

## The French academic reform: From a managerial inspiration to a bureaucratic drift

Jean-Claude PACITTO<sup>1</sup>, Driss AHEDDA<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract:

The French “University Autonomy” Law voted in 2007 included a singular objective: creating a more autonomously managed institution by turning its President into a genuine manager, in lieu of the erstwhile administrator. By presenting Presidential power as the would-be remedy for all of the University’s woes, the 2007 “reformers” forgot to diagnose the serious challenges currently facing the institution of higher education. The President’s newly gained powers did increase his decision-making leeway. The strengthening of presidential powers has also, however, furthered the institution’s bureaucratic tendencies through increasingly centralized decision-making and ever more attributes entrusted to core services. The result has been the multiplication of procedures which are ultimately incompatible with efficient management practices.

At the same time, shoring up presidential powers lends her/him heightened clout to influence internal political stakes, notably with regards to recruitment.

**Key-words:** university, reform, unintended consequences, bureaucracy, change, political games, oligarchy.

### La réforme universitaire française : d’une inspiration managériale à une dérive bureaucratique

#### Résumé

La loi sur l'autonomie des universités votée en 2007 visait un objectif : autonomiser la gestion de l'institution universitaire en permettant à son président d'être un vrai gestionnaire et non plus un administrateur. En se focalisant sur le pouvoir du président comme remède à tous les maux de l'université les réformateurs de 2007 oublièrent de porter un diagnostic sérieux sur les dysfonctionnements de l'institution universitaire. De fait et si les nouveaux pouvoirs attribués au président ont accru sa marge de manoeuvre décisionnaire, il n'en demeure pas moins que cet affermissement des pouvoirs du président a aussi eu tendance à renforcer les caractéristiques bureaucratiques de l'organisation universitaire en accentuant la centralisation décisionnaire et en faisant jouer aux services centraux un rôle toujours plus important. La conséquence a été une multiplication des procédures souvent incompatibles avec la démarche managériale.

De même, cet affermissement du pouvoir présidentiel lui permet de peser toujours plus dans les jeux politiques internes notamment par le moyen des recrutements.

**Mots clés :** université, réforme, effets indésirables, bureaucratie, changement, jeux politiques, oligarchie.

---

<sup>1</sup> Université Paris Est Laboratoire : IRG Management jean-claude.pacitto@orange.fr

<sup>2</sup> Docteur en sciences de gestion, enseignant à l'IUT Saint Denis de l'université Paris XIII ahedda.driss@yahoo.fr

## **Introduction**

The so-called university autonomy law aimed at making the management of French universities more efficient. Its application has tended to accentuate some of the most emblematic existing dysfunctions (bureaucratism, clientelism) and has led to a model of governance far removed from the managerial ideal-type, in particular as a result of the growing centralization, which, as we shall see, has had other consequences. The aim of this study is to examine a process of change that has occurred within a particular bureaucratic organization – university - and to show how this process of change has produced results contrary to expectations. Indeed, although much has been said in recent years about this university reform, much less attention has been paid to its concrete effects, to how it was implemented, and to the particular contexts in which this implementation took place.

Indeed, while the academic literature on the subject of universities often focuses on the crisis that has affected the institution for decades, few scholars have devoted attention to how it is governed, and those who have (Mignot-Gérard, 2006), have minimized certain political aspects of this governance. Like any organization, universities face power-related phenomena (Pfeffer, 1992) and, in this regard, Crozier (1971) has shown that these phenomena also affect so-called bureaucratic organizations.

Similarly, the political-administrative superstructure of universities and its ability to last in time, whatever political vicissitudes may arise, deserve to be examined more thoroughly. The famous iron law of oligarchy developed by Roberto Michels would undoubtedly be applicable here. Too many university specialists tend to position themselves for or against the university reform, which in both cases leads to ignoring some problems or, on the contrary to overestimating them.

The intention here is to start from the reality of the situation and to try to understand how a reform, intended to be managerial in

essence, has had results often opposite to those hoped for.

This is a first step in what an investigation on French university should be: to describe what it is, and not what it should be.

Understanding how it functions is necessary in order to be able to reform it.

## **1. Conceptual and methodological framework**

Adverse, unintended or unexpected effects are often indicative that public policies or ambitious reforms have failed. In his book "The unintended consequences of social action", published in 1982, Raymond Boudon, takes the example of the educational policies introduced after 1968 and shows how these policies did not, as was intended, modify the structure of social mobility, on the contrary. Adverse and unexpected effects generally stem from several phenomena (Cherkaoui, 2006; Perri 6, 2014). Some authors (Hood and Peters, 2004; Rhodes, 2011) even believe that they are inevitable and inherent in any action. These unintended effects may affect public policies over time, as shown by Perri 6's study (2014) on British health policies adopted during the period 1959-1974. Perri 6 reveals that the cognitive biases of decision-makers (especially in negotiation, the expected effects or the supposed hierarchical nature of the decision) and the interplay of actors specific to each organizational system often produce unexpected effects that are different to those intended initially (in this sense, they are undesirable). From this point of view, unexpected effects often constitute, as Margetts *et al.*, (2010) put it, paradoxes of modernization policies aimed at reforming the public sector. Boudon (1992) distinguishes adverse effects from unexpected effects. Indeed, according to him, some effects are perfectly foreseeable and, in this sense, are not unexpected. This is the case, for example, of policies intended to protect tenants by capping rental rates, but which often result in housing shortages. Moreover, an effect can be unexpected without being considered

negative, that is to say, without running counter to the actions undertaken. A perverse effect belongs to a particular category of effects that were not expected and which tend to aggravate situations that the actions undertaken were supposed to remedy, or according to Hirschman's classification (1991), to compromise the objectives that decision makers sought to achieve. It should be noted that the distinction between undesirable, unexpected or unintended effects is seldom made by scholars, particularly by Anglo-Saxon authors.

Perri 6 (2010) rightly points out that before characterizing an effect as unintended or unexpected, one must first determine what the primary intentions of those who implemented public policies or actions were. Without knowing what the objectives of an action or policy were, it is indeed difficult, to conclude that they have undesirable or unexpected effects! When reforms are implemented, certain results are expected, in particular in terms of eliminating or minimizing previous dysfunctions. The fact that those dysfunctions persist after the implementation of a reform intended to eliminate them is indeed an unexpected effect, but it is more than that: it is an undesirable effect in that it goes against the objectives of the reforms. As Jacques Chevallier (2003) remarks, public policies (or actions) are mediated by a plethora of stakeholders, who might modify their primary objectives or alter the expected results. In their book *To change or not to change*, Fontaine and Hassenteufel (2002) describe many cases of public policies and closely examine the context in which they were implemented. In their introduction to the book, the authors stress that too many public policy analysts "tend to be caught up in the political rhetoric of public policy" and that it is important to make the distinction between the intention to act and the ability to act. Public action always takes place in more or less complex contexts characterized by variously

strenuous constraints, and in which the interactions between stakeholders can result in a redefinition of the very content of the policies implemented. Political decision-makers often neglect these "specialized arenas" (Rasmussen, 2002) because of their poor understanding or even total ignorance thereof. Even if discourse can have performative power, there must be no illusion about it; and it is not, in itself, enough to use concepts of modernity or change to change the nature of things.

