

# CHAPTER

## Governance, Change and the Universities in Western Europe

*Guy Neave*

### INTRODUCTION

**F**or nigh on three decades in Western Europe, what Anglo Saxon terminology calls 'governance' has tried the ingenuity of leaders and the patience of governments. Indeed, it has been the object of unremitting concern of political parties, Ministries and, last but very far from least, of the legislator. From a long-term perspective, the issue of governance—that is the organization, control and distribution of responsibility for teaching, learning and research at the level of the individual university—is both enduring and vexatious. It is also highly political. In Europe, it tends also to engage a very different discourse and evokes a very different mental landscape from its counterpart in those other 'referential systems'<sup>1</sup> of higher education, Britain and the United States.

Precisely because the context, historical, political and organizational, is so very different from either Britain or the United States, I want to mark out some of these differences, beginning first of all with the notion of governance itself. There is some merit in doing this. It should remind us that if our dialogue has reached a point where meaningful lessons may be exchanged, we should not lose sight of the fact that the paths which bring us together today themselves started from very different premises and in very different circumstances. Nor does it exclude the possibility that they could diverge later.

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1 Guy Neave [1998] "Quatre modèles pour l'Université", *Courrier de l'UNESCO*, septembre 1998

## Governance: a far from Universal Term

That “governance” is increasingly used as coterminous with ‘la gestion interne de l’université’, ‘Bestuursorganisatie’, ‘Universitaetsverwaltung’ is not simply a reflection of the convenience that various forms of English have as the *lingua franca* of our domain. The concept of governance in Britain and the United States assumes that the individual university possesses very real and substantial powers for determining the use of the resources assigned to it and in the decision to raise other resources. It also presumes that the individual university controls independently and on its own, the appointment, promotion, recognition and reward of academic excellence amongst both students and academic staff. Thus, the supposedly plain and straightforward concept of governance makes certain presumptions about the ‘proper’ relationship between public authorities, their representatives and the universities in which the latter possess a high degree of self-government (De Groof, J. & Neave, G. & Svec, J., 1998).

Fifteen years ago, few of these assumptions applied in the same way in Western Europe. The assumptions contained in the Anglo-American usage of the term implied a type of relationship between government and universities that did not then exist. Much has changed in the intervening period. If today we can debate the notion of governance within the Western European context, it is precisely because the relationship between university and government evolved beyond its classic—and long enduring—mode of ‘State control’. Beneath the unfolding patterns of institutional self-regulation in Western Europe lies a very radical change in relationship between central national administration and university. This particular dynamic which, if sometimes deriving from and inspired by, American practice, sets ‘governance’ within a very different political and cultural environment and has imparted to it a very different evolutionary path.

The centrality of governance in today’s university world reflects a particular thrust in the higher education policy of Western European States. To the adepts of Public Administration, this development is seen as part of a wider trend, permeating into higher education from other sectors of public life. Often described as the ‘new public management’, it entails on the one hand a reduction in the range of activities coming under the oversight of central national administration, together with greater efficiency and public accountability in the use of public resources on the other (Blickle, I., 1998) (Maassen, P. A. M. & Van Vught, F. A., 1994). An extension of this perspective concentrates on the relationship between state and university. It involves a shift from detailed scrutiny and central direction, which parades under the short hand of ‘State control’, before a more accommodating and more flexible concept of ‘State supervision’ (Van Vught, F. A., 1997) (Neave, G. & Van Vught, F. A.,

1991). Functions hitherto vested in a central Ministry have, in the course of the past fifteen years or so, been delegated to the individual university and, with them, an enhanced degree of 'self regulation'. In most European systems, academic appointments at senior level, self-validation of the curriculum or a diminution in the degree of formal central control exercised over the latter (Askling, B. & Bauer, M. & Marton, S., 1999) figure amongst these 'repatriated' functions (Neave, G., 1999).

