Points in an Ongoing Debate

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0. Introductory remarks

Assessment of universities is here to stay. The size of the system of Higher Education and its costs make it inevitable. The question how to assess has received more than one answer in different countries. The discussions following the papers presented at the Augsburg Symposium raised many points of method as well as substantive questions. The original plan of publishing the transcript of the discussions was abandoned, because closely related topics turned up in quite different contexts
Points raised in the discussion[1] show that many problems are (a) difficult to isolate, that (b) methods of assessment cannot be discussed "objectively", i.e. without taking the different academic disciplines into account as well as size of disciplines and universities, and that (c) a contrastive analysis of systems of Higher Education can help to clarify issues of assessment.

The following remarks try to summarise the discussions in a systematic way, starting with issues of methodology, followed by remarks on the reactions to the assessments. The third paragraph discusses the relationship of an assessment of research to teaching. This is followed by some notes on the assessors and the costs of the assessment exercises. The final paragraph tries to draw some conclusions from a German point of view.

1. Methodology

In German universities one of the ways to fend off assessment is to claim that it cannot be done in a scientific way. British Universities had no choice and had to undergo two assessment exercises, the first of which was described as admittedly a "quick and dirty exercise", undertaken in response to political pressures. Comparing the results of the two exercises one finds

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[1] Copies of the transcript of the discussion can be obtained from "Bayerisches Staatsinstitut für Hochschulforschung und Hochschulplanung", Arabellastr. 1, 8000 München 81.

some quite dramatic shifts. These were mainly due to differences in aggregation, but it was also evident that the first exercise as such had "set in motion" certain changes.
The first exercise was based on research achievement measured by the two standards of national and international excellence which is rated on a five-point scale. A single criterion would not have been sufficient for a fair evaluation because subjects differ in respect of their international links. An example is accountancy, a subject with very few international journals but many journals of national excellence (Sizer). Regional studies or teacher training could also be mentioned as examples of subjects with a geographically restricted "appeal" only. The question how finely differentiated a system must be in order to be "just" was not pursued in detail; the British experience seems to suggest that an experimental discovery procedure is the best way to find out.

One of the most interesting questions is how size can influence results. It is evident that differences in defining "cost centres" (individual disciplines or larger units) will influence overall results. Distortions can be avoided, however: The number of members of departments is known; "what one really says is what proportion of members of staff have achieved national or international standing". Large science departments, on the whole, achieve higher ratings because in science one normally tends to work in large groups to achieve international standing. So there was more of a correlation between standing and size in the sciences than in the arts and humanities where, for instance, an historian can work on his own using his time and the library facilities and a word processor (Sizer). It is evident that assessment is more interested in the sciences than in the humanities. Whether this means that assessments will necessarily be "anti-humanities" would deserve further discussion. It seems that the "Two Cultures" should be treated in different ways by the assessors. This does not mean, of course, that the sciences can and should be evaluated using quantified indicators, whereas the humanities must be analysed without such indicators.

The size of departments and universities seems to be of greater importance than has so far been admitted or realized. Sir William used the department of Engineering Design and Manufacture at Hull as an example to illustrate the problem: The ranking achieved by this department was a "four", the second highest; such a department could not readily achieve a "five" because it was too small, even though it had the highest per capita research income of any group in the country. If top achievements are the only criterion in assessing and planning, a department like the one in Hull would not survive, even if it is necessary for a region (cf. 420). Size comes also into play when subjects like biology are at stake because these need other subjects in order

to flourish. To some extent the overall size of a university is a factor which must be taken into account: a discussion of methods used in assessing research achievements must not ignore wider political issues, e.g. regionalization v. concentration, centres of excellence in research v. teaching in a broad range of subjects for a large and growing audience.

