PART I

THEMES AND PATTERNS

CHAPTER 1

THEMES

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INTRODUCTION

The Second World War left behind a devastated university landscape in many parts of Europe. The only areas to escape were Spain and Portugal in the Iberian peninsula, Sweden in Scandinavia, and Switzerland in the middle of Europe. The most severe damage was sustained by the universities of Eastern Europe, which were systematically destroyed by the conquerors. In Central and Western Europe as well, the German occupation and liberation by the Allies left many universities in ruins. Fifty years later, they had more than recovered. The 201 universities registered in Europe in 1945 had grown by another 600. They enrolled five times as many young men and women as had attended universities just after the war. Among their subjects of study were many not taught at universities in 1945. This success story is the general theme of this volume, which is the last in our *History of the University in Europe*.

Three main themes contribute to its particular character. The first is the idea of reform, an essential element in universities since their earliest beginnings. The second theme, the destruction of the ivory tower, is concerned mainly with the consequences of the reforms that began in the 1980s relating to the university and its interaction with the public domain. The third major theme is the provincialization of European universities, the loss of their world dominance in research and instruction. Both the second and third volumes have a chapter devoted to the adoption of the European university model in other continents. In the present volume there can be no talk of this. Europe itself has become a province, though an important one, in a global university landscape, whose contours are drawn largely by the United States. There first British and then German university models underwent an independent development, with the result

that in the 1990s it was the American model that drove the fundamental changes in the universities of a reunited Europe. In this final volume of our history, it will be useful to put these changes into perspective.

REFORMATIO IN MELIUS[1]

The oldest-surviving university statutes of 1215 state as their goal lasting improvements in the circumstances of the Paris schools, *ut statui Parisiensium scolarum in melius reformando impenderemus operam efficacem*. *Reformatio* described not only the restoration of a dissolved university, but also the renewal of former statutes and the foundation or regulation by statute of a university. The officials in the Italian city states responsible for the universities were often referred to as *reformatores studii*. Since the tenth century *Reformatio* had been applied to monasteries in its original sense of the restoration of an original form, and when it came to be used in connection with the universities, it meant that, from the very beginning, they had as their task to realize their own particular form, their underlying Platonic idea, their Aristotelian entelechy.

As far as the imagination of the new students and the public were concerned, this form was symbolized by a figure of authority. The very first universities, therefore, invented founders from the distant past. In Paris it was Charlemagne, in Oxford, the English king Alfred the Great. In Bologna they concocted a foundation document according to which the emperor Theodosius II of the late classical period, who had played an important role in establishing Roman law, gave Bologna the right to teach jurisprudence.[2]

Later foundations authorized by popes, emperors or kings followed the model of one of the two oldest universities founded around 1200, that is, either Paris or Bologna. They only differed in the way they were administered through their scholars, or masters, and in the number of their faculties. Gradually the state university emerged, with its four faculties: the 'arts' or philosophical faculty, offering a general education in the *artes liberales* and in philosophy, and the three higher faculties, which provided the academic basis for a career as a theologian, lawyer or doctor. The *reformatio in melius* explains the uniformity of the organization into faculties and the structure of study, with the grades of *baccalaureus*, *magister* or *licentiatus* and *doctor*, together with prescribed teaching programmes and methods.

[1] Vol. I, 28–34 (Rüegg, 'Themes').
[2] Around 1888 a foundation year of 1088 was invented in Bologna in order to be able to celebrate the jubilee of the oldest university in Europe; cf. vol. I, 24f.

