CAMBRIDGE STUDIES IN COMPARATIVE PUBLIC POLICY

Convergence and Diversity in the Governance of Higher Education

Comparative Perspectives

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Governance Trends in European Higher Education

HARRY F. DE BOER AND JEROEN HUISMAN

12.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on developments in governance in European higher education, with a focus on Western Europe. It presents an overview of the literature on this topic, including the various modes of governance as well as the changes in European higher education in recent decades. Our point of departure is to understand governance broadly as a system of ‘authoritative direction and control’. All over Europe, policy makers and other stakeholders have been reconsidering the rules of the game to encourage higher education institutions to deliver high-quality services in an effective and efficient way (de Boer and Jongbloed, 2012; Broucker and de Wit, 2015). In recent decades, ‘[c]hanges have taken place in the forms and mechanisms of governance, the location of governance, governing capacities and styles of governance’ (van Kersbergen and van Waarden, 2004, p. 143), in higher education as well as in other public sectors.

In continental Europe, the traditional ‘bureaucratic-professional’ approach, in which the coordination of higher education systems was driven by governments and academic oligarchies, has gradually shifted towards governance systems in which the logics of markets and networks are prominent (e.g. Bleiklie et al., 2011; Paradeise et al., 2009). There have been a number of reasons, applying in varying degrees to many European countries, for reconsidering the traditional modes of governance (de Boer et al., 2007; de Boer and Jongbloed, 2012; Pierre and Peters, 2000). First, economic recessions, combined with a growing demand for higher education, presented governments with fiscal pressures. There was a general belief that the emerging welfare state model, in which the state plays a key role in the protection of the socio-economic well-being of its citizens, was becoming unaffordable. Second, there was growing disillusionment and distrust in the potential

of governments to solve societal problems centrally. One of the consequences of this was an ideological turn towards the market as the superior mode of coordination. Government failures paved the way for neoliberal values, including market preference for the allocation of goods and services and the restructuring of public sectors known as New Public Management (NPM). Third, globalization, internationalization, and Europeanization caused governments and other national higher education stakeholders to reconsider their position and action potential. Increasingly, higher education and research became a dynamic global 'industry', with new actors entering the scene. Finally, there has been a growing awareness of the importance of having a strong and competitive higher education sector in the emerging knowledge society, calling for new rules of the game.

The structure of this chapter is as follows. We start by describing different conceptual models used to address and analyse higher education governance (Section 12.2). Next, based on these conceptualizations, we present general tendencies with regard to governance (Section 12.3). This section demonstrates that states have been delegating some of their powers to other levels in the higher education system, in four directions: an upward shift to the supra-national level, a horizontal shift to 'independent' agencies, a downward shift to the institutions ('autonomy'), and an outward shift ('privatization, contracting'). As a result of these shifts, often cited as a move from government to governance, the modes of system steering and coordination have become more complex and dynamic, including more stakeholders at different policy levels (Pierre and Peters, 2000; Rhodes, 1996). The shift from government to governance is seen as one of the more noteworthy developments in (studying) public sectors (Sundström and Jacobsson, 2007). It concerns, in general terms, the transition from hierarchical to network-based forms of steering, the overlapping of roles of political and societal actors, and a blurring of boundaries between the public and private domains. In higher education systems the new configurations of authority distribution can be seen as multi-level, multi-actor, and multi-domain. The latter refers to the increasing interconnectedness of the higher education, research, and innovation domains.

While it has been argued that in these new configurations state authority has been hollowed out, we will argue that 'steering from a distance', to characterize the state's new philosophy towards higher

education, or the state stepping back, is not identical to the state stepping out. In fact, we will argue that a state-centric view still prevails in the new governance modes, although in certain areas (such as appointment of staff, spending matters, managing buildings and campus infrastructure, engaging in contracting with external partners) higher education institutions have gained more autonomy. Despite all the policy initiatives and changes to empower other stakeholders, such as the institutions or students in demand-driven systems, the state continues to determine the rules of the game to a large extent ('meta-governance'), even if the tools that it uses differ from those of previous decades. It has been argued that the shift from government to governance is overestimated, indicating, as we will also argue, the persistence of hierarchy, or at least the prominence of government in steering public sectors (Koch, 2013).

