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Universities and Government in Post-War Japan

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ABSTRACT

Japan's higher education system, in which private universities and colleges play an important part, has embarked on far-reaching reform in the 1990s. Its main objective was to free the national (public) universities from tight control by the central government and to give them more autonomy. In light of dramatic demographic changes, especially a much smaller proportion of people of traditional university age, and considering that higher education research was not useful to Japanese industry, the status and management of public universities have been transformed to allow more autonomy, competition, and private sector-style management. Meanwhile, mechanisms have been introduced to hold the newly independent universities more accountable.

RÉSUMÉ

Le système japonais d'enseignement post-secondaire, où les universités et collèges privés jouent un rôle important, s'est donné l'objectif de se réformer dans les années 1990. Il s'agissait de libérer les universités d'un contrôle étatique excessif et oppressif. Considéant l'évolution démographique du pays, surtout la faible participation des jeunes gens d'âge post-secondaire, et considérant le peu d'utilité industrielle des recherches alors en cours dans les universités, le statut de l'enseignement supérieur a été profondément modifié. Parmi les conséquences des réformes, il faudrait souligner l'autonomie des institutions, y compris en matière de management, et une franche acceptation de la compétition, style libre marché. D'ailleurs on a fait introduire une suite de mécanismes pour que, dorénavant, ces institutions autonomes restent tout de même imputables.

INTRODUCTION

Japanese universities and colleges are as numerous and as popular as their counterparts in North America and Europe. Fifty years ago, after a world war and at the beginnings of a second industrial revolution, Japanese universities and colleges were fewer, less well off, and burdened with outdated curricula. More than half of them were in private hands, and governmental control was weaker after introduction of an administrative system directed by the United States occupying force after the war. However, universities and colleges, including national universities, and faculty members working there enjoyed "university autonomy." Because autonomy was itself something of an innovation, it would be difficult to show how—if at all—Japanese post-secondary teaching and research of the 1950s were closely linked to social and economic development in 1950s Japan. Other factors must have accounted for that development.

A half-century later, the picture is radically different. Under the impact of the baby-boom and after two decades of vigorous policy development and state intervention, Japanese higher education has expanded into a mass system. Most universities and colleges remain private institutions, but the Japanese government has regained a degree of authority and control unparalleled in North American and Europe. Further, the government has decided to use its powers to engineer a great sea-change in the higher education sector, introducing incentives so that *all* universities and colleges must compete not only for research and development [R&D] funding from industry, but also from public sources. Universities and colleges have gradually accepted the research imperative, and at last begun to build strong links to industry. Research and development have increasingly become the mission of all colleges and universities.

Several factors account for the recent evolution of university-government relations in Japan, particularly in the Japanese political economy. On one hand, public opinion, and a clear managerial consensus in most Japanese industry, has favoured the massification of post-secondary education. On the other, traditional linkages between capital, social structure, and formal education, remain firmly in place. For example, University of Tokyo law graduates are still the largest single source of appointments to the bureaucracy of the Japanese government—a clue to the prevailing social structure of Japanese society, and the ambitions of a well-defined elite group. In short, the relationship between the Japanese government and higher education since 1950 is a revealing indicator of the Japanese industrial mindset, as well as economic and social policy.

This article examines how the relationship and interdependence between universities and the (federal) government developed over the last 125 years and the influences and forces that shaped the relationship.

THE ORIGINS OF THE MODERN HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

Japan's first modern university, the University of Tokyo, opened in 1877, and became an Imperial University in 1886—the first of seven, the other six being established gradually until 1939. The mandate of the Imperial Universities was to train elites, and to introduce and to interpret Western science to Japanese society. Engineering, then taught outside most Western universities, was an essential feature of the newly created university system. Meanwhile, private higher education institutions such as Keio (established in 1858) and Waseda (1882) grew to supplement their Imperial sisters, occasionally playing the role of centres for advanced practical and technical training. The system distinguished public universities from their private counterparts, and recognized a further distinction between special training colleges and normal schools. Not even the most prestigious private institutions were allowed to call themselves "universities," and gained equivalent legal status only after 1918. Despite legal equalization among all forms of higher education after World War II, a hierarchy of institutions persists in Japan, differentiated by history, funding, reputation, and function. Universities such as Tokyo and Kyoto are widely acknowledged to have better students, better graduates, more government funding, and greater success in obtaining competitive external research funds.[1]

