the NAO and the external committee need to use a clear definition of the bachelor and master levels. A good starting point might be the so-called Dublin descriptors¹:

- How has the reference framework been arrived at and does it reflect the internationally accepted domain-specific standards?
- Has the external committee checked the necessary quality criteria and is there sufficient evidence that the study programme satisfies these criteria?

¹ For more information about the Dublin descriptors see <http://www.jointquality.org/>, http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/en/prague_berlin/index.htm; or http://www.upc.edu/ees/contingut/arxius/Descriptors_dublin%5B1%5D_2004.pdf.

- Is the overall opinion of the external committee consistent with the assessment in detail?

If the results of the verification and validation are positive, the opinion of the external committee is adopted. If the assessment is positive, the hallmark is granted; if the assessment is negative, the hallmark is withheld. If the validation turns out to be negative, the study programme must be given the opportunity to have a new assessment carried out. It will be clear that the organizing institution cannot permit unsound assessments to be carried out.

3.6 The Accreditation Framework and the Protocols for External Assessments

It would significantly reduce the workload of the NAO if the accreditation framework and the protocols for the external assessments were coordinated in advance. This does not mean that the NAO should impose mandatory requirements for the way in which a QA-agency should organize and carry out the external assessments. It does mean that the accreditation framework will be a guideline, because the QA-agency will not want to run the risk of an external assessment not being validated.

The NAO and institutions that organize the external assessments will therefore have to reach agreement about the protocol to be used. This protocol should in any case cover:

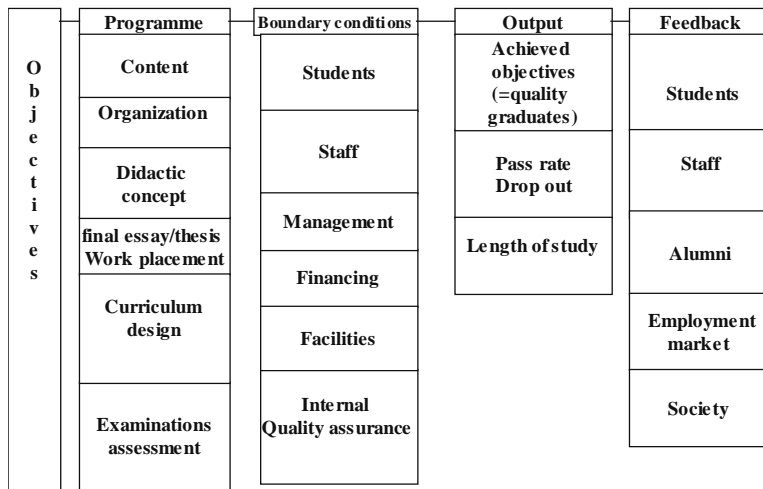
- the assessment framework, on which the external committee has based its opinion of the Bachelor and Master levels, which must also distinguish between the profiles (academic or professionally-oriented);
- the creation and use of the reference framework for the evaluation of domain-specific and general educational objectives;
- the quality criteria used for assessing the quality. These should satisfy the internationally accepted criteria for quality assessment;
- the form and content of the report;
- the way in which the independence of the external committee's judgement is guaranteed.

If the NAO and the QA-agency agree upon the protocol, the organizing institution will be registered by the NAO as an institution that can be expected to produce valid assessments. In the process of verification and validation, the discussion will be about the application of the protocol rather than about the protocol itself.

3.7 The Quality Criteria for the External Assessment

When validating the external assessment, it is important to ask whether the judgement on the quality is valid and whether the quality criteria have been assessed to give a realistic view of the quality. To achieve this, an assessment framework that satisfies the (national and international) requirements for a quality assessment must be used for the external assessment. When developing a model for checking the quality of Dutch higher education, it is important to take the experience of recent years into account and to be consistent with international assessment frameworks.

Figure 1. A Quality Model of Higher Education as a Checking Framework



One of the conditions for the recognition of the Dutch hallmark abroad is that the quality has been checked for the same quality aspects. Looking at the manuals and protocols in use throughout the world of higher education for assessing study programmes, there is a large degree of agreement on the aspects that must be assessed, even if the emphasis varies sometimes. Based on an analysis of different manuals and protocols used in different countries, it is possible to develop a quality model or checking framework that can be used for quality assessment (see figure 1). The model can be used both for self-evaluation by the study programme and as a checking framework for the external committee.

The big advantage of this quality model is that it not only covers national quality criteria, but it also corresponds with international assessment frameworks.²

3.8 A Public, Clear Report

Since the NAO will rely on the assessment by the external committee, high standard reports will be required. The report will have to be sufficiently clear and explicit so that the NAO can easily form an opinion on validation. The protocol should clearly state what information is necessary.

The following items should be considered in any case:

- the composition of the external committee;
- the way in which the external committee has checked the institution's claim;
- the reference framework used by the committee;
- an opinion about the 21 aspects mentioned in the quality model on the basis of, for example, a ++; +;0; .- or -- grade;
- an overall opinion;
- an evaluation of the external assessment;
- if several study programmes are being assessed by the same committee: a comparison of the study programmes and a description of the state of the discipline.

The report will be open to the public and will be presented to the accreditation body for verification and validation of the assessment and the award of accreditation.

3.9 An Independently Operating External Assessment Committee

One important requirement that must be placed on the external assessment is that the opinion must be formed independently. This means that the external assessment committee can form an opinion on the quality without external influences. It is not relevant, in this respect, whether the QA-agency is independent of the sector organization. Generally speaking, bodies that organize external quality assessments have some form of link with the sector organization (this may be the institutions, but may also be a professional association as is the case with ABET and EQUIS). It is precisely this link with the sector organization that has significant advantages for quality improvement and the development of a quality policy and provides support for substantive improvements to the study programmes.

² The quality model is elaborated in Vroeijsstijn 2001.

It is not so much the question as to whether the organizing body is independent, but whether the organizing body ensures that the judgements are arrived at independently. The following requirements must be met for an independent opinion:

- The committee members have no personal interest in the assessment;
- The committee itself determines how it will work, while observing the protocol;
- The committee is responsible for the report;
- The committee is not subject to external influences.

The protocol must then clearly state how the organizing body guarantees this independence.

4. From External Assessment to Accreditation

The document “Een Keur aan Kwaliteit” clearly states that the anticipated accreditation must build on the existing external assessment system. The question is, what modifications are needed to go from external assessment to accreditation. Questions that arise here are:

- Who organizes the external assessments?
- Are the current methods and protocols sufficient?

4.1 Who Organizes the External Assessments?

The current system for external quality assessments originated in the agreements of 1986, whereby the minister of education, culture and science (OC&W) and the higher education institutions agreed that higher education was primarily responsible for the specification of the external assessments and for organizing the external assessments by external experts.

Institutions are legally obliged to have the quality of their study programmes externally assessed. At that time (1985), the higher education institutions decided to have the assessments organized by the VSNU and the Netherlands Association of Universities of Professional Education (HBO-raad). Institutions were entirely free to invite other bodies, such as for example ABET, EQUIS, ASPA or the American Veterinary Medical Association, to carry out an external assessment. The Dutch Validation Council is also active in the validation of HBO Master’s study programmes.

One of the principles praised in “Accreditation in Dutch Higher Education” is the promotion of a greater variety of bodies assessing quality. As can be seen in, for example, the current VSNU protocol, this is an aim that is supported. The

question is, however, how realistic the expectation is that more quality assessment bodies will enter the Dutch market. It is up to the institutions to decide who they will ask to organize the assessment. That the assessment of study programmes will have to be validated by the NAO will certainly play a role in this decision making in the future. The demand from the institutions will ultimately determine whether more bodies will be interested in organizing external assessments of higher education in the Netherlands.

Foreign organizations will be involved in a number of cases. These will mainly be American accreditation bodies such as ABET, ASPA and the Veterinary Medical Association or internationally operating bodies such as EQUIS. It is not obvious that other foreign, but in principle nationally operating bodies such as the QAA in the United Kingdom or the German Akkreditierungsrat will carry out assessments in the Netherlands, unless it concerns a joint assessment such as that recently carried out in a joint project between ZeVA (Germany), the VLIR (Flanders) and the VSNU (cf. ZEVA 2001).

4.2 Is the Current System of External Assessment Already fit for Accreditation?

The current quality assessment system is not yet tailor made for accreditation. Up to now the main purpose has been quality improvement and accountability. The protocols of the HBO-raad and the VSNU will have to be modified to be consistent with the new developments in accreditation. The protocols will have to be matched to the accreditation framework. In any case, the following changes will have to be made:

- In addition to process orientation, more attention for output orientation.
- Up to now the attention has primarily been paid to quality of the process, although the product quality also received attention and the level of the graduates was not entirely neglected. There will however have to be more explicit attention paid to the qualifications and the standards.
- A greater emphasis on determining the reference framework.
- At the beginning of the external assessment, the reference framework for the assessment will have to be clearly and explicitly formulated, more than it is at the moment.
- An overall judgement on the study programme.
- Up to now, the external committees have formed an opinion on a number of aspects. In order to lead to accreditation, the committee also have to express an overall judgement
- A closer monitoring of the independence of the assessments

- The safeguards for the independence of the judgements forming will have to be made more explicit than before by the QA-agency.

For the organization of the quality assessment by the VSNU, the introduction of accreditation means the development of a protocol that includes all conditions for external assessment which are mentioned in this memorandum. The protocol should have the assent of the NAO so that the VSNU can be registered and the institutions have the guarantee that the external assessment reports can be submitted for validation by the accrediting body.

5. Conclusions

The introduction of accreditation can be a further step on the way towards quality assurance and improvement of Dutch higher education and towards strengthening its competitive position with respect to other countries. This does mean that accreditation must be supported by all interested parties, including the higher education institutions, and must not be seen as a bureaucratic extra burden.

Summarized, the most important points are:

- Accreditation is the final step in the quality assurance system and relies on verification and validation of the assessments from external experts.
- Verification and validation are carried out on the basis of an accreditation framework.
- The accreditation framework is not mandatory but is a guideline for the QA-agency.
- Both the Dutch organizations that currently organize the assessments and the NAO will ensure that the protocols are consistent with the accreditation framework.
- The accreditation framework contains criteria for the verification of:
 - the independence of the assessment,
 - the quality criteria that have been assessed,
 - the BAMA framework used,
 - the discipline-related reference framework used,
 - the clarity and consistency of the report,
 - the consistency of the overall judgement.
- The accreditation framework will be developed in stages, with the help of all interested parties.

- The development of the accreditation framework and the assessment protocols (including the BAMA framework) of the bodies that organize the assessments will be carried out in the light of international developments to ensure international recognition.

In the near future, it is important to build upon the current system and to make it as less bureaucratic as possible. All stakeholders must support it. If the NAO is not supported by higher education and if accreditation is felt as something forced on “from above”, the system is doomed to fail, and in the same time destroying all the benefits of 14 years of external quality assessment.

The guardian of the quality is not the NAO but all parties concerned: the universities (by means of internal quality assurance), the VSNU (by means of external quality assessment) and the NAO (by means of the formal quality label). Quality assurance should be based on trust and not on a bureaucratic control system.

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II

ACADEMIC CAPITALISM IN RESEARCH

Market Unbound – and Everything Went Well ...?¹

Uwe Schimank

In John Dos Passos' (1925, p. 255, misspellings in the original) novel "Manhattan Transfer" a speaker on a public place shouts to the people passing by:

"You look pale you fellers ... you need blood. ... Why dont you get some blood in your veins? ... Back in Russia the poor people ... not so much poorer'n we are ... believe in vampires, things come suck your blood at night. ... That's what capitalism is, a vampire that sucks your blood ... day ... and ... night."

That is a very familiar view on capitalism. We know it from the history of the workers' movement, from proclamations and political programmes of trade unions as well as socialist and social-democratic parties. The left in general was always and still is highly critical of capitalism from a moral point of view. They read capitalism as exploitation, inhuman and insecure working conditions, manipulation of consumers, alienation at work as well as in society at large, etc.

Another view, a more analytical one, understands capitalism as an economic system which is based on competitive markets not only for goods but for all factors of production as well. Nature, human labour, and capital are dealt with as commodities. In all market transactions economic action is not guided – to use Karl Marx' famous distinction – by the use-value of a commodity but by its exchange-value which means that producers and sellers of commodities want and have to make profits, above all other considerations.

¹ I thank Jochen Gläser and Grit Laudel for comments. As usual, they were very helpful to clarify my thoughts – especially where I still disagree with them.

This is the standard view of economic theory and economic sociology, from Marx (1867) to Max Weber (1921) and Karl Polanyi (1944) up to the neo-classic mainstream. It points out three basic constituents of capitalism which mutually stabilise and reinforce each other: *competition – commodification – profits*.

Turning now to *academic capitalism*, a term that was coined by Sheila Slaughter and Larry Leslie (1997) some years ago, it is clear that this labelling of certain trends in contemporary science most of the time is used in the first sense I mentioned: as a call for help against a seemingly overpowering force which endangers what appears to be inalienable rights and achievements of modern science. This kind of moralistic rhetoric may be sometimes appropriate in political debates but is certainly uncalled-for in a scientific investigation of what happens. Instead of expressing “hot” emotions we should rely here on a “cool” analytical study. Accordingly, I will ask: Where exactly are analogies to markets, commodification, and profit-seeking in academia, and has something significant happened to these three dimensions of academic life recently? And if so: Has this something to do with changes of the governance regime of science in the direction of so-called “new public management” (NPM)? I can only sketch some preliminary and scattered empirical findings and theoretical reflections on these questions here, restricting myself to the university system with a special focus on Germany.

1. The Advent of NPM

In important respects, we have always had academic capitalism in modern science. Students of science as diverse as – among others – Warren Hagstrom (1965), Bruno Latour (Latour 1987, see also Latour and Woolgar 1979), or Pierre Bourdieu (1975) highlighted the relevant features some time ago. Dietmar Braun’s (1997, pp. 66-83) synthesis of their ideas goes like this:

- Scientists compete with each other for resources as well as reputation. Their relative position on the academic market manifests itself especially in more or less attractive posts. Attractiveness is not so much measured in terms of personal income but by the number of research assistants and other resources at disposal.
- The resources, the factors of production, are commodified in important respects. Scientists are no longer rich amateurs but belong to the labour force. They are employed by universities or other organisations where scientific research is done. Laboratories, offices, equipment, and materials needed are goods which must be bought on the market.

- There also is an analogy to the accumulation of capital in economic markets: the academic “credit cycle”. Publications, if they are read and quoted, lead to reputation; this brings about better chances for new grants for research proposals; these new projects produce new results which are the basis of new publications; etc.

As Robert K. Merton’s (1968) dictum of the “Matthew effect” notes this is a system in which “deviation amplification” (Maruyama 1963) is institutionalised. As in the capitalist economy, the rich get richer most of the time. On the one hand, positive feedbacks bring about that the chances of those who already are highly reputed scientists to acquire even more reputation are good; on the other hand, those with very little reputation have almost no chances. For young scientists this means that they must start their career under the tutelage of a reputed elder scientist.

How has this general pattern changed with the advent and implementation of NPM in more and more countries? In Great Britain, this happened early in the 1980’s, not much later in Australia. In continental Europe, the Netherlands were the first in the late 1980’s. Recently, a country like Austria followed whose governance regime was similar to the German one whereas Germany still lags much behind – for better or worse.

Adding to Burton Clark’s (1983) well-known initial “triangle of coordination” (state, market, academic oligarchy) a fourth mechanism (organisation) which he himself added later (Clark 1997) and differentiating the first-mentioned mechanism into two distinct ones, five basic components of the governance of university systems can be distinguished (Braun and Merrien 1999):

- bureaucratic regulation of universities by state authorities;
- political guidance of universities by state authorities or by university boards to whom this guidance is delegated;
- competitive pressure within and among universities;
- academic self-regulation of universities;
- hierarchical self-guidance of universities by their leadership.

Using this analytical framework, it is easy to see that the traditional governance regime of German universities differs sharply in all five dimensions from what NPM recommends. The traditional regime is characterised by a combination of strong academic self-regulation with a high autonomy of each professor, on the one hand, and a strong bureaucratic regulation by state authorities, whereas the other three mechanisms are rather weak. In contrast, NPM strengthens just these mechanisms: first, hierarchical self-guidance of universities by rectors and deans, secondly, political guidance of universities by state authorities and, even

more, by university boards in which important extra-scientific reference groups of the universities – industry, above all – are represented, and thirdly, competitive pressure. At the same time, NPM implies a marked deregulation with respect to budgeting and personnel management and to the approval of study courses. Last but not least, a reduction of the power of academic self-regulation is an explicit goal of NPM because the professors' resistance to change is seen as the major force which has preserved an increasingly dysfunctional status quo for decades by now.

Other national university systems were not that far away from NPM when their transformation started. For example, at the old British universities as well as at the Australian universities the level of regulation was traditionally comparatively low whereas the British polytechnics and the Australian colleges of advanced education already exhibited two other elements of NPM: strong political guidance and strong hierarchical self-guidance. Making a number of long and complicated stories short, one can summarise what had to be done, and partly has been done by now, in Germany, Austria, Great Britain, Australia, the Netherlands, and the United States on the way to NPM (Schimank and Meier 2002):

- In the United States, only political guidance of universities was lacking and had to be installed, with some attempts in this direction being made.
- In the other five countries, competitive pressure had to be increased – the most in Austria.
- With the already mentioned exceptions of the British polytechnics and the Australian colleges of advanced education academic self-regulation had to be reduced in these five countries – the most at the old British and the Australian universities.
- Everywhere in these five countries political guidance of universities had to be extended – the least at the British polytechnics.
- In the Netherlands, Austria, and Germany, bureaucratic regulation by the state had to be decreased and the hierarchical self-guidance of universities had to be intensified.
- At the old British and the Australian universities bureaucratic regulation by the state had even to be increased.

At the centre of already achieved or intended changes of university governance is clearly an increase of competitive pressure. Deregulation is one requirement for universities and scientists to be able to face the challenge of increased competition. Another requirement is the neutralisation of the forces of standstill inherent in academic self-regulation and the installation of leadership which constitutes a university as a unified corporate actor. Political guidance is sup-

posed to give broad long-term orientation to the competitive strategy of a university. Spelled out in this way it becomes clear that NPM is not just a bundle of loosely coupled or even disconnected changes but an integral approach towards an overall redirection of universities. The common slogan is simply: “*more market!*”

So the first of the three constitutive elements of capitalism – market competition – is clearly visible. With respect to academic capitalism, we now can ask more specifically: How does increased competition express itself? Does it go along with increased commodification and profit-seeking? And which are the consequences of all this for research?²

2. NPM and Academic Capitalism

To begin with, these are probably the most conspicuous manifestations of increased *competition* in university systems:

- There is a higher dependence of research on separately budgeted funds. Simultaneously, and partly as a result of higher demand, an increased scarcity of these funds is experienced. As a consequence, more and more effort has to be invested to apply with less and less chances of success for grants whose average duration and amount have continuously shrunk.
- There is an increased dependence of the amount of basic funds on the competitive strength of a professor, an institute or a department, or a university as a whole. According to relative performance, future resources are allocated either according to a general formula or according to specific decisions by deans, rectors, or funding councils and ministries. Necessary information for these allocation procedures is provided by all kinds of evaluation exercises.
- Finally, there is an increased dependence of the amount of a professor’s income on individual performance. For Germany, take a look at the new salary scheme for professors to be implemented at the beginning of 2005. It binds increases above a considerably lowered basic salary to positive results of regular evaluations.

Corresponding manifestations of an increased *commodification* of the factors of production in university systems are:

- With respect to human labour, first of all there is the prospect of an elimination of the tenured public servant status of professors for Germany. In Austria, this was already implemented. Under these new conditions, professors

² I must restrict myself here to research, although the consequences for teaching would also be very important to study.

are white-collar employees who eventually can be dismissed if there is no further demand – mainly in terms of teaching – for their work. Secondly, an increase of temporary work contracts, especially for non-professorial academic staff, has taken place. The average length of these contracts has shortened. A researcher who had 20 contracts over a period of seven years is no exception, for instance in Great Britain. In Germany, the overall number of years someone can be employed by universities with such contracts is fixed by law. As a consequence of these and other developments, an increased use of service contracts instead of regular employment can also be observed.

- With respect to buildings, equipment, materials, etc., the creation of a heightened cost-consciousness is attempted at some German universities. For rooms, to illustrate, the University of Heidelberg installed internal markets so that an institute may rent some of its rooms to another institute and use the money earned in this way to buy books for its library or expensive laboratory equipment. Before these markets existed, rooms not needed temporarily were simply stockpiled because one never knew whether one would get rooms when they were needed.
- With respect to artefacts, Jochen Gläser's (2002) survey of scattered empirical evidence for a "commercialisation" of science documents, among other things, the patenting of more and more kinds of research results. Mathematical algorithms or manipulated genes were patented in some countries, including the United States. Whoever wants to work with these patented results has to pay to the patent holder – not just a firm which needs the patent for some commercial product but also a university professor who does basic research.

Finally, increased competition and increased commodification together reinforce *profit-seeking*:

Competition means that an increasing number of university scientists make the experience that their work is more and more not judged just by itself as good or bad, but relative to the work of others. They learn the lesson that they are permanently compared with others, and better should internalise this comparative attitude to their performance themselves.

All in all, an increasing number of university scientists assess more and more elements of their work environment – all kinds of resources as well as results – and, moreover, their own work capacity by their relative prices – not just in monetary terms but also in terms of time budget, for instance. From this they learn to calculate the use of any of these items in an economic way with respect to relative efficiency. And obviously, there are now more of those who really make big money from private research contracts, patenting of research results, etc.

Not just individual scientists, but work groups, institutes, departments, and whole universities as well become evaluation-conscious. They start to think increasingly in terms of money they need or could earn, either for their work or for their personal income, and undergo – to adopt Richard Sennett’s (1996) phrase – a “corrosion of character” which turns them into “flexible men”, as the German edition (1998) of Sennett’s book is aptly titled. For instance, they are prepared to change their research agenda whenever “the market” demands it, instead of pursuing a long-term research line.³ This opportunistic profit-seeking grows only partly out of necessities of survival. The other half of the story is that very soon profit-seeking is internalised as a self-evident driving-force of research activities which overshadows all expressions of the traditional curiosity motive.

3. Consequences for Research

I am aware of the fact that by and by my language has slipped into a negatively sounding vocabulary. In fact, I did this deliberately to remind you of my starting-point: capitalism as a bad order of things, in economic affairs and even more in science. Having implicitly suggested to you such an assessment of the contemporary new wave of academic capitalism, I will now explore whether this is the whole truth. Again restricting myself to research, I will compare some of the possible major benefits of NPM with some possible costs to get at least a rough impression of the cost/benefit balance.

At the moment, there is only very fragmented empirical evidence from here and there. Only Great Britain seems to be studied a little bit better (see, for instance, Henkel 2000).⁴ This lack of evidence is not accidental but seems to be a consequence of the fact that everybody involved is convinced that she or he already knows for sure what the consequences of NPM at universities are. There are those, on the one hand, who firmly believe that the status quo is all good, or at least much better than what NPM has brought or will bring about. On the other hand, there also are the true believers in NPM who declare that this governance regime is the only thing which can save today’s universities from perpetual decline. To reiterate, a sober look at things seems to be overdue.

3 Of course, there are many restrictions of this kind of individual flexibility, for instance, the “path dependency” of particular research agendas. The decisive thing is that such limitations are experienced now as restrictions, and not as orientations.

4 In fact, with Jürgen Enders and Barbara Kehm as co-directors I started a research project which compares Great Britain, the Netherlands, Austria, and Germany with respect to changes of university governance to NPM and the consequences for research.

Here are some possible costs of NPM to university research:

- Individual autonomy of scientists at universities, especially with regard to the selection of research topics, may be reduced by stronger political guidance and by a weakening of academic self-regulation. The latter implied not only respect for each professor's decisions about topics with which he or she deals with but also a guarantee of a minimum resource base.
- In combination with intensified competition, the reduction of autonomy may lead to a driving-out of unorthodox research lines in favour of mainstream research. Both developments are detrimental to the variety pool of the evolution of scientific knowledge. Radical new ideas become less probable, the danger of mainstream research eventually leading into dead end streets becomes greater.
- An ever-increasing competition becomes ruinous at some point. To mention just two aspects of it, first of all many professors become more and more "experts for fund raising" whereas the actual research work has often to be done – if the money comes – by relatively inexperienced young researchers who are left alone because professors have no time for supervision and advice. Secondly, not only bad research is eliminated by stronger competition for resources, which is an intended effect, but quite a lot of mediocre research as well. However, modern science rests on a broad basis of unspectacular routine research, certainly in applied fields but also in basic research – for the latter see what Thomas Kuhn (1962) called "puzzle-solving" research activities.
- Political guidance as well as intensified competition may lead to a ruinous driving-out of basic research oriented only to criteria of scientific curiosity by applied research dominated by criteria of extra-scientific utility. Again, whether this is good or turns bad depends on the overall mixture of scientific and extra-scientific relevancies in the aggregate of all research activities. Nevertheless, nobody can deny that the famous "mode 2" (Gibbons et al. 1994) may go too far.

