Surviving in the ruins of the university?

Lost autonomy and collapsed dreams in the Finnish transition of university policies

RISTO RINNE, ARTO JAUHIAINEN AND JENNI KANKAANPÄÄ

Introduction

One of the first scholars who focused critical attention on the close connection between the transformation of the university, the transformation of the state and the transformation of the global economy was Readings in his book *The University in Ruins* (1996). We may disagree with his findings, but we must agree that the university has become a very different kind of institution, no longer linked to the destiny of the nation state. Today, the universities must balance between two cultures: traditional academic culture and the culture of the free market. These changes have heavily modified the forms and mechanisms of governance and university policy-making. The old traditional models such as ‘collegial organization’ or ‘professional bureaucracy’ have been replaced by perspectives and models such as the ‘entrepreneurial model’. However, the domination of a top-down effectiveness-based approach is also been criticized as damaging, and the resistance to market-oriented changes is strong in many institutions (Rinne & Koivula 2005).
In the Nordic countries, these trends can be seen distinctly. States are trying to increase competitiveness between universities by diminishing funding and establishing assessment procedures to guarantee and improve efficiency and quality. In Finland, the new University Act (2009) was the culmination point of breaking away from the old Finnish national university model and striving for the new neoliberal university model.

We have in CELE (the Centre for Research on Lifelong Learning and Education) for a long time conducted intensive research on Higher Education and University politics in Finland as well as in comparative perspective. This article is grounded on those research projects and their theoretical and empirical results.1

In this article, we explore the profound changes that have been going on in Finnish university policies from the 1980s to now, and how the new modes and features of university policies have changed the place, the role, the functions and the significance of the Finnish national university. More specifically, we ask:

1 What kind of new international influences, principles and aims have penetrated to the state level of official university policies? (section 3)
2 How have these policies been implemented, transformed and received at the institutional level, and with what kinds of technologies of governance have new policies been put into practice? (section 4)
3 How have university actors on the shop floor level accepted and/or rejected the principle of the new higher education policies and the new modes of governance, and how they have seen the consequences in their everyday work? (section 5)

Our empirical data consists of several sources. The first question is based on a review of Finnish higher education policy documents, research and literature. The second question draws on policy documents, institutional documents, statistics and interviews made in three Finnish universities in 2005. Question number three is grounded in two data sets: the abovementioned interviews and the survey undertaken of employees of two Finnish universities, the University of Turku and the University of Joensuu, in 2008 (‘Power Survey’).

To begin with, we can briefly sketch a picture of the changing place and the history of the Finnish university.

The changing place of the university

The roots of the recognized university institution lie in the medieval model, and in the guild system. Students who wanted access to advanced learning became apprentices to men known for their scholarship. The next developmental stage was connected with the building of nation states, which needed professionally trained civil servants (Husén 1993, Perkin 1991).

Universities in the 19th century were still solely teaching and training institutions, and the role of research was minimal. The founding of the research university in Berlin by Wilhelm von Humboldt in the early 19th century was the exception to the rule and was emulated all over the world. It was necessary for the nation to establish a new university in Berlin after the lost war against Napoleon and his troops in order to ‘... compensate with intellectual power for what it has lost in military power’ (Wittrock 1989, p. 282; Husén 1993; Rinne 1999). Guy Neave (2000, p. 5) considers this a specific instance of the establishment of a modern university that was closely connected to the building of a nation state. Steve Fuller (2007, p. 57) considers Humboldt ‘the architect of the Enlightenment model of the university
as a state function’, and as having brought in
the innovation to ‘turn the university into an
engine of social progress – specifically
progress of the “nation”, the spirit of which
state policy tries to embody, however imper-
fectly’.

Torsten Husén (1993, p. 6) reminds us
about one crucial paradox of the university:

The university as an institution has always been
rigid and conservative, but its ethos of inquiry and
pursuit of truth has been radical in the literal
sense of the word – that is, going to the roots.

Husén (1993, p. 6) asks: ‘How can an insti-
tution be conservative per se but radical in its
mission to the extent of coming into conflict
with power centres such as the state and the
Church?’ He gives the explanation, which
lies within the scope of the freedom and au-
tonomy that has been given to the university.
In some respects the explanation is the same
one that applies the word ‘trust’ to intellec-
tual, academic professions and their work in
the university.

Husén (1993, p. 8) lists the following
three historical characteristics of the tradi-
tional European university (see Rinne
2010):
– It makes a more or less sharp distinction
  between theory and practice.
– It puts a premium on autonomy as aloof-
  ness to the extent of complete irrele-
  vance.
– It is both socially and intellectually an
  elitist institution.