But these unexpected effects can also result from "the existing structure of the social field" (Chevallier, 2003). The author adds that, in this case, the administrative action is conditioned by the state of social relations, which it is unable to modify and worse still, which cause it to deviate more or less sharply from its intended course. The Matthew effect<sup>1</sup>, first coined by Merton (1968), is characteristic of this type of unexpected effect. It sometimes becomes clear that some collective goods that were supposed to benefit all and to serve as means of social redistribution, ultimately only benefit the most privileged. Thus, and even if one key principle of the public service is that of equality and its corollary of free access to all, experience with some public services actually reveals "the existence of unofficial segregation mechanisms". Far from reducing inequalities, policies based on the principle of free universal access often amplify them. Thus, some public goods appear to be a fundamental resource for the privileged elite. Income plays an important role in this selection/exclusion (Pitrou and Matalon, 1963), but this role varies according to the services, the privileged classes making use of the most prestigious services while deserting the others. The consequence thereof is often an aggravation of inequalities and not their reduction.

In a study on the implementation of performance indicators in the English public sector, Peter Smith reveals how this

---

<sup>1</sup> In reference to the Gospel of St. Matthew, 13:12 "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but

whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath. "

implementation, because of the particular context in which it occurred, has produced undesirable effects that have called into question the merits of this policy.

It is precisely this type of undesirable effect-which results from the existing structure of the organization or institution - that we would like to study here. We shall attempt to show that, by focusing on certain weaknesses in universities' governance system (autonomy, problems related to the powers vested in the president and to his/her relations with the various components of the university), the 2007 reformers failed to consider the organizational realities of the institution, and in particular the fact that, since the reforms initiated in 1968, university had become, as Mintzberg put it (1985), a political arena and that modes of governance also reflected this reality. It should also be noted that this political reality is little studied by academics and yet is frequently denounced. Crozier (1982) clearly shows how this failure to consider the precise contexts in which reforms are attempted leads to disillusionment. Our purpose here is to reveal that the consequence of the 2007 reform has been to accentuate existing organizational patterns and thus resulted in cumulative effects that run counter to the reformers' original intentions. Essentially, the diagnosis made by the 2007 reformers about the academic institution was not reliable, for a simple reason: as we shall discuss below, this diagnosis was partly made by university presidents, who laid great emphasis on their managerial function and much less on the political reality of their function.

Implementing a change of any magnitude requires taking into account the context as a whole and all the actors interacting therein, and not just certain functions taken in isolation because they are considered central.

As Coenen-Huther noted (2001), the university institution in France was already, before 2007, a social system in transition "where delegations of authority were unclearly defined, responsibilities were widely dispersed and even diluted, and possibilities of deadlock

were frequent because many actors were able to exploit the factors of uncertainty ". According to this author, the overall university context, because of its complex interplay of actors, contributes to generating unexpected effects by confounding the expectations of decision-makers. This complexity of the university system seems to have somewhat escaped policy makers.

Other reforms undertaken prior to 2007 were affected by these effects. But those reforms were partial and implemented in a localized manner; they were not aimed at producing an overall change in the institution, in particular in terms of its governance. More fundamentally, the institutional nature of a university, as understood by Meyer and Rowan (1977, 1978), was not taken into account. A university is not an "instrumental" organization and its legitimization does not depend solely on the results it achieves nor on the means it employs, but also on the simple fact that it "acts" (Zan and Ferrante, 1996) and is part of a wider environmental system. An institution's apparent adaptation to its environment, due to the potency of an "orienting myth" does not necessarily mean that its status changes and that it becomes a finalized organization structure.

Although they are not yet evident, the effects of the implementation of the autonomy law are beginning to be visible (Chatelain-Ponroy *et al.*, 2012; Musselin *et al.*, 2012). Many surveys and studies have revealed, among other things, a trend toward increasing bureaucratization of the university institution. Contrary to popular belief, this phenomenon is not specific to France and we will see that university reforms introduced in other developed countries, more or less as part of the vast movement of "modernization" of universities, have produced identical effects. This bureaucratization has an effect: over time, and as Meier *et al.*, (2000) have clearly shown, it affects the very performance of institutions. If, as the same study reveals, bureaucratization, in itself, does not prevent the institution from adapting to its environment, it does, however, affect its future performance.

This article has no other purpose than to reveal the organizational mechanisms and arrangements that produce these undesirable effects through decisions which, by ignoring them, have often aggravated rather than corrected them.

## 2. On the origins of reform: the intention of reformers.

As Hugo Coniez (2008) has highlighted, measures to give universities more autonomy were already included in the Savary Law of January 26, 1984. The problem was that universities had neither the authority nor the means to implement them. Christine Musselin (2009) clearly shows that the 2007 law (LRU)<sup>2</sup> is part of a general trend towards reforming European universities; a trend largely inspired by the New Public Management (Mercier, 2012; Gillet and Gillet, 2013) and new governance principles, although it involves different methods of implementation from country to country. Like all other public institutions, universities must shift from a resource-based approach to one based on results; results which must be evaluated on a regular basis (Bessire and Fabre, 2014). Even though it is not always easy to define the exact content of the New Public Management (Bezes and Demaziere, 2011), one of its main objectives is to get administrations to move away from a process- and routine-based management approach and towards a more reactive, more flexible - in other words more entrepreneurial - management approach (Osborne and Gaebler, 1993; Alvesson and Spicer, 2016). The definition of objectives, performance evaluation, and contractualization must, therefore, replace the bureaucratic approach based on resources and procedures. In essence, it is thought that universities, just like private organizations, are embedded in competitive environments and cannot afford to shy away from strategies based on the efficient use of resources, and

from positioning themselves in such a way as to improve their ranking (Marketization). They must, therefore, aim at efficiency and can no longer focus solely on internal aspects of their organization. As pointed out by Mignot-Gérard (2006), applied to higher education institutions, the New Public Management "requires a reinforcement of the decision-making power and leadership of university deans and presidents". Kogan *et al's* study (2007) on university reforms in Sweden, Great Britain and Norway confirms that this was indeed the intention of these three countries' public authorities and that the latter considered that improving performance went hand in hand with reinforcing the power of university executive leaders.

This reform was in the making for a long time and in order to implement it, Valérie Pécresse, relied heavily on the support of academic actors close to the so-called reformist left.

