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The academic fields of knowledge

1. The original myth

The Oxford English Dictionary informs us, that the word “academic” designates “a member of the staff of the university or a college”, and that “academic community”, means “the world of university scholarship”. But the Dictionary tells us nothing about this strange, albeit universally accepted custom of calling everything associated with university institutions — “academic”. The term “academic” comes from Academe which the English can thank Milton for introducing into their vocabulary. In book IV of his *Paradise Regained* Milton translates Horace’s renowned “silvas academi”, into “the olive grove of Academe, Plato’s retirement”¹.

Considering the subject matter of the present essay, it is somewhat disheartening to realize that behind the widespread use of the word “academic” is hidden an absurdly presumptuous myth of the origin of the university institution. It is even more disheartening to realize, that it was university scholars, not poets, who manufactured this myth.

The reasons, why the myth of the direct descent of the university institution from Plato’s

school through the centuries was an essential part of the institutional self-image, are naturally very difficult to ascertain. We can imagine two kinds of reasons: the psychological and the intellectual ones. The psychological ones are so tritely obvious, that I shall say little about them: hardships of lonely studies, only repaid by undeserved harassments from the powerful patrons, and the ignorant public — not an unusual fate of scholars — could easily misguide their imagination into illusionary worlds. Imagined academic worlds created by this mechanism were, unfortunately, small worlds populated by naive believers and cynical hypocrites.

More interesting however, are the reasons which might be called intellectual. It is very difficult to establish the exact beginning of the university institution, i.e. to answer a seemingly simple question: when, how, and where did it originate? And it helps little to realize that we run into problems of the same nature, when searching for the origins of social institutions of a comparably complex nature: The Church, the State and the Parliament. As we all know, this cognitive predicament was in older times solved by some variety of a “creationist” theory.

Every above mentioned institution was once imagined to have been created, preferably on some exact date, and by some particular founder. I do not claim that historical scholarship is by now completely free from the fads and foibles which heavily marked the earlier stages of its development. However, no one any longer believes the original myth which tells us that:

Plato's suburban school did, in Roman exile, survive the breakdown of the Greek civilization. Through the centuries it served the Papal Court—then the axial institution of the Christian civilization emerging on the ruins of the Roman Empire—just to be transferred by Charlemagne, around the year 800 to the capital of his Empire, where it became known all over the world as the University of Paris.

This myth, taken literally, is of course worthless as an account of the origins of the university. But it has a sound kernel. The myth displays an acute awareness of the vitality of the interdependence of Power and Knowledge, the same awareness which animates the best of contemporary research on the nature of the production of knowledge.

The history of universities, conducted in a modern, empirical spirit, came comparatively late into the family of historical studies. Hasting Rashdall's voluminous work from 1895 presents the culmination of this branch of scholarship (Rashdall, 1936). Working on the origins of the universities some fifty years after the appearance of *On the Origin of Species*, Rashdall mentions the original myth with forbearance only². His indifference applies only to the explanatory value of the myth. He collected it, as an anthropologist would, while travelling among strange natives, looking for every artifact important to an understanding of their culture. As a good empiricist, Rashdall travels through archeological layers of the dusty archives of Rome, Paris, Bologna, and Oxford collecting the fragmentary sources to be pieced together into an intelligible pattern at the end of his "Beagle-expedition".

Rashdall's plan, according to his own words, was: "to describe with tolerable fullness the three great *archetypal* universities" and "to give short notices of the foundation,

constitution, and history of the others" (Rashdall, 1936: xxxii). A theologian by training, philosopher by vocation, and extremely modest by disposition, he never tells us what value and relevance his project might have for the universities of the present. Irrespective of his modesty and characteristic understatement, he would not have spent twelve years of research and studies if he did not consider the past of the universities important for an understanding of the academic institutions of our times. And he would not have used the concept of the "archetype" if he did not think that a full account of its essentials would help us to comprehend stability and change in academic life.

In complete harmony with the evolutionary idiom of his time, he insists that the archetypal forms of university life were not due to something which might be called an act of creation, either divine, papal, or royal³. They resulted from somewhat haphazard, creative adjustments of conflicting social forces to the pre-existing local and historical conditions. But once established, they coalesced into a pattern which from then on functioned as a model, furnishing fairly stable limits to what were to be considered the proper forms of university organizations.

The early university movements began to appear in the wake of the 12th century Renaissance, the period of demographic, economic, and cultural growth which reshaped the face of Europe after a protracted period of "darkness" covering the 10th and the 11th centuries. Moving around, travelling alone or in bands, does not call for any special explanation in the period of crusaders, preachers, wandering scholars, and all the other forms of augmented social mobility so characteristic of the revival period. De Savigny, one of the pioneers of the history of the universities felt it necessary, however to refer to the "awakening of the innate thirst of knowledge", as the explanation of the somewhat restless mobility of the scholastic movements of the 12th century⁴. Rashdall does not deny the distinctive position of the scholars' communities. But he sees it as a result of the specific composition of the whole

social field, the field delineated by conflicting and overlapping interests of the Town, the Gown, and the Crown rather than of a “thirst” for knowledge.

The actual existence of the communities of scholars was readily acknowledged by the Papal bull or the Royal edict. This was once variously interpreted by the historians. Some thought that the Papal or the Royal will was *conditio sine qua non* for the existence of the university, while others looked upon the bull or the edict as an acceptance of the situation. Were the universities purposefully established by the ecclesiastical or the secular powers, or did they emerge independently? The ideological flavours of this debate seem vapid now. It has been a long time since the universities last “emerged”.

We all know that they are now an important instrument of the national manpower policies, and thus purposefully designed and financed in detail. But the old controversy reminds us of the persisting problems of the relative obsolescence and frustrating inefficiency of the planning enterprise in the realm of knowledge production.

Academic production of knowledge, not surprisingly, developed an organizational structure highly homologous to its close kins: the Ecclesiastical and the Secular bureaucracy. But the complete integration of the university into the bureaucratic order would presuppose the disappearance of demarcation conflicts which sustain and create the identity of both.

History shows that the universities acquired their singularity and distinctness by any means available. Very often, by means far below the standards of intellectual and ethical decency. From this point of view, the strange, albeit universally accepted custom of calling everything associated with the university, “academic”, belongs to the relatively benign part of the repertoire.

2. Student unions

The Oxford English Dictionary tells us that the domicile of the academics is called “university”.

Let us have a closer look at the term itself

and begin by a quite recent example from the on-going debate concerning the proper range of its application.

On November 11, 1989, *The Economist* brought an editorial entitled “Pretty poly”. It reads: “The past few years have been kind to the polytechnics. The government likes their approach to education and has given them greater freedom from local authorities. Polytechnics’ heads are usually as quick to praise Mrs Thatcher as university academics are to damn her. But they have — at least — one remaining grouse. They want to change their collective name, and the government is not going to let them. In September the polytechnic heads put in a round-robin to the Department of Education and Science (DES), asking it to allow (though not compel) a polytechnic to incorporate the word ‘university’ in its title”.

The heads of polytechnics have a double argument to support their request. Firstly, as they say: “the division between universities and polytechnics, is a British quirk — a legacy of a snobbish distinction between gentlemen (who study abstractions) and operatives (who learn about things)”. Secondly the meaning of “polytechnic” as revealed by a commissioned poll was unclear to 75 % of the respondents. And they find it unjust, especially from the part of the market-oriented government to “force enterprising institutions” to carry a label that consumers find at best confusing, at worst a turn-off. At this moment it is impossible to predict the fate of the name “polytechnic” worn so unwillingly by the second division of the British institutions of higher learning. They complain about the unclear meaning of the name “polytechnic”, a more than one and a half century old artificial combination of two words of Greek extraction (*poly* and *techné*)⁵. They would rather have an older label containing the word of Latin extraction which, by the way, is not much clearer.

