



The Post-entrepreneurial University: The Case for Resilience in Higher Education

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INTRODUCTION

Historically speaking, universities have been found to be highly resilient organizational forms. Since their inception in Europe in the middle ages, they have been able to adopt new functions, structures and values while retaining their essence and identity (Scott, 2006). The most important transformative turn occurred in the mid-nineteenth century, with the so-called Humboldtian revolutions, when research emerged as a core mission alongside academic autonomy as a cherished value (Nybom, 2003). In many European countries, the post-WWII period assisted in the rise of different types of higher education institutions (HEIs) with an explicit mandate to promote national and regional economic development, which

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provide the backbone for the establishment of binary higher education (HE) systems. More recently (last two decades or so), and as a result of an increasingly competitive environment (for students, staff, funding and prestige), both domestic and global, entrepreneurialism, and its emphasis on the ‘market’, has emerged as a feature of modern HEIs and systems alike (Alajoutsijärvi et al., 2021). As a means of responding to these (and other) external imperatives, universities and other types of HEIs are nowadays characterized by a multitude of missions, some of which are at odds or in tension with one another (Castells, 2001), leading some to suggest that such tasks are impossible to accomplish (Enders & Boer, 2009).

Few studies to date have taken stock of the distinct and incompatible ways in which the notion of the entrepreneurial university has developed, and how that affects its ability to incorporate other concepts into its model. Specifically, we are interested in the way the concept of resilience, broadly defined as the ability to adapt to changing circumstances while retaining its core attributes or essence (Walker & Salt, 2006), can be articulated to that of the entrepreneurial university. We ask in this chapter: to what extent are entrepreneurial universities likely to be resilient? In order to address this question, we first provide conceptual clarity by revisiting the seminal works of two scholars who have underpinned scholarly and policy debates in the last two decades, resulting in what we argue are two distinct schools of thought on the entrepreneurial university as an organizational archetype. In doing so, we investigate how the rise of New Public Management (NPM) in Europe in the late 1990s and early 2000s co-opted and reframed the concept of the entrepreneurial university in ways that make it incompatible with resilience thinking. We do this by, in the second part, laying out three tensions (or paradoxes) that emerge from this NPM-inflected version of the entrepreneurial university. We show how these are rooted in an ideational interpretation of the concepts of efficiency, competition, and diversity. Finally, by tying back into ‘lost’ elements of sociological conceptions of entrepreneurialism in HE, we demonstrate how resilience can potentially resolve the tensions identified in what we term a post-entrepreneurial model of the university.

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL UNIVERSITY: TRACING THE ORIGINS OF A (MISUNDERSTOOD) IDEA

The existing literature on the topic points to two relatively distinct conceptions of entrepreneurialism in HE. These conceptions are aligned

with two diverging schools of thought with disciplinary and normative undertones, one *sociological* stressing the importance of adaptation and change for the public good and the unique features of universities as fiduciary institutions, and the other *economic*, centred on the idea that competition and markets are the most efficient and sustainable ways to organize activities and the notion of universities as quasi-firms. Having presented the two schools, we go on to show how the entrepreneurial university concept has been extrinsically aligned with a NPM policy regime that emphasizes efficiency and competition and has been used to underpin a bold reform agenda aimed at the modernization of European HE systems and institutions.

The Sociological School

Since its inception in the 1970s, the sociological perspective's point of departure has been a recognition of the importance of HE as a public good and the effects accrued from the massification of HE systems after WWII. Inspired by the work of Israeli sociologist Joseph Ben David, it paid attention to comparative issues pertaining to structural differences among national HE systems, with an emphasis on flexibility, innovation and change (Clark, 1973, p. 6). Following the seminal work of Jencks and Riesman (1968), the sociological perspective interpreted broader system-wide developments in the 1970s as reflecting the rising power and influence of (North American) scholars and scientists as the fundamental 'academic revolution' of the time (Clark, 1973, p. 5). Further, the sociological perspective identified the meso level of the HE organizations (themselves rooted in national systems of HE) as the primary unit of analysis (p. 7). Burton Clark, as a principle voice in this tradition, was immensely concerned with the risk of co-optation by non-educational interests and agendas, particularly managerial and public policy ones.