Until the mid-twentieth century, the univer-
sity was an elite centre of learning that was
accessible only to a small percentage. It was
not until after the Second World War and
the transition from an industrial society to a
service and welfare society that it changed to
a mass educational system.

Nowadays the traditional characteristics of
the European university presented by Husén
are being severely challenged. The Hum-
boldtian notion of the university remained
quite dominant up to World War II, but
since then has been subjected to increasing
forms of criticism and pressure. Aant Elzinga
(1985, p. 194) claims that the age of pure sci-
ence ended as early as the 1970s, when there
was first a shift towards technology, and then
in the 1980s towards innovation. Thus the
policy basis is no longer science but the de-
velopment of technology and innovation
(Rinne & Koivula 2005). During the last
two or three decades, universities around the
world have been under exogenous pressure
for change. Social uncertainty has created in-
creasing controversy over their changing na-
ture. Today their raison d’être is mostly de-
fended by means of pragmatic and utilitarian
arguments, such as to better the competitive
power of the nation on the world market or
to produce an effective work force for the la-
bour market. Universities adopted a new
level of knowledge instrumentalization and a
new relationship with the state as a principal.
(cf. Husén 1993; Dale 2007, pp. 17–18;
Nedeva 2007, p. 85).

Roger Dale (2007, pp. 20–21) lists three
major aspects of the recent changes. First,
university funding was cut and there was a
need to seek funding from non-state sources,
which brought new stakeholders and part-
ners into university governance. Second,
governmental control and evaluation of the
allocation of funding was strengthened.
Third, universities were integrated more
tightly into the broader process of the reform
of the public sector initiated in the 1990s and
usually known as New Public Management
(NPM). One of the most central aspects of
this movement was to replace the old rela-
tionship of trust between universities and
stakeholders with a relationship of contract.
NPM was considered equally applicable to all sectors, and the university was no exception.

Universities today have to maintain some general features but all the time listen to thousands of new voices, because anyone may be a stakeholder. As Burton Clark notes, the modern research university has become 'overextended, underfocused, overstressed and underfunded' (Clark 1998, pp. xiii–xiv, 146–147; Rinne 1999, p. 163). At the same time, it seems that universities' historical attachment to the concept of emancipation has been tempered by the recent emphasis on regulation by the market, states and transnational bodies. Is it even possible to ask, if the old Kantian concept of reason and the old Humboldtian idea of culture-wide national cultivation are both now about to give way to the techno-bureaucratic notion of utility and rare top unit excellence (cf. Dale 2007, pp. 15–20; 2009a; 2009b; Deem 2007, p. 10; Readings 1996, p. 14).

Historical changes in Finnish university doctrines

The university expansion in an independent Finland and after the Second World War relied heavily on the ability and the will of the academic elite to steer the direction of the rather autonomous and independent system. The main aim was to guarantee freedom in teaching and research in the universities, and to provide an elite education to meet most of the civil service needs of the country. This 'traditional academic doctrine' lasted in Finland until the 1960s and the opening up of the universities to the masses in response to new social demands.

The decades from the 1960s until the late 1980s could be called the period of the Social Democratic Nordic 'state development doctrine', and a kind of watershed between the old, more Humboldtian 'academic traditional doctrine' and the emerging, more liberal 'managing by results and competition doctrine', which in turn is gradually becoming the 'neoliberal NPM doctrine' in the 2000s.

We can, quite justifiably, divide the history of the Finnish university into these four doctrines and their corresponding periods (see also Rinne 2004). Table 1 below lists their most important features.

In the 1980s, Finland stepped into a new kind of 'managing by results and competitions' world in its higher education, and this has gathered momentum since the 1990s. It was the first step towards the university type of 'enterprise university' (Clark 1998; Marginson & Considine 2000), which will be discussed in the next section.

The recession of the first half of the 1990s treated Finland much less kindly than it treated many other countries. It was the downswing of the 1990s, the rapid increase in unemployment, joining the European Union and the increasingly right-wing bias of government policy that forced the welfare state to trim its sails. Rationalization and utilization were the watchwords, even in everyday practical education and higher education policy. In the higher education policy documents, a utilitarian or instrumental task for universities began to supersede the Bildung task, that is, the cultural task, which all the same did not entirely disappear. New concepts emerged in texts, such as innovation system, competitiveness and exploitation. (see Kankaanpää 2013.) Welfare utopias resting on the virtues of equality of educational opportunity and the university as an autonomous ivory tower have belatedly (compared with the rest of Europe) given way to efficiency and results, and their continuous assessment.
Nowadays the mainstream in Finland is to promote all kinds of competitiveness and effectiveness. The increasingly unequal division of resources has become the rule, in that it is considered desirable to favour 'diversity' and 'giftedness'. The aim of the policy is now to open up new pathways for the best human capital and centres of excellence. The universities are marching in the front ranks of the new ‘policy of assessment’, but close behind is the wider education policy – all school levels from primary school up to

