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Higher education, internationalisation, and the nation-state: Recent developments and challenges to governance theory *

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Abstract. The new phenomenon of European integration has again challenged our conceptual and empirical tools for higher education studies to integrate the international dimension into frameworks that tend to concentrate on the single nation state and domestic policies even where international comparisons are made. It drives as well the awareness of certain blind spots: namely (1) the concentration on policy effects, neglecting the input side of policy formation, and (2) the concern with macro level policy-making and meso level organisational adaptation, neglecting to some extend the micro dynamics and effects in the actual practices and performances of academic work. This paper makes an attempt to contribute from a certain perspective on governance studies to the ongoing debate on the challenges "internationalisation" or "globalisation" bring up for higher education policy analyses and especially for comparative research in that area. The development of governance theory towards a multi-level and multi-actor approach is discussed and its strengths and weaknesses for higher education studies in an internationalising environment are addressed.

Keywords: internationalisation, modes of coordination, shifts in governance

Introduction

"Internationalisation" and "globalisation" became key themes in the 1990s, both in higher education policy debates and in research on higher education. Higher education policy is still predominantly shaped at a national level; and as such, it still tends not only to reflect but to underscore the specific traditions and circumstances of individual countries. However, a number of different trends, many of which can be grouped together under the general heading of "internationalisation", have begun to challenge the predominance of the nation state as the main determinant of the character of universities and colleges, and of the experiences of their students, their graduates and those who work in them. Internationalisation is contributing to, if not leading,

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a process of rethinking the social, cultural and economic roles of higher education and their configuration in national systems of higher education.

A growing number of students of higher education research have put related questions on the agenda of research (e.g., Teichler 1996; Curry/ Newson 1998; Scott 1998; Huisman et al. 2001; Muller et al. 2001; Wende 2001, 2002; Marginson/Rhoades 2002) – Teichler probably as one of the first researchers to take seriously the topic of internationalisation as an area of theoretical, empirical and policy interest in higher education. In many cases this interest grew out of experiences and findings based on international comparative studies in higher education, the observation of somehow coinciding trends and policy developments and a remarkable variety of responses on the national and organisational level of higher education. It is not the purpose of this paper to map the broad landscape of these studies or to introduce a new theory of internationalisation. My intention in this work-in-progress is a rather modest one: To contribute from a certain perspective on governance studies to the ongoing debate on the challenges "internationalisation" or "globalisation" might bring up for higher education policy analyses and especially for comparative research in that area. I begin by outlining a range of processes which have been identified under the broad label of "internationalisation", and by suggesting some of the paradoxes and contradictions which it helps to highlight. Next, I discuss the more complex, and ideologically more suspect, concept of "globalisation", and its implications for the nation state. Last but not least, an account on the development of governance theory will be made that raises the issue of the strengths and weaknesses of this approach for higher education studies in an internationalising environment.

Higher education, and the rise and fall of the nation-state

There is little doubt that the university as we know it – the modern university as a project of the nation state and its cultural identity – finds itself in a complicated and indeed delicate situation at the moment (Kwiek 2000). Universities are institutions that, in all societies, have performed basic functions which result from the particular combination of cultural and ideological, social and economic, educational and scientific roles that have been assigned to them. They are multi-purpose or multi-product institutions which contribute to the generation and transmission of ideology, the selection and formation of elites, the social development and educational upgrading of societies, the production and application of knowledge and the training of the highly skilled labour force. This range of functions constitutes the key tasks of higher education systems, albeit with different emphases depending

on the national context, the historical period, the specific sector and indeed the institution concerned. But what is clear is that nowadays, universities are heavily involved in literally every kind of social and economic activity in our increasingly dynamic societies – and this is one of the factors that make higher education such an interesting social institution to study.

Moreover, there is no prospect of achieving any kind of stability in university-society relationships, let alone one which will satisfy all parties, for there seems no longer a single society to which a university can now be expected to respond. There are only governments, academics and students, labour markets and industries, professions and occupations, status groups and reference groups, communities and localities, and the dis-localities of the "global". In this light I see it as of great analytic interest to study the emerging new modes of co-ordination in the higher education sector, their underlying rationales and in particular the effects of internationalisation and globalisation – I will come back to the debate on terminology later – and also how these are being translated into institutional frameworks and responses. Equally, from a normative point of view it also seems essential to stimulate a policy search for institutions which will be solid and dynamic enough to withstand the current tensions and dilemmas: dilemmas that are already triggering demands for the simultaneous performance of contradictory functions (Castells 2001) in a polycentric and internationalising environment. In other words, what can be done to support higher education's capacity to continue to function as an institution, now that the mission that it is expected to fulfil can only be described as impossible?