In the mid-Meiji era (circa 1900), popular perceptions of the university solidified. The middle and upper classes came to think that expensive university education, especially at the Imperial Universities, would guarantee prestigious jobs and social status. As a result, a near-universal examination system developed throughout the entire school and post-secondary system. Entrance examinations extended from elementary schools to middle schools then to higher education. Although only about 20% of elementary school graduates advanced to middle schools between the 1920s and 1940s, and only about 3% of the population went on to higher education, examinations were the subject of repeated reform even before 1945. The main problem was to reconcile entrance examinations with the

schools' recommendations and reports on actual student achievement. The entrance examination, a mechanism to justify student advancement through all levels of schooling, was taken to an extreme. Because of the extraordinary effort to get admitted to a prestigious university, the status of graduates flowed from the university attended, not from the students' actual academic record within that institution.

Higher Education after World War II

The postwar introduction of an "American-style single-track" secondary education system, followed by enormous growth in the Japanese economy in the 1960s and 1970s, triggered rapid increases in post-secondary enrolment. Junior high school education became compulsory. In 2003, more than 95% of students advanced to senior high schools. Now, all graduates of senior high schools became eligible to enter higher education institutions, provided they passed the appropriate entrance exam. This expansion of numbers of graduates from upper secondary school and the strict hierarchy of higher education are at the origin of the so-called "examination hell" phenomenon.

Higher education enrolment rose quickly from the mid-1960s. Higher education became a mass system. "Massification" of higher education did not only entail quantitative expansion of the system, but also systemic change. The 1963 Report of the Central Education Council, an advisory body to the Education Minister, warned that problems arising from massification could be solved only through greater diversity in the system. That is, one could not go on building old-fashioned universities forever; one would surely need colleges, technical and vocational institutes, and quasi-university institutions—all of them well funded and strongly endorsed over a lengthy period. At the time, few in the system saw these implications, most retaining a fervent faith in the traditional university system.

Between 1960 and 1975, participation ratios among 18-year-olds jumped from 10% to 40%, mainly through expansion of the private sector.

Private universities and colleges (including two-year junior colleges) increased in number from 525 in 1960 to 933 in 1975, while the number of national universities grew from 72 to 81 during the same period.[2] Participation ratios stabilized in 1975-85 through a government initiative called the Higher Education Plan, aimed at enriching the quality of university education by restricting expansion of universities and colleges. Still participation grew again after the latter 1980s.

Today, nearly half the 18-year-old population attends university or college, and if one includes specialized training schools in the system, more than 70 percent participate in higher education. To accommodate so large a number of students (about 3 million) takes more than 1,200 universities and colleges, including 541 two-year junior colleges (Table 1). The private sector represents about three-quarters of higher education institutions—512 universities and 475 junior (2 year) colleges. But more than half (54 percent) of graduate studies occur at the 99 national universities, where the bulk of research is conducted.

Demographic Developments and the Changing Graduate Labour Market

Higher education is now threatened by a sharp decline in the 18-year-old population. Although their numbers peaked at more than 2 million in the early 1990s, they are forecast to fall to 1,200,000 by 2010, and 800,000 by 2050. This means a fundamental change in the supply/demand balance for higher education. Already, more than half of junior colleges and a quarter of private sector universities and colleges have reported enrolment shortfalls. One private university closed in 2002. This closure may be a prelude to the future bankruptcy of many private institutions. Possible solutions include accepting more adults—so far a tiny minority in universities as compared to North American higher education (see Yamamoto, Fujitsuka, & Honda-Okitsu, 2000)—and increasing the number of foreign students (presently almost 100,000 students, representing 2.5 percent of the total student body).

