

become a corporate society. The university would finally have given up any pretension to a social mission other than being at service to whoever paid.

Ch. 2, A MANIFESTO FOR THE PUBLIC UNIVERSITY
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Redefining the Public University: Global and National Contexts

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The university is in crisis, almost everywhere. In the broadest terms, the university's position as simultaneously inside and outside society – as both a participant in and an observer of society (always precarious) – has been eroded. With the exception of a few hold-outs the ivory tower has gone. We can no longer hold a position of splendid isolation. We can think of the era that has disappeared as the 'Golden Age of the University', but in reality it was a fool's paradise that simply could not last. Today, the academy has no option but to engage with the wider society; the question is how, and on whose terms? In this chapter, I examine the twin pressures of regulation and commodification to which the university is subject, propose a vision of the public university, and position that vision within different national contexts and then within a global context before concluding with the assertion of critical engagement and deliberative democracy as central to a redefined public university.

Market and regulatory models

We face enormous pressures of instrumentalization, turning the university into a means for someone else's end. These pressures come in two forms – commodification and regulation. I teach at the University of California, which had been one of the shining examples of public education in the world. In 2009 it was hit with a 25 per cent cut in public funding. This was a sizeable chunk of money. The university has never faced such a financial crisis since the Depression in the 1930s and it was forced to take correspondingly drastic steps – laying off large numbers of non-academic staff, putting pressure on already outsourced low-paid

service workers, furloughing academics that included many world-renowned figures, introducing management consultants to cut costs and increase efficiency. Most significantly it involved a 30 per cent increase in student fees, so that they now rise to over \$10,000 a year, but still only a quarter of the price of the best private universities. At the same time, the university is seeking to increase the proportion of students from out of state as these pay substantially more than those from in-state. There has been talk of introducing distance learning and even shortening the time taken for a degree.

These are drastic measures indeed, and the antithesis of the California Master Plan for Higher Education, Clark Kerr's vision of free higher education for all who desired it, orchestrated through a system that integrated two-year community colleges, the state system of higher education and then, at its pinnacle, the University of California, crowned by its jewel of the Berkeley Campus. All this is undergoing major transformation as each campus scrambles for ways to make up the budget deficit. In the end the elite universities will survive, but at the expense of the non-elite parts of the system where degradation of conditions for educators and educated is far more precipitous.

It has not been an overnight process. The state has been withdrawing funds from higher education for over three decades so that before these recent cuts it supplied only about 30 per cent of the university's budget. So a 25 per cent reduction in state-funding is more like a 7 per cent cut in the university's budget – still a sizeable proportion. The cuts began in the 1980s with the new era of marketization. Reflecting that broader shift was a change in how society viewed intellectual property rights, a change marked by the 1980 Bayh-Dole legislation on patents for intellectual property arising from federal government-funded research. Before then, patenting was seen as an infringement of the market. Knowledge was a public good that should be available to all and no one should have a monopoly access to its revenues. That changed and today a patenting mania invites expanding industry/university collaboration, including some \$500 million from BP for research on non-fossil fuels at Berkeley (in partnership with the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign). As leading public universities cashed in on their research so the government saw less need to pour funds into higher education, which only further intensified the commercialization of knowledge, with devastating implications for those disciplines that could not convert their knowledge into tangible assets. They were told to find alumni or corporate donors

to support their enterprise (see Bok 2003; Kirp 2003).

As a result, the university came to look more and more like a corporation, and its managerial ranks expanded rapidly. Akos Rona-Tas has calculated that, at the University of California between 1994 and 2009, the ratio of senior managers to ladder-ranked faculty has risen from 3:7 to 1:1, and the salary structure has been distorted accordingly.¹ The President of the university now expects to earn the equivalent of a corporate executive salary – he actually earns in excess of \$800,000, which is twice the salary of the President of the country. All managerial and administrative salaries are stretched accordingly, and salaries within the university become ever more unequal, varying with the marketability of the associated knowledge and the credentials they produce. At every level inequality runs amok – between universities and within universities, between schools and within schools, between disciplines and within disciplines, between departments and within departments. Those who cannot sell their research initiate new ways of selling their teaching through online services that lead to dilution and lower costs of instruction.