Table 1. Finnish university doctrines in the late 20th and early 21st centuries (cf. Kivinen, Rinne & Ketonen 1993; Rinne 2004; Rinne 2010).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICY DIMENSIONS</th>
<th>DOCTRINES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and research</td>
<td>'Academic tradition', until the 1960s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Freedom in teaching and research. Focus on the provision of an elite education. Professional power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics and relations with the state</td>
<td>Subordination of education to social, regional and labour-market policies. State dirigisme in education. University democracy in inner governance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>No expectations of immediate economic gain but an awareness of long-term benefits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality</td>
<td>Training students for leading positions in society, especially in the civil service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University type</td>
<td>ELITE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE model</td>
<td>NORDIC HE MODEL WITH RATHER WEAK STATE CONTROL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICY DIMENSIONS</th>
<th>DOCTRINES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and research</td>
<td>'State development', from the late 1960s to the late 1980s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Production of an adequate supply of trained manpower. Allocation of training quotas according to labour-market needs. Science as a factor of production.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics and relations with the state</td>
<td>Subordination of education to social, regional and labour-market policies. State dirigisme in education. University democracy in inner governance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Higher Education as one crucial factor in economic development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality</td>
<td>Full utilization of potential talent requiring egalitarian educational access. Rapid expansion leading to the levelling out of social and regional inequality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University type</td>
<td>STATE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE model</td>
<td>NORDIC HE MODEL WITH STRONG STATE CONTROL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICY DIMENSIONS</th>
<th>DOCTRINES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and research</td>
<td>'Managing by results and competition', from the late 1980s to late 2000s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Response to demand from many sources. Focus on productivity. Orientation to EU policy and European Higher Education Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics and relations with the state</td>
<td>Flexible and innovative servicing of societal needs. University governed on the basis of achieved results. Innovation policy. Evaluative state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Promotion of international competitiveness and industrial diversification. Market-driven.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality</td>
<td>Observance of gender and regional equality. The promotion of state-led competition. Equity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University type</td>
<td>STATE-DRIVEN, MIXED UNIVERSAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE model</td>
<td>LIBERAL QUASI-MARKET HE MODEL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICY DIMENSIONS</th>
<th>DOCTRINES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and research</td>
<td>'Neoliberal NPM', from the late 2000s (2009 University Act).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elastic and flexible Europeanization of Finnish HE. Full Quality Assessment and Evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics and relations with the state</td>
<td>Subordination of education to social, regional and labour-market policies. State dirigisme in education. University democracy in inner governance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Higher Education as one crucial factor in economic development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality</td>
<td>Full utilization of potential talent requiring egalitarian educational access. Rapid expansion leading to the levelling out of social and regional inequality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University type</td>
<td>QUASI-MARKET-DRIVEN ENTERPRISE UNIVERSITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE model</td>
<td>NEOLIBERAL QUASI-MARKET HE MODEL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fourth and most recent university doctrine, 'the neoliberal NPM doctrine', has just taken hold in Finland. Its institutional form rests on the new quite radical University Act, which was established in 2009 and gives universities a far stronger financial and administrative status: they are considered 'independent legal entities' and are supplied with starting capital.

The message in the political rhetoric is that as legal entities the universities will be better equipped to respond to their own needs and to the expectations of society and the market than they were as 'state accounting offices'. Another radical change is in the composition of the university board. The board decides on the main aims of the activities, the strategy and the principles governing the management of operations, and implements the regulations governing the organization of the university. It is also responsible for the finances. It was for the first time in the history of the Finnish academy when a collegiate body was occupied by outside representatives. According to law «more than 40 per cent' of the members ought to be elected outside university. In addition, the chair and the vice-chair of the board are elected from amongst these members. External members and stakeholders therefore have quite a strong position in the board (Universities Bill 2009; University Act 2009).

The latest doctrine is quite elastic and flexible, clearly supporting the universities in their efforts to become the spearhead of Finnish innovation policy and the forgers of strong cooperation with the market. NPM as a form of direction and governance is penetrating the system in order to foster success in circumstances of fierce market competition.