Musselin (2009) argues that the reforms undertaken in various countries share some similar orientations, concerning the central role of universities in knowledge-based societies, the reinforcement of the autonomy of education institutions and their leaders and, finally, the transformation of relations between States and universities. And the author indicates that a more recent objective is to improve performance.

The so-called law on university autonomy had one main objective: to give university executives greater freedom of action by adopting a management model closer to that used in foreign (especially Anglo-Saxon) universities and by encouraging a more managerial approach to university governance. The objective to adopt a more managerial approach was made clear through measures allowing for more efficient managerial control of universities. In this way, and without necessarily admitting to it, the intention was to initiate true organizational change in universities.

---

<sup>2</sup> *Law on the autonomy and responsibility of universities*

## *The French academic reform: From a managerial inspiration to a bureaucratic drift / Jean-Claude PACITTO, Driss AHEDDA*

---

Essentially, the aim was to convert what could be called administrators into affirmed managers and gradually pull French universities out of the professional bureaucracy model (Mintzberg, 1982). In other words, the reform aimed at making the institution more efficient by giving the presidential team more decision-making freedom through re-configuring some governing bodies. The presidentialization of the university governance system was, therefore, seen as the means to managerialize the latter. For the 2007 reformers, autonomy and performance were inextricably linked. By giving the president the ability to manage his resources optimally, one could logically believe that performance (particularly in terms of the reach and influence of the university) would follow. Indeed, the poor performance of French universities was attributed to the fact that presidents did not have enough power to control resource allocation. The then political leaders attributed what was deemed universities' mediocre performance at the international level to the paralyzing lack of power of their executives. From their point of view, the problem, for universities, was first and foremost one related to governance. In fact, one of the purposes of the Pécresse Law was precisely to overcome "the current paralysis in governance". This objective was reiterated in the 2013 Senate report reviewing the application of the Pécresse Law. Indeed, achieving the first objective - to increase the attractiveness of university- and the third one -to extend the international reach of research - depended largely, according to the reformers, on their ability to reach the second objective – to overcome the current paralysis in governance. This diagnosis of "governance paralysis" was harsh and was not confirmed by the studies carried out on the governance of French universities. Blockages did indeed exist, but claims of structural paralysis are not valid.

As has already been pointed out, this diagnosis was also approved by the Conference of University Presidents (CUP), the vast majority of whom supported the reform. For many university presidents, the effort to rationalize the governance of universities, made since long before 2007, were hindered by their lack of power and their difficulty in getting the various components of the university to take part in the effort. Thus, as revealed in 2008 by Jean-Pierre Finance, then chairman of the CUP, the latter had, by 2001, already proposed "most of the reforms that are now included in the law"<sup>3</sup>. The CUP's chairpersons intervened on a continual basis, unconditionally supporting the reform put in place. This support was undoubtedly the key success factor in the adoption of the reform, despite the strong engagement of university staff against it. The action of the CUP at this level was part of an important evolution in its role. As Auclair (1994) has shown, the CUP has, over time, become a pressure group that made propositions and is no longer only a consultative institution.

The rationalization process was, indeed, hindered by strong local resistances (Mignot-Gérard, 2006). But this rationalization, undertaken in the years leading up to the 2007 reform, was also affected by bureaucratic obstacles, which reduced its performance.

As one might suspect, the power of a manager depends to a large extent on his/her mastering the budgetary process and his/her ability to not be dependent on higher authorities or, in our case, on any supervisory authority. For the first time, payroll expenditures were going to be included in the university budget and the university would ultimately own the premises on which it operated. In truth, these common sense measures were not met with serious criticisms<sup>4</sup>. It was the institutional dimension of the reform that raised the most issues. Indeed, beyond the resource aspect, it was the university governance system that reformers

---

<sup>3</sup> *Educpros*, 12.06.2008.

<sup>4</sup> Except for the criticism concerning universities' dependence upon allocations from the State !

sought to change, by modifying the role of university presidents and by giving them the means to impose their views (with their team) on the various university bodies. The provisions relating to the allocation of new responsibilities are included in the new version of article 712.2 of the National Education Code.

It was believed that from then on, the president and his team would have the means to govern without having to go through endless bargaining, which prevented them from making suitable decisions. In this perspective, it was also necessary to reshape the very structure of the institution and its faculty organization. Thus, the faculties became components<sup>5</sup>, over which the president and his team were given more power, in particular in terms of their ability to create or eliminate them. As a result, the institutional structure of French universities was somewhat shaken, and the powers of the deans were reduced. Thus, the autonomy law aimed at increasing the autonomy of the presidents more than that of the establishments themselves. And this first misunderstanding has too seldom been highlighted. It is a specific form of autonomy which the reformers of French universities have privileged. The reformers were certainly influenced by the centralization model which they were supposed to correct, and by a (probably) distorted vision of the realities of French universities. The autonomy law they developed was not merely aimed at granting the presidents powers and prerogatives which the education minister had hitherto exercised; More profoundly, they sought to move away from a governance system based on collegiality – which, admittedly was complex and sometimes political - and towards a presidential system, in which the president is the only decision-maker and is no longer accountable. The president must be able to

govern: this was the primary objective of the 2007 reform.

This seemingly rational and common sense reform gave the presidential team two types of responsibilities that are seldom compatible in a university environment: managerial responsibilities and scientific responsibilities; incompatibility, which some well-informed observers of the university reality did not fail to report (Raynaud, 2008).

The provisions on strengthening the powers of presidents are very significant in this respect, and it should be noted that the presidents are, consequently, able to veto almost any recruitment<sup>6</sup> (amended Article 712.2 al.4 of the Education Code). More fundamentally the new election procedures, the composition of the boards and the presidents' extended prerogatives have threatened the very principle of collegiality. The latter could admittedly be counterproductive, but as Mignot-Gérard has shown in his study on university governance (2006), presidents had accommodated themselves well to it, and, except in very few cases, it cannot be said that collegiality really prevented them from governing. The most worrying aspect of this reform was the absence of counter-powers and the mixing of genres, which was denounced by Thomas Piketty<sup>7</sup> and Antoine Compagnon justifiably denounced in an article published in 2009 in the newspaper *Libération*. Management is one thing but concerns were raised about confusing it with the management of academic careers, which explains to a large extent why teacher-researchers expressed extreme reservation about the reform. As often when blaming the reluctance of staff members on their conservatism alone, one loses the opportunity to understand the valid reasons that cause actors to oppose or to doubt the appropriateness of the reforms implemented.

---

<sup>5</sup> This change of name is not neutral, as rightly pointed by Olivier Beaud (2010).

<sup>6</sup> Using the well known « considered unfavorable opinion ».

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Piketty also regretted universities' lack of resources.

In this regard, the reform of the board of governors and the confusion between the missions did little to reassure.

