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Universities and the Public Sphere

Knowledge Creation
and State Building in the
Era of Globalization

EDITED BY
BRIAN PUSSEY, KEN KEMPNER,
SIMON MARGINSON, AND IMANOL ORDORIKA

Universities and the Public Sphere

Universities have been propelled into the center of the global political economy of knowledge production by a number of factors: mass education, academic capitalism, the globalization of knowledge, the democratization of communication in the era of the Internet, and the emergence of the knowledge and innovation economy. The latest book in the International Studies in Higher Education series, *Universities and the Public Sphere* addresses the vital role of research universities as global public spheres, sites where public interaction, conversation, and deliberation take place, where the nature of the State and private interests can be openly debated and contested. At a time of increased privatization, open markets, and government involvement in higher education, the book also addresses the challenges facing the university in its role as a global public sphere.

In this volume, international contributors challenge prevalent views of the global marketplace to create a deeper understanding of higher education's role in knowledge creation and nation building. In nearly every national context, the pressures of globalization, neoliberal economic restructuring, and new managerial imperatives challenge traditional norms of autonomy, academic freedom, access, and affordability. The authors in *Universities and the Public Sphere* argue that universities are uniquely suited to have transformative democratic potential as global public spheres.

Brian Pusser is Associate Professor of Higher Education in the Center for the Study of Higher Education, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia.

Ken Kempner is Professor of Education and International Studies and former Dean of Social Sciences at Southern Oregon University.

Simon Marginson is Professor of Higher Education in the Centre for the Study of Higher Education at the University of Melbourne.

Imanol Ordorika is a Professor at the Instituto de Investigaciones Económicas at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

International Studies in Higher Education

Series Editors:

David Palfreyman, OxCHEPS

Ted Tapper, OxCHEPS

Scott Thomas, Claremont Graduate University

The central purpose of this series is to see how different national and regional systems of higher education are responding to widely shared pressures for change. The most significant of these are rapid expansion, reducing public funding, the increasing influence of market and global forces, and the widespread political desire to integrate higher education more closely into the wider needs of society and, more especially, the demands of the economic structure. The series will commence with an international overview of structural change in systems of higher education. It will then proceed to examine on a global front the change process in terms of topics that are both traditional (for example, institutional management and system governance) and emerging (for example, the growing influence of international organizations and the blending of academic and professional roles). At its conclusion the series will have presented, through an international perspective, both a composite overview of contemporary systems of higher education and the competing interpretations of the process of change.

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Universities and the Public Sphere

Knowledge Creation and State Building in the Era of Globalization

Edited by Brian Pusser, Ken Kempner, Simon Marginson, and Imanol Ordorika

Universities and the Public Sphere

Knowledge Creation and State Building
in the Era of Globalization

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Simon Marginson, and Imanol Ordorika**

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Series Editors' Introduction

International Studies in Higher Education

This Series is constructed around the premise that higher education systems are experiencing common pressures for fundamental change, reinforced by differing national and regional circumstances that also impact upon established institutional structures and procedures. There are four major dynamics for change that are of international significance:

1. Mass higher education is a universal phenomenon.
2. National systems find themselves located in an increasingly global marketplace that has particular significance for their more prestigious institutions.
3. Higher education institutions have acquired (or been obliged to acquire) a wider range of obligations, often under pressure from governments prepared to use state power to secure their policy goals.
4. The balance between the public and private financing of higher education has shifted—markedly in some cases—in favour of the latter.

Although higher education systems in all regions and nation states face their own particular pressures for change, these are especially severe in some cases: the collapse of the established economic and political structures of the former Soviet Union along with Central and Eastern Europe, the political revolution in South Africa, the pressures for economic development in India and China, and demographic pressure in Latin America.