**Rise of the Finnish enterprise university**

The two latest university doctrines in Finland can be seen as a period of the rise of the 'enterprise university'. The concept of the enterprise university (Marginson & Considine 2000) or entrepreneurial university (Clark 1998) has become quite a settled concept in higher education research to describe the latest phase in the development of universities (e.g. Barnett 2011; McLennan 2008). It has also provoked many questions and much criticism. We mean by the enterprise university a university model that has been created as a consequence of new governance technologies of new public management and as a consequence of market orientation. So, the concept does not refer to a single university but to a university type in a certain time period and within certain trends. Neoliberal higher education policy has on one hand encouraged and enabled universities to create entrepreneurial activities and on the other made them to focus on quantifiable results, performance and continuous competition for money.

**Different kinds of progressions**

At the institutional level, an essential feature of the enterprise university is changing financing models and grounds for universities. Increased external funding is one clear sign of entrepreneurial activity and market orientation. All Finnish universities are primarily financed from the state budget. The basic state financing of the universities was reduced considerably at the beginning of the 1990s, and universities have suffered from reduced budgets until today. A massive increase in student numbers came at the same
time as decreased funding, and resources per student collapsed. However, external financing grew, which was of course partly due to the shortage in the budgets. The state also started to encourage the universities to find external funding. The share of external funding in Finnish universities has grown considerably since 1990. At that time the share was on average under 10%.

Nowadays over one third of university budgets come outside the state budget (KOTA database). Thus universities have been forced to adapt their operation to new funding models and principles. Also, the core funding system which is based on the state budget changed significantly in 2013, when the new funding system, in accordance with requirements set by the Ministry of Education (MoEC 2011), was introduced in all universities. Now 75% of the core funding is determined by the effectiveness, quality and internationalization of three main factors (education, research and other education and science policy objectives) measured with quantitative indicators. The model strengthened responsibility and revenue logic concerning core funding. For example, the funding of education is no longer allocated on the basis of a target number of degrees, but on the basis of the number of graduates. The relative weight of publishing has also increased and the so-called Matthew effect has been deepened: the acquisition of competitive research funding increases core funding.

To become more entrepreneurial means changes at the organizational level as well as in the relationship between the university and state control. Increasing interplay with stakeholders in society has caused transformations in organizational structures of universities. The development of entrepreneurialism in Finnish universities has been studied as part of a broader European level research project (EUEREK, see Shattock 2009; Rinne & Koivula 2009). In Finland, three case universities were studied in 2005: the University of Tampere (UTA), the University of Lapland (ULA) and the Helsinki School of Economics (HS) which later became part of Aalto University. Institutional documents, statistics and interviews were used to examine the situation. The interviewees (n = 23) were leading members of universities: rectors, administration managers, financial managers, and chairs of departments and units.

All the case universities had established new units which are different from traditional disciplinary departments, and which operate at the interface of university and surrounding society. They were for example multidisciplinary and thematic research units, development companies exploiting research or regional service centres. These units, operating on the ‘developmental periphery’ (Clark 1998), were usually more entrepreneurial than traditional departments. In these units, individuals could also work entrepreneurially, irrespective of the rest of the university.

It is difficult to evaluate the degree of overall entrepreneurialism in universities because it can appear in various ways, and depend especially on discipline and how commercially applicable the knowledge it produces is. Apparently, the Helsinki School of Economics especially wanted to profile itself as entrepreneurial university. It strived for a good ranking position both nationally and internationally and developed its brand. The central administration of the School of Economics was most steadily against strict state control. The university administration wanted to compete on international education markets, take risks as well as create real education markets and a more entrepreneurial administration system for Finland. The School of Economics had a close relationship to the business world and it was ready to increase the share of external funding even
more. It had several self-defined visions and aims, but to realize them the obstacles set by laws and state policy would have to be removed.

The University of Lapland had a softer approach to entrepreneurialism. The university closely cooperates with its region and it tries to respond to the demands of the region without maximizing its own income. This small and young university wants to make sure that the organization acts flexibly, and they have created innovative solutions like a network faculty to be able to act flexibly in different situations. The market model of universities did not attract the university. First, it was seen to be against the basic principles of a university institution. Second, according to our interviews, in Lapland the lack of external and local funding is an obstacle to entrepreneurial activity.

In University of Tampere, the units were in different phases concerning entrepreneurialism. Comparing the three case universities, it appeared to be the most traditional university. Some of the interviewees described the university as being atomized, and that it has a rigid administration structure because of its size and culture. Still, for example in the field of medical science and information technology, there are units that can be seen as entrepreneurial.

In all the case universities, there were both entrepreneurial features and hindrances to market-like behaviour. Some of the interviewees thought that real entrepreneurialism can only be imitated in universities; there are too many obstacles and too few incentives. However, the situation in universities of technology was considered to be different, because they have managed to achieve productive cooperation with business (Koivula, Rinne & Niukko 2009; Kankaanpää 2013).