The only aspect of the *New Public Management* model that was taken into account was that related to the decision-making sequence, and little attention was paid to the structure of the decisional process. Indeed, beyond the issue of collegiality, no thorough diagnosis was made on the bureaucratic structure of universities and the fact that the latter must contend with the characteristics of a loosely coupled organization (Pacitto, 2012). By focusing all their attention on the presidential powers alone, the reformers omitted to thoroughly reflect on the organizational constraints associated with the decision-making process in a bureaucratic universe; it is as though Crozier's (1971) research on the bureaucratic phenomenon had been ignored. By failing to understand that the dysfunctions of universities were also a condition for their functioning, the technocratic reform of 2007 would soon be confronted with the reality of universities. Efficiency in organizations depends on many parameters, but it essentially requires a thorough understanding of the functioning of the organizations to be reformed. For reasons that can be easily understood, given the role that university presidents played in the implementation of this reform, the reformers chose to view them as mere managers and failed to see that they were also often political managers forced to contend with organizations that had become, over time and as we shall see, political arenas.

### **3. When the real reemerges or the adverse effects of a reform**

The paradox is that these reforms have led to an aggravation of some of the dysfunctions they were supposed to correct, such as, for example, the bureaucratic and political processes

#### **3.1. The bureaucratic drift**

Various surveys of university staff reveal that, far from being reduced, bureaucratic processes have been reinforced, and that the political processes inherent in any bureaucratic organizational system (Crozier, 1971) – even professional – have also become more pronounced. These adverse effects (Boudon, 1977, 1992; Margetts *et al.*, 2010) stem from a twofold misunderstanding of the organizational nature of French universities: first, an underestimation of its bureaucratic nature. The supposed collegiality of French universities' management system must not obscure the fact that their central administrative services have always played an important part and that they are non-negligible components in universities governance system, whatever the president's mode of management (Mignot-Gérard, 2006). Furthermore, the processes aimed at presidentializing governance were already in place before the 2007 reform and had resulted in increased intervention from these services, in particular through rationalization policies.

The French university remains bureaucratic in the way it functions and, from this point of view, the reforms have not changed anything, on the contrary. And this is for a simple reason: the increased power given to university presidents is indissociable from the increasing role played by the administration, particularly through control processes that are highly bureaucratic by nature (Mercier, 2012). The characteristics of the bureaucratic organization have been well described by Weber (Timsit, 1986; Chevallier, 2003). According to him, and this is a very important point, the rationalization of modern societies necessitated the establishment of a "predictable and calculable" administration. This rationalization was inseparable from the characteristics that any modern administration should possess, namely, professionalization, hierarchy (the "bureaucratic-monocratic" administration for Weber), unity, distantiation, and authority. We know that, for Weber, the efficiency of administrative action depended on the de-



personalization it created, and on its ability to reduce individuals to "functions and roles", as Merton (1965) had found. This was both a guarantee of neutrality and efficiency for the administration and of protection for the governed (rules and their organizational corollary - formalism - protect the administered from arbitrariness). In an article on school administration, Laforgue (2007), drawing on Weber and Reynaud's (1997), concludes that bureaucratic routines have been maintained in the school administration. According to him, it stills combines the three characteristics of the bureaucratic action. The first characteristic is that it defines the common good and "appropriate action", keeping the users and executants at a « distance » from this process, and basing the definition on legal, regulatory or technical expertise. A second characteristic is a division of labor based on the planning/implementation pattern. The third characteristic is an evaluation of the action by the top hierarchy, without any feedback from agents and users.

In essence, university administration, at both the central and local levels, is no exception to this characterization.

The unitary nature of the administration is indissociable from its pyramidal, hierarchical and centralized character (Timsit, 1986).

Centralization has become a central characteristic of administrations, even though centralizing phenomena also affect private organizations. Similarly, the formalism associated with the procedural aspect of administrative action is often highlighted in criticisms of the same action. Crozier (1971) has clearly shown in his *Bureaucratic Phenomenon*, that the Weberian ideal-type is affected by dysfunctions which, paradoxically, also allowed the bureaucratic organizational system to function! Nevertheless, centralization and structural complexification, whatever the "changes" the administrative space goes through (Chevallier, 2003), remain essential characteristics of public organizations and are subject to recurrent criticism.

From this point of view, the implementation of the so-called university autonomy law has reinforced or, in some cases, created control processes that have resulted in an increasingly visible and restrictive intervention by the administrative services (Bessire and Fabre, 2014). Moreover, the rationalization processes introduced before 2007, particularly through the use of Nabuco (expenditure and payments monitoring software) and Apogee (Education and student management software), had been assigned to the central services and was already, at the time, the target of much criticism, some of which, incidentally, was justified (by their hyper-procedural nature).

In this respect, the introduction of aims and means contracts appears more as a central instrument for managing budgetary constraints than as a budget optimization tool (Mercier, 2012). Let us note that, in the same way, the introduction of new entities (Pres, Rtra, Ctrs, Idex, Labex, Equipex, Satt, Irt, Alliances etc ...), for example, has largely been to the detriment of the traditional consultation and decision-making bodies of universities, accentuating the bureaucratization of processes (Fournel, 2013) and, by the Senate rapporteurs' own admission, has done nothing but to increase the complexity of the administrative management of universities (Gillot and Dupont, 2013). When discussing the bureaucratization of an institution, it is necessary to consider two aspects: the introduction of new services for reasons that may vary, and from the point of view of the staff, the new constraints created by the implementation of new management systems, in particular by their procedural aspects. Thus, the increase in the number of international research programs and of calls for projects has had consequences that are often emphasized (Musselin, 2007) : that of forcing teacher-researchers to devote more and more of their working time to filling in application forms or to seeking funding. The 2007 reform did not create this state of affairs but has certainly aggravated it; and the teacher-researchers questioned in the above-mentioned surveys experience it negatively.

There is, therefore, a contradiction between what is expected of those control and openness processes - namely increasing the efficiency of the organization as a whole – and what is perceived by universities' staff members - namely a crippling bureaucratic invasion, manifested in ever-increasing procedures and demands. This bureaucratic invasion is revealed by a large number of surveys of teachers and researchers. For example, two trade union surveys conducted with 2000 teacher-researchers in 2012 and 2013 and concerning their working conditions, show that an overwhelming majority of the respondents find that the bureaucratic processes have worsened since the 2007 reform and that their working conditions – already perceived to be negative – have further deteriorated (Santos Ortega *et al.*, 2015). These results are confirmed by those reported by Chatelain-Ponroy *et al.*, (2012).

This problem is not unique to French universities and can be found in other countries, and have similar reasons. In a very interesting study on the bureaucratization of American universities, Ginsberg (2011) shows, with figures to support his point, how a form of bureaucracy has developed, and is caused - as in the case of French universities - by the necessity to establish new prerogatives or apply new regulations (in particular related to discrimination). Similarly, Furedi (2002), in a study evocatively entitled "The bureaucratization of the British university", shows how the need to comply with the many performance criteria set out by the public authorities, has thrown British universities into a bureaucratic spiral from which they have not escaped. A study conducted in 2015 confirmed this trend by revealing that academic staff have now become a minority in British universities (Jump, 2015).