The *reformatio* was given concrete form in the university statutes. Minute regulations and proscriptions ruled the behaviour of the university members, with the aim of avoiding friction between them and with the general public and of ensuring that the university fulfilled its purpose as efficiently as possible. The norms laid down in the regulations embodied the values then associated with the ideal of the scholar and expressed both explicitly and implicitly in sermons and disputations. In addition to *amor sciendi*, intellectual honesty, wide-ranging knowledge, and clarity of thought, there were virtues such as humility, a paternal interest in the well-being of the scholars, collegial solidarity and loyalty to the university, and obedience to the officers of the university and its ecclesiastical and secular supporters.[3]

The essential features of this newly emerging academic ethos rested on seven values, which gave a religious legitimacy to *amor sciendi* and its practice in the universities:[4]

1. Belief in a world order accessible to human reason underwrote the concept of academic research as an attempt to discern the rational order in God's creation.
2. The ancient view of man as an imperfect being and the Judeo-Christian vision of a creature who had lapsed into sin, together with the associated idea of a limited human intellect, acted as a motor for academic criticism and collegial cooperation, while forming the basis for the conversion of general ethical values such as humility, modesty, respect and self-criticism into the ideal of the academic scholar.
3. Respect for the individual as a reflection of the macrocosm or as an image of God constituted the basis for the gradually emerging freedom of academic research and teaching.
4. The establishment of absolute truth as the goal of the academic pursuit of knowledge required the introduction of basic norms, such as sharing information, submitting statements to generally accepted rules of critical examination, and, not least, subscribing to the public nature of the procedures underlying academic research and its results.
5. A readiness to improve one's own knowledge by accepting convincing results from any source, such as the rediscovered Roman law or Arabic medicine and science. Thus from the very beginning there was

[3] A. L. Gabriel, 'The Ideal Master of the Medieval University', *The Catholic Historical Review*, 9 (1974), 1–40; G. Lebras, '*Velut splendor firmamenti*. Le docteur dans le droit de l'église médiévale', in *Mélanges offerts à Etienne Gilson* (Toronto and Paris, 1959), 373–88; J. Leclerq, 'L'idéal du théologien au moyen-âge, textes inédits', *Revue des sciences religieuses*, 21 (1947), 121–48.

[4] W. Rüegg, 'The Academic Ethos', *Minerva*, 24 (1986), 393–412; cf. A. B. Cobban, *The Medieval Universities: Their Development and Organisation* (London, 1975), 13ff.

a particular value unique to the universities, which in the course of the centuries was to take on a socially revolutionary force: judging knowledge on the basis of its merit, not its source, and accepting the equality and solidarity of their members in carrying out this task. However much modern social history emphasizes the social inequalities in universities, they disappeared completely (at least in principle) when it came to the pursuit and transmission of academic knowledge.

6. Thanks to the appreciation of academic research as a public good, in religious terms as a gift of God, the university – in contrast to the guilds and the regional corporations – was an open institution. Any freeborn Christian able to study was admitted, and the pecuniary interest in exploiting knowledge was lower within the university than outside.
7. The *reformatio* put enormous emphasis on prescribed authors and systems of thought, but these were not accepted uncritically. They were scrutinized logically before being admitted as the basis of education. Academic research as the acquisition of knowledge in a cumulative process was based, in the Middle Ages, on the *reformatio ad melius*.

The fact that the world is illuminated by academic research, which at the same time leads towards obedience to God and his servant the emperor (*scientia mundus illuminatur ad obediendum deo et nobis, eius ministris, vita subiectorum informatur*) was stressed by Frederick Barbarossa in 1155 in his ordinance protecting foreign masters and scholars.[5]

The student practised obedience when he matriculated at the minimum age of thirteen and had to find a master who would supervise his studies and his way of life. He practised academic obedience by listening to the prescribed texts as they were dictated and explained by his teachers, and by learning them by heart and repeating them in class. After three or four years of basic study in grammar, logic and rhetoric, he could graduate as a bachelor and either take up an academically non-specialized career as a town scribe or notary, or, under the supervision of a master, learn to become a teacher and educate himself further in the mathematical *artes liberales* (arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy) and the three philosophies (physics, ethics and metaphysics). After a total of four years he was allowed to present himself for the master's examination, which brought with it the *licentia ubique docendi*, the generally recognized teaching qualification. Only a few students who had qualified as masters in the arts faculty went on for a further four to eight years of study to

[5] W. Stelzer, 'Zum Scholarenprivileg Friedrich Barbarossas (Authentica 'Habita')', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters*, 34 (1978), 123–45.

gain the licentiate in one of the higher faculties of medicine, the two forms of law or theology. Both masters and licentiates could obtain the title of doctor without any extra examinations, simply on the payment of hefty fees.

