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Changing Notions of the Governance–Creativity Nexus

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This article presents two different perspectives on the relation between university governance and creativity. It argues that although perceptions of the relation between European university governance and creativity differ and vary over time, the space for creativity also seems to have been shaped by some common factors: fragmented authority structures, support and protection by centres of economic and political power, and values emphasizing openness and tolerance for new ideas. The importance and interplay between these factors have varied over time. This is illustrated by contrasting two examples of the development of the European university: Perkin's historical perspective on universities in Medieval Europe and the modern university – as it has developed from about 1800 until today.

Introduction

On the face of it, my discipline, political science, has little to say about a phenomenon as ephemeral as creativity. Nevertheless, I venture to address it, because the invitation to reflect on the issue of university governance and creativity triggered my curiosity and provided an opportunity to explore ideas that have existed on the issue of how governance and particular ways of organizing are associated with creativity. Here, creativity is understood as the development, formulation and communication of new ideas, questions, methods and technologies. The question I will address is this: how has the relation between university governance and creativity been interpreted during the long history of the university institution? I do not define creativity, but I base the analysis on the assumption that it is usually perceived as strongly associated with new ideas, methods and discoveries. The basic research question is therefore: what perceptions do we find among students of universities about the conditions under which university governance limit or support the freedom of academics to be creative?

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I will first say a few words about how I intend to approach the topic at hand. Then I will try to illustrate important aspects of the relationship between university governance and creativity through selected examples. I will focus on two sets of conditions related to governance: the relationship between universities and external authorities or stakeholders and the internal organization and relationship between academics and organizational leaders.

University Governance and Creativity – an Institutional Perspective

Two major governance principles are at work in universities, collegiality and hierarchy:

> *The collegial principle* holds that academics as a group of peers make decisions on behalf of the institution. Institutional leaders are elected by and among members of the academic community and negotiate on behalf of the academic peer group with funders and stakeholders to secure the flow of resources to the institution while preserving its autonomy. *The hierarchical principle* holds that institutional leaders (rectors, vice-chancellors, presidents) make decisions on behalf of the institution with a view to the interests of major funders and other stakeholders and apply the means necessary to see their decisions implemented by subordinate faculty and department levels. (Ref. 1, emphasis added.)

The balance between the principles of collegial and hierarchical coordination has shifted throughout history and varies from country to country. Nevertheless, if we look at the historical development of university institutions the mix and balance between the principles has changed radically over time. Thus, the research question may be specified to ask how these principles and tensions between them may play out, and how they have been assumed to affect creativity.

The actors and interests promoting the two above-mentioned principles may prefer different ways of mixing them depending on varying national or local preferences and interpretations. However, we assume that actors – particularly in universities – operate in highly institutionalized environments where rules, norms and values are pretty settled and stable,[2] as is evidenced by lingering national peculiarities regarding how higher education and research institutions are organized.[3–5] The following analysis is consequently based on the assumption that actors, whether they are part of a collegial scientific disciplinary community or a hierarchical context of relations between leaders, managers and rank and file organizational members, tend to be conformist. This implies that creativity is likely to be highly circumscribed and that promoting and sustaining it successfully requires peculiar circumstances.

The above assumption differs from two common perspectives on universities and potential scientific creativity. These perspectives seem to assume that creativity is a natural state potentially limited or hampered under certain specific conditions, peculiar actor preferences and power arrangements that may jeopardize the natural order of things.