A review of the complex and dynamic processes of internationalisation at different levels in higher education reveals that these processes are prompting increasingly rapid change in two rather different respects (Teichler 1999). First, there is now a wide range of border-crossing activities, many of them resulting from institutional rather than governmental initiatives, and these are certainly still on the rise. But we can also see more substantial changes towards systematic national or supra-national policies, combined with a growing awareness of issues of international co-operation and competition in a globalising higher education market. Under the first heading there is a growth of specific, clearly visible international co-operation, including activities such as student and staff mobility schemes, co-operative research activities and foreign language teaching to support them; under the second, we can see trends towards internationalisation, regionalisation or globalisation of the actual substance and structures of higher education – for example, proposals for convergence in institutional patterns, study programmes or curricula.

> Perhaps at no time since the establishment of the universities in the medieval period has higher education been so international in scope. Internationalism is a key part of the future, and higher education is a central element in the knowledge-based global economy. (Altbach and Teichler 2001, p. 24)

Those who claim to have identified a strong trend towards internationalisation, are self-evidently also describing the past: asserting that higher education in the past was less international than today, and even less so in comparison with the anticipated future. A closer look, however, shows that higher education in the past can be described in a seemingly controversial and even contradictory way.

The university in its medieval Western tradition has always been perceived as a highly international institution compared to other major institutions of society. Grand notions of students moving freely from Bologna to Paris to Oxford suggest that from its earliest times the university transcended national or, to be more precise, territorial frontiers. These medieval folk-memories are reinforced by images of the Renaissance, of Europe in the Age of Enlightenment, and nowadays of academics as the archetypal global players in contemporary societies. Certainly there has always been an appreciation of cosmopolitan values in universities, pride was frequently based on international recognition and reputation, international co-operation and mobility were not unusual, and a universal conception of knowledge dominated many disciplines and was seen as legitimate in others. Thus one could fairly argue that the university always was and still is an international institution, and that it has been a major force not only in the secularisation of modern societies but also in their internationalisation.

But these memories and images may actually serve as a kind of mystification if they are taken as proof that the university always has been, and therefore always will be, an international institution. The other side of the coin is the prominent historical role of universities in the process of nation-building, and their dependence on the nation state. In his essay on the modern university, Wittrock wrote that

> ... universities form part and parcel of the very same process which manifests itself in the emergence of an industrial economic order and the nation-state as the most typical and most important form of political organisation. (Wittrock 1993, p. 305)

This is what the "nationalisation" of higher education is about (Neave 2000). The contemporary university was born of the nation state, not of medieval civilisation, and it was only in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries,

following the establishment of clear national economic interests, that universities acquired their identification with science and technology. Their regulatory and funding context was, and still is, national; their contribution to national cultures was, and still is, significant; students tended to be, and still are, trained to become national functionaries; and universities played, and still play, a considerable role in what some have called the military-industrial complex of nation states. In this perspective, they are very much national institutions. It is appropriate, therefore, to see current trends as part of a process by which national systems of higher education are being challenged by new forces of internationalisation. Universities are thus objects as well as subjects of "internationalisation" or "globalisation". They are affected by and at the same time influence these processes.

Internationalisation, globalisation, regionalisation, and de-nationalisation

Having said this, the notion of internationalisation reminds us at the same time of its clear links to international power and domination. There are neo-colonial elements in the debate: nationalism may well be provoked into growth at times of internationalisation; competition and exclusion are at stake when terms such as "globalisation" are on the agenda. The narrative of globalisation that entered the English-speaking world in the 1960s, and was then taken up surprisingly quickly all over the world, is not just a narrative but an ideology with multiple meanings and linkages. In this context it is often constructed as an impersonal and inevitable force – sometimes in order to justify certain policies.

> At any event it should make us suspicious that the most powerful actors, and the most likely winners, praise internationalisation of higher education almost unconditionally, and push aside the anxieties of the less powerful actors. (Teichler 1999, p. 9)

The challenges of internationalisation or globalisation are confronting developing countries at a time of major national transformation and re-structuration (Moja and Cloete 2001). These countries' burden is in many cases threefold: to support the further expansion and "nationalisation" of their higher education system, to redefine its role and situation in the regional context, and to struggle with the impact of global forces confronting it, like the WTO treatment of higher education in the framework of the GATS agreements. Meanwhile, in many industrialised countries "internationalisation" and "globalisation" are nowadays performing a kind of "icebreaker" function (Enders 2002) for national reform agendas. In many cases, neither the

diagnoses of the perceived problems of the system nor the corresponding prescriptions for reform are in any way new. But the international argument lends fresh wind to national debates on higher education reform which can now sail under the flag of "internationalisation" by claiming to strengthen national capacities in the face of global competition.

