Internationalisation of Higher Education in the United States of America and Europe

de Wit, J.W.M.

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Globalisation, Regionalisation and the Internationalisation of Higher Education

In the first two parts of this thesis a historical analysis of the development of the international dimension of higher education has been given, and a conceptual framework for the internationalisation of higher education has been provided. In this third part thematic case studies of relevant issues in relation to the internationalisation of higher education will be presented. In this first chapter of Part Three, the development of the internationalisation of higher education will be related to the present context of globalisation and regionalisation.

First the relationship between globalisation and the internationalisation of higher education will be analysed. Then two phenomena: the knowledge society and transnational education will be related to globalisation and higher education, as well as how they link with the internationalisation of higher education. In the last part the different forms of regionalisation in higher education and how this phenomenon is linked with both globalisation and the internationalisation of higher education will be handled.

1. Globalisation and the internationalisation of higher education

Although, as several authors (Scott 1998; Haug and Race, 1998; Teichler 1999) emphasise, higher education is still predominantly a national issue, globalisation is affecting this national competency of higher education (Altbach, 1998, 349). As Magrath (2000, 257) states: "If the globalization evident in business, communication, and finance is inevitable, how can universities that have provided so much of the intellectual capital for these developments not be affected -and indeed change themselves?" Altbach (1997 b, 4, 17) describes universities as "international institutions, with common historical roots and also embedded in national cultures and circumstances...that) despite remarkable institutional stability over time, have changed and have been subjected to immense pressures in the post-World War II period." These pressures are related to the globalisation of our societies, economies and technologies. According to Scott (1999, 35) "globalisation is perhaps the most fundamental challenge faced by the university in its long history". At stake is "the survival of the university as a recognizable institution." Slaughter and Leslie in their book on 'academic capitalism' (1997, 209) argue that "the structure of academic work is changing in response to the emergence of global markets." According to Mason, (1998, ix) his research on global education shows an "increasing differentiation of the education market around the world, and hence the scrambling for position in that global market by existing as well as new education providers." Steven Muller (1995, 65) argues that "with the end of the Cold War, the advanced technological societies of the information age seem to be well on the road toward a single global marketplace of ideas, data, and communication." Higher education is likely to be affected by this development, as Scott (1999) agrees.

So it is not surprising that the link between globalisation and higher education has become a key topic of study in recent years. This is true in particular for Australia, where studies such as Slaughter and Leslie, 1997; Currie and Newson, 1998; and Mason, 1998 have been published on
this theme. This strong interest among Australian academics for the link between globalisation and higher education is, according to Pratt and Poole (1998, 4), related to the fact that globalisation is seen in analyses of Australian higher education as a major influence.

A large number of other publications deal with this issue or make at least ample reference to the importance of the phenomenon (for instance Kerr, 1994; Clark, 1998; Scott, 1998 and 1999; Altbach and McGill Peterson, 1999, etc.). The reason lies in the overall globalisation of our societies and economies, described by Leyton-Brown (1996, 11) in umbrella terms as "a wide variety of technological, economic, cultural, social and political trends, all pushing the boundaries of our social systems wider than the borders of our states."

Jan Sadlak (2000, 244) observes that globalisation has become very rapidly part of higher education terminology, although the term is perceived by many as Anglo-Saxon 'Westernisation' or 'Americanisation'. Peter Marcuse (2000) criticises the use of the term 'globalisation' as a "nonconcept in most uses", catalogising "everything that seems different since, say, 1970." These comments look similar to the critic on the use of the terms 'international education' and 'internationalisation of higher education' as 'western' and vague, as discussed in Part One of this study.

Sometimes, the terms 'globalisation' and 'internationalisation' of higher education are used interchangeably. An example of the use of the terms internationalisation and globalisation as synonyms is Lim (1995, 1-2), who not only uses the terms international/global together, but also makes a plea for a gradual shift "from a concept of 'international' to one of 'global' or 'universal' in education, research, public service, and culture in universities. 'Global' has", according to Lim (Ibid., 10), "a double meaning. In a geographical sense, it refers to more than issues or activities among (inter) nations. It describes the community on a larger scale and an ethos going beyond interactions among a given number of polities. In a conceptual sense, 'global' means 'general or universal'." Another example is Alladin (1992, 4), who calls for "the globalization of universities, for the university is the only truly global institution that can promote international co-operation and understanding through educational exchanges." A third example is Kornpetnanee (1999, 5) who defines 'internationalisation of universities' for her research as "the development process of universities into a more global aspect." Dubhashi (1995, 10) sees cross-cultural co-operation as an inherent part of the concept of globalisation of knowledge. Warner (1992) also makes no distinction between the two terms. Mestenhauser (2000) uses 'internationalisation' as an umbrella concept of which 'global' education refers to the worldwide context in which it works, and further uses the two terms internationalisation and globalisation in a confusing, alternate way. However, he also notes the need for clarification of the two terms and their links.

