Chapter 9
Collegiality Revisited: Continuity, Rejuvenation or Demise?

Dimensions of the Collegial Tradition

It was never our intention in writing this book to construct a nostalgic portrayal of the collegial tradition in higher education or to glance back into the past and to lament that the world of higher education is not what it used to be. In the past 25 years most national systems of higher education have changed out of all recognition. We have used the idea of the collegial tradition to throw a spotlight on those changes. We have done so partly because this is a concept that we have grappled with in much of our writing. But it is more than a conceptual love affair. The collegial tradition represents a powerful idea of the university that embraces its purposes, how it should conduct its business and what its outcomes should be. Furthermore, in our analysis of the collegial tradition we have argued that it is a concept that is embedded not only in the collegiate universities but also has embraced higher education almost universally.

An examination of the idea of collegiality provides, therefore, a particular avenue into the analysis of change in higher education. It has certain advantages over other approaches. While requiring a presentation of the evolving historical context, it demands that the empirical evidence should be analysed conceptually rather than allowed to overwhelm the writing with descriptive detail. It does not prevent the intrusion of prescriptive judgements or the presentation of partisan policy proposals, but it does suggest that the researching of higher education deserves a better fate. As we have argued, it is a multi-dimensional concept but at its core is an argument about the character of higher education institutions – how they are structured to perform their key tasks. As such it enables the analysis to transcend, while drawing upon, the established research themes of access, funding, the evolution of the academic estate, the quality agenda, links to state and society or even exposure to the presumed perils of mass higher education.

In this chapter we want to bring together our analysis of the collegial tradition by presenting an overview of its current evolution and likely future development. The goal is to explore where it is going. We will do this in terms of the three central interpretations of the tradition that have formed the core of this book:

T. Tapper, D. Palfreyman, *The Collegial Tradition in the Age of Mass Higher Education*, DOI 10.1007/978-90-481-9154-3_9,

1. the collegiate universities with particular reference to the federal principle of governance
2. colleges and commensality
3. the conduct of the academic enterprise

Within the context of this overview we will consider the future of collegiality both as a process (how collegial institutions should function) and as an idea (the purposes of collegiality and indeed of the university itself). The intention is to present contrasting (although not completely distinctive) scenarios: 'collegial continuity', 'collegial rejuvenation', and 'the demise of collegiality'. The chapter will conclude by briefly addressing the implications of the future of collegiality for our broader understanding of developments in higher education with, of course, particular reference to the national systems that form the empirical basis of this book.

Federalism: A Weak Form of Governance?

It is possible to argue that the foundation of the University of London, incorporating University College and King's College, was a political masterstroke in the sense that the creation of a federal university enabled the reconciliation of conflicting interests. Moreover, it could be maintained that this was a principled compromise in the sense that the University of London, as a publicly created body, would have the authority to control the examination process and award degrees, while the two colleges would be responsible for undertaking day-to-day academic functions. Furthermore, this could be seen as a principled outcome in that sense that the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge had set the precedent. It therefore genuflected to a model that embraced England's only two (leaving aside Durham) universities.

The contrary argument is that the federal model was little more than a convenient construction to reconcile irreconcilable interests and that, sooner or later, differing institutional ambitions would blow the compromise apart. In other words, to draw upon Dicey's strictures, the inherently conservative and weak nature of the federal model of governance would either prove unworkable or would impose too high a price upon the constituent members of the university. But, weak and conservative or not, it has been our contention that central to the collegiate university is a federal structure of governance, and if it is compromised beyond a certain point then the collegiate university is no more. Of course, as we have explored in this book, this leaves considerable room for manoeuvre because the line between acceptable and unacceptable compromises is far from certain.

With respect to the four federal universities (Cambridge, London, Oxford and Wales) that this book has drawn upon to analyse the collegiate university, the evidence supportive of 'continuity', 'rejuvenation' and 'demise' is mixed. The first point to stress, obvious but nonetheless very important, is that all four universities continue to have (albeit reformulated) federal structures of governance. When Oxford and Cambridge became collegiate universities, as opposed to mere creatures

of their colleges, is open to debate, but the University of London received its charter in 1836 and the University of Wales in 1893. Regardless of all the trials and tribulations, the four respective models of governance have persisted with broadly similar structures over time. Our prior analysis has made, which our subsequent discussion will reinforce, important qualifications regarding the federal structures of the four universities, but these should be evaluated in the light of this powerful manifestation of continuity.