At the global level we are also getting differentiation at the behest of international ranking systems – Times Higher Education (once with QS, now working with Thomson Reuters) or Shanghai Jiao Tong – indicating the 'world class' universities where private investments are likely to yield the greatest returns. Markets have invaded every dimension of the university, and its 'autonomy' now means only that it can choose the way to tackle budget deficits, whether through restructuring its faculties, employing temporary instructors, outsourcing service work, raising student fees, moving to distance learning, etc.²

This is the commodification model; now let me turn to the second model – the regulation model. The source of this model, we might say, was the Thatcher regime in the UK. Here the strategy is not to commodify the production of knowledge (or at least not immediately), that is, not to bring the public university into the market, but instead to make it more efficient, more productive and more accountable by more direct means. The Thatcher regime introduced the notorious Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) into British higher education – an elaborate scheme of evaluation based on faculty research output as measured by publications. A complex incentive scheme was introduced, with the collaboration of the universities, to simulate market competition but in reality it looked more like Soviet planning.³ Just as the Soviet

planners had to decide how to measure the output of their factories, how to develop measures of plan fulfilment, so now universities have to develop elaborate indices of output, KPIs (key performance indicators), reducing research to publications, and publications to refereed journals, and refereed journals to their impact factors. Just as Soviet planning produced absurd distortions, heating that could not be switched off, shoes that were supposed to suit everyone, tractors that were too heavy because targets were in tons or glass that was too thick because targets were in volume, so now the monitoring of higher education is replete with parallel distortions that obstruct production (research), dissemination (publication) and transmission (teaching) of knowledge.

British higher education has developed an elaborate auditing culture that has led academics to devote themselves to gaming the system, distorting their output – such as publishing essentially the same article in different outlets – while devaluing books, and creating and attracting academic celebrities to boost RAE ratings. Perhaps the most debilitating consequence has been the shortening of the time horizons of research, so that it becomes ever more superficial. This Soviet model has been exported from Britain to Europe with the Bologna Process that homogenizes and dilutes higher education across countries, all in the name of transferability of knowledge and mobility of students, making the university a tool rather than a motor of the knowledge economy.

The Soviet or regulation model is especially applicable, therefore, to those states that want to hold on to public higher education, but seek to rationalize it rather than privatize it. What is happening today, however, is more sinister – rationalization as a vehicle for effective commodification. As fiscal austerity grips Britain, and indeed much of Europe, free and open access to universities becomes a luxury so that the auditing system is now deployed against those disciplines, such as philosophy or sociology, which are least profitable. State subsidies per student are not only cut but are made to vary by discipline. Those with the lowest selling price – Band D – are most at risk. As we saw in the Soviet Union, planning turned to shock therapy, which proved to be all shock and no therapy. We should be aware of what has happened in Russia. Its universities became commercial operations – charging market rates for degrees in different disciplines, selling diplomas to the highest bidders, renting out real estate on the one side and buying academic labour at ever lower prices under ever-worsening conditions on the other. Education and research are afterthoughts, sustained in a few pockets of

protected higher education. With the destruction of the old order the market rules unopposed. Alexander Bikbov (Bikbov 2010) rightly asks whether the Russian university is the future of the world.

An alternative framing

Our two models – commodification and regulation – are ideal typical tendencies which combine in different ways according to place and time. Is there an alternative model which we may use as a reference to evaluate these two, yet point towards other possibilities? How shall we think of the university today in the light of these two tendencies? Each model raises its own question about the nature of the production of knowledge and thus the university. Commodification of knowledge leads to production for the highest bidder, and that often means that scholars are led out of the university to sell their skills to some policy client. In many parts of the world, such as Africa and the Middle East, it has spelled the end of the university as we know it, as the best scholars leave for more rewarding employers who seek short-term returns on poorly conducted research. Commodification raises the question of *knowledge for whom?* Are we producing knowledge for ourselves as a community of scholars or for a world beyond the academy? In reality each needs the other, there can be no serious knowledge of an applied character without careful development of knowledge within scientific research programmes. There is no short-circuiting of knowledge production. Still, knowledge for its own sake – pure knowledge – also needs to be inspired by questions and issues beyond the university.

If commodification raises the question of knowledge for whom, regulation raises the question of knowledge for what? All the mechanisms of regulation, whether through ranking systems or through standardization, repress the reason for producing knowledge. Here we have to ask whether knowledge is produced as a means to a given end – an end defined by someone else, whether this be a policy client or a research programme – or whether knowledge should be concerned with a discussion of ends themselves, whether this be a discussion among academics about the direction of scientific knowledge or between academics and wider publics as to the goals of society more broadly. The first type of knowledge I call *instrumental knowledge* as it is concerned with orienting means to ends, while the second type of knowledge

I call *reflexive knowledge* as it is concerned with dialogue about values themselves. It is the reflexive knowledge that is being sacrificed by the instrumentalization of the university.