### **Two Reforms for the Price of One**

Changes in governance come from re-considering both the location and weight of historic systems of control and regulation, which, by and large, have been in place for the best part of a century or more. However, current debate in Western Europe over forms of governance does not take place in an historical vacuum. And whilst it would be exaggerated to argue that what is happening today is an attempt to correct earlier developments, this interpretation is not wholly unfounded. If we dismiss the first wave of reform in governance that took place during the late Sixties to the late Seventies, we risk being less sensitive to some aspects that arose in the course of the second.

Most denizens of British and American academia, aged 50 plus, are in the case of the former, engaged in putting in place the idea of the entrepreneurial university or, in the case of the latter, involved in adjusting it to economic or technological change. Many of their fellows in mainland Europe have, however, been through *two* reforms in governance. Of these, the present challenge of the 'new economy' is probably less traumatic, though more radical in its consequences for the distribution of authority.

### **Le Grand Soir of the Ordinarienuiversitaet: 1968 and its Aftermath**

The significance of the reforms that from 1968 onwards rolled in upon the university in Western Europe lies in several areas.<sup>2</sup> First, it was a highly political affair and treated as such by both its protagonists and its adversaries. From the standpoint of its adepts, the pressure for overhauling 'university governance' drew justification from the notion of 'participant democracy'. Participant democracy extended 'democracy' beyond the issue of who should have access to knowledge. It focused specifically on the organization, decision-making, participation and thus the distribution of authority, which accompanied the dissemination of knowledge inside the university itself. In this scheme of things, the 'Gruppenuniversitaet' (The University of Repre-

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<sup>2</sup> For an irascible and testy account of these developments, see Shils E. & Daalder H., (eds), (1982), *Universities, Politicians and Bureaucrats*: Cambridge University Press.

sentative Groups) was erected as counter example to the dysfunctional and supposedly 'non democratic' Ordenarienuniversitaet—the University of the Senior Professors.

The pressure to found the 'inner life' of universities upon the transparency of 'collective representation' of interests—junior staff, non academic personnel and students (Neave, G. & Rhoades, G., 1987)—in both central university decision-making and in individual faculties generated a number of developments which have direct bearing on the present debate. First, the principle of Tripartite representation (*Drittelpartiet*) set aside one third of seats on university and faculty Councils to each constituency - academic staff, university personnel and students. The number of officially recognized 'constituencies' inside academia increased. Their relative weighting altered profoundly (De Boer, H. & Denters, B. & Goedegebuure, L., 1998b). Second, and beginning with the Dutch law of 1970, the principle of 'corporate representation'—the representation of formally constituted groups within the university—became the Ark of Covenant which, in the course of the Seventies laid the basis of institutional governance in mainland Europe. Enshrined in the fundamental legislation of Germany and Austria in 1976<sup>3</sup>, the system of 'electoral colleges' embraced Sweden the following year, with similar measures introduced in Greece and Spain during the early Eighties.

### Fragmentation and Shifts in Basic Units

What might, perhaps mischievously, be called 'Mode One'<sup>4</sup> in the reform of decision-making structures in Continental Europe, formally strengthened internal accountability in the university sector<sup>5</sup> and supposedly counter-balanced professorial power by a system of checks and balances. From the standpoint of those less enthused by collective decision-making, 'electoral collegi-

3 Respectively, in the shape of the Hochschulrahmengesetz of 1976 and the Universitaet-organisationsgesetz of the same year, in Sweden a year later with the 1977 reforms.

4 Honour paid where honour is due. This term was first coined by Michael Gibbons and applied to developments in science policy and research. It has, to the best of my belief, not as yet been applied to the historical development of governance. The logic of so doing becomes, however, unstoppable, once we change our perspective on the university qua institution to that of being a sub-set of the 'knowledge production process' (sic)—see Gibbons, M. & Limoges, C. & Nowotny, H. & Schwartzmann, S. & Scott, P. & Trow, M (1994), *The new production of knowledge the dynamics of science and research in contemporary societies*, London/Thousand Oaks/New Delhi, SAGE Publications, p. 179.