The threat to federalism at the Universities of London and Wales is most clearly seen in the desertion of two of their respective flagships – Imperial and Cardiff. However, this does not mean that the two universities are bound to experience the fate of capsising instigated by further desertions. Indeed, it is possible that both will actually grow in size should other institutions (for example, the Brunel University with respect to London) decide that it is in their best interests to join. Both the Universities of London and Wales remain highly respected brand names, which could prove to be a greater attraction to prospective members than any of the perceived practical advantages (the centralised provision of shared services) of joining. Nonetheless, in terms of the overall prestige of the two universities it is not much comfort if highly prestigious members declare independence while other less-prestigious institutions, whatever their virtues may be, want to join. Such a change in the balance of a university's profile must inevitably impact upon the long-term strength of its appeal.

The same problem does not emerge at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge because the federal models are so much more deeply entrenched. However, the two universities have continued to incorporate new colleges and, while this may not dilute the overall brand name, it almost certainly extends the college hierarchy within both universities. It is not only a question of a prestige hierarchy built around the contrasting resources of the colleges for it also raises the issue of the relative weight of the individual colleges within both the inter-collegiate bodies and within the universities themselves. With respect to the formal rules all may be equal, but influence has a way of being determined by variables other than the constitutional niceties. So, all are equal but some are more equal than others. It may be inevitable that there is an imbalance of power amongst the constituent members of a federal system (after all, California, New York and Texas are not quite the same as Rhode Island, Nebraska and Idaho) but the impact of the expansion (albeit intermittent) of the collegial system at both Oxford and Cambridge upon their federal models of governance is a topic worthy of further investigation.

The evolution of the federal model at the University of London is a consequence of a great deal more than the change in the composition of its constituent members. The annual grant from the funding council is now distributed directly to the colleges (with the central services delivered by the university underwritten by a formula-driven financial contribution from the individual colleges) and the colleges can award their own degrees if they so wish. In effect the university has moved from a federal to a confederal model of governance. It is not too much of an exaggeration to draw a parallel with the collegiate consortia that are to be found in American higher education. In both cases the centre performs a service role, which entails

providing the support functions devolved to it by its constituent members. As it were, responsibilities are devolved to the centre, rather than as is the case in the more usual devolutionary process where the centre transfers responsibilities to the periphery.

Nonetheless, there are also critical differences because the University of London is not the creature of its colleges but rather an independent statutory body. The Universities of London and Wales are not inter-collegiate models in which the colleges delegate essentially administrative tasks to their universities as in the case with the collegiate consortia in the United States. However, although it is to make the point too sharply, in relation to its colleges the University of London has become essentially the provider of service functions, which entail administrative rather than policy-making responsibilities. And, as we have had occasion to remark previously, the constitutional position invariably carries less weight than what is taking place on the ground.

The conclusion that you are almost inexorably led to is that we are left with two somewhat different federal models of higher education in Britain – the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Furthermore, if we are to maintain that a federal model of governance is integral to the idea of the collegiate university, it follows that there are only two collegiate universities. However, we have already queried the strength in depth of the federal model at Oxford and Cambridge given the growth in the number of colleges. Are there other more significant causes for concern?

The contemporary struggles at Oxbridge (and more particularly, and certainly more publicly, at Oxford) over the governance of the two universities have focussed more on the decline of donnish dominion rather than on the possible erosion of the federal model of governance. While the defence of donnish dominion (especially seen in the resistance to the increased representation of lay members on Council) may be an evocative cause, it surely has no more importance than the surreptitious shifts in the balance of power within the federal model.

In Chapter 3 (*Collegiality: The Contemporary Challenges*) we discussed the pressures upon the federal model. At the core of the argument was the claim that successive governments had changed the relationship between the state and the universities in ways that tilted the power balance within the federal model from the colleges to the universities. This shift has followed on from the following (to name the key variables): the introduction of new funding mechanisms, the research assessment exercises, the quality assurance agenda and the persistent pressure upon the universities to 'widen participation' in order to achieve a more socially representative student intake.