In problematizing both commodification and regulation we have posed two sets of questions, knowledge for whom and knowledge for what, that give us Table 2.1.⁴

	AUTONOMY Academic Audience	HETERONOMY Extra-Academic Audience
Instrumental knowledge	PROFESSIONAL	POLICY
Reflexive knowledge	CRITICAL	PUBLIC

Table 2.1 The functions of the public university

This vision of the public university recognizes four functions of the university. At the heart is professional knowledge, the knowledge produced in research programmes defined in the academic world evaluated by fellow academics. The knowledge can then be applied to the world beyond in the policy realm, but recognizes the interdependence of the two knowledges. You cannot short circuit the academic world and produce meaningful and durable knowledge on demand by clients. But a dialogic relation between clients with their problems can generate new and interesting challenges for research programmes.

Sustaining the autonomy of professional knowledge is the role of what I have called critical knowledge that depends on the existence of a community of scholars. Critical knowledge is the conscience of the community; it insists on maintaining the conditions of professional knowledge that it does not veer off into world of its own. It creates a community of discourse that transcends disciplines. Finally, public knowledge is the conversation between sociologists and wider publics about the broad direction of society and the consequences that might follow. Just as there is an interdependence of professional and policy knowledge, so the same is true of critical and public knowledge – each infuses others with a discussion of the values recognized by society.

Against the instrumentalization, both regulation and commodification, of knowledge the survival of the university depends on the reassertion

of reflexive knowledge, which means the university community has to develop a collective conscience but also has to counter policy definitions of the worth of knowledge and elaborate the longer term interests, building society in the university and the university in society.

In other words, what I am redefining as the *public university* gives weight to each of the four types of knowledge, requires them to be in dialogue with each other and recognizes their interdependence, even as they are in an antagonistic relation.⁵ Each knowledge depends upon the other three. Thus, public knowledge requires the value discussions inspired by critical knowledge and the scientific work of professionals, but also draws on the policy context. Professional knowledge shrivels up if it does not enter into dialogue with the policy world, if its foundations are not subject to interrogation from critical knowledge and if it does not translate itself into public debates about the direction of society. Policy knowledge becomes captive of its clients, and thus more ideology than science, if it loses touch with public debate, with the accumulation of knowledge in research programmes, and with the organized scepticism that comes from critical engagement. Critical knowledge, itself, depends on having the professional and policy worlds to interrogate, but also gains much of its energy from the public debates to which it also contributes.⁶

The balance among these knowledges certainly will vary from discipline to discipline within the university. The hard sciences emphasize the instrumental moment of knowledge, varying in their emphasis on professional as opposed to policy knowledge, but that is not say they do not also have a reflexive moment, engaging in discussion of the implications of their science for the wider society. The humanities may be oriented toward the reflexive dimension but that is not to say that they too do not have autonomous paradigms of investigation and exploration and the more they influence the foundations of policy considerations the better. The social sciences, one might say, form the pivot around which the four knowledges revolve since their central task is to understand the relation between instrumental and reflexive knowledge as well as to negotiate academic and extra-academic knowledge. The social sciences have a key mediating role to play within and without the university.

We might also extend this framework to teaching, recognizing that pedagogy also comes in four modes: professional teaching that imparts to students the accumulated body of knowledge that defines a discipline or area of study; policy teaching that is more like vocational education, the application of knowledge to a particular occupation; critical

teaching that examines the foundations of knowledge and its existence; and teaching as public engagement. The latter regards students not as empty vessels, but as members of a public with their own interests and experiences that are elaborated through pedagogical dialogue based in different disciplines. Again, we can say there is an elective affinity between certain disciplines and the articulation of these different ways of teaching.

The University in the national context

Combining all four forms of knowledge, the public university is the ideal type response to the regulation and commodification models. But how realistic is it? What are the pressures on the university that make it sustainable or not? We must now place this model in a national context to see how it survives. In order to do that I break down the four realms of knowledge into an inner and outer zone – the inner zone is necessary to sustain the integrity of the university while the outer region mediates the impact of the world beyond.