We follow this with a discussion of how structural reforms impact governance (Section 12.4). Many governments have taken forceful initiatives and introduced reforms to change the higher education landscape in their countries. Such structural reforms (e.g. mergers, excellence initiatives, redefining institutional mandates) illustrate our view that in governing contemporary higher education, despite NPM, marketization, and the like, the government remains a key player; its interventions seriously affect the higher education institutions and other stakeholders, and the interactions among them. We will then argue that governance configurations in European higher education not only have some similarities but also differ from each other in various ways: these European variants will be addressed in Section 12.5. Section 12.6 summarizes the key points of the chapter.

12.2 Higher Education Governance Conceptualized

Governance is a highly contested concept and is closely related to such terms as 'organization and management', 'steering', and 'coordination' (OECD, 2008, p. 69). In our eyes, it concerns the exercise of collective control towards common goals (de Boer and File, 2009, p. 10). Following Eurydice (2008, p. 12), we define governance as 'the formal and informal exercise of authority under laws, policies and rules that articulate the rights and responsibilities of various actors, including the rules by which they interact'. There have been several attempts to develop useful classifications and conceptualizations of governance

for description and analyses. We present a few that have garnered much attention in studying higher education governance.

In higher education, Clark's triangle of coordination (1983) is the most well-known example and is regularly used as a point of departure to study higher education governance. Clark distinguished three dimensions forming a triangular space: state authority (varying from centralized to limited state intervention), the market (different degrees of market forces), and academic oligarchy (the different degrees of impact of the academic profession and communities). This triangle of coordination was conceptualized in the 1970s and early 1980s, before reform movements swept across higher education systems globally. Since then, the coordination triangle has been adapted by several authors (see Salazar and Leihy, 2013). Instead of a triangle, Braun and Merrien (1999) developed the cube of governance, also based on three dimensions: the procedural, the substantive, and the political culture dimensions. The procedural dimension concerns the degree of administrative control of higher education institutions by administrators, ranging from tight to loose. The substantive dimension relates to the goal-setting capacity for teaching and research by the government, also ranging from tight to loose. As regards the third dimension, Braun and Merrien make a distinction between utilitarian and non-utilitarian belief systems, referring to the role of higher education in the public service system.

Another widely used governance conceptualization is van Vught's (1989, 1995) distinction between two classic models of coordination: the state control model and the state supervision model. The state control model, derived from the model of rational planning and control, portrays the government as a hierarchical actor that micro-manages the higher education system. In its ultimate form, the government is fully informed and has complete control over higher education. The state supervision model, by contrast, relies heavily on the self-regulating capabilities of the higher education institutions. The government's role is far more modest, acknowledging its limited capacity to control the sector. It sets the rules of the game in such a way that the higher education sector itself is able to make fundamental decisions about missions, goals, services, and activities.

In between the poles of state control and state supervision, hybrid models can be conceptualized, such as the 'state contract model', which is based on Williamson's transaction cost reasoning (de Boer and van

Vught, 2016; van Vught and de Boer, 2015; Williamson, 1991). The state contract model focuses on the 'attempt to achieve some level of central coordination and protection for specific investments while retaining the high-powered incentives of market relations' (Klein, 2005, p. 438). Key elements of the state contract model are also clearly visible in the concept of market-based governance, which encompasses not only the delegation of state authority to other (private) actors, but also the introduction of market-style management and mechanisms of accountability in public organizations (de Boer and Jongbloed, 2012, p. 555). It represents a combination, or compromise, between the benefits of central coordination and control and the advantages of decentralized decision making. In the context of higher education, the model respects the autonomy of higher education institutions without denying the existence of government coordination by means of setting conditions and framing the game hierarchically ('meta-governance'). Cooperation between government and institutions, by means of agreements of mutual consent, is the core mechanism and provides opportunities to pursue self-interest conditionally: agreements allow for discretion but are not free of rules.