This interchangeable use of the terms 'internationalisation' and 'globalisation'; the proposed gradual shift from 'international' to 'global'; and the use of 'global' in the meaning of 'general' or 'universal' are all highly questionable. They are not so because, as Wells and Pfantz (1999, 21) argue, globalisation should be considered as a too complex and ideological-loaded term. Jane Knight (1997, 6; 1999, 13-14) provides a more convincing view. "The description which is most relevant and appropriate to the discussion on the international dimension of the higher education sector is as follows:
Globalisation is the flow of technology; economy, knowledge, people, values, ideas... across borders. Globalisation affects each country in a different way due to a nation's individual history, traditions, culture and priorities.

Internationalisation of higher education is one of the ways a country responds to the impact of globalisation yet, at the same time respects the individuality of the nation. Thus, internationalisation and globalisation are seen as different but dynamically linked concepts. Globalisation can be thought of as the catalyst while internationalisation is the response, albeit a response in a proactive way."

Peter Scott (1998, 108) is also of the opinion that globalisation and internationalisation are not "simply words to describe the same process" but "radically different processes dialectically linked." He (Ibid., 126-127) links internationalisation with a world order dominated by nation-states, where the emphasis is on strategic relationships. Globalisation on the contrary implies a reordering of this world order into new regional blocs, new allies and the breaking of national boundaries by high technology and world culture. Scott (Ibid., 123) links these notions to higher education. The contemporary university is the creature of the nation state: "paradoxically perhaps, before it became an international institution the university had first to become a national institution – just as internationalization presupposes the existence of nation states." This way of linking internationalisation and globalisation was followed in general lines at a conference of the CRE in 1999 (Van der Wende, 1999 c, 63).

According to Scott (1998, 124), internationalisation of higher education has taken two forms. The first was the export of ideas and systems, or academic imperialism. The second was that of exchanges and mobility, although not in structured form. In the present environment of processes of globalisation, these forms have acquired new dimensions but have not yet been replaced by globalisation. "Globalization cannot be regarded simply as a higher form of internationalization. Instead of their relationship being seen as linear or cumulative, it may actually be dialectical. In a sense the new globalization may be the rival of the old internationalization." It is also for that reason that Scott questions a possible link between the archaic notion of 'universalism' and the new globalisation, "because they both transcend, and are antithetical to, the dynamics of nationalism (and of internationalism as its logical extension)."

Scott (1999, 37) gives three main reasons why globalisation cannot be regarded as a higher form of internationalisation:
- "internationalisation presupposes the existence of established nation states, where globalisation is either agnostic about, or positively hostile to, nation states;
- internationalisation is most strongly expressed through the 'high' worlds of diplomacy and culture; globalisation in the 'low' worlds of mass consumerism and global capitalism; and
- internationalisation, because of its dependence on the existing (and unequal) pattern of nation states, tends to reproduce – even legitimize – hierarchy and hegemony; globalisation, in contrast, because it is not tied to the past, because it is a restless, even subversive, force can address new agendas."

According to Scott (Ibid., 38), universities are challenged by globalisation because of their close identification with national cultures; because of the standardisation of teaching through the impact of communication and information technology, and the emergence of global research cultures
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and networks; and because global markets undermine the welfare states which public universities depend on for the bulk of their income.

Teichler (1999, 7) describes the relationship between the internationalisation and globalisation of higher education as “two more or less unconnected trends” of internationalisation: “a growth of specific, visibly international, border-crossing operations” on the one hand, and “a trend towards universalisation, globalisation, internationalisation or ‘regionalisation’ of the substance and the functions of higher education.” This is a confusing way of mixing terms and content. It is better to describe the first trend as ‘internationalisation’ and the second as ‘globalisation’.

As argued by Jane Knight and Peter Scott, there is a fundamental difference and at the same time dialectical link between the internationalisation of higher education and globalisation. One example of this link is given by Kerr (1994, 21) who observes that “the international flow of information, of scholars, and of students is aided by what seems to be the convergence in the structures and policies of systems of higher education around the world.” This relates to the trend for harmonisation and uniformisation of higher education, seen as one of the consequences of globalisation of our societies.