Here, now, are some of the possible benefits of NPM for university research:

- As already mentioned, basically an intensification of competition will do research very good. Good research can be stimulated and rewarded, bad research can be eliminated. Since the money to be distributed has become and will remain scarce for a long time, these effects lead to a more efficient overall allocation of resources.
- A necessary condition to enter the competition for resources is deregulation which gives scientists much more flexibility in many aspects of their daily work. For instance, nobody who has experienced the advantages of a more global budget in German universities would like to give it up again for the old

budget system with its strict regulations of what can and cannot be done with certain budget items.

- As already mentioned, a certain shift towards extra-scientific relevance of university research is a good thing because society indeed could not afford to waste that much public money on “ivory tower” activities as it actually does spend for universities. To some degree, particular scientists at universities surely were pampered parasites whose research amounted to nothing but an irresponsible “vanity fair”, at best.
- Finally, increased competition may force universities, departments, institutes, or individual professors to de-couple research from teaching – not totally, but to a certain extent. Although especially in Germany the ideology of a necessary “unity of teaching and research” is still very strong (Schimank and Winnes 2000), many empirical experiences show that at least two things should be reflected upon: Why should someone who is a good teacher but a bad researcher be forced to do research, or make believe that he or she does? Vice versa, why should a good researcher teach masses of undergraduates instead of concentrate her- or himself on master and doctoral students?

These are by no means all pro’s and con’s of contemporary academic capitalism. Moreover, winners and losers of the described developments should be differentiated more closely in three respects, at least. First, different generations of scientists experience these changes not at all in the same way. Some “cultural lag” among those who grew up in the traditional system must be taken into consideration. Secondly and somewhat correlated to the first point, different status groups among university scientists are differently affected by these changes. From professors to doctoral students there is a considerable range of positive or negative reactions. Thirdly, and most important, different disciplines and fields of research may fare more or less well with NPM. My hypothesis – which is not that original, after all – is that “mode 2” research areas such as biotechnology may, all in all, profit from the new governance regime whereas typical “mode 1” fields, especially most of the humanities, may come into trouble.

In the final end – of these very preliminary reflections! – I come to a similar conclusion as the overwhelming majority of ordinary people as well as scientific observers with respect to economic capitalism: We are certainly right in many things we don’t like or even despise about capitalism; but whoever has had first-hand experience of real-life socialism – in distinction from utopian dreams – or has at least carefully studied empirical findings and theoretical interpretations of it, will come to the conclusion that capitalism is to be preferred, after all. Having experienced as well as studied the totally over-regulated and nevertheless highly fragmented, even anarchic standstill of the “planned economy” of the traditional governance regime of the German university system, I can say for myself that a

marked shift towards the academic capitalism of NPM would be very welcome. More specifically, we should try to find out how positive elements of NPM can be realised without having to suffer too much from its negative effects.

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Two Training Models in the Continuum of Finnish Doctoral Training

Jussi Välimaa

1. Introduction

The main purpose of this study is to examine the nature of doctoral training in Finnish higher education. The aim is to describe the traditions of doctoral training and analyse them in the framework of the changing idea of modern university, called here strategic university. The study is based on previous research on Finnish doctoral training (see Aittola 1995, Aittola and Määttä 1998, Laiho 1997, Määttä 2001, 2004) and on empirical research project (Välimaa 1999).

One of the problems with single-country case studies is that they are difficult to relate to other countries and their realities. Two main strategies have been used to avoid this problem. The first strategy involves comparisons with other national case studies within more or less the same comparative framework. The other solution, which will be applied in this study, is to tell the Finnish story with the help of intellectual devices developed in international studies of higher education. Ivar Bleiklies' (Bleiklie et al. 2000) analysis of the development of the idea of university and its practical implications together with Slaughter' and Leslie's book (1997) and their concept of *academic capitalism* are especially useful in this regard.

The study is structured accordingly. First, I shall describe the main characteristics of Finnish higher education and discuss the idea of strategic university in order to contextualise it within the international field of higher education. Secondly, I shall analyse doctoral training and the working conditions of academic staff in Finnish higher education. Finally I shall consider the traditions of and recent changes in higher education in Finland as they are reflected in the training of junior staff in Finnish higher education.

The Main Trends in Finnish Higher Education

Two crucial contextual factors will make it easier to understand the topic of this paper. The first factor is the high social status that higher education enjoys in Finnish society. There are many possible arguments to support this thesis (see Välimaa 2001b). The most convincing ones are perhaps the geographical expansion of Finnish higher education all over the country and the fact that we have 20 universities and 32 AMK institutions (or polytechnics)¹ to serve the educational needs of a population of 5,200,000. The number of higher education institutions is in itself a value statement expressing the social prestige of higher education in Finland. It should also be noted that over 86 per cent of the relevant 19-22 age cohort are offered a starting place and that 67 per cent take up the opportunity (Havén 1999).

A second important factor to be taken into account relates to the changes in the structure of Finnish higher education funding. Throughout the 1990s, funding trends followed the unchanging logic of reducing public financing from the Ministry of Education. Public funding of higher education by the Ministry of Education fell by 21 per cent between 1990 and 2001 (from 84 % to 63 %), while external funding from both private and public sources (Academy of Finland, Tekes (National Technology Agency of Finland), foreign funding, the EU) grew almost six-fold (KOTA database 2001).² In practice, this has affected the working conditions of academic staff because researchers on short-term contracts are normally paid from external (market-like) funding sources. This may also be seen as a manifestation of academic capitalism (Slaughter and Leslie 1997) as I will argue below.

Academic Capitalism as a Social Context

From a comparative perspective, Finnish higher education is facing challenges common to many other countries in the Western cultural sphere (see Välimaa 2001b). For this reason, it is appropriate to test the concept of academic capitalism as an intellectual device to describe the social context of Finnish higher education institutions. Marketisation would be another alternative way (see Williams 1995) to give an account of recent changes in Finnish higher education by focusing attention on the fact that its aims are increasingly influenced by competition. In this sense, marketisation is, as a concept, more limited than that of

1 The expression 'AMK institution' was suggested, in the 1990s, by Prof. Ulrich Teichler to the then Minister of Education, Mr. Olli-Pekka Heinonen. It was soon taken into use in government publications.

2 KOTA database is maintained by the Ministry of Education. See: <http://www.csc.fi/kota/nuts.html>.

academic capitalism, which starts from the assumption that the academic world should be analysed from the perspective of globalisation (see Välimaa 2001b).³

There are several reasons to consider academic capitalism as a social context for Finnish higher education. First, Finnish universities (and other higher education institutions) are seen as a natural component of a *national innovation strategy* to increase the international competitiveness of the Finnish economy on the global marketplace. This objective has been formulated over and over again in several policy documents (see Kehittämistrategia 1993, Higher Education Policy 1996, 1998, and 2000). The second reason to make use of this concept stems from various market-like behaviours of higher education institutions and academics. These behaviours are reinforced by the current pattern of higher education funding, as was shown above. Even though 65 per cent of the funding is provided by the Ministry of Education, the rest of the money comes from various sources on the basis of competition. The essential point is that this creates a social situation in which universities and AMK institutions are competing on a quasi-market, as Slaughter and Leslie (1997) have pointed out. Furthermore, the national steering system is based on the promotion of competition between institutions, called *management by results*. According to the rules of this quasi-market game, each university negotiates a separate contract with the Ministry of Education where the educational establishment engages to produce a certain number of completed degrees (both MAs and PhDs) while the ministry gives each higher education institution a certain sum of money (a block grant). The same procedure is repeated on a smaller scale and with some variations in procedures inside the individual institutions (see Treuthardt 2004). The important thing to note here, which is also in line with the arguments presented by Slaughter and Leslie (1997), is the fact that competitive 'external funding' is mainly used to finance research, whereas teaching is funded mainly from the Ministry of Education budget.

Strategic University as an Idea

As regards the changes in higher education, it is important to realise that they have reshaped not only the social contexts of universities but also the idea of university. Applying Ivar Bleiklie's (2000) categories, it may be said that Finland has a strong tradition of defining its universities as a *public agency* operating as a part of the national civil service and as implementor of public policy. There is an equally strong tradition of understanding universities as *autonomous cultural institutions* associated with expectations of academic activity based on autonomous research and teaching and rooted in the chair-faculty system as

3 It also may be said that these changes and other reforms carried out in Finnish higher education have been made in the spirit of New Public Management.

described by Neave and Rhoades (1987). These categories are still part of Finnish cultural understanding of the country's universities. They are like archaeological strata lying below the surfaces of present universities also because the traditional Humboldtian ideals remain vitally relevant to any description of the basic academic values expressed through academic freedom and institutional autonomy (see Huusko and Muhonen 2003, Kogan et al. 2000). However, in the 21st century the nature of Finnish universities is changing. There has been a shift in a direction where universities are understood as *corporate enterprises*, as Bleiklie et al. (2000) put it. These corporate enterprises emphasise quality and efficiency; their organisational objectives may be described as being grounded on the idea of entrepreneurial universities (see Clark 1998). However, one should indeed ask whether this aspiration at the top is shared by the main working parts? (see Kogan et al. 2000, 208). In Finland, entrepreneurial university falls short, as a normative model, of covering the challenges created by the 'global condition' – to refer to the 'post-modern condition' – where universities face not only changes in local and national conditions but must meet also the expectations of global agents (see Välimaa 2004). Phenomena crucial in this context include the rapid transformation of the societal and social environment where higher education institutions operate.

Therefore, I suggest that Finnish universities following the idea of corporate enterprise should be described as strategic agents, or *strategic universities*. I am using this expression to focus attention on the nature of the changes taking place both inside and outside higher education institutions. An important recent trend sees Finnish universities accepting and adopting the idea of strategic behaviour not only as a reaction to rapidly changing social and economic contexts but also as a tool helping them to survive in these new contexts. Practically all Finnish universities have drawn up a strategic plan (Välimaa and Jalkanen 2001). In this sense, economic globalisation is the social context of and for strategic universities. Strategic universities are local, national and global agents. However, I do not mean that Finnish universities are strategic agents on a global marketplace. What I am trying to say instead is that the concept of strategic university is an attempt to pinpoint the direction in which Finnish higher education institutions are moving and willing to move. I also acknowledge that Finnish universities exist in a social context that they share with many Western universities even though Finnish universities may have arrived there earlier than some traditional continental universities.

In the social contexts of global higher education and academic capitalism, higher education institutions must meet four expectations:

They are supposed to create their own survival or success strategies. These strategies should combine both academic and economic strategic thinking. In academic strategic thinking, the essential goal is the maintenance of high quality

– and therefore also of a good reputation – whereas in economic strategies the main objective is to locate multiple funding sources.

They are required to see market-like behaviour as a natural model of academic and institutional action. Finding new sources of financing is the responsibility not only of the institutions but also of the academics employed by them, themselves under pressure to raise research funds to ensure their personal future.

They are expected to respond promptly to changes in their various environments. This requires institutional policies and flexible decision-making procedures. In Finland throughout the 1980s and 1990s, universities have been developing into significantly more flexible institutions, a trend that found its legal expression in the Universities Act (1997). At the beginning of the 21st century, these traditionally state-controlled Humboldt-type universities are allowed to decide independently on their faculty and institutional structures. Their decision-making procedures have also been made more flexible, making possible quick responses to changes in their social and economic environments.

All these changes mean, and this is my final point, that these ‘*traditionally public universities*’⁴ (see Välimaa 2001b) *are expected to formulate their own institutional policies and profiles.* This, in turn, stimulates institutional differentiation inside national systems of higher education, which, again, serves as an impetus to the emergence of inter-institutional hierarchies. As some scholars have pointed out, when we have the makings of an institutional hierarchy then we easily have a system of vertical stratification in national systems of higher education (see Fulton 1996).

2. Training Junior Academic Staff

The training of new academic generations is essential not only for the quality of research and teaching but also for the standard of academic work of the future. It may be assumed that the training of researchers is the factor that most efficiently socialises students into academic cultures (see Ylijoki 1998). Therefore, an analysis of the training of junior academic staff in Finnish universities opens an important perspective on the social dynamics of the emerging strategic university.

It is possible to identify two parallel models of training junior staff in Finnish universities. Historically, first there was the traditional model based on self-

4 The expression ‘traditionally public universities’ has been borrowed from South African terminology with the aim of highlighting the fact that Finnish universities have a strong tradition of being public institutions as regards both their funding and the service contracts of their staff, based on employment conditions applied in the Finnish civil service. Both of these pillars are being challenged by recent changes.

training in a Humboldtian university. The second one – the model of organised training – was established in the form of graduate schools in the 1990s.

The Traditional Model: Self-Training

The idea of self-training should not, strictly speaking, be defined as a model of doctoral training because it is based on the principle of the student training themselves to be a PhD rather than on any actual model of supervised training. Furthermore, it is not a historical model in the sense of belonging to the past because it continues to function as an alternative route to a doctoral degree in present-day Finnish universities. However, it may be called a traditional model to make it easier to compare with the modern model represented by graduate schools. This traditional model is, thus, based on the following ideas. First, it is assumed that those holders of MA degrees who wish to do a dissertation should be able to find their own funding sources. Secondly, it is also assumed that professors can be helpful in this context by signing letters of recommendation and by providing supervising when they are asked. However, it is the doctoral candidates themselves who are supposed to ask for the professor's help. Thirdly, and in line with these basic assumptions, before the 1980s, there were no systematic arrangements or even study plans for completing a course of doctoral studies. Today, Finnish universities do require a plan for doctoral studies, but supervising practices continue to vary between individual disciplines and universities (see also Aittola 1995, Laiho 1997).

Historically, the financial resources available for doctoral students have been rather limited, especially in the humanities and the social sciences. Till the early 1990s, fixed-term assistants' positions⁵ were the most typical means of funding the preparation of a dissertation. In fact, writing a dissertation was normally understood mainly as an individual challenge; this was the only form of doctoral 'studies' that was recognised. In addition to getting an assistantship it was possible to apply for research funding from the Academy of Finland and from private and public foundations. In short, if and when one assumes that individual struggles to secure funding for a dissertation are less a system than a challenge to the doctoral candidate to prove that they can find funding, it may be said that there was no clear system of doctoral training in Finland before the 1990s.

The Modern Model: Organised Training

The problems associated with the unsystematic training of doctoral candidates became evident as the higher education system expanded from the 1960s to

⁵ Assistant (in Finnish *assistentti*) is equivalent to the term assistant professor in English speaking countries.

1980s. The main difficulties involved in traditional Finnish doctoral studies were twofold: a lack of systematic supervision and a lack of funding. In addition, the need of doctors in certain areas of society (especially in the information technology industry) underlined the need of the reform. An essential starting point for the reform was the idea that doctoral training is an important component of a national innovation strategy; this is still a current idea. Doctoral training has been and may still be seen as an essential element in efforts to enhance the country's innovation capacity. This idea provided a strong stimulus to the establishment of graduate schools in Finland in the early 1990s, when economic depression hit the country hard.

The main aim of the Finnish graduate education reform was to make doctoral training more efficient by creating a systematic training structure that could be implemented in all disciplines. The first new graduate schools began their activities at the beginning of 1995. In the first phase of the reform, the Ministry of Education granted, on the recommendations of the Academy of Finland, funding for 93 graduate schools with 949 students (Aittola and Määttä 1998). In 2003, after the establishment of further graduate schools, there were 114 schools with 1 426 students in Finland. However, between 2 000 and 2 500 students altogether have been funded through this system yearly because Finnish universities are required to finance an equal number of doctoral training posts. When higher education budgets were cut in the 1990s, the shortcomings of doctoral training were, remarkably, defined as one of the most urgent functional problems affecting Finnish higher education (Aittola and Määttä 1998). The reform has benefited most the natural sciences and the technical fields, whose share in all doctoral education positions grew from 55 to 60 per cent between 1995 and 1999 (Määttä 2004).

The Academy of Finland decided that doctoral student posts should be open for all potential students and they should be filled on the basis of applications. In practice, the posts went to researchers who were in different phases of their academic careers. Some of them were finishing their dissertation, whereas others had just completed their master's degree. The doctoral student population is therefore academically very heterogeneous (Aittola and Määttä 1998). Under the Finnish model, a typical graduate school is a network organisation linking two or more universities. This network organises the training of the doctoral students through national seminars in which students present papers in the traditional academic style of each discipline. Graduate schools can also invite international scholars to give lectures and/or discuss relevant research-related issues with the students. In addition to national seminars, each member university of a network may organise its local seminars. The students are required to prepare both a research plan and a study plan for the approval of the graduate school. According to national policy, students are expected to finish their studies within four

years. During their studies they are paid a monthly salary. Apart from students who have an official position as a doctoral student there may also be students in what are known as status positions, which gives them the right to take part in all the seminars and other activities organised by the graduate school without receiving a salary.

The Finnish model of graduate school is not, however, an imitation of the American model even though the basic concept was adopted from US discourse. The Finnish graduate school is a cultural interpretation of the idea rather than a direct translation of the concrete model, as seems to be the case with most reforms in the field of higher education when an international concept is transferred to national contexts (see Välimaa and Mollis 2003; Czarniawska and Sevón 1996).

The Two Models Combined

In 2000, it was estimated that there is a total of 20 500 students in Finland pursuing either a licentiate or a doctoral degree (Määttä 2004). However, only about 20 per cent of the doctoral student population works in graduate schools. In order to analyse the nature of Finnish doctoral education, we must take a closer look at the practices of doctoral education under the two models.

According to a case study conducted in a typical Finnish university, the University of Jyväskylä, it is possible to identify two ideal types of doctoral training, represented by the practice of the humanities and that of the sciences respectively (see Välimaa 1999). The ideal type of doctoral training in the humanities espouses and is linked with the traditional model, whereas in the sciences the ideal type of training is linked with the modern model.

These two ideal types differ in four dimensions. There are, first, distinct selection processes. In the humanities, 'talented and promising' students are encouraged to continue their studies towards a doctoral degree, whereas in the sciences doctoral students are selected on the basis of applications invited through a public announcement, even though in many cases the applicants have similarly been encouraged to continue their studies. In this sense, both ideal types belong to the Humboldtian, individual master-apprentice tradition stressing academic freedom and self-steering of students as was noted by Laiho (1997). The second main difference lies in the organisation of academic work. In the humanities, the students traditionally work alone and without a detailed plan for their doctoral studies. They are also expected to plan their studies themselves. In the sciences, by contrast, research is normally carried out in teams and laboratories, and doctoral education follows a doctoral curriculum. The third difference stems from the ratio between full-time and part-time students⁶ (Välimaa 1999).

⁶ Full-time doctoral students are required to work a minimum of 31 hours a week. In the University of Jyväskylä in 1999, 31 per cent of the doctoral students were full-time. Part-time students work

In the humanities ideal type the ratio is between four and 15 part-time students to one full-time student whereas in the sciences there are 0.3-2 part-time students to one full-time student. The fourth main difference is due to the funding structure. In the humanities, the most important funding sources include assistants' posts and individual funding sources together with the Academy of Finland, the Ministry of Education, the University of Jyväskylä and the EU (see also Aittola and Aittola 1995). The sciences have access to a (better and) broader range of funding sources because in addition to sources identical with those of the humanities there are also private enterprises and Tekes (National Technology Agency of Finland) (Välilä 1999).

However, these two ideal types should be understood as descriptions of two extremes on a continuum of doctoral studies. At the one end lies the situation described by the head of a humanities department: "We have no doctoral education plan because it would be useless. Very few students drift into doctoral studies because students are normally oriented to the teaching profession" (Välilä 1999, p. 11). At the other end of this continuum we find the systematic organisation of doctoral education in science disciplines.

However, because graduate schools challenge all academic disciplines to make traditional doctoral education more systematic and also because the resources available for doctoral education vary across academic fields real-life doctoral education is a mixture of these two ideal types. For example, in psychology there is a model of doctoral training which combines the well-defined structure marking doctoral studies as they are organised in sciences with the individual student responsibilities typical of the humanities model. In addition, as Reeves (1969, quoted in Ylijoki 1998) pointed out, four essential continuities can be identified in the context of doctoral training. First, it is important to remember that the novices belong to the same organisation as the masters. Secondly, the learning process goes through progressive stages. Thirdly, those novices who have reached a midpoint in their studies (and become journeymen) are allowed to teach more junior novices. Finally, the masters have a monopoly on teaching and learning.

Efficiency of Doctoral Education in Finland

Finnish doctoral training has become significantly more efficient, especially when this is measured in terms of the number of doctorates completed yearly. The figure has doubled after the implementation of the graduate school reform

between 5 and 30 hours a week. Their proportion was 46 per cent in 1999. The remaining 23 per cent are enrolled as doctoral students but work less than 5 hours a week. Half of these 'virtual students' (47 %) study for a degree in a humanities subject, a fifth (23 %) for a degree in a social sciences subject (Välilä 1999).

(from 521 doctoral degrees earned in 1991 to 1,203 doctoral degrees taken in 2002) (KOTA 2001). Consequently, both the academic and the economic efficiency of doctoral training have been enhanced in Finland. The reform was one of the main factors in this development even though it is not the only explanation. According to Määttä (2001), the growth in the number of degrees granted was related to the increase in student enrolments in the 1980s. It was natural that when this large population began to do their dissertations, this resulted in a greater number of completed dissertations. The graduate schools contributed to this development. It is also more than evident that the establishment of graduate schools has made doctoral studies more systematic and productive. It may be even said that as measured by the number of doctoral students or in terms of the experiences of the doctoral students, the graduate schools have been a success story (see Aittola and Määttä 1998). Why?

First, because they have meant the creation of a regular structure and system of supervising doctoral students. Especially in the humanities and social sciences, this was not something that was normally available in the past. Secondly, the graduate schools have also made for better cooperation within and between academic fields and disciplines. In most cases, this social structure has enhanced cooperation also between junior and senior academics. In fact, the model of graduate schools has proven to be so successful that many Finnish universities have imitated it and begun to establish their own doctoral training programmes.

However, the advantages of the traditional model have not been forgotten. The greatest strength of this model is the flexibility offered to students, who may choose their professors, departments and topics quite freely whereas in graduate schools students are selected by the professors and topics should be chosen from a range related to the objectives of the given graduate school.

3. Doctoral Education and Academic Careers

In order to describe what the traditional model based on the ideal type of the humanities means in the actual lives of young academic generations, I shall present an example provided by a female project researcher active in the field of social studies. Let us call her Sophie (see also Välimaa 2001a).

Sophie's Choices

Sophie graduated in 1992 (the year when economic depression had just hit the Finnish nation state hard). After graduation, she was recruited by her professor for a one-month stint as a research officer, followed by a two-week contract as a researcher. Then there was another two-month researcher contract, which was later extended to 11 months. After these contracts Sophie was unemployed for

8 weeks. She was engaged again in December 1993 for a two-week period after which she was granted a three-month scholarship. When this ran out, Sophie continued as a researcher until the end of 1994 (three contracts). She then obtained a university scholarship lasting eighteen months. After this period, during which she finished her licentiate thesis, she worked as a lecturer in the academic year 1996-97. Sophie then went on as a research fellow until the end of 1998. She continued her career as a researcher on a scholarship granted by a foundation till the end of 2000, when she defended her dissertation. After having gained her doctoral degree she was appointed as a lecturer for one academic year.

Sophie worked all the time in the same university department. Between 1992 and 2000 she had 20 contracts with one and the same university, lasting from two weeks to 12 months. She was funded by two ministries, a public health care organisation, a foundation and a city council and through two different scholarships granted by her own alma mater. A typical feature of her career is the constant uncertainty as to whether she will obtain another contract after the current one expires and how long the new one will last.