The last conceptualization of governance that concerns us here is the governance equalizer, developed by de Boer et al. (2007). These authors assume that governance configurations are made up of a specific blend of five dimensions at a particular point in time. These dimensions are: i) state regulation (the degree to which central actors such as the state prescribe institutional behaviour in detail); ii) stakeholder guidance (the degree to which external stakeholders set and guide directions for institutional behaviour); iii) academic self-governance (the role and impact of academic communities in higher education systems such as peer-review-based self-steering); iv) managerial self-governance (the role and impact of university leadership in steering the higher education system); and v) competition (coordination based on competition among institutions for scarce resources). Although the five dimensions are interrelated, the equalizer assumes that these dimensions are, to a large extent, independent. For instance, less state regulation does not automatically lead to more competition or more academic self-governance. As de Boer and Jongbloed (2012, p. 555) argue, the choice between markets and hierarchies is not a zero-sum game. The relative independence of the five dimensions implies that many different governance configurations are possible. This seems

to hold in practice, as demonstrated in Section 12.5, which discusses European variants.

12.3 The General Picture

Based on studies on higher education governance in the last two decades, an overarching picture can be painted – or, at least, some general tendencies can be observed. Obviously the role of the state towards higher education has changed, often referred to as the shift from government to governance. Governance has become more complex and dynamic and involves more participants from different levels. Governance as exercise of authority increasingly concerns interconnected policy levels, with multiple actors influencing different parts of the decision-making process and shaping its outcomes. Traditional state authority over higher education in Europe has been redistributed across various policy levels.

In fact, there have been shifts in four different directions. There has been an upward shift, moving state authority to the supra-national level. The Bologna Process and its consequences may serve as a clear example here; decisions of the European Court (see, e.g., van Wageningen, 2015) have also affected national policies (among others, in the area of policies for student support). We have seen a tendency of ‘moving out’ – a transfer from state to market (marketization, privatization, contracting). The rise of private higher education and the introduction of pricing systems serve as examples of this. There has also been a tendency to transfer state authority to national bodies at arm’s length from the state (‘agencification’) – in other words, ‘moving sideways’. We observe, for example, the introduction of new accreditation bodies or greater responsibilities for funding agencies in system coordination. And finally, as part of political deregulation and liberalization agendas, we have seen the devolution of authority towards higher education institutions (‘moving down’) – enhancing organizational autonomy and encouraging institutional strategic actorhood (Whitley, 2012). There have been numerous reforms across Europe which aim to enhance organizational autonomy with different objectives. In some countries, universities have achieved a legally independent status (e.g. Portugal, Finland). In other countries, universities have acquired the role of employer, giving them more authority in staff matters, or have gained ownership over property and buildings (e.g.

the Netherlands). And in many countries new public funding schemes have given universities more discretionary powers in allocating and spending budgets.

This redistribution of authorities does not imply that the government is stepping out, rolling back, or hollowing out. In Europe, governments still play a pivotal role in this ‘network of governance’ by establishing frameworks, objectives, and priorities in and for the system. In steering higher education systems, governments – facing market as well as government failures (Dill, 1997; Jongbloed, 2003) – found themselves in a position to develop hybrid steering models, blending characteristics of central steering and ‘spontaneous ordering’ through marketization. In these hybrid situations, governments still shape the rules of the game to a large degree, but in a different way and by using new devices, which fit general tendencies in public sector management that stress the demand for performance, including obligations to publicly demonstrate performance (Bolton, 2003; Broucker and de Wit, 2015; Fryer et al., 2009). New funding schemes (output- and/or competition-based), mandatory quality assurance and accreditation systems, and explicit contractual obligations serve to maintain or improve system performance, seen as the primary task of the state. They embody both a changed government role and a continued one. This state contract model, characterized by bargaining, reciprocity, and mutual consent, indicates both the government’s responsibility and the institutional autonomy of higher education institutions. It provides the government with the possibility to attach conditions, in the form of outputs to be realized and other (reporting) obligations, in return for public funding and other facilities.

