

University mission between searching for truth and commercialization¹

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Privatisation of higher education is a highly disputed issue in many countries today. Several blocks have formed around this issue; their arguments are confronting in academia, in politics as well as in media and public in large. From one perspective, privatisation looks as the final solution for all pains and troubles in higher education of today, from the other it endangers the finest substance of the university mission.

1. Internal and external determinants of education and knowledge

It is not difficult to recognise the relative meaning of terms “public” and “private” (higher) education in a contemporary context; different understandings depend on different systems of argumentation, i.e. on different “philosophies” as well as on different cultures and traditions. Within Europe, probably more than in other parts of the world, we have to explain and interpret our different contexts to understand what we mean while using these terms. When we discuss “private education” in a Benelux country we mean something profoundly different as in a case of a Central European country. To make the confusion even bigger let’s take the following example: in times of a totalitarian regime, scholars, students, critical intelligentsia etc. met at private apartments for similar reasons as their colleagues from open societies met at public higher education institutions. Similarly, a “State University” could be understood either as a public institution established on principles of academic autonomy and service to society or as a directly controlled by the supreme political power.

However, this introduction does not aim at making the issue relative – and vague. Today, the promotion of privatisation of higher education as a universal solution for troubles of the public higher education is an extremely serious and sensitive issue. It is an extremely complex issue which requests a careful elaboration of various details and does not allow simplified answers. In this contribution (limited, of course), the focus will be given only to one aspect: “privatisation of higher education” as a process of

commodification² and/or commercialisation of knowledge. It seems that this process only began and that its future perspectives are enormous. Under this light, knowledge is legitimized when reduced to instrumental knowledge. The value of knowledge is its usefulness. There are also sharp criticisms of this process; the stress is given to intrinsic values of knowledge, e.g. to traditional academic “searching for truth” and “disinterested research” as pillars of science. Dealing with these discussions, it is important to avoid a simplistic contradiction of “intrinsic” and “extrinsic values” (“commercialisation”), based on metaphysics of “good” and “evil”; the issue is much more complex. It is also very old.

Two millenniums and a half ago, Aristotle launched a first debate on a relationship between public and private in education. At the beginning of the last chapter of his Politics, we can find one of his famous stances on this issue:

»It is clear then that there should be laws laid down about education, and that education itself must be made a public concern. But we must not forget the question of what that education is to be, and how one ought to be educated. For in modern times there are opposing views about the tasks to be set, for there are now generally accepted assumptions about what the young should learn, either for virtue or for the best life; nor yet is it clear whether their education ought to be conducted with more concern for the intellect than for the character of the soul. The problem has been complicated by the education we see actually given; and it is by no means certain whether training should be directed at things useful in life, or at those conducive to virtue, or at exceptional accomplishments. (All these answers have been judged correct by somebody.) And there is no agreement as to what in fact does tend towards virtue. For a start, men do not all prize the same virtue, so naturally they differ also about the training of it.« (Aristotle, 1992, VIII:2 1337a33).

It was very clear to Aristotle – and, hopefully, it is clear today – that education »must be made a public concern« and that »laws should be laid down about education«, but there has been also an eternal dilemma until today, should education be »directed at

things useful in life, or at those conducive to virtue». Aristotle made his position on this issue clear³; however, two millenniums and a half later we find ourselves in a substantially different situation which does not allow any more to differentiate between a “free man”, who can aim at virtue, and a “mechanic”, a “talking tool”, i.e. a slave. But, we understand the dichotomy of internal and external determinants of education and knowledge. Since its birth several centuries ago, the University mission has always had to balance between them. This has been – and remains – one of the key questions of university or higher education governance. The dilemma on “public” vs. “private” higher education could be also considered from this point of view.