Table 1

Number of Institutions and Students of Post-Secondary Education in Japan, 2000

	National	Local Public	Private	Total
Institutions				
Universities and Colleges[a]	99	75	512	686
Junior Colleges[b]	16	50	475	541
Colleges of Technology[c]	54	5	3	62
Specialized Training Colleges	100	215	3,152	3,467
Students				
Universities and Colleges	621,488	116,706	2,047,884	2,786,078
Junior Colleges	5,800	18,834	242,480	267,114
Colleges of Technology	50,483	4,635	2,231	57,349
Specialized Training Colleges	12,720	32,283	720,700	765,703

[a] Degree-awarding institutions which provide four year undergraduate and post-graduate programmes.
[b] Providing two year associate degree programmes.
[c] Providing associate degree programmes of five years (three of upper secondary education and two years of higher education).

Source: Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Sciences and Technology (MEXT). 2002.

A third option is attracting more graduates from high schools than the current 50 percent. As elsewhere, the Japanese higher education system is responding to socio-economic change, in particular the recent development of a knowledge-based society and economy. In most countries in the developed world it is assumed that science and technology are engines for economic development and more resources are invested in scientific and technological research than ever before (OECD, 2003, p.33), a good deal of which is conducted in universities. Besides, the graduate labour market has changed considerably over the last 40 years, and many jobs that only required high school qualifications in the past are now filled by university graduates. Thus, for example, in 1960 most holders of clerical jobs—the crucial first step for careers in business and public administration/management in Japan—were high school graduates (more than 80 percent), whereas in 2000, more than 60 percent held a university degree. This upward shift of educational requirements illustrates the new reality of demand for higher education. The need for university reform in terms of educational standards is obvious. But there have been also other drivers of university reform.

Changes in the University-Government Relationship Since World War II

After World War II, "new universities" grew from various higher education institutions. The new system included four-year undergraduate programs with general education and special subjects, and graduate programs for master's degrees and doctoral degrees, none of which had been found in the pre-war system.[3] Another feature of the post-war university system was that all universities were legislated a common mission—research and teaching—under the School Education Law. Before the war each higher education institution had received a distinct legislated mission. Introduction of a common mission made university administrators and faculty alike accept that every institution should be equal and should have a research-intensive mandate.

Universities in Japan are now divided into three categories: national, local public, and private (or independent). National universities are established by the national government, local public universities are by local governments (prefectures), and private universities by private school corporations with non-profit status by law.

The Relationship Between Universities and the Government

In post-war Japan, the national universities, all public institutions, were strongly controlled by the government. However, they also enjoyed a high degree of autonomy due to the fact that, as in other nations, the instructional decisions of departments and faculty were protected by law from interference by the government. In addition, the government financially supported them by providing them with so-called general university funds based on a particular formula (number of chairs, students and so on) and not on competitive proposals. Due to this, the relationship of national universities with the government was characterized by the principle "no control, but support."

Until the mid 1970s, the relationship between private universities and the government had been "no control, no support," whereas before the War the government often intervened in management of private universities. The post-war Private School Law strictly limited governmental intervention in private institutions. In addition, the post-war Constitution of Japan provides that no public money or other property shall be expended or appropriated for the use, benefit or maintenance of any religious institution or association, or for any charitable, educational, or benevolent enterprises not under the control of public authority (Article 87). Thus, provision of financial support by the government for private institutions was difficult, even had they wished to accept. The School Education Law decrees that schools should be supported and controlled by those who establish them (Article 5). Since private school corporations establish the private institutions, the corporations must support their own schools.

Main Policy Concern Until Mid 1970s

Within this framework, the main roles of the Ministry of Education were: (1) design and administration of higher education system, (2) approval of new private and local public institutions,[4] (3) and the running of national universities and colleges on a budget secured from the Finance Ministry for national universities. Generally speaking, policy was set out so that the higher education system would function according to law. The public saw universities and colleges as ivory towers not very different in form and function from what they had been before the War. University autonomy acquired high value. The Ministry of Education was expected to be a general secretariat for all universities and colleges in Japan.