5 To call this process accountability is both an inaccuracy and an anachronism, but convenient nevertheless. Accountability, like governance, is a concept almost impossible to translate directly into other European languages. Responsabilité, imputabilité in French do not carry the same connotations of rendering accounts to those to whom the establishment has a moral obligation so to do

ality' served both to fragment and to politicize the inner life of the university (Shils, E. & Daalder, H., 1982). Fragmentation, however, was not confined to the shifting alignments of the various groups inside either university or faculty councils. It also emerged in the shape of new 'basic units' below Faculty level. The creation of sub faculty groupings—the so called Unites d'Enseignement et de Recherche—in the wake of the French Loi d'Orientation of 1968 and their counterparts in the Netherlands and Germany—the Vakgroep and the Fachbereiche—the first introduced by the law on University Governance of 1970 (Wet op de Universitaire Bestuurshervorming) and the second by the Higher Education Guideline Law of 1976, are interesting from several points of view. They reflected, at a time of massive student growth, the need for a teaching unit below the faculty level, less remote from either students or staff. They also reflected the conviction that a student body, of increasing diversity, required a closer, pedagogic 'encadrement'. In truth, the faculty had literally outgrown its functions, both as the main administrative and as a teaching unit. In terms of relationship between teaching staff, 'Department' equivalents were cast 'as the very model of a modern' collegiality. In the Netherlands, following the promulgation of the 1970 Law on University Governance, Departmental Boards, with a majority of teaching staff, but also including non academic personnel and students, elected their Chairmen on a one year mandate from amongst full professors (De Boer, H. & Denters, B. & Goedegebuure, L., 1998a).

### **Change and Continuity**

Radical though changes in the basic units for knowledge delivery and the strengthening of 'corporate participation' were—the latter to be understood in its original meaning of a guild or medieval corporation—they remained reforms *internal* to the university. In terms of co-ordination and authority, neither the relationship with the State nor with the market, were objects of revision. The impact fell within the 'academic oligarchy'. Certainly, the apparent demise of the Ordinarienuiversitaet was radical in itself. But, the way in which change was carried out and the basic principles that underlay it, from an administrative and legal standpoint, in no way departed from well-established practice. Instruments of change remained, in effect, the traditional armory of national legislation. They applied in a homogeneous fashion across the whole of the university sector throughout the breadth and depth of the land. In France and Germany, re-definition of participant constituencies and 'knowledge delivery systems' formed a sub-set within broader, framework legislation which set down the overall operating frame for the university, whilst reserving the right of the Ministry to elaborate on those aspects—finance or curriculum development, for instance,—which might require attention later.

Thus, inner change was balanced by continuity in the instrumentality that implemented it. Though agendas naturally varied from university to university, the composition, size and remit of committees and councils—university, faculty or department—did not. They reflected the ‘national’ nature and status of the university. In short, the principle of ‘legal homogeneity’ both symbolic of, and as a means of upholding national unity, survived intact.<sup>6</sup> So, also, did established boundaries of national regulation over such domains as degree validation, control over curriculum, length of courses, creation of posts—and in some instances, nomination to posts—areas which, with certain exceptions, fell firmly under the oversight of national authority and were subject to national legal stipulation, remained set in that mould.

Despite internal reform, the distinction Trow drew a quarter of a century ago between the ‘public’ and ‘private’ lives of academia in Britain and the United States (Trow, M., 1975) remained less clearly delineated in Europe. National regulation still penetrated into and set norms for those functions, which in both Britain and the United States, stood as quintessential features of institutional self-regulation.

### **Mode One of Governance Reform: a Retrospective View**

What were the lasting achievements of Mode One reform? Given the passions, heat and energy aroused, the outcomes were remarkably modest. By the same token, given the very radical changes Mode 2 reform introduced to the inner decision-making machinery of universities in Western Europe, how little effervescence it generated amongst the student estate is just as astounding. If there was much heart-searching amongst academia, it found little echo amongst society at large—a phenomenon which itself deserves closer scrutiny. Mode One reform focused on a political agenda. In the long run, neither the relationship with State nor with Society, still less the instruments of national policymaking, were altered.