A comparison of the papers by Sizer and Halsey shows that two quite different ways of assessing universities produce similar results: they show top and bottom groups of institutions and a large fuzzy middle group. This may reflect a general way of thinking and of evaluating human beings. If this is so the assessment would be a rationale to decide where the money goes, but would not necessarily be a "real" measurement. Halsey was of the opinion that by and large the analysis does mirror reality: "In the UFC-exercise, as Sizer stressed two or three times, the heaviest weight in the evaluations was given to publications. Secondly, more than one person has reminded us that there is a very strong weighting or bias to those who have been to Oxford or Cambridge and the strong London Colleges. The first story seems to suggest a world of objective meritocratic judgement; the second suggests an old-boy-network, as it used to be called or a politicized arrangement of those who are already prestigious co-opting their own images, as it were, all the time. These two notions seem not to be consistent notions. If the greatest weight was given to publications then there must be real substance in the existence of, in this case, 'two companies at the top', and real truth in the idea that there is a fluid tier below that, in which institutions can shift around quickly. Unless one can demonstrate that control of publication itself - this may be linked with the question of what really constitutes an international journal - has been more subtly politicized, that adds for me some credence to the belief that you do in fact live in some real objective world and that you do have in this case a rather large gap between the two at the top and the rest."
Halsey's optimism about the possibility of describing the "real world" of universities deserves special attention. Apparently different methods can be used, if they are used in an intelligent way, to get hold of this "reality". Ranking based on publication or citation analysis or reputation will produce fairly similar results for the top and bottom groups, even though such results may not be graded finely enough for planning purposes. Halsey's comment on his method: "What I have been doing is to start to devise an economical or parsimonious simple model for determining where people aim in the system in terms of rank. So far it is clear that the two highest correlates are first a measure of publications (I have been arbitrary about that - counting a book as worth ten articles for instance). And the second is, and that is extremely interesting, where did this person do his or her graduate work. There is a pretty straight correlation between age and research

productivity; what I do attach importance to is, that if you keep age constant, then the institutional attachment becomes an important factor. The hierarchy that appears here seems to be the determinant of productivity." The English system with the "real" top-group of universities may be more easily analyzed than the German world of Higher Education with its tradition of all universities having basically the same standard. Probably a university as a whole should not, as a rule, be a unit of assessment. "It may be possible to rank the best universities but I don't think you can rank all universities." (Sizer). Considering the popularity of ranking lists both in Great Britain and in Germany this is an important point: assessors should be very careful in drawing up ranking lists and the public should be made aware of the problems inherent in such lists. It is also important to realize that any evaluation will modify the system and that such influences cannot always be predicted.

It will be necessary to improve the analysis of the "middle group" of universities: "It is certainly true for reasons of 'justice and satisfaction', that in this group the discriminations have to be more refined and we probably have not yet got answers to this" (Sizer) and "it is necessary to distinguish the grade ones and twos and threes if you want to distribute resources across the whole system as opposed to trying to identify the best departments" (Sir William). The UFC-assessment was influenced by the size and membership of the different assessment panels. Sizer explained that this was due to their origin in the old UGC: "The chairmen of the UGC-subcommittees generally became chairmen of the advisory groups. The chairmen of these groups then submitted suggestions for membership in the advisory groups and on the panels. In my case and in many of the arts and social sciences we brought fresh faces in, people we knew were working on the frontiers of their subjects. In some of the sciences and in engineering, for instance, they had people who had been members of their UGC-subcommittee for long periods and tended not to bring in new people. This will not happen again; the Vice-Chancellors picked up this point and will try and make recommendations" (Sizer).
German participants were surprised at the extremely good data base for the assessment. In Germany, so far, similar collections of data are not yet available. This may partly be due to legal restrictions und the way statistical data are collected (Hochschulstatistikgesetz). Most of the necessary data could be collected in Germany, too, but there is a strong feeling against too much factual and numerical investigation in general, and in the universities in particular. The principle of confidentiality (Datenschutz) can be used to fight a comprehensive assessment. The problem is solved in Great Britain because the universities "own" the information service (Universities Statistical Records): "It was set up on the condition that it would collect the

whole system of information and make it available - but there are strict rules about the form in which these data can be released, precluding nosey persons from being able to identify particular individuals or particular institutions."

2. Reactions and Selectivity

The assessment was basically caused by lack of funds and the solution envisaged was apparently a more stream-lined system to be achieved by selectivity, better accountancy and increased private funding. The assessment exercises were the first of their kind, even though the British universities had been used to closer financial supervision and self-control through the quinquennial planning periods introduced by the old University Grants Committee. For the German observer it was surprising how moderate the reactions of individuals, disciplines and institutions were. Especially noteworthy from the German point of view was the cooperation of the vice-chancellors and the detailed public debate of the issues involved. The discussions at the Augsburg Symposium shed some light on the attitudes and mechanisms.