In the 1960s, with the growth of the Japanese economy, debate intensified on the relationship between education and economic growth. The government saw the importance of education as an investment in developing human resources in its "Report on the Long-Range Educational Plan Oriented toward the Doubling of Income (1960)." In addition to this, various new policy measures were discussed and implemented (Beauchamp, 1991, pp. 35–42).

One new policy concern was added in the 1960s. Due to growth in the national economy and thus of income, along with increases in the 18-year population, the desire for access to higher education grew. Because very few parents of students had attended higher education, chiefly for financial reasons, adults wanted their children to go to universities and colleges provided they were affordable. The participation rate of the 18 year-old population in higher education began to rise. The increase rapidly came to near 40% in 1975. The so-called "Japanese-style employment system" pushed people to apply to enter higher education.[5]

As people wanted to increase their and their children's chances for decent employment and income by going to university, the growth of demand for higher education continued to be greater than the supply. The most serious problem in higher education was the so called "entrance

examination hell," more onerous than in the years before the War, as far more students were involved. The question was how to provide more opportunities in education to secure equal access to higher education, and how to ease the competition for entry.

The Higher Education Plan Initiated by the Government

The growth of higher education, however, stopped in the mid 1970s. By the mid 1970s, the rapid growth of higher education began to cause new problems: (1) an imbalance in the locations of universities and colleges, since private institutions tended to locate in urban areas like Tokyo and Kyoto; (2) a decline in the quality of higher education, because so many institutions were established in a short period; and (3) rapid massification of higher education—leading to the question whether Japan needed more post-secondary education.

Disorder at universities in the later 1960s led the government to consider drastic reform. The solution of the day was not to "massify," but rather a kind of "birth-control" in order to support existing institutions by preventing new ones from establishing themselves in urban areas. Financial support for existing private institutions was strongly supported by conservative politicians. The constitutional problem was solved by direct governmental control of accounting. Government avoided direct control of whole institutions, restricting themselves to accountancy.

The Ministry of Education began to implement new initiatives. There was financial support for private institutions of up to 50 percent of running costs, although the figure never exceeded 30 percent. Meanwhile the Higher Education Plan aimed at controlling the quantity of higher education by prohibiting establishment of new institutions and departments in urban areas, and by encouraging universities to locate in or move to suburban or local areas. Finally, new national universities, as for instance the University of Tsukuba and the University of the Air, were founded in response to new demands for higher education. With implementation of the Higher Education Plan, the participation rate of the 18 year-old population

in universities and colleges stopped growing and those who could not enter universities and colleges advanced to special training schools different from universities and colleges. The Plan encouraged universities and colleges to locate outside Tokyo. In 1976, when the Plan was implemented, 37.8% of the students studied in universities and colleges located in Tokyo. In 1980, the figure dropped to 32.0% and continued to decline to 26.0% by 1990.

For the effective implementation of its plan, the government changed a crucial rule. From 1976, private and local public institutions were required to have the approval of the Minister of Education when they wished to create a new department and/or to raise enrolment. Until then, only the establishment of new institutions or the creation of new schools within the institutions had required approval. The new rule was enforced and, along with financial support (and strings attached to it), gave government a strong tool to control the expansion of private higher education. From then on, relations between the government and private higher education institutions followed a new principle, namely "support and control." Regarding national universities, this relationship did not change until the 1990s.

CHANGES OF UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT IN THE 1990s

Fundamental reform waited until the early 1990s. Universities, conservative as always, resisted it. The 1990s are nevertheless known as "The Ten-Year Reform" in higher education. Although successful implementation of reforms would have been difficult in the 1970s and 1980s, change could be accommodated in the 1990s, partly because of sweeping socio-economic developments after the collapse of the "bubble economy." "University autonomy" was replaced by the notion of "accountability of public institutions." The majority of the public came to think that universities and colleges were supported by public money, thus should be accountable to the public.