The first perspective implies that academic creativity is potentially hampered by two sources. The first is the threat of managerialism within academic institutions whereby short-term efficiency concerns interfere with academic freedom and creativity. The second source is external and means that the expectations for useful

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and relevant teaching and research from society or the policy layer puts pressure on institutional leaders to limit the freedom of research and teaching in order to achieve short-term utilitarian goals.[6,7] These forces represent a push that limits academic freedom and implicitly favours conventional research. This view is expressed by students of higher education institutions, where university governance by implication is a threat to academic freedom and consequently to creativity.[8,9]

The second perspective points to the role of academic communities themselves, emphasizing that they 'normally' will adhere to established perspectives, ideas and methods and tend to be highly sceptical of views that threaten what they consider the basic tenets of their discipline. Academic disciplines are thus power structures where status and resources are concentrated around certain groups and individuals whose positions are legitimized by certain disciplinary tenets.[10] In this case, creativity is threatened from within the academic communities themselves. Without invoking Kuhn's concept of scientific paradigms,[11] it can also be assumed, based on these perspectives, that scientific ideas and discoveries that break radically with existing conventional views are more likely to be met with stronger resistance or even hostility than those representing incremental and step-wise modifications.[3]

The institutional perspective thus indicates that creativity throughout history has faced bleak conditions with forces both within as well as outside academic disciplines and institutions threatening and limiting the creativity that leads to new ideas and new knowledge. Yet, new ideas are formulated, scientific discoveries are made, new knowledge is produced and new methods are developed. These developments have historically often – but far from always – been associated with universities. Indeed, historical evidence seems to support Perkins' argument that Medieval Europe offered unique conditions for the establishment and survival of relatively autonomous institutions of higher learning and elite training.[12] During the centuries, universities have not just enabled the creation of new knowledge, but have also been able to renew themselves organizationally and adapt to shifting circumstances while keeping their basic functions intact.

Three conditions seem to be involved in most perspectives on the organizational conditions that promote creativity. The core idea seems to be that creativity is made possible by constructing a space within which it can unfold in a productive way in the face of the strong forces that sustain conformism. Some, but not all of the conditions that observers have considered essential to shaping the space for creativity seem to have been present in European society throughout the history of universities, and may contribute to explaining the unique, and at the same time changing position of universities from the medieval beginnings up until today's massive higher education and research systems. These conditions may accordingly have opened up a creativity space, constituted by:

(1) a *fragmented and competitive authority structure* as opposed to a monolithic and centralized one;
(2) *relations to external centres of economic and political power* that are close enough to generate support and economic resources, and

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sufficiently distant to offer protection against direct interference in academic affairs;

(3) *values that emphasize openness and tolerance* for new and/or divergent perspectives in academic communities, as well as respect for academic freedom and autonomy of academic institutions among managerial and political leaders.

In the following, I will use some examples from different historical points in time to illustrate the importance ascribed to these conditions during various periods of university history and how they have been assumed to make possible or promote creativity. First, I will focus on a historical perspective that emphasizes the importance of the first and second conditions in Medieval Europe, formulated by Perkin.[13] Towards the end of the period, the third condition increasingly also plays a part. The perspective will be illustrated through the stories of individual medieval and early modern scholars. Then I will focus on notions of the governance-creativity nexus that have been clearly articulated since the emergence of the modern university around 1800. The first is known as the 'Humboldtian' model of the German research university as it emerged in the early nineteenth century. The second, which is emphasized here, is related to the emergence of 'big science' and massive higher education systems from the latter half of the twentieth century on, and new forms of university governance introduced from the 1980s on, known as the 'managerial university'.

The Blessings and Limits of Fragmented Authority and Alternative Benefactors

In this part, I will present three case stories centred on the role of three different scholars. The three scholars have been chosen because their lives and works illustrate different transformative periods to which they were important contributors: early Medieval Scholasticism, early Renaissance Humanism and the rise of early Modern Science. Two of the cases I present illustrate how two conditions – fragmented authority structures and opportunities to seek powerful benefactors and protectors – made it possible for brilliant thinkers to work and operate, as pointed out by Perkin,[13] although they challenged authorities as well as established doctrine. The third case also illustrates the limits of the same space.

Peter Abelard (1079 –1142) actually lived and worked before universities were formally established, from the twelfth-century on.[13] Nevertheless, his scholarly innovations and their reception were important both as motivations for establishing universities and for shaping their inner life and self-consciousness.