Sir William pointed out that there was fundamentally a basic respect for Government in Parliament: "You must respect its mandate, whether you agree with it or not." Halsey described the situation and some of the fears that arose: "There is a search for some rationalization in the mind on differential allocation of resources. But it is a myth that can serve more than one vested interest, for instance to raise the total budget. There is also, in Britain, the tendency to drive a wedge between the science people on the one hand and the humanities people on the other. In the discussions of the exercise I have noted very much that the greatest anxiety tended to be generated among the humanities people. There have been attempts to form 'Leagues of Protection', one of which is the 'Conference of University Professors' which wants to enlist the help of everyone else to cooperate in the production of alternative ways of defining what is meant to be evaluated. There has been heightened suspicion and hostility between universities. One of its faultlines lies along the distinction between the ancient and the modern universities, others run along the different 'missions' of different universities (cf. Sizer on the technological universities). Another point is the selection of students: there may be a long-distance threat that somebody else will tell you whom you can have. Another general point: where does the money lie in different economies? There has been an increasing shift of resources to the private sector. If you have a strong private sector - you may not like that kind of society - you have got to operate in that private sector."

It is not yet clear at all which way the system will be developing in the long run. Assessment can mean more than one thing. Secondary and frequently unintended consequences may arise when a certain type of assessment is institutionalized. Evaluation can be seen not only as a steering device but also as a new myth for legitimizing decisions which may have a completely different basis. Halsey described to what extent a particular myth can influence the overall development. "The old German doctrine, true or false, that all German universities were excellent and equally so, is probably a better myth for deciding to allocate money than the myth that there is a bibliometric technique which will make the discrimination between the three's and the two's and the one's, that the British committed themselves to; not by any Hegelian principle but by the necessities of practical politics."

"Supposing that we would be foolish enough to say to some central body like the UFC or, even worse, the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP): 'you can decide where talent shall lie in future, where the really powerful five international, tremendous places shall be and the rest would be extended secondary schools for teaching.' Or you can be very German and say we go back to the great period of competition in the 1840s and they are all the same and all marvellous - supposing we did that, could they deliver? My melancholy suspected answer is: yes they could. If you wanted to produce a system that is terribly unequal where the resources were to be concentrated and the rest, as it were, debarred from the market, you could do it. I think it would be an awful thing to do. If, on the other hand, they will say, we are going to destroy Oxford and Cambridge and - just in case they get out of hand - the LSE and Imperial College and this new-comer Warwick, they could also do that. They could do it by the simple process of giving resources to the other places: that will randomize the poaching capacity (i.e. the ability to bribe people to come to other institutions). If you equalize the poaching capacity you can certainly destroy the inequality of the system. Whether the result will be for the benefit of human knowledge and science or for the opposite, that is something I do not know the answer to." The system on the whole is heading towards more selectivity both within the individual university and within the system as a whole. Some of the shifts in the results of the second exercise were definitely due to action within the universities set in motion by the first exercise, when the UGC told the universities that they had to be as selective internally as the UGC was externally.
As Sizer pointed out: many vice-chancellors made public and external criticisms but said privately that they agreed with most of the '86 gradings; these allowed them to legitimize decisions which they would have made in any case. "And the second exercise is respected because it provides vice-chancellors with justification to support decisions which they wish to make.

Maybe your [i.e., the German] rectors, because they are elected, don't have that freedom, they don't have to manage and to make such hard choices, therefore they are less likely to be interested in having such exercises."
The exercises forced the universities to ask questions about individual departments in relation to the overall economy of the university, for instance if it is worth the effort and the money to turn a "four" into a "five" - as in the example (Engineering) given by Sir William. Sizer pointed out that it was very difficult to improve a "grade one" unit into a higher grade without taking money away from the units with higher grades: "This probably means that as a by-product of the exercise the aim of the Government may be achieved that there should be some 'teaching-only' universities. If you get low grades the message could mean: make each member of staff write two papers in reputable journals during the next five years. There may be a weakness here in the exercise: it does not say let the best people concentrate on research and make the weaker ones support them by doing more teaching and administration; it only asks for two papers by everyone." Decisions on selectivity cannot be taken without taking into account the size of a university and how disciplines are interlinked with each other. Martin referred to a study by his colleague John Irvine on the 13 technical universities in Britain. He found that "in order to be good at certain scientific fields you also had to be good at neighbouring scientific fields. This leads to the question whether - if you want greater selectivity - you should focus on departments or institutions. John Irvine argues that you should pursue selectivity at the institutional level, because there is a danger of weakening one - good - department by weakening some of the other departments at the same university." Size must also be seen in relationship to the number of subjects taught: a higher ranking may have been achieved by a "young" university than by an old one of comparable size: Sir William pointed out that the more recent foundation may have kept the number of subjects down to 18, whilst the older university, which did not do so well in the exercise, had more than 40.