2. The “pursuit of truth”, a “nation state” and “needs of economy”

There is much evidence that the conceptual origins of the modern term “higher education governance” are closely linked to the complexity of the societal context characterised by the transformation from elite to mass higher education which has occurred during the last few decades. The phenomenon of mass higher education involves a demarcation between traditional and modern higher education in several respects. A review of developments in the past two or three decades shows that the democratising and liberalising of access to higher education put the need for systemic reforms onto national and institutional agendas everywhere. The Eurydice study on twenty years of reforms in European higher education found that »the major focus of legislation and policy was the management and control of higher education institutions and in particular the financing of such institutions« (Eurydice, 2000, 33). Mass higher education challenged – and in its further course totally changed – the traditional university as well as its complex relationships with the modern state as well as with other “external factors”.

It is widely recognised that throughout Europe the government role in the governance of higher education institutions has been and remains very significant. However, since the 1980s governments have been gradually withdrawing – in various directions – from direct institutional governance: more autonomy was suddenly given to institutions but also more accountability was expected. Thus, after the unannounced and unexpected storms of the late 1960s and early 1970s, universities found themselves up until the 1980s – in some places a little earlier, in

others a little later – in a totally new environment. As universities, they had to be able to reflect these changes and to understand that they should take them into account while reconsidering their mission.

The famous convention of European universities in 1988 – »four years before the definite abolition of boundaries between the countries of the European Community« and, we should add this from today’s point of view, two years before the fall of the Berlin Wall – stressed the importance of being »aware of the part that universities will be called upon to play in a changing and increasingly international society«. Its most remarkable message is that »the university is an autonomous institution at the heart of societies [...]. To meet the needs of the world around it, its research and teaching must be morally and intellectually independent of all political authority [...] and economic power« (Magna Charta, 1991, 59)⁴. In a form of an “externally expressed” hope (i.e. being at the heart of societies), this sentence reflects two deeply rooted “internal” fears of a modern academic community (political authority and economic power).

However, this is not the first time universities have found themselves in radically changed circumstances. The debate on autonomy goes back to the very beginning of universities. Yet, as the discussions on university relationships with the “external world” in general and on university autonomy in particular can sometimes be treated as “eternal issues”, in reality these issues have been appearing each time as different: always in concrete ways and under a new light. If we compare the concept of autonomy as it appeared during previous centuries and in modern times then there are actually two concepts which differ substantially at least at one point. Universities of the “old times” had to negotiate and articulate their relations with “external” – either secular or church – authorities; at first sight similarly as today. Like today, they depended on them to grant them their particular power (autonomy) as well as for the more “material” troubles of their survival. However, they were confronted by circumstances prior to the appearance of a modern nation state.

The birth of the industrial society in the 19th century marks a sharp turn in the development of higher education. The traditional mission expressed as the “pursuit of truth” and “disinterested research” was challenged in a radical way and for the first time it confronted the “needs of the economy” very directly. Universities met a new, previously unknown agent; as a consequence, they also encountered competitors, other higher education institutions closely

related to professional training aimed at the “needs of the economy”. The challenge was even bigger: they faced a newborn modern nation state that understood the protection and acceleration of economic development in terms of the “national market” as the most important issue on its political agenda. The dissemination of knowledge and skills and organisation of research as the means for strengthening “productive powers” simply became an integral part of this agenda. »Until the nineteenth century one cannot observe any visible direct connection between the economic development of countries and their university systems« (in ‘t Veld, Füssel, Neave, 1996, 20-21); now, this question was raised loudly and it was necessary to respond to it – yet in circumstances that had radically changed.

In practice, these circumstances differed from country to country; nevertheless they had a common denominator: the challenge to universities to become national universities. This meant a huge challenge to their traditional, “universal” role. There were no geographical, political and institutional delimitations for universities in the middle ages⁵ but in the 20th century we experienced borders between various higher education systems. They grew up parallel to the industrialisation processes in modern nation states. Thus, as a sub-chapter to the protection of domestic markets protective measures in the field of higher education qualifications emerged and various national recognition procedures – predominantly for professional recognition – were also put in place. At the national level decisions were made to classify institutions, their qualifications etc. on one hand and to establish selection procedures on the other. In these circumstances, it became necessary to not only regulate relationships between the state and an individual institution in a new way but to regulate the system, namely, to govern the national system of higher education – by a modern nation state.