Thus an additional factor to be considered is competition among systems and institutions of higher education. At the institutional level, universities have not generally been perceived in the past as highly competitive: over the last half-century, the huge state-funded growth of higher education has damped down any need for competition. In any case, most institutions' capacity to compete was limited in practical terms, even if they might have wished to extend their territory (Dill and Sporn 1995). The scenery is now being changed, first by the recent stagnation or even decrease in levels of financial support, which is sharpening institutions' need for new sources of funding, and second by the blurring of boundaries of space and time through the availability of new technologies which are making possible new modalities, both of learning and of research. So, as globalisation theorists would have it, the past is no longer a reliable guide to the future. Despite earlier low levels of competition, the increasing rivalry among higher education institutions, along with the other competitive challenges just mentioned, is leading universities that wish to compete, or to find new niches in the emerging international market, to develop more adaptable and flexible means of organising and managing academic work.

These adaptations can take a variety of forms. In some universities we see newer and income-earning (and hence potentially competitive) activities such as continuing education, technology transfer and research exploitation taking place at, or even just beyond, the boundary: new units are created to manage these activities which leave the traditional core of academic work relatively untouched. In others, new structures are emerging which increase internal differentiation, and bring these activities more into the centre of the university while preserving or even sharpening the distinction between old and new roles. Others again are aiming at various forms of integration, so that a new and more competitive culture begins to suffuse even the most traditional and stable areas of academic work (Sporn 1999; Clark 1998). In other words, we might say that universities' reactions to internationalisation, and their hunger for new resources, begin as a series of blisters on their skins. It is an interesting question whether they can continue to treat these as localised eruptions to be plastered over or otherwise contained at the periphery, or whether they will be forced to adopt a more holistic approach.

At the national level, however, we can see two contradictory factors. On one hand, as suggested above, politicians are paying growing atten-

tion to international competition. On the other hand, there seems to be a growing concern with mutual observation and comparison between systems and institutions, which suggests a kind of revival of interest in international co-operation. For policy analysts working in comparative higher education it is, of course, particularly interesting to see how a previously widespread and entrenched scepticism about the possibility of learning anything useful from foreign experiences is being overtaken by an equally insouciant optimism as to the transferability of specific elements of other higher education systems. The outcomes of this development, however intriguing, are far from clear.

The advent of globalisation as a fashionable topic has led to considerable controversy over whether it is a genuine social process or a new element of political discourse – or, most plausibly, a composite mixture of both (Guillén 2001). Globalisation sometimes seems a catch-all phrase or a non-concept, a catalogue of more or less everything that seems different since the 1970s: advances in information technology, greater capital flow across borders, international mobility of labour or of students, new public management and the weakening power of nation states, credit transfer in higher education and international recognition of degrees. Moreover, "globalisation", "internationalisation", "regionalisation" and "de-nationalisation" are frequently used interchangeably to highlight the international activities and widening outreach of higher education. Still, there are important differences and Scott (1998) has proposed a clearer distinction between the different terminologies.

Following Scott's interpretation, I believe that the concept of internationalisation should refer mainly to processes of greater co-operation between states, and consequently to activities which take place across state borders. It reflects a world order in which nation states still play a central role. Given this political reality, the emphasis is on the building of strategic international relationships, based on mutual co-operation and also on mutual observation. In this formulation, the conceptual boundaries between the state, the market and the university seem fairly clear, albeit regularly contested in practice.

In contrast, globalisation refers primarily to the processes of increasing interdependence, and ultimately convergence, of economies, and to the liberalisation of trade and markets. (In addition and as an observable consequence, globalisation has a strong cultural component, which tends to encourage the establishment of a (usually Western) global-brand culture, although in principle it can also support the diffusion of more indigenous traditions.) The process of globalisation is associated with a restructuring of the nation state: through the deregulation of legal and financial controls, the opening of markets or quasi-markets (including in higher education), and the increasing primacy of notions of competition, efficiency and managerialism. In a glob-

alised environment, the power of nation states is fundamentally challenged: states find that they have very limited control over policies that regulate higher education "systems".

This basic distinction between internationalisation and globalisation can be supplemented, if also complicated, by the concept of "regionalisation". Taking Europe as an example, and regarding "Europeanisation" as a form of regionalisation, we can see two somewhat contradictory trends. On the one hand, regionalisation, at least in higher education, could be described as a process of growing regional co-operation or even integration on equal terms, involving mutual co-operation and "horizontal" interaction at all levels: between national and sub-national governments, between sectors and institutions of higher education across the region, and even region-wide collaboration among corresponding units within universities and colleges: in other words, a benign regional version of the internationalisation processes we have just described. On the other hand, one can also make a persuasive case that regionalisation in higher education is part and parcel of the globalisation process, establishing co-operation among neighbours in order to counteract the pressure from other parts of the world.