The prominence of government in European higher education governance is also illustrated by various studies on institutional autonomy (e.g. Bennetot Pruvot and Estermann, 2017). The empowerment of higher education institutions through the devolution of authorities and decision-making capacities from the state to the institutions assumes that power balances are tilted towards the institutions at the expense of the state. Such a conclusion, however, would be both premature and too simplistic. De Boer and Enders (2017) argue that enhanced formal autonomy does not automatically correspond with the actual space that an institution has to make its own decisions. Organizational autonomy is a relational concept, which implies that external influences – state policies, for example – affect the decision-making space that institutions have. Based on the data from

an eight-country study, de Boer and Enders conclude that most universities experience strong to medium levels of influence from the government and its agencies on their internal decision making, regardless of the degree of formal autonomy they possess. While the role of the state has changed, universities continue to operate in the shadow of hierarchy. As a result of funding, regulation, audit, and normative pressures, in reality institutions cannot escape from government interference and the government remains a key actor in governing the system. Moreover, it is important to note that governments, apart from fine-tuning their governance architectures over time, do – once in a while – significantly ‘shake up’ their higher education systems.

12.4 Big Reforms

The prominence of government is visible not only in the day-to-day steering arrangements, but also in what we term ‘big reform’ projects. The comparisons of governance arrangements in previous studies do highlight some dynamics over time, but often do not reveal the ways that (other) structural reforms in higher education systems impact governance. That is, by focusing on relatively stable policy areas (funding, quality assurance, institutional governance, programme provision, etc.), these studies offer significant insights in changes in key policy areas. But at the same time, such a focus does not pay sufficient attention to bigger reform projects that may – directly or indirectly – impact governance arrangements. In this section, we address a couple of these reforms and explore how they impact governance arrangements.

In their study on structural reforms, de Boer et al. (2017) investigate system-wide policy change, with specific attention to government policies that intend to metaphorically ‘change the landscape’ by bringing less/more horizontal or vertical differentiation into the system, or to change the (inter)relationships between higher education institutions. In themselves, these reforms cause governance changes, for the government clearly sets the ‘rules for the game’ and supplements the policy ideas and changes with instruments such as regulation, funding, and information (see also de Boer and van Vught, 2016). Examples of horizontal differentiation are the introduction of a private higher education sector in Poland and non-university higher education institutions in Croatia. The possibility to ‘upgrade’ colleges in Norway also

fits this category. With vertical differentiation, governments intend to increase (performance) differences between higher education institutions, for example through excellence initiatives, such as the UNIK (Investment Capital for University Research) reform in Denmark, the CEI (International Campus of Excellence) reform in Spain, and a combination of similar policies in France. Reforms pertaining to interrelationships include merger processes in Finland and Wales, but also the setting up of associations (collaborative arrangements between universities and non-university *hogescholen*) in Flanders.

The Finnish case may serve to illustrate governance dynamics. Nokkala and Välimaa (2017) focus on merger initiatives in the Finnish higher education system and stress that Finnish higher education policies have been characterized for decades by gradual and slow change. In line with the Nordic welfare state model, governments were key stakeholders in setting strategies and policies for higher education, based on the idea of all higher education institutions being equal. The context of globalization and increasing international competition caused the government to rethink the landscape and to introduce various measures to increase efficiency and competitiveness. Mergers (i.e. creating larger, more efficient units that would be able to compete with universities abroad) were seen as a major instrument to achieve the government’s goals. While it may be tempting to see these reforms as stand-alone landscape changes, implemented in parallel to the more stable policy areas, there were clear implications for the latter areas. In line with, or as a consequence of, the ‘upscaling’ of higher education institutions, many other governance changes were brought about. For instance, a minimum size was introduced for departments and other organizational units, alongside a minimum overall size for all higher education institutions. The legal foundation of higher education institutions was changed. Institutional governance structures were adjusted to make room for the involvement of external stakeholders in decision making, and executive powers of the rector were strengthened. Finally, and just as controversial as the changes to the institutional governance structures, academics’ civil service status was changed into a contractual relationship, with higher education institutions as employers (Nokkala and Välimaa, 2017). Measured against either the governance equalizer (de Boer et al., 2007) or the dimensions of institutional autonomy (Bennetot Pruvot and Estermann, 2017), it is clear that ‘one-off’ structural reforms like the one in Finland have

enduring impacts on the exercise of authority and control, and thus on governance arrangements.

Although the Finnish case is an extreme one (compared, for example, to mergers in Wales that did not entail many accompanying governance changes), the widespread occurrence of structural reforms across Europe suggests that in many other countries structural reform processes are having significant repercussions for governance regimes (see de Boer et al., 2017; Paradeise et al., 2009; see also Dobbins, 2011, on reforms in Central and Eastern Europe, and Huisman et al., 2018, on reforms in post-Soviet states).