In terms of power and governance, the development of the enterprise university is in conflict. The shift to the policy that strengthens financial autonomy and self-steering of the universities has in principle meant that universities have gained more power and autonomy. Nevertheless, at the same time they have been wrapped in managerial control and governance. The general opinion for example among the case university interviewees was that supervision and monitoring had increased despite the freedom allowed by the University Act of 1997.

Adoption of managerial governance in Finnish university

New managerialism or NPM represents the logic of the governance and regulation derived from the private sector, aiming for efficiency, effectiveness, excellence, emphasizing revenue logic, and striving for the constant improvement of organizations (Deem, 2001). So, NPM can be seen as the praxis of neoliberal policy. It is certain techniques and procedures which transform political ideologies and discourses into something workable and real in everyday life. In Finland, during the period of the two most recent doctrines, the political changes were implemented step by step and purposefully with various administrative and organizational reforms, documents, legislation and concrete administrative and management methods. The development which resulted in a new University Act in 2009 seems to have continued and deepened further. The following table is a summary of foremost reforms and interventions, many of which have shaped the Finnish university towards a more entrepreneurial-like model. These reforms have also influenced every day university work in many ways (see section 5).
Quality assurance and evaluation formed the cornerstone of the new operating policy in the 1990s (see e.g. Rinne & Simola 2005). In 1996, a panel of experts called the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council was established to develop and coordinate evaluation (Saarinen 1995; Rinne 2004). Evaluation was given legal status and institutionalized in the new University Act (1997). The universities were responsible for evaluating their teaching and research. The law also required universities to allow external auditing.

The reforms caused by the new policy became even more concrete with the approach of the new millennium. In 1998, the salary system based on a fixed teaching load was replaced at all universities by a system based on a set number of total annual working hours, with the goal of increasing flexibility in arranging working tasks and improving the possibilities for the teaching staff to do research, and to thus develop teaching based on research (Puhakka & Rautopuro 2003).

At the end of the last millennium, Finland, along with several other European countries, signed the Bologna Declaration (1999) which aimed at increasing the competitiveness of European education on the world educational market and the creation of a common European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and degree structure. At the same time, the discussion on quality intensified. In 2004, the development of quality assurance systems was begun in Finnish universities. The quality assurance systems were to fulfil the criteria of the quality assurance standards being developed for the European Higher Education Area. They were to be integrated with the entire operational structure of the universities and their management and governance systems, and it was to be ensured that all employees were committed to them.

In the amendments to the University Act of 2004, the so-called third function of the universities was defined, which meant that they were to serve the surrounding society, and that their activities should have a social impact. In 2005, Finland's active role in the Bologna Process took on concrete form when all universities switched to the new three-stage degree system. In the previous year, the time allotted for the completion of an academic degree was limited by law for
the first time in the history of the Finnish HE system. In 2005, the productivity programme of the Ministry of Education was published, which aimed at forming larger units within the university network and dismantling overlapping operations. At the same time, emphasis was placed on the allocation of resources to certain key areas, the development of new growth areas and advancing top-grade research.

The new salary system, which included job demand and personal work performance components, was introduced in all Finnish universities in 2006. In order to define and assess these two components, a system of 'immediate superiors' and the assessment discussions between the supervisor and the employee were created. The justifications for the new system were to promote fairer salaries, improve the salary competitiveness of the universities, encourage staff to perform better and to improve academic leadership (Kekälä, 2008). In the same year, a system to record the allocation of individual working time was introduced, which required the electronic recording and archiving of individual work plans and follow-up of their implementation. The background of the system was that universities have to distinguish their (externally funded) business operations from budget-funded operations (Vanttaja 2010, 11).

In 2007, the centre of excellence policy was made a concrete part of the Ministry of Education’s structural development plan, in the form of the so-called third spearhead project. It was suggested that the Helsinki School of Economics, the University of Art and Design, and the Helsinki University of Technology form a new innovation university (Aalto University), that the universities of Eastern Finland in Joensuu and Kuopio form a university federation called the University of Eastern Finland, and that the University of Turku and the Turku School of Economics become a university consortium.

After the new University Act came into effect in 2010, the reforms and interventions of the new policy continued. A second round of audits of the universities and other HE institutions was started (FINHEEC 2012). From 2013, the new funding system was introduced, which means that management by results and accountability logic was remarkably strengthened in the steering and financing of the universities and their faculties (MoEC 2011).

The reception of the new policy in universities
Reactions of university leaders

The institutional level analysis is further elaborated by exploring the reactions of the abovementioned interviewees, the leading members of universities (Kankaanpää 2013), towards the radical changes in universities and in higher education policies. The interviews in universities handled the question of the rise of the entrepreneurial university. In addition to practical issues discussed above, this theme created discussion about the idea and core of university institution.