The editorial informs us that the minister of Higher Education, Mr Jackson (an Oxbridge graduate himself?) brushed away this — from the commercial point of view completely sound — wish, and diagnosed it as a symptom of “an academic drift”.

Nomen est numen. The Latin proverb draws our attention to the importance of calling the right thing with the right word. Philosophers ruminates on the numinous quality of the Name. Salesmen and advertising specialists are acutely aware of the commercial value of the name under which a product is marketed. Let us take the middle road and look at some of the ideas associated with the awesome name "university".

"Universitas" was originally a quite mundane word roughly meaning "a community". Within the context of the Roman civil law it was used to designate a corporate personality with a distinct set of rights and obligations.

The 12th century Renaissance was a period of thorough reanimation of large parts of Europe. South of the Alps the period was marked first of all by the growth of the Italian city-republics. The growth was to some extent facilitated by the fact that traditional commercial city life, in these parts of Europe, never completely died out after the fall of the Roman Empire. Rediscovery of the partially forgotten Roman *corpus iuris civilis* stimulated an adequate regulation of the early capitalist economy. Guilds of merchants, bankers, and artisans were the most important representatives of the variegated flora of corporations (*universitates*) so characteristic of the highly developed forms of the communitarian movements of the period.

Bologna was one of the Italian cities which took an active part in this feverish development. The industrial and commercial life of the city was organized according to corporative principles, which furnished every professionally active citizen with an elaborate set of rights and obligations. Some of the trade unions were of course more prestigious than others, but all of them, besides being organizational forms of economic life, took part also in the political life of the town.

The fascinating flexibility and conceptual sophistication of the rediscovered *corpus iuris civilis* was undoubtedly a powerful source of attraction to the intellectuals of the period, and an important stimulus to the cultural revival in these parts of Europe. *Fictio iuris*, ability to construct a legal fiction, was one of the

characteristic facilities of the Roman legal thought, and it worked so to speak in two ways. It presented a vertiginous, intellectual challenge and at the same time smoothly wound up the business contracts.

The geographical position of Bologna proved favorable not only for the development of the economy but also for the development of the intellectual life, when the town evolved, in the middle of the 12th century, as a European center for legal studies.

The idea of founding fathers, pioneers, and great men serves to some extent the same needs as the old "creationist" theory. Irenerius, one of the famous jurists of Bologna, is thus customarily selected by posterity as the founder of the legal studies of Bologna; similarly, Abelard, the great theologian, is usually nominated the founder of the University of Paris. But there were no particular founders in either of these places⁶. In the case of Bologna there were thousands of scholars drawn to the city from all of Europe by the fame of the residing jurists.

Rumours from Bologna reported not only the agility of Irenerius and his colleagues, but also told convincing stories about the career possibilities for jurists in the growing administration of the church and the expanding economies of the Italian cities. In the middle of the 12th century Bologna found itself in an unexpectedly complicated situation. Thousands of scholars flocking into the city created an ambiguous mixture of uncertainty and hopes of prosperity. They were, legally speaking, aliens, but highly desirable ones as they brought with them a promise of fame for the city and prospects of an income increase for its citizens (house rent).

The above mentioned ingenuity of *fictio iuris* of the Roman law provided a possibility for compromise between the conflicting interests of the townspeople and the gownspeople (the clerics)⁷. During the second part of the 12th century a whole series of compromises and bargains, reached between the Town and the Gown, were authorized by the highest powers of the Christian civilization, the Emperor and the Pope, and one of the archetypal forms of the academic production of knowledge began

to take form⁸. The student-universities of Bologna (*universitas scholarium*) evolved as a creative solution to the perennial problems of the ambiguity of intellectual work. The solution applied adequately within the confines of the singularity of time and place.

Real privileges, economic and legal, were granted to the communities of scholars by creating an "as if" situation to the benefit of all (?) involved parties. The fiction agreed upon relieved the scholars of their uncomfortable status of aliens and supplied them "with an artificial citizenship in place of the natural citizenship which they temporarily renounced in the pursuit of knowledge or advancement" (Rashdall, 1936, vol. 1: 151).

Corporations of students also acquired political privileges of an astonishingly large scope: they could, through the elected representatives (rectors), negotiate with the city council, a privilege acknowledged only to the trade unions organizing professionally active citizens of the town.

Members of the student-universities acquired through the creativity of jurists the "artificial" citizenship and a jurisdiction of their own. This fiction was to some extent in harmony with the Roman concept of personal law (aliens were judged according to their own laws). But the privilege of political rights was by Roman law expressly granted only to men known to exercise a profession (*professionem exercere noscuntur*)⁹.

Nobody even dreamed of granting the apprentices of different trades and crafts corporative political rights. Most of the students of Bologna were not even preparing for a profession, as the majority of them pursued only the liberal studies. To overcome this difficulty the knowledge of law was not enough; it was an obstacle. The situation required a political judgement. And probably not for the first time and certainly not for the last, the bewildered public experienced a transfiguration of Power into Knowledge.

Mighty corporations of scholars would use the threat of dispersion or the appeal to the Emperor's or the Pope's authority in order to persuade the burghers of Bologna and stimulate the imagination of their legal advisers.

The justification of the political privileges granted to the student-universities, but denied to the apprentices of crafts and trades, was a masterpiece of juridical sophistication. It was based on the ancient distinction between *artes liberales* and *artes serviles*.

The ancient imagery of a knowledge hierarchy with the *artes liberales* on its higher levels and the *artes serviles* on its bottom line was reanimated by the 13th century jurists of Bologna for practical political reasons. It furnished a very much needed justification for students' privileges. It is probably the same spectre which pesters the British debate concerning the right name for the "polytechnics". But it is a spectre of obviously non-British origin.

3. Teachers' guilds

Drawing a demarcation line between KNOWLEDGE and POWER belongs to the most celebrated philosophical pastimes. On one side of the line (the right side?), stand the RATIONALISTS who believe that the power of an argument comes from its truthfulness, in principle an absolute, suprahuman quality. On the other side, (the left side?) all shades of RELATIVISTS flock who, roughly speaking, stand for the opposite: the compelling force of an argument rests ultimately on its appeal to a human-made element of POWER. Schematically speaking, we thus get the idealistic worship of naked TRUTH against the realistic cynicism of the worshippers of naked POWER¹⁰.

This barren dichotomy haunts, unfortunately, not only the philosophical debate. It clamours behind most of the analyses of the formation and development of social organizations. Studies of the social forms of intellectual work, including studies of knowledge and science institutions, are helplessly caught in the snares of this duality. We all know the rallying poles of this debate wearing labels like: the "rational" vs the "social" and the "internalists" vs "externalists" which divide the students of the institutions of knowledge into disparate camps¹¹.

An understanding of the past as well as of the present always entails an appeal to some general principles to which the chaotic factual data are supposed to adhere. And weighing the emptiness of the general principles against the muteness of the empirical facts, which never speak for themselves, is a source of tension which leads to the eventual progress of scholarship.

For a very long time historians studying the early universities were so baffled and repulsed by the organizational principles of the student-universities that they classified them as anomalies. As we have seen in the preceding section the worry and repulsion was groundless. The student-universities of Bologna were by no means examples of a violation of professorial authority. They were examples of divergent principles of division of authority in the production of knowledge, an alternative to the principles on which the Parisian model was based.

The jurists of Bologna, the pupils of Irenerius, exercised a highly respected and much demanded profession. They cared about their fees as lecturers as much as the students cared about the quality and the quantity of the lectures they received. The citizens of Bologna were probably proud and happy to have the famous center of legal studies within the walls of their town. But they were equally anxious to make a profit from the always scarce housing facilities. Bolognan students were on the average older and wealthier than their Parisian counterparts and the legal knowledge they pursued called for much less transcendental ambition than did Parisian theology.