How is this ongoing change in the federal model of governance of the two ancient collegiate universities to be interpreted? First, it has to be said that there is nothing new about the oscillation of power – once it was all colleges and virtually no university. Shifts in the balance of power is what one would expect of a federal model of governance (indeed what it was meant to accomplish), which provides an important counter to Dicey's negative analysis of federalism. Furthermore, the colleges at both Oxford and Cambridge continue to fulfil critical academic functions, and as long as they do so it would be very mistaken to see them as simply upmarket halls

of residence. The colleges – obviously some more than others – remain powerful in their own right; there are inter-collegiate bodies that (for example) organise undergraduate admissions and are responsible for the smooth running of undergraduate teaching, and within the decision-making bodies of both universities the college interests will be firmly represented.

So what is the problem? First, there is the fact that the relative balance of power appears to have been shifting inexorably for many years in one direction. Second, there is no sign that this is coming to an end, which raises the fears of those who feel that it has already gone too far. It is important to remember that Oxford and Cambridge sustain somewhat different representations of the collegiate university. For many years the University of Cambridge has had a stronger centre (reflecting in part the larger size of its science base), and nearly all college fellows are first and foremost university employees. And yet it is in Oxford that fears for the future of the collegiate university are more likely to be expressed and, although there may be stern critics of how Cambridge is governed, there is no voice to suggest that it is not a collegiate university. So what should be the balance of power within the federal model if the collegial tradition is to be sustained?

As long as the Oxford colleges continue to hold onto their core academic functions, the collegiate university will persist. But this is not to say that the fears for its future are completely groundless. The pressures associated with the research assessment exercises and quality assurance mechanisms have augmented the leverage of the universities over the colleges. But a perhaps more insidious development is the state interventions that impact directly upon the interests of the colleges. The most striking of these is the erosion of college fees and the channelling of the remaining income through the universities rather than paying it directly to the colleges. At one time negotiations on college fee income were conducted between the state and inter-collegiate bodies (with considerable cooperation between the Oxford and Cambridge colleges). The loss of this role therefore has both practical and symbolic significance.

The collegiate control of undergraduate admissions is another soft target. If the universities are to be held responsible by the state for their alleged failure to broaden the social base of their undergraduate recruitment then it makes sense for them, if not to wrest control away from the colleges, to seek a greater say in how the admissions process should function. It is far from an envious position for the universities in as much as the state accords them the responsibility but they do not control this sensitive policy area.

These developments suggest it is becoming increasingly difficult to hold onto any pristine understanding of the collegiate university as a federal model. The channelling of college fees through the Joint Resource Allocation Method (JRAM) has given rise to negotiations between representatives of the universities and of the colleges. Thus we have the interaction of two levels of governance – that of the university and that of the inter-collegiate representatives. In parallel fashion it is easy to envisage a joint university/inter-collegiate body taking over responsibility for undergraduate admissions, which would reshape in part how the federal model operates.

A perennial critical issue is the relationship between inter-collegiate bodies and individual colleges. Will the latter delegate to the former the binding authority to act on their behalf? Inter-collegiate bodies appear to function effectively, and with little rancour from the colleges, when they are focussed on specific issues such as admissions and the organisation of teaching. As the saga, following the recommendation of the Franks Report for the creation of a council of colleges (with binding decisions determined by the votes of college representatives), demonstrated there were limits to the spirit of inter-collegiate cooperation. It is evident that when core collegial interests are at stake many of the colleges want to protect their freedom of action just as Haverford College was prepared to incur the ire of Bryn Mawr College over the admission of women students in spite of their long inter-collegiate cooperation.

But, regardless of the sanctity of college sovereignty, it is evident that the federal model of governance is becoming more complex within the collegiate universities. There is a steady institutional entwining of the colleges to each other, and of them to the universities. The shift is away from the clearly defined models of governance to one in which it is difficult to apply unequivocal labels. As we noted, the University of Wales now describes its model of governance as confederal but London still continues to see itself as a federal university. Broader changes in higher education are stimulating an array of institutional links. The University of London can be viewed as a close federation of colleges, which are part of the loose federation known as London Higher. Within this context the possibilities for the development of collegial consortia, perhaps built around cooperation on specific degree programmes, are immense. Already such cooperation is expanding with, for example, the Universities of Sussex and Brighton, like the Universities of Plymouth and Exeter, sharing a medical school. Inevitably adjustments to the structures of governance have to be made to accommodate such developments. And Durham University, whose colleges for the most part are still little more than offshoots of the university, has a couple of colleges with an independent corporate identity and some endowment resources, which give them the potential to be more than simply residential colleges (and one could argue that the realisation of that potential is long overdue). If ever there were a hybrid model, it is Durham.