3. Teaching

The assessment exercises must be viewed against the general background of the British Higher Education system. Teaching has always been seen as the main task of a university. The right of the universities and colleges to select their students has never so far been questioned. (Halsey repeatedly asked whether German universities really were not allowed to select: "This can't be true"). Much more is known, therefore, in Britain about the profiles and the standards of departments and universities. Formal ranking of colleges by examination results has existed in Oxford and Cambridge for a long time.

The system of External Examiners has contributed to create some sort of informal ranking of the system. The clear-cut division into undergraduate and graduate (research-oriented) teaching gives further weight to the teaching side of the system.

The German system, on the other hand, is still based on the idea of research-orientation. Senger explained and illustrated this: "There is considerable criticism in the German universities for putting too much emphasis on research. Students taking their degrees are now supported by grants which are linked to research projects whereas formerly they could be supported from the normal budget. My department has grown about twenty times but the budget is more or less the same. So research has become much more important for teaching, too. This kind of interaction between teaching and research is frequently disregarded. From it could also be drawn a justification for looking at research only when you select a person to become professor." The question of research and teaching or research vs. teaching is linked with the question of the binary system (Polytechnics) and the Fachhochschulen in Germany. A purely research-oriented assessment will influence teaching. As Finkenstaedt put it: "If we in the German system concentrate on research and say you can't measure teaching this will be an excuse for many colleagues to say 'damn' to teaching; whereas in the British system teaching has been at the centre, in our system it has always been marginal." Sizer has his doubts about teaching assessment: "How many people do really know about teaching in universities? The Times Higher Education Supplement (THES) used to have a similar exercise where they asked people about teaching. How can you actually rank another university when you have never actually sat in a classroom, and you have never talked to students or had access to student questionnaires. I am much more comfortable with a peer-review of research than with a peer-review of teaching. A further problem with the THES survey was that the response rate was very low and for some subjects a very high proportion came from the Polytechnics; so it was Polytechnic people commenting on the universities." It was agreed that the question whether research ratings are a substitute for teaching ratings is terribly important.

A possible - and perhaps intended - development furthered by selectivity is towards Centres of Excellence in research on the one end of the scale and teaching-only institutions on the other. Sir William said that he would fight such a development in his own university for a number of reasons: "One would be the regional aspect. Ours is a fairly self-contained region. It has had to overcome considerable economic difficulties and has done this very successfully. It needs a research resource that is local to itself and is oriented toward the needs of its own hinterland. To deny such a region

resource would be a mistake. The university is one of the catalysts for economic development." Sizer was pessimistic about this: "It's a question of whether you will be able to fight it. If the UFC 'buy' student places at minimal prices in order to minimise the cost of expansion, this could erode both teaching quality and research effort. That is why the question of minimal teaching quality assurance is high on the agenda. If you have a university with a high proportion of low research grades, and it bids for more students at low prices in order to attract more money in order to survive, there is the danger that this will drown the research efforts and drive it towards becoming a teaching only university. This is in sharp contrast to what is happening in Scandinavia where they are trying to maintain the quality even across the countries, whereas in the Netherlands they appear to be moving towards competition based on quality rather than on price as in the U.K. Hopefully you will not go along our road, but be more attracted to competition based on quality, not price." Halsey suggests that teaching quality could be monitored through better organisation rather than measurement: "You can reward teaching by different kinds of organisation. For instance, when I came to Oxford we had thirteen different Colleges and only one examining body. All these Colleges admitted their own students, taught and then presented them for examination by the university. And that was the reason why you had league-tables and 'Magdalen having so many Firsts in Classics again'. In other words there was a currency of teaching reward that was possible because there was a public output on that organisational base. One solution we ought to think about is: why do we have to treat the boundaries of the universities as the territory for examining. Why couldn't we separate teaching from examining? We have done it - unsuccessfully? - through devices like external examiners or the CNAA (Council for National Academic Awards). Why not treat the unit of examining as a multi-campus one and make them compete with each other for the class of degree they award. It would have the secondary advantage of standardising the curriculum." Sir William thinks that the external examiner system still has life in it and that the life has been restored, namely by the practice that Vice-Chancellors now have to read every report by the examiners and raise with the Head of Department or Dean of School all the criticisms. "I have to see the answers as well, and to satisfy the new academic audit group that we have in fact done that. I agree that it is not as easy as in the past; in the old days when there was a small number of institutions A or B or C knew what was going on; he had a 'national standard' in himself. I have not lost faith; I have learnt a lot from perceptive, well-written external examiners reports. They don't do it for the money but because they care for their discipline and their profession." Sizer points out that there is a worrying tendency of universities publicizing the number of Firsts and

Upper Seconds they are achieving. There is a danger that standards may be slipping considering the increased numbers of Upper Seconds.