Taking this set-up into account, student-universities were not an abtruse anomaly, they were rather quite "natural" instruments well suited for collective bargaining — instruments which made it possible on behalf of the student communities to negotiate fees with the teachers' guilds and the appropriate level of house rent with the city council. Although locally grown and historically conditioned, they adressed the perennial question of the division of authority within the academic production of knowledge. Hence their position as archetypes.

While the tradition of lay teachers survived

the fall of the Roman Empire in the southern parts of Europe, teaching, north of the Alps, had been exclusively associated with the authority of the Church since the days of Charlemagne. In those parts of Europe the knowledge order was a relative newcomer into the ranks of feudal society. Dabbling with books was not looked upon as worthy of, or compatible with, the status of a nobleman. Conceptually, as well as factually, a "teacher" was a "cleric", and his social standing was inextricably connected with the position and fate of the sacerdoty.

Production of knowledge was confined to the monasteries but they kept the, often very sophisticated, results of their research well encloistered behind the walls. The only network suited for the transmission of knowledge were the cathedral schools which began to mushroom under the reign of Charles the Great¹². Therefore it was considered a natural responsibility of the "scholasticus" (the office under the chancellor of the cathedral) to grant, or to refuse, the masters a formal permission to open a school for their own profit in the vicinity of the church.

The necessity of proper legitimation of teaching activities has, within the social reality, a status comparable to that of the "necessities" we think about while constructing physical realities. Or, less metaphysically speaking: the very existence of proper authorization of teaching activities enables us to tell "teaching" from "non-teaching". The social image of valid knowledge was differently constructed troughout Europe and involved different procedures of authorization and transmission. The ecclesiastical character of teaching was never disputed in the transalpinian territories. It had slowly grown out from the other sacerdotal duties, and the eventual difference only slowly became generally recognized.

The Parisian university of teachers evolved from within the ecclesiastical network of the cathedral schools. The network was supervised by the decentral authority of the chancellor's office who could, on his own discretion, deny the insubordinate applicant his teaching license (*licentia docendi*). No wonder that the fights of the Parisian teachers against the chancellor's

right to issue a "Berufsverbot" to the undesired masters turned out to be the pivotal conflict which shaped the primeaval associations of teachers into the university. One might be tempted to look upon the conflict as the early manifestations of the fight for academic freedom, but that would only lead us astray. The whole controversial issue was not yet born. The term "academic" was not colloquial. As we remember, the classical roots of European culture were just about to be discovered.

It seems that the Parisian masters fighting against the embarrassing supervision of the chancellor's local authority based their arguments upon the analogy between the masters' guilds and the secular guilds of merchants and artisans, an analogy which they tried to establish in spite of the clearly ecclesiastical character of the teachers' unions¹³.

And we all know the masters succeeded in liberating themselves from the inconvenient local hierarchy — otherwise the famous *Studium Generale* of Paris would not have been born. During the beginning of the 13th century the Papal Court, on several occasions, resolved that the Parisian guild of masters had a sole right to issue the license to teach "everywhere" (*licentia ubique docendi*).

It is hard to tell, whether it was the convincing force of the arguments or the influence of the Papal authority which brought about the decisive victory of the Parisian masters. Rashdall sums up the outcome of the Parisian conflict with the charming authority of the historian: "...papacy with an unerring instinct which marks its earlier history sided with the power of the future, the university of masters, against the efforts of the local hierarchy to keep education in leading-strings." (Rashdall, 1936 vol. 1: 308).

The means employed in the constitutional struggle of the Parisian teachers' guild conformed to the ethics and tactics of the day. The threat of excommunication frightened the insubordinate master of the 13th century probably even more than prospective unemployment (*Berufsverbot* or financial cuts) scares the average Ph.D of our days. The

threat of "cessatio" (dissolving the university and leaving the town) was a powerful response, relatively easy to set in motion for the universities still retaining their original migratory character. Carefully used, it might have had as spectacular an influence on the King's or Pope's decisions as the university revolt of 1968 had on the French domestic politics.

Instead of multiplying superfluous and obvious analogies we had better have a closer look at the concept of *licentia docendi*, the hard core of all the tribulations of the universities. *Licentia docendi* was an ingeniously simple device. "Teaching" cannot even be conceived without the complementary roles of the teacher and the pupil. And the rule: "No master without his master", or, as it was known throughout the ages, (*nullus assumi debet in magistrum, qui sub magistro non fuerit discipulus*), was the fundamental principle upon which all organized transmission of knowledge was built. It applied to the teaching of ideas as well as to the learning about things¹⁴.

When the time of the required training came to an end, the pupil could become the master. Every rite de passage contains an unavoidable portion of mystery, and every society celebrates it by some kind of festivity. The metamorphosis of a pupil into a master after the successful ordeal of examination and the inception (*inceptio*) of the new master into the guild was also properly jollyfied. It is generally assumed that *licentia docendi*, public authorization of the master's rights, grew out of the ceremonies following the inception¹⁵.

The fissure between the *inceptio*, which was the act of the professional acknowledgment of the master's dignity, and the *licentia*, which symbolized public authorization of the professional rights and duties was narrow. But it contained an explosive conceptual potential. It made it possible for us to shift, at will, the perspective from which we look upon the knowledge order: from the inside or from the outside¹⁶. Social energies released by the conflicting conceptualizations of the *licentia docendi* fuelled much of the development of early organizations of academic knowledge. Intellectual energies,

invested in the attempts to split the rational from the social element in the production of knowledge, weigh heavily on the research budgets of the social science laboratories all over the academic world.

4. The academic community

a. Members

The conceptions of the universities of Bologna and Paris as prototypes of academic organizations, are the products of the scholarly informed imagination of historians. The crudeness and the imperfections of those reconstructions are easily excused on account of the self-evident causes: missing and distorted historical sources. However, the ambiguity and the uncertainty which torment the results of contemporary explorations into the academic territories, are much more disturbing and not so easily excused.

The academic community refers to, as mentioned above, "the world of university scholarship". We already know from the Bible that taking a census of population belongs to the oldest prerequisites of Power: . . . "And all the World should be taxed". In the case of the academic population, this simple, albeit powerful exercise of authority proves somewhat inconsequential. I am not thinking about the unreliable numbers of scholars who flocked to Paris or to Bologna. I refer to the frustrating results of a recent census executed in the United States:

"In 1980 the United States National Center for Educational Statistics estimated that as many as 846.000 individuals were members of an institutional staff of an American institution of higher learning. That number could have been lowered or raised by a different set of *exclusions* and *inclusions*. Had census-takers seen fit to exclude graduate assistants and part-time faculty, their headcount would have dropped to around 460.000; had they included campus professionals who did not teach or do research and campus researchers who did not hold faculty appointments, their total would have soared to well above a million." (Metzger, 1987: 123).

The disparate estimates of numbers of scholars of Bologna and Paris in the Middle Ages are natural consequences of missing sources¹⁷. But the divergent results of the academic census, at the close of the 20th century, compel us to come up with some better excuse.

The academic community escapes a clear-cut description even on a dimension as basic as the size of its population. And the reasons for that are so embarrassingly simple that I have chosen the above quoted author to state them. Naturally, the computation of the size of the academic community varies according to the "*exclusions*" and the "*inclusions*" on which the whole operation is based. The exclusions and the inclusions and the numbers are the result of a compromise reached through long and complicated negotiations. And before the social science researchers have published their conflicting analyses, we do not even know for sure who the parties of the "round table" are.

The archetypal membership of the academic community was based, as we remember, on the juridical fiction which granted academic rights to scholars "in the pursuit of knowledge or advancement". The massive migrations of the early student populations were tactical moves in their struggle for academic privileges. And the transitory character of their social position only foreshadowed the problems of "status uncertainty" of present-day students.

The fictitiousness of student life, if adequately managed, leads, as we all know, to more or less comfortable careers in the learned professions. But it may also result, as the large bulk of social science literature tells us, in more or less temporary maladjustment: dropping-out, counterculture, militancy, laxity of sexual morals — just to mention a few of the perils threatening the academic oblates.

