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in Europe**

In this issue:

**Globalization: A New Paradigm for Higher Education Policy**

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# Higher Education in Europe

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### **From the Editors**

A very recent issue of this publication (Volume 25, Number 3, 2000) dealt with the question of the provision of transnational education in its various forms. The current issue, by focusing on "Globalization: A New Paradigm for Higher Education Policy" could, depending upon one's definition of "globalization", be perceived as continuing the discussion on the same topic or as initiating discussion of a phenomenon that is really quite different. If, as suggested in the earlier issue, transnational education "reflects an important aspect of the internationalization of higher education", then might it not be correct to assume that internationalization" and "globalization" reflect the same phenomenon? Not everyone would agree. Peter Scott, notably, suggests that the two terms reflect "radically different processes dialectically opposed", even if they are linked.\*

It seems evident that there is no clear, straightforward definition of "globalization" even when, in the case of this issue of **Higher Education in Europe**, the concept is restricted to the world of higher education. It is a Protean concept, readily assuming different shapes, forms, and colours, much determined by the intentions, mind, and eye, of the observer. The ten articles making up the "topic" section, like the slow rotation of a kaleidoscope, reveal the richness but hard-to-pin-down nature of the concept. They run the gamut from general discussions of the phenomenon of globalization of higher education as a policy paradigm to discussions of specific aspects of globalization to very targeted presentations of the methods and problems as well as the evaluation and accreditation of e-learning and transnational education.

The scene is set, so to speak, by two broad, almost philosophical discussions of the origins and the effects of globalization on higher education, one by Grant McBurnie of Australia, the other, by Marek Kwiek of Poland. They cover similar ground, searching for a succinct definition of the concept and then examining the effects of globalization on higher education institutions, on the teaching staff, on learners, on the role of the nation-state in regard to higher education, on the need for higher education institutions to form partnerships with other institutions, and, finally, on the cultural role of higher education. McBurnie, however, is optimistic about the effects of globalization, while Kwiek adopts a somber, if not pessimistic, attitude. The difference comes from the fact that McBurnie, an administrator, reflects the experience of an Australian public university, Monash, that has been very successful in selling its educational wares transnationally. Kwiek, on the other hand, a professor of philosophy at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, who has also become a higher education policy specialist, reflects a less optimistic, more skeptical view of the question. He realizes that by its serious weakening of the welfare-state function of the nation-state (indeed the weakening of the nation-state itself) upon which the modern university depends, to a great extent, for its existence, globalization makes the Humboldtian university model obsolete. The university may well survive as an educational corporation, but in such a case, it would no longer be the university that we know today. In his opinion, for the university to remain what it is, it must "search for a new place in culture and new ideas to support the organization of its functioning", possibly in supporting "the ideals of civil society".

In short, globalization is with us, whether we like it or not. If McBurnie is basically saying, let us make the best of it, Roseann Runte, formerly the President of the Canadian National

Commission for UNESCO and currently the President of Victoria University (an institution federated with the University of Toronto) proposes a way to tame it. For her, this way is to educate for global awareness and to impart an ethics of globalization. She proposes ways by which students, at all levels of education, but particularly at higher education level, can be made globally aware.

The next two articles (one on the need for fair play in transnational education, and the other on the need for cultural sensitivity) represent the writings of British academics who are themselves currently "living globalization", so to speak. Geoffrey Alderman, Vice-President for International Programmes of Touro College in New York City (he was formerly a reporting assessor for the Higher Education Quality Council for England), argues strongly in favour of quality control for transnational education offerings, regardless of the ways in which they are delivered. But the counterpart to rigorous quality control, he asserts, is that receiving countries must not be allowed to set up artificial barriers to transnational programmes simply to protect their own national systems of higher education. He cites several cases of "unfair" restrictions on trade in educational services.

Leslie Croxford, the Director of the Madrid campus of Suffolk University of the United States, reminds the reader that even if e-learning has captured a good deal of attention, much in the way of transnational education (that he calls "global university education") will involve the mobility of both students and higher education providers leading to campus-based students studying on traditional campuses that might, as in his case, be branches of universities headquartered in another country. The tasks of teaching and learning here and in the "home" country, however, will be frustrated if teaching staff are not sensitive to the cultural differences of international students. He cites varying and sometimes clashing attitudes towards so-called academic honesty and student class participation.

Even though for many academic management pundits it is axiomatic that globalization causes academic administration to become leaner and meaner, Glenys Drew of Queensland University of Technology and Leanne Bensley, a professional writer, both of Australia, present a somewhat different scenario. For them, globalization, that is bringing convergent social, cultural, and organizational change, is also causing a revalorization of knowledge capital that is ultimately vested in people. The result will be a more nurturing administrative structure in higher education institutions.