Each volume in the Series will examine how systems of higher education are responding to this new and demanding political and socio-economic environment. Although it is easy to overstate the uniqueness of the present situation, it is not an exaggeration to say that higher education is undergoing a fundamental shift in its character, and one that is truly international in scope. We are witnessing a major transition in the relationship of higher education to state and society. What makes the present circumstances particularly interesting is to see how different systems—a product of social, cultural, economic and political contexts that have interacted and evolved over time—respond in their

own peculiar ways to the changing environment. There is no assumption that the pressures for change have set in motion the trend towards a converging model of higher education, but we do believe that in the present circumstances no understanding of 'the idea of the university' remains sacrosanct.

Although this is a Series with an international focus it is not expected that each individual volume should cover every national system of higher education. This would be an impossible task. Whilst aiming for a broad range of case studies, with each volume addressing a particular theme, the focus will be upon the most important and interesting examples of responses to the pressures for change. Most of the individual volumes will bring together a range of comparative quantitative and qualitative information, but the primary aim of each volume will be to present differing interpretations of critical developments in key aspects of the experience of higher education. The dominant overarching objective is to explore the conflict of ideas and the political struggles that inevitably surround any significant policy development in higher education.

It can be expected that volume editors and their authors will adopt their own interpretations to explain the emerging patterns of development. There will be conflicting theoretical positions drawn from the multi-disciplinary, and increasingly inter-disciplinary, field of higher education research. Thus we can expect in most volumes to find an inter-marriage of approaches drawn from sociology, economics, history, political science, cultural studies, and the administrative sciences. However, whilst there will be different approaches to understanding the process of change in higher education, each volume editor(s) will impose a framework upon the volume inasmuch as chapter authors will be required to address common issues and concerns.

The impressive team of Brian Pusser, Ken Kempner, Simon Marginson, and Imanol Ordorika edits this volume in the Series. Our 10th volume represents one of the most internationally representative treatments in the Series. It offers an intellectually rigorous analysis of the effects of neoliberal restructuring policies on the university and assesses the degree to which these policies are influencing the university's role in defining the public sphere. The volume is organized around three objectives: 1) to revisit the important public purposes of the university and the neoliberal models that have emerged as part of a flattening world, 2) to evaluate the impact of neoliberal restructuring across several national settings, and 3) to interrogate the intent of these neoliberal market transformations.

Habermas's notion of the "public sphere" forms the baseline for the analysis of neoliberal influences on the university. At the core of their analysis, the chapter authors unpack the degree to which the globalisation of knowledge and attempts by neoliberal policymakers and corporate interests has eroded the transformative democratic potential of the university. Through the chapters in the volume, the editors evidence the importance of the university's role in the public sphere and develop a case for the preservation of its relative autonomy

in the face of market forces. These market forces are part and parcel of the national contexts developed by the chapter authors, contexts that include the pressures of globalisation, neoliberal economic restructuring, and new managerial imperatives that challenge the university's traditional norms of autonomy, academic freedom, access and affordability.

As with previous volumes in the Series, the above issues are located in different theoretical contexts. Its editors and authors have attempted to establish a dialogue between theory and praxis in order to further our understanding of the internationalisation of higher education and, more especially, the role of international organizations in that process. At its best, this is what the study of higher education attempts to achieve and we believe the editors and the authors of this volume deliver a most trenchant example.

David Palfreyman
Director of OxCHEPS, New College,
University of Oxford

Ted Tapper
OxCHEPS, New College, University of Oxford and
CHEMPAS, University of Southampton

Scott L. Thomas
Professor of Educational Studies,
Claremont Graduate University, California

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1

Introduction and Overview of the Book

BRIAN PUSSER, KEN KEMPNER,
SIMON MARGINSON, AND IMANOL ORDORIKA

After some three decades of efforts to impose neoliberal restructuring policies on universities around the world, it is a propitious time to revisit the models, evaluate national cases, and assess the intent of neoliberal market transformation. It is also time to ask, based on the emerging challenges considered in this volume in national contexts as distinct as Japan, South Africa, and the United States, “What has the neoliberal project wrought?” As calls for the globalization of the higher education arena around such organizing principles as competitive resource allocation, standardized managerial regimes of quality and accountability, and the private exchange value of postsecondary education, we turn attention to the future of knowledge production, to the university’s role in creating public goods, social justice, and a more egalitarian society. To that end, we also consider the prospects for creating and preserving a public sphere through higher education, so that universities may serve as sites for discovery, discussion, and critique of even the most powerful forces and interests in contemporary society.

