



The Changing Role of Universities in our Societies

A European Perspective.

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What is the future of our Universities? Where are we going?

The trouble with our times is that the future is not
what it used to be.

Paul Valery

- ◆ Many discussions
- ◆ Many publications
- ◆ Many recommendations



on globalisation
massification
commercialisation
internationalisation

UNIVERSITY = THE PALACE OF PARADOXES

The dilemma: How to be:



- ◆ Accessible and elitist?
- ◆ Challenging and fair?
- ◆ Autonomous and accountable?
- ◆ Public and private?
- ◆ Innovative and conservative?
- ◆ Engaged and secluded?
- ◆ Critical and respectful?
- ◆ Demanding and supportive?

UNIVERSITY = THE PALACE OF PARADOXES

- ◆ Creative and precise?
- ◆ Local and international?
- ◆ Specialised and interdisciplinary?
- ◆ Rational in the face of irrationality?
- ◆ Attract funds without losing credibility?
- ◆ Do more with less?

A difficult balancing act !

The contradictions of today's world echo in the University

LOOKING AHEAD: THE BIG PICTURE

The future that has already happened (Peter F. Drucker)

- ◆ Climate change (catastrophes and opportunities)
- ◆ Demographic change (baby boom / papy boom)
- ◆ Globalisation (communication, transport, migration)
- ◆ Economic change (size: from a 1,5 to a 6 billion market in 20y.)
(nature: knowledge economy)
- ◆ Innovation (ICT, bio- and nanotechnologies)
- ◆ New emerging powers (China, India, Brazil, South Africa, ...)
- ◆ Urbanization, city / region

LOOKING AHEAD: THE BIG PICTURE

Consequences:

A more interdependent and instable world

- ◆ Increased inequality
- ◆ Migration
- ◆ Energy crisis
- ◆ Depletion of natural resources
- ◆ Highly turbulent world economy
- ◆ Financial instability
- ◆ Global epidemics
- ◆ Exacerbated identities
- ◆ Renewed religious and spiritual quests
- ◆ Global trafficking
- ◆ Terrorism

→ A more and more unpredictable and competitive world.

→ Increasingly we should be aware of events and trends outside the university.



THE IVORY TOWER

MUST BECOME

A WATCH TOWER

CONSEQUENCES AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL

MORE COMPETITIVE

- ◆ Competition on the rise - ranking
- alternative provider
- ◆ The Brain business
- ◆ Marketing

MORE INVOLVED

- ◆ Growing expectations
- ◆ Explosion of knowledge
- ◆ Lifelong Learning
- ◆ Stakeholders
- ◆ Shift in the town and gown relationship
- ◆ Internationalisation

CONSEQUENCES AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL

MORE DEPENDENT

- ◆ The State: ~~less investment, more~~ interference
- ◆ Need to generate new revenue
 - student fees
 - entrepreneurship
 - fundraising
 - partnership

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- ◆ Demand overload at every level.
 - ◆ Increased fragmentation of institution at the expense of its identity
 - ◆ Management tries to adjust
 - ◆ Our public image is changing

FROM THE BIG PICTURE TO THE UNIVERSITY IMAGE

The global village metaphor

- ◆ « The World is a village » is both an interesting and a reassuring image
- ◆ Villages are usually built around a church and a market place
- ◆ In today's collective representation, the university is symbolically somewhere between a place of worship (a church) and a market place (a supermarket)

FROM THE BIG PICTURE TO THE UNIVERSITY IMAGE

Universities as churches

- ◆ **Temple** of knowledge, with a **tower** as focus point
- ◆ Often directed by **Rectors**
- ◆ New students are like **novices** to be initiated to the mysteries of knowledge
- ◆ « Professori ordinarii », like **priests**, have been ordained and hold a chair from where they teach/preach « ex cathedra »
- ◆ Laboratories are **sanctuaries** and the researcher dedicates his life to science and wisdom
- ◆ Like **religion**, science is omnipresent, both scaring and reassuring, invoked and convoked on every occasion