Martha Peach of the United States puts forward the argument that globalization serves as a means to eliminate the effects of previous national isolation. Like Alderman and Croxford she "lives" globalization, serving as the Director of the Library of a Spanish research institute, the Instituto Juan March de Estudios e Investigaciones of Madrid. The Spanish academic community, she writes, has, in general, embraced globalization as an aid to complete recovery from the isolation that resulted from recent Spanish history. Transnational higher education is viewed as a means to reconcile the problem of the increasing number of both private and public higher education institutions in Spain that is accompanied by a decline in the size of the traditional university-age population.

Two case studies, one broad, the other narrow, reflect the roles of e-learning in the general purview of globalization. Patricia K. Kubow and Suzanne H. Crawford of Bowling Green State University in Ohio, in the United States, describe the setting-up and the operation of a university-sponsored international workshop on multidimensional citizenship and democracy aimed at high school teachers in Hungary and Ukraine who are linked electronically to

counterparts in local Ohio high schools in the United States. The project reflects a phenomenon that could be called "grassroots globalization". Francis Farrelly, Sally Joy, Sandra Luxton, and Val Clulow of Australia describe the setting-up of an on-line Master's Degree Course in Marketing Education offered by Monash University in Australia in collaboration with the Australian telecommunications enterprise, TELSTRA.

The final two articles broaden the scope of the debate on globalization once again, the first one expressing some caution as to the power of the economic interests that are promoting and driving globalized higher education, and the second one, pointing out that the offerings of globalized higher education can still be (and must be) subjected to rigorous quality control for the greater benefit of the consumer.

Brian Denman of the United States, who lives and teaches in Australia, at the University of Sydney, surveys the many types of organizations: governmental, non-governmental, intergovernmental, and international organizations, as well as transnational corporations that promote and/or regulate the international manifestations of higher education. He points out that higher education is becoming increasingly globalized because economic developments worldwide require it to evolve in this direction. The process is driven by the most economically powerful countries and organizations the actions of which represent a form of cultural if not economic imperialism.

Glen Jones, also of the United States, is an educational entrepreneur who heads, among other organizations, Jones International University Ltd. - The University of the Web and the Global Alliance for Transnational Education (GATE). He argues that even if globalized transnational education, particularly e-learning, is an open field for entrepreneurial activity, the results are not only positive but in many cases provide the only feasible way to serve the escalating numbers of learners for whom no other viable educational possibilities exist. He cites increasing demand in Asia for initial higher education and a growing world-wide demand for continuing education. However, emerging transnational higher education programmes, regardless of how delivered, like traditional course programmes, must be subjected to some standardization (in this context he refers to the Bologna Declaration for the development of a European Higher Education Area) and to quality control. He views the role of his organization, GATE, in the latter context.

The long and short of it is that although globalization is inevitably having a powerful effect on higher education and its policies worldwide, its specific manifestations appear to be as subjective as they are objective. As these articles show, opinions in regard to globalization frequently depend upon the proverbial eye of the beholder. Certainly, as Professor Kwiek insists, the globalization of higher education cannot be understood in isolation but must be considered along with the effects of globalization throughout the whole socio-political and economic spectrum.

The three articles making up the "Tribune" of this issue deal with aspects of networking in higher education and as such are linked to the paradigm of globalization. The first two articles, by, respectively, Jaak Aaviksoo, Rector of the University of Tartu in Estonia, and Vakhtang Sartania, Rector of Tbilisi State Pedagogical University of the Republic of Georgia, are calls for the universities in their countries to form networks based on different criteria at local, national, continental, and global levels as a first step towards the formation of and participation in the European Higher Education Area. For Aaviksoo, the formation of such networks, given the rigours of globalization, is at least a survival mechanism. However,

networking can serve as a means for product and efficiency enhancement. For Sartania, whose call for networking is also partly inspired by the Bologna Declaration, formation of the Network of Pedagogical Universities of the Caucasian Region could serve as a means of defusing ethnic tensions in the area.

The third article, by Sharker Md. Numan of Bangladesh, describes the efforts of the Bangladesh Open University to offer distance health care course programmes. A component of the course delivery mechanisms makes use of electronic means thus offering access to global networking.

Some of the themes that have been developed in this issue of **Higher Education in Europe** will be picked up in the next issue, No. 2, 2001, devoted to "Regional Co-operation in Higher Education in Central and Southeastern Europe