Abelard was an extraordinarily gifted scholar. At a very young age, he left his home in Brittany to study with famous scholarly masters. Very quickly, he was outshining and out-disputing his first master and then he fell out with him. He moved to Paris to study with the most famous scholarly master at Notre Dame, William of Champeaux, and the same thing happened again. He then set up his own school, were he did not have to struggle with underperforming masters, but returned later to Paris

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to become resident scholar at Notre Dame. Abelard was brilliant, and he knew it. History tells us that one reason why he fell out with his masters was that they 'disappointed him'. Abelard was also arrogant and combative, a personal characteristic that may have been useful for one who was a daring innovator: from the history we may infer several possible causes of conflict, such as Abelard's combination of brilliance, even hubris, and a personality not too eager to please. By the same token, academic competition for fame and prestige may be another such cause. He subjected the authoritative holy texts (e.g. the Bible) to disputation. Although he did not show any clear intent to question received truths about these texts, it was a radical break with the traditional meditative and introvert monastic tradition because it opened up a space for questioning that had not existed before. Before Abelard, the academic use of authoritative texts such as the Bible were part of the monastic and ascetic discipline of learning the practice of *lectio, meditatio, oratio, contemplatio* – with ties to meditation, tears and silence. Abelard spread the martial arts of the scholastics to the holy texts, thereby subjecting them to a loud, dry-eyed, agonistic art – *praelectio, quaestio, disputatio, determinatio (sic et non)* – with ties to the rhetoric of controversy, polemic and trials. He dared to question and put up for dispute what was holy and indisputable, and, according to Clark, this led to the spread of the method of the academic dispute for communicating academic knowledge alongside the lecture, the essential method of university instruction.[14]

Abelard is also considered the founder of Nominalism, which then became the philosophical basis for the intellectual struggle over universals. His writings brought him fame, attracted hordes of students, but they also brought him trouble. He was persecuted by his enemies, but that did not keep him from his teachings. Abelard's transgression with Heloïse d'Argenteuil (1100–1? – 1164), for which he was properly punished by castration, cannot be overlooked. It became the material for a love story, the legendary status of which is almost in the same category as Romeo and Juliet or Tristan and Isolde. In our context, what is important is the fact that he was persecuted for his methods and his ideas. At one point he had to make a public avowal of faith. He was forced to leave Paris to teach in a remote area, then he became an Abbot, but soon fell out with the monks. He eventually obtained permission to return to Paris, but his writings were reported to the Archbishop and then brought to the attention of the Pope, and he was ordered to silence a year before he passed away. Peter the Venerable, the abbot of Cluny, wrote to the Pope about these matters, and the Pope lifted Abelard's sentence. Abelard died on 21 April 1142.

The story of Abelard illustrates the unique decentralized character of power in Europe, horizontally split between the Pope and the Emperor and Kings, with two sets of legislation – the Canonical and the Civil – vertically shared by pope and bishops and by Emperor and minor Kings and Princes.[13,15] Consequently, when Abelard was persecuted in one place, he could seek protection in another. He was also close to power, as his students were active as kings, philosophers, poets, politicians, theologians and monks. They included three popes and several heads of state. His story also illustrates how political and religious power and disciplinary power were woven together. Abelard did not only come up against the clerical hierarchy, but also against fellow scholars whose authority he challenged.

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If Abelard represented early Scholasticism, *Lorenzo Valla* (1406–1457) was an early representative of Humanism in early Renaissance.[16] Valla was one of the most important humanists of his time. He gave the humanist programme – of going back to the Greek and Roman classics – some of its most trenchant and combative formulations, bringing the study of Latin to an unprecedented level. As a person, he is described in a way that reminds the reader of Abelard. He had neither an easy life, nor an easy-going personality. He is said to have been equipped with a sharp and polemical mind, an even sharper pen and a sense of self-importance, verging on the pathological. He was an unstoppable maker of enemies and made many throughout his life. He made numerous contributions to classical scholarship, but was also on the verge of being tried for heretical and heterodox opinions. He used his vast knowledge of the classical languages and their literatures as a tool to criticize a wide range of ideas, theories and established practices. He famously exposed the *Donation of Constantine* — an important document justifying the papacy's claims to temporal rule — as a forgery. He compared, for the first time, St. Jerome's translation of the Bible with the Greek text of the New Testament, thereby laying the foundations of critical biblical scholarship. In his Dialectics, he attacked scholastic-Aristotelian thought from an essentially linguistic point of view.