Clark's (1983) seminal work *The higher education system: academic organization in cross-national perspective* sheds light on the building blocks that characterize HE as organizations by pointing to three key elements: (a) the fragmented nature ('loose web') of academic organizations substantiated around loose coupling among their various units and knowledge domains [what might also be termed the 'ambiguity of structure' (Pinheiro, 2012)]; (b) the role of academic and disciplinary norms and values ('beliefs') as mediating systems between societal demands and university responses; and (c) the balkanized system of authority from the

lowest level of the departmental unit up to the national government with the ‘middle-structure’ of the central administration caught in between. Finally, Clark’s work pointed to the process of adaptation and change within HE systems by referring to natural systems’ evolution:

[T]he fundamental adaptive mechanism of universities and larger academic systems is the capacity to add and subtract fields of knowledge and related units without disturbing all the others [...] Adaptability, in short, lies first in the internal variety of amalgamated, conglomerated organization. (Clark, 1983, pp. 186–187)

In the 1990s, the emergence of the first studies focusing on university crisis and change in Europe and the importance attributed to strategic planning (Maassen & Potman, 1990) propelled Clark to pay close attention to the processes of change and adaptation within the context of an entrepreneurial framework (Clark, 1998, 2004). Underpinning Clark’s notion of entrepreneurialism in HE are three critical elements: *autonomy*, *differentiation* and the active role played by the *academic heartland*.

A growing number of entrepreneurial universities now embody a new option for institutional self-reliance. In their more active autonomy, they marry collegiality to change as well as to the status quo... They know the difference between a university and a business firm. They also know that a complex university has many ‘souls’, some righteous others unrighteous. (Clark, 2004, p. 7)

For Clark, the quest for self-reliance starts with the search for opportunities to foster institutional differentiation (niche seeking) in the larger HE ecosystem. ‘Greater differentiation, rather than simple imitation, becomes a virtual requirement. And standing still becomes a means of falling behind’ (p. 161). Finally, Clark’s case studies revealed the importance of the change processes initiated by or supported across departmental units while acknowledging different postures across disciplinary fields when it comes to embracing ‘the market’ and/or change more generally: ‘Science and technology departments commonly become entrepreneurial first. Social sciences departments, aside from economics and business, find the shift more difficult and lag behind... Uneven adoption of new ways should be expected’ (p. 88). In short, the sociological perspective on entrepreneurialism in HE stresses the importance of the public good, approaches HE institutions as complex systems, and focuses

on evolutionary processes of renewal and change with the aim of fostering adaptation and differentiation.

The Innovation School

The second dominant perspective in the literature on the entrepreneurial university emerged in the early 1980s through the work of Henry Etzkowitz, a sociologist by training, but a scholar of innovation studies then based at a UK business school. Etzkowitz's focus was centred on the rise of 'entrepreneurial science' and its direct contribution to economic growth and innovation, which he termed the 'second academic revolution,' following the institutionalization of research as a core university activity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Etzkowitz & Webster, 1998, 2001). According to this perspective, change is initiated not from the inside of the organization but from the outside, with inner dynamics centred on the protection of the status quo:

Change in academia has always been notoriously slow when driven from within. As a conservative institution of medieval origins the university is always fearful of change, especially of revisions of academic norms that appear to be initiated by forces outside of the academy. (Etzkowitz & Webster, 1998, p. 21)

For Etzkowitz, this external pressure is an opportunity for change, and the author portrayed a more instrumentalist view of the university that pays almost exclusive attention to the research function and its interface with the outside world, most notably firms in the context of innovation and technology transfers. It conceives of research groups as 'quasi-firms' (Etzkowitz, 1983, 2003) that seek and secure funding that enables them to be globally competitive and thus thrive in a market economy. In short, the innovation perspective on entrepreneurialism in HE stresses the importance of external dynamics and events and the need to foster competitiveness through the infusion or institutionalization of a market-like ethos across the inner fabric of universities.

