

other parts of the world. Historical, cultural, and linguistic linkages with Latin America have made that region an obvious target for Spanish university activity abroad. A wide range of Spanish initiatives in Latin America—at the national, institutional, and even individual levels—have placed the country at the forefront of European activity in the region. Spain is also keen to play a leadership role in the evolving plans for an Ibero-American higher education space and a Latin American, Caribbean, and European Union education space. Though much more limited in scope, engagement with the United States is also an extremely important focal point for Spanish internationalization. Meanwhile, Spain seeks to play off its historical ties with North Africa to cultivate partners there and in the Middle East and is now turning an eye to the emerging economic and higher education sectors of China and India.

CONSOLIDATING GAINS

Despite the more global dimensions of internationalization, Europeanization has unquestionably driven and shaped much of the Spanish approach to the phenomenon over the last 20 years. In the EU, the opportunities and imperatives to internationalize have provided enormous benefits for the universities of Spain—including the confidence, know-how, and organizational capacity to craft a dynamic international dimension. These institutions now face the challenge to find the will, expertise, and resources to assess what has been accomplished and to determine where to go from here.

The universities in Spain, as elsewhere, are operating in a highly competitive environment. Strategic planning for inter-

As European internationalization has solidified in recent years, the universities in Spain have found themselves better positioned and increasingly motivated to develop connections in other parts of the world.

nationalization must meet the need to advance international agendas that are comprehensive, relevant, and of high quality. The demands of internationalization are changing, and the potential rewards are considerable. The phenomenon is understood as both a means for institutional advancement and a fundamental end in itself for any vibrant higher education institution. The universities of Spain must therefore move forward with creative visions that turn on purposeful, sustainable plans for achieving their internationalization goals—European or otherwise. ■

From the Private to the Public Governance of Universities: Britain and Europe

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It is a paradox of British higher education that in the period between 1946 and 1980 when British universities received between 80 and 90 percent of their funding from the state they enjoyed the most freedom from state control. But in the period 1980–2006 when nonstate income rose to an average of over 40 percent of institutional income, with many research-intensive universities moving to over 70 percent, state intervention in policies directly affecting higher education have greatly intensified.

In the earlier period the University Grants Committee, a body made up almost entirely of academics, acted as a kind of collective minister to protect universities from direct intervention and to mediate the needs of the state with the needs of universities. An “insider” and a senior member of the Funding Council staff has described a fundamental shift in state-university relations over the second period: while it was once the role of the state to provide for the purposes of the universities, it is now the role of the universities to provide for the purposes of the state. We should not be surprised that the state is more interested in higher education. Since 1980 the participation rate has risen from 14 percent to over 40 percent of the age group, making higher education the natural presumption for the middle classes; the costs of higher education have escalated (even though unit costs have halved); the importance of higher education to the national knowledge economy is now fully recognized; and the globalization of higher education and particularly the attraction of British universities to international students are seen to be a national asset. Britain is not alone in recognizing the utility of higher education for state purposes, but in Blairite Britain the seepage of policy initiative away from the main functional ministries to the Cabinet Office and the Treasury and the weakness of the collective organizations representing higher education (most notably Universities UK) have led to the increasing dominance of “one size fits all” policies, conceived centrally in government.

The need to reform the public services has been a major preoccupation of the Blair government and its predecessors right back to the original Thatcher revolution. A range of concepts have evolved out of these attempts—the introduction of quasi markets, increasing personal choice, raising quality but

reducing costs, implementing performance management and increased monitoring—that have been characterized loosely under the heading of new public management (NPM). Increasingly NPM solutions, applied elsewhere in the public services with varying degrees of success, have found their way into higher education policymaking under the portmanteau phrase created by higher education scholars of “new manage-

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rialism.” The defining characteristic of these policies is that they have been exogenously driven and represent adaptations of initiatives created to reform activities as disparate as the National Health Service (NHS), the prison service, or the care of the elderly; they have not been initiated from within higher education, nor are they created with higher education issues especially in mind.

From a European perspective this situation could be viewed as a typical example of British exceptionalism were it not for the fact that many European countries, while starting from a very different relationship between universities and the state from the former British system, are following a similar reform model—most notably in the Netherlands and Austria but also in Scandinavia and even Italy, France, and Spain. In Europe itself, the Bologna process, the Lisbon declaration, and the EU's intention to establish a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) all represent moves at a supranational level to create a European higher education policy with the potential to foster uniformity rather than diversity among universities. Indeed, the proposal (now neutered) from the European Commission to establish a European Institute of Technology to rival the Massachusetts Institute of Technology suggests naivety or a willingness to put political gestures before well-informed policies, which must urge caution in considering the rise of a European higher education agenda.

A useful perspective of British exceptionalism is provided by Christine Musselin's description of the transformation of the French university system not into a set of private entities, as in Britain or the United States, but into institutions that have “organizational autonomy,” defined by the establishment of a specific institutional identity, the creation of internal hierarchies, and decision making based on internal rationalities; but this autonomy is strictly limited by detailed steering from the state and supranational bodies. (Christine Musselin,

“Managing Its Own Staff: A New Challenge for Public European Universities” [paper presented at The Crisis of the Publics Symposium, University of California, Berkeley March 26-27, 2007].) While organizational autonomy may seem radical in France (matching as it does the degree of autonomy accorded to foundation hospitals in the British NHS), it represents a considerable diminution of the autonomy assumed by a private entity. Moreover, clearly the British university has the power, *de jure* if not always *de facto*, to determine its own future and mission—taking account of but not being dictated to by the state or its intermediate agencies, the funding councils.

The centralized decision making in the British state contrasts very sharply, even when taking account of the effects of devolution to Scotland and Wales, with the agility in institutional management and the ability to take quick decisions retained by the private universities and many of the public universities in the United States. In Europe, and this includes Britain, we appear to be pursuing a policy model of what elsewhere I have called “derived autonomy,” as distinct from “self-directed autonomy,” which can stifle real institutional initiatives and neutralize precisely characteristics that encourage “world-class” institutions to develop. On this reading, the most important pointer to the future in Britain is not the merger of Manchester University and the Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, heavily backed by the state and by regional authorities as a step toward creating a world-class university, but the attempts by the English Funding Council to

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push Oxford to a “one size fits all” governance structure in the name of greater accountability, a move forthrightly rejected by the university.

This should not be seen as an argument to dispense with the role of the state in European higher education; the research evidence suggests that in Europe the mixed-economy university is much more innovative than the private university. But rather there is a danger of the balance between the state and the institution shifting too far toward the state, in the case of Britain, or of not moving far enough toward the institutions, in the case of many continental European countries, to the extent that the state suffocates and constrains the powers of initiative to breed the international competitiveness of universities that the British government and the EHEA are seeking to achieve. ■