But what about the rest of the academic community, when parts of the academic population migrate or dissolve into anti-academic countercultures? When the students of Bologna left the city in order to improve their position upon their return — the teachers stayed behind. They were "real" citizens of Bologna and thus not allowed to teach in other

places. What did they do in the meantime? Probably they carried on with their research, preparing next season's lectures. Exactly as their contemporary counterparts do during vacation or on sabbatical leave. But research was not yet negotiated as an academic right/duty. Should they, or should they not, count as members of the community¹⁸.

The "artificial citizenship" of the students and the migratory character of the early universities prefigured the problems of the preparatory stages of the academic journey. The *licentia docendi* and its double nature foreshadowed the problems encountered upon its continuance.

Unfortunately, it is beyond my capability and beyond the space available to summarize the immense literature on the subjects of intellectuals in the university and in society. And it must suffice to point out that many of the problems later formulated by the Encyclopedists, the Zolas, the Gramscis, the Brechts, and the Gouldners, were in a nuclear form already present in the academic rite de passage.

The duality of the *licentia docendi* must, as Bourdieu expressed it, necessarily produce "bi-dimensional beings". The beings, who on one hand "must belong to an intellectually autonomous field", and "on the other must deploy their specific expertise and authority in their particular intellectual domain in a political activity outside it." (Bourdieu, 1989c: 99).

The antinomy between the academic autonomy and the external engagement of the academics was already present in the rudimentary forms of academic degrees. And it was the production of academic degrees that set in motion the wheels of the academic production of knowledge¹⁹.

Had the production of knowledge remained encloistered behind the walls of the monasteries, the role of the European intellectual would have had a different complexion. But, as we know, with the appearance of the universities, knowledge production went public. It became more secular and less particularistic than its monastic ancestor. Taking monastic orders equalled the inception to the teachers' guild, but it implied an oath of

loyalty to the particular "regula", and the oblates were supposed to stay within the confines of the "scriptorium" and carry on with their research. The secular masters, contrariwise, were, after having received their degree, allowed to go and teach "everywhere". And the double standards of loyalty, implied in the academic rite de passage, was a simple (socio)logical corollary of this early secularisation of the production of knowledge.

The spiritually corrupting effects of the monolithic monastic loyalty are well known, or can be easily imagined. The dual loyalty of the academic orders eased the burdens of the intellectual's role, mostly by improving its manoeuvrability. And the improved manoeuvrability of the university's intellectual makes the academic head-count and the ensuing head-hunt a somewhat strenuous adventure. The relative permeability of the university walls accounts for the appearance of a role logically absurd, but socially very important and quite common; the well known position of a "consecrated heretic"²⁰.

As we know, an academic heresy might consist in receiving, or applying for, citizenship from some community other than the one to which one is expected to belong. The heresy can be of a narrow disciplinary nature, of a local or international significance, it can be temporary, or of a more permanent character, it can be genuine or faked, real or imagined, etc. And if we remember that the loyalty of the intellectual citizens, by its very nature, is or should be transitory, the multiplicity of heresies, heretics, and heresiarchs is bewildering. Consecration of a heretic divides equally easily into several main forms: temporal, everlasting, accepted, controversial, during a lifetime, posthumous — just to mention the few best known.

The variety of the forms of academic heresy and of academic loyalty is the result not only of the bi-dimensionality of the university's intellectuals; it is also a product of past and present images of the conditions of academic life. The history of the past is cruder and simpler than the history of the present. The heretics of the past seem bigger and sound prouder than the more or less anonymous

contemporary rebels. For example, most of us are moved by the story of the archetypal academic heretic who became (posthumously and universally) accepted as a “patron saint” of the University of Paris. Abelard balanced dangerously on the edge of the worst of all heresies: he commenced his teachings without being properly inducted to the teachers’ guild by his master Guillaume de Champeaux (nobody remembers his name). He succeeded in breaking the wall of academic orthodoxy by the loving support of his students. The price which he paid with his body is well known. Less known is probably the price which he paid as a teacher. He died intellectually marginalized behind the walls of a monastery (see Rashdall, 1936 vol. I: 57, Pedersen, 1979: 135; Compayré, 1893).

The machinery of the consecration of a heresy and the dynamics of rejections of orthodox paradigms, which provide the other side of the *licentia docendi*, have always been troubled by a defective coordination between the relevant authorities. The procedures are not much improved in the age of mass-produced higher education. But much has changed. Everybody who is moved by the deeply affectionate struggles of the heresiarchs of the past, from Abelard to Wittgenstein, cannot ignore the impression that the daily grind of academic life has become less earnest and more dull. It seems that the writing of research proposals and the execution of projects within the stipulated confines of time and money has become the core activity of the academic bureaucracy. And it is difficult not to be stricken by the acuteness of the concept of a “de-eroticized” university, a concept describing contemporary academic life (Heinrich, 1989: 91—99).

Marginalization of huge numbers of academics into modern forms of transient academic citizenship (part-time, research only, teaching only, non-tenured, temporary/folding chairs, etc.) turns the academic census into a nightmare of computer work — without lowering the overhead costs of academic industry. Worst of all, the whole design seems to work counterproductively. The Eros, a constitutive element of knowledge production, shuns the

assembly line of mass-production. Few can take comfort from the fact that no rebel gets emasculated or burned although thousands get fired.

b. Territories

The question of membership of the academic community escapes a clear-cut answer, mostly because of the elusive character of the academic citizenship. It is also evident, by now, that the academic terminology, which has grown organically through the ages, is particularly well suited for all kinds of language games. Some of them are obviously trivial, but some have profound practical consequences. Thus, for example, if an obituary tells us that a recently deceased Nobel-Prize winner “was for many years a student of animal behaviour”, nobody will mistake him for a student of zoology who just did not manage to get a degree. Among the more consequential games, we can mention the halfhearted but relentless efforts of the partially united educational bureaucracies to equalize the equivocal terminology of the European university degrees²¹.

As the question of academic membership proves difficult, we may try to satisfy our curiosity by asking another simple question: Where do they live?, or, What are the boundaries of the academic territories?

Unfortunately, again we have to begin with terminology. But let us do it summarily. “UNIVERSITAS” was the term originally used to designate a corporation of any kind, and only slowly and accidentally it became associated with an educational institution. Meanwhile, “STUDIUM” was the name used for places where scholars’ corporations resided.

Already in the wake of the 14th century this precise but unostentatious name was subjected to important terminological extensions and corrections. The term *STUDIUM GENERALE*, with the usual qualification: “*ex consuetudine*”, became authorized as an appropriate name for the first division of academic places: Bologna, Paris, Montpellier, Oxford, and a few others. The precise list of the first class places

was never easy to fabricate. The line demarcating them from the second class places always went through territories where scholarship met politics.

The early emergent models proved an instantaneous success. No wonder that Popes and Kings hastily embarked upon the business of founding replicas of the original prototypes. This is easily understood, if we remember that the “investiture” conflict between the CHURCH and the STATE was defined (also) as a juridical problem — which called for strong and loyal juridical faculties. The utmost importance of the theological scholarship is equally evident. Strong, heretical movements in the 13th and 14th centuries seriously threatened the unity of the CHURCH. And the challenge was to be met by all means available. Scholarly arguments were deemed a necessary supplement to torture, slaughter, and the stakes of the Inquisition. But even the Popes could not make the “studia” emerge. The only thing they could do was to found them. And the scholars, who keep parts of the language-management in their custody, and who look after the appropriate terminology, have denied the qualification “ex consuetudine” (studium generale by custom) to the replicas of the original places. That is why the institutions of the second division are called plainly “studia generale”.