12.5 European Variants

In this section we first offer theoretical views on why similar or different governance trends might be expected, and then present a number of empirical examples. The last sub-section reflects on the question of whether there are any (regional) patterns discernible between divergence and convergence.

12.5.1 *Convergence and Divergence?*

As already noted, some countries have moved quickly and others more slowly in governance changes. Some started early and others were late adopters (see Kehm and Lanzendorf, 2006). And changes are not always unidirectional. Dobbins and Knill (2014, p. 186) conclude in their four-country study that:

Great Britain ... has pulled back on several market-oriented policies, for example in the area of quality assurance, while the state is also increasingly exerting its leverage over academic content. And along these lines, there are few indications the HE governance in any of the four systems will become more market-oriented in the foreseeable future. For example, Germany is also in the process of retracting some market-oriented instruments, most notably tuition fees.

That said, the previous sections have demonstrated that there is indeed a broad governance trend in European higher education that can be summarized under the heading 'from government to governance'. It has been argued that this broad trend, observable in so many countries, is the result of the adoption of international and global

pressures. Higher education systems, traditionally organized nationally, are exposed to common reform agendas and global scripts (Gornitzka and Maassen, 2014). The agendas, policy positions, and ideas of supra-national and international organizations travel across national and sectoral boundaries and, it is argued, produce similar reforms and policies for national higher education systems. In the last two decades, for example, many national governance reforms have entailed elements of governance approaches that have been advocated by the EU's modernization agenda for higher education or reflect the views of the OECD on governance. The impressions of NPM as a 'global script' to organize public sectors are clearly visible and have been reported widely (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004).

Nevertheless, studies on governance in higher education reveal that, next to similarities, differences across higher education governance persist. As Gornitzka and Maassen (2014, p. 26) argue, '[a]lthough national reform agendas for higher education have become more alike, the reform outcomes can be argued to show many diverging tendencies'. Various authors have offered explanations for the differential governance developments (Ferlie et al., 2008; Gornitzka and Maassen, 2014; Jungblut and Vukasovic, 2013; Perellon, 2005): they suggest that the key factor in countering the converging effect of global scripts is the existence of national and sector-specific filters that interpret and modify these scripts. Agents such as national policy makers and institutional leaders do not share the same beliefs systems, nor are they passive recipients of new ideas. They have their own beliefs and preferences and try to translate external pressures accordingly. The likely outcome of the dynamic interactions among various agents within a national higher education system is a system-specific response to global scripts. This implies that within the big picture, portrayed in the previous sections, variety flourishes.

The convergence hypothesis can be challenged in other ways as well. First, change may not materialize as intended. Cerych and Sabatier (1986) noted this phenomenon, and other authors have offered the same explanations for implementation failures and unintended consequences. Higher education institutions are known for relatively high levels of organizational and professional autonomy (including a belief in academic freedom). The nature of higher education institutions, characterized by unclear technologies, many uncertainties, and goal ambiguity, means that external control is hard to achieve (van Vught,

1989). Deviations from intentions are to be found particularly when those who are to implement the changes do not fully subscribe to the reform intentions. As Gornitzka and Maassen (2014, p. 29) put it, '[s]ector specific characteristics and issues lead to variations in how major public-sector reforms are enacted'.

To take this argument further, agents can by definition exercise discretion. Global scripts do not prescribe action in detail. They also may carry internally conflicting norms or elements that are valued differently. Whereas there may have been support for some aspects of new governance approaches (such as more organizational autonomy), other aspects of governance (e.g. marketization) might be met with scepticism and resistance. New governance modes may also conflict with existing logics. New governance elements are implanted into existing institutions and policy areas and do not necessarily fit well (Gornitzka and Maassen, 2014). The room for interpretation and the potential conflict that this creates are sources for agency. Paraphrasing Scharpf (1997, p. 42), new ideas on governing a system 'will define repertoires of more or less acceptable outcomes of action that will leave considerable scope for the strategic and tactical choices of purposeful actors'. It is highly unlikely that this 'considerable scope' will be used in the same way in each country and, therefore, variation in governance modes seems self-evident.