Because universities are a precious and often scarce national and international resource, the contemporary structural transformation of global higher education is a shared and interdependent concern of scholars, policy makers, and the broad array of constituents of postsecondary education. In this volume, we focus on three issues of paramount importance for understanding the emerging landscape of higher education: the process of globalization, neoliberal policies shaping higher education, and the reduction of autonomous, critical, discursive, and emancipatory postsecondary space.

Despite the varied and diverse character of the many nations and regions of the earth, across contexts certain strategies, values, and demands appear again and again on the contemporary scene: exhortations to produce higher education with fewer public resources; calls for greater accountability, efficiency, and productivity; the privileging of applied research in service of economic development, including the focus on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields as the highest value disciplines; the move to a contingent and de-professionalized academic workforce; and above all else, the need to train individuals to compete in something called a global knowledge economy. What is clear amid this din is that powerful forces are contending for control of universities and their functions in ways that have not been seen in many centuries. What is unclear, and yet vitally in need of clarification, is where these demands originate, whose interests they serve, how they comport with historical understandings of the role of higher education in society, how they affect equity and social justice, and whether they allow for the university to continue its slow evolution into an autonomous site of contests over knowledge creation, critique, and teaching in the public interest.

This is not to suggest that the authors represented in this volume agree on the interpretation of such complex and contested phenomena as globalization, neoliberalism, and understandings of public and private as organizing frames or on the relationship between knowledge and the economy. As editors, we hope a strength of this book is that there is much on which the authors disagree. This is what we strive for in assembling independent-minded scholars from various national contexts. The authors here might reasonably disagree on the limits of globalization, the ultimate utility of technology, or the utility of private action in service of public purposes. However, it is fair to say there is agreement on one point that pervades this volume: universities have an essential role to play as independent arbitrators of each of these essential questions, to serve as a public sphere through higher education. We do not argue that universities are now, or have historically been, unfettered, independent sources of discussion, critique, and contest. It may be only that they have done this to a greater degree than other major forms of public and private organization. What we argue is that they have the potential to become such sites and the obligation to strive to achieve that status in service of the public good.

The notion of the public sphere originates from the discussion of eighteenth-century London by Jurgen Habermas (1962). The public sphere was the interlocking set of institutions, networks, and activities sustained in independent civil society, at once beyond the nation-state and transactions in the market while intersecting with them at many points. It was found in dining establishments, in salons and clubs, in theaters and writers' festivals and in universities—all the places where people met and talked—and in

the plethora of civil organizations that focus on changing common opinion or behaviors. The public sphere was sometimes critical of the State, and sometimes provided crucial ideas and support for State projects. Above all, it was a forum for critical intelligence and creative discussion about the issues of the day and, alongside family, community, market, and nation-state, it was one of the media in which social solidarity was formed. Craig Calhoun (1992) has described Habermas's vision of the public sphere as "an institutional location for practical reason in public affairs and for the accompanying valid, if often deceptive, claims of formal democracy" (p. 1).

Habermas's concept has many contemporary resonances (Calhoun, 1992; Marginson, 2006; Pusser, 2006). Arguably, the single research university serves to some degree as public sphere for its own local and city communities, particularly in constituting an independent civil space for political debate and critical ideas about social organization. The Internet, with its blogs, social networking, and popular websites focused on politics and public affairs, is a more instantaneous version of the same interactive process that Habermas discussed, as it forms the first worldwide communicative system. Arguably, we are seeing the formation of a new global public space or civil society, constituted by the open flows of knowledge and information, in which the worldwide network of research universities plays a central role. This is taking the form of a global public sphere. Open global exchange protects independent voices, enabling communication outside the control of particular nation-states (despite the efforts by some to limit Internet access). As Clark Kerr (2001) anticipated in 1963, universities are essential because of their key roles in creating new knowledge, and the codification of that knowledge, in economies, societies, and modernist cultures (Kerr 2001). In contrast with Kerr's time, this role is now exercised globally. It is striking that of all the agents and networks that now constitute global communicative relations, universities—for all their limitations—are perhaps the most open and intellectually free and the least consistently constrained by particular interests, including national interests.