FROM THE BIG PICTURE TO THE UNIVERSITY IMAGE

Universities as supermarkets

- ◆ Production of educational and scientific services which are given (sold) to an ever widening range of customers
- ◆ Specialized knowledge is no longer shared, but turned into profit opportunities
- ◆ The researcher becomes an entrepreneur, knowledge a product and the student a customer
- ◆ The university becomes entrepreneurial



**In Europe and in the world,
the University has many missions**

1st EVOLVING MISSION: EDUCATION

- ◆ Unprecedented growth of students.
- ◆ Accessibility and affordability (students fees).
- ◆ Growth of professional education at the expense of “liberal arts”.
- ◆ Mismatch between student’s choices and job opportunities.
- ◆ Explosion of new curricula and degrees.
- ◆ Creation of many new HE Institutions, often private.
- ◆ Need to better recognize personal involvement in teaching (promotion criteria).
- ◆ Increasing interventionism of business and professional organizations.

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- ◆ Balancing bricks and clicks

1st EVOLVING MISSION: EDUCATION

- ◆ Creation of specialized joint degrees.
- ◆ Increased mobility of ~~students between institutions~~ and countries (ECTS, Diploma Supplement).
- ◆ The Tuning project: analysis of content and structure of studies.
- ◆ Expression of the level of education in terms of competences and learning outcomes (comparable degrees).
- ◆ Increased flexibility
- ◆ Valorisation of professional experience
- ◆ Replacement of retiring teachers
- ◆ Increasingly need to resort to part-time or adjunct faculty

2nd EVOLVING MISSION: RESEARCH

- ◆ Rapid growth of research cost (big science = big money)
- ◆ The most international sector of activities in the university
- ◆ Shift from pure to applied research.
- ◆ Increasing role of university in public R&D
 - risk taking
 - innovative
 - highly specialised
 - transdisciplinary
- ◆ Transdisciplinary approaches are required to meet major challenges of society.
- Specialisation drives progress and discovery

2nd EVOLVING MISSION: RESEARCH

- ◆ Growing demand for expertise, risk assessment, from public and private decision makers (links between science and humanities).
- ◆ Difficulties in tackling large and complex emerging issues.
- ◆ Conflict of interest, intellectual rights, patents.
- ◆ A growing rift between the part of the University which has access to major funding and the rest (Academic Capitalism).
- ◆ Creation of science parks, incubators, spin offs.
- ◆ Research quality indicators prevail over other mission in ranking.

3rd EVOLVING MISSION: SERVICE TO SOCIETY

- ◆ The Universe - City
- ◆ Serving public interest (local - global) = **glocal**
- ◆ Service provider: hospital, expertise, sport facilities, day care, training, ...
- ◆ Cultural Heritage Management: museum, archives, libraries, monuments.
- ◆ Diffusion of science and culture (conferences, interview, campus radio, ...)
- ◆ Teaching to senior citizens.

3rd EVOLVING MISSION: SERVICE TO SOCIETY

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- ◆ The demand from the knowledge society should not be driven only by the market, but by social, political, ethical considerations.
 - ◆ We regain our eroded legitimacy with this third mission.
 - ◆ But, additional resources must be allocated.

3rd EVOLVING MISSION: SERVICE TO SOCIETY

◆ The idea of engagement (ACU, 2003)

(interpenetration of Universities and the wider world)

- 1- setting universities' aims, purpose, priorities
- 2- relating teaching to the wider world
- 3- dialogue between researchers and practitioners
- 4- taking fuller responsibilities as neighbors and citizens

◆ Universities should contribute to a fairer and more sustainable society:

- social mobility
- economic and social development
- mutual understanding between communities and cultures
- democracy

4th EVOLVING MISSION: CRITICAL INQUIRY

- ◆ Universities do not only respond to society's needs, they contribute to its evolution.
- ◆ Need to preserve space to promote the free pursuit of rational inquiry.
- ◆ Need to nurture debate culture.
- ◆ Need to preserve a space for critical and independent thinking (free from ideological political, economical, religious or politically correctness constrains).
- ◆ In view of the declining role of the media, need to work more closely with them.