This story of 'Sophie's choices' describes the reality of junior university staff in Finland: their career paths may and do involve various types of work (teaching and research) lasting for varying lengths of time, with periods of unemployment also possible. Moreover, this is a typical rather than an exceptional career in Finnish universities. That is to say, according to a national survey carried out by the Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers, 31 per cent of the respondents (here junior academic staff) worked as university teachers while 40 per cent were researchers. The percentage of tenured office holders among them was 23.5. Most respondents (76.5 %) had a short-term contract or worked on a scholarship. Of the researchers, 91 per cent had a fixed-term post. The length of project researchers' contracts and the researchers' tasks and funding sources vary considerably. More than 60 per cent have had more than four contracts (Puhakka and Rautopuro 2001). To understand why so many junior academics work under fixed-term contracts and how doctoral education is related to academic careers in Finnish strategic universities we need to place these data in their social context.

Academic Staff in Finnish Universities

Academic staff in Finnish universities may be divided into university teachers, researchers, and assisting personnel. The number of university teachers decreased steadily in the 1990s, whereas that of other staff has grown fast. According to the KOTA database, the growth has been most rapid among other staff funded from external sources (see Table 1). They consist of researchers, assisting and administrative personnel, and university teachers. Researchers are people financed by the Academy of Finland, a university, a ministry, or

from other private or public funding sources. They are often called ‘project researchers’ (*projektitutkija*). The position of doctoral students resembles that of project researchers because they are similarly paid a salary during their studies⁷ (Välimaa 2001a).

Table 1. University Teachers and Other Staff in Finnish Universities 1985-2000 (absolute numbers and percentages)

	1985	1990	2000
University teachers ¹	7,200 (38.7)	7,800 (37.1)	7,400 (28.0)
Other staff on budget funds ²	6,700 (36.0)	8,000 (38.1)	9,800 (36.8)
Other staff on external funds ³	4,700 (25.3)	5,200 (24.8)	9,400 (35.2)
Total	18,600 (100)	21,000 (100)	26,600 (100)

Source: KOTA database 2001

¹ Professors, associate professors, lecturers, senior assistants, assistants. The figures also include human resource of teaching (913 years of teaching in year 2000).

² Researchers (about 14%) and other staff, mainly administrative personnel (86%).

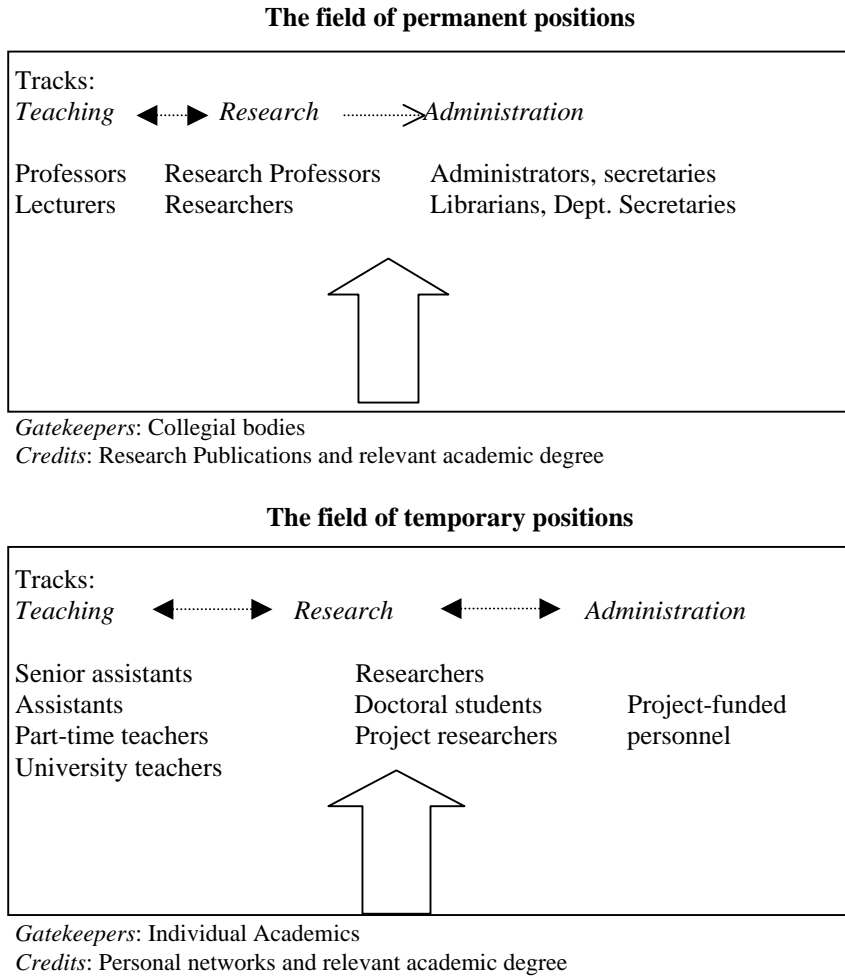
³ Project researchers, administrative and assisting personnel, and doctoral students in the year 2000.

The example of Sophie is intended to illustrate also one of the characteristics of strategic university, an institution that sees market-like behaviour as a natural model of academic action, values flexible working conditions and seeks to respond rapidly to changes in its environments. Essential question is therefore, how does this affect junior academic staff starting their careers?

In Finland, the structure of academic career development can be represented as two separate but interlinked academic career fields: a field of permanent positions and a field of temporary positions (Figure 1).

⁷ Doctoral students are included in the category of other staff on external funding.

Figure 1. The Fields of Permanent and Temporary Positions in Finnish Higher Education



In the temporary field, the essential question is how to find one’s first job and make it last. There are many kinds of temporary and short-term contract and position available either in teaching, research or administration track. The first job also depends quite much on the junior academic’s personal networks because project researchers (the most likely first job in this field) are appointed by a project manager or a professor without the involvement of a collegial body. It is assumed that after a few years of active research the junior academic will be

better qualified to apply for a better-paid or even a permanent position. However, it is possible that the academic remains a project researcher, especially if he or she does not obtain a doctoral degree (Välimaa 2001a). Doctoral students belong to this group no matter whether they follow the humanities or science ideal types also because most of the funding for junior academics comes from external sources.

The field of permanent positions follows a different logic. Here one may speak of an academic career. Building a career depends less on personal networks than on personal reputation even though both are linked. Normally, this requires publications and a relevant academic degree. These will not, however, be enough because both the social dynamics and the role of the gatekeepers vary in the two fields. In the temporary field, the gatekeepers normally are individuals, whereas in the permanent field they are collegial decision-making bodies. Even though reputation is the currency in both fields, the nature of reputation varies between them. In the temporary field, personal relations are a more important source of reputation than publications, whereas in the field of permanent positions reputation is rooted in the academic's publications.

The social dynamics of an academic career in Finnish higher education are revealed when we take a look at the relevant figures. In 2001, the field of temporary positions comprised some 23,600 posts, the field of permanent positions 11,900 posts (KOTA 2001). However, only 4,200 of these were academic jobs, the rest being administrative positions. This means that there are at least 2.4 temporary academic people applying for each permanent position, indicating that it is quite difficult to move from the temporary field to the permanent one. In practise, the figure is much higher because holders of permanent positions may also apply for these posts (see also Välimaa 2001a).

4. Concluding Remarks

For the majority of Finnish doctoral students, traditional self-training remains the dominant model despite the fact that most doctoral degrees are produced by graduate schools. Seen from the perspective of strategic university, both models are practical. In this context, the traditional model works because it relies on students' individual activity and their ability to operate as entrepreneurs and create their own academic networks and fund their doctoral studies in market-like situation. It may be said that doctoral students are expected to respond promptly to the changes in various environments. In this sense they repeat – or rather are forced to repeat – the institutional behaviour of strategic university in their own lives. From the perspective of the Finnish universities, which receive their direct budget funding from the Ministry of Education on the basis of the

number of masters' and doctoral degrees taken by their students (see Välimaa 2001b), the model makes also economic sense. Self-trained doctors are a rather cheap way for universities to earn doctoral degrees (and money). This said, I should also add that it is impossible to pinpoint a single reason or motivation for taking a doctorate. From a national perspective, a leading motive has been a wish to increase the innovative capacity of the nation state. For universities, doctoral degrees are a means both of advancing academic research and of earning money. From an individual perspective, a doctoral degree not only opens the gates to permanent positions in higher education but may also be an important factor in enhancing self-esteem and promoting the construction of an academic and a personal identity.

However, the problems involved in traditional self-training are evident (and still felt in Finland). The main difficulties and concerns arise from the lack of continuity in completing a course of doctoral studies, aggravated by constant uncertainty about where one will find funding when a scholarship runs out or a fixed-term post ends and about one's potential academic career. It is scarcely surprising that because of the many uncertainties, chance and personal relations play a significant role at the early phases of an academic career. Further, there seem to be differences across disciplines because as a model, the graduate school favours the natural sciences and the medical and technical fields (Määttä 2001).

Those pursuing doctoral training or completing a dissertation may take many different routes depending on their academic orientation and disciplinary field. However, all these different routes seem to resemble each other in one conspicuous respect: all are based on the traditional craft guild model together with the underlying apprenticeship model and the associated social structure of novice (apprentice), journeyman and master (see Laiho 1997, Reeves 1969). In this sense, the academic world follows medieval guild traditions, as has been noted by other scholars (Clark 1983, Reeves 1969, Neave and Rhoades 1987). From this medieval perspective, I would now like to ask: what has been learnt from this study?

The first lesson suggests that the training of junior academics depends on nationally specific historical traditions. Secondly, it seems that the basic social structure developed in and by medieval universities (master, journeyman and novice) has not been replaced even though it has been challenged by modern structures and discourses. Thirdly, as has been noted by Kogan et al. (2000), the social practices of academe are more static and more difficult to change than organisational structures which can be changed rapidly. And finally, the existence of two parallel models of doctoral education suggests that the historical development of higher education is essentially a story of creating new layers of practices over existing ones rather than a story of linear development during which the 'new' replaces the 'old'.

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III

THE STRUCTURE OF BACHELOR AND MASTER DEGREES

Bachelor/Masters – An Australian Perspective on the Anglophone Experience

Craig McInnis and Felicity Jenz

1. Introduction

Flexibility in degree and course structure has for many years been a feature of the Australian higher educational sector. This flexibility is not only available within degrees, but also allows students to undertake more than one degree concurrently, thus opening up many varied combinations of fields of study. The higher education system in Australia is derived from the British model, but has been adapted over time to suit the Australian context. The reasons, why the system has evolved to its present state in recent years are primarily linked to market demand. Studying two degrees concurrently (as opposed to back-to-back) shortens the time of study by at least one year and allows the graduate to enter the workforce with a broader knowledge base from more than one field. The flexibility within an undergraduate degree suits the needs of many different types of students – for the student population in Australia is progressively diversifying and for many years has accommodated large numbers of part-time and mature-aged students. Australia also has a strong tradition of catering for students learning from a distance. Learning for the sake of learning still coexists comfortably alongside market-driven vocational degrees and in part this is due to the flexibility that the Australian higher education system offers.

In this chapter we provide an account of the current state of play in the structure of the bachelors and masters degrees and the relationship between them. The discussion then identifies some advantages of the relatively open and flexible system and concludes with an analysis of emerging and potential problems that suggests the need for caution in reconfiguring degree structures to respond to student and market needs.

2. Overview of the Australian Context

The degree system in Australia is basically a two-tiered system, with the major divide being between undergraduate and graduate degrees. The duration of an undergraduate bachelor degree is usually three years (or six semesters). It stands by itself as a qualification, and a student is usually able to enter the workforce on graduation. An honours year (a fourth year in most cases in which the student writes a thesis and acquires specialist knowledge in a discipline) is the traditional link between undergraduate and post-graduate study. Although an honours year is part of the undergraduate degree, the research skills a student acquires in this year through a supervised research project or thesis is usually the prerequisite for research masters or doctoral degrees.

Australian universities are empowered by the government to issue their own qualifications. Of the 43 higher education institutions in Australia, 38 receive Commonwealth funding under the Higher Education Funding Act (1988) on a triennial basis and are known as public universities. Unlike the United States, which has many private universities, Australia has only two private universities. There is also a range of small, privately funded institutions (such as theological colleges and vocational training institutions), which offer higher education courses. Since 1994, a nationally recognised system of qualifications has been implemented with support from all national and federal governing bodies. This system is known as the *Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)*. Within this framework, there are twelve nationally recognised qualifications that encompass secondary school level, vocational training and university-based qualifications. This integrated system is designed to facilitate lifelong learning. The critical point to understand here, however, is that the universities are ‘self-accrediting’ and autonomous institutions in the sense that:

“... the state does not control or directly scrutinise courses or course content for Australian universities. There are no external exams to moderate standards between institutions or ensure minimum standards. Universities decide whom to admit as students. They are responsible for deciding what to teach, how to teach, and how learning is assessed” (Nelson 2002, p. 6).

The universities have their own mechanisms for developing and assessing new course proposals that come from faculties and schools, and they accredit their own course— often with the close involvement of advisory bodies and professional registration organisations.

Each of the twelve qualifications in the AQF is identified by characteristics of learning outcomes at the described level, typical programmes and entry pathways. There are seven qualifications defined by the AQF for the Higher Education sector. They are: Diploma; Advanced Diploma; Bachelor Degree; Graduate Certificate; Graduate Diploma; Masters Degree; and Doctoral Degree. Each of

these qualifications has a set of unique descriptions of learning outcomes. The characteristics of learning outcomes for the bachelor degree include:

- the acquisition by graduates of a systematic and coherent body of knowledge;
- an understanding of underlying principles and concepts;
- communication and problem-solving skills;
- academic skills and attributes necessary to undertake research;
- the ability to comprehend and evaluate new information, concepts and evidence from a range of sources; and,
- the ability to review, consolidate, extend and apply the knowledge and techniques learnt including in a professional context.

Finally, in line with a broad national policy emphasis on employability demands, the bachelor degree should provide interpersonal and teamwork skills appropriate to employment and/or further study as well as a foundation for self-directed and lifelong learning.

The difference between the bachelors and masters degrees is essentially about depth of knowledge, higher order skills and specialisation. According to the AQF, a graduate from a masters' degree is able to provide appropriate:

- evidence of advanced knowledge about a specialist body of theoretical and applied topics;
- demonstrate a high order of skill in analysis, critical evaluation and/or
- professional application through the planning and execution of project work or a piece of scholarship or research; and,
- demonstrate creativity and flexibility in the application of knowledge and skills to new situations to solve complex problems and to think rigorously and independently.

There are three separate types of masters degrees in Australian higher education. In the pure research masters degree the student usually has 18 months to complete a thesis of between 30-50 000 words based on original research. There is also a masters degree completed by 'Advanced Seminars and Shorter Thesis'; in this masters stream a student has demonstrated research ability, but may not have specific expertise in one aspect of their research project so gains knowledge through advanced seminars. A third masters programme is a masters by coursework. This is a relatively new stream and because of the different reasons for its development, there are three distinct sub-categories within the masters by coursework framework:

“No single course structure characterises the masters degree by coursework. Course nomenclature has become one of the more obvious indicators of this diversity as institutions have sought to differentiate their masters

programmes to corner niche markets. The multiple forms of the degree are a response to a variety of professional and vocational purposes in addition to the traditional masters academic functions. The coursework masters brings together a student mix whose needs and expectations are frequently varied - many students are recent graduates, others are returning to study to build on extensive professional experience. A growing number of students are beginning studies in fields that are unrelated to their undergraduate specialisations” (McInnis, James and Morris 1995).

Within the coursework masters degree stream, there are three distinct forms, which have determined the way the different courses have developed:

- traditional academic courses;
- programmes developed for the enhancement of professional specialisations; and,
- programmes designed for students wishing to acquire skills in a new field of professional study.

The traditional academic coursework programme is aimed at students who wish to use it to prepare for entry into a doctoral degree. Students enrolled in this form of masters usually continue research in the discipline that they specialised in during their undergraduate degree. Research is a major component of this masters course with coursework focusing on advanced theory and scholarship in the field. In this regard, outcomes of an academic coursework research masters degree are similar.

A professional specialisation masters, on the other hand, is designed for students who are already in the work force. Its function is to enhance and upgrade students knowledge in a particular field, usually one in which they are currently employed. Many students enrol in such courses to improve their career prospects and the course design usually places a focus on applied professional knowledge above that of the academic research interests of the teaching staff.

The third form of masters’ coursework can be described as ‘new fields’ professional masters degrees. These are also aimed at people with professional experience who are wishing to enhance their opportunities in changing their fields of employment, wish to diversify within their current occupation, or would like to adjust to the changing contexts in the workplace. The focus within these courses is usually directed towards the current and emerging developments in related fields. Since the course demands an interdisciplinary approach, the students are not expected to have specialised in the field in their undergraduate degree. A common pattern is for students to get the foundation within a graduate diploma and then, if preliminary academic grades are of high enough standard, to upgrade the enrolment status to the masters level. Due to the fact that these de-

degrees have evolved around market demand, attention is given to the professional work experience and the professional interests of the student in the selection process.

3. Flexibility within the System

As indicated above, flexibility is a defining feature of the Australian higher educational system. This flexibility, however, is not available in all disciplines: within the professional degrees, for example medicine, dentistry and to a lesser extent engineering and law, the courses tend to be highly prescribed and structured. In the case of the Bachelor of Dentistry, students cannot transfer from one university to another and gain credit points without considerable difficulty. One of the major factors in the rigid structure of the degree programme is that the bodies that grant professional registration are not necessarily national and qualifications are not always readily transferable across states.

In the Australian context, the disciplines of Arts, Commerce and Economics, Education and Science offer much flexibility within their degree programmes. This flexibility is best shown through examples from a large research based university. In this university, there are almost 70 different areas of study within its Arts Faculty. To obtain a major, that is a sequence of subjects over three years, a student must complete 25 points in a discipline in the first year and 87.5 points at second and third year level (or 7 subjects of 12.5 points each). These Bachelor of Arts subjects typically consist of a two-hour lecture and a one-hour tutorial. There are no compulsory subjects, and students are free to choose from a wide array of options, however, some later year subjects require prerequisites. Often a subject is open to both second and third year students, with slightly more rigorous assessment tasks required of third year students. If students decide later in their degree that they wish to change majors and do not have the required points, they can undertake more classes to fill the criteria. They are, however, charged fees for each subject at the same rate as the other subjects in their degree.

Although it is not common, students in most general undergraduate programmes have the option of concurrently studying for a diploma. This option adds one year to the duration of the degree, for a student undertakes 75 per cent (which equates to 75 points or 6 subjects of 12.5 points) of the degree workload over a four-year period and 25 points of subject relating to the diploma. One of the most popular diplomas to undertake in the case study university, and no doubt others, is the Diploma of Modern Languages. A commerce student, for example, could undertake a Bachelor of Commerce majoring in International Commerce and complete a Diploma of Modern Languages concurrently.

Most Australian universities have bachelors/masters subjects similar to that of the large research-based university. This allows for students to transfer between

universities, or to complete subjects at other universities and have the credit points count for their main degree at their home institution. However, transfer between universities is not a very common occurrence as Australian students tend not to be mobile across state borders. International exchanges are encouraged, and credit points can be gained by students at foreign institutions towards their main degree at their home institution, and yet, the proportion of students taking part of their degree in another country is disturbingly small (Gallagher 2002). The ability to take subjects from another degree programme at a different university has proved valuable for universities and students where resource limitations have forced the closure of some departments altogether. Language departments in particular have been able to concentrate their specialisation by mutual arrangement with partner departments elsewhere.

The following diagram (Figure 1) represents an actual course of degrees undertaken by a student at the case study university.

Figure 1. Example of a ‘Sequence’ of Bachelor of Arts (Years 1-3), Honours (Year 4) and Post-graduate Studies Course of Degrees in a Faculty of Arts

	PhD (History) candidature 3-4 years			
	Masters (Germanic Studies) – 18 months			
Year 4	Advanced German 100 points (Honours)			
Year 3	Advanced German 50 points		Psychology 50 points	
Year 2	Advanced German 33.3 points	Cultural Studies 33.3 points	Psychology 33.3 points	
Year 1	Advanced German 25 points	Chemistry 25 points	Indonesian 25 points	Psychology 25 points

The flexibility in the degree of Bachelor of Arts is clearly evident. This student took a major in Germanic Studies as well as a major in Psychology. Since the student had excellent academic grades in Germanic Studies she was invited to complete an honours year in this field. The resulting grades were of a high enough standard to be accepted into a Masters of Germanic Studies, which was a pure research programme. The student has since changed departments and is studying for a doctoral degree in the History Department. This was possible because the student was deemed to have had scholastic aptitude and demonstrated sufficient relevant study in history within the electives taken in the Germanic Studies major.

Within the two majors of the undergraduate programme there were many electives taken, especially after the first year of the degree. Although not shown in the diagram, the student also deferred for a year between the second and third year of the course and travelled to Germany, where she undertook subjects at a German university. These subjects were credited to the Australian degree. She also was a part-time student during two semesters of the honours year (which extended the honours year from 12 to 18 months). All of these breaks and changing of enrolment status without penalty highlight the capacity of the degree structure to accommodate the changing needs and aspirations of students.

3.1 Combined Degrees

Combined undergraduate degrees are increasingly favoured by students in some universities. They are generally open only to students who have strong academic grades. In 2000, for example, just less than 7 per cent of the Australian tertiary population was enrolled in a double degree (around 48,500 of 695,500) students (Nelson 2002). At the large research-based university, there are many opportunities for students to undertake combined degrees. This allows a student to graduate with two degrees in less than the time it would take to complete the same degrees back to back. Combinations of bachelor degrees are increasing as student interests change and diversify. Some examples of combined degrees include: Bachelor of Engineering/Bachelor of Law, Bachelor of Music/Bachelor of Creative Arts, and Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science.

The following provides an example of what a student would have to do to complete a combined programme. A student may wish to simultaneously undertake a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Laws. Instead of completing a four-year Bachelor of Laws and then undertaking a three-year Bachelor of Arts, the student may enrol in and complete both of these degrees in five years. As in the example below (Figure 2), instead of completing 300 Arts points to receive a Bachelor of Arts (as in Figure 1) the student who is enrolled in a double degree needs only to complete 200 Arts degree points to satisfy the requirements of graduating from a Bachelor of Arts.

If, however, the student does not complete the Bachelor of Laws, the student must undertake 100 more Arts points to graduate from a Bachelor of Arts (completing the required 300 Bachelor of Arts degree points). Since in this scenario the student has only 200 points to complete within their Bachelor of Arts, they often have only one major within this component. If, however, they wish to complete two majors, then the student can complete more subjects (but must have approval from both faculties and will also be charged fees accordingly). Students who complete a Bachelor of Arts in a combined degree are able to undertake an honours year if their marks are of a sufficient standard.

Figure 2. Example of a combined Bachelor of Arts/Law degree at a large research-based university. The study major in the Bachelor of Arts is Asian Studies (numbers in italics = points)

Year 5				Law Electives 100 points	
Year 4	English <i>(12.5)</i>	Asian Studies <i>(37.5)</i>		Equity <i>(12.5)</i>	Electives <i>(37.5)</i>
Year 3	English <i>(12.5)</i>	Politics <i>(12.5)</i>	Asian <i>(25)</i>	Admin. Law <i>(25)</i>	Property <i>(25)</i>
Year 2	English <i>(12.5)</i>	Politics <i>(12.5)</i>	Asian <i>(25)</i>	Criminal <i>(25)</i>	Contracts <i>(25)</i>
Year 1	English <i>(12.5)</i>	Politics <i>(12.5)</i>	Asian <i>(25)</i>	50 Compulsory Law points	

3.2 Professional Degrees: Bachelor of Architecture as a Case Study

This course of study, which leads to the degree of Architecture, is in fact two degrees with a compulsory industry year in the middle. The first degree, the Bachelor of Planning and Design (BPD) is a three-year course, of which the majority of subjects are compulsory and there are few electives. After the first three years, if all the requirements are met to a satisfactory standard, the students graduate from a BPD. They are then obliged to fulfil the faculty's requirement of a 26-week period of work in industry which, incidentally, means they are not enrolled at the university for that period of time. It is only when this requirement had been undertaken that the student will be accepted into the Bachelor of Architecture (BArch), a degree that meets the academic requirements of the Architects Registration Board (Victoria) and is recognised by the Royal Australian Institute of Architects. The Faculty also accepts students straight into the BArch without completion of the BPD dependent on an individual's prior qualifications and work experience.

Unlike the Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Arts, the Bachelor of Architecture is quite a rigid course with limited choices and does not allow for part-time study. Classes are specific to each year-level.