The strongest reaction can be seen in the ‘specialty of the university’ discourse. This was visible in the data as various discursive themes: 1) the university has both in its idea and functioning special characters which distinguish it from other institutions; 2) enterprise ideology as well as entrepreneurial practices do not fit in universities as such; 3) academic and other research are clearly separated; 4) a strong belief in preservation of the core idea and basic values of the university.

The specialty of universities was generated in the interviews by speaking about the traditional essence of universities, typical characteristics of organizational structure and administration culture, long-term operation, differences between universities and polytechnics, as well as the distance between
the university world and the rest of the world.

So I would say that the restrictions come rather from traditions and attitudes, which as such, change as such is not a necessity at all. I think it’s also good that we have these retardant forces. It fits the university institution very well (UTA H7).

These issues were not explicitly asked but interviewees used them to explain functioning of universities and as reflectors of transformations and their suitability to the university institution. This can be thought as some kind of protection or defence reaction against the changes that university is facing or even fighting with.

Entrepreneurialism and 'universityness' were largely positioned as opposite extremities. Entrepreneurialism did not fit with university ideology, nor with its functions.

But I think the big problem is that these systems do not meet. On one hand there is this desirable entrepreneurship and on the other hand there is this old academic management culture and structure which do not fit to each other, not really in any way (ULA H7).

It was anyhow noted by some interviewees that academic persons often have certain 'inherent entrepreneurship' and that in some fields entrepreneurialism might work. In other words, entrepreneurialism has different nuances and it can be understood in various ways.

The basic tasks of universities, teaching and research were stressed to still be the primary tasks. New tasks, like service tasks and other extra tasks, were accepted but it was said that these tasks must be realized on the terms of the university, so that the basic tasks are not compromised. So called 'service research' for example should be naturally connected to academic research. Many of the interviewees highlighted the importance of getting 'real academic research' funding for the university. Making reports and vaccination projects were not appreciated as much as academic research.

Despite quite radical changes, there was the belief that the basis and idea of the university will survive. The interviewees almost naively believed that external financiers and other stakeholders do not have the possibility to control the operation of universities.

So, the applicability to companies is very high in some areas. But it doesn’t affect the everyday work; researchers are researchers. And researchers do what they do: free, critical research (HSE H4).

On the other hand, fear of universities losing their criticality and innovativeness was also present (Kankaanpää 2013).

Among interviewees there was a common view about the specialty of universities as an institution but beyond that opinions varied greatly, especially concerning the desirability of market-oriented or entrepreneurial activity (Koivula et al. 2009). In addition to that, interviewees spontaneously commented on the differences of disciplines’ possibilities for acting entrepreneurially.

Experiences of the university workers – the 'power survey'

Our survey study (Rinne et al. 2012; Rinne & Jauhiainen 2012), which was a part of the larger project 'Power, supranational regimes and new university management in Finland' by the Finnish Academy, explores the ways in which new university policy, governance and management have affected the work of academics and other employees, and how they experience these new modes of governance from the point of view of power. The survey was carried out in the spring of 2008 among the employees of two Finnish universities.
Reserved attitudes towards principles of new policy

The attitudes of university workers towards all of the basic lines and principles of the new university policy were reserved (see Figure 1). In particular, investments in the ‘universities of excellence’, apart from making universities into businesses-like institutions, receive little understanding from those working in the everyday university world. The respondents were also rather categorically opposed to introducing tuition fees. They were repulsed by the effects of the new policy: the great majority of them thought that it reduces scientific freedom, and the new funding models are leading to inequality between different disciplines. The only policy point that was acceptable to the majority was the increasing of decision-making power in relation to the funding of universities.

**Figure 1.** The attitude of respondents to the HE policy being applied: raw distributions by response to statements.
The open-ended answers concerning university policy concurred with the university workers’ attitudes depicted by responses to the claims, both contextually and directionally. The number of critical comments was considerably high. Out of more than 300 answers, only a little over ten included arguably positive assessments. In many of the answers the Finnish university policy was described as inconsistent, unclear and shortsighted. The answers also reflect the powerlessness of the individual university worker in the midst of policy reformation coming from an external source or decreed from above.

I feel like a Jewish professor in 1933 Germany, being forced to just helplessly stand by and watch as a well-functioning university system is destroyed over an incredibly primitive ideology (526/male/professor/law).

An important theme among the answers was concern over the decaying educational university tradition, and most of all over the replacement of scientific freedom and the autonomous university with the harsh values and doctrines of the business world. Entrepreneurialism and the rule of money were seen as consistent elements of the implemented policy.