Having said this, it seems obvious that globalisation and to some extent regionalisation as well tend to be regarded as dominant factors contributing to a certain "de-nationalisation" that affect important sectors in society, like higher education. The fall of the nation-state – whether it is political reality or not – can, however, have two distinct meanings. On the one hand, we can discuss issues related to shifts in the sovereignty of nation-states where responsibilities and capacities for political steering are moved to an international level and to a local level. On the other hand de-nationalisation might be discussed as a process of "de-etatisation" or "Entstaatlichung" due to certain rearrangements in the triangle between the state, the market, and forms of societal self-organisation. Discussions in this area thus focus on the transfer of authority and responsibility, either downwards (decentralisation, localisation), upwards (inter-, trans-nationalisation) or to the side (de-regulation, privatisation, self-organisation).

Some such attempt to reduce the bewildering variety of phenomena labelled "globalisation" to a more systematic definition must be an essential preliminary to any serious account of current developments. But if we are to move beyond definitions, there are a number of options. One option is to disentangle and systematise the various components and dimensions already addressed (cf. Guillén 2001). Can we actually observe the phenomenon of "globalisation"? Where and how is it really happening? Is it producing convergence within higher education, and at what levels? Is it undermining the authority of nation states over higher education, and if so, where is all the

power going? Is a global higher education system – and culture – genuinely in the making?

It ought to be obvious that our answers to these key questions in the globalisation debate may not necessarily all lead in the same directions. Recent developments seem, for example, to be leading to a society that is multi-dimensional, polycentric and contingent – but one, however, in which the national and the trans-national still coexist. As various studies (e.g., Sassen 1996) have reminded us, the role of the state has changed, but it has not been eliminated. It is not simply the case that the national state is losing significance, because the state itself has been a key agent in the implementation of global processes, and it has emerged quite altered by this participation.

In this light, the controversy between "the State" and "the market" as imperfect alternatives (Wolf 1988) may as well not be as sharp as it seems at first sight. While recent reforms have been prompted by a loss of trust in the regulatory power of the state and the widespread perception of so-called government failures, we now find a growing awareness of the imperfections of the market, including so-called market failures. It still remains to be seen what will happen in the longer run, now that in so many countries the state has decided to set up markets or quasi-markets in service sectors like higher education. And our understanding of globalisation is still in its infancy.

Both the challenges and the trends described above are beginning to influence the development of higher education policy at the national level. They are leading to initiatives that go beyond traditional internationalisation policies, which could be characterised as marginal, add-on activities mainly focused on the international mobility of students and teachers. We are now seeing more structural measures which will influence the higher education system more profoundly (Wende 2002). Mutual awareness and self-reflexivity among the actors involved (Beck 1996) are certainly growing in the international landscape of higher education.

Moreover, globalisation does not have to be a uniform process and is not necessarily leading to uniform outcomes. We should bear in mind that the context for internationalisation varies substantially from country to country. As we all know, context matters, and the point we started from always leaves its stamp on wherever we may arrive (Stinchcombe 1965). It is obvious that the economic and political power of a country, its size and geographic location, its dominant culture, the quality and typical features of its higher education system, the role its language plays internationally, and previous internationalisation policies have all to be taken into consideration. Not so many years ago, many countries had sharply differing views on the merits or even the possibility of internationalisation, and the same can still be said today – even if to a somewhat lesser extent.

Studies like these should make us aware of the usefulness of comparative research in higher education. Comparative perspectives on governmental policies of the nation-state and on national systems of higher education still offer fruitful cross-national insights into national patterns. They are as well

> ... indispensable for understanding a reality shaped by common international trends, reforms based on comparative observation, growing trans-national activities and partial supra-national integration in higher education. (Teichler 1996, p. 431)

But the underlying rationale of traditional forms of comparative higher education research is a presumption that we can reasonably analyse and compare national systems which are defined as relatively closed; and this is being challenged by recent trends. Given the complexity of the phenomena involved, we may need to keep an open mind as researchers, and try to construct a more differentiated picture of the causes, implications, and effects of the emerging secular trends at stake and the multiplying actors and stakeholders involved (Maassen 2000). One such attempt may be found in governance studies.