The dialectical relation expresses itself in two phenomena referred to as the ‘knowledge society’, also called the ‘knowledge economy’, and ‘transnational education’.

1.1. The Knowledge Society

The relationship between globalisation, new technologies and science finds its expression in the concept of the ‘knowledge society’, also – in a more narrow sense – referred to as the ‘knowledge economy’. The pace of knowledge is accelerating as a consequence of new technologies, and the university is changing in character and emphasis from sole production and dissemination of knowledge to technology transfer and the formation of incubator facilities and research centres with industrial participation. As analysed in Chapter One, globalisation, the end of the Cold War and the related development of a knowledge economy are calling the traditional role of the university into question. A ‘triple helix of university–industry–government relations’ (Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff, 1997), and the notion of the ‘innovative’ or ‘entrepreneurial university’ (Clark, 1998) are expressions of the new relationship between science and economy in a global context that challenges the traditional notion of ‘ivory tower’. New paradigms of knowledge production are developing, emphasising the importance of context and the proliferation of research communities. Greater emphasis is placed on knowledge transfer and applied research (Scott, 1999, 41-42). The transformation into the entrepreneurial university, according to Clark (ibid., 5), consists of at least five necessary elements: a strengthened steering core; an expanded developmental periphery; a diversified funding base; a stimulated academic heartland; and an integrated entrepreneurial culture.

68 The same applies to terms that are also used as alternatives for globalisation, such as ‘multinationalisation’ (see for instance Altbach, 1999). The danger of using this and other terms as synonyms for globalisation is that the distinctive line between internationalisation and globalisation becomes even more obscured.

69 Although international and global aspects are clearly related to these elements, surprisingly enough, Clark does not
This change in emphasis and character for universities is described and analysed by scholars mainly in the context of research and development or science. The same phenomenon, however, can be observed in the other core function of universities, teaching. Growing competition and collaboration with the private sector (in particular in the area of specialised, professional training and life-long learning, in distance education and the use of new technologies) are developments that are increasingly coming to the forefront in higher education. Where the notion of ‘the knowledge society’ seems to be more research-related; in teaching, the terms ‘transnational education’ and more recently ‘borderless education’ are normally used to describe this phenomenon.

1.2. Transnational Education

Transnational education, as Liston (1999) states, is not something of recent years or even of the past century, but has always been there. It became a more visible phenomenon with the massification of higher education after the Second World War, and with the development of new technologies has, more recently, become a key factor in tertiary education. The term ‘transnational education’, however, is used by Liston in a confusing way, including both student mobility and the mobility of teaching and learning. The term ‘transnational education’ is also used by other authors as a synonym for and modern version of international education, whereas, although there is a link, it should be seen broader in the context of globalisation and the way this globalisation impacts and is influenced by higher education.

The term is defined by the Global Alliance for Transnational Education (GATE, 1997) as: “any teaching or learning activity in which the students are in a different country (the host country) to that in which the institution providing the education is based (the home country). This situation requires that national boundaries be crossed by information about the education, and by staff and/or educational materials (whether the information and materials travel by mail, computer network, ratio or television broadcast or other means).”

A working group on transnational education of UNESCO-CEPES (1999, I.1) states that “transnational education refers to those courses of study, parts of courses of study, or other educational services in which the students are located in a different country to the one where the institution providing the services is based. The institution or programme in question may belong to the national education system of another country, or it may be independent of any national system.”

acknowledge this and thus ignores the strong link between the entrepreneurial university and the context of globalisation, in common with other authors.

70 The term transnationalisation, a term frequently used interchangeably with globalisation, will not be used. Jane Knight (1999,c, 13) observes that transnational education does not appear to have been formalised or institutionalised. However, this is even more true for transnationalisation of higher education.

71 Transnational education should not be confused with ‘transnational competence’, just as global education should not be confused with ‘global competence’ (see Chapter Five).

72 Wilson and Vlăsceanu (2000, 75) indicate that this definition was formulated by the Working Group on Franchised Qualifications of the ENIC/NARIC network.
Machado dos Santos (2000, 5-6) describes transnational education as "higher education activities in which the learners are located in a host country different from the one where the awarding institution is based."