The entrepreneurial university thus has interface capabilities such as liaison and transfer offices and incubator facilities to manage and market knowledge produced in the university at several levels, from specific pieces of

protected intellectual property to technology embodied in a firm and propelled by an entrepreneur. (Etzkowitz, 2003, p. 113)

As far as governmental policy is concerned, the innovation perspective has been rather salient in providing a template for science and innovation policy throughout the world, most notably in Europe in light of the Lisbon Agenda (Pinheiro, 2015), but also elsewhere (Slaughter & Cantwell, 2012). It has done so through the concept of the ‘triple helix’, where university, industry and government articulate strategic actions for promoting innovation and economic growth at the national, regional and local levels (Etzkowitz, 2008; Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000). It has also melded with NPM ideas and discourses which began gaining prominence in the mid-1990.

REFRAMING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL UNIVERSITY THROUGH THE PRISM OF NPM

In this section, we show how the ideas of NPM align with those of the entrepreneurial university. Given that both concepts (NPM and the entrepreneurial university) were developing hegemonic positions in their relative fields at roughly the same time in the mid- to late 1990s and that influential international actors, such as the OECD, were engaged in championing both, some degree of mutual influence can be expected. OECD became the key player in popularizing NPM through its Public Management Committee (PUMA), and the 1995 report *Governance in Transition* (OECD, 1995), which was followed by several policy briefs and another report in 2005, *Modernizing Governance: The way forward* (Pal, 2012). The OECD likewise was quick to pick up on the entrepreneurial university concept and in the fall of 2000, through its Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education, organized a major conference (Clark, 2004) followed by a journal volume on the topic (OECD, 2005). The OECD’s interest is thus not merely coincidental but based on many overlapping and intersecting ideas in the discourses that surround those two concepts.

NPM is a notoriously difficult concept to precisely pin down (Barzelay, 2001; Gruening, 2001); however, there are some agreed upon ideational underpinnings that are common to most understandings. These trace back to Christopher Hood’s (1991) seminal paper that identifies the

freedom to independently manage and the use of markets as core principles for allowing public administration to become more ‘business-like’. Further research specifies more concretely three concepts: disaggregation (distinct actors with a capacity to act), competition (a market-based landscape) and incentivization (a reason to act or change) (Dunleavy et al., 2006, see also Diefenbach, 2009; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). In short, NPM entails a distinction between actors (with autonomy) and landscapes (with market-based competition) that is critical for further discussion.

Across Europe, there are many ways in which NPM has entered national and supranational policymaking that vary by intensity (Seeber et al., 2015) and aspect (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). In HE policy, we have seen a move towards NPM-dominated policies in ways that often maintain the strong historical path dependencies of the national context (Bleiklie et al., 2011; de Boer et al., 2007; Paradeise et al., 2009; Young, 2015). Our argument here is more general, while the concept of an entrepreneurial university and the idea of HE systems as quasi-markets (Teixeira et al., 2004) appears to mesh well with the emphasis on business-like, market-oriented public management, upon closer inspection, we find that it embodies several inherent problems and contradictions when attempting to unite management and markets.

If the ideal NPM actor is a business competing on a free market, then to apply it to public administration requires the replication of two key elements: a) an entity that behaves like a business and b) a landscape that functions like a market. Attempts to apply these characteristics in the realm of HE raises two critical issues. First, while universities may be characterized as institutions (Meyer et al., 2006) and organizations (Krücken & Meier, 2006; Seeber et al., 2015), they have traditionally not been characterized as unified ones (Maassen & Olsen, 2007; Musselin, 2007); rather, the university has been seen as loosely coupled or an organized anarchy (March & Olsen, 1979; Weick, 1976). To compete in the way that NPM envisions, the university needs to become a unified actor; specifically, it should be a ‘complete organization’ (Brunsson & Sahlin-Andersson, 2000). Hence, disaggregation in the university sector involves aggrandizing the authority of the units which already have distinct identities. Disaggregation can be understood as the process of creating complete organizations and providing them the autonomy with which to make strategic decisions. This paradigm contrasts with the view that loosely coupled structures (individual academics and research groups) can behave in entrepreneurial ways (i.e. swiftly adapting to emerging

situations), as defended by proponents of systems thinking (Pinheiro & Young, 2017).