The same cannot be said of the second wave of reform, which since the mid Eighties in Western Europe has been urged on by economic and industrial considerations—though these are no less ideologically powerful. Though not always couched in such terms, ‘de-regulation’ and ‘marketisation’ (Dill, D. &

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<sup>6</sup> For the notion of legal homogeneity, see Neave, G. & Van Vught, F. A., (1991), *Prometheus Bound: the changing relationship between higher education and government in Western Europe*, Oxford, Pergamon; Neave, G. & Van Vught, F. A., (1994), *Government and Higher Education across Three Continents: the winds of change*, Oxford, Pergamon; for a more historic account of this value set in its importance in shaping the development of universities in Europe see Neave, G., (2001), “The European Dimension in higher education: the use of historical analogues” in Huisman, Maassen, P. A. M. & Neave, G., (eds), *Higher Education and the Nation State*, Oxford/Paris, Elsevier Science for IAU Press.

Sporn, B., 1996) began to unravel the financial nexus between university and central government. Sometimes, part of the budgetary burden was transferred to regional and local government—Spain (Garcia Garrido, J.-L., 1992) and France (Merrien, F.-X. & Musselin, C., 1999) being particular examples of this partial ‘diversification’. The more modest role now attributed to central national administration in running higher education, a development variously described as ‘remote steering’ (Van Vught, F. A., 1988) or as the ‘off-loading state’, was accompanied by radical overhaul to the instrumentality employed and to its point of application.

### The Radicalism of Mode 2 Reform in Governance

Viewed from outside mainland Europe, the shift from ‘national regulation’ to ‘self-regulation’ may appear both just and natural, the equivalent of those who have sinned by over reliance on State protection against the chill winds of the market, coming to repentance and admitting, at last, the error of their ways. It is a view, which, if understandable, tends to underplay the theories of political and social development that such a relationship once underpinned.<sup>7</sup> With central administration now defined as ‘strategic’ or ‘remote’, so the instrumentality of policy underwent revision. Revision involved adding national systems of qualitative evaluation, indicators of performance with the possibility of moving towards ‘benchmarking’ (Scheele, J. P. & Maassen, P. A. M. & Westerhijden, D. J., 1998) as the prime means for assessing outcomes. With higher education policy concentrating on outcomes and relying on individual institutions setting their own objectives for the attainment of national priorities, the formal legal fiction, long defended in many Western European countries, that all universities were equal in status, could no longer be sustained.<sup>8</sup>

7 For a more extensive development of this problematique and the political assumptions which underpin the notion of the university serving the ‘national’ – as opposed to the ‘local’ community, see Neave, G., (1997), “The European Dimension in Higher Education”, *op. cit.*, also Brinckmann, H., (1998) *Neue Freiheit der Universitaeten: operative Autonomie der Lehre und Forschung an Hochschulen*, Sigma, Berlin.

8 A minor parenthesis, but nevertheless an important one. It is only during the Nineties in Europe that the term ‘Research University’ began to gather credence. To European ears, it is an oxymoron. Universities were research universities to the extent that all trained students to the Ph.D or its equivalent level and had the right to award the doctoral degree. If research was not undertaken, the formal obligation was nevertheless incumbent on academic staff. Interestingly, the term ‘research university’ only began to assume extended usage when the principle of externally defined competition became an integral instrument for the ‘steering’ of higher education policy in Western Europe.

## The Drive to Convergence

De-regulation expanded the area of institutional discretion—and responsibility. Instead of being concerned primarily with verifying the application of national legislation, governance now extended to such areas as income generation, the negotiation of paid services to the external community<sup>9</sup>, the internal attribution of resources, financial and human. The second wave of governance reform began with the French Higher Education Guideline laws of 1984 and 1989. It assumed further momentum with the 1993 reforms in Sweden (Askling, B. & Bauer, M. & Marton, S., 1999) Denmark (Rasmussen, 1999) and Austria (Pechar, H. & Pellert, A., 1998), reached Norway in 1996 and the Netherlands with the 1997 University Modernisation Act (De Boer, H. & Denters, B. & Goedegebuure, L., 1998a). The salient feature of the second wave lies in governance *a l'européenne* taking on a substantial discretionary dimension with which it is usually associated in the Anglo-American literature (Harmon, G., 1992).