Valla also spent his life balanced between papal and royal protection, a balance that at one point, he seemed to lose, and it threatened to get him into serious trouble. He was born in Rome in a family with ties to the papal curia and was already in close contact with major humanists working as papal secretaries as a young man. He hoped to succeed one of them, his uncle Melchior Schrivani. However, having already published controversial work, he was opposed by major humanists among the secretaries, such as Leonardo Bruni and Poggio Bracciolini, and the pope refused to employ him. Subsequently he moved to Pavia in 1431, teaching rhetoric, stimulated by his friend Antonio Beccadelli, with whom he soon was to quarrel. In 1433, he had to flee after having angered one of the lawyers' main authorities Bartolus Sassoferrato. He then found employment at the court of Alfonso de Aragon in 1435 after some travelling. The following years were immensely productive, and Valla published, among other things, the first version of his critique of scholastic theology (1439), a manual for the correct use of Latin syntax and vocabulary (1441). As a humanist in the court of a King who was fighting against the pope, he also proved the Donation of Constantine, as mentioned above, a forgery. However, Valla's philological approach and his propensity to quarrel earned him enemies at the Aragonese court, and after King Alfonso made peace with the Pope, his enemies took advantage of the situation. An inquisitorial trial was staged by his enemies at the court, and only the intervention of the King finally rescued him from this dangerous situation. In 1447, he made peace with the Pope and spent his last 10 years in papal employment as an apostolic scriptor and later as a papal secretary. His productivity and bad temper intact, he did however continue his work as well as engaging in quarrels, particularly with his arch-enemy Poggio.

Again, we see that a certain combination of factors provided a controversial and innovative scholar with a space that made his work possible. A decentralized power

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structure made it possible to play on several centres of power and, at the same time, to draw on the resources – in this case employment and protection – that these centres had at their disposal.

The life of Galileo Galilei (1564–1642), who may be the most outstanding representative of early modern science, illustrates that the increasing openness to scientific knowledge during the Renaissance had its limits.[17] Galilei was a Tuscan astronomer, physicist, mathematician, inventor, and philosopher. He became professor and chair of mathematics at the Universities of Siena, Pisa and Padua. Until about 1609, he taught mathematics, and made several discoveries in physics. He then became interested in optics and astronomy, and, in 1609, he built his first telescope and began making observations. The following year he published his first results, where he described the highlands and 'seas' of the Moon, four of Jupiter's largest moons, and many newly discovered stars. These observations confirmed Copernicus' model of a heliocentric Solar System, and refuted the basic principles of Ptolemean cosmology, while putting to rest Aristotle's theory that the heavens were 'perfect and unchanging', as supported by the Catholic Church. The Church still allowed Galileo to conduct his research, as long as he did not openly advocate his findings. In 1632, Galileo angered the Pope when he published a book in which he openly stated that the Earth was moving around the Sun. He was put on trial by the Inquisition in Rome, where he was found suspect of heresy, and forced to say that all of his findings were wrong. He was first imprisoned, and later confined to his house near Florence. During the last ten years of Galileo's life, the Church monitored his travel and communications with others, and his writings were censored and placed in the Index of Prohibited Books. Galileo continued to write about physics, and in 1632, he put forward his concept of Basic Relativity in physics, which may be stated as follows: 'the laws of mechanics will be the same for all observers moving at the same speed and direction with respect to one another'. This fundamental concept later formed the basis for Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity. Strangely enough, Copernicus' (1473–1543) theory of the heliocentric system, conveniently published in the year of the author's death, for some reason triggered no papal reaction.