4. Assessors and costs

Any assessment will depend to a large extent on who is assessor. And this leads to the question "Who selects the assessors"? One gets the impression that the English exercise is accepted by the academic world, perhaps as something inevitable, perhaps as something sensible and useful. Apparently there are no fixed rules of how to solve the problem. Halsey suggests that many different ways of selection would be feasible and could be defended: "It would be possible to use the whole body of the academic staff and not rely on the essentially political mechanisms of choosing particular groups. We must have a defensible mechanism to decide who shall decide. You could say 'let them all decide; and choose them randomly'; if you know what target fractions you have in view you can get where you want to get by this method." Sizer presented the general setup and illustrates the process of cooperation and cooption of his own panel. "As explained in the paper, there is a Conference of Professors of Accounting, a British Accounting Association, then there are the professional accounting bodies (members are the Chartered Accountants). I invited the first two to nominate three professors on the understanding that I would choose one from each group. And that meant again that the academic accounting community had some ownership. And I asked the professional bodies whether their directors of research would like to sit as assessors. They do not vote but give their view. In other areas it depended on whether such bodies existed." It was also important to enter into a dialogue with the people who would have to implement the system later. Sizer gives an example: "A report by a joint CVCP/UFC group I am chairing on a set of indicators on institutional financial health was recently issued to universities for comment. The universities' comments will be taken into account when finalizing the report. It will be presented to the UFC and CVCP for approval before being implemented by the CVCP/UFC Performance Indicators Steering Committee. The vice-chancellors and the finance officers should feel ownership. If the group had published those indicators, and said you must provide the numbers because otherwise you won't receive a UFC grant, the group would have created a lot of antagonism. All the indicators published currently have been developed jointly by the CVCP and the UFC, or its predecessor the UGC, after a similar process of consultation."
It was important for the vice-chancellors and others taking part in preparing the report to get the feeling of some "ownership". For the vice-chancellors there was some opportunity to influence the direction of events and the

more enlightened ones - as Halsey pointed out - have looked at the exercise in quite utilitarian terms and said "I actually get a very good bargain for the money I have to pay in". They get a statistical basis for their decisions which they actually own.

The cost point: It is estimated that the exercise cost £ 3.8 million for the universities and about £ 1 million for the Research Councils. But most of those £ 3.8 million were opportunity costs.
Halsey's study cost about £ 40.000, but Halsey made it quite clear that making his system more "exact" beyond the top group of universities would make it more expensive.
In Germany many people feel that research into Higher Education is some kind of hobby research and should cost little if anything. Public funding for university research in this field is still very limited in Germany. In 1990 the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft established a Schwerpunktprogramm (priority programme) on Science of Science. The Stifterverband has sponsored relevant research for a number of years. The English participants pointed out that such private support had its advantages, and that the official Robbins Committee was preceded by a series of so-called "Gulbenkian weekends" supported by the Gulbenkian Foundation entirely on a private basis.
Costs must, of course, be seen in the context of what is being achieved. As was pointed out above the different methods used in assessing the performance would identify the top and bottom groups but could probably not achieve a nice enough grading in the middle. More sophisticated ways of tackling the problem seem to be required. Peer-review continues to be one of the most important ways of assessing, and perhaps the best. In recent years limitations and shortcomings of peer-reviewing have been stressed. Martin referred to a study for the French Government on peer-reviewing. "We asked the Research Councils and other UK bodies which use traditional peer-review mechanisms about their experience. It was one of the shortcomings, they found, that committees were usually formed round traditional disciplinary boundaries and there were examples of projects which did not fit neatly into one or another of those disciplinary committees and, therefore, took longer to get funded or were not funded at all. Science policy, for instance, is an interdisciplinary and relatively new area which finds difficulty in dealing with the Economic and Social Science Research Council because we don't fall neatly under any of their committees. In fact at present we go through the Politics Committee, but as far as the political scientists are concerned we are very much peripheral to them." It could, however, be improved by a better use of available quantitative data. Martin illustrated the point with an example from Big Science where it is often difficult to find peers outside the groups competing for funds.