Figure 3. Bachelor of Planning and Design (BPD) and Bachelor of Architecture (BArch) at a Large Research-based University, with an Industry Year Between the Two (numbers in italics = points)

BArch (Year 2)	Design (50)		Practice (25)	Elective (25)
BArch (Year 1)	Design (37.5)	Elective (37.5)	Practi- ces (12.5)	Services (12.5)
Industry year	6 months work experience			
BPD (Year 3)	Design (25)	Construction (25)	Theories and Practice (37.5)	Elective (12.5)
BPD (Year 2)	Design (25)	Construction (25)	Elective (25)	Digital Design (25)
BPD (Year 1)	Design (25)	Construction (25)	Arch. History (25)	Design Com- munications (25)

4. Discussion

The Australian approach offers many advantages for universities, students, and society that may be relevant, in part at least, to other national systems. As the implementation of the recommendations of the Bologna Declaration unfolds, many of the issues discussed in this paper will soon confront those whose task it is to turn “harmonisation”, “convergence” or “coordination” in the European Higher Education Area (Cerych 2002, p. 121), into an everyday reality for academics and students, not to mention employers, that actually works and makes sense.

The broad base of sometimes eclectic and idiosyncratic bachelor programmes described above, provides a framework for a dual cycle, readily compared system of degrees. Ideally, it should provide students with a framework for lifelong learning. Ironically, while most Australian students have a clear idea of the vocational outcomes they want from a degree, and most are not interested in pursuing general or foundational studies, a substantial proportion of students in the first years of the bachelor degrees are actually quite uncertain about their commitment to the course in which they have enrolled (McInnis and James 1995, McIn-

nis 2000). Many, therefore, like a broad canvas to start with, and one they can reconfigure as they progress and as their motives and interests change and develop. The combined degree is one way for students to keep their options open. The current structure allows for the maturation and adaptability to accommodate the simple fact that many students make uninformed choices too early. While there are probably still too many students in professional preparation courses attracted by status – but who subsequently feel trapped by lock-step course structures – on the whole, the student population is empowered by a framework that enables them to maximise their options and to revise and achieve their life plans as individual circumstances change.

From a labour market perspective, open and flexible course structures enable students to respond to market demands. It quite obviously also gives governments and the universities the capacity to adapt to and manage short-term shifts in demand as well as the ability to respond to new developments. Moreover, countries with small populations like Australia can only be competitive internationally if they can use the limited pool of human resources efficiently and effectively. Australia can ill-afford to waste intellectual talent. In both respects, Australian universities have been highly successful in ensuring the best use of talent. The accessibility and adaptability of the system means that the talents of ‘late-starters’ who did not go straight from school to university, or those who would like or need to change career direction are not lost to the knowledge based economy. As knowledge workers become more mobile, nationally and internationally, their ability to adapt courses to their prior learning without penalty or duplication, is crucial for all stakeholders. In other words, matching individual capacity to national needs can be facilitated, or at the very least not hindered, by an open and transparent system with a framework that, nevertheless, ensures that programmes with the same titles have comparable learning goals and outcomes.

The list of potential problems presented by an open and flexible system is somewhat predictable, but far from insurmountable. One of the first things that strikes a casual observer about students at large universities in Australia is the range of options and combinations of subjects they have at their disposal. There has long been a concern that the amount of choice has the potential to undermine the quality of the student experience, that is, when students are able to treat their course as a ‘smorgasbord’ of loosely-connected subjects, the chances are that the notion of a degree as a coherent learning experience is seriously undermined. In extreme cases, where courses are eclectic and lacking recognisable sequence and structure, students are able to avoid, consciously or otherwise, the elements that bind their knowledge base. This raises questions about standards – particularly concerning notions of integrity in course structures and outcomes.

The pursuit of flexibility in course structures has most recently been debated around the introduction of trimester programmes to allow students to complete their degrees more quickly. Baldwin and McInnis (2002) conducted an extensive

analysis and review of the issues and concluded that too much flexibility of this kind is likely to undermine the opportunity for students to learn as a cohort over time, and, perhaps more importantly, to interact and share their learning experiences. There is a substantial body of evidence to support the view that the social experience of learning adds considerable value to the academic outcomes of students (Baldwin and McInnis 2002, p. 33). The potential of the social cohort experience to add value to the student experience in bachelors and masters degree programmes is seriously weakened with poorly managed flexibility. Likewise, the proliferation of subjects aimed at capturing student markets in recent years has been made possible by the flexibility of course structures inherent, and now expected, in the system. This has tended to weaken the sequential nature of degree programmes in some areas:

“Some disciplines have changed in thirty years from programmes in which most elements were compulsory to an almost completely open bill of fare from which students can choose whatever they wish. It is not uncommon for majors to have only one compulsory subject, and in some Arts faculties, the distinction between second and third year subjects has virtually disappeared” (Baldwin and McInnis 2002, p. 26).

In some large Australian universities it is now the case that more than half of the undergraduate students have idiosyncratic timetables, that is, a timetable of classes and subjects unique to the individual. Indeed, partly as a consequence of this situation, it is not uncommon for year levels to be mixed, or even for undergraduates and masters coursework students to be in the same classes with only the requirements of assessment tasks differentiating their experience.

It is noteworthy that the changes in the nature and organisation of the generalist bachelors and masters degrees in Australia cannot be divorced from a major policy push for the development and recognition of generic skills in graduates. The federal government requires universities to articulate in fairly specific terms the graduate qualities they aim to produce. This is about the value they add to the student experience by developing skills and attributes that employers value. The strong shift towards a focus on graduate outcomes has been promoted by government and industry, and has in some instances made the core experience of acquiring and mastering discipline specific knowledge less dominant. The University of South Australia provides one of the clearest examples, from the perspective of government of the way universities in Australia ought to address the employability of graduates, and the needs of the economy. The seven generic abilities defined by the University of South Australia permeate the entire curriculum and assessment practices. A graduate of a bachelor degree from this university is expected, for example, to:

- be able to work both autonomously and collaboratively as a professional;

- demonstrate international perspectives as a professional and as a citizen;
- communicate effectively in professional practice and as a member of the community; and,
- be an effective problem solver, capable of applying logical, critical and creative thinking to a range of problems (University of South Australia 2002).

What is interesting here with respect to the core purpose of the bachelor degree is that value is placed on the body of knowledge acquired. The generic ability is expressed as, “operates effectively with and upon a body of knowledge of sufficient depth to begin professional practice” (University of South Australia 2002). The emphasis on an active relationship with the knowledge-base is in keeping with the mission of that university. In other institutions, emphasis is given to the need for bachelor graduates to have an extensive knowledge of a particular discipline, and the capacity to use that knowledge or ‘operate’ on it, is simply assumed. At the masters’ research level, the expectations commonly shift to a focus on understanding the state of art in research for the field, while for the masters’ course-work programme an advanced understanding of the changing knowledge base in the specialist area is required.

Although the notion of lifelong learning is a common element in definitions of generic skills, relatively less attention is now given to the acquisition of values, knowledge, understandings, and outlooks that will be sustained long after the discipline-specific or professional-specific skills and knowledge have become dated or even redundant. The open and flexible bachelors and masters arrangements are inevitably exposed to the pressures of immediacy and the over-responsiveness of universities to the needs of the day has the potential to put the more substantial and sustainable qualities of ‘graduateness’ at risk.

Finally, with the proliferation of course choices the quality of student support services and course advising has emerged as a major issue for universities in Australia. Unlike the United States, Australia has not until recently had a professionalised workforce of staff whose major role it is to assist students in their choices and to advise them on their options. Web-sites now abound with information, which, if anything, simply serve to confuse students. Most universities have developed quite sophisticated support systems that work their way down from central administration to the faculty, school or department level. The new and expanding infrastructure required to manage the open and flexible degree system has shifted the balance of responsibility for student progress to some extent away from academics. Nevertheless, despite the highly professional nature of the support and advisory staff, academic work roles have been affected in significant ways. Academics attribute their increasing workload in part to the time they now spend providing course advice to students (McInnis 2000).

MacLachlan makes the important observation from the US experience that “there has been a long term evolution of student services in the United States

which is labour intensive and subjects the student to a high degree of supervision” (2002, p. 14). Although the starting points are different, Australia is certainly on the same track. It is not the case, however, that Australian students are closely supervised in the same way: they are carefully advised but on the whole maintain a great deal of independence in terms of decision-making about their course structures. And while it is also not the case that the relatively open and flexible structure of the bachelors-masters degrees is entirely responsible for the growing demand for professional student support and advisory services, it is certainly a key factor.

5. Conclusion

We agree with MacLachlan that simple replication of the US model in Europe will fail (2002, p. 13). The same can be said of any simplistic adoption of the Australian approach to degree structures in other contexts. There are, however, pressures driving the European and Australian systems in similar ways, and these are of course associated with globalised student markets and the imperatives of the knowledge economy. The Australian system and the student population are in a process of mutual adaptation and adjustment whereby the provision of choice raises expectations of more choice. But this scenario is built on decades of experience with student-driven course design and development whereby meeting the needs of an enormously diverse student population has consistently been a high priority. Part-time, mature age, and external enrolments have been a major feature of the Australian student profile for at least 40 years, and their demand for flexible and open course structures has incrementally shaped the orientation of the system of awards. While it is still the case that some of the providers of professional degrees have resisted catering for diverse student groups, they too have felt the need to change.

So what can be learned from the Australian experience of the bachelors-masters programme? On the negative side, there are serious concerns about the management of standards and in particular, the loss of coherence and integrity in course design that potentially puts short-term student needs ahead of long-term benefits and advantages. Nevertheless, it still remains that if students are empowered to adapt their courses in response to changing personal or labour-market circumstances then they, the economy, and society are better off. The balance between the public good and the private benefit is not distorted by an inflexible, anachronistic and decidedly perverse arrangement whereby neither the individual student is happy nor the labour market satisfied. What seems to be attracting a disproportionate number of high achieving international students to Australian universities is the capacity the degree structures offers as a basis for lifelong learning. This is where the building blocks, if properly managed, can set students

on career and learning paths that are reasonably comparable and adaptable within and across national boundaries.

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Bachelor, Master, Credits, and Modularization – The Case of Germany in an International Perspective

Ludwig Huber

The words in the title of this paper mark the biggest changes in the structure of the programmes of studies which the German higher education has been challenged to realize since two hundred years. Up to the end of the last century, a “continental European” structure prevailed. Readers of this paper will probably be more or less familiar with the picture; therefore here a few strokes shall do. There was and mainly still is a binary system of institutions with *Wissenschaftliche und künstlerische Hochschulen* (universities and academies of fine arts, music, etc.) on one side, *Fachhochschulen* (polytechnics or now: “universities of applied sciences”) on the other. The courses of studies lead to a university diploma or *Magister* degree or state exam in five to seven years here, to a *Fachhochschuldiplom* in three to four years there. Examinations are taken mainly at the end of the study; at most an intermediate or pre-exam after the first two or so years; there are no modules, no credits, little permeability or transfer between institutions before the final exam.

Now these structures are being shaken.

1. The Situation – Developments and Discussions

Observers watching the German scene from the *outside* will probably note remarkable changes or even, depending upon their values, enormous *progress*:

- Policies have been formulated and decisions taken on all political levels (Conference of the Ministers for Higher Education in the European Union; Conference of the Ministers for Higher Education in Germany, and recommenda-

tions and memoranda from advisory bodies of the highest rank, e.g. Science Council, Rectors' Conference, German Academic Exchange Service: all are pressing higher education institutions to adopt a consecutive structure of studies (bachelor/master) and a modular system. German federal law and state laws have been changed to open the way, and under the auspices of the Accreditation Council new agencies are being installed to monitor it.

- There is a rapid development of courses of studies following the new pattern; an ever increasing number of programmes are being prepared or submitted for accreditation or are already running. A flood of lists, information brochures, and websites by several institutions and bodies is pouring down on developers, teachers, and students alike. All this goes along with hectic activities in many higher education institutions, accompanied by solemn declarations of presidents and rectors, turmoil in senates and department assemblies, and by a certain chaos as old and new programmes are offered side by side, old and new structures are intersecting, courses have to be “polyvalent” for both at least during a transition period, etc.

Those who are convinced of the new structures and actively promote the change – probably a majority of the politicians concerned, but still a tiny minority among faculty – feed *great expectations* and promise big advantages:

- flexibility and quick adaptability of study programmes offered;
- transparency of study programmes offered, and at the same time:
- recognizable profile of the higher education institution;
- modules as stimulus for new and innovative curriculum development, disciplinary and interdisciplinary, by groups of teachers cooperating;
- opportunity for students to compose individualized curricula, and also
- transparent presentation/documentation of studies absolved and individual achievements;
- enhancement of student mobility, national and international, both ways;
- concentration of studies and higher efficiency of programmes, thereby
- reduction of length of studies (very high or too high in Germany);
- combinations of different learning modules over time and space, and therefore:
- enhancement of lifelong learning.

Altogether, in the public debate the change to the new structures is valued by “functionalists” or social engineers in higher education as an almost unambiguous achievement or at least as a big and necessary technical modernization. For “idealists” or imperturbable reformers it raises new hopes as perhaps another

vehicle to bring about reforms of studies desired for a long time but not achieved so far.

Seen *from up close*, there appear huge obstacles and powerful forces of resistance on the stage.

For one, the occupational system seems to be hesitating – in spite of the employers' pledges in the public debate. Thus, so far it remains unclear which acceptance (in recruitment and promotion) graduates will find with the new degrees – especially with the bachelor – in the public as well as in the private sector. Therefore the students are likely to choose a strategy to go beyond the bachelor and to continue their studies at least up to the master degree if not even also to the traditional diploma or state exam. Then at least the abbreviation of study time which politicians are expecting from the change would be lost.

Second: Within the universities powerful interest groups stick to the old degrees, if necessary besides the new ones (thereby making possible the student strategies mentioned). They do so partly due to pure traditionalism and/or immobility but partly for thoroughly respectable reasons, e.g. Humboldtian concepts of academic studies, humanistic ideas of personality development or *Bildung* which require more freedom and leisure than the new structures seem to offer; and partly out of fear for the special status and prestige of university programmes in relation to *Fachhochschulen*, e.g. in sectors, where university courses instead of courses at “lower” status institutions (*Fachhochschulen*, teacher training colleges) are a recent achievement (for example social work/social education) – a distinction which to them seems to be threatened by the new structures.

Apart from such fears and doubts regarding the structures *many worries* concern also the process and the outcome of reforms regarding *curriculum, teaching and learning* (also and just among reformers supporting the change in principle).

To paint a worst case scenario from their point of view:

- nothing but new labels for old contents and practices;
- complicated and burdensome accounting systems for credits and grades;
- even more heterogeneity of participants of a module while ability of teachers to cope with it does remain the same, i.e. insufficient;
- even less coherence and continuity between study elements as exist already now;
- even less opportunities for complex project work (which would require more time than just a module and involve studies and groups across different disciplines);
- no space for continuously pursued study or research interests by students;
- perhaps loss of the slot for the “one real academic piece of work”, the thesis for the diploma or state exam, instead

- omnipresence of smaller tests and exams (latest at the end of each module), leading to “the erosion of learning” (see Marton 1975) and to surface level learning;
- less comparability and control, higher divergence of exams due to the distribution among the various teachers (indeed a danger observed in the American system by Rothblatt 1991);
- and so on.

(Reading such a list one must keep in mind that the aims and objectives obviously implied are by no means satisfyingly realized in the present state of university studies – but they still seem valid as concepts to be fought for.)

2. Problems of Implementation

To begin: little is known about the implementation. Apart from a few cases documented more extensively in books (cf. Schwarz and Teichler 2000, Welbers 2001, BLK 2002), we find rarely reports on the process of discussions and decisions, and we see products which are not very informative: mostly lists of courses (by titles) or tableaux (of sequences of, hours for, credit points attached to courses). Already because of the number the programmes cannot be described here; research of some length would be necessary to systematize and classify the different approaches.

What really is occupying the energies of developers may instead be indirectly concluded from what the guidelines or recommendations by local or national institutions are dealing with, i.e. from the tasks which they underline (cf. BLK 2002). These are:

(a) on a higher and rather principal level:

- defining objectives in terms of competencies (instead of subject matter);
- thinking in modules instead of thinking in disciplines;
- restructuring resources given (instead of asking for new ones);
- aiming at polyvalence/multiple use of the module in various programmes;
- defining and making transparent the prerequisites for each module;

(b) on a rather administrative level of the organization of studies/curricula:

- modularising if possible all programmes of an institution;
- homogenizing the frames of modules (size, length in terms of lesson hours and work load) and, accordingly;
- structuring the system of modules (macro-, meso-, micro-level);

- adapting the same module for different programmes (multiple usage);
- describing the modules in detail and following a common scheme;
- certifying the modules, etc. in the final certificate, etc.

This is the level which requires the greatest changes in attitude and behaviour of the university community regarding communication, cooperation, and contracts between teachers (and perhaps students) from different fields!

Unfortunately, claims or resolutions to turn around the wheel completely, to leave the old structures behind altogether and to settle upon the new scale of programmes for bachelor-, master-, doctor-studies, however justified for theoretical reasons, will not succeed immediately. Particularly in order to win fellows for the new structures it will be necessary to concede that the highly valued old programmes and degrees continue to exist for at least a while.

But what seems to be absorbing energies most of all (if you look at the number of pages dedicated to it as indicators is on the bureaucratic level, the business of awarding and accounting for credits and controlling the tests/exams:

- choosing among the different systems of credits (with preference for ECTS);
- assessing the workload and calculating the credits;
- accounting for internships, projects, major works as a thesis or the like;
- homogenizing modules also in this respect;
- attaching grades to the credits and calculating the grade point average;
- recording and accumulating credits over time (lifelong);
- fixing dates and periods for tests and exams attached to modules;
- regulating control of exams/examinators;
- settling matters of announcement of exams, repetition of exams failed, etc.

In short, the major problem seems to be the management of this whole system of dispersed exams which is so new and unfamiliar to the German tradition of the one great examination at the end of the course of study, often under direct control by state authorities. The danger is, that in the hurry to overcome the old ways, regulations are fixed and difficult to be changed again later, before questions of aims, of competences to be developed, of content to be restructured, etc. have been seriously considered.

I could continue to describe and analyze these problems of implementation at length and in detail, but in any case it would turn out that so far in this country administrators and teachers are preoccupied with reorganizing the offer, the curriculum, and the schedule of instruction in a formal way. However, regarding the content, at best some innovation is aimed at by new interdisciplinary links and/or some variation in the learning situations, while on the other side all par-

ties do hardly think of how the learners will cope with it and how they could be guided and supported through the system.

3. Tasks for the Student Services: Advisement and Counselling, Guidance and Support

The problem is evident, the challenge for German higher education extraordinary, for most of all two reasons:

(a) Study structures, especially during the transition period, will become even more complicated than before (overlapping old and new structures, uncertain perspectives on the labour market, growing heterogeneity of students, etc.; cf. Welbers 2001, p. 8; Bülow-Schramm 2001, p. 4).

(b) In German institutions is traditionally missing what, for example, the American college offers as a matter of course:

- a student record kept by the administration (registration of presence, modules absolved, credits achieved or failed, grades, transcripts, etc.),
- a personal tutor,
- a relatively well staffed and equipped system of agencies or persons on the central as well as the departmental level for guidance or advising on matters of curriculum, choice of courses, exams and study strategies, for counselling with regard to social or psychological problems, and for career guidance.

In addition: modularisation, most of all when going beyond the disciplines, could even more weaken what in German universities instead is functioning to a certain (although rather low) degree, namely

- the work of discipline- or department-bound counsellors and
- the “peer”-advising by discipline- or department-bound student organizations (*Fachschaften*), which presently bear quite an important part of the burden and are more appreciated by the clientele than the teachers (cf. Lewin et al. 1997; 2000).

Big changes are necessary in Germany in this domain:

- improved central guiding and counselling agencies: more staff, higher degree of specialization, more permanent further training to keep them up to date;
- decentralized guides bound to the main study resp. degree programmes (not disciplines), who must not only be motivated and willing but knowledgeable and continuously trained or even going further;
- decentralized guidance resp. advice agencies which can adapt to the specific structures and problems of the department or programme as well as to the disciplinary or departmental culture (e.g. a student centre, cf. Bülow-Schramm

2001 in general and especially the analysis by Schwarz (2001) and the resulting recommendations, pp. 63ff.);

- personal mentors (obligatory for each student); however: here as with student advisers in the departments the problems of qualification for the conversation with the student (low degree of professionalisation) are evident (cf. Meer 2001, who proposes to choose junior staff: doctoral students, project assistants as advisers);
- but also
 - transparent information brochures and/or websites;
 - orientation units at the beginning of the bachelor and master programmes;
 - additional training courses for research (surfing), writing, presenting, etc., if needed.

However, I would like to underline that it would be short-sighted to hand over the whole task of guidance, etc. to services resp. extra-curricular activities or offers. It would be an insufficient compensation for a genuine function of teaching itself and of teachers as persons themselves. Students in order to become or to prove themselves autonomous learners need more than just information: namely orientation. By this word I mean that within courses or – in the future – within modules questions as to the purpose of studies on the whole (beyond the particular module), the relevance of contents and tasks, the potential for learning and for the development of personal abilities are addressed and teachers reveal their personal stand towards them.

Perhaps the process of planning modules together will stimulate the thinking and exchange of ideas about such questions among the teachers? Contrary to the sceptical picture drawn above this alone would be a great side-effect of the new structures.

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IV
TRANSITION FROM HIGHER EDUCATION TO
EMPLOYMENT

Old Problems and New Solutions or New Problems and Old Solutions?

A Personal Account of the Debate on the Relationships between
Higher Education and the World of Work

Ulrich Teichler

1. Early Impressions

I appreciated the exceptional honour of being invited to present a biographically shaped account of the theme under consideration: a report how I perceive the debates on the relationships between higher education and the world of work and how I myself tried to contribute to better understanding of the issue.

During my last year of secondary education I became strongly aware of the relevance of choosing a field of study for the rest of one's life. Teachers, parents and relatives as well as the occupational counsellor of the public employment agency underscored that the choice of the field of study was more or less the choice of the subsequent occupation. I heard most frequently that interest in certain professional practice or success in a certain subject learned in school would be the best criteria of choice. This led me for some time to believe that I should enrol in physics. Eventually I made the abstract decision to choose a field of study which was neither a subject in the school curriculum nor was clearly linked to any professional area. Actually, I faced enormous difficulties in finding such a field of study. As those whom one usually could ask for advice only shook their heads I addressed elder brothers of my classmates whether they could identify such types of fields of study at their university. Fortunately, I got various responses, and my elder brother even presented me a book describing sociology as a discipline. I opted for sociology – only to find out later that I was

part of the gradual change process in the relationships between higher education and the world of work.

I was lucky to finance my fourth to six semester in the framework of a research project. I was invited by a professor who later became the supervisor of my doctoral dissertation to conduct interviews on the professional concepts and activities of protestant ministers and to be involved in the analysis of the findings of this study (the results were eventually published in Spiegel and Teichler 1974). I remember that I contributed one observation to the analysis: The ministers obviously suffered from the fact that most persons they met had very vague ideas about their professional tasks of ministers and were highly sceptical as far as the relevance of these tasks are concerned. In response, the ministers tended to underscore their relevance in the usual way persons in a secular achievement society do: they tended to underscore at any conceivable occasion that they are very busy. Ironically, their professional justification was bound to undermine their opportunities to do professionally meaningful work, because people wanted to consult a minister when they had got in trouble and needed a person who is willing to spend much time with them, listen to their concerns and eventually consult them.

Subsequently, I got a contract in the Max Planck Institute for Educational Research already while being a student. My tasks were to advise researchers how to formulate questionnaires, administer empirical research processes and help to analyse quantitative data. Concurrently, I was encouraged to choose a thematic area which could be my own field of research subsequent to graduation. As regards the latter, I got most intrigued by a paradox of that time: On the one hand, the view spread in the late 1960s that educational expansion was desirable and an irreversible trend as well; on the other hand, a conviction was widely shared that the growing enrolment in higher education was bound to lead to a catastrophe on the labour market. For example, the first systematic forecast on the graduate labour market in Germany, published in 1968, predicted that the number of graduates around 1980 would be twice as high as the number of job openings for graduates. I came to the conclusion that this paradox could be a good starting point for academic inquiry. And it was part of the academic climate of this research institute that I would have to study both the theoretical debate and contribute to it as well as to find an original way of empirical study.

2. “Demand for Inequality” and the Opportunities and Dangers of “Absorption”

I was impressed by the decision of my colleagues at the Max Planck Institute to counter the conceptual bias of restrictive manpower requirement arguments by undertaking a survey on the careers of graduates from a newly established field of study – a field which by definition was not satisfying established demand, but

providing a new supply, thus forcing the graduates themselves to offer an unexpected supply of competences and contribute to a dynamic process of redefinition of “demand” in a society which has to learn that a growing complexity of knowledge is the demand of the future. I myself decided that I wanted to analyse the conditions for the absorption of graduates in countries in which the graduation quotas of the corresponding age groups were substantially higher than in Germany. I considered the US and Japan as possible options. The director of the National Centre for Educational Research in Tokyo invited me to his institute; he was convinced that there should be more researchers in other parts of the world who include Japan in comparative studies on educational research, and he was convinced that I could have a secondary motive to be among them, because my wife is Japanese.