Until the time of Galileo, European scientists relied largely on Aristotle's approach of philosophical analysis to explain physical phenomena. Galileo demonstrated the advantages of experimentation, and argued that physics should be a mathematics-based science. He was among the scientists, including Kepler, Newton and others, who began the Scientific Revolution in Europe, and his work was instrumental in advancing the scientific method. His experimental and mathematical approach to physics was revolutionary and ahead of his time.

Galilei was born after Europe had experienced great upheavals, such as a the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople and the fall of the Byzantine empire in 1453, the re-conquest of the last Arab, Muslim stronghold in Spain in 1492, the same year as Christopher Columbus encountered Hispaniola and the New World, and not least the Reformation following Luther nailing his theses on the Church door in Wittenberg in 1517. The discovery of the New World in particular contributed to the perception of knowledge as related to new discoveries, looking ahead rather than back, as clearly

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illustrated by the front page of Francis Bacon's *Instauratia Magna* (The Great Introduction (of new scientific instruments), 1620). This was a period of emerging sciences, triggered by new needs such as navigation and astronomy. Galilei was an atypical representative of the emerging sciences who did his scholarly work inside a university, at a time when this was difficult in most parts of Europe, and scientific discoveries of the time were typically made outside universities.

Compared with Abelard and Valla, Galileo's fate made clear that the space for manoeuvring within European universities and within Europe's fragmented authority structures had its limits, as even more brutally demonstrated by the burning of Giordano Bruno at the stake in 1600. Although the position of the Catholic Church was more strongly challenged than before, universities continued to be primarily religious institutions oriented towards theology and classics. However, two developments around 1500 are important in our context. The first is that the autonomy of academic institutions and learned activities had come to be an increasingly accepted norm. The second is the fact that remuneration of professors was increasingly provided by the King, securing a more independent economic position of professors who previously tended to depend on fees paid by their students.

Nevertheless, the rise of modern science primarily took place outside universities, while universities increasingly came to be considered as institutions in decay. Their revitalization did not start until the eighteenth century, and in particular the early nineteenth century in Germany and then in the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the end, this transition within scientific knowledge, in the role of universities as knowledge institutions and the way in which they relate to authority took centuries to accomplish.

Modern Universities – Changing Notions of Governance and Creativity

The history of universities since 1800 demonstrates that prevailing ideas about the organizational conditions under which new knowledge is produced have changed radically. However, one kind of tension seems to run through the entire history of universities – the tension between the time and attention offered to academic activities as opposed to the administrative maintenance and governance of the organization. It is illustrated by the comments by Philippus de Grevia (1160/85–1236, magister at the University of Paris 1206, and Chancellor, 1218–1236) on the consequences of carrying out academic activities within a university as opposed to an activity carried out by individual practitioners:

> At one time, when each magister taught independently and when the name of the university was unknown, there were more lectures and disputations and interest in scholarly things. Now, however, when you have joined yourselves together in a university, lectures and disputations have become less frequent; everything is done hastily, little is learnt, and the time needed for study is wasted in meetings and discussions. (Ref. 16, p. 15; quoting Ref. 18)

Although there is a 600-year time span between the quote above and the Humboldtian model of the early nineteenth century, the idea of individual academic freedom and

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institutional autonomy as a precondition for academic activity is common. Loneliness and freedom were often cited as the ideal conditions under which new knowledge could be developed. Thus, the Humboldtian idea of the university as a site for creativity and development of new knowledge assumes that a decentralized organizational model, where research and teaching is organized around professors in a guild like master–apprentice relationship, is appropriate. It is also a model that today is considered a better fit with the research style of the humanities than the sciences. In scientific terms, an important innovation that came with the model and preceded the great scientific advances of the nineteenth century was the single-discipline professorship, permitting a far more focused and better organized research effort in the various academic fields. The Humboldtian model as a national model for universities envisaged, in addition, a role for the state in protecting academic activities by granting institutions autonomy and safeguarding academic freedom. The latter was achieved by providing professors with senior civil servant status (*Beamter*), protected lifelong careers and guaranteed salaries. Thus, as nation states and their control of universities grew stronger, reducing the medieval fragmentation of authority, concentrating authority into the hands of the state, the legal protection that universities and the academic activities within them enjoyed also grew stronger.