The fundamental goals of a university have been forgotten: research, sophistication and education. Money rules. Why must everything be measured in money? How can one measure profitability when considering the abovementioned goals, which in my opinion are the backbone of every university (377/female/assistant professor/humanities).

Negative experiences of the policy techniques
The main principles of the new university policy are realized through different planning, assessment and reporting practices which have gradually become part of the everyday life of universities. Through these so called policy techniques (Ball, 2003, 2006) the university workers come face-to-face with the ethos and new governance of the new university policy in their everyday work.

The attitude towards these techniques was quite critical. This indicated clearly the values of the sum variables which were formed out of the claims concerning each technique. The systems of total working time and working time allocation are new forms of working time control, where the academic freedom of time allocation, characteristic of the academic culture, has been replaced with a new type of time allocation principle. The most criticism was received by the new time allocation system. The distribution of the rough classification based on the open-ended answers (Figure 2) draws a significantly negative, albeit similarly focused, picture of the university workers’ attitudes towards new techniques.

The transition into a new salary system was justified, for instance, by its fairness and incentives. However, according to our research, the system did not make good on these promises. The system did not increase motivation at work, nor was it found to be a good management tool. Instead, the respondents had noticed, among other things, deterioration of the atmosphere at work as well as unfair treatment.

The UPJ (the New Salary System for Universities) is an incomprehensible system. The basis of a salary is completely dependent on external factors, no-one knows how much their colleagues are making, and the whole system feeds secrecy, shady business and suspicious deals. It does not give incentive to anything other than brown-nosing the superior; it increases jealousy among co-workers, and deteriorates the atmosphere at the workplace (42/male/researcher/social sciences).
Answers to open-ended questions indicated that the allocation system is not able to recognize all forms of academic and university work, and it is forcing the reporting of working time allocation within a strict classification system.

The system is completely unnecessary, it takes up an unreasonable amount of time, its categories are arbitrary and it does not help in any way. Can someone please come out and admit already that the Emperor is not wearing any clothes? (42/male/researcher/social sciences)

When the total working hours system was introduced to universities at the end of the 1990s, it was marketed to the teaching staff particularly as a reform that increases flexibility and research possibilities. According to our research, these goals were not met very well. Nearly every other respondent said that the total working time system had not made the work more flexible or increased the orderliness of the work. As with the working time allocation system, many of the respondents felt that the system forces employees to alter the truth and make up stories concerning working time allocation:

The total working time system is a ridiculous form of self-deception. Each and every one of us knows that no-one works the set 1,600 hours, but much, much more than that. But we still have to make up stories in the forms on how we intend to use those 1,600 hours. It is the most pointless part of university work (95/male/assistant researcher/natural sciences).

Quality control and assessment were also seen to have more negative than positive features. The main problem with these seemed to be that the implementation of quality assessment was not seen equally fit for all branches of science. Most respondents con-
considered the discussion on work quality unfit for university work, and felt that quality control and assessment takes up an unreasonable amount of time away from more important tasks.

During the past year I have for the first time understood that it is possible to burn out at work, even though I myself have not encountered this. Burnout is not caused by a heavy work load if one feels that it’s necessary and enjoyable, but the obligation to make these reforms ordered from above that make no sense at all. Quality procedures are the worst of these burnout factors, but not by far the only ones (449/male/professor/humanities).

Distrusting towards management and administration, but enjoying the work

Experiences on the changes in management and governance were studied with a section where the respondents were given the opportunity to assess whether management and administration at the university had changed for the better, for worse or stayed the same on different levels. The question was formulated as 'Management and governance have changed during the past years...'

The answers show in general that the higher one advances from one’s own work towards national university policy, the more critical the assessment becomes. At the national level a clear majority of the respondents felt that management had gotten worse, however at the level of their own work and unit, the experiences were much more positive. However, only about one in five felt that their own work had improved directly due to new management and governance practices, while the majority felt that these had stayed the same or worsened.

Even though the respondents were critical of the new policy, its techniques and administrative culture, their own university work was still found by them to be enjoyable and meaningful (over 90% of respondents) although the work is overshadowed by strict preconditions, uncertainty and a stressful pace. The shortage of the time resources was regarded as the most significant negative experience concerning work in our research.

It is perhaps slightly surprising that regardless of a strong sense of meaningfulness of the work, as many as 40% of the respondents said they would pursue work outside the university given the chance, which is explained by the fact that over half of the respondents who took part in the questionnaire were working on a fixed term contract.

Conclusions

Finnish university doctrine has gone through several historical changes since the Second World War. First it was strongly connected with the old Nordic and Finnish historical tradition of 'academic doctrine', including university autonomy, freedom of research and teaching, no expectations for immediate economic gain and clearly being of elitist character. Then it became from the 1960s to the late 1980s connected with the state planning system and producing manpower and economic progress, while at the same time strongly emphasising the values of equality of educational opportunities and democracy.