In my doctoral dissertation and in various other publications I underlined that Japan is not an exotic exception as far as the relationships between education and work are concerned, but rather a prototype of a “modern education society”. Employers in Japan were not convinced that the growing supply of graduates was needed, but they accepted the expansion as the consequence of an open meritocratic society where ambitions for educational success spread and should be rewarded. They increased the job openings for graduates by means of “vertical substitution” and they funded this process by a step-wise reduction of the income advantage of the university graduates as compared to those entering the labour market without a degree. This process was facilitated by the fact that most graduates expected a job commensurate to their level of educational attainment without an expectation of a close link between the field of study and the area of job assignment, and that most employers did not expect to recruit specialists. Absorption seemed to be easy, but from my perspective, the Japanese solution undermined “curricular relevance” and “professional identity”; moreover, tiny distinctions of education status, i.e. possibly marginal differences of reputation among the universities would become increasingly relevant for one’s career, thereby transforming education to a rat race for tiny educational advantages (see Teichler 1975, 1976).

Concurrently, I studied the political debates and the available research on the relationships between higher education and the world of work. The request by the International Labour Office to write a trend report on this issue provided a good opportunity to synthesize the state of knowledge and debate (Teichler, Hartung and Nuthmann 1976, 1980). I came forward with a developmental theory according to which the relationships between higher education and employment are not primarily driven anymore by a demand for certain skills, but increasingly by concerns how growing numbers of highly educated persons could be made compatible with the existing inequities in the world of work. I argued that “de-

mand for social inequality” (Teichler 1974) was the rule of the game (cf. the following text no. 1).

Text 1

Educational Expansion, Qualification and Status Distribution

The significance of the changes in the relationship between qualification processes and status distribution occurring since the 1960s becomes particularly evident when viewed in the context of historical developments.

In traditional society, the individual’s social position was as a rule determined directly by his or her social origin – social status was “handed down”. In a long process by which skills and knowledge were passed on from one generation to the next, qualifications were acquired through familiar socialization and long periods of apprenticeship. Meanwhile, specific institutions sprang up through which the knowledge and skills needed for particular occupations were transmitted. Thus education – save in rare instances – did not determine social positions, but rather was one of its attributes.

These traditional paths to qualification and the underlying social structure were severely jolted by the coming of industrialization. Traditional patterns of socialization and ways of transmitting knowledge were no longer equal to the dynamics of occupational requirements, changing as they were under the impact of economic developments. Moreover, it could no longer be taken for granted that power should continue to rest in the hands of a small group for whom privilege was hereditary. Under these circumstances they developed a systematic and – as industrial development preceded – ever closer interdependence between the organized acquisition of qualifications and status distribution. It is characteristic of this latter stage that status distribution was a matter of principle open and oriented toward a certain level of qualification. The promise of social advancement served, under these circumstances, to stimulate the acquisition of required qualifications. At the same time, social inequality was alleged to be the equitable reward for the performance society required, thereby guaranteeing that society would continue to function smoothly.

This development has been accompanied by a growing sense of public awareness of the fine distinctions that exist in the system of rewards, and of the connection between educational achievement and career and social status. This point is illustrated by the fact that more people are becoming conscious of the differences in social opportunity associated with the various types of education available, and consequently seek access to those educational institutions which promise better career opportunities and higher social status.

This process of becoming aware and responding is, of course, subject to fluctuations varying with views, on whether a shortage or oversupply of qualifications is thought to exist.

- In the event that the education system's output of qualifications actually or supposedly falls short of the requirements of the occupation system, the above-mentioned relationship between qualification and status assignment can be put to effective political use: emphasis is then placed on the open character of the education system. At the same time, measures are taken to render access to hitherto exclusive educational institutions easier.
- On the other hand, the close connection that exists between qualification and status distribution turns out to be politically inconvenient when it is felt necessary to reduce the supply of qualifications as more people are seeking higher education. In such situations the general practice is to try to demotivate potential students by persuading them that the connection between educational achievements and chances of acquiring status has become tenuous, and that other criteria are now more decisive in opening the way to high-status positions.

Under such circumstances, no policy to reduce a surplus of qualification would have a choice other than actually reducing the social reward for additional education. This however, calls in question the legitimization that educational achievement gives the system of social inequality throughout the industrialized world. This, in turn, would mean constantly re-examining the connection between qualification and status distribution in line with prevailing assumptions about what qualifications are required.

- It seems, however, that once a certain measure of interdependence has developed between qualification and status distribution, the tie cannot be loosened without there being consequences. Society cannot switch back and forth from being open and achievement-oriented to the very opposite. Attempts to cut back expansion administratively the moment an oversupply of qualifications is thought to exist appear, in fact, to sharpen public awareness and simply strengthen the demand for higher education.

Various factors have contributed to creating in many countries a far greater individual demand for status-promising education than widespread notions about qualifications requirements would deem advisable. Studies in countries where the trend toward mass higher education is more pronounced show that this development tends to culminate in a state of affairs in which the education system's output appears out of step with the existing social and occupational structures, in terms both of qualification and status distribution.

This appears to mark a fundamental change in the way qualification relates to status distribution. If the two are no longer interdependent, then one of them might come to dominate: it is conceivable that if qualifications become more

closely adjusted to demand, educational distinctions will no longer serve to legitimize social inequality. It is equally conceivable that if status continued to be based on educational success, it would prove impossible to bring the supply of qualifications into line with demand. The fact is that the latter of these two tendencies is prevailing: status distribution is beginning to dominate. Despite a substantial reduction in educational differences, education continues to have a status-distributive function. The importance that was once accorded to larger differences in educational achievement is now accorded to relatively minor distinctions, for example, in prestige between two otherwise equal-ranking institutions.

Throughout all this, qualification and status distribution continue to relate to one another to the extent that educational achievement is rewarded in terms of status, and status distribution serves to stimulate qualifications. However, as the situation changes, it is no longer a simple matter to reconcile the need to keep a balance between the provisions and the requirement for qualifications, nor to legitimize the prevailing system of social inequality.

In contrast to our thesis that a "dominance of status distribution" is developing, there appear to be a number of other conceivable possibilities for reconciling the discrepancies we have been describing. First, a reduction in the discrepancies with regard to length of schooling and a lessening of differences in standards between various courses of study could have an equalizing effect on the social structure. Second, a gradual reduction in discrepancies in educational attainment in the presence of a relatively stable structure of social inequality could result in the education system gradually losing its importance for the process of social selection, which then would generally be relocated in the occupational system. Third, differences in social reward could become so slight in response to educational expansion that educational aspirations would generally lower, thereby bringing about a measure of agreement between assumed qualifications requirements and the output of the education system. Fourth, planning and administrative measures could affect the way education is organized, to the extent that it meets the qualification requirements of the employment system.

All four of these assumptions can claim some sort of evidence in their support. In most industrialized countries, things have not developed perfectly in line with any one of these ideal-typical conceptions. Instead, all four possible forms of coordination co-exist, but vary in their impact. Altogether, however, signs supporting such alternatives are clearly weaker than signs that selection through education becomes even more important under conditions of a growing "demand for inequality".

(Source: Adapted from Teichler, Hartung and Nuthmann 1980)

Fortunately, the research of our institute was paid enormous attention in the German public debate on educational expansion. We were called the advocates of the “absorption approach” (cf. the overview of the analyses in Hartung, Nuthmann and Teichler 1981). The pessimism with respect to the consequences of educational expansion for employment remained strong in Germany, but we obviously contributed to a phasing out of the term “academic proletariat” which suggested that the superfluous graduates would end up in misery. However, our more optimistic notion that “vertical substitution” eventually would enrich the world of work and contribute to economic and societal innovation was not widely shared either. In Germany, instead, the term “displacement” met highest public acceptance, i.e. agreement to our hypothesis that the “superfluous” graduates were most likely to get employed in positions slightly lower than those traditionally held by graduates, but claim that those trained for this level of occupation newly captured by the increasing number of graduates would be deprived of their appropriate positions and forced to climb down the occupational ladder.

3. The Search for an Understanding of Complex Relationships

Research on higher education has been a rare species in academia not only in Germany, but also in most other countries of the world. In Europe, institutions for higher education research mostly were founded with specific tasks reflecting major concern and policy debates of their period of foundation. For example, the Institute for Economics of Education was founded in 1970 in Dijon (France) when worldwide debates focussed on the contribution of educational expenditures to economic growth. And the Center for Higher Education Policy Studies was established in Enschede (the Netherlands) in the mid-1980s when governmental steering and institutional management of higher education became more strategic. Similarly, the establishment of the Centre for Research on Higher Education and Work (Wissenschaftliches Zentrum für Berufs- und Hochschulforschung) at the Comprehensive University of Kassel (Germany) in 1978 was a response to growing concerns about graduate employment and work in the wake of educational expansion and of graduate employment problems visible since the “oil shock” of 1973 (cf. Teichler 1990). But some of the persons advocating the establishment of the Centre also had hoped that new ideas would be generated about future links between study and work on a way towards a society which we would nowadays call “knowledge society”. Being offered to be the key driver for the establishment and further development of this centre, I clearly viewed this assignment as an opportunity to analyse the relationships between higher education and the world of work and many related issues of higher education and society from broader perspective than individually operating scholars can cope with. Text no. 2, an excerpt from an text written for an encyclopaedia, might illustrate the broad range of issues which can be taken into account:

Text 2**Education and the World of Work**

Education is a social mechanism which, as a rule, *dissociates the learner physically* for a certain period of his or her life *from the regular world of work* and other life spheres. This is undertaken in order to prepare her or him in a more rational manner for coping successfully with the diversity of work and other life tasks through explanations, rules, general reasoning strategies etc. The more efficient the industrial society became in producing wealth in the 19th and 20th century, the more expanded the education system and the more was education viewed as a means of generating competencies which contribute to the production of goods and services.

Regarding to the world of work it has

- a *qualifying* (in the French and German connotation) *function* of fostering the cognitive and possibly affective and sensu-motoric capabilities which might be useful to cope with job tasks, as well as challenges in other spheres of life;
- a *status-distributive function*: the level of “educational attainment” determines to a certain extent the monetary resources and the social recognition which will be available to the individual person in his or her subsequent life; for education became an increasingly powerful factor in opening up or closing the access to prestigious occupations and providing the means for professional achievement which are directly linked to differential remuneration and socio-economic status.

These basic functions are undisputed. However, it is generally assumed that education is bound to be imperfect in preparing for the world of work, among others because rational learning through dissociation from practice has its price in less direct preparation for occupational tasks than on the job-learning, and because education is expected to serve broader functions than merely preparation for the world of work. Also, in addition to education, many other factors are at work in determining the professional success of individuals, such as socio-biographic background, genetically determined abilities, socio-economic factors surrounding the role of credentials, processes of transfer from education to employment, and finally lifelong learning and personal development. Thus, it cannot come as a surprise to note controversial debates as regards the actual ways education is and ought to be shaped to serve the world of work. Similar, views diverge about the impacts learning has and ought to have on the subsequent employment and work.

Even if education was expected to be closely geared to the “requirements” of the employment system and even there were no particularistic social factors in play, e.g. parental background, gender, etc., which interfere to a close link of

educational and career success, there are obvious imperfections and uncertainties which make close linkages unlikely. Available research and past debates pointed out the following issues:

- *Imperfections in identifying job requirements*: Employers tend to be uncertain, and scientific approaches of job task analysis often turn out not be very useful for educational approaches.
- *Occupational dynamics*: The employment is very dynamic in terms of changes of job tasks within given occupations, and most persons have to expect occupational mobility in terms of changing employers or occupations over the life courses. This challenges the view that youth might be best served by getting well prepared for a very specific bundle of job tasks.
- *Indeterminate work tasks for highly-qualified work force*: The higher the educational level required for a certain occupational area and thus the higher the investments for education are for the learners or for the society, the more difficult is it to identify the competencies required. For the relationships between knowledge and job tasks are too complex to be validly analysed, and the individual is not expected merely to take over anticipated tasks but also to question the existing rules, to contribute to innovation and to cope with indeterminate work tasks.
- *Planning gap*: There is an unavoidable time gap between the identification of new job assignments and the provision of respective competencies on the part of school leavers and graduates, because several years are needed for the revision of curricula, their implementation and the actual “production” of graduates.
- *Generalists’ vs. specialists’ paradigms*: Views vary substantially regards the extent to which education should be general or specialized in order to serve best the preparation for employment and work.
- *Provision of foundation vs. job-preparatory function of education*: Similarly, views tend to vary as regards the extent to which education prepares for future work tasks or only lays the foundation and leaves the direct preparation to the initial training of employees.
- *Emphasis on pre-career education vs. recurrent education*: Finally, views differ similarly on the extent to which the growing role of lifelong learning might reduce the need of pre-career education and training.

Even if there were no major obstacles as regards the feasibility of linking education closely to the demands of the world of work, the views and policies are likely to differ substantially because major *value judgements* come into play:

- To what extent should education serve the world of work or *other spheres of life* (personality, citizenship, family, culture, leisure, etc.)?

- Should education be expanded beyond the *needs of the economy*, if social demands call for it? Should education serve social justice in terms of increasing equality of opportunity and smaller differentials of educational attainments, if this creates tensions to the demands of the economy?
- *Who determines the needs of the world of work* (the current views of employers, a social compromise, the needs according to experts' views, etc.)?
- How are *employment and work valued in a society* (as a basis for identity, an alienating environment, predominantly extrinsically valuable as means for acquiring income and status), and what role should education play in this context?
- To what extent should education serve the development of personality, values, social skills, etc. *beyond the cognitive domain*?

In all societies, controversies can be observed as regards the extent to which education is viewed as instrumental in securing the individual's and the society's economic success or other aims are given a stronger weight.

The extent to which the patterns of educational qualifications match the demand of the employment system is a frequent topic of research and policy debate. One tries to establish – both for the labour market of recent graduates and the total labour force – the extent to which the qualifications correspond to the occupational structure

- *horizontally*, i.e. in terms of links between subjects and occupational categories, and
- *vertically*, i.e. in terms of the appropriateness of the level of education to the status of the occupation.

Altogether, concerns about a horizontal match are more pronounced in countries emphasizing specialization in education and employment than in countries considering education predominantly as a general preparation for various possible assignments. They tend to be more pronounced as well regarding higher levels of education than lower ones: a substitution of a car-mechanic by a baker seems to be more acceptable than that of an engineer by a chemist. But the more research on the horizontal relationships between education and employment progressed, the more visible became *leeway for substitution*. For example, the fact that about half of the German having undergone a apprenticeship training are employed five years later in occupations not closely linked to the type of training does not tend to be considered as a major wastage, but rather as an indicator that in-depth specialized vocational training fosters substantial potentials for flexibility and transfer of skills.

More attention was paid to problems linked to possible vertical mismatches. In the 1960s, concern was frequently voiced that countries with a low proportion of the population with advanced education might fall behind the others with respect to economic growth. From the 1970s through the 1990s, controversies

were on the agenda whether a trend towards “over-education” or “*over-qualification*” could be observed. During the 1990s, eventually a mix of concerns about over-education in some areas and lack of competencies in other areas, e.g. qualifications required for new technologies, was prevalent in many countries.

The issue of “over-education” seems to be a perennial issue, because the tensions do not fade away between often steep occupational hierarchies on the one hand and on the other a relatively open access to the highest levels of education. Concern, however, tended to be voiced less dramatically in the 1990s. This might be explained by widespread expectations that a “knowledge society” is likely to emerge. Also, research has shown that most persons seemingly over-qualified did not face major hardships on the labour market but acquired mostly a position only slightly lower than they had strived for.

Altogether, even in a “knowledge society”, one does not expect that a more or less pure educational meritocracy will emerge, because other factors might increasingly get momentum. But education seems to remain the single most important determinant of career and of chances in other spheres of life.

(Source: Adapted from Teichler 2001)

Most research institutes at universities, however, face difficulties in pursuing consistent research and communication policies. They must respect the diversity of conceptual, thematic and methodological priorities of the participating scholars. Moreover, these research centres are subject to the merits and plight of staff mobility, they have to weigh the chances of getting research grants and the grants received greatly influence future research strategies. In addition, these centres typically must reflect public debates. These issues notwithstanding, the centre in Kassel succeeded in setting six priorities for more than two decades (see Schomburg and Teichler 2005).

First, there was a strong need to collect information on concepts, available research, and other information on the changing relationships between higher education and the world of work. Also of interest were the implications of these data for quantitative, structural, and curricular developments in higher education. Data gathering was done with the help of national and international conferences, often undertaken in cooperation with other institutions (Teichler 1979; Brennan, Kogan, and Teichler 1995). In addition, scholars were invited to write trend reports (Kehm and Teichler 1995) or detailed accounts of available research (Holtkamp and Teichler 1983; Burkhardt, Schomburg, and Teichler 2000; Paul, Teichler, and van der Velden 2000) as well as synthesizing analyses (Teichler and Sanyal 1982; Teichler 1988, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c; 2003). This national and international effort yielded valuable information for researchers and practitioners and informed the centre’s research plans.

Second, efforts were made to overcome the frequent inclinations of large-scale graduate surveys to be confined to a small range of themes. Often graduate surveys provide only information on themes such as field of study, the whereabouts of graduates after some period, their employment success, and the job satisfaction and overall assessment of their study experiences. The centre in Kassel preferred surveys asking graduates to provide detailed information about many areas in order to:

- examine features of the transition from higher education to employment and how students' competencies, labour market conditions, employers' expectations, and the dynamics of the transition mechanisms interact in determining the relationships between graduation and initial employment;
- measure the employment and work success of graduates in multiple ways, thereby showing the extent to which remuneration and status, on-the-job use of knowledge acquired during the course of study, and job satisfaction are interrelated or divergent;
- get an in-depth picture of the links between the competencies acquired during the course of study and the actual work tasks as perceived by the graduate;
- analyse the extent to which the study conditions experienced by students matter for their subsequent employment and work;
- check the impact of the students' motivations and orientations on their career paths.

These themes were addressed in a longitudinal study of German graduates who completed their final year of study in the early 1980s. These graduates were surveyed two years, five years, and ten years after graduation (Teichler, Schomburg, and Winkler 1992; Schomburg 1992; Schomburg and Teichler 1993, 1998). In the international comparative study discussed in this chapter, these themes played a major role as well.

Third, various studies were undertaken to examine the relationship between curricula and employment in selected fields of study and occupation areas, notably in engineering, fine arts, and teacher training (Hermanns, Tkocz, and Winkler 1983; Ekardt, Löffler, and Hengstenberg 1992; Winkler 2003; Rattemeyer 1982). In most cases, questionnaires, interviews of graduates, participant observation, and expert interviews were combined in order to get a more detailed picture about the links between study and work.

Fourth, various studies were conducted to solicit employers' views. In the early 1980s, for example, heads of personnel offices of large companies in Germany were interviewed about the recruitment process and the role that credentials play in recruitment (Teichler, Buttgerit, and Holtkamp 1984, Buttgerit 1984). In the mid-1990s, a pilot study addressed the demand for graduates and competencies expected by companies through surveying heads of personnel and supervisors of university graduates in German companies (Baldauf et al. 1995a,

1995b). Finally, a study was undertaken during the 1990s about recruitment, career, and training policies of Japanese companies. Questionnaire surveys, interviews, and document analysis were employed in this study (Ernst 1998, Metzler 1999, Teicher and Teichler 2000). On one hand, these studies showed that information provided by employers is an indispensable source for understanding work tasks and job requirements. On the other hand, the studies made clear that the employers' views and expectations cannot be considered the single most valid indication of demands and job requirements. For example, employers may have divergent perceptions of actors at the workplace and difficulties in identifying actual job requirements and competencies. Finally, traditions, political biases, and other factors may cloud employers' views.

Fifth, steps were taken to strengthen the element of international comparison in the analysis of the relationship between higher education and the world of work. Most of the studies addressed economically advanced societies. For example, the study on education and employment in Japan aimed to understand differences and common elements between the company-based approach in Japan and the profession-based approach in Germany. Finally, the Kassel centre had the exceptional opportunity of coordinating a graduate survey in a large number of countries (Schomburg and Teichler 2006, Teichler 2007b).

Surveys were conducted on the employment and work of individuals who had been internationally mobile during their course of study or during early stages of their research career (Schomburg, Winkler, and Teichler 1991, Maiworm and Teichler 1996, 1997, Teichler and Jahr 2001, Bracht et al. 2007). International comparative analyses turned out to be very helpful for generating ideas about how to interpret findings. It also provided food for thought regarding alternative options from those customary in one's own country.

Sixth, the Kassel centre was active in supporting other scholars wanting to embark on graduate surveys and related analyses. Increasingly, universities around the world are evaluating the educational experiences of their graduates. Leaders of developing countries are especially interested in training experts of higher education research, including experts on the relationship between higher education and the world of work. Consequently, the centre advised administrators and researchers in Germany and other countries embarking for the first time in graduate surveys. A handbook was written and updated (Schomburg 1995, 2003) in the English language to serve as a standard instrument for graduate and employers surveys. Individuals aiming to undertake such studies were provided with explanations, sample questionnaires, and computer programmes for data analysis in order to facilitate all steps of a survey.

Training workshops were conducted in more than ten countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America in order to assist researchers and administrators in conducting graduate surveys (Winkler, Hartmann, and Schomburg 1992, Baldauf und

Lwambuka 1993). Eventually, ten graduate surveys were conducted in Africa, and researchers of the Kassel Centre collaborated with African scholars to undertake a joint comparative analysis (Mugabushaka, Teichler, and Schomburg 2004) and recommended a common framework for graduate surveys in Latin America.

Finally, the Kassel Centre started offering individual universities in Germany the opportunity to survey their graduates in conjunction with a major representative survey of German graduates. The findings of this representative survey provided the individual university with a benchmark for analyzing their own graduates' employment and transition to work (Grühn and Schomburg 2002).

The various projects of the Kassel Centre helped higher education administrators to get access to information about the relationship between higher education and the world of work. The projects informed decision makers in higher education systems, institutions, and study programs. Last but not least they were hoped to be considered by students and graduates but they pointed out that students and graduates determine their educational and career "fate" more substantially than more simplistic research suggests (see also text no. 3). Findings were not disguised in international academic modes of presentation and analysis; instead, the implications of the studies were made explicit for practitioners.

The findings of the projects cautioned against simple studies and called for more comprehensive analyses. For example, findings suggested:

- More than a quarter of graduates who are underemployed (their remuneration and positions are below those expected) report that they have interesting and satisfying jobs and good opportunities to use the competencies they acquired during the course of their study.
- Remuneration of German graduates varies more strongly by the economic wealth or poverty of the region of employment than by the academic reputation of the university.
- Graduates from vocationally oriented colleges in Europe are more satisfied with their preparation for practice than graduates from academically oriented universities, but vocational graduates report a higher discrepancy between their competences and their work tasks.
- Graduates from Japan and Europe differ substantially in the characteristics of study programmes, competence acquired, and job tasks but are very similar in their job orientations.

These studies call for more in-depth analysis about the relationships between higher education and the world of work to better guide decision making.

Text 3**Graduate Employment and Work in Europe**

Students' and graduates' motives and activities cannot really be viewed, as it is often done, as primarily driven by a desire to maximise income and status. Six partly interrelated areas of values must be quoted in this respect.

First, professionals hold in high esteem a *pride in good professional work* and in the use of their competences. *Intrinsic motivation* is often seen as a more important driver for good professional practice than the extrinsic motivation for rewards such as income and status. Second, *autonomous work*, in terms of disposition to decide about the goals, the process, the timing, etc. of one's assignments, is held in high esteem by a substantial proportion of graduates and is part of the professional pride of highly qualified persons. Third, we note that some *values* that are closely *associated with the innovative function of systematic knowledge* are held by many highly qualified persons: opportunities to undertake research, curiosity, interest in further learning, improving and revolutionising society. Fourth, research on job satisfaction has revealed a wide range of *work conditions and employment conditions* that is generally highly appreciated. Good contacts with colleagues, time for regular leisure activities and other assets of certain job roles could explain the occupational choice and the daily behaviour of the work force. Fifth, values related to the *socio-communicative environment outside the world of work* have often been pointed at in recent years as highly influential for work-related decisions. The choice of certain regions as place of work or place of residence, as well as career sacrifices for the sake of partnership, family and children are examples of this. Sixth, *gender differences* of occupational conditions, values and behaviour have been one of the major themes of debate and research in this framework in recent decades. Analyses do not only address the views of men and women, but also try to establish whether the different values and activities could be considered as adaptations to unequal opportunities or as genuinely distinct values and options.