Since the mid-twentieth century, this model has increasingly been challenged and gradually replaced by what we may call 'the disciplinary university' and, from the 1980s on, 'the managerial university'.[7] These two models represent different ideas about the organization of academic activities. The first emphasizes the disciplinary community organized in disciplinary departments within the university as basic units vital to the organization, particularly to the teaching programmes, while research remained more the responsibility of individual professors. It gained ground in the US and later in many European countries from the early twentieth century on. The second model has informed university and higher education reforms across the world since 1980, and represents a more radical emphasis on the formal organizational level and on managerial structures as preconditions for academic activities symbolized by what one may call the five revolutionary changes in the organization of university affairs in recent decades.

(a) *Systemic integration*. Whereas higher education used to consist of a limited number of universities regulated individually by the central government, it now tends to comprise all institutions considered as tertiary education providers under a common regulatory system.[19]
(b) *Decision making*. Decision making used to be organized in a decentralized bottom up system where institutional leaders, as *primi inter pares*, acted on behalf of senior academic members of the university. Currently, decisions tend to be made in a top down chain of command with institutional leaders now being closer to chief executives.[20]
(c) *Funding*. While traditional university funding used to come as direct allocations from the state, based on input factors such as number of faculty and/or number of students, there is now less detailed government

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regulation, funding based on output indicators (e.g. number of degree candidates, research publications), and dependence on additional 'external' research funding.[20]

(d) *Quality assurance and evaluation*. Traditional quality assurance and evaluation used to turn on individual academic performance through examination and hiring procedures. This has been supplemented by organizational quality assurance through accreditation, evaluation exercises and other procedures.[6]

(e) *Work organization*. While academic work used to be carried out individually, it is increasingly carried out in groups, spurred by the emergence of research funding arrangements, mergers of disciplinary departments into larger units, and formalization of organized thematic research groups.[21]

Through these developments, universities have changed along two dimensions: one is towards managerial strength and capacity for top down leadership, the other is towards stronger and more complex dependencies on the environment related to vital areas such as political regulation, funding, evaluation and governance. The general strengthening of leadership and managerial structures in individual institutions has changed the nature of academic power in two ways: while academic influence used to be based on professorial positions within universities, it is increasingly based on positions held by academics on bodies engaged in research funding, quality assessment, academic gatekeeping functions on editorial boards, hiring committees, policy commissions and external institutional boards. Thus, academic power is increasingly based on positions within inter-institutional and, to some extent, international networks rather than hierarchical positions within individual universities.[5,21]

The change also signifies a fundamental shift in the perspective on governance and creativity. The former Humboldtian model focused on individual freedom and institutional autonomy whereby any form of governance apart from what is based on academic collegial authority should be kept at a distance with a focus on protecting and providing the resources necessary for academic activities. The managerial model focuses on the managerial structures and resources that must be marshalled in order to mobilize and steer the creative efforts in specific directions defined by priorities and targets set by institutional, and to some extent political leaders in order to contribute to economic and social development in a goal-oriented and efficient way.

Drastic as the reversal of principles may seem, the scope and pace with which it has been implemented in universities across Europe vary considerably.[22] The variation may be observed along two dimensions – first, across nation states,[5,23] and second depending on the strength of the research within an institution. In the latter case, leading research universities seem to have been uniquely capable of preserving traditional forms of governance and influence of academics over major decision making processes.[6]

However, as a general trend, the transition from a Humboldtian model via the disciplinary university to a managerial model clearly changed both the perception of

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the relationship between the governance of higher education institutions and creativity as well as the relationship between the state and the university. An obvious explanation and justification is that the organization of academic institutions as parts of integrated higher education systems charged with providing higher education and research on a massive scale must necessarily change with the magnitude and complexity of these tasks. This may cause concerns as to whether the previous protective mechanisms of academic freedom and institutional autonomy that provided spaces of creativity within the setting of the nation state have been weakened or even dismantled. This seems to be reasonable if one just considers each national system as an isolated space. However, if we consider higher education systems today, they include a far a wider diversity of institutions than before, and it seems that stronger research universities are quite capable of protecting their spaces of creativity.