The environment, in Europe specifically and across much of the world, in which universities operate is not the free market per se—though universities may enter that arena with some of their activities, particularly ones that are often associated with the entrepreneurial university (i.e. spinoffs, technology transfer, etc.). In an attempt to bring market forces (and their presumed benefits) to teaching and research activities in the university sector, there has been an expansion of quasi-markets, which are commonly depicted as a tool of NPM reforms (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011; Salamon, 2002). Quasi-markets are socially constructed by the government to foster competition but have several distinctive differences from regular markets in terms of both supply and demand: while suppliers in quasi-markets compete as independent entities, they don't necessarily aim to maximize profits; on the demand side, money is not necessarily the only mechanism of purchasing power (others include prestige, reputation, or bibliometric counts), finally, the user is not necessarily the consumer, i.e. councils that fund research are not the users of that research (LeGrand & Bartlett, 1993) (Table 7.1).

The entrepreneurial model follows the inspiration of Newtonian physics, which is based on reductionist and rationalistic principles and linear causality. It has much in common with what we have termed the innovation model of the entrepreneurial university (see also Pinheiro, 2016). This model hopes to reduce or at least make manageable the complexity of the university system and the context in which it is embedded. The post-entrepreneurial or resilient university model, on the other hand, embraces that complexity. It is rooted in complex systems

Table 7.1 Alternative university models

	<i>Entrepreneurial</i>	<i>Post-entrepreneurial</i>
Dominant logic	Efficiency	Resilience
Modus operandi	Reduce/manage complexity (plan, steer/control, compete)	Cherish complexity (foster emergence, self-organize, co-evolve)
Internal governance	Unified, top-down control	Loosely coupled
Positional objective	Through global competition/winning	Through requisite variety/thriving

Source Authors' own, following Pinheiro and Young (2017)

thinking, in which causality is often non-linear; i.e. emergent entities co-evolve with each other and their landscape and show the capacity to self-organize (Meadows, 2008). The inspiration for this model comes from evolutionary biology rather than Newtonian physics, and the overall positional objective for an organization is to thrive within a niche rather than to win a global competition.

TENSIONS AND THEIR RESOLUTION IN A RESILIENCE MODEL

As we have seen, the concept of the entrepreneurial university grew out of the idea of adaptivity and the perceived need for flexibility to adapt to changing societal demands and circumstances. Clark (1998) intended to showcase universities that were dynamic and changing. The word ‘entrepreneurial’ struck a chord, as it fits well with several discourses of that time, particularly those of economic competitiveness, regional development, globalization and NPM. In his own words, ‘The use of “entrepreneurial” as the key term in the organizing framework, in place of the softer “proactive” and “innovative”, was also provocative’ (Clark, 2004, p. 3). The relative ambiguity of the concept allowed it to become imbued with unintended meanings that at times ran counter to Clark’s aims of adaptability, diversity and dynamicism. There are three important areas of tension that occur with the NPM inspired push towards unified actorhood, efficiency and isomorphism. In this section, we discuss those tensions and demonstrate how the post-entrepreneurial university model centred on a resilience paradigm (see Pinheiro & Young, 2017 for a more detailed description) addresses them in a way that cleaves to the sociological understanding of the entrepreneurial university.