As budget crises hit the university so the tendency is to seek out short-term economic gain through the sale of knowledge, whether this be in the form of increasing student fees, individual consultancies or collaborations with clients. In each case the result can be subjugation to the interest of the client. Whether it be subservience to capital or the dictatorship of student desires, the commodification of knowledge undermines its integrity. We can call this a *sponsorship* model of policy research in which the initiative comes from without. But we cannot reduce policy science to sponsorship; the academic world has its say too. It is, in other words, a negotiated relation in which sponsorship is but one end of a continuum that has *advocacy* at the other end. In the latter model academics take the initiative in proposing policies for clients, recognizing their interests as framing the problems to be solved but not surrendering their independence. Thus, Douglas Massey's view of immigration to the United States adopts the interests of the state in reducing the flow of undocumented immigration and shows how reinforcing borders actually locks immigrants into the United States, only exacerbating the problem (Massey 2006). The best and most original policy initiatives come from academics who are allowed to make proposals of their own, proposals often critical of government

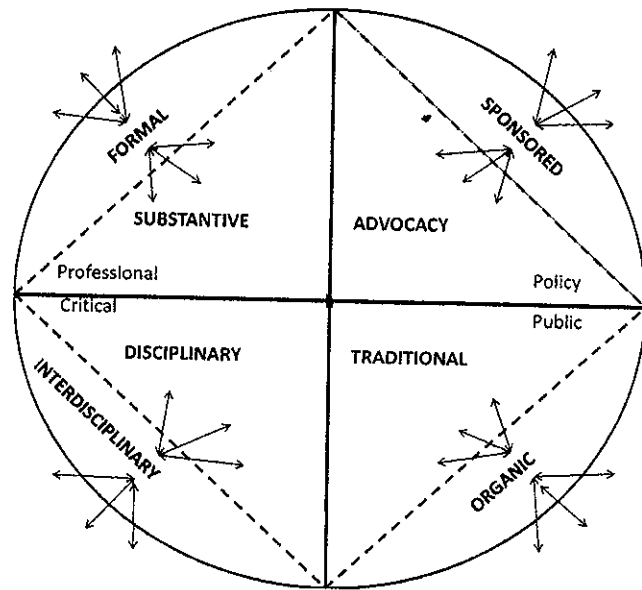
policy. It is not enough to be critical of sponsored research: we have to counter with reservoirs of advocacy research, but that requires continual contact with professional knowledge.

Just as the capturing of policy science threatens the integrity of the university, so can the regulation of professional knowledge. We can distinguish between *formal rationality* that secures the institutional prerequisites – such as peer review, competitive production of knowledge, hierarchies of publication outlets – and *substantive rationality* that is the expansion (or contraction) of research programme-based attempted solutions of anomalies and contradictions. The danger is that formal rationality, rather than protecting, undermines substantive rationality through the development of extraneous measures of 'excellence' that then become the basis of novel incentive systems as in the UK's Research Assessment Exercise. In pursuit of 'world-class university' status, the university is removed from its ties to national and local issues. We will have more to say about this below when we introduce the global context.

The ascendancy of formal rationality in the regulation model feeds into the commercialization of the commodification model, making critical engagement all the more important. But here we have a different tension: between disciplinary and interdisciplinary criticisms. Interdisciplinarity presupposes disciplinary research with its distinctive array of interconnected assumptions, methodologies, theoretical frameworks and guiding questions. New disciplines may emerge, but there is no eliminating of disciplines for all their potential narrowing of perspectives. That is how knowledge progresses – through disciplinary frameworks, ever more necessary to organize and make sense of the exponential growth in information. Still, these frameworks must be subject to continual criticism and that is the role of critical debate and the interrogation of fundamentals, not least the distortion of knowledge by an extraneous regulatory system, by the accentuation of formal rationality. It is critical knowledge that provides the corrective, calling attention to the underlying goals and values of any given research programme. Moreover, that critical knowledge is often inspired by ideas drawn from other disciplines, and even transdisciplinary thought. While dialogue with other disciplines can inspire critique, the danger is that it threatens to substitute itself for disciplinary development as in some expressions of poststructuralism that seek to abolish the very project of warranted knowledge.

