

Histories, Traditions and Legacies in Higher Education

Jussi Välimaa

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On Basic Concepts

- History
- Tradition
- Legacy
- How are these related with each other?



History

- **History as a social phenomenon:** the past considered as a whole
- **History as a story:** a written account of past events
- **History as a discipline** is influenced by contemporary interests of knowledge but it studies past ⇔ Focus on continuities & discontinuities, processes & contexts



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Tradition

🎯 **Tradition** the passing of beliefs or customs from one generation to the next (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary), **a process of negotiation**

=> **Tradition is oriented to future:** what are so relevant beliefs, values, norms, knowledge that they should be passed to next generations

🎯 to understand traditions of contemporary worlds one should know how they have developed (**history**)



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Legacy

- **A Thing passed to somebody by people who lived before them or earlier events** (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary)
- Legacy is **oriented to past**, a one-way process without negotiation with the future
- ... burdens of history felt in contemporary world



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Higher education as a crossing point?

- We live in three simultaneous times: **past** (through histories, traditions & legacies), **contemporary** with its tensions & in the **future** already initiated by next generations
- ***What kind of crossing point higher education is for the past and future in contemporary world?***



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What is a university?

- **Idea** of university: a what should university be and do (political dimension)
- **Organization** with formal structures & procedures (historical layers and legacies)
- **Social Institution with many tensions:** teachers vs. students; academics vs. administrators (managers); disciplinary differences; teaching vs. research vs. third mission; relationship with state/society
- **= dynamic institution**

On The History of Universities

- An indigenous **European social innovation**
- **Corporative character:** *"privileged corporate associations of masters and students with their statutes, seals, administrative machinery and degree procedures"*. (Cobban 1988)
- First universities were never established ... but appeared around 1200 ⇔ **universitas**
- Archetypes of **Paris**, 1215? (University of Masters) & **Bologna**, 1088? (University of Students); several combinations of them ...



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Beliefs & Values of Europe's Universities (1)

- 1) *the belief in the dignity of man*, who, even in his fallen state, was capable of impressive mental and spiritual growth (**education**)
- 2) *the belief in an ordered universe open to rational understanding* (**research**)
- 3) *the belief in the prospect of man's mastery of his environment through his intellect and his mounting knowledge and experience* (**utility**)

Beliefs & Values of Europe's Universities (2)

4) *culture in which **questioning and analytical approach** to both classical and contemporary material was encouraged (**critical thinking**)* (Cobban 1988, 11-14)

5) **Publicity of research & open debates**
(Rüegg (2004, 32-34))

These beliefs & values are the fundamental historical layer for all European universities

A Perspective for changes in universities: revolutions

- The Gutenberg Revolution, 1460-1560
- The Scientific Revolution, 1600-1750
- **The Humboldt Revolution, 1810-1860**
- **The Research University Revolution, 1860-1920**
- The Mass-Revolution, 1960-1990
- **The Knowledge Society Revolution, 1990-**
(Nybom 2007)

The Humboldtian / Napoleonic Revolutions & Legacies

- Napoleonic wars in Europe (1790-1815) challenged the traditional role of universities
- One of the most critical periods in the history of European universities (Wittrock 1993)
- ⇒ **French system** of HE: Grandes Écoles & teaching oriented universities & Science Academies
- ⇒ **New Humboldtian** university in Berlin (1810) part of the new nation-building process

French (Napoleonic)- system (1790s -> 1968?)

- Specialist institutions, subjected to severe discipline, strictly organized & controlled by the state (e.g. *École Normale supérieure*, *École Polytechnique*)
- Produced the elite & civil servants for the state
- '*scholarly desert*' because of professionalization & centralization & separation of teaching from research (=>1870s) (Charle 2004)
- Research allowed only in great teaching universities (Sorbonne) & Science Academies



The Humboldt *Idea* of University

- **Knowledge** as a unified indivisible entity
- Unity of **teaching & learning** (*forschung & lehre*)
- Primacy of science & scholarship (*wissenschaft*)
- Pursuit of truth in **solitude & freedom** (*einsamheit & freiheit*)
- **Freedom of teaching & learning** (*Lehr- & Lernfreiheit*)
- **Bildung –wissenschaft –national culture as basis for modern state** (*Kulturstaat*)

Humboldt legacies & traditions:

- **Institutional:** university autonomy & faculty – discipline –chair system \Leftrightarrow academic careers
- **Professional:** Professors nominated by the Prince to prevent nepotism & int. strife
- **Mental:** Impetus for combined research & teaching activities in all disciplines
- **Pedagogical:** Seminars, laboratories, clinics
- **A Political model:** a 'good deal' with nation state

Research University Revolution, 1860-1920

- Science => "intellectual industry"
- Problems in integrating research with teaching
=> research institutes
- Changes in student population, problems with
non-professor staff
- Unity of knowledge => "two cultures" sciences
(explanation) & humanists (understanding);
↔ technical universities (1899: professors)
- Professionalization of careers



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On Russian Higher Education

- Two traditions & tensions: **liberalism** (Humboldt) ⇔ **totalitarianism** (Napoleon)
- University model from Germany: institutional autonomy + unity of teaching & research
- Objectives of universities from France: to train bureaucracy (see *grandes écoles*)
- Practical training + Specialist institutions
- Tsarist model** perfected by **Soviet model**: authoritarian system of rules & regulations (Rüegg 2004, Charle 2004)



The Mass-Revolution, 1960-1990

- **Crucial element:** the social role of higher education changed from the reproduction of elite to production of qualified labour force (Trow 1974)
- Crucial matter: the number of students from the age cohort (~15%) ***elite - mass - universal***
- Part of policies & processes of making welfare states => equality issue & Economic issue (expenses of HE)
- ***Political, professional & pedagogical aspects***



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Globalised Knowledge Society Revolution?

- Changes in the knowledge, its production, storage and dissemination => needs to re-organise administration & management, pedagogical thinking (MOOCS), the role HEIs in society, professional profiles
- **World class university** as an idealized image of a US research university. A new myth?
- Drivers of changes in society, globally:
Networks & ICT & Knowledge



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Recent & future trends related to Knowledge production & transmission

Dimensions of Knowledge:	(Traditional) Hierarchical Society:	Networked Knowledge Society:
<i>Locus of knowledge</i>	Local & national institutions	(&) Global networks
<i>Nature of knowledge</i>	Controlled /closed	Open & free
<i>Mode of knowledge production</i>	Universities	Cooperation: universities & others
<i>Production of knowledge</i>	Individual academics	Collective cooperation & peer production
<i>Storage of knowledge</i>	Libraries & archives	(&) internet
<i>Access to knowledge</i>	Limited, controlled	Open & free
<i>Mode of knowledge transmission</i>	Teacher-centered, lecture rooms	Student-centered, web-based learning

How to incorporate three different times into HEIs?

- Knowing our history
- Accepting our legacies
- Recognising our contemporary tensions
- Reflecting on our traditions and contemporary trends
- Communicating with new generations: they live already (at least partly) in the future