Two pioneering studies in this field - one on Californian universities and authored by Gumport and Pusser (1995), the other conducted by Gornitzka (1998) on four Norwegian universities – have revealed the existence of similar processes, with a sharp rise in the number of administrative staff to the detriment of academic staff.

A study on the bureaucratization of the Italian public research sector (Coccia, 2009) is informative in several respects. First, because it concerns a country that is culturally closer to France than the above-mentioned countries are, particularly in terms of its administrative practices. Second, because the public research sector in Italy has undergone several reforms, all aimed at improving its efficiency, in particular by reshaping its governance system and its general organization.

The conclusions of the study are in line with those already presented, though with a slight difference: more than a rise in the number of administrative structures (which have increased but to a lesser extent than in Anglo-Saxon universities) Coccia discusses the bureaucratization of the academic process with a substantial increase in the constraints imposed on researchers, due according to him, to incomplete restructuring processes, which have had to contend with local organizational realities.

More serious from the point of view of the public authorities is the fact that this bureaucratization of the public research sector resulted in a deterioration of performance, whereas the opposite was intended.

On the whole, these studies tend to reveal that the rise of bureaucracy followed the implementation of the various managerial mechanisms that universities have adopted in recent decades (Alvesson and Spicer, 2016). These new, more centralized control processes have lessened, if not eliminated, the collegiality of decision making, which was one of the fundamental characteristics of the functioning of universities (Parker, 2014). As Derouet and Normand (2012) point out, the implementation of those mechanisms has been strongly influenced by the New Public Management movement and by the desire to combine performance and public service. The AERES was created within this context (Bessire and Fabre, 2014).

It should be noted that these new mechanisms were implemented in universities in an attempt to take into account and respond to the demands of the environment

(professionalization, openness to the international environment, etc.). As Coccia (2009) rightly points out, taking these demands into account could only be done through an increased bureaucratization of universities. This is the undesirable effect of openness.

Although we still lack perspective, it is clear in the case of France, that since the adoption of the Pécresse Law, new procedures and structures related to budgetary control and to the control of the institution's performance, particularly in terms of research, have been introduced and developed, and have accentuated the process of ensuring compliance, which universities' staff members perceive as highly bureaucratic (Pacitto *et al.*, 2014).

This reinforcement of bureaucratic processes is inseparable from that of the process of centralization, which a team of French sociologists (Chatelain-Ponroy *et al.*, 2012) investigating French universities' governance system, following the implementation of the law, has clearly highlighted. Indeed, these authors have concluded to a "*centralization of decision-making powers at the level of the university's governing board, of its president and his management team, namely secretaries-general or heads of departments or of central services*".

The authors of the study show that this centralization was accompanied by a reinforcement of bureaucratic thinking. Indeed, centralization requires constant data feedback to enable the presidents to update their performance charts. This demand for feedback impacts the activity of the staff, 68% of whom perceive it as "a process of creeping bureaucratization". Another question raised is that related to the processing of the data thus provided and of which structure has the capacity to process that data.

Let us note that these bureaucratic processes have consequences on performance (Meier *et*

*al.*, 2000), which does not seem to have been taken into account.

The qualitative part of a study conducted by Musselin *et al.*, (2012) on three universities helps to identify the phenomena at the root of this centralization. The latter has translated into the creation of select committees who work with and assist the president. Those committees appear to be the real decision-making bodies and to have relegated the governing board to a rubber-stamping role (this is true in two of the three universities studied). The authors of the study point out that the members of these select committees are chosen by the president (not by their peers). Moreover, this political centralization is combined with a reinforcement of administrative centralization, which has resulted in the expansion of central services (in terms of staff and expertise) because of the increasing complexity of the new tasks to be managed (particularly payroll and budget management), centralization of information (through IT tools and procedures), centralization through a process of compliance with norms, of standardization and centralization of the management of research resources.

Thus, the human resources and financial services of universities have benefited from these upheavals, and have been able to assert their power, often positioning themselves as "rationalization entrepreneurs" and presenting their tools (dashboards, indicators...) as the conditions for improving the efficiency and performance of universities.

As Musselin *et al.*, (2012) have indicated, this reinforcement of administrative centralization has also taken place through the adoption and implementation of information systems (SIFAC<sup>8</sup>). The authors reveal that SIFAC promoted a twofold centralization process : "the first occurred through the pooling of previously decentralized staff resources and the second through the transmission of information relative to the financial

---

<sup>8</sup>Accounting and financial information system

management of the university research departments and laboratories to the universities' financial department, which can now better monitor the budget consumption of the various components ". The same trend can be observed in the case of other management software used before the implementation of the Pécresse law, but whose use was generalized.

This reinforcement of administrative centralization was made possible by the development of standards which all establishments have been required to comply with (for example, standards relating to the opening or closing of university courses or to bonus schemes) and by an increasingly centralized management of research resources.

This dual centralization has concrete organizational consequences: flooding demands for information (passed on to the components of the universities and then to the staff and experienced very negatively) and a reduction in the leeway given to these components, the highly Weberian objective of making the administration "predictable and calculable" being judged more important than all others!

These are all consequences of centralization that fuel the famous vicious circle of bureaucracy (Crozier, 1971). The proliferation of procedures and associated formalism, even when they result from approaches intended to be managerial, eventually become incompatible with the very objectives of these approaches. From this point of view, compliance with the rule becomes just as important as the outcome. French universities face the same organizational dilemma as American or British universities. The technologies involved in the production of output and in performance evaluation induce bureaucratic effects which eventually affect performance (Meier *et al.*, 2000). There is, therefore, a discrepancy between the objectives and the means implemented to reach them. Centralization hampers decision-making fluidity. It ultimately often leads to bureaucratic congestion, which then

necessitates the creation of new structures, thus adding to organizational inertia.

One of the main weaknesses of the reforms related to the 2007 law lies in the fact that not enough thought was given to the means of implementing the decisions made by executive teams. As the British and American examples show, giving more power to governance bodies is not enough. The modes of intervention as well as the means to implement them should have been entirely reconfigured, which was not done, or at least not sufficiently so. The rationality, which the reformers intended to optimize by conferring more power to the presidents, has gradually turned into a bureaucratic rationality – in its Weberian form - ("predictable and calculable" administration) that is far removed from the managerial rationality model from which the reformers drew inspiration. How does one reconcile managerial efficiency and cumbersome bureaucracy? How, for example, can one talk of effective decision-making when even the smallest request made to the university administration can take up to 3 months to be processed? Reinforcing the power of the presidents was probably necessary, but little thought was put into whether they had the ability to assume those new responsibilities, on a daily basis, while avoiding the congestion effects induced by the centralization of processes.

