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Rhoten, Diana & Craig Calhoun (Eds.) (2011) *Knowledge Matters: The Public Mission of the Research University*. NY: Columbia University Press.

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Reviewed by Mark Oromaner
New York, New York

At the time of the publication of *Knowledge Matters* Diana Rhoten was the director of the Knowledge Institutions Program and the Digital Media and Learning Project at the Social Science Research Council, and Craig Calhoun was president of the Council and University Professor of the Social Sciences at New York University. In September, 2012, Calhoun became Director of the London School of Economics. They have edited an important volume reflecting various international perspectives concerning the transformation of the research university in the 21st century. Given the above, it might have been advisable to place Christine Musselin's literature review paper, "The

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Academic Workplace: What We Already Know, What We Still Do Not Know, and What We Would Like to Know" (Chapter 14) earlier in the volume.

The first three chapters set the general historical and theoretical background for the more specific papers that follow. According to Calhoun (Chapter 1), the "book focuses on the public mission of universities, what they owe in return for funding at public expense, and what they may provide as public goods, how they may work in distinctively public ways, and how they may nurture public discourse" (p.3). Although in the emerging global society, knowledge does matter, and the university has played a crucial role in its production and dissemination, "the university today is an institution in upheaval" (p. 1). Examples include increasing pressure for public accountability, diversification of enrollment opportunities, strains between research and teaching, and competition from new ways of conducting and communicating research. Perhaps the most prominent challenge has to do with financial shortfalls.

Over the past thirty years the global dominance of the neoliberal ideology has had negative consequences for universities and in particular for public universities; they have experienced meaningful declines in their state support. As sources of funding support have moved toward student tuition and fees, donors, patents and economically successful research, business/industrial ties, etc., the missions of universities have also shifted. What happens to the public mission of the university as funding increasingly comes from private sources? Calhoun worries that adaptations to present short-term economic crises may result in long-term structural and mission changes.

In a thoughtful discussion (Chapter 2), Gustavo E. Fischman, Sarah E. Igo, and Rhoten caution critics that the current view of a "crisis" situation for the public research university may be based on an "ideal-type" model that "purportedly flourished in the post-World War II period, often nostalgically referred to as the 'golden age' "(p. 35). The "golden age" view is not limited to the United States. However, an analysis of the history of universities reveals that in general they were established as elitist, discriminatory, and patriarchal institutions. Do recent transformations reflect change or crisis? A number of the

papers in this volume indicate the possibility of analyses of current conditions based more on research than on perceived historical conditions.

In longest paper (Chapter 3), Simon Marginson and Imanol Ordorkia argue that along with U.S. domination in global military strength and economic power, "the U.S. hegemony in education and research underpins the U.S. domination of other spheres" (p. 68). They employ Antonio Gramsci's concept of "hegemony" to indicate the negative consequences of the U.S. dominance for research universities in other countries and for those in the U.S. For instance, academics outside of the U.S. use English and pattern their work on U.S. paradigms, and academics within the U.S. exclude knowledge produced outside of the U.S. In the words of the authors, "Globalization in higher education is what the United States brings to the rest of the world, not what the world brings to U.S. universities" (p. 100). If I had to suggest one chapter to be read, this is the chapter.

In general, contributors are aware of the importance of local contexts, e.g., state, nation, however, a number of chapters are written from a larger perspective, e.g., continent or region. Yusef Waghid (Chapter 7) proposes that African nations place greater reliance on the importance of local culture and in particular the concept of "ubuntu" (African humanism). The implementation of this concept could lead to practices such as institutional autonomy, academic freedom, critical research, and deliberative forms of teaching and learning. Unfortunately, the implementation process is not clearly presented. In a more historical and less philosophical paper, N'Dri T.

Assie-Lumumba and Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo (Chapter 8) examine the public university in the context of African national development during the past fifty years. Since the early 1990s, the university sector has reflected the impact of the market economy and neoliberalism and is mainly characterized by the emergence of private universities (both brick and mortar and distance learning). These are consumer oriented and "tend to offer courses in those disciplines considered to be of greater value to the global economy…. "(p. 281). The authors call for a new public university to pursue scientific, artistic, and humanistic endeavors "within the framework of both

human- and society-centered development paradigms and social progress in African countries and the global Pan-African community" (p.283). Once again, these nice sounding words are not backed up with a convincing implementation plan.

In their comparative analysis of the impact of evaluation and accountability programs on the the changing relationships between higher education and the state in South Africa and the United Kingdom, John Brennan and Mala Singh (Chapter 13) conclude that power is shifting to external stakeholders and to administrators and middle managers within the university. They also propose that the "capacity of academics, individually and collectively, for resistance and subversion should not be underestimated "(p. 420). Once again, this sounds good, but where is the evidence?