The conclusion, therefore, is that the two ancient English collegiate universities are far from alone in facing challenges to their models of governance. It is not simply that the federal model is under pressure but rather the governance of higher education at large is in flux. Although the fluidity makes for instability, with all the tensions that it can generate, it is also a dynamic situation that opens up possibilities for constructive change. While there may be parallel pressures that have impacted upon different national systems of higher education, there is no one pre-determined response that is dictated by those pressures. Inevitably response patterns will be shaped by the particular problems that an institution faces, but judgements will have to be made to determine how best to adapt to the pressures for change. It is a context that encourages innovation, lateral thinking and even risk taking. Moreover, it does provide opportunities for energetic leadership (with all the dangers that this possibly entails) for the structural constraints have been eroded.

Burgan (2006) argued that academics needed to be continuously engaged in the daily affairs of their universities if they were serious about impacting upon the decision-making process. The point is self-evident: if the academy is serious about retaining the collegiate university then it will have to fight for it. The restructuring of the federal models at both the Universities of London and Wales, including the defections of Cardiff and Imperial, came out of intense political struggles. And, to draw upon a broadly parallel Oxbridge example, the mobilisation of grassroots academic opposition defeated the then vice-chancellor of Oxford in his attempt to reformulate the composition of Oxford's Council. So, in one form or another, the collegiate university with its federal model of governance can survive but whether the commitment either to sustain or to reformulate it actually exists is another matter.

Colleges and Commensality

The perseverance of federal structures of governance is more than matched by the longevity of colleges in the history of higher education. Furthermore, the foundation of new colleges, although not a frequent occurrence, has not dried up. But it is equally clear that the character of the present-day college (even at Oxford and Cambridge) no longer conforms to the fictionalised model – gothic buildings, well endowed, an enclosed world constructed around a range of inward-looking social and cultural activities and – above all – dedicated solely to undergraduate teaching. The values that underwrote the foundation of collegiate models of higher education – namely the importance of a liberal education within the confines of a small college dedicated to undergraduate education, combined with a strong emphasis on the residential college as a force for shaping the whole person – may still persist, but this is a declining reality. In its most pristine form it is most likely to be found in the small American liberal arts colleges, but its overall representation within higher education is in steady decline.

In order to survive, the idea of the college has adjusted pragmatically, and in the process has become a more complex and, in some respects, more interesting concept. Indeed, our small foray into the world of the medieval college revealed similar flexibility. There are numerous contemporary examples – colleges for graduate students, undergraduate colleges with affiliated graduate students and colleges that use their resources (status and buildings) to pursue a range of money-making activities. If there is nostalgia then it is put to good use in the regular appeals for donations that are targeted at alumni. Furthermore, as the admission of women to the former all-male colleges at both Oxford and Haverford demonstrates, the colleges did in the last analysis make decisions they felt were in their own best interests. Decision-making in the colleges may be slow but the need to do what is seen as best for the college is invariably of paramount concern.

In some respects colleges have become business enterprises, dependent on their commercial pursuits to augment their incomes and thus enhance their core activities. And at Kent, Lancaster and York we noted the emergence of college annexes,

so creating the possibility for students to establish different kinds of relationships to their college. In a formal sense all undergraduates at these three new (1960s) universities, as well as at Durham, may belong to a college but what that means in practice can vary considerably.

What is true for students is also true for the faculty. The collegiate system (even in the small, high-status American liberal arts colleges) has had to adjust to social and academic change, which has meant accepting the fact that nearly all academics will construct relations to the college that they perceive to be in their own best interests. Thus the weight of undergraduate teaching cannot be allowed to damage seriously the commitment to research; commensality has to be confined more to the 'nine-to-five' working day; and involvement in conducting the affairs of the college becomes more ritualised, and perhaps increasingly delegated to a small number of faculty whose personal circumstances (and interests) make it particularly appropriate. As the example of the University of California at Santa Cruz (UCSC) demonstrates, it is especially difficult to create a collegiate university (as opposed to a university that embraces collegiality) within the boundaries of a university with a deeply entrenched commitment to the research agenda. The unexplored issue with respect to UCSC is whether a compromise could have been formulated that would have allowed the differing factions either to coalesce amicably or to go their separate ways while making different positive contributions to the greater good.