From this angle, the 20th century was a period of the growing (legal, financial, administrative) regulation of national systems of education; the importance of systemic governance was continuously increasing. Specific features of particular countries and/or regions which developed originally as cultural traditions were gradually transformed into sophisticated legal systems and reinforced by political action. Europe developed strong public education systems but the management, control and financing of education institutions are simply not the only legislative issues. Knowledge and skills as defined in national frameworks of qualifications – usually based on a special legislative provision – had throughout the

century their closest relation with the approval of curricula; exact procedures of selection and examination were developed (e.g. the State Examination) and the working conditions of teachers in public institutions were regulated by governments in detail.

The practices of national regulations sometimes overlapped one another but were also separating. A serious problem was encountered when these extremely different and in many respects incompatible national systems started to emerge as a significant obstacles to the new European political agenda encompassing the principles of free mobility, cross-border employability, etc. in societies at large as well as in their respective higher education systems. It should not be forgotten that the Bologna Process (Paris 1998 and Bologna 1999) began as an initiative of the national Ministers responsible for higher education – without (and partly even against) interference with the European Commission and/or other European political bodies.

Within the historical context we have just sketched we should reconsider developments in higher education after new challenges appeared in the last quarter of the 20th century and which we briefly reflected on at the beginning. The importance of higher education for economic development has only increased to date; in fact, it has grown enormously and continues to rise. Under this “new light” mass higher education and its rapid internationalisation require an even greater concern over governance.

It seems that there are at least two new elements that can significantly influence further developments. As a result of processes in the last two decades, governments are increasingly occupied by systemic governance and institutions are recognised as being the most responsible for their internal governance. On the other side, the globalisation of economies, the emerging knowledge society, integration processes and international co-operation in the broadest sense also definitively bring a new challenge to higher education – the challenge of higher education governance in an international context. It is needless to argue here in detail that all three structural dimensions of governance – institutional, systemic and international – construct a triangle: an interdependent totality. On the other side, it is important to stress that higher education institutions find themselves today in a new cleft which hasn’t been known so far.

3. Commercialisation as the biggest challenge to contemporary higher education

The concept of higher education governance is obviously multidimensional. However, only considering its structural dimensions or “levels of governance” would leave further dimensions unexplored. Its multidimensional “space” constantly changes its form; today, this change depends first of all on dynamism of academic, political (governmental) and market aspirations.

From certain points of view, the pressure of the economy towards the traditional role which universities have played in the societal environment may today seem inconvenient and even dangerous; however, even when criticisms of the commercialisation of higher education yield convincing arguments we cannot avoid the fact that neither institutions nor society at large can simply return to the middle ages. It is similar with governance at the system level: the legal regulations of national education systems may seem overstated – and they may indeed be overregulated and may urgently need reforms leading towards deregulation – but their radical abolition would put both institutions and individuals into serious trouble as regards standards, financing, qualifications framework, transparency and compatibility, mobility and employability etc. To summarise, from a “pragmatic” point of view neither the influence of the economy nor the legislative burdens on higher education can be seen only as a threat to academic aspirations; they can also be seen as supportive, that is, as “external” factors which make these aspirations feasible. It is very important to analyse this triangle precisely and thoroughly: as an interdependent totality which is a characteristic of modern times. The threat is not just an illusion – nor a support.