Although elements of our argument are found in some scholarly books, the purpose of this edited volume is to provide an integrated text serving as a compendium of perspectives from international scholars. Their work extends scholarship beyond simplistic arguments of the global marketplace to inform a larger understanding of higher education's role in knowledge creation and State building. Though the role of the State in constructing institutions and systems has gained recent attention (Altbach & Balán, 2007), the role of universities in various national contexts in building, sustaining, and transforming their respective States has been infrequently addressed (Ordorika & Pusser, 2007). In this volume, we turn considerable attention to the interaction between universities and States as we argue that in addition to its contributions to building legal and civil systems and the

development of professional capacity for the State, in its role as a public sphere the university offers an essential site for analysis and critique of the State and State functions.

Taken together, the perspectives presented here argue that not only is the potential to serve as an essential public sphere inherent in the university, but it also is the university's position as a site of critique and relatively unfettered knowledge production that enables it to create a wide range of public goods that are essential to the public welfare. The ability of the university to generate essential public goods, however, is under considerable pressure from a wide array of emerging demands in the global political economy, many of which are the subject of analysis in this volume. In the opening chapter, Simon Marginson turns attention to status competition as a fundamental driver of postsecondary transformation, one that may well have become a more pervasive force than market restructuring across the globe. Brian Pusser seeks to define the ideal set of conditions for the creation and preservation of a public sphere through higher education and to deconstruct the forces that limit that ideal state. In the process, he turns attention to the oft-neglected role of social actors and the civil society in shaping postsecondary possibilities. In the same way, Greg Misiaszek, Lauren Jones, and Carlos Torres apply Freirean generative themes to an analysis of contemporary State resource allocation policies and economic crisis in pursuit of alternatives to neoliberal strategies.

The tension between the global and the local is a central tension that emerges from the cases presented here, as Ken Kempner and Ana Jurema demonstrate through their analysis of the ways in which globalization shapes workforce development through postsecondary education in Angola and the implications for social mobility as a public good. Akiyoshi Yonezawa and Hugo Horta contrast the emerging competitive processes shaping global student mobility with Japan's distinctive approach to attracting and educating international students. Their analysis suggests a space for competitiveness and distinctiveness that challenges the rhetoric of global standardization as the driver of success. Jussi Välimaa evaluates the impact of globalized narratives of "world-class" postsecondary characteristics with national cultural norms of postsecondary organization, through an examination of the corporatization of higher education in Finland. In the process, he turns attention to the discourse of globalization as a persistent challenge that threatens longstanding State norms and cultural understandings of the benefits of higher education. Similarly, Mayumi Ishikawa analyzes the hegemonic impact of global ranking systems on the Japanese postsecondary system, presenting a striking case of powerful global status hierarchies clashing with deeply embedded national norms. Imanol Ordorika and Roberto Rodríguez Gómez focus on globalization and neoliberal policies as drivers of adaptation in Mexico, where public universities have adopted the

discourse and practices of privatization. At the same time, private universities have also adapted new strategies for differentiation, suggesting the need for a more complex and nuanced approach to understanding the ways in which global demands shape local and national transformations.

Perhaps the most startling clash of neoliberal economic policies and State purposes is evidenced in the case of contemporary South Africa. Ivor Baatjes, Carol Anne Spreen, and Salim Vally illuminate the stark contrast between the local and national demands for postapartheid re-invention of the postsecondary system and the pressure of supranational resource allocation practices and accountability regimes. The South African case serves as a powerful reminder of the continuing neoliberal challenge to State building through higher education, a hegemonic force so intense that it threatens norms of equity and social justice forged out of one of the most visible and celebrated liberation struggles in modern history.