The 2007 law was developed using an exclusively top-down approach, thus neglecting the bottom-up processes. It focuses on the decision making powers of the president but fails to consider the mechanisms that undermine effectiveness, on a daily basis. Modernizing universities cannot be reduced to piling one model on top of another. It involves identifying the malfunctions and trying to identify their causes. Failure to do so results in a situation – which has now emerged – in which we are confronted with the organizational problems associated with both models while being unable to reap their benefits. By adopting a technocratic approach, the authors of this law have, from this point of view, missed the essence of the situation. The university presidents had good reason to

adopt a single-cause diagnosis. As is often the case, accepting a single-cause explanation eliminates the need to question other regulation and governance models that are less inspired by the new public management theories.

### 3.2. The political drift

Indeed, this disregard for the bureaucratic nature of the French university organization is combined with a disregard, or even covering up of, the highly political nature of university governance in France. It is historically known that the political nature - in the sense meant by March - of university governance has part of its roots in the reforms of 1968 (Boudon, 1977). Given the fundamental role trade unions play in university boards, it was illusory to think that presidents would remain "neutral" administrators; they are, necessarily, political administrators who, though they come from the academic arena<sup>9</sup>, do not necessarily have very strong ties to it (Cabanis and Martin, 2009, Gauchet, 2009). While the often political nature of the former university boards is rightly emphasized (Mignot-Gérard, 2006), it is also important to stress that university presidents are also politicized. Indeed, French universities, like many other organizations, have become political arenas (Mintzberg, 1985), that is, systems characterized by political games and conflicts between actors. Thus, Mintzberg describes the political games that structure these arenas, the actors involved and their objectives. According to him, the various dimensions of conflict (intensity, pervasiveness, stability or duration) help to distinguish 4 types of arenas. The first are arenas of "confrontation", characterized by intense, confined and brief conflicts. The second arenas of « shaky alliance », characterized by moderately intense, confined and stable conflicts. The third type of arena is

that "politicized organizations" characterized by moderate, pervasive and lasting conflicts. Finally, the fourth type of arena can be described as "complete political arena", and are characterized by intense, pervasive and brief conflicts. It is always difficult to classify a particular organization into a predefined typology, in that the contingency factors may vary from one organization to another, and in our case, from one university to the next. However, this conflictual dimension inherent in political activity is important. For example, the election of a new president in any university is an eminently political and conflictual moment. Coalitions form and clash; and each actor or groups of actors involved in these coalitions seek to derive benefits in exchange for their participation (Gamson, 1961). Gamson argues that the ideological affinities, the resources possessed by each party, the expected benefits and the decision threshold to be reached, explain the formation of these coalitions. Bargaining is, therefore, inevitable and, depending on the type of resources exchanged, results in the formation of more or less stable majority coalitions. The term arena should not, however, be understood as referring to an environment characterized solely by permanent conflict and instability. As Zan and Ferrante (1996) have rightly pointed out, an arena "remains a structured system of actions subject to game rules and presenting dynamic regularities". The presidential election is a key political event in academic organizational life but is no way the only one; Salancik and Pfeffer (1974, 1977) have shown how university budget discussions are important moments during which some departments, which were not necessarily the best endowed initially, gain power and influence because there were able to develop a fundamental resource: the ability

---

<sup>9</sup> Marcel Gauchet (2009) lays emphasis on the fact that, given their electoral constraints, university presidents, are often trade union activists or members of related organizations,

Vers une société de l'ignorance, *Le Débat*, n°156.

to obtain subsidies <sup>10</sup>. The political alignment strategies (essential to the formation of coalitions) revealed by Bacharach and Lawler (1998) are, in some cases, indissociable from co-optation strategies, the objective, here, being to maintain cooperation through selective incentives, and to reduce the risk of defection. Indeed, a coalition must be able to last in time, its survival over time depends on its ability to get different actors to politically "align" with others ; and the ability of the dominant actors to generate situations of dependence is, according to Bacharach and Lawler, one of the conditions for the sustainability of coalitions. The new powers given to the presidents are likely to facilitate these strategies of political alignment by reducing the capacity of the other actors, in particular during recruitment processes, to influence those processes. In bargaining processes with other actors and organizations, the president is in a dominant position, which was not always the case in the configuration that existed prior to the adoption of the University autonomy law.

As in the case of all other organizations, an oligarchic system – in the sense meant by Michels (2015) – has been developing in French universities, a system partly rooted in academia, but from which it has gradually

separated and gained autonomy. Thus a new profile has emerged, namely that of political-administrative administrator who addresses power relations and influence phenomena. Through its perfect knowledge of the ins and outs of the politico-administrative machinery, this oligarchy is almost ineradicable, and its members have, as phrased by Lazega (1994), become veritable "network surgeons". This point has been insufficiently investigated in academic literature. It is, nevertheless, an essential point for understanding how our universities are governed. By concentrating management and academic powers into the hands of the presidents and their teams<sup>11</sup> and by accentuating localism <sup>12</sup>, the 2007 reform merely reinforced the phenomena of dependence which already characterized French universities (Pacitto, 2012) and in so doing has increasingly politicized career management, straying far from the tenets of managerial rationality put forward in discourses <sup>13</sup>.

This political sequence can be manifested through a development of clientelism and of strategies of favoritism <sup>14</sup> where the criterion of proximity to decision-makers counts as much as the criteria of excellence <sup>15</sup>. From this point of view the way in which recruitment committees (which have replaced the

---

<sup>10</sup> Which, in France, enables University Technological Institutes, for example, to resist the « presidential » centralization, better than the other university components.

<sup>11</sup> Concerning this blurring of genres and its consequences on the principle of independence of the teacher-researchers, see Olivier Beaud's legal discussion in *Les libertés universitaires à l'abandon ?* p.251-263, Dalloz, 2010

<sup>12</sup> For an evaluation of localism, refer to the interesting article by Godechot and Louvet "Le localisme dans le monde académique : un essai d'évaluation", *La Vie des Idées*, April 22, 2008.

<sup>13</sup> Marcel Gauchet rightly emphasizes the fact that "an elected actor depends on his/her

voters if s/he wishes to be re-elected -s/ he is not about to modify practices that are likely to reinforce his/her support base.", in article entitled "Vers une société de l'ignorance" opus cited p.239.

<sup>14</sup> Marcel Gauchet goes so far as to speak of mafia-like practices and the omnipotence of networks ; see *Vers une société de l'ignorance*, opus cited.

<sup>15</sup> Vincent Descombes notes: "It is said everywhere (and with reason) that a scourge affecting the French university system is localism, feudalism, favoritism in recruitment. See book entitled "Le corporatisme est-il réactionnaire ? Grandeur de l'institution dans *L'université en crise* » opus cited page 268

committee of experts) are appointed reinforces the presidential role which was already significant before the implementation of the university autonomy law.