A second challenge to the convergence hypothesis comes from path dependency. This overlaps to some degree with the previous explanation, for it alludes to existing power configurations and to the firmly and historically rooted institutionalized structures within higher education systems. In fact, the argument goes back to the emergence of the nation state (Neave, 2001). Although governments addressed similar aspects of the fabric of higher education – for instance, funding, certification, and academic employment – there were important differences between countries, resulting from their specific histories and domestic points of departure. There is general acknowledgement that contemporary governance developments are to some extent institutionally path-dependent (Krücken, 2003). Even if there would be convergence to – for example – a state supervision or market-type model of governance, significant differences would still remain because of the deeply ingrained and persisting norms, values, and interests that shine through in current governance arrangements (de Boer, 2003). A variant of this argument, rooted in Scandinavian institutionalism (Czarniawski and Sevón, 1996), is that

many governance reforms are translated, filtered, converted, or adjusted because of particular institutional heritages and hence lead to new governance configurations that deviate from the global models (see, e.g., Dobbins and Knill, 2014) or are a combination of old and new configurations through a process of layering (Mahoney and Thelen, 2010).

Besides these two major factors, the literature also points to conflicting institutional logics (e.g. the market logic versus the bureaucracy logic) that play out differently in different national contexts (Jungblut and Vukasovic, 2013). This leads to crises or punctuated change (Gornitzka and Maassen, 2014), or to temporal sorting, where policy and governance developments are determined not so much by means-ends arguments, but rather by the coupling of policy problems and solutions (see Gornitzka and Maassen, 2014; Jungblut and Vukasovic, 2013).

Reviewing the recent literature on policy and governance change, the balance tilts towards the importance of agency as well as contextual and situational factors that may have a significant impact on the direction, pace, and nature of governance change. There are good reasons to assume that behind generic trends considerable variety looms. In the next section we will address a number of studies that support our claim of the establishment of governance arrangements in higher education across European countries that have both similarities and differences. We will then explore whether there are specific governance configurations emerging in response to global scripts.

12.5.2 Comparative Studies on Higher Education Governance across European Countries

It appears safe to say that most European higher education systems have picked up elements of new governance approaches. De Boer et al. (2007), using the governance equalizer, noted that England, the Netherlands, Germany, and Austria were all moving, generally speaking, towards a NPM model (see also Kehm and Lanzendorf, 2006). Nevertheless, striking differences were visible, particularly in the dimension of 'competition'. With strong competition for students, and research funding based on performance, England was a clear outlier in this dimension and it is therefore worthwhile to juxtapose this governance mode with the one in Austria at that time. In Austria, there

was very limited competition between institutions. When universities were invited to develop specific profiles, the key driver was not so much competition, but the government's wish for country-wide educational planning. Likewise, performance did not play an important role, either in university-government relations, or internally in relations between rectors and deans (de Boer et al., 2007, p. 145).

In a study across 32 European countries, including Central and Eastern European countries and the Baltic states, the CHEPS Consortium (2006) note similarities in terms of governmental attention to changing funding arrangements, increasing institutional autonomy, introducing market mechanisms and quality assurance mechanisms, and changing internal governance structures, but stress that 'the range of governance reforms across Europe not only differs in terms of content but also in terms of timing' (p. 27). De Boer and File (2009, p. 15) echo this – again based on a comparison of governance trends in Europe – by summarizing that governance reforms are complex and target different areas of the higher education fabric, and that many governments 'have developed their "own versions" of the very same tidal wave'. Zooming in on institutional autonomy, Estermann and Nokkala (2009) make an inventory of how European governments shape aspects of autonomy (e.g. financial autonomy and academic autonomy). They conclude that there is a general trend towards more autonomy, but they emphasize differences across countries and even report some cases where autonomy has decreased. Their follow-up report (Bennetot Pruvot and Estermann, 2017, p. 41–52) offers scorecards for various dimensions of institutional autonomy and gives examples of significant differences. For instance, on the dimension 'organizational autonomy', the United Kingdom ranks first among 28 countries (and is therefore allocated a score of 100 per cent), Lithuania is ranked fifth (88 per cent), Hungary 23rd (56 per cent), and Luxembourg at the bottom (34 per cent). But in another dimension, the pattern is different: for 'academic autonomy', Estonia leads with 98 per cent, the United Kingdom is in the third position (89 per cent), as is Luxembourg (89 per cent), and Lithuania is ranked 26th (42 per cent).