Views on changes of these values vary over time. On the one hand, a growing weight of intrinsic motives is observed as a shift toward "post-industrial values": the more a certain wealth of society due to economic dynamics could be taken for granted, the more persons turn to improvements of life and society beyond the material rewards that were previously strived for. Similarly, the *values of the highly qualified professions seem to spread in the process of educational expansion*. On the other hand, monetary and non-monetary labour market rewards, as well as status motives are viewed as gaining momentum *when employment problems grow*. Similarly, we noted a revival of the *homo oeconomicus* when the *Zeitgeist* was increasingly shaped by *neo-liberal economic values*.

Prior analyses have shown that some value dimensions that could conflict with those of the *homo oeconomicus* and status seekers could be interpreted as an appreciation of non-monetary economic rewards within a broad spectrum of status dimensions. Moreover, we often observed a high positive correlation between income and status and work conditions held highly in esteem by professionals, such as autonomous work, opportunity to make use of one's competences, or opportunities for lifelong learning.

The more intellectually demanding job roles are the less clearly they are determined by rules, instruments, work environments, and social control. Rather, highly qualified workers are expected to handle indeterminate work tasks, to reflect on established professional practice and to seek innovative solutions, and they have many opportunities of interpreting their work tasks and choosing possible options. Therefore, graduates' values and orientations can play a crucial role in constantly redefining job "requirements" and in shaping professional work and its outcomes.

The high relevance of the graduates' values and orientations can be viewed as conventional wisdom. Debates and research on the "professions" and "leadership" tend to address the relevance of intrinsic motivation, professional ethics and socio-political views held by graduates. This notwithstanding, a substantial proportion of well-known research projects neglected students' and graduates' values and orientations or took for granted that the norms of the *homo oeconomicus* and the status seeker prevailed. The CHEERS study, in contrast, attempted to map the graduates' values and orientations and to measure the extent to which they explain their professional activities.

Values other than income, status and employment conditions seem to play a major role. For example, graduates quoted personal development, work and home and family more frequently as central than money, social prestige and varied social life. Job satisfaction was more closely associated with autonomous and challenging work and the opportunity of using competences than with income, position, job security, time for leisure, and other dimensions of employment. Graduates considered themselves to be more strongly driven by intrinsic than by extrinsic motives.

A closer look reveals that the composition of values varied substantially:

- One out of seven graduates was *predominantly status-oriented and income-oriented* with little concern about the intrinsic dimensions.
- For more than a quarter of the graduates, *intrinsic and extrinsic motives seemed to coincide*: they either stated high or low ambitions in both respects.
- More than half, however, stressed their *interest in the challenges of their work or their appreciation of self-development*, while they perceived income, status and other employment conditions as being less important.

Not surprisingly, though, many graduates considered their *work situation as not fully meeting their desires*. Discrepancies between orientations and actual work situations seemed to occur almost as often with respect to status and income, opportunities of pursuing own ideas and using knowledge as with respect to opportunities of spending time on leisure and family. Some graduates accepted these discrepancies and adapted to them, while others tried to transform their work and employment conditions to meet their values and orientations.

There were differences in the values and orientations by country. For, example, a status orientation that was not strongly linked to professional intrinsic motives could be observed more frequently in the Netherlands and in the UK than in the other countries. Altogether, these differences were less striking than those of the employment conditions and work situations.

Finally, the relevance of values and norms affected career choices differently in various respects. In some countries, affiliation with a region was held in such high esteem that some graduates forewent bright career opportunities in order to live in a certain region. There were indications that international mobility was greatly appreciated by some graduates for many other reasons other than income, status and satisfactory employment conditions. Last but not least, child care continued to be a central issue for women; we noted a strong preference by women for employment in the public sector, especially in countries where political efforts were made to counterbalance their professional disadvantages.

...

Altogether, the results of the study could be seen as indicating less dramatic changes in the relationships between higher education and the world of work than the discussions about macro-trends of modern societies would suggest. Upgrading of middle-level occupations towards typical areas of graduate employment had progressed substantially in only a minority of economically advanced countries. Graduates were exposed to serious employment problems to a lesser degree than the public debates suggest, and the graduates themselves anticipated this while they were still enrolled in study programmes. Intrinsic professional motives did not seem to weaken under conditions of a *Zeitgeist* in favour of the *homo oeconomicus* and status seeker. And national characteristics of study, graduate employment and work did not seem to give way rapidly to convergent pressures of globalisation. Future research will tell us whether the relationships between higher education and the world of work will change faster in the future than in the recent past.

(Source: Adapted from Teichler 2007)

4. An Interim Account: What has been Achieved and What Remains to be Done

In comparing the public debate on the relationships between higher education and the world of work at the beginning of the 21st century with those of the preceding decades we certainly note substantial changes. The increasing popularity of terms such as “knowledge society” and “knowledge economy” imply, among others, that high numbers of highly educated persons are viewed as crucial for coping with the professional tasks of the future. This does not mean, however, that relatively restrictive and relatively elitist views of the relationships between higher education and the world of work have ceased to be dominant in Germany and many other European countries. A widespread belief seems to persist that

- high income and professional and managerial occupations are good indicators of the demand of the employment system for highly qualified graduates;
- only a limited number of young persons are able to acquire high level competences needed for highly demanding positions and occupational areas;
- the increasing numbers of graduates beyond such a demand for high calibre should be accommodated in academically less demanding institutions of higher education and should find eventually middle-level occupations with the help of vocational specialisation, “flexibility” and acceptance of moderately demanding occupations.

Research on the relationships between higher education and the world of work which is not confined in this conventional wisdom has contributed, first, towards a more complex picture of these relationships. Accordingly, many graduates not ending up in high positions report a close link between their level and kinds of competences and their work tasks. Careers depend to a lesser extent than traditionally assumed on the specific field of study. The academic reputation of a university is not the single most important factor for career success. Employers are not a more or less perfect source of information for the “demands” of the employment system. We need hundreds of possible factors to take into account in order to describe appropriately what determines a successful graduate career and what determines successful handling of intellectually demanding and complex work tasks of graduates.

Second, research in this area has underscored that higher education cannot merely respond to the presumed demands of the employment system or the economy and society at large. Higher education has to prepare as well for indeterminate work tasks, to challenge the conventional job roles and practices of division of labour, and to contribute to unexpected innovative ideas. Therefore, curricula, teaching, and learning has to be both a response to perceived demand and training for proper functioning within established work assignments as well as a proactive policy for occupational change thereby transcending the dominant views of “demand”.

In recent years, interest is substantially grown in higher education to get more and more complex information on the links between higher education and the world of work. However, those actors of the higher education system interested are often disappointed that research on the relationships between higher education and the world of work provides little guidance for decision-making in higher education.

We have to admit that even more complex research on the relationships between higher education and the world of work has not yet reached a degree of quality which could be highly beneficial for a dialogue with practitioners about the future of higher education. Three persistent weaknesses have to be named.

First, most studies on graduate employment compare different fields of study according to common yardsticks of employment and work “success”. But fields such as dentistry on the one hand and sociology on the other hand need to be analysed on the basis of different yardsticks as regards the closeness of links between subject and occupational area as well as knowledge and work tasks, the responsive or innovative training for job tasks, the expected occupational rewards, the career risks, the diversity of relevant curricula, etc.

Second, the available measures of job requirements and competences acquired in the course of study are often too strongly shaped by the categories employed in daily conversations of laymen and are often guided by over-expectations regarding the “isomorphy” between kinds of work tasks and areas of knowledge and learning. Moreover, they depend too strongly on the ratings of graduates or of employers. Ways have to be found towards the development of more sophisticated and more valid measures.

Third, we are still at the beginning of developing good methods to measure well the relative weight of various elements of study provisions and study conditions for the acquisition of competences and for the utilisation of these competences on the job, i.e. the extent to which certain factors from the side of higher education “matter”.

Research on the relationships between higher education and the world of work, thus, has further room for improvement. And it certainly has ample opportunities to contribute to more convincing visions about the educational tasks of higher education. But the dialogue between the researchers and the practitioners in this domain is likely to remain strenuous. For the researchers are likely to deliver a more complex picture than the practitioner considers desirable for making priority decisions. And new ways of intensive communication between the researchers on the relationships between higher education and the world of work and the experts of individual disciplines and individual occupations have to be found in order to develop meaningful concepts of the professional relevance of study and competence development in the various areas of knowledge and professional practice.

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Training and Wandering of University Graduates in Germany and Japan

Keiichi Yoshimoto

1. Objectives

Based on a comparative analysis of survey results concerning German and Japanese university graduates, this paper attempts to elucidate, from a Japanese researcher's point of view, how training and wandering in young people's experience in university education and subsequent working life are related to their independence and career development in Germany and Japan, and offers a new perspective for future challenges for university.

In Japan, since the national council for university has recommended the amendment of the standards for the establishment of the universities in 1991, university reforms have been taking place in various areas, ranging from research and education to administration and management. As a result, individual universities have been responding variably to diverse needs and requirements from the outside society. In today's discussions as to how universities should function, however, one important viewpoint is often ignored: that is, the question is rarely examined from the viewpoint of students' development. Students, despite being the largest constituents of the university and the direct recipients of the impact of university reforms, are often treated not as stakeholders but as "guests" and removed from the field of vision of academics, whereas serious discussions are held to analyse even the smallest changes in academics' daily lives. In this context, this paper analyses the results of surveys concerning university graduates in twelve countries (11 European countries and Japan) in terms of their transition from student life to working life, initial career development and status of independence in the actual society, to confirm different patterns of

university education experience, particularly in Germany and Japan, and examine how such differences are reflected in young people's transition to working life in these two societies. The ultimate objective of the study presented in this paper is to establish a methodology for evaluating university education on the basis of students' and graduates' career development.

2. Background: University Education Expansion and “Youth Problems” in Japan

In June 2003, the Japanese government announced a “Youth Independence and Challenge Plan”, thus stimulating general interest in today's so-called “youth problems”. It is essential, in examining these problems, to situate them within the framework of long-term trends in Japan since the end of World War II, instead of assuming that young people suddenly began to undergo changes and problems in recent years.

2.1 Even-paced Expansion of University Education and Cyclic Economic Fluctuations

First, as part of long-term societal trends after the World War II, an even-paced expansion of university education and cyclic economic fluctuations can be identified. In other words, the macro-structure of education has been marked by an even-paced increase in the number of years people remain in the formal education system. Since the end of the War, the average number of years spent in schooling has been increasing by around one year almost every ten years. As for university enrolment, in 1950, the year in which the new university system was inaugurated in Japan, 98,691 people entered four-year universities. In 1955, 7.9 per cent of high school graduates (including those graduating from high school earlier) were enrolled in universities. In 2000, the total university enrolment was 544,222 people, or 5.5 times more than 50 years ago and accounting for 39.7 per cent of high school graduates. In this manner, university education has changed from ‘elite’ to ‘mass’, and higher education, including two-year junior colleges and specialized training colleges, has, on the whole, reached the stage of universal access.

Meanwhile, economic fluctuations have been cyclic. The post-war Japanese economy has evolved on the whole with continuous growth, accentuated by fluctuating factors such as oil crises and the bursting of ‘the bubble economy’. In addition, the industrial structure has been transformed over the years, with priority shifting from the secondary industry into the service sectors.

In line with the even-paced expansion of supply of university graduates together with these cyclic and structural economic fluctuations, a variety of prob-

lems have emerged, particularly those concerning employment of graduates. In the 1960's and 1970's, university graduates' unemployment and their entry into grey- and blue-collar labour markets became major concerns, on which Ushioji (1971) and others conducted research. In the 1980's – Japan having recovered from the oil crises in a relatively better shape than other industrialised countries – unemployment among younger people did not surface as a problem. However, it was during this period that graduates' credentials became problematic as an important screening device in the recruiting process, via school designation and other systems, thereby resulting in an overtly hierarchical ranking of universities. Koike and Watanabe (1979), Iwauchi (1980) and other researchers responded to this phenomenon with arguments over the “degreeocracy” society. Since the 1990's and to date, the severe job market situation and changing corporate recruiting practices following the collapse of the bubble economy have given birth to a new style of working: being a “*free-ter*” (derived partly from “free” and partly from Japanese “*arbeiter*” as part-time worker), that is, having one or several spells of short-term or part-time jobs, simultaneously or in succession, instead of one fixed, formal contract-based “regular job”. These phenomena have in turn come to be viewed as a new problem for the youth (Kosugi 2003).

2.2 Diversification of University Faculty Names and Growing Irrelevance of University Majors to Future Work Orientation

Secondly, other long-term societal trends reflect how the Japanese university education has responded to the economic fluctuations. Let us examine the trend regarding university faculty names, which may indicate the width and depth of university knowledge and the relevance of it to the labour market. In 1950, around the inaugural year of the new university system, there were 47 university faculty names, such as the Faculty of Letters, the Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Law. This number grew to 211 by the year 2000. This “diversification” of faculty names did not occur at an even pace over the fifty years after the War; 105 new faculty names appeared in and after 1991, a phenomenon typically suggestive of the direction of recent university reforms.

It should be noted that the newly-named faculties were introduced and approved on the premise that they reflected new societal requirements amid new socio-economic trends, the growing importance of service and information sectors, globalisation, and so on. At the same time, the fact that faculties with new names have been attracting students should imply that at least the educational market has adjudged universities and these faculties to be responsive to societal changes.

The business community, however, has constantly and harshly criticized university education, maintaining that university graduates do not necessarily possess appropriate professional knowledge and skills. It is hard to say that univer-

sity faculties with new names are excluded from this criticism. Among more than 100 new faculty names that have appeared since 1991, many are used only by one university in the country, and they are often composed of four to six or more *kanji* (Chinese characters) and may include *katakana* (Japanese phonetic alphabet usually used for words of foreign origin). Few of these new faculty names offer a clear indication of specific work categories in which their students may be hired upon graduation. Such new faculty names can be considered as indicating new groupings of fields and subject matters traditionally treated separately in different disciplines, rather than as titles of new disciplines.

In view of this situation, it is possible to collectively describe such faculties with new names as “keyword faculties”, in that they bear in their name a keyword expressing interests and trends of the times. Such keywords include “human”, “environment”, “international”, “culture”, “communication”, “management”, and “information”. Some faculties with new names are, in fact, focused on specialized human resource training for a specific domain, such as public health, and their names indicate this intention. Nevertheless, most new faculty names can be more easily interpreted as a juxtaposition of several disciplines with no intention of narrowed-down training. This means that some new faculty names are combinations of the names of sub-disciplines that have already existed in the conventional categorization as names of university departments and tracks. This phenomenon resonates with the dynamics of the ongoing university reforms.

With regard to actual work orientation, results of basic school surveys indicate that the relevance of students’ university majors to the industrial and work categories of their subsequent employment has been constantly diminishing since the end of World War II (Yoshimoto 2002). The 1970’s saw an oversupply of graduates from scientific and engineering departments established about ten years earlier to mitigate the shortage of engineers. In the 1980’s, many graduates from education departments began to seek employment as system-engineers in the information sector, as the number of available teaching posts had begun to drop. In any case, it is obvious that the idea of correlating the specialization in university faculties and departments with students’ future work orientation has not been adopted.

2.3 “Post-modern” Work Visions

Thus, the irrelevance of university education to subsequent working life has been further increasing in recent years. In addition, with the “youth problems” of unemployment and the *free-ter* working style becoming conspicuous, society’s criticism is now being focused on young people’s work visions and the lack of professional utility in university education. It should be noted, however, that it is hard to believe that young people have suddenly begun to have different ideas.

Now, as the third type of long-term societal trends, let us examine young people's work visions, for they clearly indicate the presence of structural problems for Japanese youth. It is known that three fundamental elements constitute one's work vision, i.e. livelihood, self-realization, and social participation. One's work vision is usually a combination of these three. Findings from a statistical analysis (Yoshimoto 1996) of an opinion survey about the youth in eleven countries around the world, conducted by the Youth Affairs Administration of the Management and Coordination Agency of Japan in 1993, have identified four types of work vision, as suggested by Sugimura (1990). That is, Korean, Thai, and Brazilian youth tend to view work as "(1) contribution to society", whereas European and American youth tend to view work as "(2) individual self-realization". Both groups view work as an end in itself. On the other hand, Russian and Japanese youth tend to view work in terms of means. Russian youth have a stronger tendency than the others to consider work as "(3) an individual means of livelihood", whereas Japanese youth tend to consider it as "(4) a means for playing a role in society". It is suggested that once this means fulfils its end, these young people may try to avoid work. From this, it can be surmised that the underlying feeling of the Japanese youth's work vision is the desire to escape from work; in other words, once having the "alibi" of having done their work, the Japanese youth would rather not work but spend the rest of their lives doing only what they want to do.

In this regard, the Japanese youth's work vision may be a total antithesis of M. Weber's theory that considers contribution and self-realization through work as one in accordance with the traditional German notion of *Beruf* (calling), although whether today's German youth embrace this notion or not is another issue. What is important is that by the time of this opinion survey as of 1993 the "new species (*shin-jinrui*)" theory that asserts that today's youth differs from the stereotyped "diligent" Japanese, "old species (*kyu-jinrui*)" had already become popular.

It can be summarized, therefore, that – although today's "youth problems" are largely influenced by the conditions of the times, namely the cyclic economic fluctuations following the bursting of the economic bubble in the 1990's and the changing employment conditions – they should be understood as structural problems situated within a longer-term evolution of related matters. All this brings to the fore the following: There have been structural ingredients in Japan that facilitate a young person's transition from being a student to a non-working adult; young people tend to consider work as a mere means; human resource training systems, in dealing with societal changes, have not necessarily produced new programmes in view of specific future labour markets, thus further weakening the relevance of university education to future employment. It can be summarized, therefore, that fundamental problems, as reflected in long-term trends, lie in the very way the system of transition is completed from school

in the very way the system of transition is completed from school education, including university education, to working life.

3. Analysis: University Education Experience and Career Development in CHEERS Studies

3.1 Outline of Surveys about University Graduates in 12 Countries, Including Germany and Japan

One of the feature policy measures proposed in the Youth Independence and Challenge Plan by the Japanese government is the introduction of a Japanese-version “dual system”. It is simply termed “Japanese-version”, but it would be impossible to introduce this typically German system of transitioning from schooling to working lives into Japan without modification. Besides, it would not function appropriately in Japan. An effective methodology for reforms can be formulated only when elements of this system that should be adopted by Japan are identified through careful examination and comparison of the German and Japanese mechanisms of transition within a common and comparable framework. This paper is in a way a place for demonstrating such examination and comparison.

Data are taken to be examined in the present study from surveys conducted from 1998 to 1999 concerning those who had obtained the first degree (bachelor's degree or its equivalent) at higher education in eleven European countries and Japan three years ago (and additionally 7-10 years ago in the Netherlands and Japan). In Japan, the surveys were conducted by mail correspondence, and effective samples were obtained from 3,421 respondents who had graduated from university at least three years before and 2,585 respondents who had graduated from university at least eight to ten years before. As this paper places particular emphasis on comparison between Germany and Japan, it should be noted that from German respondents, effective samples were obtained from 3,429 university (including specialized college-level schools) graduates. For the twelve countries as a whole, effective samples were obtained from 42,005 respondents for analyses (Teichler 2000, Japan Institute for Labor Policy and Training 2003).

3.2 University Entry Patterns of German and Japanese Youth

(a) Patterns by age

Table 1 shows the number of years between university entry and graduation and students' ages at these two points. As indicated, Japanese university students are mostly aged between 18 and 22 (at the beginning of each academic year), whe-

whereas German students are on average older and spread more widely, between 21 and 26. In Germany, the total number of years of university education is theoretically 4.5 years. In reality, however, since academic requirements that must be fulfilled before reaching the stage of final examinations vary from one university or specialization to another, the average number of years of university education (including *Fachhochschulen*) amounts to 5.3 years.

Table 1. Varieties in Age of Enrolment and Graduation

	Age of new enrolment (age)	Duration of study (year)	Age of graduation (age)	
			(mean)	(S.D.)
Japan	19.3	4.1	23.4	1.53
Italia	19.7	7.2	27.3	3.58
Spain	19.4	4.8	24.5	3.57
France	20.8	2.6	33.6	3.57
Australia	20.6	7.0	27.8	5.07
Germany	21.8	5.3	27.2	3.21
Netherlands	20.9	4.7	25.7	4.42
U. K.	21.9	3.3	25.6	7.44
Norway	23.3	4.8	28.2	5.80
Finland	22.6	6.1	29.0	5.69
Sweden	19.4	4.9	24.4	3.52

(b) Experiences by German and Japanese youth before university entry

In Germany, young people wait longer to enter university. Before university entry, 60 per cent of men undergo national service, while 40 per cent of men and women work (Table 2). It is also known that a considerable percentage of German youth undergo long-term professional (occupational) training upon acquiring their university entry qualification. In Table 2, this experience is combined with academic training. On the questionnaire sheet for Japanese youth, the typically Japanese choice "*Arubaito*" (derived from the German word *Arbeit* and used to mean part-time job) was provided and considered as "work experience". In this case, the nature of work done by 20 per cent of the Japanese respondents should be examined. Considering that the majority of the Japanese respondents entered into the university immediately upon high school graduation or after a period of only one year, it is possible to say that their "work experience" consists mostly of part-time jobs that are limited in scope and engaged in during their high school years. The survey data also indicate that the experiences undergone

by the German youth before university entry are more varied, including travelling or living in foreign countries (Teichler 2000).

Table 2. Activities before Enrolment into University after Acquiring Qualification for Higher Learning

	Japan		Germany	
	male	female	male	female
Preparatory school	39.3	20.8	22.4	24.7
Vocational training	0.2	0.0	22.4	24.7
Employment, self employed	1.4	0.4	37.0	40.3
<i>Arubaito</i> (casual job)	22.8	19.4	–	–
Unemployed	0.4	0.2	12.8	16.5
Child care and housewives	0.0	0.2	0.7	3.1
Military services	–	–	64.0	3.4
Others	1.3	1.4	17.6	34.9
No experience	42.8	60.4	3.7	10.8
N (including N.A.)	1,808	1,613	2,108	1,572

(c) Study hours as university students

Table 3 compares the numbers of hours German and Japanese university students spend studying. Japanese students' weekly study 30.2 hours, more than 10 per cent less than their German counterparts' who study 34.5 hours. The number for the Japanese students remains smaller even when study hours during holidays are included. These figures are perhaps proof of the argument put forth by German educators to the effect that, despite the official number of university education, 4.5 years, it usually takes about six years to finish college in Germany because of the demanding curriculum, and therefore a German bachelor's degree corresponds to a master's in substance. In any case, the standard study hours proposed in the Japanese government's university founding criteria, 124 units or more by 45 hours, are not fulfilled.

Table 3. Average Study Hours per Week during Lecture Period

	Japan	Germany
Average Study hours	30.24	34.54
S.D.	12.67	12.34
N (including N.A.)	3,421	3,700

(d) Working experience and working hours during university years

Now, how do the university students spend the rest of their student life? Internship or practical corporate training convertible to university credits were carried out by less than one per cent of the Japanese students (men and women) graduating in 1995, that is, before the promotion of internship was adopted as a policy measure in the country. In Germany, on the other hand, 52.2 per cent of men and 60.2 per cent of women underwent internship or practical corporate training during their student years.

Table 4. Work Experience and Working Hours during Course of Study

	Japan	Germany
Experienced percentage during lecture periods	39.3	20.8
Working hours per week	13.1	9.9
S.D.	8.8	6.7
Experienced percentage during non-lecture periods	79.7	65.9
Working hours per week	20.0	22.6
S.D.	12.2	12.7

This does not mean, however, that Japanese university graduates had no work experience at all while in university. The percentage of university students who experience part-time jobs while in college is considerably larger in Japan, as shown in Table 4, 85.2 per cent among Japanese and 53.4 per cent among Germans. In addition to this large difference, Japanese students spend on average more hours on part-time jobs. Despite the widespread Japanese "belief" that university students do part-time jobs to make money to pay for their entertainment, some Japanese students keep in mind their tuition fees while pursuing part-time jobs, and a considerable sum of money earned via part-time jobs may be used to pay the tuition fees, while the German youth enjoy free education. The presence of students in difficult financial situations working their way through college, as

in the past, should not be forgotten¹. The important question here is how such experiences undergone during university years are evaluated in society.