Europeanisation and the governance of the academic commons

Mayntz (1998) has recently summarised the overall evolution or development of a theory of political governance, a theory that began by being concerned with the steering actions of political authorities as they deliberately attempt to shape socio-economic structures and processes. She does so without special reference to given fields or sectors of policy studies, like higher education. A first attempt to follow respective developments in our field reveals, however, that higher education studies have not only reflected but contributed to this debate and helped to build a framework for the study of political governance. In this context it is, of course, impossible to refer to or to document these developments by extensive references. An account to look for the contribution of higher education policy studies to the overall development of governance theory can rather serve to put our field into a larger context and to see to what extent this context might serve our further purposes of studying the international dimension in higher education.

> For Mayntz (1998, p. 2)
> the modern theory of political governance emerged after World War II at a time when governments aspired explicitly to steer their nations' social and economic development in the direction of defined goals.

The first paradigm of a theory of political governance was concerned with policy development and policy implementation, and it adopted a top-down,

or legislator's perspective. A brief sketch of the evolution of this theory of political governance in the narrow sense of "steering" in higher education studies mirrors indeed very much the developments in other fields of policy analyses in three stages from "planning" via "policy development" to "policy implementation". Early studies in the late 1960s began with a – largely prescriptive – theory of planning of higher education. They were accompanied by strong believes in human capital and manpower planning approaches as well as the contribution of educational investment to economic growth. In the 1970s, with the planning euphoria waning and the reform of higher education systems in Europe on the move, policy development became the object of empirical analyses; this directed attention to context factors influencing policy development, in particular executive organization; different policy instruments were discussed, in particular the role of law. Finally, in the first half of the 1980es, policy implementation became a new research focus in higher education studies where the process of policy formulation, reformulation and implementation gained interest (e.g., Cerych/Sabatier 1986).

These studies carried in themselves the seeds of their own transformation. Implementation research called attention to the fact of policy failure or shortcomings, and proved that such failure was not only the consequence of mistakes in planning or of shortcomings on the part of implementation agencies, but of having neglected specific characteristics of the field of policy implementation concerned as well as the recalcitrance of the target groups of public policy and their ability to resist or subvert the achievement of policy goals.

This recognition led to two important enlargement of the initial paradigm.

First, had it so far concentrated on the subject of political steering, government and its ability or inability to steer, it now included also the structure and behavioural dispositions of the object of political control – the higher education system and its organisational structures. Important studies were undertaken to deepen our understanding of the systemic peculiarities of higher education, their embeddedness in professional believe systems and national traditions and ideosyncracies (e.g., Clark 1983; Becher/Kogan 1992). Furthermore, the rise of studies in the sociology of organisations emphasised characteristics of universities' internal life and the nature of the relationship between their internal and external life that make these organisations unique and a significant object of study. Examples are 'loose coupling' (Weick 1976), 'organisational saga' (Clark 1970) and 'garbage can decision-making' (March and Olson 1976). Thus the top-down perspective of the initial paradigm (policy making and implementation) was extended by the inclusion of questions related to the 'governability' of higher education

systems as well as bottom-up processes which are in turn conditioned by the structure of the given regulatory field of higher education. This expansion of the analytical perspective taught us much about the conditions of policy effectiveness.

Second, the disappointment of the belief in the existence of an effective political control centre as well as the withdrawal of several states across Europe from direct control to 'steering from a distance' directed attention to alternative forms of governance: In various lines of discussion, market principles and horizontal self-organization were discussed as alternatives to hierarchical political control. Among the first and most often cited attempts is, of course, Clark's triangle (Clark 1983) of higher education systems between the three axes of market-like co-ordination, state-induced co-ordination, and academic/professional co-ordination. For some time it seemed – at least in the European context – as if "the state and the market" could be treated as alternative options in a kind of zero sum game – the more there is of one, the less there is of the other (van Vught 1989). Analyses and differentiation between 'state control models' and 'state supervising models' as well as a perceived shift from 'ex ante control' of higher education to 'ex post control' contributed to a large extent to the understanding of the 'rise of the evaluative state' in higher education. They made it clear that we are dealing with not so much a loss of state control, but rather a change in its form. Recent critic of previous governance models, however, extended again the principle list of modes of coordination (e.g., Braun/Merrien 1999). Moreover, local self-governance, hierarchical self-steering, quasi-market competition, authoritative interaction and stakeholderism in higher education are no longer seen as exclusive or as alternative options – they coexist and are casually interrelated. At the same time, one might say that realism has grown as regards the potentials and limits of the steering capacities of certain modes of coordination. Governmental failures as well as professional failures, market failures as well as managerial failures tend to be observed and it is not unlikely that network failures will enter the floor soon as well.

