

State, Society and University -a historical perspective

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Photo:
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Main starting points & aims



- Universities are, and have always been, a part of their societies => differences in universities, in their relationships with state and societies => **How to explain differences?**
- Yet, remarkable similarities among universities & academics \Leftrightarrow common intellectual & academic values => **What is a university?**

State and Society from the perspective of higher education

- **The State** represents a territorially-based authority (king/emperor, city state, nation state, federal state) having sovereignty. It takes care of the execution of power: legislative, law-enforcing, military. It has the power to grant / discontinue HEIs' operating license.
- **The Society** represents voluntary-based communities & organisations (associations, churches, NGOs). They can run a HEI / work in cooperation with HEIs
- Historical perspective helps to open new perspectives to modern understandings ... Church -NGO or a political authority? State -kingdom, union, federal state, nation state? University?



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University

- **University** (*universitas*) = a medieval western social innovation: **a corporate entity** (organization) & **academic community**
- **A Social institution with many tensions:** teachers vs. students; teaching vs. research vs. third mission; academics vs. administrators; disciplinary differences; relationship with State & Society (*institutional autonomy, academic freedom + economic dependancy*)
=> a dynamic institution

How universities emerged?

- First universities were never established but developed organically: **studia particolare** ⇔ **studia generale** => universitas 14th century
- **Basic problem:** what to do with growing numbers of foreign (university) teachers and students?
- **Basic challenges:** How to organise the relationship with the City/Society (prices of food, accomodation, law & order...) and with territorial authorities
- **Basic solution:** license to operate from Pope or (sometimes) from the King (or Emperor), or both
- **Resources:** student fees (paid by Church & students) + grants from Prince



The granting of its privileges to the University of Bologna by the Pope and the Emperor (in a 15th century manuscript)





University as a federation of scholarly communities

- 1) **Corporative character:** "privileged corporate associations of masters and students with their statutes, seals, administrative machinery and degree procedures". (Cobban 1988)
- 2) **Organisational autonomy** in relation to Catholic Church & cities (Society) and Kings (State)
- 3) **Academic character** with a unique value basis aiming for a better understanding of the world & education of students

Beliefs & values of Europe's universities (1)

- 1) *the belief in the dignity of man*, who, even in his fallen state, was capable of impressive mental and spiritual growth (**education**)
- 2) *the belief in an ordered universe open to rational understanding* (**research**)
- 3) *the belief in the prospect of man's mastery of his environment through his intellect and his mounting knowledge and experience* (**utility**)



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Beliefs & values of Europe's universities (2)

4) *culture in which **questioning and analytical approach** to both classical and contemporary material was encouraged (**critical thinking**)* (Cobban 1988, 11-14)

5) **Publicity of research & open debates**
(Rüegg, 2004, 32-34)

These beliefs & values laid the fundamental intellectual basis for all European universities



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Universitas & University

- **Universitas** = several types of corporate bodies such as craft guilds & municipal councils (*11-13th centuries*)
=> only universities (*14th / 15th centuries*)
- **Universitas in universities** = the communities (or guilds) of masters, or students, or masters and students combined **=> different from other modes of corporations**
- **Traditional Faculties:** Theology, Law (Roman & Canonic law), Medicine, Artes Liberales / Humanities (trivium +quadrium)



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The Essence of university: schola



Olaus Magnus (1555) in Nuorteva 1997



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Society in universitas: Guilds

- **Craft Guild** as a social model to organise & protect a professional group (professors, students) ⇔ *"a controlling stratum in guild is a combination of persons who are autocrats and colleagues"* (Clark, 1983)
- With guild structure emerged the idea of **education as a ladder** => A social innovation: teaching & advancing in studies was related to academic degrees (Bachelor => Master (license to teach in university) => Doctor) **granted by the academic community**
- Democratic ideas (elections of officials, statutes, autonomy) were adopted from Italian city states



Two 'archtypes' of universities

- **Bologna (1088?) as the University of Students;** organised the relationships between the city of Bologna & hired professors. **Nations** of students as a self-governance model. Adult law students.
- **Paris (1215?) as the University of Masters:** administration of university taken care of by Masters; colleges, nations of students & masters as organisational units in faculties. Academics & students were members of the Catholic Church ⇔ canon law
- Many combinations of these ideal types in European universities (N.B. medieval idea of re-formation)



Bologna 1888: the 800 years Celebration of the University of Bologna



Museum of Bologna, photo JV

Universities in the emerging territorial states, 16th century =>

the strengthening of territorial states with more powerful kings made universities more important for the states:

- 1) need for (the training of) **civil & military officials**;
- 2) need for **social cohesion** through religion (control the training of priests):
- 3) educate the defenders of the **ideological basis**, 'right religion' (Reformation)

=> The universities were connected more tightly to the interests of the states. The Kingdom Sweden as an illuminating example of this European development



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The Expansion of the Kingdom of Sweden



Sweden: Universities in the service of the King & Lutheran Church, 17th century

- Context: Sweden as the Superpower in the Baltic region (1630s-1720)

=> Need for a homogeneous & efficient administration because of a) need to reform inefficient (medieval) administration based on personal loyalty to the King, b) small population & big land area of relatively poor Kingdom => more resources for the endless wars of and for the Kingdom

- Opened career paths in military and civil service to King
⇔ Lower nobility benefited; clergy grow important estate because of its importance for royal propaganda



Universities as THE Uniforming instrument

- New universities established: Tartto (Dorpat ,1632), Turku (Åbo, 1640), Lund (1664) & renewed old ones: Uppsala (1477) Greifswald (1520)
- Turku Cathedral School (est. 13th century) was promoted to **the University of Turku in 1640**
- *We Christina, the Queen of Sweden, etc. etc. ... in order to bring the light of culture and education to civilise the ignorant people in Eastern Provinces ... (Statutes of the UT)*

Inauguration of the Royal Academy in Åbo in 1640 by Albert Edelfelt (1902) (wikipedia)



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The State and the university

- Swedish universities were aimed to **train civil servants for the King & clergy for the Lutheran Church**
- 1) to defend the 'right Christian Belief' = political & dynastic issue
- 2) to strengthen social ties & value basis: Lutheran Church took care of the local administration (=>1870s)
- Channel for upward social mobility both for lower Nobility & priests as individuals & as an estate

In Europe: the development of national (systems of) higher education were rooted in the political interests of territorial Rulers (the State), lower nobility & territorial churches



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Society and Universities: Science academies and the Republic of science

- Emergence of first academies in Italy (15th century) was influenced by the humanistic movement => important for the development of science ⇔ humanism universities
- Increased stranglehood of state => strengthening identity of academics + development of learned societies ⇔ **Republic of science**, first academic journals (17th)
- **Science academies**: 'Invisible college' => *The Royal Society* (1662) -a private association vs. *Académie Royale des Sciences* (1666=>1699) -a state department of scientific research as a model ⇔ Science academies were established all over Europe (=>18th century)



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French & Napoleon revolutions

- Napoleon wars in Europe (1790-1815) challenged old-fashioned medieval roles of universities as teaching institutions for priests and lawyers corrupted by nepotism especially in Germany, whereas scientific research was conducted in science academics
- **How to solve these problems?**
- The number of universities declined: **143 universities (in 1798) => 83 universities (1815)** (France: -24; Germany: -18; Spain: -15) (1850: 98 uni; 1939: 200 uni.)
=> Two new traditions introduced to European universities: French & Humboldt systems of HE



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French –Napoleonic- ideal type on the relationship with State(1790s ->)

- Specialist institutions, subjected to severe discipline, strictly organized & controlled by the state (e.g. *École Normale supérieure, École Polytechnique etc.*)
- Produced the elite & civil servants for the state
- ‘*scholarly desert*’ because of professionalization & centralization & separation of teaching from research (=>1870s) because research was allowed only in great teaching universities (Sorbonne) & Science Academies (Charle 2004)



Background for the Humboldtian university reform (1810s=>)

- The defeat of the jewel of the Prussian society: Army => state building based on *Bildung*
- **Ideology:** neo-humanism, German idealism
- **Politics:** state-building with the help of education & research (Kulturstaat)
- **Mentality:** creative intelligence & education
- **Institutional:** a total external & internal intellectual & institutional decline of German university system (Nybom 2007)



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The Humboldt *Idea* of University: relationship with state

- **Knowledge** is a unified indivisible entity
- Unity of **teaching & learning** (=> *research seminars*)
- Primacy of science & scholarship (**wissenschaft**)
- Pursuit of truth in **solitude & freedom** (*einsamheit & freiheit*) included both students & professors
- **Freedom of teaching & learning** (*Lehr- & Lernfreiheit*); *Privatdozent* as a dynamic career path, professors as *mandarins*
- **Bildung –wissenschaft –national culture**, bases for modern state (*Kulturstaat*)



Industrial revolution and the emergence of research university (1860-1920)

- Science supported industrialization of Germany
- Problems in integrating research with teaching => research institutes
- Changes in innovation policy & funding, the role of state got stronger,
- Unity of knowledge challenged => "two cultures" ⇔ introduction of technical universities
- Institutional autonomy, professionalization of academic careers ⇔ *conferences, journals*
- German model copied worldwide (USA, Japan)**