It is regrettable that these realities are little studied and are yet very often denounced. Similarly, while the political sensitivity of university presidents is sometimes talked about, their proximity with the political milieu is seldom examined. And, although this phenomenon of proximity is in no way generalized, it is in all cases a key factor in explaining certain politico-administrative careers. It is in fact, often put forward by the actors themselves during the election campaigns. Thus, having close ties with the ministry is considered an important asset, by both the candidates and the voters. This proximity can have a number of causes, including regular attendance at decision-making meetings involving the ministry and universities. But it can also result from relationships developed with political and trade union actors, on the basis of ideological affinities, in the sense meant by Gamson (1961). The presidents acknowledge those ties more or less openly. This political sequence of university governance is also a consequence of the particular organizational configuration of universities. Indeed, in line with Orton and Weick (1990) we can describe universities as loosely coupled organizations. Zan and Ferrante (1996) argue that an organization "constitutes a loosely coupled organizational system when its various components enjoy a high degree of autonomy and independence". The management of loosely coupled organizations poses a number of problems (Murphy and Hallinger, 1984) related to the low level of interdependence between the various sub-units that form the organization. Cooperation, which is rarely a simple process in organizational life, is made even more uncertain in this type of system. And yet, even though the level of interdependence is low, power differentials do exist and make it possible – in particular through appointments - to influence the future behavior of the actors. In some cases, positions can be created which legal texts make no provision for (Leroy, 1992).

It should be noted that the 2007 law has expanded this power to create posts. In the complex governance system of universities, appointment decisions are either made through bargaining – in which case they more or less reflect the power relations at a given point in time - or are made as a result of the presidency's attempt to appoint "predictable" individuals, and in all cases, to create a relationship of dependency, which alone can lead to tighter coupling in the organization.

Moreover, the coupling of operational management and academic management gives university presidents undoubtable power and this certainly contributes to a "domestication of vote" (Juhem, 2006) and to a political control of behaviors. The existence of a courting behavior is often mentioned when discussing academic behavior but is seldom explained (Alvesson and Spicer, 2016). We know that for Roberto Michels co-optation was inseparable from power strategies. In this field and since 1911 things have not changed. The risks of a drift into autocracy exist (and have been denounced) (Baratin *et al.*, 2007) especially during the president's last mandate, when the latter has nothing to lose and even less to fear. But the mechanisms that allow for this drift are already in place during the first mandate and are simply reinforced during the second mandate. It is the logic underlying the politico-administrative system of the university institution that leads to this result, whatever the profile of the presidents.

## Conclusion

Reformers, whoever they may be, often focus too much attention on the objectives to be achieved, while frequently underestimating the effects of the processes aimed at re-configuring the power structure in organizations, as well as the effects of the management tools implemented. Thus, in some cases, the means implemented to achieve an objective have effects that run counter to the desired effects. This seemingly enigmatic result can easily be explained if one understands that in order to change an

organization, or at least the functioning of some of its components, it is necessary to first make a non-complacent diagnosis of the causes of the dysfunctions observed and to understand that any organization is, by definition, a complex system of interactions that cannot be changed through top-down processes alone or through the implementation of management tools developed in other contexts and for other contexts. In the organizational context of French universities, the process of power "centralization" could only create a new vicious bureaucratic circle. It is no small paradox that this reform has had results that run counter to its initial managerial objectives.

## **Bibliography**

Auclair X., 1994, La conférences des présidents d'université, Mémoire de DEA de sciences administratives, Paris II.

Alvesson M, Spicer A., 2016, (Un)Conditional surrender ? Why do professionals willingly comply with managerialism, *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 29, 1, pp.29-45.

Bacharach S.B, Lawler E.J., 1998, Political alignments in organizations dans *Power and influence in Organizations* (dir. Bacharach et Lawler), London Sage, pp.67-88.

Baratin M, Beaud O Fichant M Guyaux A Jourde, Schapira P, Tortonese P., 2007, Réforme de l'université: autonomie ou autocratie, *Mensuel de l'Université*.

Beaud O., 2010, *Les libertés universitaires à l'abandon*, Dalloz, Paris.

Beaud O, Caillé A, Encrenaz P, Gauchet M et Vatin F., 2010, *Refonder l'université*, La Découverte, Paris.

Bernoux P., 2004, *Sociologie du changement dans les entreprises et les organisations*, Seuil, Paris.

Bessire D, Fabre P., 2014, New Public Management et évaluation de la recherche publique : l'invention du produisant, *Finance, Contrôle, Stratégie*, 17, 4, pp.31-58.

Bezes P, Demaziere D., 2011, New Public Management et professions de l'Etat : au-delà des oppositions, quelles recompositions, *Sociologie du travail*, Juillet 2011 (coordination), Dossier-débat, 53, 3, pp.293-348, numéro spécial.

Boudon R., 1977, *Effets pervers et ordre social*, PUF,

Paris.

Cabanis A, Martin ML., 2009, Ni chercher, ni enseigner : l'administration alors ?, Dans *Etudes J-A Mazères*, Lexis-Nexis, pp.47 et s.

Chatelain-Ponroy S, Mignot-Gérard S, Musselin C, Sponem, S., 2012, *La gouvernance des universités françaises, pouvoir évaluation et identité*, Sciences-Po, Paris.

Cherkaoui M., 2006, *Le paradoxe des conséquences : essai sur une théorie wébérienne des effets inattendus et non voulus des actions*, Droz, Genève.

Chevallier, J., 2002, *Science administrative*, Paris, PUF, Paris.

Coccia M. 2009, Bureaucratization in public research institutions, *Minerva*, 47, 1, pp.31-50.

Coenen-Huther, J., 2001, Les acteurs et les conséquences inattendues de leurs actions : le cas de l'université, *Revue européenne des Sciences Sociales*, 39, 121, pp.125-140.

Compagnon, A 2007, Université: l'autonomie n'est utile que si elle favorise la concurrence, *Le Figaro*.

Coniez H., 2008, *La faillite des universités françaises*, Ellipses, Paris.

Crozier M., 1971, *Le phénomène bureaucratique*, Seuil, Paris.

Crozier M., 1982, *On ne réforme pas la société par décret*, Pluriel, Paris.

Derouet JL, Normand, R., 2012, Les nouvelles épreuves d'Homo Academicus : revisiter la condition universitaire dans une société de la connaissance, In Charlier, JE, Croché, S et Leclercq, B *Contrôler la qualité de l'enseignement supérieur*, Louvain La Neuve, Harmattan-Academia, pp.45-58.

Fontaine J, Hassenteufel, P., 2002, *To change or not to change? Les changements de l'action publique à l'épreuve du terrain*, PUR, Rennes.