3.3 Utilization of knowledge acquired in university education by German and Japanese university graduates

(a) Low-level utilization of knowledge acquired in university education in Japan

Table 5 compares the levels of utilization of knowledge acquired in university education in Germany and Japan; more precisely, how those who graduated from the university three years before use, in their present work, the knowledge and skills acquired up to the point of graduation. The total sum of percentages of the two uppermost ratings of the five ratings, “used frequently” and “used fairly often”, are 21.6 per cent for men and 24.0 per cent for women in Japan and 40.3 per cent for men and 37.3 per cent for women in Germany, showing a large gap between the two countries. In fact, these Japanese percentages are the lowest among the twelve countries studied in the surveys.

Table 5. Utilisation of Knowledge and Skills Acquired during Course of Study

	Japan		Germany	
	male	female	male	female
1. Very often used	7.6	10.9	13.0	12.5
2.	14.0	13.1	27.3	24.8
3.	31.2	31.7	33.8	30.3
4.	32.7	27.6	18.7	17.9
5. Not used at all	9.0	7.4	2.5	3.2
6. Current job is not related with knowledge of higher education at all	5.5	9.2		
7. Others	0.0	0.0		
N (including N.A.)	1,483	1,075	2,108	1,572

¹ It was reported with the survey in 2002 by National Association of University CO-OP that the total expenses of university students was in average 99,500 Yen per month, among which 27,530 Yen was earned by ‘Arubaito’. Further, constantly since 1991, ‘to get living cost’ was mentioned by around 20 per cent of students as the major purpose of ‘arubaito’ (National Association of University CO-OP “The 38th Survey Report of student’s consuming life: Campus Life Data 2002-2003”, 2003).

The respondents were also asked to rate the appropriateness of their work in regard to their educational background, the degree of satisfaction with their work, and so on.

On the whole, the quality of the Japanese university graduates' working life is rated better than that of their German and European counterparts in only few aspects.

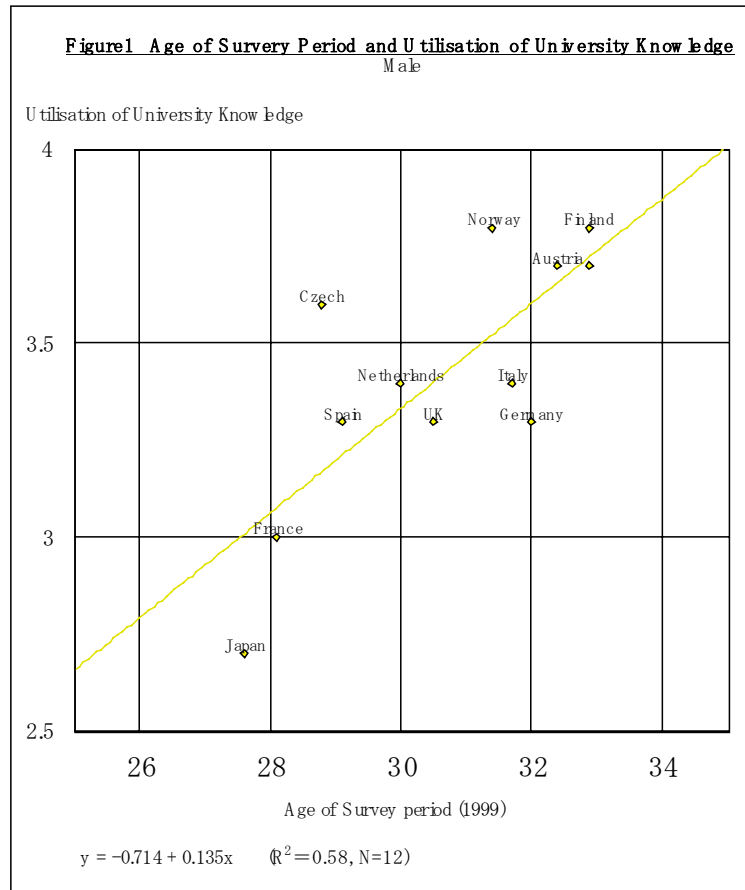
These indices seem to indicate, clearly and with no doubt, little relevance of the Japanese university education to students' future working life. However, a more careful look at the data refutes this pessimistic view. First of all, the abrupt "university bashing" by the Japanese business community is quite off the mark. Let us look into this in the following section.

(b) Utilisation of knowledge from university education in proportion to age

Figure 1 plots out the levels of utilisation of knowledge acquired in university education, based on the surveys about the twelve countries. It clarifies certain points. Indeed, the level of utilisation of knowledge acquired in university education is the lowest among the Japanese university graduates; at the same time, they are the youngest. Meanwhile, the level of utilization of university-acquired knowledge is the highest in Finland, and the university graduates there are the oldest. This correlation is statistically significant. Multiple regression analyses using more detailed individual and institutional (university) factors also support this correlation (Yoshimoto 2001).

The same data have been used to analyse and compare Dutch and Japanese subjects between different years of university graduation. The results indicate that the relevance of university education to working life, examined through such indices as the appropriateness of respondents' present work to their academic degree and the correspondence of their university major to their present work, is evaluated better as the number of years since graduation increases (Yoshimoto and Yamada 2003).

Moreover, the results of surveys by Japan Institute for Labour following up on identical respondents indicate that, as the number of years they spend at work increases, fewer of them say they have experienced "work for which the knowledge and skills acquired in the university are not required" and more say they have done "work related to the knowledge and skills acquired in the university" (Yoshimoto 1999). In other words, many university graduates develop their career gradually throughout their working life, in such a way as to approach as closely as possible to works and positions that allow them to make use of the knowledge and skills obtained in university education.



An important finding should be kept in mind: the survey results show that in all the countries examined, those who had, while in university, work experience related to their studies tend to more frequently use the knowledge acquired in the university in their work. This point will be further discussed later.

3.4 Professional Competence

(a) Knowledge, skills and competence required in the working life

It is now possible to assume that some types of knowledge, skills and competence acquired and developed in university education become increasingly useful as university graduates advance in their working life. Then, what types of competence have “durable” and “delayed” effectiveness? In the comparative surveys about university graduates in Japan and European countries, the respondents were asked to do on the questionnaire sheet of 36 types of knowledge, skills and competence required in their work; the responses were then analysed. As a result, it has been learned that European and Japanese university graduates share many common aspects in basic compositions of types of competence considered as highly necessary in their work but not fully acquired or developed at the time of graduation, arranged in the order of relative importance.

In all the countries surveyed, university graduates are required to demonstrate “problem-solving ability”, “verbal communication ability”, “accuracy, attention to detail”, “working under pressure”, etc. A major difference between Japan and the European countries is that in Japan “fitness for work” is considered important, whereas in Germany and the other European countries, importance is attached rather to “working independently”.

(b) Knowledge and skills not acquired at the time of graduation

To see if these abilities required of university graduates in the real world were already acquired or developed at the time of graduation, the level of their necessity was compared with that of their acquisition at the time of graduation, thereby measuring the gap between expectation and reality. As a result, basically identical patterns have been recognized between Japan and the European countries. In all the countries surveyed, the important types of competence not fully acquired or developed by the time of graduation include “negotiating”, “planning, co-ordinating and organising”, and “computer skills.”

(c) Relatively harmless lack of competence?

Japan and the European countries also have a similar composition of types of competence whose expectation-reality gap is small and which do not require immediate re-examination or improvement. The university graduates’ responses indicate that “field-specific theoretical knowledge”, “manual skill”, “foreign language proficiency”, “learning ability”, etc. are the types of competence whose expectation-reality gap is relatively small. Needless to say, it is almost impossible to accurately grasp the absolute level of “foreign language proficiency” expected in a given country via the questionnaire sheet of such surveys, and nobody would agree that today’s foreign language education in Japan may be left

unchanged. Yet, the survey results indicate that those who finished university education three years before in Europe and Japan experience similar levels of inadequacy vis-à-vis their foreign language ability in their respective working lives.

The fact that the types of competence not much required in the working life includes “Field-specific theoretical knowledge,” which is at the core of specialized university education, and that other similar surveys obtain results to the same effect, not only in Japan but elsewhere as well, requires serious contemplation. At present, German and Japanese universities share the same tendency of lengthening names of academic specialization², as well as reforms that involve offering the possibility of interdisciplinary specialization, that is, arrangement of several disciplines in one university department. However, from the standpoint of university graduates who now have an active working life in society, don’t such new department names, resulting from the recombination of bodies of specialized knowledge, have limits in their real-world utility?

In such a situation, university education, both in Europe and Japan, is now facing the challenge of figuring out how to draw out, namely, “negotiating” and “planning, co-ordinating and organising” from within the students and develop these abilities further by reformulating the learning methods of specialized education. Reforms are required not in substance but in approaches. Considering that students’ work experience related to their university majors can significantly influence their initial career development, it seems quite logical that university education is required to expand and diversify its approaches to studies and practical training, offer links with the real world in collaboration with its representatives, and enforce educational efficacy making use of the network of students, alumni, mentors and so forth.

4. Conclusion: Challenge and Independence in Youth

4.1 Conclusion: “Sandwich” and “Two-stage” Models of Education and Training

One conclusion that can be drawn from the survey results about university graduates is that it is important to evaluate German and Japanese university graduates at the age of about 30. That is to say, considering that the Japanese students graduate from the university at about 22 and the German students do so at about 27, it is inappropriate to mechanically examine German and Japanese university graduates, immediately upon graduation, and compare them with other European graduates.

² At a seminar held at the Japanese-German Centre in Berlin on 5-6 December 2001, it was discussed that inter-disciplinary organisation and re-organisation of faculty are a common trend of university reform both in Japan and in Germany (see *Japanisch-Deutsches Zentrum Berlin* 2002).

The study by Kazuo Koike et al. on the career development of white-collar university graduates argues that the first ten years following university graduation can be defined as the first phase in one's career. In view of this, it can be said that in Japan a university graduate becomes a full-fledged working adult at around 30, roughly the same age at which German university graduates begin to assume a specialized or managerial post three years after their graduation. In other words, German and Japanese university graduates become full-fledged working adults via systems that are different in basic structure, but the finishing stages they undergo to reach that status at around 30 are mostly identical.

As indicated in Figure 2, the German youth spend the most of their 20's within one system, university, to receive school education while at the same time preparing for the transition to a working life, before becoming full-fledged working adults. In other words, whether they experience working in the real world as part of their educational curriculum or voluntarily outside of it, periods of university education and work-related training are piled up one on top of another to form a "sandwich", which characterizes the German educational system. By the time the German students graduate from university, they are expected to have already narrowed down the focus of their career plan, to find their place in a specific field to have an active working life. For this reason, German students sometimes suspend their university education temporarily and switch to other activities, spending their 20's testing future career options and trying out different works, before completing their university education.

Outside the university educational system, in the world of carpenters, for example, the Germans maintain the system of *Walz*, or wandering artisan, in which young artisans must leave their hometown and undergo hard itinerant training for "three years and one day" to become a skilled *Meister*. Young artisans travel on foot and by hitchhiking from one studio to another all over Europe. Through this experience, they improve their skills and train their mental strength to become a *Meister*. This "wandering" practice that goes back to the 11th century and is very much alive today probably explains how this kind of "wandering" following the initial apprenticeship is structurally embedded in the German youth's life experience in their 20's. Likewise, the fact that the university entry qualification is considered in Germany as a certificate of one's maturity seems to resonate with the general definition of university years as an open period for transition from wandering to perfection as a full-fledged working adult.

In Japan, on the other hand, university students breeze through the school system so as not to overstay the standard number of years and start the first phase of their white-collar working life in companies as part of their long-term training to become full-fledged adults. Slow promotion and selection in a company constitute the basic structure of their working life. In this sense, it can be said that Japan has a "two-stage" model of education and training. Respective companies formulate their

own in-house training programmes to develop managerial personnel for specific domains of their activities. Moreover, trial-and-error opportunities are provided within the company, in its “job rotation” practice. In a way, it is possible to visualize this practice as a form of “in-house wandering” of young artisan-employees. In such a situation, it is essentially impossible for Japanese universities to offer “goal-oriented” education that is, finishing training for students set out for narrowly-defined professions in specific fields in their future working life. For this reason, the most appropriate response that the educational community can make in regard to Japan’s higher education is to more seriously examine “liberal education” as type of education intended to cultivate students’ professional interests.

This is because the Japanese youth finish their university education and are sent into the real world while still being far from “mature” in many aspects, including knowledge, skills, sense of social involvement, etc. Moreover, this is partly due to the requirements of the business community that wishes to secure in early stages young employees as their future key personnel. Not taking into account the role of the business community and blaming only the university for the societal irrelevance of university education are simplistic and often seem to constitute the recent “university bashing”. It should be pointed out that this is not at all the correct angle for contemplating educational reforms.

4.2 Internship as a Form of Broad and General Professional Training

To repeat the point, the Japanese university education at the bachelor’s-degree level in view of transition to Japanese-style manager training is the first-phase training leading to career track selection before the second-phase training to be perfected in the corporate world. In this sense, Japan’s bachelor’s-degree level university education constitutes the process in which students elaborate individual career plans. This means in turn that in many disciplines the university does not have many occasions to train students in specialized knowledge and skills. That is to say, the university education is basically viewed as the stage providing “detours”.

Therefore, what is really important for the university is “career-oriented education” mentioned in the Youth Independence Challenge Plan, and how guidance functions are put to use within the career-oriented education. Accordingly, the fundamental policy measure to be adopted by the university as it prepares for various reform efforts based on the Plan is NOT the “Japanese-version” dual system. This is because it is impossible to introduce a “sandwich”-type educational system for specific work categories and in cooperation with the business community, without first providing a period of trials and errors during which the youth can elaborate their future career plans, and as long as the conventional Japanese structure, in which the youth are forced out of the university at age 22, is maintained. On the other hand, it may be more productive to re-examine how

the merits of part-time jobs on which Japanese university students already spend much time can be recognized and enhanced in terms of work experience and training.

To sum up, the fundamental role of university education should be career-oriented education, and more specifically, via the promotion of internship as the most appropriate approach. In Japan, the American term “internship” is used without modification. However, in consideration of Japan’s educational and labour market situation, it is important to redefine internship in the “Japanese” way. In other words, internships should be planned not as a step toward formal employment, but as an opportunity for general education and for exploration of interns’ future orientation, as a programme in which students can experience working in a domain related to their specialization in an environment rich in contact with people and society. Accordingly, it is NOT necessary to assume that only long-term internships of several months are authentic. While it is often said that schools tend to avoid providing practice teaching opportunities to half-serious university students who are unlikely to take teachers’ recruitment examinations, it is in fact such experiences and short-term internships that can provide students who are uncertain about their aptitude to a given professional field with the motivation to work harder on their university specialization. In some fields, internships and practical training are already part of the required programme for specialization and perfection, as in medicine. Yet, for the present-day interest of “independence and challenges for the youth”, broad and general internships for university students should be recognized for their effectiveness and be further spread³.

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GLOBAL TRENDS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Global Trends in Higher Education: Globalisation, Internationalisation, and Policy – an Historical Critique

Guy Neave

Global Trends: Projection, Prophecy or Utopianism Renewed?

When we turn our attention to the topic of global trends, we can only stand amazed by the amount of prophecy involved. Arguably, policy analysis has its haruspentic dimension. This we call 'strategic vision'. For without a forward vision, an ideal or perhaps even a Utopia to lighten our way – to raise our insights, fire our creativity and kindle our imagination beyond the pragmatic and routine – we are indeed groping in darkness, familiar though such a condition often is to scholarship.

But the line between projection, extrapolation, considered opinion and plain old fashioned Utopianism is all too easily overstepped, especially when one broaches so vast a topic as global trends and that within the theme of the University's fitness for the future. For behind the thicket of global trends lies the jungle of globalisation. This, in its present state, is less a coherent theory than a perspective, a species quite literally of *Weltanschauung*. Here, the economic, the political, the commercial, the sociological and last but not least, the ideological flourish in richly combined and exotic forms to entrap the unwary. Or to tempt the innocent.

Yet, any examination of global trends has first to face a current and very powerful thesis, which strangely resembles what is known in French as 'la méthode Coué'. The Coué method is a form of self-persuasion, psychology's equiva-

lent technique to the Buddhist mantra. The prayerful convinces himself by self-hypnotising repetition:

‘Every day in every way, things are getting better and better’.

Directed to global trends in higher education, the corresponding mantra would be:

“Every day in every way, higher education is getting more global than ever.”

To this, the agnostic would retort:

“Every day in every way, confusion is becoming – global.”

However, if the trends we identify are to carry any weight, we ought to pay a little more than passing attention to the general backdrop in which they are set, from which they derive and very particularly to the notion of globalisation itself.

A Few Preliminary Observations

Let me start by making a few observations about globalisation as a perspective. We may accept the statement that “Every day in every way, higher education is becoming more global than ever.” But we can only do so, the historian would argue, once we know when the phenomenon began, when it assumed its present form and what was – and are – the conditions within systems and within individual establishments which have brought about – or are bringing about – this apparently desirable condition. When the process of globalisation began to emerge is subject to immense – if not to virtually random – variation. At the level of personal anecdote, I have heard erudite Italian physicists claim that its origins were first expressed in the Pax Romana, whilst Britons manfully defend the Pax Britannica – on which the sun never set. More recently, I have even heard a brilliant French molecular biologist drawing metaphysical parallels between the integration of theory surrounding the basic life processes and the press towards globalisation – a performance deeply impressive! Others, echoing, perhaps unbeknown to them, Hobson’s thesis, hold that the period immediately prior to World One saw the first glimmerings of a world economy as Capitalism evolved into Imperialism.

Such a lack of agreement – or multiple interpretations – is disconcerting. If we are unable to place what pass for current trends in a reasonably plausible chronological framework, the task of assessing whether the trends we identify are mature, substantive and robust or whether on the contrary, they are but an infantile malady, becomes a task of supreme delicacy. If our ability to locate such trends within the setting of a developmental trajectory is weak, we are open to that sin which historians have long tended to lay at the door of the social sciences, – namely, the triumph of wish fulfilment over observed fact, if not is wilful substitution.

A perusal of the literature reveals a rather unique perspective (Guillén 2001). That involves the analytic separation between the phenomenon of globalisation on the one hand and internationalisation on the other. Of the former, the least that may be said is that it strangely resembles Proteus, that Greek demi-urge, who when subject to question, furiously changed his shape, hoping that by so doing, he would dissuade his questioners from persisting in their interrogation. There is then a strand of thought, which holds that globalisation must be separated from the system and institutional response to it. Higher education, so this view argues, can only respond to globalisation. It cannot control it. The response of institutions or systems to globalisation comes in the form of 'internationalisation'.

Terminology, Labelling and Yogi Berra

Attaching names, labels and terms to processes, is a necessary first step to understanding them, pinning them down, hopefully the better to anatomise them into their component parts. It has ever been so. But labels serve a purpose only if and when they allow us to do precisely this, – and to do so with some precision. They are not greatly useful if they permit everything to be bundled together. Terminology ought to discriminate. When it does not, it serves neither scholarship nor understanding. Under such conditions, what begins as a convenient 'label' at a descriptive level, very rapidly becomes blunted in its usefulness at the analytical level. Thus it becomes subject to multiple and not always consistent, interpretations, myriad perceptions. All of which serve to confuse, if not to avoid, the basic purpose of their creation. That basic purpose is – or ought to be – to allow us to attribute causality, estimate weight, influence or impact and, above all, to gauge extent.

Likewise internationalisation. When we subject it to question, and impose narrower more precise demands upon it, it turns out to be yet another Proteus resurrected. In the immortal words of the American baseball player, Yogi Berra, 'It's déjà vu all over again!' For the number of dimensions, meanings and emphases that we may place upon it, do not lend themselves to great concord and even less clarity. Which, *soit dit en passant*, probably accounts for the quite amazing growth in the numbers of articles, some scholarly, which have come to nest around the topic. Quantity does not always contribute to clarity, though it may expand the frontier of confusion mightily (Guillén 2001).

Certainly, 'internationalisation' as it seems to be shaping up or as those analysing believe it to be shaping up, carries very specific if not unique characteristics, that set it off from previous activities, which have sailed under the same flag. Still, it remains exceedingly difficult to determine precisely when they first manifested themselves or even whether the dimensions, which underpin this new

interpretation of internationalisation, became a significant consideration in policy, irrespective whether that policy is shaped at system or national level and, a fortiori, at the level of the individual institution of higher education.

The Intellectual Importance of Historical Origins

The tracing of historical origins or the chronology, which accompanies the developmental trajectory of any phenomenon whether economic, political or social, is not to everyone's taste. More often than not, our research is concerned with the issue, theme or perspective in its current state, rather than the way it got to be what it is today. For obvious personal reasons, I do not subscribe to this perspective. It is just as important to know what factors, forces, influences moulded and shaped those things that currently interest us – or which currently interest, vex or, as today's mercanto jargon puts it, “pose challenges” to government, to the electorate or, for that matter to those who are faced with taking decisions about the future of higher education, or the future of their particular institution. In mitigation, one might explain away the relatively minor part which, the historic perspective has played in shaping our views on both globalisation and internationalisation, by evoking the pace of change itself. Events are moving so rapidly that if our work is to be ‘relevant’ to those who commission it, we must concentrate on the here and now. So it is rare indeed, for those of us who are the students of contemporary higher education policy to summon up Clio, the Muse of History, to our aid. The present is difficult enough. If we are to have a little imaginative purchase on the future, we have perforce to base our imaginings on what we know of our current condition. There is, of course, good reason for this. Not least of which is the fact that by the nature of its contemporaneity, we are walking in very muddy waters. Or trying to impose a new imagination as a way of clarifying waters that are muddy – which amounts to much the same thing.

Epistemic Difficulties

Even if we accept the notion that globalisation ought indeed to be analysed separately from the ways in which higher education responds to it, even if we accept the terminology of internationalisation as an adequate ‘catch all’ term into which we can bundle the myriad ways systems or institutions respond or are forced to respond, we face epistemological difficulties of a very high order indeed. For if both phenomena are indeed new, then to examine them from an historical perspective is tantamount to subjecting them to an approach which may not be wholly suited to the issues they contain. That is certainly the argument that many have put forward. Because, they suggest, the situation which communications

technology has created for the intensification of flows in knowledge, ideas, images, capital and people is without historic precedent, the canons of history or historical analysis are inadequate to the scope and complexity of the new global order. This school of thought is perhaps best described as the adepts of the technological *tabula rasa*. *Clio* is banished, supposedly because there is little point in bringing history back in, precisely because there is no precedent to the current condition of the planet in its globalisation. Another, and certainly unkind, epithet would be to label this school of thought as 'historical nihilists'.

History as the Supreme Evaluator

Still, there are considerable risks in demising the Lady *Clio*. For, as a 19th century German gentleman, much given over to spending long hours in the British Museum, once remarked, 'those who dismiss History are condemned to live it'. In the first place, she allows us to distinguish between the effectively short, medium and long term consequences of policy. This is very far from being the same thing as policies conceived in the short, medium or the long term perspective. Put crudely, she has the capacity to distinguish between the ephemeral, the significant and the abiding. And, as many implementation studies and studies of particular instruments to guide policy have shown, both in the US (Birbaum 2000, Wildavsky 1984) and in Western Europe (Cerych and Sabatier 1986) what policy often regards as long term and significant change, sometimes turn out to be desolatingly ephemeral in its impact at systems level, let alone at the level of the individual university. History is, in the long run, the supreme and most unforgiving form of evaluation. There is, however, another reason for treating the Muse with respect. And this has very much to do with the task I have been set this morning.

The Old Coach and Horses

The speed of the coach you drive and the direction it goes, dear colleagues, depend a lot on the horses you harness to it. So with globalisation. If interpreted as technological determinism, with the university simply reduced to a reactive tool and with globalisation pursued in terms of the outcomes of the spread of information technology, then very certainly the trends you will identify as crucial will be very different from say, if you construe globalisation in terms of financial flows. And if you view globalisation as the development of a world trading system, so that perspective will colour your assessment of the place of higher education in it. Just as it will affect the way you interpret the strengths and weaknesses of the institution in its present shape and form, whether as a handmaiden to that

commercial utopia or, on the contrary, as an obstacle to it. The impact globalisation – or, for that matter, its other half, internationalisation – will have upon the institution of higher education is, more often than not, determined by the sub-perspective from which you view it. Thus, if you share the gnawing disquiet about the social consequences of applying a wholly economic analysis or an undiluted market-driven perspective to higher education or, like the World Bank, you have belated thoughts about the value of higher education in fostering ‘social cohesion’ (World Bank 2002), your assessment of the outcomes of both globalisation and internationalisation are, like as not, going to be very different. Institutional forms of economic efficiency do not always run the same course as social efficiency, though economists will naturally argue that they do. Or can be made to do so. Such differences will certainly influence the developments you consider ought to be worth further attention, whether as researchers, planners or those wielding political responsibilities. Thus, they also colour those trends you consider to be significant in shaping the things that are to come.