4th EVOLVING MISSION: CRITICAL INQUIRY

- ◆ International cooperation and support

- ◆ Providers of critical analysis and solutions
- ◆ In order to do so, universities must have sufficient autonomy with respect to any kind of power (state, church, enterprises, ...)
- ◆ The University must remain “a place of light, of liberty and of learning” (Benjamin Disraeli, 1873)



These changes create a series of new challenges
for our universities.

They impact not only every academic
but also governance and management

CHALLENGES OF GOVERNANCE

- ◆ Tradition of collegiality and leadership (strategic choices)
- ◆ Academic independence and administrative constraints
- ◆ Individual creativity and collective strategy
- ◆ Academic culture and business culture
 - **Academic culture** is geared towards production of knowledge, scientific excellence, academic freedom and free dissemination of results.
 - **Business culture** is geared towards production of wealth, profitability and appropriation of results.

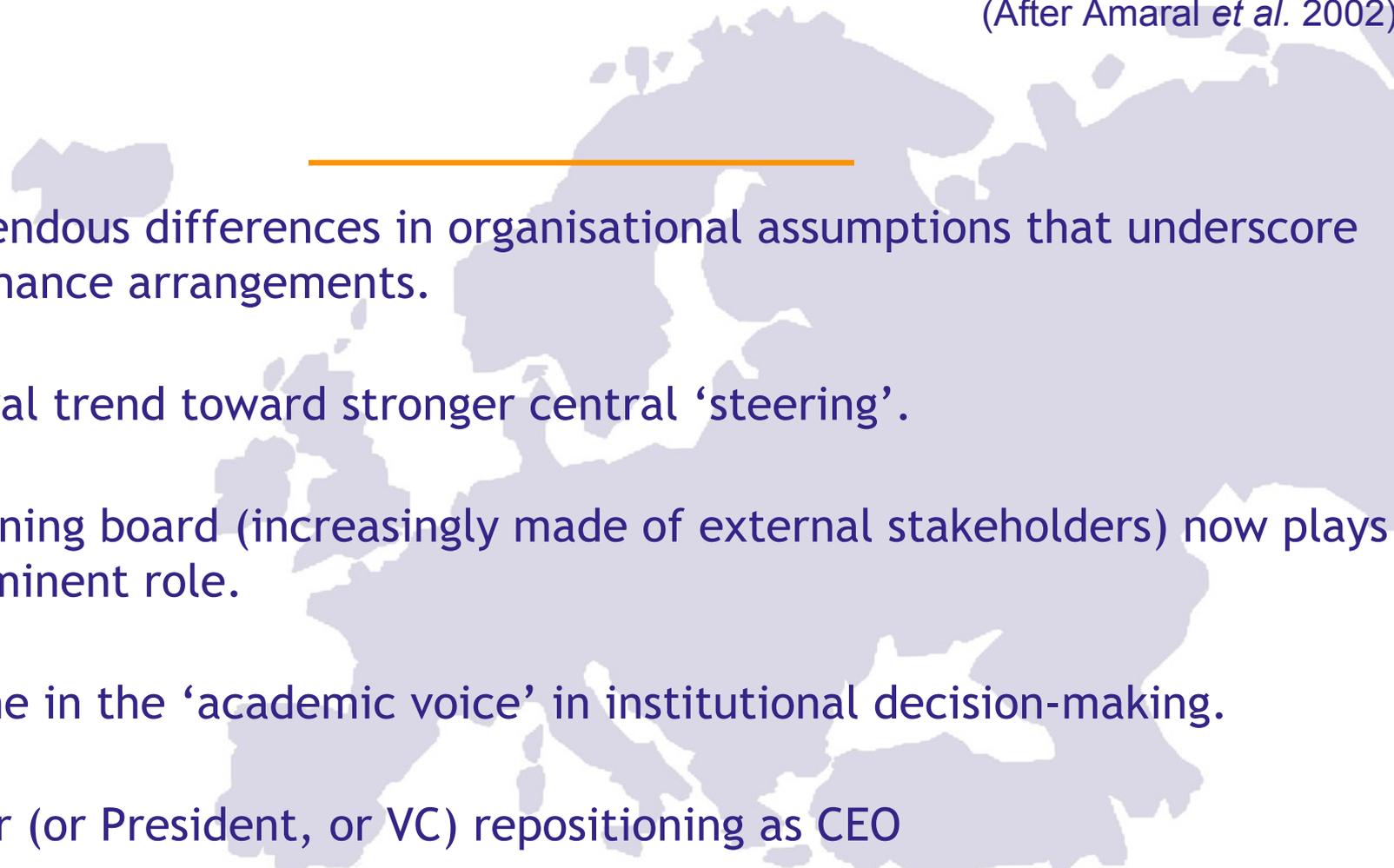
SYSTEM LEVEL GOVERNANCE IN EUROPE

(After Amaral *et al.* 2002)

- ◆ In Continental Europe: moving away from a state-controlled model
 - Increased autonomy but with difference in nature and magnitude of changes.
- ◆ In contrast, UK has experienced increased government intervention.
- ◆ New regionalism in response to intergovernmental process. (EHEA)
- ◆ Neo-liberal ideology and rhetoric on the rise, new objectives: “responsiveness”, “adaptability”, “competitiveness”.
- ◆ Balance of expectations shifting away from the social and cultural towards the economic function of the university.
- ◆ More and more private institutions but H.E. remains a public good.
- ◆ Loss of trust in public institutions and rogue private Quality assurance

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT AT INSTITUTION LEVEL IN EUROPE

(After Amaral *et al.* 2002)

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- ◆ Tremendous differences in organisational assumptions that underscore governance arrangements.
 - ◆ General trend toward stronger central ‘steering’.