Recently, the term "governance" has thus been extended in two ways, both distinct from political guidance or steering. For one thing, "governance" is now often used to indicate a new mode of governing that is distinct from the hierarchical control model, a more cooperative mode where state and non-state actors participate in mixed networks. Attempts at collective problem-solving outside of existing hierarchical frameworks of the nation-state have contributed significantly to this shift in the meaning of the term governance. The second "new" meaning of the term governance is much more general, and has a different genealogy. Here governance means the different modes of coordinating individual actions, or basic forms of social order.

Having arrived at this point, the basic frame of a theory of political governance seems complete – even though a lot remains to be done to study the complex relationships and dynamics of the different modes of co-ordination in (national) governance studies on higher education and cross-national comparisons. But meanwhile new problems have arisen, notably the crisis of the welfare state that is connected with European integration and economic globalisation. In the light of Europeanisation and globalisation, certain accepted and apparently unproblematic features of the previously sketched theory of governance and its application in the field of higher education studies appear suddenly as deficits,

> ... deficits which can trigger a new phase in theory development by challenging us to extend our analytical frame once more (Mayntz 1998, p. 9).

The deficits in question are:

- the concentration on the single nation state (even where international comparisons are made), and a selective concern with domestic politics,
- the concentration on policy effects on the changing relationship between the state and higher education organisations, and the internal governance of higher education institutions, neglecting the input side of policy formation (organisational responses and activities included), and the relationship between both.
- the concern with macro level policy-making and meso level organisational adaptation, neglecting to some extend the micro dynamics and effects in the actual practices and performances of academic work.

(1) The theory of political governance has so far dealt with political systems that have a clear identity, a clear boundary, and a defined membership which implies specific rights and duties. This kind of approach is incapable of dealing with the problems raised by European integration, and especially with the problems raised by globalisation.

> The formation of the European Union has established a new, transnational governance structure. The European Union is decidedly more than a regime, a contractual frame or a negotiating arena, but it is as clearly not a federal state; it can best be described as a complex multi-level system whose dynamics cannot well be understood in the conceptual frame developed for the analysis of political governance in nation states ... For a theory of political governance, European integration has two consequences: (1) it raises new problems of governance on the national level, and (2) it requires the extension of governance theory to a supra-national level. (Mayntz 1998, p. 5)

Ad (1): The shift of powers to the European level requires us to study the effect of European directives upon the national higher education system and respective policies. This is in fact partly being done by several first studies in this area (e.g., Barblan et al. 2000; Kälvermark/Wende 1997; Teichler 1998; Wende 2002). In this way the previous paradigm is extended once again, this time by adding an important external factor of policy formation and implementation.

Recent research in this area shows that although variation across European Union countries prevails, national policies for internationalisation of higher education increasingly emphasise the economic benefits involved. A growing range of countries are aware of the increasing international competition in higher education and have formulated economic rationales for their internationalisation policies. Furthermore, and very much related to the follow-up of the Bologna Declaration, the international and especially the European dimension is now becoming much more integrated into the main-stream national-level policy making on higher education. Furthermore, a European-wide survey of the follow-up process of the Bologna Declaration has demonstrated that the system-level reforms resulting from this process are leading to more convergence in terms of degree structures. At the same time, however, and due to the fact that the responsibility for the implementation rests with the individual countries, certain diversities certainly remain.

Ad (2): We can also observe the growth of a field called "European policy-making" (e.g., Héritier et al. 1996; Richardson 1996) in governance studies of mutual interdependence between national and European policy processes in a multi-level system. Here again, some studies on higher education have been undertaken that tend to underline the variety of policy-approaches to be observed in the peculiar case of higher education, i.e., the principle of subsidiarity and the segmented responsibility for education and training on the one hand, and science and research on the other hand. They are up-to-now, however, only loosely related to respective theoretical developments in other policy fields (cf. Scharpf 2001).

Following Scharpf, the default mode of Europeanised policy responses in higher education might for example been called "mutual adjustment". Here, national governments continue to adopt their own national policies, but they do so in response to, or anticipation of, the policy choices of other governments or certain perceived European developments.

At another level, European governance in higher education might be realised by "intergovernmental negotiations" where national policies are coordinated by agreements at the European level, but national governments try to remain in full control of the decision process, transformation into national contexts and implementation remains under their control. The cooperation

of countries in the Bologna process can be considered as such a governance form: a voluntary process, not binding and thus with no legal consequences for countries, institutions or students as compared to the EU processes of supranational steering or "hierarchical direction", although with very limited competences and authority in higher education.

Another approach might be labelled "joint decisions" and combines intergovernmental negotiations and supranational direction. Here, European legislation or initiative depends on action taken by the European commission but involves as well inter-governmental negotiations, increasingly the European Parliament as well as a heavy load of European comitology. The recent announcement towards the "European Research Area" and the call for the establishment of so-called "networks of excellence" in selected spearhead fields of research in the 6th Framework Program of the European Commission can serve as an example for this mode.