... and Their Unhorsing

Let us also note a certain ambiguity, that clusters around the term ‘Global Trends’. It may be interpreted as those developments in higher education that derive from globalisation. This implies of course, a line of questioning which sees the university as a novel form, not as intensifying and adding depth to a nation’s higher education or growth but as the product of a Globalising Age. Many of the complementary sector institutions tend to have a vague chronological association to this (McBurnie 2001). Thus we have trends that take place, for instance, ‘in a globalising world’ or ‘in an age of globalisation’ (van Damme 2002). Certainly these sub-perspectives have a common feature. That feature is a healthy development in the study of higher education. It marks a further step in focusing our attention away from the higher education system per se to the way higher education is shaped by the external world.

Risky Assumptions

In such methods, there is always a risk. The risk lies in the assumption that trends, once identified as present in a number of different national or regional systems – regional construed in the UNESCO sense of semi-continental blocs – are also equally rooted at the institutional level. Or, and it comes to much the same thing, that they will very shortly be so – which shows incidentally that divination sometimes has a little part to play. Two comments should be made at

this point. They have to do with aggregation on the one hand and implementation on the other.

That a particular development is present in a number of different national systems is no indication of its strength, power, potential or rootedness in any one. Take for example, the emergence in Europe of a common 'architecture' for the structure and duration of degrees and diplomas – the Bologna process. It is present. Indeed, it is the mobilising issue of the hour. How far it is 'rooted' in individual national systems, however, is as of this moment (2002), subject to no little diversity. This situation returns us to the question raised earlier in connection with the stage in the dynamic of a trend's emergence at which it is reasonable to count it as 'serious' or worth consideration. Are we to construct our account of what is happening in higher education – global, regional or national – on the simple 'acte de présence' of a particular feature, development or measure proposed? Or, should we take account of it only when it has finally left the desktop of the agencies, ministries and bureaux whose mandate it is to enforce or to uphold it?

This is neither a small issue, nor for that matter, a new one. On the contrary, it is amongst the oldest banes comparative educationists have wrestled with for many a year. Arguably, for the comparative policy specialist, legislative intention – or intention tout court – is a legitimate preoccupation. But, the comparative higher education specialist must face a situation not far removed from the military axiom that intention does not always imply capability. And what is axiomatic to the student of von Moltke and Liddle Hart is just as applicable to those who pore over the battlefields of educational change.

Uncomfortable Questions

Is our account simply to be a portrait of the state of a system based solely on legislative intent? Or ought it to go further? Should our analyses of global trends be content with recounting the preliminary bureaucratic skirmishes and legislative foreplay alone? When does an idea become a proposal, a proposal become (legislative) intent, legislative intent a policy and policy a trend? Or, to press matters to the point of ridicule, should we take conferences, seminars or colloquia on measures for policy as the ghostly simulacrum of a reality that their participants hope – and sometimes fear – is about to come? Should we assume that the intent – or, for that matter, the formal remit – of a particular agency, bureau or coordinating instance is a true reflection of what it will do – in default of any information about what it has done? Should we take its own account of its mission as anticipation of the real impact it will have upon its field of operation – namely the fabric of higher education? How far disbelief should be suspended or grains of salt added in appropriate dosage of such self-descriptions, claims and assertions remains, of course, the essence of scholarly judgement – as it has

tions remains, of course, the essence of scholarly judgement – as it has always done.

Anticipated Action as Policy

These are no small questions. They colour our perception and thus our choice and construction not just of trends but of the reality such trends may be said to represent. The grasp we are likely to derive from higher education viewed as a 'proces d'intention' may be a legitimate way of examining the likely – or theoretical – paths along which higher education could develop. But it has to be checked and followed up if only to ascertain how far our acts of divination are subsequently translated into reality and practice grounded at system or at institutional level. Yet, so much of policy research – and very especially work on globalisation – is apt to be content with a first scan, drawing upon the establishment of agencies, upon manifestations on first intent as surrogates for what is best described as 'action anticipated as policy to come'.

Agreed, policy always has a symbolic aspect. But we ought to be very wary of analysing the symbolic without ascertaining the reality of what is happening on the ground. And above all, how far what is happening embraces higher education, and very especially how many are involved. Yet, following-up of the symbolic is, as yet, rather more rare as too is its quantification. It is, for instance, one thing to talk about virtual universities in Hugolian overtones as an idea whose time is come (Tschang and della Senta 2001). But when we find that there are some 23 establishments of that configuration in the British Commonwealth, our excitement – like an ill-prepared soufflé – is apt to fall rather flat. Still, a little reality is a useful thing. It is almost always rewarding. It corrects our initial perceptions. It allows us to refine further our initial assumptions. And, it allows us to avoid ridicule.

The Way to Go?

A particularly good example of what I have in mind, though focussed on a different theme – that of the impact of nationally-driven policy change in Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom – was recently undertaken by Maurice Kogan and his colleagues (Bauer, Marton, Askling Marton, 1999; Henkel 2000; Bleiklie, Hostaker and Vabo, 2000) These studies are rare – and important example – of bringing together the macro, meso and micro levels to examine the formation of policy and its repercussions at the institutional level.

It is not the place here to discuss their findings. The points I wish to make, however, are two: first, Kogan et al. at a broad level of generalisation undertook

an examination of precisely that ‘rootedness’ of policy which, within the context of globalisation, is, as yet, largely absent. Second, they did so by developing into three vehicular perspectives or *voies d’approche*. These were respectively ‘The State and Higher Education’, ‘Institutional Governance and Management’ and ‘Academe’. In effect, they brought together the ‘policy community’ – those who make policy – with those who are involved in interpreting, re-negotiating and putting it into practice at the chalk face – in short, those who have policy done to them.

Clearly, a similar approach, complex though it is, has much to recommend it in respect of the drive towards international outreach. There remains, however, a good deal of preliminary work to be done.

Infinite Variety

That said, there are almost as many perspectives on globalisation as there are people writing about it. Whether we view globalisation as an outgrowth of neo liberalism (the dimension of political economy), as a hope for expression of global convergence (its millennial dimension), as the harbinger of a latter-day mercantilist hegemony (the corporate dimension) or as a vehicle of post modernity (the cultural aspect) – these interpretations have in common the view of higher education systems as variables dependent within that overall process, irrespective of whether it is interpreted as an opportunity or as a threat.

A University-centred View on Globalisation

In examining some of the ‘trends’, which bear down on this institution, I will take a slightly different standpoint. It is not particularly original. Indeed, it could be viewed as the usual stance taken by those whose interest is higher education and is thus in part of that long historical tradition which seats the university as the independent variable. In short, it is eminently possible to view globalisation in a different light altogether, namely as the implantation of the fabric of higher education across the globe and its subsequent intensification. In other words, we re-define ‘the process of globalisation’ as an expression of higher education development across the vast world on the one hand, and on the other, simply as a further round in the long conversation between university and society. Such heresy has much advantage. It allows us to separate out ‘new developments’ from trends that, rooted in earlier policy modes, have attained a certain maturity or are simply speeded up. It ought also to allow us to set aside the genuine innovations that globalisation in the more usually accepted interpretation, has brought about from those to which it is heir. Rather than looking at trends in terms of the glob-

alisation of the university, I shall stand this view on its head. What I shall look at is no more and certainly no less than the University Globalising.

The University Globalising

Globalising then, seen from this angle, involves a slightly different point of departure. It focuses on the geographical and spatial extension of that institution across the planet. And whilst it does not detach this process from the economic, political or ideological context in which it took place, it does most assuredly detach it from Neo-Liberalism as its sole sponsor.

The spatial extension of both the university institution and the fabric of higher education is one of the more outstanding achievements of the latter half of the 20th century. And whilst it is fair to say that the main thrust has taken the form of the university's march to the South – to Africa, Asia and to the Pacific – it also involved intensifying national provision in its European heartland. Indeed, two thirds of those university establishments extant in Europe – defined sensu lato in 1985, were created since 1950 – the majority between the years 1960 and 1975 (Neave 1994). A similar expansion in the national provision of higher education was also to be seen in Latin America, one of the first regions beyond Europe to receive the implant of the Spanish variant of the European type of university and that as early as the 17th century (Alvarez and Alvarez 1992, p. 151).

Aufmarsch der Universitäten

This quite massive Aufmarsch der Universitäten from its European heartland to the newly independent countries of Africa and Asia in the course of the late 1950s and early 1960s, obeyed a rationale very similar to that which underpinned the growth of its European forbears during the 19th century. It was, effectively, a species of 'match replay' of the earliest thrust. Its prime purpose was to weld a sense of identity within the Nation; to underpin a country's claims to consideration vis-a-vis other Nations, whilst at the same time, forming and modernising traditional political elites, to take over from the departing satraps of colonialism or to put in place the infrastructure, administrative and economic, of the independent Nation (Neave 2000).

The process of implantation has not ceased today, though it is no longer a question of seeing the university as a novel form, so much as intensifying and adding depth to a nation's higher education infrastructure. Thus, for instance, we see that India, in the course of the past decade has added some 2,000 university colleges to its national stock (Gnanam, in press). A similar activity took place in Brazil in the course of the 1970s (Schwartzmann 1996). It is no less evident over

the past ten years in East and Central Europe. Indeed, a recent estimate for Russia, reckons that some 1,000 private establishments – of greatly varied status, it must be said – have been added to the confusions of that unhappy land (Fillipov, in press).

Mass Higher Education and Higher Education on a Mass Scale

This development merits a little attention since it covers two very different, but inter-related elements – the first of which is a situation acquired in Western Europe and well on the way to becoming so in certain parts of Central and Eastern Europe. It is the advent of mass higher education. There is a second element and it is visible largely in the developing world – namely, higher education on a mass scale. The difference is important since, to a very great extent, it lies at the heart of policies that contribute to globalisation. Mass higher education refers to the percentage of the appropriate age group (Trow 1994). Higher education on a mass scale involves intensification and growth in the institutional infrastructure. In short, it has to do with expanding the numbers of establishments present within a national system. Naturally, the two dimensions are related. Increasing demand, at least in the Western European experience, has created more institutions and a more diverse range of institutions to accommodate rising expectations. But this is not always the case. Demand can be scaled back or regulated in keeping with current provision or be directed towards particular types of institution. Indeed, the constraints of a command economy in this area, its failure to acknowledge the pressures for mass higher education was one of the more significant forces contributing to the fall of regimes in the one-time Soviet sphere of influence (Kallen 1996, Tomusk 2001).

There is, however, a third variant on the theme and it is especially noticeable in the developing economies of the South. It is, primarily but certainly not wholly, to do with the explosive cocktail of rising expectations and galloping demography on the one side and difficulties, as much financial as economic, which accompany the transition from an agricultural and extractive towards an industrial economy. Whilst some countries have the capacity to put their higher education on a mass scale, demand combined with massive growth in the size of the age groups, holds massification at bay. Indeed, it is quite possible that higher education on a mass scale serves only to hold participation rates constant.

This brings us to the fourth variant and it is devastating. This variant is particularly evident in Africa, though I have no doubt of its existence elsewhere. Here the inability to develop higher education on a mass scale may effectively bring about a backsliding in the hitherto sacrosanct drive towards massification. The number of students in the system may in truth increase. Expressed as proportion of the age group, however, with the size of the age group rising by leaps

and bounds, expansion can, on the contrary, involve a significant drop in age group participation. Furthermore, this scenario is immeasurably compounded if institutional scaling-up is ruled out.

Demand for Higher Education and Globalisation

In dwelling on these two concepts – the massification of higher education and higher education on a mass scale – I want to make two points. The first has to do with the notion that demand for higher education is related to globalisation. No one is denying that demand for higher education is strong. Still less that precisely those lands where it is strongest are precisely those lands least able to meet it. But this condition has its origins and was in place for earlier than the Communications Revolution. Indeed, it is equally arguable that where unmet demand appears to be greatest – Africa – is also a region where the implantation of the communications infrastructure is at its weakest (see Saregeldin 2000). Very certainly, high demand is present. And, who knows, globalisation may even provide new ways of access to knowledge, though what kind of employment will remain – and where – for the newly qualified to enter, is in sooth, a very different kettle of fish indeed.

But, we have little proof outside the advanced economies and then it is subject to the same strictures as I am about to make – namely, that demand is an inherited phenomenon, long in place on the higher education landscape. Let us take the reverse proposition. Had globalisation not manifested itself, would demand be any the less? I think not. The demand that globalisation claims to stimulate in the advanced economies is wholly and utterly unrelated to the process of globalisation. Rather demand comes as part of a long-term social change, which the massification of higher education both responded to and created.

New Categories therefore New Perspectives

My second argument follows on from this: namely, that because demand outstrips the ability of ‘main stream’ higher education to meet it, the opening is provided for ‘complementary’ organisational species to take up the slack. There is a slightly different angle, however, to the rise of ‘complementary’ providers. And that is they are not confined to what are commonly alluded to as ‘alternate providers’. Once again, we must draw a line between ‘complementary providers’ and alternate providers, the former being the broader category and the latter a subset of it. ‘Complementary providers’ are simply establishments that provide a parallel service, delivered in ways broadly similar to public sector higher education. They are organised around largely the same pedagogic model but differ in

respect of their organising authorities, ethical disposition and/or their modes and sources of finance. Alternate providers, in this scheme of things, are those establishments, which provide a parallel service, but differ in delivery, in basic organisation, fiduciary purpose and even territorial location.

There is a good cause for introducing this modified classification. It gets us away from the emotional overtones that, understandably in certain European systems, accompany the term 'private' higher education. The term 'private' is a misnomer, quite apart from being little more than a legal fiction. Since the mid Sixties in Western Europe, many universities, once deemed private – in the sense of being identified with a particular religious allegiance – receive the Prince's bounty in no small measure (Geiger 1983).

The Contribution of 'Complementary Providers'

The role played in the push towards mass higher education and higher education on a mass scale by complementary providers has been varied. In Western Europe, it has been significant politically, but relatively marginal. In East and Central Europe, it has been significant from the standpoint of both higher education infrastructure and political symbolism; the latter being the freeing of higher learning from Party even if not entirely from State (Tomusk 2001). In the case of Brazil (Schwartzman 1998), it caters – as it does in present day Japan – for the greater part of students in higher education. In the case of East and Central Europe, as too in India, it is the prime vehicle of institutional growth, though from the standpoint of student numbers it constitutes a minority sector.

If we analyse the place of complementary providers, it is very clear that their role and contribution to both massification and to the placing of higher education on a mass scale differs from country to country. It has nevertheless been an integral part of higher education development for more than four decades. And, moreover, as a mature trend, it has certainly accelerated in the course of the past decade. But is this the same thing as saying it is the product of globalisation or even internationalisation, for that matter?

The Carping Voice of Dissent

Again, permit me to voice a little dissent. A closer scrutiny of the motives behind the rise of the 'complementary' sector in the systems just mentioned, above all those in the Third World, shows very clearly the motives to be internal to the particular country. Few if any, may be attributed to the quickening pace of technology, still less to its application to the 'learning process'. Rather the contrary. The driving force is demographic on the one hand and rising social expectations

on the other. Two other considerations should be born in mind before claiming the 'complementary' sector's growth as the product of a Globalising Age. First, the many of the 'complementary' sector institutions tend, in the Third World as well as in those systems nearer to home, to be curtailed in the range of subjects they cover. Second, more often than not, they focus on those very fields, which demand no great investment in equipment or plant. And technology of the type we associate with the Communications Revolution à l'occidentale requires substantial and on going investment in the very areas often or vestigial in the 'complementary' sector'. They are vestigial because they are expensive.

What lessons should we draw for globalisation here? It is this: Though important developments may take place in the same chronological framework as globalisation, it does not mean that they are eo ipso a part of that particular process. We should then draw a line between Globalisation and chronologically parallel developments without claiming the latter necessarily to be part of the former. As Max Weber once pointed out in his magnificent study on the Sociology of Religion, one may be in the world but not of it. Likewise institutional dynamics can be in the world that here and there is globalising, but what is done is not necessarily part of globalisation at all.

Two Faces of Globalisation

There is another point that merits mention. The very notion of Globalisation impels us to try and include as many trends as possible. To do less is tantamount to admitting the incompleteness and thus the non globality of what we claim to be global. A neat paradox indeed. In seeking to make our case more solid, we abandon other theses which may have equal plausibility. However, once we reverse our view on Globalisation and re-interpret it as the process of the University Globalising, the paradox of developments in complementary sector can be accommodated with little heart-searching and with the greatest of ease. It is acceptable once we give up the idea of globalisation as a species of world synchronous development and accept rather that the world, like the Englishman in Noel Coward's song from more than a half century back 'takes time'. Once we construe the massifying of higher education – in both the dimensions I have associated with this term – as the University's counterpart to the globalisation of stock-markets and capital flows – we cannot exclude either History or the fact that world developments in this sphere are asynchronous. From this perspective, massification may be compared to a ripple on the surface of a pond. It rolls out from the centre which, being ethnocentric, I shall take to be Europe. After a certain lapse of time, it reaches the pond's edges. If you accept this analogy and more especially the dynamic it seeks to illustrate as valid, then you have also to admit that, in the Age of Globalisation, there are certain trends which, if coinci-

dent with it, are in effect the completion of an earlier impulse. That earlier impulse – access to higher education in this case – began forty years ago and is only now penetrating to the geographical outer limits.

The Heartland of the University Globalising

Let us continue this pragmatic exploration to ask ourselves where the origins, where the root systems of the brave new world of the University Globalising, are to be found? Where does common wisdom identify the heartland of the new Jerusalem? Let me suggest that the pioneers were three – Australia, Britain and the United States – all three Anglo-Saxon and all three amongst the pioneers of higher education being market driven. Here, it is fair to add that the first two acquired this conviction only in the course of the Eighties. Now the interesting aspect, less in the case of the United States than in the case of the other two systems, is that the University globalising was driven neither by student demand, still less by a sudden shift in the desire to see the wide world. Rather it evolved out of the pressures that marketisation, financial diversification and ‘cuts in budget’ imposed on the home system of higher education. Very early in the early Eighties, administrators of British universities discovered that overseas students could be made to pay full cost fees, a situation which, applied to the student estate in general, doubtless would have made for interesting times. And similar considerations lay beneath Australia’s discovery of the potential market in South East Asia.

Certainly, this interpretation is not new. Nor, for that matter, was the notion that one national system could act in a ‘complementary’ capacity to those in its region or, in the case of Britain, in those areas where it once had a historic presence. For in point of fact, a de facto complementarity was fulfilled by other systems as well and very often involved far more foreign students – France was one particularly striking example and Spain another, though at a lesser level. What was new was the recognition that if the public purse was tight at home, the shortfall could be made up in part by obeying the Biblical injunction “Go Ye forth into the Highways and Byways and compel them to come in, that My House may be full”. To which one might add, “And My Coffers less empty”. Expressed in less redolent terms, universities in these three systems looked outside the Nation to the well-off in the developing world to subsidise the less well-off in their own lecture halls. Whether one is to see this as an admission that they were living beyond their means is an entirely different matter.

Seen from this perspective and stripped of the ideological accoutrements of a Neo Liberalism so often invoked for the University to globalise is simply the way by which revenues are generated, markets opened up and income secured.

Or on the other hand, to protect other interpretations and emphases on education as a public good within the Nation as against a tradable item between them.

National Fitness

What is amazing in all this must surely be the speed at which it has developed. That internationalisation in the sense of setting aside revenue generating places for overseas students should follow so swiftly on the heels of marketisation itself. Certainly, there are explanations to be had on the domain of economic ideology. Thus, international outreach has become increasingly interpreted in terms of 'National fitness' almost in a quasi mercantilist sense: the fitter he being he who can attract or capture the most foreign brains into his universities. And thus filch for himself a goodly rating in the international League Tables – and they exist – of foreign students lured – or inveigled. But there are other accounts and they too are to be found in the demographic dimension. If we take this aspect, then we have another and equally interesting hypothesis to explain some of the motives behind the University Globalising. In most of the advanced economies, birth rates have been falling for the best part of the past 30 years at the very time when their systems of higher education expanded their intake. The mechanics of demography thus work in favour of rising participation – a very different situation from its counterpart in the Third World where, as I have pointed out, they work in the contrary direction. Seen from this angle, the rush of Universities to globalise, to develop an outreach beyond the physical frontiers of the Nation-State can very easily be explained. That explanation lies in being able to sustain the physical and educational infrastructure within the same scale as it had built up within the Nation-State but which could only be sustained on condition of attracting foreign 'clients'.

The Research System

Nor is the securing of foreign clients confined in its effects to undergraduate level. There are also indirect consequences in the area of the research system and the research training systems. They too drive in the same direction and they too have direct bearing on the 'fitness' of universities in the advanced economies to face up to whatever the 21st century holds in store. Here, I think, we have paid rather less attention than we ought in seeking an explanation for the University globalising by developments at this level. Yet, it is very clear that the concern of both governments and what might be termed the 'Social lobby' at the implications a shortfall of advanced students in this area would have, and very particularly as the implications of the Knowledge Economy began to take shape. In ef-

fect, beneath the thrust towards marketisation that shaped up in the mid to late 80s, was an equal disquiet about the future of the research system – not surprising since the research system and its viability is very assuredly the prime condition of survival in the Knowledge Economy. Evidence for this is easily to hand: the measures in Britain to increase the efficiency of throughput in the research training system. The creation of graduate schools of various kinds in Britain, France, the Netherlands, and Germany in the early 1990s, are all witness to this concern. Nor was it absent from the United States where in certain fields – engineering being the most noteworthy – without the presence of foreign nationals, research in this area would be immeasurably constrained. Foreign students at this level account for some 40 per cent of all engineers training for research. It is perhaps not entirely coincidental therefore that so many engineers are engaged in developing ‘collective delivery systems’ and ardently support their export in the United States (Duderstadt 2001).

Conclusion

It is clear as the day is long that explanations of a more pragmatic nature, though somewhat less exciting than explorations of globalisation as the latter day *Weltgeist*, are to be had when we turn our attention back to the university as the prime focus of our attention. Nevertheless, these working hypotheses become exciting, once we bother to re-set them within the framework of the last – and perhaps the greatest – of the historical institutions this post modern world has inherited – namely the university itself (Kerr 1964, Neave and van Vught 1991). Nor, for those whose forte lies in the symbolic, is the terrain any the less rich. Exploring the ways in which paradigms change is, of course, one of the most interesting techniques of arguing that change-in-process will become change secured. Which brings us back to that dimension of prophecy – in this case, prophecy that is self-fulfilling – against which I railed at the start of this lecture.

Even so, we are in a period of history when the paradigms that have long determined the conduct, belief and ethics of higher learning seem about to be uprooted. Learning as part of a ‘gift relationship’ from one generation to another, is one. Another, if you prefer such things couched in the dead echoes of international bodies, is ‘Education as a Human Right’. Like the place of labour in the Anglican Liturgy (To Labour and not to count the Cost, to Work and not to seek for any Reward), neither ethical principle counts the cost. This seems remiss indeed at a time when the prospect of ‘commodifying’ higher education calls upon all right-thinking people to do the contrary. Perhaps for this reason, neither ethical principles seems in a particularly healthy state at the moment.

And this, so it seems to me, is no-where more evident than in internationalisation itself. International exchange has always had its political and cultural di-

mensions, the creation of credit and influence by one Nation over certain sections of another's rising young people. The consideration lay behind the British initiative, shortly after the end of the First World War, to create the PhD-degree (Simpson 1983). It prompted the American Fulbright programme in 1945 which incidentally played a crucial part in moulding the international values and perceptions amongst Australian academics and policy makers (Sheehan et al. 1996, p. 17) just as it lay behind similar initiatives by other governments. They dealt in cultural, political and diplomatic capital.

I remain, however, unconvinced that the paradigm shift from the symbolic to the real, from capital conceived as a cultural exchange to capital conceived largely in terms of the cash nexus, is necessarily a great leap forward for the university. Most assuredly from an accountant's World View, it may make the university a 'fitter place'. One suspects, however, that the price of such a myopic form of 'fitness' may in the future prove higher than we think. Whether we ought to avoid paying it is something the prophets of profit and loss will doubtless be only too ready to tell us.

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