An alternative term, which recently is used often instead of ‘transnational education’ is ‘borderless education’. According to Bjarnason et al. (2000, 7), the term ‘borderless higher education’ is used "to indicate developments which cross (or have a potential to cross) the traditional borders of higher education, whether geographical or conceptual." This description is broader than the one used for transnational education, but overlaps to a great extent the activities falling under the last one.

Examples of transnational education are offshore programmes and campuses; twinning programmes; articulation programmes; international institutions, franchise arrangements and branch campuses; distance education; and virtual, electronic or web programmes and institutions. Van der Wende (1999 c, 61) makes an interesting implicit suggestion to include competition under globalisation, implying that the recruitment of foreign students belongs to the domain of transnational education.

Following the argumentation of Peter Scott, one can argue that transnational education is more a product of and related to the impact of globalisation on higher education (breaking national boundaries by new technology) than to internationalisation (traditional strategic relationships). At the same time, transnational education and the internationalisation of higher education are dialectically linked in the same way as globalisation and internationalisation, as rivals. Wilson and Vlăsceanu (2000, 76) describe it as a relatively new phenomenon sometimes with roots in more traditional forms of internationalisation, sometimes taking completely new forms. See, for instance, the title of a special issue of Higher Education in Europe (1999), ‘Changing Face of Transnational Education: Moving Education – Not Learners’, which suggests a rivalry between international and transnational education. 

The dialectical link between globalisation and transnational education on the one hand and internationalisation of higher education on the other is an area of study that requires more attention in research. As transnational education becomes more central in this century as a result of the ‘information age’ in which we live, it must be analysed in its relationship with internationalisation, the ‘phenomenon’ of the 1990s – a relationship that in the future will become more closely connected.

Mason (1998, 139-141) comes to the following conclusions on transnational education, for which he uses the confusing term ‘global education’: predominance of English; very little real engagement with cultural issues; homogenisation in large-scale global courses, custom-made characteristics of small–scale offerings; diverse forms of course delivery; attention paid to the learning process, role of the teacher, skills needed by students and institutional support systems; and

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73 See also the remark by the working group of CEPES-UNESCO (Ibid., 1.6) that “Student Mobility is replaced by the mobility of the study programmes.”
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dominant trend demands in the lifelong learning market of professional updating, IT skilling, and to a lesser extent leisure.74

Several authors (for instance, Muller, 1995; ACA, 1996; Altbach, 1997b; Currie, 1998; Mason, 1998; Kahn, 2000; Machado dos Santos, 2000; The Task Force, 2000) point to the potential dangers of globalisation for higher education and transnational education, such as the widening of the information gap, strengthening of western dominance and the related problems of access; the potential conflict between market forces and academic autonomy; transparency and regulation; etc.

The Task Force on Higher Education and Society (2000) describes some of the key elements of the knowledge revolution:
- Worldwide, the rate at which scientific papers are published has doubled in the past two decades.
- The number of patent applications has been increasing steadily.

However, at the same time, the Task Force observes that not a single developing country is included among the top fifteen of published scientific papers per capita; and industrial countries have about twenty times as many personal computers as middle-income countries and more than a hundred times as many Internet hosts. The Task Force concludes that countries that are only weakly connected to the rapidly emerging global knowledge system will find themselves at a disadvantage, in addition to rising inequality within countries. No easy solutions are available.

Others (Adams, 1998; Knight, 1999; Machado dos Santos, 2000) stress the specific need for quality assurance of transnational education programmes. Machado dos Santos adds to this the need for mechanisms of regulation and recognition. Together, according to him, they must guarantee consumer protection.

In addition, there appears to be common agreement on the observation by Mason (1998, 15) that the established institutions of higher education are not leading the globalisation movement, but the newer, less prestigious, institutions and new educational providers from the private sector (telecommunication, computer and software, publishing companies).

The internationalisation of higher education, in the sense that it emphasises more the interaction between cultures than the homogenisation of cultures, can play a counterbalancing role to the potential dangers of transnational education; one reason why it is important to relate these two trends, and study the relationship between them.