Dobbins (2011) analyses governance reform in the Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria and arrives at the conclusion that convergence towards the market has taken place. It is important to note that this study mapped the governance arrangements (as a mixture of state steering, market steering, and academic self-rule) through the

recent history of these countries, from pre-communist to current times, with the Bologna Process being an important driver for change. While there is undeniably a trend towards the market, the author acknowledges that there are significant differences in how exactly marketization has taken place, and how close governments have come to the market model. The Czech Republic and Poland – with roots in the Humboldtian model – have moved far less in the direction of the market model than Bulgaria and Romania. The latter countries showed more signs of entrepreneurialism in university management, a stronger third-party funding basis, and a clearer move towards the introduction of student tuition fees. Huisman et al. (2018) analysed structural reforms in higher education in post-Soviet countries and reached similar conclusions: indeed, Bologna, internationalization, and marketization were important drivers of change, and, consequently, similar policy developments in these systems, while at the same time local institutional conditions produced convergence.

A recent encompassing comparative approach to governance in higher education is provided by Broucker and de Wit (2015). This study looks at NPM developments in the area of market(ization), budgetary policies, institutional autonomy, and institutional management in England, Portugal, the Netherlands, and Finland and concludes that 'NPM has found its way in HE and HEIs, but at a different speed and with varied intensity... Governments use the "toolbox" of NPM as they see fit' (p. 70). Leisyte and Kizniene (2006), analysing NPM developments in Lithuania, illustrate that instruments may actually also be lacking, with policies largely – at the moment of their analysis – being rhetoric.

Based on these studies, it seems safe to conclude that there is a general trend: many countries have introduced reforms in the same areas. Nevertheless, one has to be cautious in declaring convergence. While at first sight there may appear to be increasing similarity across European countries, two caveats lead us to be hesitant regarding a firm claim. First, most research – however sophisticated some of the studies may be – has not comprehensively compared the situations pre- and post-reform (Dobbins, 2011, and Dobbins and Knill, 2014, being noteworthy exceptions). Rather, trends have been identified in a rather interpretative way. Moreover, these trends are often based on the formal governance arrangements, which do not necessarily reflect actual implementation let alone reveal the perceptions of those experiencing the reforms. Second, the studies show that assessments

very much depend on the object of focus and the level of detail being sought. For example, there has been a development towards stronger executive leadership, but if one zooms in on how university leaders are elected or selected and the composition of boards, there is an enormous variety of arrangements across Europe (e.g. de Boer et al., 2016).

12.5.3 Specific Configurations?

Not only in relation to governance reform, but also to higher education systems in general, there is often reference to the historical background of the systems (see also our reflections on the role of path dependency), with particular attention to elements of the political-administrative system (Bleiklie and Michelsen, 2013). This explains why notions such as the Anglo-Saxon, Napoleonic, Humboldtian, and Nordic models figure prominently in the discussion on the emergence and evolution of European higher education systems (see, e.g., Neave, 2001). While such labels are generally helpful as sensitizing devices, there are limits to their application. They may aptly describe a model at the time of its emergence (e.g. Humboldtian and Napoleonic models at the beginning of the nineteenth century), but not necessarily reflect contemporary governance arrangements. There may also be a considerable contrast between the model and reality. Whereas the Humboldtian model appears to have some clear and tangible elements (freedom in teaching, learning, and research; unity of teaching and research; university education as cultivation of the self – *Bildung*), some analysts prefer to speak of the Humboldtian model as a Weberian ideal type (see, e.g., Scott and Pasqualoni, 2016); others are more outspoken in calling it a myth (Ash, 2006). In a similar vein, Antikainen (2016) – citing Rinne (2012), but also referencing Esping-Andersen's (1990) notions of the welfare state – is able to list distinctive elements of the Nordic higher education model (e.g. lack of institutional hierarchy, the provision of higher education free of charge, fostering social equality), while at the same time stressing that recent reforms go against the traditional model. In their in-depth analysis of reforms in Scandinavian higher education, Gornitzka and Maassen (2010) emphasize that the 'result is that even in a region with a high level of policy integration and convergence, with similar traditions, and values and norm systems, the reform instrumentation gets a very specific national flavour and colour' (p. 36).