The high value attached to post-secondary education had been a matter of the name and reputation of institutions, rather than what students *learned* there. This emphasis on the "screening" function of universities was thought appropriate for Japanese-style employment. University education itself was thought unimportant, as presidents of big companies tended to think students should pass difficult entrance exams—and that the fact of their passing would assure dedication to task during later employment. The restructuring of the Japanese employment system to become more knowledge-based has changed this view. Instead, industry has begun to ask universities and colleges to provide students with practical knowledge and skills useful for business and employment. As a consequence, university education is becoming more important than ever, but institutions are similarly under considerable pressure.

The decline of the 18 year-old population also pushed forward university reform. It has changed the relationship between universities and students. University administrators and faculty, especially in private institutions, now realize they will not survive unless they respond to student and society demands. As more than a hundred institutions are at risk, universities increasingly accept the challenge that they must strengthen their financial situation and managerial capacity, and improve their teaching and research methods.

Main Reform Measures in the 1990s

In the 1990s, the most important reform measures were "evaluation" and "competition," along with the introduction and expansion of competitive governmental funding. In the field of evaluation, the government introduced self-evaluation in 1991 at the recommendation of an advisory University Council. Universities had been reluctant to evaluate the quality of their teaching and research because institutional autonomy was regarded as a fundamental value. In respect of this, the government chose to implement the measure of "self" evaluation under which the institutions would not necessarily experience direct loss of autonomy.

Once the self-evaluation system was introduced, many universities responded quickly. By the end of 1997, more than 80% of universities practiced self-evaluation, and about 70% published the results. Such a rapid spread of evaluation encouraged the government to advance this system. External evaluation began in 1998. In 2000, a new national evaluation committee was created in Tokyo—the National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation (NIAD). NIAD began evaluating teaching and research at national universities in that same year. In 2004, the government set up another evaluation system requiring every institution to be assessed regularly by an external organization authorized by government. Although not exactly the same as the American accreditation system, external evaluation influences education and research at the universities. The NIAD is expected to be among the external organizations, as the new evaluation system begins its work.

Competition is another feature of the 1990's reforms. National universities had, in the past, received large amounts of general university funds from the Ministry of Education. Competitive funding, like research grants, used to be smaller. Faculties mainly performed their research under the general university fund, distributed by the central administration of their institution. Under the old scheme, the competitive research fund was a resource supplemental to other funds.

Government deficits, followed by government-wide administrative reform, produced financial difficulty in university research in the late 1980s. General university funds were frozen and research stagnated. In the late 1980s, it was thought that the Japanese economy was good, but Japanese universities poor. The improvement of research conditions at universities became an urgent problem of higher education policy.

The 1990s were regarded as the decade of emerging importance of science and technology. In every country, science and technology came to be regarded as the engines of economic growth and social welfare. The end of the Cold War drew every nation into competition for economic status. Japan was no exception. Thus, the growth of investment for

research infrastructure within universities became a high priority in the sector. Funding was provided *via* competition. Grants-in-aid for scientific research have sharply increased since the mid 1990s, while the growth of general (discretionary) university funds has remained modest (Yamamoto, 1999).

Government policy for expansion and reform of graduate education in the 1990s stimulated competition. Because resources were limited, government chose a policy that saw only selected national universities receive funding for their newly expanded graduate (doctoral) programs ("Juten-ka"). Most selected institutions were former Imperial Universities, such as the University of Tokyo and the University of Kyoto. But other national universities wanted doctoral programs to be funded and competition among national institutions intensified.

Along with such change in governmental funding, the Ministry of Education encouraged universities and colleges to expand and reinforce ties with industry (Yamamoto, 2002). For the institutions, the results of academic basic research became desirable, not only to encourage contributions for industrial research and development, but to acquire new financial resources from industry. Industrial funding rose during the 1990s, mainly through joint research or contract research, and through direct donations (Yamamoto, 1999). The introduction of a five-year government Plan for Science and Technology in 1996, renewed in 2001, strongly supported growing cooperation between universities and industry.

In the long run, the most important reform of national universities was administrative: the reorganization that converted national universities to "national university corporations" ("Hojin-ka"). This scheme, conceptualized during governmental reform planning in the 1990s, aims at making national universities more active in research and teaching, and more accountable to the general public by separating their administration from that of government. The General Law of Administrative Corporations enacted in 1999 states that administrative corporations will deal with public matters that need not be carried out by the government itself, but that are also not expected of the private sector.