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Laboratories as new learning environments



Photo: web pages of the university of Jyväskylä



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On the relationship with the state and higher education in Russian

- Two traditions & tensions: **liberalism** (Humboldt) ⇔ **totalitarianism** (Napoleon)
- Humboldtian university ideals: institutional autonomy + unity of teaching & research
- Objectives for universities from France: to train bureaucrats & specialists for state (*grandes écoles*)
- Practical training + Specialist institutions tied to ministries + 'humanist' universities for elite + Science academics
- Tsarist model** perfected by **Soviet model**: authoritarian system of rules & regulations (Rüegg 2004, Charle 2004)



The weight of legacies?

- strong continuities in institutional practices, processes & mentalities ⇔ structuration
- good capacities for changing discourses without changing practices



From Elite to mass higher education, 1960s =>

- Traditionally, universities have trained the elites of societies. The situation begun to change after WWII
- Crucial element:** the social role of higher education changed from the reproduction of elite to the production of qualified labour force (Trow 1974)
- The growth of number of students per age cohort (~15%), **elite - mass – universal**, has changed the social reproduction role of HE
- Part of policies & processes of making welfare states
⇔ equality, social justice & economic issues (who pays, for what?)
- => stratification of HE systems? / HPS**



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HE in industrial societies

- after the WWII education was the main channel for upward social mobility (Piketty/Simon)
- **education was one of the main instruments in the making of welfare societies:** creating equal educational opportunities in order to make societies more equal (instrument & goal / Nordic countries)
- However, equality & equity have different interpretations & connotations
- Equity: fairness of opportunities: individual, social background –talent?
- Equality: to whom, for what, by whom?

On the US model: strong civil society & market forces

- **Liberal tradition** ⇔ private universities established by religious communities & philanthropic associations ⇔ university governance: Boards of trustees.
- US interpretation of the German universities => Post-graduate schools => research universities; strong federal research funding
- System dynamics fuelled by a) **liberal arts tradition** (formation of students); b) **competition** (market forces as unifying social force) ⇔ **academic drift**; c) **stratification** of the system based on institutional status & reputation ⇔ **tenure track** / academic freedom

On the Nordic model: equality & cooperation with state and society

- Nordic welfare state: 1) strong emphasis of **equality** (no tuition fees); 2 **social trust** (fair taxation); evaluation as development rather than ranking; 3) **beneficial state**
- Interplay between state (public authorities, main funder & regulator) + expected contribution to civil society + cooperation with business & industry
- Institutional autonomy & academic freedom & equal educational opportunities guaranteed (legislation)
- Horizontal differentiation rather than vertical stratification

HEIs & knowledge production

- **Knowledge Society:** how to organize the relationship between the **nation state** (the main funder), **society** (local needs, civil society, business) and **university**?
- Reputation & prestige games (league tables)
- **Globalization:** students as consumers: global education markets, network as a social form
- Knowledge as a central factor in the economic growth (innovations, transfer) ⇔ in the core of industrial & economic policies

Discussion: State, Society and HEIs

⇔ administrative models (1)

- **Medieval basement: Italian city states & guilds =>** collegiality as the functional principle: democratic principles combined with autonomy & control of studies & academic careers
- **Reformation:** State intervention tied universities more with the interests of the state. Republic of science increased the sense of community among academics. Scientific development moved into science academies, universities became intellectually sleepy places.
- **Napoleon & Humboldt revolutions** changed the relationship with the state: more control vs. more institutional autonomy



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Discussion: State, Society and HEIs ⇔ administrative models (2)

- **19th century: State bureaucracy** => universities repeated state bureaucracy as an advanced & standardised model of administration
- **Mass education** did not solve the problems of equal educational opportunities.
- **Neo-liberal ideas** of an efficient, business-like HEIs emphasize strong management, strategic thinking, academic workforce as a resource; YET Universities serve mainly society (teachers, social work, doctors, civil engineers...) and state (administration, legislation, law-enforcement, military) and ... business needs



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Universtasis as way forward?

- CHALLENGE: how to find a dynamic balance between different stakeholders' expectations, institutional processes, the nature of academic work and the traditions of HEIs?
- Combination of **organisational structures + academic networks** balancing with conflicting needs & expectations from local, national, global level
- Universitas + stasis** (balance, greek)
- Universtasis* is a space and a place, a process and a structure where academic networks meet with and are supported by institutional infrastructure and hierarchies and fulfilled by society's variety of needs**

Thank you for your attention!



Photo: JV