It would be certainly of interest to study the input side of policy formation as well as the outcome and output of this process, and the relationship between the two. Moreover, this recent development may be seen as complementing the European Union's policy objective for a "European Educational Area", put forward in the beginning of 1990s. It follows, however, a different logic of the overall policy process, and it is very unclear at the moment whether and how these two processes – related on the one hand to the educational function and on the other hand to the research function of higher education – are going to be linked or integrated.

(2) The above policies, developed in one or the other way at the European level, and forming part of the broader process of European integration, have, however, resulted in the emergence of a multi-level and multi-actor context within which higher education organisations operate and develop themselves their international activities.

Previous evaluations and empirical research suggest that the organisational responses to national and European policies for internationalisation are far from uniform. Variation in organisational responses may refer to volume of international activities carried out, expansion across an organisation or across different organisations, the type of internationalisation of those activities, and the specific form that internationalisation takes, within the diversity of higher education organisations, systems, and national contexts.

Further studies on the perceptions of the European policies and the responses to these policies on the part of the actors of national policies and the key actors in the individual institutions of higher education are needed.[1] Moreover, colleges and universities are increasingly international and at the same time local actors. International marketing of degrees and programs,

international network building and consortia, recruitment of international students and staff are among those factors contributing to a growing role of organisations as international agents. They underline a need for the study of how local actors and organisations extend their activities to the international stage (Marginson/Rhoades 2002).

(3) Finally, concern with European policy-making also calls attention to another blind spot of national and cross-national governance studies in higher education: the micro-level of academic work and life. It is true that interest in studies on the academic profession has recently grown and that a number of studies have tried to analyse the impact of changing modes of coordination in higher education on the academic workplace in cross-national perspectives (e.g., Enders/Teichler 1997; Farnham 1999; Enders 2001; Altbach 2001). Some of them tend to send out alarming signals: standards are compromised and curiosity is displaced, control is dispersed and coherence is lost, continuity diminishes and constant change produces stress. Others tend to support continuity rather than dramatic change as regards the self-image of academics, aspects of faculty morale or the major work tasks of the academic profession. Most of them share, however, a macro-level perspective on policy making, management and international trends in higher education that concentrates on the upper levels of policy analyses. More fine grained analyses of the extent to which change at the academic workplace level is taking place is provided by Henkel (2000) in her national case study on academic identities and policy change in the UK.

The major challenge in this area will thus be to go further 'from theory to practice', i.e., to analyse the impact of changing governance structures and institutional environment on the identities, rules, and rewards that govern the academic commons as the principal internal constituencies of the higher education fabric. This is obviously a difficult and challenging task for further research. All debates on the impact of recent developments and trends on the university can, however, not confine themselves in aiming to explore what suits best the public expectations, the managerial beliefs in functioning of modern organizations, or the job satisfaction of the academic profession. Even though the impact of external and internal changes on the daily practices and the performance of academe cannot easily be examined, and even though the battle on the definition and measurement of 'quality' of academic work is part of the ongoing change in higher education, we should not loose sight of the fact that they are the ultimate criteria. Further cross-national research along this line that includes several aspects of international academic labor and employment markets is certainly needed.

Governance in a globalising context: Some preliminary remarks

While governance theory as well as higher education policy analysis have responded, at least partly, to the challenges which Europeanisation poses, this does not equally hold true for the process called globalisation. For all the talk about globalisation in higher education, there is limited theoretical conceptualisation as well as limited empirical study if and how it happens. Studies in that area tend for example to draw on theories derived from world system theory, international relation studies and organisational ecology/population theory (e.g., Rhoades/Sporn 2002). They show how certain policy discourses in higher education emerge and diffuse around the globe, and how they are locally 'adapted'. Marginson and Rhoades (2002) have recently argued toward a "glonacal agency heuristic" to conceptualise the study of simultaneous significance of global, national, and local forces in higher education. Respective approaches come close to what others would call a multi-level perspective in actor-centered neo-institutionalism:

> a complex framework that conceptualizes policy processes from a multi-level and multi-actor perspective driven by the interaction of individual and corporate actors endowed with certain capabilities and specific cognitive and normative orientations, within a given institutional setting and within a given external situation (Scharpf 1997, p. 37).

Such studies lead us further to the frontiers of the state of the art of what I have tried to elaborate in this paper as governance theory. They lead us as well to the major challenges we have to face in a multi-level and multi-actor study of global forces in higher education.