“Generale” originally referred to the fact that some of the places actually attracted scholars from outside the immediate region. But we can well understand the King of Poland or the King of Denmark, or of some other far away province, who sometime in the 15th or 16th century wanted to upgrade the educational qualifications of his staff and to foster a bureaucracy of a particular national breed. The usual strategy was to put some restrictions upon the educational migrations and to make the national educational facilities attractive. Restrictions took many forms. The attractiveness of the newly founded STUDIA was usually heightened by calling them GENERALE although they, at the beginning, only drew scholars from the restricted area. And should therefore, rightly have been called PARTICULARE. This manifestation of political

magic did not damage their reputation. On the contrary, many of them later became places of fame and importance far beyond the particular region.

The original sin of a presumptuous fiction, implied in the term studium generale, resulted in a multiplicity of interpretations of the word “generale”. One of the most popular misunderstandings concerned the scope of subjects and disciplines studied in those places. As we know, even Bologna was at the beginning just a law school, and Paris was, first of all, a school of theology. But the wrong interpretation of the term “generale”, together with the false etymology of “universitas”, created the stubborn myth of academic knowledge as covering the universe of human knowledge.

The universality and generality of academic knowledge, understood as an ideal challenge, is not to be laughed at, or to be ashamed of. But the means to this proud end should always be carefully examined. There is no doubt about the international composition of the student body of Bologna. The Studium Generale of Bologna drew scholars from all over Europe. But the perennial tension between the generality of knowledge and the particularity of its applications, was already there relieved to some extent by a division of the STUDIUM into the “nations”. As we know, the student body was split up into several areas of particular loyalties according to their countries of origin²².

Compared with the sophisticated divisions of contemporary academic communities, the principles dividing the archetypal academic territories into “home-lands” of primary loyalty were crude and simple. Lower faculty (arts), two or three higher faculties, and four or five “nations”, was all they had. But they formulated the problem of “universality”, vs “particularity”, of academic knowledge. Since then the shaping and the reshaping of the landscapes of knowledge has been the main form of development of academic organizations.

c. Activities

We have seen how difficult it is to describe the academic community in terms of its members as well as in terms of its territories. The reasons

for our distress might become somewhat clearer if we try to look at its activities.

The question: "what do they do?", has an amazingly simple answer which in all its simplicity was already given several hundred years ago. *Studium* was, as we remember, a generic name distinguishing these particular corporations from practitioners of other crafts and trades. The right name of the game was, from the very beginning, "study".

Compared with the neighbouring crafts and trades *study* vehemently resists attempts to square it into spatio-temporal confines. Although we all know that study is a collective enterprise, we worship individual results. Although it is contrary to the nature of intellectual work, we chop its whole into departments, faculties, disciplines, and the like. In spite of the fact that research and teaching are indivisible parts of a whole, we divide it into more and more perverted units.

The litany of mischiefs resulting from attempts to square the circle of knowledge is endless, but we must stop before everybody gets bored. Historical examples of strange effects resulting from stuffing and plugging intellectual work into obviously unfit forms are manifold, but they are easily outweighed by the contemporary efforts, which are virtually countless. It would be unfair to bring out the examples of academic administration that Jonathan Swift observed during his voyages to Laputa, partly because they are well-known, and partly because they were meant as a mockery.

But I cannot resist the temptation to illustrate the above mentioned mischiefs by a not very well known (?), although quite serious, piece of work. Last year (1989) OECD's Group of National Experts on Science and Technology produced the so called Frascati Manual bearing the proud title: *The Measurement of Scientific and Technical Activities. R&D Statistics and Output Measurements in the Higher Education Sector*.

Let us start with the Experts' definition of the "Sector":

"The sector is comprised of: All universities, colleges of technology, and other institutes of post-secondary education, whatever their

source of finance or legal status. It also includes stations and clinics operating under direct control of, or administered by, or associated with higher education establishments." (OECD, 1989: 11).

And the next sentence explains why the definition of the sector is so amazingly empty:

"Although policy makers in most countries are broadly interested in the same area of the research system, for historical and other reasons, it has been difficult to define a comparable Higher Education Sector which suits all countries".

Since the map of the Sector drawn by the Experts is completely unsuited for any serious travels into the academic territories, let us hope that they have something more meaningful to say about the nature of the activities they pretend to measure. But, unfortunately the description of the core activities, which they call R&D (research and development), is equally disappointing:

I quote from page 12 of the Manual:

R&D in the HE sector differs from other sectors in that:

1. It is an integrated part of the overall work-area of staff in the sector and is not a well-defined, a discrete activity;
2. The time available for R&D frequently varies according to the demands of education and other activities;
3. R&D is not necessarily carried out on the premises of the Higher Education institution;
4. R&D is not necessarily carried out within well-defined working hours;
5. Outputs of R&D are not immediately identifiable in terms of new products or systems but are vague and difficult to define, measure, and evaluate.

What they say is that research is an elusive activity which escapes definition in terms of time, space, or results. Later on the Experts say:

"Because the results of *research* feed into *teaching*, and information and experience gained in teaching can often result in an output to research, it is difficult to define where the education and training activities of Higher Education staff end and R&D activities begin,

and vice versa.”

You do not need to be an expert to come up with an opinion that the academic territories are as elusive as ever, and that it is impossible to tell what is research and what is teaching, or where the former ends and the latter begins. But one has to be an expert to produce a Frascati manual pretending to guide the impossible task of measuring study activities. And I am not going to weary you by citing Swiftian absurdities from the Manual; mostly because they are only too well-known to everybody who has, even just once, tried his hand at the tedious task of the administration of academic affairs, an activity which constitutes the backbone of the bureaucratic structure of academic life.

I would rather tell you why I have chosen to illustrate the dilemmas and the ambiguities of the academic production of knowledge largely by examples taken from the past.

The so-called historical perspective has obvious therapeutic effects. It gives a calmativie illusion of having reached some kind of “reality”. It makes it possible to toy with “archetypes”, “models”, “causes and effects” without a paralyzing fear of committing an idolatry or a deadly sin of “reification”. Moreover it relieves us, if only temporarily, from the strain due to attempts at uniting theory with praxis, or at combining morality and expediency — a strain which cannot be avoided when studying contemporary academic life. A journey to the academic places of the past is also more comfortable. The mass of recent research into the nature of the academic production of knowledge is a trackless mire of fashionable theories and mindless measurements, a quite natural condition for a field or scholarship before the disciplinary and other authorities have decided on which tracks should be paved. The historical landscapes are, on the contrary, fully equipped with a network of pathways built upon more or less firmly stamped facts.

The comforts and pleasures of the historical travels have, however, an apposite price. The places we reach, at the end of our journey, are not the real ones. They are the artefacts, the products of academic craftsmanship.

5. PAST and FUTURE

Journeys into the academic territories take us not only to historical sites of academic knowledge or to their contemporary replicas; it is equally possible to purchase, in any well-assorted academic bookstore, a travel book describing a voyage to the future landscapes of knowledge. All travel books combine recreational purposes with educational ones.

The educational benefits usually consist in a more or less repetitive demonstration of the already known sights and vistas of academic places, which gives us the pleasure of recognition. The purely recreational purposes of travels into the future divide into two main categories: the apocalyptic thrill, and the homiletic confirmation.

The educational merits of both pleasures are equally obvious: the apocalyptic vision tells us that the coming fall of the Academic Society can only be averted if we go back to the good old times. The homiletic tour reassures us that the radiant future of the Knowledge Society is just around the corner, and that the academics of all countries must stay united.

The first category is usually guided by conservative liberals, while the second is often led by liberal conservatives. As we all know the tours into the present/future ruins of the academic civilization were particularly popular in the early 1970's, when the Academy was judged to be in a state of “Revolution”, “Degradation”, or “Fall” — just to mention few of the many well known book titles²³. The Academy survived the 60's and the 70's, but in a very bad shape.