2. Regionalisation and the internationalisation of higher education

A related but specific aspect of both the internationalisation of higher education and globalisation is regionalisation and higher education, a phenomenon that over the past two decades has become more evident in Europe but also elsewhere. Although globalisation gets more attention in the literature, regionalisation can be considered a more important trend in its impact on the national character of higher education.75

74 See also Khan (2000).

75 See for instance Blumenthal et al. (1996) referring to both global and regional trends. Hufbauer and Malani (1996,
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Regionalisation takes several forms. First, a distinction should be made between inter-regional, regional, cross-regional and supra-regional forms of regionalisation.

a. Inter-regional

Although according to Haug and Race (1998, 4) there is "more diversity than homogeneity" in characterising inter-regional co-operation in higher education and for that reason no generic definition of it is possible, inter-regional should be defined as links between nations within one region, and inter-regional higher education as links between higher education (institutions) of nations within one region. Haug and Race (Ibid., 5-10) give a typology and examples of different forms of inter-regional co-operation in higher education in Europe: co-operation between homogeneous regions, neighbouring as well as non-adjacent; co-operation between neighbours in a geographically limited area; and co-operation between less homogeneous areas for confidence building. Such forms of regional co-operation are to be found in other parts of the world as well.76

b. Regional

The clearest example of what we call 'regional' is Europe and in particular the European Union. Another example is NAFTA, the regional co-operation between Canada, Mexico and the United States of America. Haug and Race (Ibid., 10) call this "regional co-operation with a continental dimension", but 'continent' as a defining characteristic is too limited, as the cases of the European Union and NAFTA show. The role of the regions has become more important with regard to internationalisation and to standardisation and recognition.

c. Cross-regional

Cross-regional can be defined as the links between different regions, such as European Union–ASEAN, Latin America–North America, Asia–Pacific. Haug and Race (Ibid., 10) call this supra-continental co-operation, a term not found appropriate because 'continental' limits this type of regionalisation to continents and because 'supra' lacks the interactive aspect that is more clearly present in the use of the term 'crossing'. Cross-regionalisation is an important foreign policy instrument.

d. Supra-regional

Supra-regional covers the work of international bodies such as UNESCO and the Council of Europe. These bodies are involved in higher education as supra-regional governmental pressure groups.77

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A second distinction should be made between regionalisation in the meaning of 'globalisation' with a regional character, i.e. standardisation, homogenisation, harmonisation of rules, regulations, recognition, structures and systems; and regionalisation in the meaning of 'internationalisation'.

A clear example of the first meaning of regionalisation is the Bologna Declaration of June 19, 1999 by 29 ministers of education of Europe and its predecessor, the Sorbonne Declaration of May 25, 1998 by the four ministers of education of France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom, calling for an open European area for higher learning. These declarations (De Wit, 2000, 8-9, see also Chapter Three) catalyse the reform of higher education throughout Europe. 78

An example of the second meaning of regionalisation is the so-called SOCRATES programme – and its predecessor ERASMUS – of the European Commission, which is directed at international co-operation and exchange within the European Union and related countries in Europe. 79

A close look at activities, programmes and studies on regionalisation and higher education indicates that regionalisation is at present more closely linked to internationalisation than to globalisation. Exceptions are the work of supra-regional bodies such as UNESCO, the work of regional entities such as the Council of Europe, and the European Commission, which deal with both internationalisation and globalisation concerns in higher education. However, it is not difficult to see that we are in a transition period in which regionalisation is becoming increasingly linked to globalisation, while information technology, competition and standardisation are becoming essential elements of reforming higher education. 80

3. Concluding remarks

In this chapter the development of globalisation, its impact on higher education and the different forms it takes in research (the knowledge society or economy) and teaching (transnational education) has been analysed. This impact of globalisation on higher education is directly linked to similar developments in our societies as a whole, and its manifestations in research and teaching take similar forms.

It is argued that the internationalisation of higher education is different from this globalisation development in the way that internationalisation is based on relationships between nations and their institutions, and for that reason takes differences as a starting point for linkages, whereas globalisation ignores the existence of nations and their diversity and looks more for


79 A good illustration of how both interpretations of regionalisation have affected national educational policy is the study by Aaro Ollikainen (2000) on 'Europeanisation of Finnish Education Policy Discourses'.

80 See for instance the contributions to CRE-Action, 1999, by Scott, Daxner and Van der Wende; as well as Field (1998).
similarities than for differences. At the same time, the internationalisation of higher education and the globalisation of our societies are and will increasingly become linked phenomena, as institutions of higher education – privatised, deregulated and more entrepreneurial – become active players in the global market place, still trying to maintain their autonomous position as academic institutions, and focusing on diversification rather than harmonisation.

The same argument is analysed with respect to regionalisation of higher education. This phenomenon is linked to the internationalisation of higher education but is also a specific form of the way globalisation impacts and is influenced by higher education.

The growing importance of knowledge and human capital and the development of new technologies (ICT) as a consequence will make the link between the internationalisation of higher education, globalisation and regionalisation even stronger than before.