While, to draw again upon Rhoades (1990), reports on American higher education may have had a tendency to invoke the collegial model of higher education and thereby create a nostalgic (and unreal) view of the past, the same charge could not be levelled at the colleges themselves. Moreover, the four English universities with colleges (besides Oxford and Cambridge) that we have researched in this book (Durham, Kent, Lancaster and York) all confirm vociferously the appeal of their colleges to would-be students and the depth they add to the undergraduate experience. These are claims that would be matched in broad terms by the American liberal arts colleges, and even those less than enamoured of Oxbridge would accept that the colleges are still intrinsic to the current identities of the two universities.

'Small is beautiful' retains its appeal, but precisely how small colleges have to be in order to sustain that appeal is difficult to say. The interesting question is what evidence is there to support it? No doubt survey evidence could be produced to show that the overwhelming majority of undergraduates have positive views of their colleges and would affirm that it was the opportunity to reside in a college that proved a decisive factor in determining which university to attend. But this is to solicit the views of the insiders, those who have already come within the orbit of the colleges. We need to know how wide this appeal is or, to put the question the other way round, is it a selective appeal, and, if so, how selective? The question that can be asked, but to which there is no answer, is how attractive these universities would be to applicants and undergraduates if they had no residential colleges? One suspects that the brand of the university, and that of the liberal arts college, is so strong that the presence of colleges has little impact upon applications, although undoubtedly they will impact upon the undergraduate experience. Again it is a matter for speculation, but perhaps an environment with intrinsically more appeal could replace colleges.

The implication of the above argument is that the public pronouncements coming from the universities with residential colleges are more a reaffirmation of their value positions rather than of any solid evidence of their appeal to applicants. This is to be expected especially when it is possible to sustain the argument with an array of anecdotal evidence. The position with respect to Oxford and Cambridge is more interesting. First, these are collegiate universities and the colleges have key academic functions – including, of course, control over the admission of undergraduates. Second, several of the colleges at both universities have international reputations in their own right. Third, over time colleges have established social links with schools and families (note also the delicate issue of how the Ivy League universities respond to pressure from their alumni who seek to secure the entry of their own children) and undoubtedly these will encourage some applicants to apply to a particular college.

Perhaps the most solid Oxbridge evidence of the appeal of the colleges is that, although applicants can make open applications (that is not to apply to a specific college) the overwhelming majority in fact choose not to do so. Nonetheless, it should be remembered that there is a strong belief (if not amongst applicants then amongst their teachers and parents) that the chances of securing a place are enhanced if you target a particular college. Moreover, how detailed a picture of the college the applicant will obtain – especially in terms of the way it will impact upon the teaching she/he is likely to receive – is very problematic. It is likely that for most applicants Cambridge and Oxford seem very desirable places to study and both come with colleges.

As the federal model of institutional governance is open to a range of interpretations, so much the same is true of the idea of the college. We are in a fluid situation with colleges adjusting to the changing environment in a manner that they judge will best ensure their long-term futures. The paths are not necessarily those the colleges would have chosen if they had been free agents. They have to plan their development in the context of their present circumstances (which certainly within Oxford and Cambridge will vary considerably from college to college) as well as the pressures they face from other institutional actors (the university, other colleges, inter-collegiate bodies and even state organisations). Moreover, the key internal elements – college fellows, students and the administrative staff – will each have interests of their own to protect. These ebbs and flows occur within an environment that is increasingly less rule bound. So, students and faculty (less so administrative/support staff) are more in control of their relationship to the college. Once the norms were clear-cut, now they are more amenable to interpretation. Thus the college has less of a sense of its own identity and its members, obviously within broadly defined boundaries, can shape their own relationship to the college. The college will mean different things to different people. To some students it will be at the very centre of their lives for several years, for others little more than an upmarket hall of residence (especially if nearly all their teaching is under the control of the university). To some tutors it may provide little more than lunch or the occasional dinner, for others it may mean an opportunity to construct an alternative (perhaps more interesting) career line. Some employees may see the college as little more than

an employer (and a not particularly generous one at that), while others may find their jobs give them both satisfaction and status within a comfortable, human-scale setting. None of this is particularly surprising and, to a degree, it was always true. The difference is that the idea of the college has rarely been so fluid and relationships to it driven so much by pragmatic considerations. This is perhaps as dramatic a period of change as that of the latter half of the nineteenth century, which saw the emergence of the idea of the college that is contemporarily under so much pressure.