Since national universities are public corporations, they are expected to be responsible to the general public. Some critics say that this scheme aims at reducing the money that has to date been granted to universities. Although this may be true to some extent, the real aim is the clarification of responsibility of university activity. To do so, the government has required each university to have a six-year action plan, improving the quality of teaching, performing more research activities, reducing the number of employees and so on, approved by the Minister of Education. Results of the six-year plan must be evaluated by a Ministry panel. External administrators must be involved in university governance. So-called "faculty autonomy" will be replaced by presidential initiatives, meaning that decision-making is not controlled by faculty meetings, but by presidents. Finally, the government will provide funds that may vary, depending on the results of the Ministerial Reviews.

Although the university corporation scheme does not mean the privatization of national universities, each institution will compete with the rest for limited resources available to all under the competitive framework which was implemented in April 2004. University administration will change drastically from the past norm.

RECENT CHANGES IN RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UNIVERSITIES AND THE GOVERNMENT, AND REASONS FOR THEM

Changes in University-Government Relations

Universities, and especially national universities, do not express strong opposition—as they once did—to university reform. In a broader sense, reform since World War II may be regarded as the re-adjustment or re-distribution of benefits that universities and faculty once had, to the exclusion of broader interests in society. Under reform, university faculty members are required to work harder in teaching and research, just as other citizens must "work hard." It is thus surprising that universities and professors do not resist reform.

Universities have come to see the Ministry of Education, not as an obstacle to institutional autonomy, but as a benevolent sponsor who allocates funding. Before the 1990s, faculty members, especially in the social sciences and humanities, tended to oppose new Ministry policies because they seemed to threaten university autonomy and freedom of research. Under these circumstances, university administrators were particularly careful to introduce Ministry policies as non-intrusively as possible.

But now the situation has drastically changed. At faculty meetings in many universities, the Ministry's demands are seen and accepted as ironclad, and disputes and difficult situations within institutions are settled decisively. Thus, universities are participants in a "rat-race" for limited resources under Ministry control. Instead of opposing governmental policy, universities follow directives.

With increased competition, professors' main concerns are how to compete with their peers for superior research outcomes. Good evaluations from peers or from the Ministry are important tickets to future success. Thus, professors are busier than ever. They become less interested in university administration, as compared with their research activities. Many professors no longer seriously concern themselves with university autonomy. Instead, they wonder how to improve the performance of their research activities.

The role of the government (the Ministry of Education) has become greater, and national universities have diversified in size and importance, as the result of severe competition between one another. The distinction between winners and losers will soon be clear.

Reasons for Change

There are, as yet, no persuasive explanations in Japan for these new reforms. Still, three reasons for it deserve consideration, and not just by researchers, but also by university faculty members and administrators concerned about university autonomy and responsibility.

First, research has become more expensive than ever, while universities and their faculty members have increasing difficulty in

funding research. Discretionary university funds play a far reduced role, whereas competitive research grants and other types of competitive funds have increased. Universities and colleges are anxious to find new funding, becoming more sensitive and submissive to national policy, and to the attitudes of the government.

There was a time when Japanese universities need not worry about research money. The general, discretionary university fund was enough to finance research. This was especially true for the social sciences and humanities. If an institution could buy books and resources from the fund, that was enough. Even today, some faculty in these fields purchase books and fund travel from their own pockets. Thus, the social sciences and humanities were relatively indifferent to new arrangements of government funding, if only because they were not so afraid as the natural sciences of losing funds.

The medical and engineering fields were similar, since faculty in those fields could find resources outside the Education Ministry, from industry or other governmental sources. They need not fear losing money. The field of science, on the other hand, needed money from the Education Ministry because its research was highly expensive and no one other than the Ministry would pay for it. In the 1960s, 1970s, and even the 1980s, since scientists were far more influential than scholars in other fields, and in light of improvements in the financial condition of the Government, professors in the sciences could easily obtain research funding from the Ministry.