Towards the end of the eighties (1987) a travel book by Allan Bloom acquired great publicity. He presented the apocalyptic vision of *The Closing of the American Mind*, subtitled: *How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students*. The tour was sponsored by Simon & Schuster of New York. If you want to know how, read the book and shiver. I am not quite sure whether Bloom's tour leads us chiefly through the arid academic landscapes of the near past, or whether it prefigures the coming of the post-intellectual society. The disasters

envisaged by Bloom seem to be of a somewhat locally restricted interest (students' souls at the US east-coast), and he does not take us far enough either into the past, or into the future. Therefore, I would suggest another trip, one which is more impressive on both dimensions.

Daniel Bell's tour into the radiant future of the Post-industrial Society, a masterpiece of social-science-fiction, could be purchased already in the early seventies (Bell, 1973). Although the author calls the book *A Venture in Social Forecasting*, it was, in 1973 when it appeared, a real adventure, and a daring one. Only five years after the invasion of Czechoslovakia, few years after the Cuban crisis, in the midst of the War in Vietnam, it called for an outstanding imagination to envisage the Eastern and the Western Empires merging into a post-industrial society.

Although both the Western and the Eastern bureaucracies made some use of expert knowledge, mostly in the industrial-military complexes of their blocks, the academic societies of both Empires were seriously troubled. The academic places in the West had just lost much of their earlier attraction as an investment object, mostly because of their unreliable rebelliousness and the more and more uncertain benefits of education. The academic places in the East seemed completely corrupted by decades of acquiescence and servility. In spite of all that, Bell was able to see through the clouds of the academic frustrations of the day and catch sight of a rainbow which he called "an axial principle" of the Coming Post-Industrial Society.

The vision of the post-industrial society in its totality is bigger (more than 500 pages) and more fascinating than most other sights fabricated by the academic disneylands. It is almost a Platonic view. But being a liberal, Daniel Bell does not speak about the philosopher-kings, he constructs the "class of knowledge workers — the educated professional elite, the increasingly central or directing group" (Bell, 1973: ch.iv.). The class of "knowledge workers" will rise to power because the post-industrial society is organized along its "axial principle" which is the codification of theoretical knowledge. The

higher education system is the "axial structure" and naturally the university is the "axial institution" of modern society.

It is impossible to convey the whole message implied in this academic *tour de force* by these brief quotations. It is equally difficult to describe all the beauties of the social universe which turns around the axis of knowledge under the gentle supervision of the knowledge workers. And I am not going to do that. Read the book, and have your dream fancies confirmed.

Instead, I had better explain why I have labelled Bell's trunk "liberal conservative". The liberal element is, I admit, a weak one. I use the term as a logogram referring to the popular liberal desire to let dreams come true, and to see the MIGHT and the RIGHT peacefully united at society's top. The conservative element comes not only from the Platonic vein of his vision, but first of all, from the fact that he, consciously or not, belabours one of the oldest theories concerning the place of the University in society.

The readers, if there are any left, will remember that we have commenced our travel through the academic fields in the distant past of the 12th century Renaissance. The theory of the State was then as simple as the states themselves. Parliaments were just about to emerge, but the political parties were not yet born. Power, the organizing principle of social life, ruled with all its medieval brutality. But even then Power was not completely naked. The assumed simplicity of the society accounts for the coarseness of its theoretical clothings.

One of the oldest theories of the Christian Society has been the renowned doctrine of the Two Swords authorized by Pope Gelasius already in 494. (*Duo quippe sunt, quibus principaliter mundus hic regitur, auctoritas sacrata pontificum et regalis potestas*) (Grundman, 1951). When, exactly, this simple bi-dimensionality of REGNUM and SACERDOTIUM became inadequate to the more educated minds, nobody can tell. Anyhow, some of the oldest attempts to improve its rudeness can be traced back to the 13th century.

I have praised Daniel Bell's imagination which sustains the magnificent structure of the

Knowledge Society. And I must say, that Alexander von Roes, an undeservedly forgotten theoretician from the 13th century, should be equally praised. Not only for his imagination, but also for a, relatively speaking, greater courage. He attempted to improve the antiquated Gelasian doctrine by inserting a Third Power between the Two already known and accepted ones. He says in his paper (parchment?) from 1281:

“SACERDOTIUM, IMPERIUM, STUDIUM are . . . the three powers (virtues) by whose harmonious cooperation the life and health of Christendom are sustained” (Rashdall, 1936, vol. 1: 2).

Pedants will say: the theory lacked originality and novelty, it was simply an application of the medieval custom of packaging all important things in trios. And I would answer: show me, please, an absolutely original social theory. Even Bell's Knowledge Society has a prodigious ancestry. And I insist that it required imagination to see the disorderly STUDIA of the 13th century as a future Third Power. And we must admire, even more, the courage which enabled him to see through the smokes of the Inquisition and catch sight of the rising power of Knowledge.

Those of you who do not enjoy academic vanity tours to imagined macro-worlds, will possibly find some charm in a little and somewhat forgotten tourist guide to the inner world of academic knowledge. F. M. Cornford's book entitled: *Microcosmographia Academica* ends as follows:

“. . . that other world, within the microcosm, the silent, reasonable world, where the only action is thought, and thought is free from fear. If you go back now, keeping just enough bitterness to put a pleasant edge on your conversation, and just enough wordly wisdom to save other people's toes, you will find yourself in the best of all company — the company of clean, humorous intellect; and if you have a spark of imagination and try very hard to remember what it was like to be young, there is no reason why your brains should ever get woolly, or anyone should wish you out of the way” (Cornford, 1949: 24).

NOTES

1. Naturally, Milton was not the first to use the word “academe”, in English. I mention him because he is probably the best known early user of the word. For other pioneers, please consult your copy of The Oxford English Dictionary. The use of the term “Academy” is, according to the same edition of the Dictionary, a multivocal one. I quote *the two* of the most common uses of the term:

“A place where the arts and sciences are thought; an institution for the study of higher learning in the general sense including a university, but in a popular usage restricted to an *educational* institution claiming to hold a rank between a university or a college and a school. In England the word has been *abused*, and is now in *discredit* in this sense”. (italics mine)

As we all know, the widespread use of the term “academy” designating an educational institution goes back to the 17th and 18th centuries when the European universities fell into such a deep discredit that many felt it necessary to look for another name for them. The history of the uses and abuses of both terms reflects the national peculiarities of educational institutions and is too broad a topic for a footnote. By now, in most European countries “Academy”, as an educational institution, ranks below a University. But it equals (at least) the university in the second meaning of the term:

“A society or institution for the *cultivation and promotion* of literature, of arts and sciences or of some particular art or science, as The French Academy. . .”

Again, as we all know, the East-European countries copied (from the early 1950's) the Soviet academy-model. The academy-sector in these countries comprised “institutions for the cultivation and promotion” of the main branches of knowledge and was an important part of the national R&D systems and, therefore, an object of special care and close supervision by the political authorities. The fall of the political structures, recently experienced in the same parts of Europe, resulted in a more or less thorough *discredit* of the term and the *dismantling* of the sector itself. In Poland, for instance, the PAN (Polish Academy of Science) was dissolved at the beginning of the year 1990. It is impossible to tell when, if ever, and under what name the discredited structure will be revived.

2. “The myth which attributes the foundation of the University of Paris to Charles the Great is one which ought long since to have ceased to be mentioned by serious historians even for the purpose of refutation” (Rashdall, 1936, vol. 1: 271).
3. Carl Friederich von Savigny's: *Geschichte des Römischen Rechts im Mittelalter* from 1834 is usually acknowledged as a beginning of the serious research on the history of the universities. He is also the “author” of a “romantic” version of the university's origin, the version which, under the influence of Schleiermacher's philosophy, saw the appearance of the university-institution as a result of the “innate thirst for knowledge”.