### Changing Focus, Changing Instrumentalities

The rationale beneath 'Mode 2' governance reform differed markedly and radically from its predecessor. Whilst 'Mode One' rested on a political interpretation—extending internal democracy by bringing the joys of participation to new constituencies—the second drew its strength from the imperatives of economic progress. As the decade unfolded, so did government priorities. What began as exercises in cost containment and a quest for new ways to enforce and to ascertain institutional efficiency acquired its own dynamic, which moved towards adjusting the internal workings of universities as key institutions in a 'knowledge-based economy'.

Within the individual university, reform of governance focused upon strengthening executive authority, upon closer internal scrutiny of the cost, output and performance of individual components—be they faculties, departments or research units—, upon developing explicit ties with the *local* and/or the *regional* community in contrast to previous concentration upon the university's place in the *national* community. Certainly, legislation aimed at strengthening institutional autonomy. But, it was an autonomy which, if more extensive, was tempered by a no less extensive system of institutional accountability and by the setting up of 'agencies of public purpose', sometimes sited inside the Ministry of Education or its counterpart, sometimes occupying a formal independence from the Ministry, but located within the purlieu of central administration. Amongst examples of the former arrangement are Ireland

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9 In France, for example, until 1980, individual universities required formal clearance from the Ministry to engage in contract work with the private sector.



and Sweden, whereas the latter are to be found in France (Staropoli, A., 1987) and in the British Quality Assessment Agency (Scheele, J. & Maassen, P. A. M. & Westerheijden, D. J., 1998).

The controlling framework itself shifted focus from input to output and from a predominantly legislative basis through ministerial decrees and circulars to a more complex, sophisticated and certainly more inquisitive instrumentality, specifically conceived for and focused on, higher education. This new instrumentality grew up in addition to its juridically based predecessor (De Groof, J. Neave, G. & Svec, J., 1998).

### **Changes in Leadership Legitimacy**

This was not the only change that followed in the wake of overhauling patterns of governance in mainland Europe. As much symbolic as substantive has been the re-seating of the source of authority and legitimacy, which now attaches to the Rector, Vice Chancellor or University President. Three decades ago, Mode One reform, if anything underlined Rectoral legitimacy as deriving directly from the extended collegiality it had established<sup>10</sup> (CRE, 1986, 1987). Since one of the explicit purposes of contemporary governance reform is to make the university more sensitive to economic change, more efficient and more business-like, it is not greatly surprising that such shifts in purpose are also accompanied by shifts in the basis of legitimacy on which leadership itself resides. Indeed, that Presidential authority is increasingly interpreted in terms of positive 'leadership' rather than in its traditional responsibility of collective institutional representation which befell university Presidents as 'primi inter pares'. This change in interpretative context is itself of more than passing interest, since it is symbolic of those deep changes contained in the underlying values of quality, efficiency and enterprise that current reforms in governance seek to embed in Europe's universities. At this point, we need to return to a rather less explored aspect of the long historic relationship between universities in Europe and the notion of public service. It is a tie that deserves some attention, if only for the fact that it stands as a major contextual difference between universities in Europe and in the United States.

Irrespective of how the withdrawal of the State is interpreted, whether in terms of 'de-regulation', 'marketisation' or (to use an awful French neologism) 'contractualisation', it is a process which involves a fundamental displacement of what is best described as the 'referential institution'—that is, the

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<sup>10</sup> In the aftermath of 1968, certain universities saw rectoral candidates no longer drawn exclusively from the senior professoriate, but also included representatives of the Assistant estate. Some in France and Germany even elected Rectors from amongst their ranks, an enthusiasm since corrected!

prime source of 'good practice'—effectively, a referential model from which standards are set and procedures taken over and emulated. Since the foundation of the Nation State in Europe, the major referential institution for the universities has been the national civil service, in terms of conditions of employment, formal status of individual academics. Seen from this standpoint, one of the outstanding strategic thrusts behind Mode 2 governance reforms involves detaching the university from the national civil service as referential institution and putting the private sector in its stead. The new referential institution is the business enterprise.