As early as the Middle Ages, therefore, university study already had the levels of bachelor and master or licentiate. Both were retained in the Anglo-Saxon higher-education system as well as in France, since the *Baccalauréat*, which forms the school leaving examination, is considered the lowest form of university examination. What today would be deplored as high rates of non-completion was the norm in the medieval period. Most of those entering the university left without taking an expensive examination. In their self-determined period of study they gained the intellectual skills that would allow them to prosper without an academic qualification in areas increasingly dominated by the ability to deal with the exchange of money and letters. An Italian city administration, for example, accepted the possession of the *Corpus iuris* as a qualification for the post of judge.

In the Middle Ages the social function of the university consisted in the dissemination of academic knowledge and methods vitally necessary to reduce rational uncertainty in the socially uncertain situation that prevailed in the realms of politics, the church, the law, medicine and education between 1200 and 1600. The university taught intellectual certainty by subjecting the contradictions between doctrines themselves and between these and the experiences of practical life to a dialectical process, and by finally resolving it in a logical synthesis. The disputations in which students practised this dialectic were an important part of the curriculum in all faculties.

This scholastic method corresponded to the Aristotelian and monastic ideal of the *vita contemplativa*. From the fourteenth century onwards the universities had to contend with the criticism that, with their scholastic method, they were not concerned with individual human beings and their concrete problems, although their main task was the education of medical doctors, lawyers and careerists in public service. As a result, other institutions of higher education emerged. There were state schools for navigation in Portugal and Spain. Learned private circles and academies started up in Italy before spreading to Erfurt, Cracow and Buda.[6] Printing also contributed to breaking the medieval university's monopoly in the production and dissemination of academic knowledge.

[6] T. Klaniczay, 'Das Contubernium des Johannes Vitéz. Die erste ungarische "Akademie"', in K. Benda *et al.* (eds.), *Forschungen über Siebenbürgen und seine Nachbarn, Festschrift für Attila T. Szabó und Zsigmond Jakó* (Munich, 1988), 227–43.

Walter Rüegg

HUMANISM AND UNIVERSITY REFORM THROUGH DIALOGUE

Just a few decades ago scholars focused on the decline, indeed the comatose state of universities in the Early Modern period. The second volume of our series, which appeared in 1996, destroyed this diagnosis.[7] On the contrary, the universities contributed to a very considerable degree to the spread of the 'scientific revolution'.[8] But they no longer did this within the framework of a unified Europe governed hierarchically by universal powers, but in the role of bridgeheads linking intellectual elites across a confessionally and politically divided Europe.

The foundations for these bridgeheads were the *studia humanitatis*, the *humaniora*, *humanités*, *humanidades*, *umanità*, that is, a humanist education common to all European states with a shared cultural background. This was the second reform of the universities in Europe, the *reformatio* of the thirteenth century being the first. Admittedly, in terms of the list of subjects studied, it only differed in the addition of history and Greek together with an emphasis on rhetoric and moral philosophy. But much more important than the difference in the material studied was the difference in the direction of study in all the faculties.

Similarly, just as the vertically oriented Gothic cathedrals were replaced by renaissance and baroque churches with their emphasis on the horizontal perspective, so the aim of university study became not so much that of the scholar, who had scaled the tower of the sciences in order to view the world beyond, but rather the *gentleman*, the *honnête homme*, the enlightened servant and citizen of the state, who educated himself 'in conversation with the most learned personalities of the past as they imparted to him the best of their thoughts'. It was in these words[9] that Descartes committed himself to the principle of the structured dialogue, which the Italian humanists had employed to open up a new access to the classical world.[10] For the mathematician Descartes and other scientists, the dialogical structure, which also manifested itself in the style of academic publications, changed not only the educational basis of the European elites, but also the concept of academic research itself. Whereas in the vertical perspective of the Middle Ages the academics sat like dwarves on the shoulders of giants and only in this way were able to see further,[11]