The first tension, a push towards unified actorhood, assumes that the university can be treated as a single unit, specifically that the uppermost level of the university has authority similar to that of the uppermost level of a business. This reinforces the idea that inter-institutional university competition is the most important type of competition in the sector, thus legitimizing the importance of global rankings (Ramirez et al., 2016). However, as we have seen earlier, this was not part of Clark’s vision for a balance of authority at all levels of the university:

Balancing influence across multiple levels is an almost constant problem in entrepreneurial universities [...] Effective entrepreneurial universities are

neither extremely centralized nor decentralized; they are administratively strong at the top, the middle and the bottom. (Clark, 2004, p. 175)

The post-entrepreneurial university is not a unified actor but rather a loosely coupled one. The term ‘loose coupling’ was coined to deal with inherent contradictions that could not be captured in the language of organizational scholars, particularly the demand for simultaneous connectedness and autonomy (Orton & Weick, 1990). For Orton and Weick, and similarly to modern conceptions on resilience systems (see Frigotto et al., 2022), to be loosely coupled, an organization needed to simultaneously exhibit both distinctiveness (being stable and closed to outside forces) and responsiveness (being flexible and open to outside forces). Loose coupling addressed both of these dimensions; however, in their review article, Orton and Weick (1990) found that much of the scholarship following Weick’s seminal 1976 article simplified this dialectical dynamic and treated loose coupling as one end of a continuum in which it was opposed to tight coupling. Treating loose coupling as the authors originally intended allows us to avoid the binary sort of thinking that leads to overvaluing complete organizations and accepting that organizations have both connected and independent elements that are not reducible or rationalizable. In other words, a university can have the strengthened steering core that Clark (1998) called for without being a complete organization. The key is reaching a balance as described in the quote above.

Orton and Weick (1990, p. 219) also raised an issue with how binary rather than dialectical thinking is problematic: ‘The last way in which researchers drift away from the dialectical interpretation of loose coupling is to describe it as managerial failure [...] These forms [universities, hospitals, etc.] are not failed bureaucracies, but distinct organizational forms’. However, it is precisely the sentiment, or even accusation, of managerial failure that lies behind the NPM reforms and buttresses their aim of enabling stronger management within public institutions. It is argued that fixing these management failures should allow the university to better respond to external pressures for efficiency, effectiveness and accountability (Pinheiro & Stensaker, 2014a).

Loose coupling treats strategy as an emergent pattern rather than a centrally planned activity. The network of units and actors that comprise the university system create a unique constellation of responses to their environment (societal, disciplinary and organizational). The identity of

the university is formed not only by its culture but also by the ongoing decisions of the actors at the heartland level as well as the departments, faculties and central administration. This supports the idea of ‘structure as something that organizations do, rather than merely as something they have’ (Orton & Weick, 1990, p. 218). Structure in this way becomes a dynamic emergent property, not a planned or pre-determined reification.

The second tension, the push towards efficiency, assumes that streamlining processes and reducing waste will result in a more effective organization and thus a better use of public funds. Again, this is not essentially part of Clark’s intention:

The legitimacy of the portfolio [of income sources] depends on educational values guiding monetary decisions. There must be things that the university will not do no matter how much money is offered. Conversely, there must be ‘useless’ things it insists upon doing. (Clark, 2004, p. 174)

The post-entrepreneurial university maintains an appropriate level of slack. We conceive of slack as pertaining to repositories of redundant resources, human or otherwise, at the disposal of organizational actors. Organizational scholars have depicted slack as a buffer (Selznick, 1966) that protects the organization from external influences (Thompson, 2008). Taking this a step further, Sharfman et al. (1988) argued that slack can even be linked to efficiency; in other words, there is an optimal level of slack which, if absent, reduces organizational performance. Within the university sector, slack can be understood in a variety of ways: as having multiple research projects seeking the same knowledge, maintaining different disciplines and departments that cover the same topics, allowing researchers ample time to explore and take risks, maintaining a full array of disciplines to allow for the possibility of interactions between them and the creation of interdisciplinary knowledge, etc. Slack allows ‘productive waste,’ whose tolerance is a prime virtue that is necessary for creative destruction in the broader terms of the innovation economy (Janeway, 2012). Resilience scholars have identified ‘redundancies’ (another term for slack) as a critical antecedent of adaptive resilient systems, including their key role in fostering organizational learning (Giustiniano et al., 2018, pp. 91–92).