Clearly, the implications of this change in referential perspective deserve closer exploration *per se*, though obviously this is not the place to do so. But, one area where its impact is already evident is in the source of presidential legitimacy and authority. In contemporary Europe, Presidential authority currently is in process of moving from its historic base grounded in collegiality to authority grounded on managerial rationality, a move encapsulated in the redefinition of presidential authority along the lines of being the Chief Executive Officer or deriving from the role of president *qua* 'corporate leader' (Askling, B. & Bauer, M. & Marton, S., 1999).

### **Stakeholders, Governors or Trustees**

Strengthening of presidential and executive authority, a more formally identified 'chain of responsibility', are the central purposes of much recent legislation in Western Europe. There is, however, a further dimension involved in Mode 2 reform of governance, which sets it off from its predecessor. As we have seen, the reforms of the Sixties and Seventies turned around extending the 'participant constituencies' *inside* the university. Those of the Eighties and Nineties place particular stress, however, on reinforcing the weight of 'external constituencies' and of outside interests—of 'civil', 'lay' or 'stakeholder' society (Rasmussen, J. G., 1998).

Not surprisingly, the ways in which 'external' society is represented are subject to considerable variation. The Consejo Social in Spanish universities is one variant. Essentially, it brings together representatives of employers, unions and the local community, acting in an advisory capacity and as a forum for consulting local opinion (Garcia Garrido, J.-L., 1992). Bereft of executive powers, the Consejo Social harks back an earlier tradition of 'constituency collegiality'. More radical are the changes introduced in recent Dutch legislation and, more particularly, the 1997 Act on Modernizing the University (De Boer, H. & Denters, B. & Goedegebuure, L., 1998b). Here, the representation of external interests is set at the highest level. The Act split leadership between Rector and President of the Executive Board, an arrangement not dissimilar to the American model of University President and Chairman of the Board of Trustees. The Rector assumes the executive responsibility for

university affairs, whilst the President of the Executive Board is drawn from outside the university. Another variation, though this time putting a slightly different interpretation on the *duplex ordo*, was enacted with the 1996 Norwegian Act on Universities and Colleges. The 1996 Act placed further emphasis on strong academic and administrative leadership and set down clear responsibility between academic and administrative leaders (Dimmen, A & Kyvik, S., 1998).

France provides a further example of tipping the balance more clearly in favor of external interests, though it remains exceptional and limited to new universities, mainly technological in bias, founded in the course of the Eighties. Here, the Governing Board (Comité d'Orientation) is made up of a majority of representatives from business, industry and regional authorities. Conceived as an interface between university and the outside world, the Governing Board is chaired by a 'external personality' (Merrien, F.-X. & Mus-selin, C., 1999).

These few examples show the way current reforms in the governance structures of Europe's universities seek to accommodate 'stakeholder society'. They also display certain common features. The first is the evident and increasing centrality of 'external interests'. No longer are they confined to a suspicious 'marginality' as ill-defined constituencies in a large and amorphous body, which tended to be their fate under the regime of 'participant democracy'. Second, theirs is a position of strategic significance, firmly rooted at leadership level and exercising leadership responsibility rather than maintaining a merely representative presence. Third, external interests are seated in key executive bodies which, compared to those created to meet the press of 'participant democracy' a quarter of a century or more ago, are relatively restricted in size - a feature which is shared by the 'new universities' in the United Kingdom, in contrast to their more venerable colleagues.

### **The Ghost of Reform Past**

Yet, the rationalization of responsibility and the concentration of executive authority, which are the heart of current reforms in the governance of Western Europe's universities, do not take place in a vacuum. New patterns of institutional co-ordination, management and decision-making have settled upon others already in place. These other arrangements are themselves the heartland of an earlier, perhaps less efficient form of governance, grounded in the notion of collegiality, whose strength lies at departmental level. In short, the current state of institutional governance is split between two very different organizational and organized value systems, which, in this essay for sake of convenience, we have labeled Mode One, and Mode Two. This *de facto* 'mixed model', combining central executive authority and peripherally-based strongholds of collegiality may indeed be transitory, just as it may also possess

high innovative potential (Clark, B. R., 1998). Nevertheless, it is no less a source of potential conflict. Recent research into the impact of governance reforms at the institutional level suggests that it is not without its downside (Dimmen, A. & Kyvik, S., 1998) (Askling, B. & Bauer, M. & Marton, S., 1999) (Rasmussen, J. G., 1998). The burden of self-regulation and expanded accountability procedures are often construed as a threat to their influence and authority by departments and basic units (Askling, B. & Bauer, M. & Marton, S., 1999).