[7] Vol. II, xxi (Rüegg, 'Foreword'). [8] Vol. II, 531–62 (Porter, 'Scientific Revolution').
[9] G. Lanson, *Histoire de la littérature française*, 12th edn (Paris 1912), viii.
[10] For this and what follows: W. Rüegg, 'Die Funktion des Humanismus für die Bildung politischer Eliten', in W. Ludwig and G. Huber-Rebenich (eds.), *Humanismus in Erfurt* (Rudolstadt, 2002), 13–32.
[11] John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon III*, 4, ed. C. C. I. Webb (Oxford, 1929), 136. Cf. R. K. Merton, *On the Shoulders of Giants: A Shandean Postscript* (New York, 1965).

the humanist dialogue with the authors of the past enabled scholars to undertake voyages of discovery on the high seas, in order to discover new worlds, for which the title page of Francis Bacon's *Instauratio magna* of 1620 provides both an illustration and a commentary.[12]

In their study of the surviving written sources, the social elites, depending increasingly on written forms of commerce and communication, maintained a dialogue with the authorities of traditional learning. In the process they judged opinions not so much by rules or doctrines, but by degree of persuasiveness. The exchange of letters as a dialogue with personal addressees, often written with publication in mind, linked European scholars with one another and with the political elites in a way that transcended confessional and political boundaries. It made possible the rapid spread and discussion of new ideas throughout the whole of Europe. In 1665 the *Journal des sçavans*, associated with the Académie Royale des Sciences in Paris, and the *Philosophical Transactions* of the Royal Society of London took on this function.

The key function of this humanist dialogue, in which the stranger is recognized as a partner in conversation and then often as a friend, appears most vividly in a letter that Guillaume Budé, the intellectual father of what was to be the Collège de France, wrote to the Swiss humanist Vadianus in October 1518: their friendship, which had just been forged as a result of the dedication of a book, would not be jeopardized by a war between France and the Swiss Confederation, for 'what person imbued with humanist values [*humanitate literaria imbutus*] who had once found friends in foreign lands could renounce them, even if the governments became tired of peace and developed a taste for warlike enterprises?'[13] Such an attitude, for which Erasmus of Rotterdam is also a model, allows us to understand why, after the collapse of church unity, the Europe of the universities survived.

They did not survive, however, as the sole all-embracing institution of higher education. General education was entirely or partly displaced from the arts faculties into residential colleges within the university, which in England continued to operate as an examining body for academic degrees, or outside the university in schools, gymnasiums, lyceums, which prepared students not only for university study, but also for the direct assumption of social roles. Humanist education was so successful in its socially integrating role that Rousseau declared in 1772 that 'there were

[12] Vol. II, 6; 16 (Rüegg, 'Themes').

[13] *Vadianische Briefsammlung*, vol. VII: *Ergänzungsband* (St Gallen, 1913), 9. Text based on the original corrected by W. Rüegg, 'Humanistische Elitenbildung in der Eidgenossenschaft zur Zeit der Renaissance', in G. Kauffmann (ed.), *Die Renaissance im Blick der Nationen Europas*, Wolfenbütteler Abhandlungen zur Renaissanceforschung, 9 (Wiesbaden, 1991), 133.

no longer Frenchmen, Germans, Spaniards, and indeed Englishmen, there were only Europeans. They had all been formed in the same way.'[14]

Academic research also burst the bounds of the university. Either on their own initiative or as a result of invitations on the part of princes, scientific societies, often called academies, brought together university scholars and scientists with members of the academic professions and educated lay persons for the joint discussion and advancement of academic discoveries.

Apart from a few leading universities in Scotland, Italy, Germany and the Netherlands, which ushered in the enlightenment by modernizing their curricula, the humanist impulse towards a *vita activa* and a socially oriented education degenerated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries into the sterile pedantry and pretence of learning that Molière and Mozart caricatured so arrestingly. It is not surprising that the French Revolution put an end to universities together with other medieval institutions and carried out that most radical of reforms, the replacement of outmoded forms by new ones.