The most recent doctrines, first the 'managing by results and competition' doctrine, and then the 'neoliberal NPM doctrine' in the 2000s, have brought in radical changes, strong market-orientation, expectations of immediate economic gain, and huge assessment and evaluation mechanisms. The place, the functions and the governance mechanisms of the university, as well as the whole university culture of the enterprise university, have stepped in. Economic and competition discourse and vocabulary have penetrated to become the soul of the university. The
change compared to the traditional Finnish university is shocking.

Barnett has stated that these days the only legitimate way to discuss universities seems to be in the language of the ‘performative university’. He warns that this closing of the language through which we can speak about the university may also mean underrating the very being and nature of it. What it is, how it is, how it understands itself, what it might become, all are underestimated (Barnett 2011, p. 15). In this process of reducing the whole meaning and idea of the university to enhancing economic competitiveness, we are taking steps to narrow the versatile tradition of the university.

We can say that in university discourse, entrepreneurialism and efficiency appear as a threat to the speciality of the university institution, as these trends make universities similar to any other institutions.

In Finland, at the institutional level of universities, the leading members’ (rectors, administration managers, financial managers, and chairs of departments) opinions about the new university policy and the state plans to promote the enterprise university were divided. Most of all, the leaders did not agree that the university could work like any other enterprise, but it has a special essential role and duty in society. The majority saw that university is the only institution in society whose main duty is to produce the best independent research and the teaching grounded on that, not so much saleable market products. But in emphasising the meaning of university autonomy, many also admitted that the ‘old’ university, with very heavy steering and control from the Ministry of Education, had been a heavy burden.

The university workers were against the new policies of diminishing academic power in favour of NPM and managerialist leaders, and getting closer to market-like steering. Of utmost importance is that the academic staff was very concerned about the autonomy of the university, and saw the new policy and new funding models reducing traditional scientific freedom and leading to inequality between different disciplines. These opinions were quite against the official aims and ideology presented by the Finnish Ministry of Education (Vanttaja & Jauhiainen 2009).

The university workers’ experiences of the new policy techniques indicate that these techniques have increased bureaucracy, continuous control and wasted useless ‘busy work’, which is the essential feature of the new performativity culture. This phenomenon can be conceptualized on the concept of fabrications (Ball 2003; 2006; Jauhiainen, Jauhiainen, Laiho & Lehto 2014), which refers to expedient display, social representation or self-presentation by individuals or organizations without the aim of presenting precisely the truth, but instead with the goal of doing whatever works best in a particular political context or market-centred, performance-centred and outcome-centred environment.

It seems that, more or less, the university staff is divided into academic traditionalists and academic marketizers, and the majority seems to be somewhere in between, closer to the traditionalists. It would seem that
there is a kind of resistance movement, or at least opposition and suspicion, toward the new market-driven university policy, to the market form, managerialism and performativity as the new policy technologies. This movement is, without doubt, connected with the defence of the old kind of autonomy of the university and with the collegial, professional and bureaucratic nature of the freedom of university institution (cf. Hay et al. 2002).

If we take the title of this paper seriously, we may conclude that in Finland we are in many respects surviving in the ruins of the university. Finnish university has lost many of its dreams and old thoughts of autonomy, democracy, equality and the university’s national character. The new enterprise culture, market orientation and mechanisms and managers of power have profoundly changed the place of the university and the work in it, as well as weakened the crucial speciality of the institution of the university in society, and this trend seems to be hegemonic in many ways. But at the moment struggles are also going on inside the university between the different tribes and territories, and there are quite strong camps on both sides: the traditionalists and the marketizers.

It seems that the university workers, especially academics, experience their work as meaningful and rewarding in itself. A change in the university institution is obvious, but global university policies cannot trickle down through all levels of academic culture and values at once. Many traditional (mostly Humboldtian) academic values are still seen as worth committing to, but this seems to be increasingly difficult and they have taken on new forms (Jauhiainen, Jauhiainen & Laiho 2009; Henkel 2005; Ylijoki & Mäntylä 2003). We cannot claim that the ‘old’ university is totally in ruins, but in the process of heavy rebuilding, it certainly is.

Note

1 Rinne 1999; 2004; 2010; European Universities for Entrepreneurship – their Role in the Europe of Knowledge (EUEREK) (Rinne & Koivula 2009; Kankaanpää 2013); Power, Supranational Regimes and New University Management in Finland (Rinne et al. 2012; Jauhiainen et al. 2014).

References