Father Peter Denifle in his *Entstehung der Universitäten des Mittelalters bis 1400*, from 1885, underlines the role of a Papal or Royal will (Brief) for the legality of the early universities. This view was

violently rebutted by the third great man in this branch of scholarship, Georg Kaufmann, the author of the equally well-known *Geschichte der Deutschen Universitäten*, from 1888.

Rashdall regrets this unnecessarily violent debate between his predecessors and somewhat phlegmatically explains:

The notion that the bull is necessary for the existence of the studium generale appears in the second half of the 13th century when the two great 'world powers' of Europe conceived the idea of creating a school which was to be placed by an *exercise of authority* on a level with the great European centers of education" (Rashdall, 1936, vol. I: 8). (italics mine)

The idea which the two great powers conceived had led to the founding of the Studium Generale at Naples in 1224 by Emperor Frederic II, while Pope Gregory IX did the same thing at Toulouse in 1229.

"Those foundations would appear to have suggested the idea that the creation of new studia was one of the papal and imperial prerogatives, like power of creating notarius public" (Rashdall, 1936, vol. I: 22).

The founding of the first-mentioned institution was "the attempt to create a powerful rival to the great Italian Law-School" the studium generale of Bologna. Its founder "the highly cultivated Emperor Frederic II" was "the friend of learning, the enemy of civic liberty, the mortal enemy of the Papal See" (Rashdall, 1936, vol. II: 22). "The Studium was a purely artificial creation, not the outcome of any spontaneous or genuine educational movement." "The University of Naples was the creation of despotism", and it probably "did not outlive its founder" (Rashdall, 1936, vol. II: 24 & 25).

"The foundation of the University of Toulouse is an event of very considerable importance in the history of the medieval university-system". "A very peculiar combination of circumstances suggested to the Pope the idea of reproducing artificially in the city of Toulouse the institution or system of institutions which had spontaneously developed themselves at Paris and Oxford", and this led to "the theory that a studium generale could only be founded by the Pope or his rival in the government of the medieval world-state, the Holy Roman Emperor" (Rashdall, vol. II: 161).

The "peculiar combination of circumstances" refers mostly to the heretical movements which were particularly strong in the territories of Southern France where they forcefully challenged the Papal authority. No wonder that "the University was intended as a sort of spiritual garrison in the heart of the conquered land of heresy" (ibid. p. 162). "It was determined to build up a seminary of ecclesiastical learning upon the ruins of the vernacular and secular culture of Languedoc" (ibid. p. 162).

The idea of sending Parisian theologians to "extirpate heresy in Languedoc" was facilitated by the fact that "the University of Paris had just decreed a dispersion in consequence of the great dispute with the burghers. There was therefore no difficulty about attracting unemphored professors to Toulouse; and Parisian scholars would naturally follow the Parisian masters" (ibid. p. 163).

4. It seems to have been difficult for the historians to accept the idea that the universities emerged as a

haphazard result of many factors without drawing some of them into the foreground. Von Savigny has chosen the already mentioned "inneres Bedürfnis" while Denifle prefers Papal or Royal will as a "causa efficiens". Even Rashdall did not fully manage to escape the trap of more or less mystical causes: He says: "Like Papacy and the Empire, the University is an institution which owes not merely its primitive form and traditions, but its very existence to a combination of accidental circumstances; and its origins can only be understood by reference to those circumstances."

However, a few lines later he adds: "The power of embodying its ideals in institutions was the peculiar genius of the medieval mind, as its most conspicuous defect lay in the corresponding tendency to materialize them" (Rashdall, 1936, vol. I: 3).

And, as if the medieval genius was not enough, he introduces also an *instinct*: "They (the universities) were spontaneous products of that instinct of associations which swept like a great wave over the towns of Europe in the course of the eleventh and twelfth centuries" (ibid. p. 15). (all italics mine)

5. The educational terminology abounds with national idiosyncratic peculiarities. The author of the editorial is partially right in calling the low prestige associated with the "Polytechnics" a British quirk.

On the Continent the name "polytechnic" is worn quite willingly by the most prestigious institutions of higher learning. Partly because the scientification of the academic production of knowledge which took place from the beginning of the 19th century had followed different routes in different parts of Europe. See e.g. a survey article by Simon Schwartzman (Schwartzman, 1984).

The difference in prestige attached to the term is in certain respects greatest in the case of the two countries united by the Tunnel. In England the name Polytechnic became accidentally associated with those institutions of higher learning which from the 1960's were designed to shield the elite universities against the consequences of the massification of higher education in the post-Robbins era.

In France L'Ecole Polytechnique belongs to the system of Grandes Ecoles which was purposefully established in the post-revolutionary era as a substitute for the universities as the producer of a modern elite since the universities had failed to adjust. Most of the European countries followed the "French model", and the continental "technical universities" or "polytechnical schools" are certainly not ashamed of their names.

The most thorough study (I know of) of the French case is Pierre Bourdieu's recent monograph (Bourdieu, 1989a).

6. Rashdall expresses it as follows: "Another inveterate prejudice of the human mind is the disposition to ascribe the origination of a great institution to a great man. Greek cities ascribed their origin to an eponymous hero; and, if tradition did not supply them with a name for him, they invented one" (Rashdall, 1936, vol. I: 142).

Neither Irenerius nor Abelard are inventions, they were influential figures of their time. "But the greatest of teachers is unable to raise a school even to temporary, much less to permanent, renown unless he appears at the right place and at the right moment — unless a concurrence of favourable circumstances

second the personal attraction of the individual intellect" (ibid. p. 115).

A very moving description of the role of Abelard as the "founder" of the University of Paris is to be found in the book of Gabriel Compayré (Compayré, 1893).

7. "The student-universities represent an attempt on the part of such men to create for themselves an artificial citizenship in place of the natural citizenship which they had temporarily renounced in the pursuit of knowledge or advancement; and the great importance of a STUDIUM to the commercial welfare of the city in which it was situated may explain the ultimate willingness of the municipalities — though the concession was not made without a struggle — to recognize these student-communities" (Rashdall, 1936, vol. I: 151).
8. Although the original universities have not been born on a particular date, it is probably the result of another "prejudice of human mind" (see above note 6) to invent a date in order to make it possible to celebrate a birth-day party. The existence of the University of Bologna is confirmed by several sources from sometime during the second half of the twelfth century. The 1158 charter of Emperor Barbarossa is one of the oldest extant documents. In 1888 the Bologna *octocentenary* was a great festival of the European academic community. The nine hundred years' birth-day party was celebrated in 1988 with even greater pomp as the European Common Market had united the European academic community to an extent not seen since the days of Emperor Barbarossa. And nobody was disturbed by the arbitrariness of 1088 as the birth date of the jubilarian.
9. See Pedersen (1979: 142).
A reconstruction of the actual status and the scope of the privileges, once granted to the student communities requires careful maneuvers between the Scylla of the incomprehensibility of perished mentalities, and the Charybdis of anachronistic analogies.

Many privileges granted to scholars (e.g. exemption from lay jurisdiction) were based on their status as *clerics*. The positions of a *cleric*, a *scholar*, a *student* were probably never entirely unambiguous. And the thousands of years which had passed since they had emerged did not make the attempt to delineate their conceptual boundaries any easier. A cleric could enjoy a membership of the ecclesiastical society to a lesser or greater extent, exactly as a student or a scholar could have been more or less intimately associated with the community of scholars (by taking higher church orders or by receiving higher academic degrees). Sometimes "cleric" meant the same as "student", sometimes the difference was conspicuous. The sources intermingle the terms not least because it was once very easy for a student to obtain the status of a cleric: "Any student could become a clerk and so acquire the immunities of an ecclesiastic by merely receiving the tonsure from a bishop, and adopting the clerical dress" (Rashdall, 1936, vol. I: 181). . . . "The understanding of the medieval conception of *clericatus* is of great importance in the appreciation of the relations between the universities and the church." (Rashdall, *ibid.*)

For a treatment of the concept of clerics in the terms of Weber/Jaspers inspired sociology of knowledge, see e.g. Shmuel N. Eisenstadt (Eisenstadt, 1982), and the continuation of the theme in *Knowl-*

edge and Society: Studies in the sociology of cul-ture past and present, vol. 7 (1988), especially Eisenstadt's survey essay (Eisenstadt, 1989).