In France the Revolution closed all twenty-two universities and replaced them in the twelve largest cities by technical colleges, *grandes écoles* and schools for medicine and law. Later the Facultés des lettres and the Facultés des sciences were reintroduced, in order to administer the *baccalauréat* examinations, to train secondary-school teachers, and to provide lectures for an educated public. In other countries, too, universities disappeared; in the whole of Europe some sixty had gone by 1815 out of the 143 that had existed around 1789.[15] This policy corresponded to the mentality of the enlightenment and its desire to direct higher education towards the transmission of practical knowledge, which served the common good, and to establish professional schools. Thus the leaders of large and small states from Spain to Russia created institutes of higher education to provide an academic training for their military and civilian officials. In 1801 the Prussian king expressly demanded that the Academy of Architecture founded in Berlin two years previously 'should train architects and not professors'.[16] As in the Middle Ages, the production of their own teachers was still considered to be the main task of the universities. It is thus all the more remarkable that the Prussian universities not only

[14] J.-J. Rousseau, *Considérations sur le gouvernement de Pologne et sur sa réformation projetée* (ed. J. Fabre), *Oeuvres complètes* (ed. B. Gagnebin and M. Raymond), vol. III (Paris, 1964), 960. Originally the quotation was erroneously attributed to Voltaire (e.g. in O. Dann and J. Dinwiddy (eds.), *Nationalism in the Age of the French Revolution* (London and Ronceverte 1988), 14); this was corrected by Charles Wirz, curator at the Institut et Musée Voltaire in Geneva.

[15] With regard to the following section, see vol. III, 7ff. (Rüegg, 'Themes').

[16] *Die Technische Hochschule zu Berlin 1799–1934. Festschrift* (Berlin, 1935), 39.

survived, but in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries developed into the world's leading institutions in higher education. The reason is that a 'General Educational Institute' was not established in Berlin, as had been planned, but instead a university was founded in 1810 on the basis of the modern idea of university reform.

THE LIBERAL REFORM OF THE UNIVERSITIES BY SCHLEIERMACHER AND HUMBOLDT

In the French model, given its final form by Napoleon, higher education dedicated to the training of higher civil servants and officers, and the academic professions under the control of the state, fell under a bureaucratically organized administration. The same bureaucracy regulated curricula and examinations in detail, supervised the political and religious conformity of teaching, and subjected the behaviour of the staff to a quasi-military discipline.[17] This model was very successful in the meritocratic selection and specialized training of highly qualified officials.

Today, however, the 'unexpected rise of the universities' in the nineteenth century is explained even among French historians of universities 'by that policy of a modernizing revival of the university, which is symbolized by the opening of the University of Berlin in 1810, and is now associated with the name of Wilhelm von Humboldt'.[18] In the course of his fourteen months in charge of the Prussian education system, the diplomat and scholar, Wilhelm von Humboldt convinced the king that he should reject the French model and found a modern university in Berlin based on the liberal proposals of the theologian and philosopher Friedrich Schleiermacher and charged the latter with carrying them out.[19]

For Schleiermacher and Humboldt, schools were responsible for disseminating generally accepted and directly applicable knowledge. The task of universities was to show how to discover knowledge by 'making apparent the principles at the basis of all knowledge in such a way that the ability to work one's way into any sphere of knowledge would emerge'.

[17] Vol. III, 33ff. (Charle, 'Patterns').

[18] A. Renaux, 'Le rôle des institutions universitaires dans le développement d'une culture démocratique européenne', in N. Sanz and S. Bergan (eds.), *Le patrimoine des universités européennes* (Strasbourg, 2002), 123–31, quotation 126; cf. W. Rüegg, 'L'Europe des universités: tradition, fonction de pont européen, modernisation libérale', *ibid.*, 39–48.

[19] W. Rüegg, 'Der Mythos der Humboldtschen Universität', in M. Krieg and M. Rose (eds.), *Universitas in theologia – theologia in universitate: Festschrift für Hans Heinrich Schmid* (Zurich, 1997), 155–74. Cf. R. C. Schwinges (ed.), *Humboldt International: Der Export des deutschen Universitätsmodells im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, Veröffentlichungen der Gesellschaft für Universitäts- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte (GUW), 4 (Basel, 2001).