There is, first of all, the sheer complexity of transnational policy making and its interdependency with the national and local level. If globalisation is in the making, it probably means a growing disjunction between increasingly unbounded and farflung economic, social, and communicative networks on the one hand, and bounded political systems on the other hand, a disjunction between problem structures and (traditional) political structures. This is probably one of the reasons for the efforts to create and strengthen transnational regulatory frameworks, like regional blocs and associations such as the European Union or the North American Free Trade Agreement or non-governmental organisations, such as ILO, OECD, UNESCO, WHO, or the World Bank. They mirror, at least, to some extent governance subjects and structures where it is, in principle, still possible to speak of a policy process with its input and output aspects. But there are furthermore many international organisations, like professional associations, interest organisations and scientific organisations. Moreover, there seem to be a rise of trans-national

epistemic communities and social movements, social groups without clear geographical reference. Given their co-existence with national and local agents and organisations, this creates an enormous complexity of the co-existence of many different types of structures and processes, i.e., different governance modes. It is thus not surprising to note that in the global market, most agents believe to play, as it were, most of the time "against nature". And there is a danger that we ascribe our explanatory models for a structurally diffuse context to easily to specific forces (e.g., the impact of the World Bank, the aping of the US higher education system) thus contributing to a certain flavour of "conspiracy theory" that is as well easily around when it comes to globalisation.

This leads me to a second challenge. If globalisatition is in the making, it does not necessarily mean a linear and uniform process with uniform outcomes. Up-to-now higher education studies tend to emphasise globalisation if and when observations of "commonalities", "similar processes", "common structures", "one nation after the other" tend to be observed. A central tenet is that global reality is singular, and conforms everywhere to the same external laws. A corollary is that context is thought of as a set of conditional variables that have predicable effects under a general theory of a globalising world. Once the general developments are well understood, a full understanding of behaviour and institutions devolves. But even if we assume certain global forces on and in higher education, like massification, neo-liberal politics, or ICT, they are not uniform but multidimensional. They develop in a world of un-simultaneity that will not be affected to the same extent and at the same point in time. Yet, it should be possible, even as we might note "the global spread of standardized educational models", to perceive "persistent pecularities of higher education systems and distinct national options" (Teichler 1996, p. 251). With other words, even though it might be that we all go to the same holy grail our pathway might be very different. As a result, although we expect to find very different solutions to collective problems under radically different systems, it is also the case that we find very different solutions under putatively similar rationalised systems.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have made an attempt to contribute from a certain perspective on governance studies to the ongoing debate on the challenges "internationalisation" or "globalisation" might bring up for higher education policy analyses and especially for comparative research in that area. A range of processes which have been identified under the broad labels of "internationalisation", "globalisation", "regionalisation", and "de-nationalisation"

and some of the paradoxes and contradictions which it helps to highlight, have been addressed. Last but not least, an account on the development of governance theory was made to look for the strengths and weaknesses of this approach for higher education studies in an internationalising environment. In this development, changes in political reality have played a role for the extension of the conceptual frameworks. This development looks, however, like the unfolding of a more complex cognitive agenda. For one thing, "governance" is now often used to indicate a new mode of governing that is distinct from the hierarchical control model, a more cooperative mode where state and non-state actors participate in mixed networks. The second new meaning of the term governance is much more general, here governance means the different modes of coordinating individual actions, or basic forms of social order.

The new phenomenon of European integration has again challenged our conceptual and empirical tools for higher education studies to integrate the international dimension into frameworks that tend to concentrate on the single nation state and domestic policies even where international comparisons are made. It drives as well the awareness of certain blind spots: namely (1) the concentration on policy effects, neglecting the input side of policy formation, and (2) the concern with macro level policy-making and meso level organisational adaptation, neglecting to some extend the micro dynamics and effects in the actual practices and performances of academic work.

The more complex, and ideologically more suspect, concept of "globalisation" raises again questions toward an even more comprehensive theory of social dynamics where we might loose the necessary amount of selective attention that is a prerequisite of theory-building and empirical evidence. The complexity of the internationalisation and globalisation of higher education certainly invites further research. For this, we will need to use multiple methods of applying our theoretical and empirical tools to a variety of research settings defined at various levels of analysis. The differences and similarities which we discover across these levels and settings ought to provide us with some starting points for what may well turn out to be our biggest question: how different are the causes, implications and effects of internationalisation and globalisation between one context and another?

Note

1. A very recent example is the so-called HEIGLO-project "Higher Education Institutions' Responses to Europeanisation, Internationalisation and Globalisation. Developing International Activities in a Multi-Level Context", a joined study of seven European higher education research centers coordinated by my CHEPS colleague Marijk van der Wende and financed within the 5th Framework Program of the EU.

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