We therefore have some reservations as to whether specific models can be detected in Europe. For some aspects of higher education, it clearly makes sense to speak of such models: for example, Pechar and Andres (2011), using OECD data on expenditure, participation, tuition, and financial aid for students, convincingly show the continuing relevance of welfare regimes (conservative, liberal, social-democratic). On the other hand, there is much variation which cannot be explained by European models (Dobbins and Knill, 2014; Gornitzka and Maassen, 2010) and there are many outliers and counter-examples in the studies discussed so far (even Pechar and Andres, 2011, found the United Kingdom and Finland to be out of step with expectations; Huisman et al., 2018, also found much variation across post-Soviet countries), strongly suggesting that the usefulness of ideal typical models is decreasing. This has led some authors to speak of hybridization of models. The notion of hybridity is already implicit in the title of one of the early analyses of governance – 'An intriguing Janus-head' (Maassen and van Vught, 1988) – which analyses how the Dutch government of the mid-1980s showed elements of steering from a distance but at the same time demonstrated traditional features of state steering. Gornitzka and Maassen (2000), using Olsen's notion of state models, pick up the theme of hybridity and argue that it applies to many European countries. Subsequent research has confirmed the relevance of the notion of hybridity (e.g. Jungblut and Vukasovic, 2013), but has not advanced the mapping of (hybrid) governance models.

12.6 Conclusions

Using different conceptual models to address change in higher education governance in Europe, we have illustrated the shift from government to governance. At first glance, this development appears to represent a change from a combination of government control and academic oligarchy in coordinating higher education, towards a network- and market-based governance approach, characterized by a dynamic, interdependent mixture of multiple levels, actors, and domains. In the new governance configuration that we are witnessing in Europe, the relationship between state and institutions has changed, among other things by empowering institutions, and by giving a more visible role in system coordination to other stakeholders, including agencies which operate at arm's length from the government, institutional leaders, and students.

There are, however, three important qualifications to be made. First, more organizational autonomy does not mean that the state is actually 'stepping back'. Governments retain ultimate authority, despite higher education institutions having more organizational autonomy. Market forces may offer institutions opportunities for self-directed strategic action, but with governments still deciding on the rules of the game, real autonomy will be limited (de Boer and Enders, 2017). Second, like other reforms in public sectors (see, e.g., Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004), change comes in different shapes. Our analysis has confirmed this for higher education, showing important differences across systems and time. Third, the many attempts to 'map' governance are often snapshots, largely overlooking the extent to which different governance models and instruments overlap and impact on each other, and also ignoring the fact that, besides their regular governance mode, governments often intervene by embarking upon large reform projects. We deem these qualifications to be important for those analysing future governance change in higher education.

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13

Governance and Corruption in East and Southeast Asian Higher Education

Close Cousins, Close Encounters

ANTHONY WELCH

Fighting fraud is like the woodpecker:

always pecking at the tree, and digging out the pest.

WAN Gang, Minister of Science and Technology, China (2010)

13.1 Introduction

No analysis of governance in East and Southeast Asian higher education could be complete without treatment of its close cousin, corruption. As illustrated in this chapter, of the countries of East Asia – China, (including Macao and Hong Kong), Taiwan, Korea, and Japan – and Southeast Asia (the 10 member states of ASEAN), all suffer from the taint of corruption, albeit to substantially differing degrees. The selected examples herein chart cultures of corruption pervading higher education in the region, which are closely linked to system and institutional governance.

What is the link between governance and corruption? Good governance consists of far more than simple administrative efficiency (Farazmand, 2015): it promotes transparency and ethical behaviour, emphasizes and implements behavioural norms and associated practices, and sanctions transgressors. Poor governance, by contrast, licences various irregularities, both financial and organizational. As the recent IIEP/CHEA 'Advisory Statement for Effective International Practice' underlines, there are clear links between poor governance and corruption: nothing less than the integrity of academic governance and institutions is imperilled by the 'malignant tumour' of corruption (IIEP/CHEA, 2016; Yang, 2008). Defined as the abuse of entrusted power for private