Since the early 1990s, research in the social sciences and humanities has become more expensive with sophistication of research methods, and now require resources and facilities. Research needs and manpower requirements exceed the abilities of individuals to bear library-intensive expenditures. Thus, more academics have become dependent on governmental funding than may have been the case a decade or two ago.

Second, few people working for universities and colleges now can recall times before and during the War when non-science university activities were neglected by the government. Even the generation

involved in 1960s university and social disorder, and which opposed attacks on university autonomy, have become older and more complacent. Most current faculty members have no personal acquaintance with those earlier periods, and are interested only in their own research and teaching. From their perspectives, the government is the source of funding, not a power opposed to university autonomy.

Third, people in the Ministry have also changed. In the 1950s and 1960s, most who entered the Ministry of Education graduated from universities other than the School of Law at the University of Tokyo, as the Ministry of Education was a less popular destination among them than the Ministry of Finance or the Ministry of Industry. Then, in the 1970s and 1980s, the number of people in the Ministry of Education who had graduated from the School of Law at the University of Tokyo rapidly increased (Yamamoto, 1998).[6] As is well known, the main route to becoming a high-ranking bureaucrat of the government began with graduation from that School. Graduation from the University of Tokyo gave bureaucrats much self-confidence, and they became bureaucrats in the worst sense of that term, rather than public servants according to the great objectives of the Constitution. As for the Ministry of Education, its staff operate as administrators, rather than as secretariats for universities and colleges. This, along with the factors described earlier, suggest the possibility of rapid development in university-government relations in years and decades to come.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES IN RELATION WITH THE KNOWLEDGE-BASED SOCIETY

Japanese universities, as in other countries, were once isolated from government and society. But with the rise of a knowledge-based society, and given the changing higher education environment, the distance between universities and the rest of society has diminished greatly. Burton Clark suggests that three kinds of university stakeholder play important roles in the university system (Clark, 1983, p. 143). One

is the university itself. The second is the market or the general public. Universities cannot disregard the emerging and changing needs of research and teaching expressed by the public, industry, parents, and students. The government is the third stakeholder.

There has been a gradual shift in the balance among these three stakeholders. Private universities have become more aware of the market's role. National universities, in contrast, have grown to rely more on government, including its resources. The move to independence, therefore, causes anxiety for many university administrators and faculty. Whether the National University Corporation system will be successful or not is entirely dependent on the ability to overcome this fear.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATION: THE NON-INTENDED COSTS OF THE PRESENT REFORM

University professors will be involved in discussions of university reform, whether or not they are interested. On the other hand, if they commit too much time to reform, the outcomes of their research and teaching will decline (Kobayashi, 1998). Faculty may wish to gauge carefully the amount of time and energy they devote to reform, remembering they must continue to be productive in their institutions and in society. Professors' most central occupation is, after all, research and teaching, not administration and management, perhaps better done by professional administrators.

Notes

[1]In 2003 the University of Tokyo alone received about 14% of the scientific grant-in-aid funded by the Education Ministry.

[2]Data come from the School Basic Survey of the Ministry of Education, Tokyo, Japan. Statistical data for this paper come from publications of the Ministry of Education, culture, sports, science and technology, searchable at: http://www.mext.go.jp/english/

[3]Before 1939, graduate education was a step in the preparation of academic researchers, organized as kind of an apprenticeship.

[4]Although more local public universities were established and supported by the local governments in the 1980s and 1990s, only with national and private universities are discussed here.

[5]By that time, the so-called Japanese-style employment system was a well-established practice in big companies. It meant a life-long employment practice (by the age of 55 or so), employment of graduates mainly from prestigious universities, and employment exclusively of new graduates younger than 25 or so. Adult education and graduate education were almost irrelevant to people wishing to be employed by big companies.

[6]Reasons for the increase are many and different. University disorder in the late 1960s affected student attitudes to education, and more students at the University of Tokyo became interested in appointment in the Ministry of Education, as compared to earlier generations and decades.

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