Just as professional knowledge can be subverted from without

Figure 2.1 The matrix of knowledge in its national context



through formal rationalization and from within by devotion to the sustenance of regressive research programmes, so critical knowledge can become dogmatic and irrelevant if it loses touch with its disciplinary heritage and public issues. Public engagement holds professional and critical knowledge accountable to lay audiences. It does so in two ways. On the one hand there is the mediated dialogue with publics – what I call public knowledge of a *traditional* kind – that involves the generation of public debate through various forms of journalism and other media outlets. Audiences are addressed from on-high without entering into direct relations with publics, the opposite of what I call public knowledge of an *organic* kind. The former tends to engage publics that are thin, broad, passive and mainstream while the latter is more likely to engage publics that are thick, narrow, active and oppositional. The danger with public knowledge of the organic kind is the same with sponsored policy science – the loss of autonomy. As British industrial sociologists found, when they got close to the labour movement, the dialogue turned into a relation of servitude, in effect to become policy scientists beholden to clients. It is important, therefore, for scholars organically connected to their publics to also retain their attachment to professional knowledge,

often via traditional forms of public scholarship that disdain proximate connection to publics. Public scholarship of a traditional kind maintains its autonomy but at the expense of influence and so it can benefit from connection to the more organic forms of scholarship.

Different societies allow for different balances between inner and outer zones of the four types of knowledge. Thus, in the social sciences, the United States has often been hyper-professionalized, and this can distort the substantive rationalization of research programmes. The commodification of knowledge, however, puts enormous pressure on policy research and collaborations between science and industry, all of which will come at the expense of the disciplines that are concerned with critical and public knowledge – the humanities. In the Soviet Union the world of sponsored policy research prevailed at the cost of all the others, and this legacy actually shaped the post-Soviet terrain, with the continued focus on short-term dividends of policy research sponsored by politicians, government or corporations. By reaction it has generated pockets of universities, here and there, that are driven by the defensive affirmation of a critical knowledge, dismissive of the policy orientation and embracing the idea of the liberal university. Many of the developing countries – Brazil, India and South Africa – that have emerged from authoritarian or colonial regimes into some form of democracy with a vibrant public sphere take for granted that the university has a public moment and, indeed, it is in these countries that the university still plays a major public role, sometimes at the expense of the professional knowledge.

The two large countries that have so far seemed to have escaped the budgetary crisis, that have well-funded university systems, are Brazil and China. In the case of Brazil the legacy of the previous dictatorship's commitment to the advance of science continues and the state funds a network of outstanding federal universities that jealously guard their autonomy. Academics have resisted the imposition of external standards of professional evaluation. China continues to expand its funding of universities, believing that their contributions will motor economic growth. Indeed, the Shanghai Jiao Tong University ranking system, now deployed worldwide, was designed to evaluate the best Chinese universities against the top US universities. Funding is driven by the policy dimension, but in recognition of the importance of the development of professional knowledge and the training of ever greater numbers of university graduates.

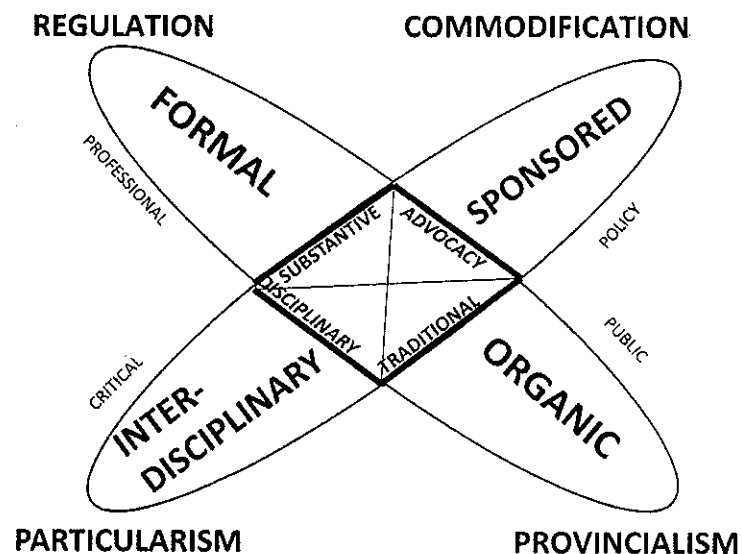
The global context

The configuration of national university systems is shaped by and shapes its insertion into a global context. Again our two models of regulation and commodification reflect pressures operating at the global level. Regulation refers to the systems of global competition for places in international ranking systems. This entails nation-states applying pressure to universities to compete globally along a range of indices, but most fundamentally to publish scholarly papers in major international journals, to teach and research in English, making US or European societies the reference point for everything. This draws the best university faculties into the orbit of an international community but in so doing they lose contact with national issues. While this most obviously affects the social sciences and humanities, it can also affect the hard sciences in that the medical and engineering problems faced by a country in the Global South can be very different from those faced in the Global North.