This is particularly important when considering the relationship between internal and external governance. If external factors were treated merely as threats, internal aspirations should be closed within “ivory towers”. The metaphor suggests a closed universe of scholars – probably not students – delineated from the “external world” which hinders them in their pursuit of the truth and disinterested research. However, some surveys have shown that »the ivory tower is a myth, because in modern institutions of higher education there has always existed tension between service to the public and more contemplative scholarship« (Rosovsky, 2003, 14)⁶. Why can these external factors not be treated as challenges, proactively,

instead of threats from which academia has to withdraw behind their walls? In fact, who says that academia avoids contacts with the “external world”? In modern academic practice disinterested research is being ever more “challenged” by research that yields interest. The difficult academic dilemma of today is not “to close or not to close from the external world” nor “to start or not to start commerce with the external world”. The difficult question is how to respond to the new challenges in a way we will not come to regret.

Probably the biggest challenge of the “external world” to contemporary higher education institutions is commercialisation. Within our societal environments accustomed to well-developed public education systems, initiatives to reorient institutions towards alternative financial resources and entrepreneurship have not only met scepticism and restraint but also criticism and protest. Nevertheless, the proposed reorientation seems to be more and more firmly found on political agendas in all countries. Here, it can remain an open question of whether budget cuts pushed universities to search for alternative funds or universities’ success in finding alternative funds influenced governmental budget cuts. In any case, since the 1980s it has become quite clear that the extraordinary expansion of the higher education sector for structural reasons cannot expect a proportional expansion in terms of national budgets – particularly if additional pressure from sectors like health care and social security as well as the fact of the ageing society is taken into account. These questions importantly influence governance issues and raise several new dilemmas. However, is commercialisation the only alternative? And what does it actually mean?

In this respect, Europe probably started to encounter similar questions which North America had experienced earlier; for that reason it is also useful to cite the American analyst, Derek Bok, formerly President of Harvard University:

»If there is an intellectual confusion in the academy that encourages commercialization, it is confusion over means rather than ends. To keep profit-seeking within reasonable bounds, a university must have a clear sense of the values needed to pursue its goals with a high degree of quality and integrity. When the values become blurred and begin to lose their hold, the urge to make money quickly spreads throughout the institution« (Bok, 2005, 6).

It is obvious that we cannot only speak about “external” threats to institutions but institutions themselves

should also be scrutinised; it is important for them e.g. to avoid self-illusions. The almost proverbial truth says that academic institutions have not always been an example of a transparent and efficient organisation⁷; on the other hand, unfortunately, academic values could suffer from distortions within and not only from pressures stemming from outside institutions. Therefore, interference with the external world can be productive. Bok concludes: »Left to itself, the contemporary research university does not contain sufficient incentives to elicit all of the behaviours that society has a right to expect« (28).

Efficiency is increasingly being demanded from higher education in contemporary systemic reforms. Institutional as well as systemic governance should be improved to bring better results: this claim seems to be undisputed. However, it would seem quite a joke if one were to propose the transplantation of an efficiency matrix from economic enterprises straight into academic institutions. The nature of teaching and research is "strange" – as creative work they are characterised by "soft" standards – and efficiency as expressed in exact, e.g. quantitative, terms is not a helpful guide for them. "Entrepreneurial" efficiency measures can help in administration and services but can easily damage the quality of education; the quality of education should be approached differently. The education process has certain features which distinguish it from ordinary profitable services competing in the marketplace. As Bok says, »a major reason why competition does not yield optimal results in higher education is that students cannot adequately evaluate the options available to them« (179). Efficiency in research as valued in terms of commercially profitable results can only be trivial from a scientific point of view while, on the other hand, the fundamental inquiries in science as such – e.g. the solar system, cell, the subconscious etc. – have been always useless from the enterprise's point of view. They should be commodified – e.g. star wars, cloning, a course of psychoanalysis in three steps – to be useful.