Alongside the impact of market restructuring, globalization, and neoliberal policies on States and institutions, several of the authors here turn attention to the personal realm: the effects on students and professionals in higher education. Jenny Lee and Brendan Cantwell point to the inability of neoliberal policies and market models to redress the various forms of persistent bias in the selection and assignment of international graduate students. Reitumetse Obakeng Mabokela also turns attention to powerful and persistent disparities in hiring, promotion, and levels of authority for women and people of color in postapartheid South Africa and in global higher education. In each case, the authors point to the need to shelter efforts to implement equitable and just policies to shape individual lives and careers from emerging global norms of university organization. In their analysis of the relationship between globalization and the academic workforce, John Levin, Genevieve Shaker, and Richard Wagoner point to systemic disparities in the impact on local professionals from global demands and neoliberal adjustment policies. At the same time, the authors envision a space for resistance and reconstruction, based in a commitment to craft and the reconstruction of professional identity.

Taken together, the chapters in this volume suggest that the imposition of neoliberal policies in the name of globalization and market competitiveness have not shaped universities in ways as democratic or self-regulating as neoliberal scholars and policy makers have presumed. These findings, in combination with the devastating collapse of global capital markets in 2008, give us reason to question the foundation of arguments for the globalized and neoliberal university. If market-competitive strategies and a university built around economic development and prestige competition are not sustainable, what then is the appropriate vision for the contemporary university across national contexts? The authors assembled here remind us of the essential values that have sustained the legitimacy of the postsecondary project since

its inception. We stress values here, as opposed to strategies or policies. It can be reasonably argued that the rise of neoliberal models of postsecondary provision throughout the world has been abetted by placing *value*, in the economic sense, over *values* as a moral compass. That is, the arguments for reducing State support, for eliminating patterns of historical cross-subsidy in favor of concentrating resources on what Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) have termed “close to the market disciplines,” and for privileging elite student preparation over universal access are decisions made with ends, rather than means, foremost. A central message of this volume is that in higher education, to a greater degree than in many other arenas, process and production cannot be separated. Though a fundamental postsecondary commitment to equity, to discovery and critique, and to individual and community development makes economic growth and social mobility possible, the neoliberal project has demonstrated that strategies that begin with privileging the economic and private benefits of higher education not only fail to ensure equity and community success but also may come at the expense of those core goals. We conclude that universities have a major and transformative democratic potential at the global level, though one as yet largely unfulfilled.

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2

The “Public” Contribution of Universities in an Increasingly Global World

SIMON MARGINSON

Introduction

In 1529, the great monasteries of England and the nearly 400 parallel but smaller establishments had never looked so good. They were doubly protected, by universal belief and by a multitude of material connections into English society, the economy, politics, and the court, which made them necessary to daily life. Monasteries were centers of farming and craft production and the source of community welfare. They were way stations for travelers across the land. They provided valued careers for younger sons. Cathedrals loomed over the landscape. Holders of vast wealth and power, the monasteries could not be touched.

Ten years later, in 1539, a bill for the confiscation of the large monasteries passed through parliament. By then they were already gone, their plate and jewels seized by the Crown, their personnel forcibly expelled, furniture and hangings left for pillage or rot, and much of the massive stonework dismantled for local building. The smaller establishments had been dissolved by statute three years earlier (Brigden, 2002). And to the surprise of some contemporaries, life went on. The fires of hell failed to swallow up Thomas Cromwell and Henry VIII's inquest into the monasteries. The king soon squandered his new wealth in an unsuccessful war in France. Like other European countries, the French still had their cathedrals and religious houses, but the English never brought them back. They found more modest ways to worship and believe. They created other forms of charity. They became cynical about other kinds of corrupt local authority. Somebody new made the wine.