In the case of Asia, Ka Ho Mok (Chapter 6) "examines how and what strategies governments in Asia have adopted to restructure and transform their higher education systems to cope with the challenges of marketization and commodification in education" (p.196). To compete on a global scale a number of countries have emphasized measureable outcomes, e.g., patents. publications in international journals, position in global ranking systems. However, "the overemphasis on international ranking and the quest for the world-class university status have led to shifting agendas favoring an international reputation instead of local research contributing to domestic development" (p.208). It is up to critical academics/intellectuals to lead the resistance to the "entrepreneurial university" and to reach out to the public to ultimately have an impact on policymakers. The negative impact of globalization on economic development is seconded in the data rich country based analysis of Latin America by Juan Carlos Moreno-Brid and Pablo Ruiz-Napoles (Chapter 5). The public research university plays an essential role in this development, and in Latin America and other developing regions a fundamental weakness or "missing link" is the strong relationship between universities and the local business/industry sector.

In a move to Continental Europe, Mark S. Johnson and Andrey V. Kortunov (Chapter 4) find that throughout the period of the Soviet Union and since its collapse in 1991,

"the basic relations of power in and around Russian higher education have remained remarkably stable" (p. 132). Although the collapse of the previously closed system meant that universities were exposed to the forces of emerging information technology and globalization, the state continues to play the dominant role in the direction of these institutions. The "missing link" in Russia "remains society itself" (p. 152). That is, students, parents, local and regional governments, small businesses, civil society, and nonprofit organizations. In another European county with a well-established university tradition, Stefan Lange and George Krucken (Chapter 11) describe the ongoing strains between the strong culture of faculty control over curriculum and research matters and the increasing influence of politicians and funding administrators in university agenda setting in Germany.

In Chapter 10, Rhoten and Walter W. Powell trace the development of the American public research universities' adaptation to eternal forces in their transition "From Land Grant to Federal Grant to Patent Grant Institutions." That is, the mission has changed from an emphasis on services to local residents and communities (land grant) to the integration with other organizations that provided services addressed to the nation and its concerns (federal grant) to an institution (patent grant), "responsible for taking knowledge products directly from laboratory to the market, reinvesting earnings to enhance prestige and reputation, and carrying the country forward into a globally competitive knowledge economy" (p. 322). This paper can be paired with the nuanced final contribution (Chapter 15) in which Michael D. Kennedy uses his insider knowledge of the University of Michigan to explore the meanings of the term "public" at one of the outstanding public research universities in the United States.

Concerns associated with the shift toward the "entrepreneurial university" include: Intellectual property (Who owns the rights to patents? What impacts will the race for profitable research have on the sharing of ideas?), Industrial partnerships (Will a dependence on industrial support lead to a capture of the direction of university research by corporations?), Professoriate (Will the emphasis on competition for research and funding divert attention from teaching and service to the university and

community? Will science and technology be funded at the expense of the humanities?). In Chapter 9, John Willinsky presents his well-known argument that greater institutional support for open-access initiatives in publishing would reassert, "a balance between public and private interests in the ownership of, and control over, the universities' published record of research and scholarship" (p. 291).

New information technologies provide opportunities for research universities to expand their missions to include service to worldwide audiences. And, in a brief, informative, and clearly written paper (Chapter 12), Voldemar Tomusk examines recent arguments at the University of Cambridge concerning Intellectual Property Rights policies. The conflict between the rights of academics as individuals and the rights of the university are not limited to Cambridge and are likely to proliferate with the development of the "entrepreneurial university."

The broad spectrum of regions and countries represented in this collection is impressive. At the same time, a rationale for the selection of these and not other regions and countries, e.g., Central Europe and the Middle East (Arab countries, Israel, Iran, Turkey) is not presented. Also, this important volume deserves better editorial work. For instance, the preface contains a reference to the Lange and Krucken paper as chapter 9 rather than the accurate citation as chapter 11. And, on the same page the Rhoten and Powell chapter is referred to as 11 rather than 10 (p. xiv). Another example is the phrase, "The number of active [sic] and researchers being trained in the various areas is low… "(p. 185). However, these omissions and errors are insignificant when compared with the information and challenging ideas in this collection. Policymakers and academics interested in debating, understanding, and influencing the missions and structure of research universities in the 21st century will gain a good familiarity with current knowledge and issues. Persons interested in particular geographic areas or global trends will find selected chapters to be valuable resources.

About the Reviewer

Mark Oromaner is an independent scholar (sociology). He spent more than thirty-five years in higher education as a faculty member, administrator, and researcher. His major research interests and publications focus on the sociology and politics of higher education and on the creation, diffusion, and influence of social science knowledge.

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