4. Is the university an enterprise?

For these and similar reasons the university cannot be governed as an enterprise. Service to the public and more contemplative scholarship have always co-existed at universities – together with the tensions between them – and the form of institutional governance has always had to bear their uneasy balance in mind. Ivory towers and knowledge enterprises can only be regarded as extremes. Today, searching for a

balance requires a deliberate analysis of the costs and benefits of commercialisation; yet it puts modern universities into a Ulysses-like position between the prospects of bringing in substantial new revenues⁸ and the risks to genuine academic values⁹. What should we do in this position? Several authors – Derek Bok as well – call today for clear academic guidelines: »Setting clear guidelines is essential to protect academic values from excessive commercialization«¹⁰. But guidelines alone will not be enough: »Unless the system of governance has safeguards and methods of accountability that encourage university officials to act appropriately, the lure of making money will gradually erode the institution's standards and draw it into more and more questionable practices.« He is quite a pessimist: »Unfortunately, the structure of governance in most universities is not equal to the challenge of resisting the excesses of commercialization« (185).

However, the university in the market place is a university under certain public scrutiny. Several authors, including Bok, have argued that universities are becoming more susceptible to public criticism because of their increased importance to the economy and society at large; similarly, the decline of confidence so far characteristic of governments and their agencies can now also be applied to academic institutions. Here comes an important warning signal:

»The university's reputation for scholarly integrity could well be the most costly casualty of all. A democratic society needs information about important questions that people can rely upon as reasonable objective and impartial. Universities have long been one of the principal sources of expert knowledge and informed opinion on a wide array of subjects [...]. Once the public begins to lose confidence in the objectivity of professors, the consequences extend far beyond the academic community«. Namely, any damage to the reputation of universities »weakens not only the academy but the functioning of our democratic, self-governing society« (Bok, 2005, 117-118).

The problems which universities and higher education institutions generally encounter today would be trivial if academic institutions were not »at the heart of societies« (Magna Charta, 1991, 59), that is, if they were not crowded with students and if they were not expected to contribute to dramatic environmental, energy, health, communication etc. problems through their teaching and research. However, if this were the case they would not be modern academic

institutions. Modern institutions have to compete with problems that are not trivial at all.

The increasing external demands on modern universities require internal adjustments: universities must reorganise themselves, find new modes of operating and answer the challenges of how to carry out their new roles, yet without sacrificing their basic values. Basic academic values – e.g. »research and teaching [as] morally and intellectually independent of all political authority [...] and economic power«, »scholarly integrity« etc. – are not academic caprices at all. They are of vital importance for society at large: »strong universities« (EUA, 2005) are today a well-recognised and important lever of democratic society and economic development. They must set clear academic guidelines, including in terms of governance. However, the increasing external demands require some “external” adjustments as well: the governance of a higher education system should support universities in being successful in their endeavours. For (not only) this reason the public responsibility for higher education has been stressed several times in recent discussions and documents. Legislation should contain clear provisions not only about the relationship between higher education institutions and the (nation) state; the relationships between academic and market aspirations should also be specified in a similar way.

In the last instance, the increasing external demands on modern universities have started to require international and global adjustments. These demands are largely accelerated by the globalisation of markets and growing internationalisation of higher education. This dimension is no less important when the interplay between academic, governmental and market aspirations and/or forces is considered; yet it differs from the previous two. Responsibility for higher education remains even in the European Union with nation states but there are many problems which exceed the level of national higher education systems. When problems like the recognition of degrees and periods of study – particularly with regard to transnational higher education – come under discussion then the responsibility for higher education becomes international.

Could universities – and cooperation of universities across national borders – bring an alternative to pushes from global politics and global markets? At the occasion of signing Magna Charta Universitatum in Bologna in 1988, Rector Fabio Rovarsi-Monaco gave an affirmative answer: »In the name of the unity of culture the needs for supranationality of Universities could once more confront the difficul-

ties ensuing from the birth of national States and nationalisms« (Magna Charta, 1991, 11). It seems that there are further issues which should be clarified before answering this question.