That said, the issue of boundary between central managerialism and what some may see as the apparent imperviousness of departments remains intact. What is no less intact is the paradox that policies of self-regulation and decentralization become themselves subject to bitter dispute as managerial authority in the self-regulating institution begins to bite. It is a situation fraught with peril since, ultimately, it bids fair to drive a wedge between institutional leadership and academic staff.<sup>11</sup>

## CONCLUSION

From the *de facto* co-existence of two conflicting interpretations of self-regulation, one operating in the institution at central level based on executive authority, backed by the weight of law, the other, collegial and representative, based on established practice, a number of conclusions may be drawn.

First, that the move from governance based on a participatory ethic to one grounded in management rationality—from Mode One to Mode Two—in Western Europe is far from being complete, though clearly some countries will be more advanced along this path than others. Nor has the drive to strengthen institutional efficiency been universally successful in terms of exchanging old governance patterns for new (Pechar, H. & Pellert, A., 1998).

Second, introducing change in governance systems reflects a very old adage: “Legislate in haste and dispute at leisure.” As we penetrate behind legislative enactment into its consequences at institutional level, so the task of transformation appears both protracted and delicate. It is, moreover, a task the

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11 Nor is this situation confined to Europe. Commenting on the discrepancy between the values, objectives and agenda of management and of the devolved units - Faculties and Departments - in Australian universities, Wood & Meek noted: “the increased conflict and alienation amongst rank and file staff as institutions become more corporate-like and managerial in orientation. The executive appears in danger of increasingly distancing itself from the collegial needs and philosophical outlook of most academic staff while itself lacking confidence in the institution’s peak governing body.” (Wood & Lynn Meek 1998, “Higher education governance and management: Australia”, Higher Education Policy, Vol. 11, No 2-3)

success of which is dependent on the weight—or its absence—of informal traditions and values contained in an organizational ethic that still retains a very particular strength in Western Europe. That strength derives very especially from the fact that the first step in modernizing governance systems in Europe entailed the State's earlier underwriting, extending and endorsing that very principle of academic collegiality that appears increasingly at odds with the drive towards the concentration of executive responsibility around key individuals and key posts which is the essence of contemporary reform in the governance of Europe's universities. It is from such a context that the thesis of the 'confiscated revolution' has drawn inspiration. Simply stated, this view interprets enhanced institutional autonomy as advancing less the authority of the academic estate so much as the power of its administrative counterpart.

The third conclusion must be that in Western Europe the issue of governance is, at present, in a state of considerable flux and transition. The burden of reform may indeed have shifted to the individual university. But as attention comes to focus on the institutional level, so we become aware of the presence of deeply-laid centrifugal forces acting on the periphery, obeying their own interpretation of self-regulation in defense of identity, territory and internal coherence. True, the priorities of what has been described as Academic Tribes (Becher, A., 1989), the disciplinary fields, subdividing, splitting off, each seeking a new identity and means to uphold it, may indeed be seen by some as a source of potential fragmentation. Against the tidiness of the new managerialism, this situation bids fair to perpetuate a multi-layered and complex model of decision-making which may well nullify whatever gains have been already been made in efficiency (Braun, D. & Merrien, F.-X., 1999).

It remains to be seen whether the new executive bodies are powerful enough to complete what some see as a half-finished managerial revolution, or, whether they will be brought up short by those interests that have been long in place. That the issue still hangs in the balance should give cause for thought to those who believe that direct intervention by government is a thing of the past. In Europe, de-regulation and non-intervention are far from being acquired rights. And even in those instances where they once were, there is no reason why they should remain so. Rather both are conditional. They are conditional on the successful outcome of a reform, which more than any other in recent times has direct impact on the nature and the way academic work is carried out.

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