The third tension arises from the assumption that competition will lead to diversity. In this case, Clark’s hope was to see universities diversify, and

he envisioned that this could happen in his version of the entrepreneurial university:

The mantra for reform becomes: complex universities operating in complex environments require complex differentiated solutions. One hundred universities require 100 solutions. (Clark, 2004, p. 183)

However, the idea of global competition that has found favour in many policy interpretations of the entrepreneurial university is more likely to produce homogenization than differentiation. To understand why, we turn to recent research on evolutionary competition. Kenneth Stanley and Joel Lehman asked why, if evolution is correct, we don't 'converge on a single optimal creature?' (2015, p. 115). Evolution, they argue, when understood as a universal theory of competition, does not logically include a mechanism to promote and sustain diversity, but rather 'drives towards everything converging to the best. And the best is only one thing' (p. 108). This quest to be the 'best' is one of the driving forces in both university ranking systems and policy initiatives (Young, 2015). The emergence of global university rankings (Hazelkorn, 2015) and discourses on the global organizational archetypes (Pinheiro & Stensaker, 2014b), such as world-class universities (Ramirez et al., 2016), demonstrate how the global context has taken a central role in shaping the context of the modern university. This has resulted in a convergence—a so-called 'emerging global model' for the university (Mohrman et al., 2008)—to which an ever-greater number of universities aspire.

A resilient approach to diversity would try to model itself more on natural evolution, which as Stanley and Lehman explain: 'But natural evolution isn't like these kinds of competitions because it drives towards divergence, towards a multitude of varying solutions to life's problems' (p. 109). It does this by creating *local* rather than global competition:

Unlike global competition, local competition encourages the founding of new niches to escape competition. In discovering a new way to live that's free from previous competitors, competition is reduced—by running away from it. But in global competition there is no escape: No matter what an organism does it will always be judged against all others. That's why global competition naturally leads to convergence while local competition naturally enhances diversity and creativity. (Stanley & Lehman, 2015, p. 115)

There is a distinct lack of an alternative model or niche to which universities can escape and thrive, and thus under the current conditions, we would expect more homogenization than differentiation. This is not to say that some differentiation does not occur in the context of global competition, but that the convergence forces are stronger in the context of hegemonic templates or archetypes like the research-intensive university (for a discussion see Hüther & Krücken, 2016).

The concept of requisite variety helps us reframe this dilemma in a way that allows resilience to be used to foster diversity. The concept comes from cybernetics (Ashby & Goldstein, 2011) and is based on the idea that ‘the diversity of potential responses must be sufficient to handle the diversity of disturbances’ (Page, 2011, p. 211). Applied to organizational studies, this means the internal variety in an organization—be it structures, skills, people or knowledge—must match the variety of the external environment if the organization is to thrive. That external environment is both local and global. In the case of universities, this is particularly challenging, as the number of missions that have been assigned to it has grown dramatically over the past few decades, making it ‘a rather vulnerable institution that tends to be overloaded with multiple expectations and growing demands. The mission impossible of the modern university is that it means too many things to too many and too diversified stakeholders’ (Enders & Boer, 2009, p. 166). Fulfilling the demands of requisite variety under these conditions is nearly impossible from a centralized perspective. The central steering core cannot understand, much less strategize about, all the disturbances and responses faced by the hundreds or thousands of people in the academic heartland. This is a classic situation of bounded rationality (Simon, 1991). Requisite variety thus requires autonomy at the lower levels of the organization and a strategy that emerges from them rather than being produced from the top. It also requires the establishment of new units that correspond to the new pressures and initiatives, as Clark described:

Just as each new source of funding requires a university office, so do the new units of the developmental periphery require specialized offices to develop and process their activities, the office of continuing education, for example. Numerous administrative units paralleling the many research and teaching units of outreach are part of what makes the entrepreneurial university a proactive place [...] New assemblies of subjects – cognitive territories varying in content, time and place – require supporting

tribes in both operating units and the administration, resulting in greater organizational density. (Clark, 2004, p. 176)

Diversity is in this view not only about finding unique things to do but about finding different ways of doing them. This aligns with university missions on their broadest level: seeking knowledge through different disciplines and methodologies and interacting with society and business in a plethora of ways. However, the global archetypes described above challenge diversity by standardizing the measurement of university achievement or excellence in a set of key indicators (Sørensen et al., 2016). Through standardized archetypes and indicators, the complexity of both the organization and the environment is simplified as a result of our attempt to rationalize it, as discussed by Ramirez et al. (2016).

CONCLUSION

Our core argument, rooted in concepts from complex systems literature, is that the successful fulfillment of the multiple missions of the modern university requires characteristics of loose coupling, slack and requisite variety which can be found in the idea of a post-entrepreneurial or resilience university based on some of the original elements in Clark's sociological model of the entrepreneurial university. Universities and political and economic systems are both related and nested (Pekkola et al., 2021), and while exerting pressures on one another, they also retain the ability to shield themselves from pressures (Young et al., 2017) that could take them over thresholds. Based on this perspective, it is a mistake to consider resilience as essentially just resistance to change. Resilient entities and systems are dynamic in the sense that they can and do change and adapt but also retain their identities by not crossing essential thresholds or identity boundaries. The university's continued existence is evidence of its remarkable resilience and adaptability since its origins in the Middle Ages.

While NPM has remained an important concept in understanding public policy changes since the 1990s, there have recently been calls in both public policy and HE studies to move beyond discussions of NPM (Broucker et al., 2017; Christensen & Laegreid, 2007). We argue that, correspondingly, university discourses need a concept less infused with NPM values and ideas than the entrepreneurial university archetype (as an ideal model), whose meaning, as we have shown, has shifted away

from its sociological origins and whose hegemonic use leans towards the innovation perspective. Thus, the concept of a post-‘entrepreneurial’ or resilience university builds on the sociological foundations of the entrepreneurial university and the idea of complex and co-evolutionary systems that change in accordance to external stimulus yet retain their essential function and identity, i.e. it is resilient.

In fact, what we show in the section on tensions is maybe better described as a paradox. Policy initiatives that aim for diversity and effectiveness are in fact likely to do the opposite. The incentives for organizational behaviour promoted within these policies, push towards increasing homogeneity, despite policymakers’ interest in a diversified system in which universities ‘smartly’ specialize and find niches. An overemphasis on efficiency drains away the slack which would have allowed for more exploration (March, 1991) and an ability to react to and address emerging scientific puzzles. And consolidation of centralized governance moves the locus of resource allocation further away from those with the expertise to effectively allocate it.

The resilient post-entrepreneurial university is entrepreneurial in that it captures many advantages of the entrepreneurial model, though not as a unified actor but intrinsically through and within the academic heartland. It is not static but dynamic, diversifying, looking for niches, and doing new things while retaining the core values and norms of what makes it a unique institutional type. Most importantly, the post-entrepreneurial university model respects the complexity inherent to both the university itself and the landscape in which it operates. Further research is needed, both empirical to flesh out the model and theoretical to build these connections more substantially, to demonstrate how complex systems theories can solve some of the many puzzles of university organization and action that are not properly conceivable within the rationalized entrepreneurial model that has gripped public policy debates in recent decades. It is by turning away from the efficiency/innovation unified model and refocusing on those post-entrepreneurial aspects that make it resilient, that the university will position itself to drive economic growth and social change while simultaneously remaining truthful to its cherished values and traditions, including an insurmountable commitment to safeguarding the public good.

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