It is also increasingly true that higher education institutions have developed stronger ties to international and supranational actors during the last decades. Two important manifestations of this trend during the last few decades are, first, that bodies involved in evaluation and quality assurance, research funding and publishing operate at the supranational level. Second, decisions made by these bodies are often based on academic peer review panels. Although academic power has been weakened within individual universities, as they have become more managerial, academic power is making itself increasingly felt through decisions made by international (and national) peer review mechanisms related to research funding, evaluation and publication. A further manifestation of stronger network influence is the increasing stakeholder involvement through external representation on university boards. Finally, the tremendous growth, differentiation and formal integration of higher education systems have been paralleled by a differentiation of government bodies involved in higher education governance. Thus, higher education governance has acquired a more 'networked' character caused by several developments: the growth and differentiation of the higher education system itself; the differentiation of public bodies involved in higher education governance; an increasing stakeholder involvement in higher education and an increasing number of bodies related to evaluation, funding, and publishing. While hierarchical structures have been strengthened in European universities during the last decades, their increasing dependence on a wide range of external relationships for vital resources such as funding and prestige means that external actors and decision arenas penetrate universities and affect their internal power distribution and leadership control.

Thus, we find that university governance systems can be characterized as 'penetrated hierarchies' that, in certain ways, may have limited space for creativity, yet at the same time have developed structural characteristics that contribute to protecting such a space.[5] It might be argued that, in a certain sense, while academics have lost some of the protective mechanisms related to the nation state, they have gained others to the extent that they are able to operate within the more fragmented space of the international academic community.

It may seem difficult to draw clear conclusions regarding what space current university governance arrangements offer for creativity today. If it appears to

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have been reduced, seen in the light of internal governance structures in universities, there are also signs of more fragmented and hybrid forms of authority that might compensate for this development. Similar contradictory developments can be observed for academic disciplines. The disciplinary organization of universities has been weakened as universities are increasingly organized in large cross-disciplinary thematic departments. Research funders increasingly ask for cross-disciplinary research proposals. Yet disciplinary journals have become increasingly important as academic gatekeepers in connection with hiring policies in research universities, and academic disciplinary track-records have become increasingly important for the chances of academics to obtain the research funding on which their careers increasingly depend.

Furthermore, there is also the question of how governance systems and work organization interact. Given the massive, industrial scale of higher education and research systems today and the increasing tendency to work in groups rather than individually, one might assume that this will not just affect how governance may foster, sustain or hamper creativity. One might also ask what research and creativity is expected to accomplish in the first place. Academic activity in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries turned on elite training and basic research that tended to take place at a distance from other economic and social fields of activity. The development of new knowledge was supposed to be 'an end in itself'. Today it is much more closely integrated with the concerns of the national economy. Higher education in many European countries provides now about 50% of new entrants to the labour market, serving an economy that increasingly depends on highly educated, research-trained labour, innovation and creativity. The development of new knowledge is clearly supposed to be 'a means to an end', to serve economic development and generate innovation in the form of new products and processes.

Conclusion

In this article, I have argued that perceptions of the relationship between European university governance and creativity have differed and varied over time. However, the space for creativity, according to the perspectives presented here, seems to have been shaped by some common factors: fragmented authority, support and protection by centres of economic and political power, and values emphasizing openness and tolerance for new ideas. This has been illustrated by two examples: the medieval European University, and the modern university as it emerged in the nineteenth Century and which finally turned into the recent managerial university. The three factors have been present in different degrees and combinations. Fragmentation of authority was of particular importance before the consolidation of the nation state, while protection by nation states based on increasingly strong values favouring academic freedom and institutional autonomy has been important from the nineteenth century onwards. Finally, fragmentation may have increased in importance in later decades while the managerial university model is gaining ground in an increasingly international academic community and marketplace.

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