Furedi F., 2002, The bureaucratization of british university, In Hayes, D. et Winyart, R. *The McDonaldization of higher education*, Westport, CT, Bergin and Garvey, pp.33-42.

Gamson W., 1961, A theory of coalition formation, *American Sociological Review*, 26, 3, pp.373-382.

Gillet M, Gillet P., 2013, Les outils du système d'information, facteur clé de succès ou d'échec dans l'évolution des organisations: le cas des universités, *Gestion et Management Public*, 2, 1, pp.55-77.

Gillot D, Dupont A., 2013, *L'autonomie des*



- universités depuis la loi LRU : le big bang à l'heure du bilan, Rapport du Sénat.
- Ginsberg B., 2011 *The fall of the faculty*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Godechot O, Louvet A., 2008, Le localisme dans le monde universitaire, *La vie des idées*.
- Godechot O, Louvet A., 2010, Comment les docteurs deviennent-ils directeurs de thèse : le rôle des réseaux disponibles, *Sociologie*, 1, 3.
- Gornitzka A, Svein K, Larsen IM., 1998, The bureaucratization of universities, *Minerva, Learning and Policy*, 36, 1, pp.25-47.
- Gumport P, Pusser B., 1995, A case of bureaucratic accretion, *Journal of Higher Education*, 66, n°5, pp.493-520.
- Hirschman A.O., 1991, *The rhetoric of reaction : perversity, futility, jeopardy*, Harvard University Press.
- Hood CC, Peters B.G., 2004, The middle aging of new public management : into the age of paradox ?, *Journal of Public Administration, Research and Theory*, 14, 3, pp.267-282.
- Juhem P., 2006, La production notable du militantisme au parti socialiste, *Revue Française de Science Politique*, 56, 6, pp.924 et s.
- Jump P., 2015, Academics in the minority at more than two-thirds of UK universities, *Times higher education supplement*, 3, september.
- Kogan M., Bauer M., Blekli I., Henkel M., 2007, *Transforming higher education, a comparative study*, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London.
- Laforgue D., 2007, L'administration scolaire est-elle une bureaucratie? *Pyramides*, 14, pp.153-174.
- Lazega E., 1994, Analyse des réseaux et sociologie des organisations, *Revue Française de Sociologie*, 35, pp.293-320.
- Mauss., 2009, *L'université en crise, mort ou résurrection*, Revue du Mauss, n°33.
- Meier KJ, Wrinkle RD, Polinard JL., 2000, Bureaucracy and organizational performance: causality arguments about public schools, *American Journal of Political science*, 44, 3, pp.590-602.
- Mercier A., 2012, Dérives des universités, périls des universitaires, *Questions de communications*, 22, pp.197-234.
- Merton RK., 1968, The Matthew effect in science, *Science*, 159, 3810, pp.56-63.
- Merton RK., 1965, *Eléments de théorie et de méthode sociologique*, Plon, Paris.
- Meyer J, Rowan B., 1977, Institutionalized organizations: formal structure as myth and ceremony, *American Journal of Sociology*, 83, 2, pp.340-363.
- Michels R., 2015 *Sociologie du parti dans la démocratie moderne*, Folio, Gallimard, Paris.
- Mignot-Gérard S., 2006, *Echanger et argumenter : les dimensions politiques du gouvernement des universités françaises*, Thèse, Institut d'Etudes politiques, Paris.
- Mintzberg H., 1982, *Le management*, Paris, Les éditions d'Organisation.
- Mintzberg H., 1985, The organization as political arena, *Journal of Management Studies*, 22, 2, pp.1333-154.
- Murphy JA, Hallinger P., 1984, Policy analysis at the local level : a framework for expanded investigation, *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 3, pp.5-13.
- Musselin C., 2007, The transformation of academic work: facts and analysis, Paper center for studies in Higher Education at university of California, Berkeley, 4.
- Musselin C., 2009, Les réformes des universités en Europe : des orientations comparables mais des déclinaisons nationales, dans *L'université en crise mort ou résurrection*, Revue du Mauss, 33.
- Musselin C, Barrier, J, Boubal, C, Soubiron, A., 2012, Liberté, responsabilité...et centralisation des universités, Rapport, Sciences PO, CSO, ESEN.
- Oton JD, Weick K.E., 1990, Loosely coupled systems: a reconceptualisation, *Academy of Management Review*, 15, 2, pp.203-223.
- Osborne D, Gaebler T., 2013, *Reinventing government: how the entrepreneurial spirit is transforming the public sector*, Addison-Wesley, London.
- Pacitto JC., 2012 Le plagiat, transgression individuelle ou phénomène organisationnel dans *Le plagiat de la recherche scientifique* (Dir. Guglielmi, G et Koubi, G), Paris, LGDJ, pp.93 et s.
- Pacitto JC, Gay M, Charlet J.L., 2014, Malaise à l'université : les enseignants chercheurs ont la parole, SupAutonome.
- Parker M., 2014, University, Ltd : changing a business school, *Organization*, 21, 2, pp.281-292.
- Piketty T., 2009, Autonomie des universités : l'imposture, *Libération*, 17 février.

*The French academic reform: From a managerial inspiration  
to a bureaucratic drift / Jean-Claude PACITTO, Driss AHEDDA*

---

Pitrou A, Matalon B., 1963, *La fréquentation des services et équipements collectifs*, Etude Credoc, 2049.

Pfeffer J.P., 1992, Understanding power in organizations, *California Management Review*, Winter 1992, pp.29-50.

Rasmussen J., 2002, Quand l'arène politique s'en mêle : la mise en place des zones franches urbaines, Dans Fontaine J, Hassenteufel P., *To change or not to change ? Les changements de l'action publique à l'épreuve du terrain*, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2002, pp.211-254.

Raynaud P., 2008, Université, *Commentaires* n°121, pp.139 et s.

Reynaud J.D., 1997, *Les règles du jeu. L'action collective et la régulation sociale*, Armand Colin, Paris.

Rhodes R.A., 2011, *Every day life British government*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Salancik G.R, Pfeffer J.P., 1974, The base and use of power in organizational decision making: the case of university, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 19, 4, pp.453-473.

Salancik G.R, Pfeffer J.P., 1977, Who gets power and how they hold on it : a strategic contingency model of power, *Organizational Dynamics*, 5, pp.3-21.

6 P., 2010, When forethought and outturn part : types of unanticipated and unintended consequences Dans Margetts H, 6 P and Hood C, *Paradoxes of modernization : unintended consequences of public policy reform*, Oxford University Press, pp.44-60.

6 P., 2014, Explaining unintended and unexpected consequences of policy decisions: comparing three british governments, 1959-1974, *Public Administration*, 92, 3, pp.673-691.

Timsit G., 1986, *Théorie de l'administration*, Économica, Paris.

Zan S, Ferrante M., 1996, *Le phénomène organisationnel*, L'Harmattan, Paris.