10. Directly inspired by Bruno Latour (Latour, 1989).
11. A comprehensive review of the mentioned positions can be found in a recent book by James Robert Brown (Brown, 1989). Those who do not agree with the author's rationalist bent can still use his loyal summaries of the friends' and foes' points of view, and a rich bibliography which covers the last 40 years of the debate going back to Plato's and Protagora's days.
12. Olaf Pedersen sees Charlemagne's initiatives, which resulted in a network of cathedral schools, as the first (unwitting) attempt in Europe, to realize the old Platonic ideals about the educational responsibility of the State (Pedersen, 1979: 78).
13. The academic knowledge order, embodied in the masters' guild, developed slowly and gradually from within the ecclesiastical orders. The process of coalescence of the society of scholars into units, different, and to some extent independent, from its ecclesiastical progenitorship was a long chain of turbulent and stormy conflicts of interests. In the struggle against the chancellor's supervision Papacy sided with the masters' guild. See (Rashdall, 1936, vol. I: 308).

In the protracted conflict with the mendicants Papacy sided against the masters' guild settling the limits of scholars' autonomy from the Papal supervision.

Since the mendicant-affair prefigures some of the most important issues in the academic production of knowledge, I must say a few words about it.

At the beginning of the 13th century the monolithic orthodox ideology of the Church was deeply shaken by the strong popular support given to competing heretical heterodoxies. The emergent monastic preaching movements (Franciscans and Dominicans) presented a challenge to the petrified ecclesiastical bureaucracy, but they eagerly defended the purity of the Faith. Mendicants also presented a challenge to the Parisian guild of the theologians. They (especially the Dominicans) insisted on combining the acute and thorough scholastic training at the university with equally important praxis of preaching among the infidels and of carrying out the practical duties of the inquisitors. In this situation Papacy felt compelled to support the overzealous mendicants and adopt them as an intellectual spearhead of the Inquisition.

The appearance of the mendicants at Paris challenged the whole concept of the guild. They came to Paris in order to get intellectual nourishment for their ideological engagement which they intended to deploy outside the academic field (burning heretics in Languedoc). At the same time they were *regular* clerics and as such already bound by the oath of loyalty to the Dominican or Franciscan rule (*regula*). Masters of the Parisian guild were secular clerics, and as we remember, an oath of loyalty to the statutes of the university was a *conditio sine qua non* of receiving an academic degree (*licentia docendi*). "The oath of obedience to the statutes was, to an extent which is hard for us to realize, a matter of vital importance to the universities. The whole power over their members, their very existence depended upon the sanction of this oath" (Rashdall, 1936, vol. I: 379). Since the *bi-dimensional* role of the university

intellectual (see Bourdieu, 1989c) had not yet developed, the clash between the two ecclesiastical orders was unavoidable. As mentioned before, the Papacy sided with the regular clergy. The Parisian scholars boycotted the regular masters declining the loyalty oath. The Papal See excommunicated the Parisian doctors, who in turn retaliated by dissolving the University. Some of the unemployed Parisian masters got salaried chairs at the newly founded University of Toulouse (See above, note 3).

And it did not help the masters' cause that they "in the controversy with the mendicants denied the right of the Pope to meddle with the university, qua university, at all." (Rashdall, *ibid.* p. 302). The Pope suppressed the ancient tradition of freedom to form autonomous associations with their own laws and statuses supporting the mendicants' right to decline the loyalty oath.

For the role of the mendicants in the Inquisition see the marvellous work of Henry Charles Lee (Lee, 1887).

14. Quoted after Pierre Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 1988: 95). By a strange coincidence, I quote only twice from the work which influenced the whole structure of the present essay the most. For those who know the work of Bourdieu, my debts are obvious and might even seem inadequately reimbursed. Those who do not know *Homo Academicus*, "the surprising journey through the intricate landscape of academia in France", would not profit much from a more ostentatious acknowledgment of my debts. They would profit much more from studying the "book for burning" of this outstanding French mandarin, if possible, after having read the interview with the author himself (Bourdieu, 1989b).
15. "Gradually, and probably by imperceptible steps, the ceremony passed from a mere jollification or exhibition of good-fellowship into the solemn and formal admission of a new master into an organized and ultimately all-powerful corporation of teachers" (Rashdall, 1936, vol. I: 286).
16. Refers to Bruno Latour: *Insiders & Outsiders in the sociology of science; or how can we foster agnosticism* (Latour, 1981). Latour calls his article also "a seven-stage journey through the looking glass of science", alluding to the, at least, seven degrees of "insideness" which is usually applied in the studies of the fields of knowledge.
17. Rashdall reduces the medieval estimates counting the number of students of the early universities in tens of thousands to: 6—7 thousands at the most in Paris and slightly more in Bologna. (Rashdall, 1936, vol. III: ch. 13).
18. Jurists of Bologna were predominantly citizens of the town. They were organized in guilds known as *colleges*.
Student guilds known as universities "succeeded in getting into their own hands the real control of the STUDIUM in most of those matters which were at Paris settled by the masters alone" (Rashdall, 1936, vol. I: 148).
"But doctoral guilds retained", of course, "the indefeasible right which every professional guild possessed of examining into the qualifications of candidates to the profession" (Rashdall, 1936, vol. I: 149).
Doctors were contractually obliged not to leave the town for a stipulated period of time. (Rashdall, 1936, vol. I: 169ff).
19. "The right to the licence once established, there was nothing to prevent the multiplication of masters. . .". "Wherever scholars congregated round some famous teacher, the number would increase of those who were ambitious of becoming teachers themselves and, wherever teachers multiplied, there naturally in that age of associations grew up certain professional customs and unwritten laws which in some cases ere long crystallized into statuses of an organized guild or university" (Rashdall, 1936, vol. I: 283).
20. The term is borrowed from section 4 of chapter 3 entitled: Types of capital and forms of power (Bourdieu, 1988).
21. Gabriel Compayré has a short, but very informative chapter on the history of academic degrees (Compayré, 1893: ch. iv).
He says: ". . . if the objections made by those who protest against the unreasonableness of competitions and the infinite variety of diplomas are well founded, it is the Middle Ages which must be held responsible, for they were the first culprits; it is the universities of the Middle Ages which must be blamed, for they were the inventors of examinations and degrees" (Compayré, 1893: 139). Then he continues with an analysis of the origins, development, and change of the three main university degrees: *bachelorship*, *licentiaship*, and *mastership/doctorship*.
Examples of the contemporary problems of multilateral or bilateral recognition of the university degrees are legio. The following titles are typical: *World guide to higher education: a comparative survey of systems, degrees and qualifications*. UNESCO. New York: Unipub, 1982 (Studies on the evaluation of qualifications at the higher education level)
Academic recognition of diplomas in the European Community. Present state and prospects. Edwin H. Cox, EC Commission. Luxemburg, 1979.
22. Originally there were four "national" universities: Lombards, Ultramontanes, Tuscans, and Romans which from the middle of the 13th century were united into the two universitates: a *universitas citramontanorum* and a *universitas ultramontanorum*. (Rashdall, 1936, vol. I: 154—156).
The university of Paris, in the 13th century, consisted of four nations: the French, the Normans, the Picards, and the English (including the Germans and all the inhabitants of the north and east of Europe). (Rashdall, 1936, vol. I: 299—320).
23. I have the following titles in mind: *The academic revolution*, Christopher Jencks & David Riesman, N.Y., 1969, *The degradation of the academic dogma*, Robert Nisbet, N.Y., 1971, and *The fall of the American university*, Adam Ulam, London, 1972.

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