"In one particular case the falling behind of one of two groups which was not yet evident to the wider scientific community could perhaps have been discovered somewhat earlier through an analysis of publications and citations."

5. Concluding remarks

The presentation of the British experience of assessing universities at the Augsburg Symposium was remarkable for several reasons: it made clear how complex a task it is, and it became evident that an assessment can be fruitfully conducted - fruitfully from the point of view of the taxpayer as well as the vice-chancellor. Even the academic community seems to agree that an assessment is necessary, even though the results may be dissatisfying or plainly wrong in particular cases. An assessment can be done in various ways and the best way to improve it and make it more acceptable is to conduct it, publish the results and improve the methodology through a - public - debate mainly among those concerned. An analysis of the British way of handling the problems of university administration and planning (and they are much greater than in Germany where so much more public money is available for Higher Education!) has, of course, an intrinsic interest for the student of Higher Education. It could also be used as a model for Germany or as a quarry from which Germany could take "suitable" bits; software bits, hardware bits, or the idea that budgets and salaries should be reduced... None of these approaches will do in the present German context: We cannot afford the luxury of too much disinterested study of foreign university systems just because they are there. We have to solve the problem of assessment, and this will not be achieved by "picking from the package", as Sir William put it. (There has been too much of such picking during the university reform of the seventies already!). Nor can we take over the British system as such because it works in a completely different context.
What we need is a "contrastive analysis", as the linguist would call it, to bring out the relevant "underlying" features of the system. I should like to single out the following aspects:

In the British system there is a strong sense of accountability, and this is not just the knowledge that there is a public auditor or a UFC looking at the books, but that the public has a right to know what is happening in the university. In Germany there is among university people a widespread feeling that it is enough to be there and that - once tenured - they have a right to be there. Such an idea of independent university scholars led to many of the great achievements of German science and scholarship in the past. Today, however, we must also ask: How many should be there of a

particular sort of academic and we must "justify the ways of academics to Man".

The second notable feature is the rôle played by the British universities and the university teachers in the assessment. In the German universities there is a lot of noise about "autonomy" and "self-government", but the more disagreeable decisions, people feel, should be taken by the ministries: professors or lecturers or assistants (there is no unified body of academic teachers in Germany) are to be praised for the success of the university whenever it is successful. Where it is less than successful the blame lies with the administration, the registrar, the officials in the ministries and the school-system, of course, with its inadequate teaching by teachers trained by the universities... Self-government, however, needs the academic self across the whole scale of decision-making.

A third aspect is the idea of competition made public through "ranking" of one sort or another. Most people in German universities would agree that there is some sort of informal ranking within each subject and among professors in individual universities. The "invisible college" has its hierarchies, too: pecking-orders had been known long before the term was coined in 1922.
If German professors are asked how to define such rankings or hierarchies the majority will say that this is the wrong sort of question or, at least, that any definition using quantitative indicators will be wrong. Such an attitude, and it is more or less the official attitude of the German Vice-Chancellors' Conference, too, is not only slightly less than rational, under present circumstances it is also politically and economically dangerous. It was pointed out during the symposium that competition and ranking need not be defined as "competing for funds" or "ranking by grant money". It is high time for German universities and especially for the German professoriate to discuss the kind of competition that they think is acceptable and how it should be "measured". Perhaps one of the ways to make the idea of competition and ranking more acceptable is to allow more than one model: a more research-oriented university or - better - faculty could use "Model A" based on citation analysis and grant-money; a traditional Philosophical Faculty could use Model B and present the monographs and the doctorates as a measure of success. A Model C which is based on success in undergraduate teaching would probably be chosen by very few German academics, but the idea deserves further thought. As there are quite a number of faculties and departments with very little research and very few monographs and doctorates, even a preliminary comparison of teaching (as attempted by Prof. Neidhardt in 1990) would be a great step forward.

The number of models must not, of course, be equal to the number of institutions. It is a fundamental question for the future well-being of the academic community in Germany whether it will be able to come to an agreement on assessment which is acceptable to the public in the long run. The German universities can and should learn a lot from the British experience and they should become more active in the field of assessment before the Government steps in.

It is in this context that privately sponsored research into Higher Education can help. A symposium like the Augsburg one can help by bringing people together to share experience and exchange views in a friendly atmosphere. Such a symposium can also provide a place where the administration can meet the academics round one table and not on opposite sides. The publication of the proceedings will contribute to make known that there is - as in other fields of research - a "state of the art". All those concerned with the welfare of the German system of Higher Education should take notice.

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