Moreover, by making US universities the model of excellence, poorer countries pour their scarce resources into an unattainable and arguably inappropriate goal, enriching one or two universities while impoverishing the rest. In some cases it becomes a justification for having no substantial university at all so that the training of students, especially postgraduates, takes place abroad. Where higher education remains, there is an ever deeper polarization between the top universities hooked into international circuits and the poorer universities mired in service to the locality: cosmopolitanism through regulation at one pole, localism as provincialism at the other. Examples of this can be found in the Middle East with its elite universities, such as the American Universities of Beirut and Cairo, following international standards, teaching the children of the wealthy in English and ever more differentiated from massified national universities suffering under appalling conditions and teaching in Arabic. No less instructive is the situation in Israel where the top universities consider themselves an appendage of the United States, making the best US universities their reference point, while the non-elite and technical universities are responsive to the needs of the locality.⁷

The ranking of universities serves market forces seeking to invest in or collaborate with the most profitable centres of knowledge production. University administrations, threatened with budget cuts, use their ranking as world-class universities to attract corporate donors, fee-paying foreign students and so forth. In some countries, for example

Figure 2.2 The university in its global context



Turkey and South Korea, capital actually creates or buys up universities with the aim of producing centres of academic excellence. Owning a university becomes a mark of 'distinction' for corporate capital. As the market model becomes more important so corporations and governments begin to sponsor think-tanks and consultancies to engage directly with issues of immediate concern, drawing some of the best talent out of the universities. This is happening all over the world, not least in Europe, under the rubric of Mode-2 type knowledge (Nowotny, Scott and Gibbons 2001),⁸ but its effects are especially pernicious in the Global South, where university employment does not provide a living wage and presumes multiple jobs. As faculty members depart for private-sector research organizations – and there too often to conduct quick and dirty research with short time horizons – so the university is no longer seen as a major source of knowledge production and suffers decline. This is the story across much of Africa (Mamdani 2007). Even in a country with as well-developed a system of higher education as South Africa universities have great difficulty holding on to their best talent, especially African talent which can find far more lucrative positions elsewhere. Market invasion involves the accentuation of sponsored policy research at one

pole and a reactive critique at the other pole. Critical knowledge recoils against commodification and regulation, turning toward new inbred particularisms that draw on national traditions and altogether reject disciplinary thought.

What is to be done?

A vision for the public university, relevant to different national contexts and an overall global context, must counter the twin pressures of regulation and commodification to which the university is now subjected. Critical engagement and deliberative democracy are central to this vision of the redefined public university.

Global pressures, fostered by nation-states and international capital, giving priority to regulatory and commodification models, have led to the enormous divides within national systems of higher education, and between them. There is an ever greater concentration of resources in the top research universities in the Global North at the expense of the impoverishment of the majority universities there and also in the Global South. In all cases the reflexive moment is being outweighed by the instrumental moment.

The university is being pulled into regulatory and market systems that are destroying the very basis of its own precarious autonomy, its capacity to continue to produce and disseminate profound knowledge. The reflexive moment needs to be reasserted as a counterweight: the inner zones of the four knowledges – substantive professional knowledge, advocacy policy knowledge, traditional public knowledge and disciplinary critical knowledge – have to be brought into a systematic relation with one another. Each has to support the other in counteracting pressures on the outer zones – formal rationalization of professional knowledge, commercialization of policy knowledge, provincialization of public knowledge and particularistic critical knowledge.

Against the regulatory and market models we have to formulate alternative models of the university – two in particular. First, the university should be viewed as a *critical public sphere* in which there is indeed discussion among academics about the nature of the university and its place in society. The recent outpouring of books, discussions and blogs about the university suggests that there is a lively debate about the fate of the university, but it has to happen across disciplines. The

humanities cannot confine their defence as repositories of wisdom for the education of responsible citizens – though they must do that – they have also to inject a critical and reflective moment into the discussion about the fate of the university.

If the critical public sphere is one alternative model, the idea of *deliberative democracy* is the second. Here the university has to be at the centre of organizing public discussion about the direction of society. As the more conventional representatives of publics – trade unions, political parties, voluntary organizations, religious associations – are falling down on their public mission, the university has to take up its calling as the pivotal institution to orchestrate a deliberative democracy. Each nation has to find its own balance among these models of the university – regulatory, market, critical engagement, deliberative democracy – and the balance will look very different across the globe, but we have to get away from the idea of a single model for the university, a model not just based in the West, but in imitation of the richest universities in the West.