5. One-dimensional concept of knowledge and education

One of the big civilisational problems of the past lay in the fact that one of the dimensions of knowledge – applicable knowledge – remained marginal. Knowledge was traditionally a privilege, in a similar way that educated circles are considered to form a social elite. The basic ideas at the foundations of the development of civilisations found neither encouraging circumstances nor effective ways to contribute towards “the good” realisation of the possibilities dormant in theoretical ideas, fundamental knowledge. On the other hand, one of the greatest civilisational problems of our time is the fact that knowledge is increasingly valued, created and usually also understood through only one of its dimensions: as applicable knowledge.

Knowledge seen in this way in present times is not a privilege, instead we could say it is a social necessity and obligation with which we have learnt to live and which we can master fairly well. The mastery of basic literacy has for a long time now no longer constituted a privileged class, elevated and separated from the wider classes, as was the case in the remote past. It is no longer primary school, but completed secondary school education that has become a general standard for population; in line with the Lisbon goals, by 2010 there should be at least 85 percent of twenty-two year olds in the European Union who have completed secondary education. The share of the population with tertiary education is among the younger population segments moving towards a half. One of the central characteristics of educational policy in modern democratic societies is the widening of access to education and the improvement of the educational structure of the population. Of course, because we live in – or at least very close to – the knowledge society. Nobody objects this trend any more: people need knowledge and they should have an open access to education. In this regard, we nowadays often hear that “knowledge contributes both to economic stability and social cohesion”. However, an emphasis solely on applicable (“useful”) knowledge – a knowledge useful to me – brings with it problems which may in future years only get worse; they will certainly not disappear off their own accord.

The complex goals of education can not be reduced to “useful to me”, to private interest only or to instrumentality, without endangering the very foundations of education. Education by its very nature is not just functional strength, but the power of the analytical (i.e. critical) recognition and transcending the reality.

We are challenged by the “knowledge society”, by the “knowledge-based economy”. With all the indisputable benefits it brings, it does not seem that the “end of history” has come. On the contrary, a number of serious problems are arising, of which we as a culture are not well enough aware. Knowledge is becoming a commodity to an extent that the twentieth century only dreamed of: it is sold as a commodity on a gigantic scale. We are not focusing here on the problems of the so-called proletarianisation of intellectual professions or something like that (that is another story), but about the fascinating “disappearance of the aura”, to refer to a well known essay (admittedly on art, not on education) by Walter Benjamin: knowledge in the “era of its technical reproduction”, that is at a time when we can keep and convey it in cosmic dimensions, irrespective of its extent or location of origin, loses its charm and becomes ordinary. This is a problem; a problem of culture. When certain knowledge can be technically reproduced (this is called today copy and paste in all languages), when it becomes easily transferable and present everywhere (“we download it from the internet”), we no longer need much knowledge – what a paradox! – to deal with it. Knowledge thus becomes a kind of a “good time”, private entertainment, as well as a “good business”, not a goal in itself. Such knowledge, of course, is no special privilege – and elites, be it cultural or critical, are not based on it.

So that in future we do not risk our roots, knowledge will have to strengthen that common, that which we share; in order to be able to make an active contribution to this, we must recognise and re-affirm knowledge as a public good, as well as the public responsibility for it. In order not to risk the welfare we have and in order to actually strengthen social cohesion, to which we so often refer in general goals, we must, in contrast to the reduction of knowledge to “applicability”, re-affirm all the dimensions of knowledge and the whole extent of (higher) educational goals:

- preparing individuals for their future professional careers, but also
- preparing young (and not so young) people for an active life as citizens in a democratic society,

- facilitating their personal development and, last but not least,
- creating and maintaining broad, superior foundations of knowledge and promoting research and innovation.

As we started with Aristotle we can also conclude with a quotation from his Politics:

»And just as there must also be preparatory training for all skills and capacities, and a process of preliminary habituation to the work of each profession, it is obvious that there must also be training for the activities of virtue. But since there is but one aim for the entire state, it follows that education must be one and the same for all, and that the responsibility for it must be a public one, not the private affair which it now is [...]« (Aristotle, 1992, VIII:1 1337a11).