 - ◆ Governing board (increasingly made of external stakeholders) now plays a prominent role.
 - ◆ Decline in the ‘academic voice’ in institutional decision-making.
 - ◆ Rector (or President, or VC) repositioning as CEO

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT AT STRUCTURAL LEVEL IN EUROPE

(After Amaral *et al.* 2002)

- ◆ Greater centralisation has reduced the authority with discipline-based, decision-structure.
- ◆ Repositioning of local academic leadership (Deans=faculty CEO).
- ◆ Local level resistance to broader organisational changes.
- ◆ Loss of trust in academic probity and altruism.
- ◆ What about the eccentric professor ?
- ◆ And the fun ?

SPECIFIC ISSUES / FOCUS AREAS

◆ New directions:

- * Quality development
- * performance indicators
- * ~~creativity~~
- * redistributive mechanisms
- * city / region / university joint strategy
- * communication

◆ Research :

- * Graduate schools: on the rise
- * Promoting interdisciplinary research
- * Innovation (spin-offs, incubation, entrepreneurship, centers, etc.)
- * Intellectual property

◆ Internationalisation:

- * Networking
- * ERASMUS, SOCRATES
- * Joint degrees
- * Joint research

Major universities are becoming very fragmented.

Reforms that focus only on changing structure, governance, quality standards or technologies will never succeed alone.

They need to be embedded in supportive, cohesive, spirit-filled culture.

Leadership from the university can make a difference by nurturing hope, identity and a shared spirit.

CONCLUSION : MANAGING UNCERTAINTY

In today's chaotic, complex, changing and unpredictable world, there is only one certainty: we are facing uncertainty.

So, the University has a critical role to play:

- ◆ Equip our students to deal with uncertainty,
- ◆ Through research, transform uncertainty into innovation,
- ◆ Manage our institutions to be adaptive enough to deal with uncertainty,
- ◆ In society, provide a forum to turn uncertainty into a brighter future for us all.



THE WAY WE SHAPE THE FUTURE OF OUR STUDENTS,
RESEARCH AND OUR UNIVERSITIES WILL ALSO SHAPE
THE FUTURE OF SOCIETY AND THE WORLD.

If one cannot predict the future, one must invent it.