- 1) Paper presented at the PRESOM workshop on education privatisation, 6 October 2007, Berlin, Germany.
- 2) In the last years, this issue has been pushed forward also by the European association of national Student Unions (ESIB) – an association with influence and respect within the Bologna Process. In 2001, ESIB established a special committee, the Committee on Commodification of Education (CoCo), which has raised its voice several times within “Bologna discussions”; see <http://www.esib.org/old/commodification/coco.html>.
- 3) »Then as to useful things: there are obviously certain essentials which the young must learn; but it is clear (a) that they must not learn all useful tasks, since we distinguish those that are proper for a free man and those that are not, and (b) that they must take part only in those useful occupations which will not turn the participant into a mechanic. We must reckon a task or skill or study as mechanical if it renders the body or intellect of free man unserviceable for the uses and activities of virtue.« (VIII:2 1337a33).
- 4) The supposed “hermetic academism” has always been challenged by certain “pragmatism” as its counterpart. Institutional autonomy can quickly turn into a phantasma if the environment, i.e. if “external factors” are not considered in a realistic way. In his speech on the occasion of the adoption of the Magna Charta Universitatum, the Rector of the University of Bologna Fabio Roversi-Monaco was even more direct about how »to take up the challenge of what is new«: »The society into which this new University has to integrate itself is the advanced industrial society of our time [...]. It would be a serious mistake if the University, in this new society, decided to withdraw into itself, into its pride of academic corporatism« (Magna Charta, 1991, 13).
- 5) »Until the sixteen century European universities were to a large extent all organized on the same line. They showed no national particularities or local focuses. [...] The picture changed with [...] the emergence of the European nation state« (Zonta, 2002, 32-33).
- 6) Rosovsky argues that »the ivory tower does not describe the modern research university: learning and service are always present. External influences are becoming more powerful for many different reasons: the power of government, the search by commercial interests for knowledge within the academy,

the perpetual need for more resources within the university, and – not least – the opportunity for individual faculty members to make economic gains.« A “splendid isolation” couldn’t be an alternative to external influences; Rosovsky argues that the “external permeability” has a parallel in the “internal” permeability (e.g. disciplinary barriers). The author articulated the real and serious dilemma of the contemporary period in the following way: »Can universities preserve their objectivity as disinterested researchers and social critics if current trends persist?« (Rosovsky, 2003, 18).

- 7) Bok argues that »universities have something to learn from the world of commercial enterprise. [...] In the first place, university administrators do not have as strong an incentive as most business executives to lower costs and achieve greater efficiency. [...] university officials will be less successful than business executives in operating efficiently. Presidents and deans lack the experience of most corporate managers in administering large organizations. [...] A second important lesson universities can learn from business is the value of striving continuously to improve the quality of what they do. [...] corporate executives have made major efforts to decentralize their organizations and give more discretion to semi-autonomous groups to experiment and to innovate« etc. (Bok, 2003, 24, 25).
- 8) Interestingly, Derek Bok admonishes that revenues are not as high as usually expected: »Despite their attractive features, commercial profits do not always live up to expectations. [...] Of an estimated 200 or more patent licensing offices on American campuses, only a small fraction received more than \$10 million in 2000 and a large majority failed to earn any appreciable profit« (Bok, 2005, 100-101).
- 9) »Another educational cost that commercialisation can incur has to do with the moral example such behaviour gives to students and other in the academic community. Helping to develop virtue and build character have been central aims of education since the time of Plato and Aristotle. After years of neglect, universities everywhere have rediscovered the need to prepare their students to grapple with the moral dilemmas they will face in their personal and professional lives« (Bok, 2005, 109).
- 10) Similar statements can be found in other places: »What universities should do instead is to look at the process of commercialization whole, with all its benefits and risks, and than try to develop clear rules that are widely understood and conscientiously enforced« (Bok, 2003, 121). »When rules are unclear and always subject to negotiations, money will prevail over principle much of the time« (Bok, 2003, 156).

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