The Academic Enterprise in Action

One of the main reasons for writing this book was the conviction that the collegial tradition was embedded deeply within both contrasting national systems of higher education and institutions of a widely varied character (including, besides universities, law firms and barristers' chambers). It is a tradition not confined to collegiate universities or to universities with colleges alone but rather represents an idea of how all universities should pursue their goals. It is composed of values that underwrite organisational structures and procedures that many would argue are central to the idea of the university.

In much of continental Europe, the United States and Britain there has been a persistent belief that control of academic affairs is best left to those who are responsible for their delivery. This placed academic authority in the hands of the faculty and most power, especially in continental Europe, resided with the professors. But in this respect the contrast with both the United States and Britain should not be too sharply drawn. Invariably senior academics, especially those who were members of decision-making bodies like Senates or held management posts – heads of departments, deans and members of academic boards – had most influence. From 1945 to around 1980 the academic estate was the dominant decision-making force in the university. We have discussed how in the past 20 years its influence has waned to the point that it may no longer control even the development of the university's academic agenda.

In continental Europe the university has come to acquire a much stronger sense of its own identity and institutional decision-making is no longer simply a question of how to navigate and construct compromises out of competing interests. In the United Kingdom the sentiment of the academic literature is that the state has eroded university autonomy by ever more tighter steering of the development of higher education. But there is an alternative interpretation: the state has strengthened its grip of higher education policy by undermining the authority of the academic estate and at the same time has enhanced the ability of the university to resist pressure from this previously dominant interest. The key issue is no longer whether universities are autonomous institutions or not, but rather who has power on campus. But, of course, one should not forget that power over the development of the university may also have seeped out of the campus towards state and quasi-state institutions (the United Kingdom) or to the trustees (the United States).

The decline in the authority of academics is usually seen as the corollary of the managerial revolution in higher education with its emphasis on the importance of institutional leadership, senior management teams, the clear designation of councils as the executive authority of the university (with a majority of lay members and a layperson as chair), the fusing of departments into schools/colleges and the appointment by the centre (rather than election from below) of deans who are absorbed into a hierarchical chain of command. Thus, even the idea of shared governance, let alone collegial governance, is fading rapidly.

However, interpreting developments in higher education is rarely clear-cut. The presence of many institutions within a diverse system of higher education invariably means that universities will change at different speeds and with variations in their practices. As the continental experience informs us it is perhaps more important to examine policy implementation rather than policy prescriptions because the gap between what appears on the statute book and how the universities interpret their legal obligations is often wide. In spite of these equivocations, it is evident that both academic structures, and the mechanisms by which the academy develops, have changed quite markedly in the past 20 years. The issue is not whether there has been a managerial revolution but rather how it impacts upon the structure of governance and administration in higher education. Does it mean the demise of the collegial tradition? Or can this assume forms that will lead to a constructive synergy between managerialism and collegiality?

In both the United Kingdom and the United States the academic estate (excluding the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge) was the most prevalent policy-making interest for only a comparatively brief period of time. Therefore, it could be argued that what we are seeing is not so much the decline of donnish dominion but rather a shrinking of its sphere of influence to boundaries that were once commonplace. By way of contrast, in much of continental Europe the university did not have a strong identity, rather it acted as a body reconciling the competing interests of the guilds, with the professoriate (that gave the university its identity) exercising most authority. In the emerging continental model the university has more autonomy not so much in relation to the state but rather in its dealings with its internal interests. While the state increases the institutional authority of the university, in return it demands more detailed accountability. The university needs to demonstrate that it is indeed delivering efficiency and effectiveness.

The question is what model of governance and administration will be adopted within the varying national systems to enable the university to achieve its goals? The general trend across national boundaries points to more centralised structures of both governance and administration, with a decline in the authority of the academic estate paralleled by an increase in the influence of both the administrative arm of the university and of lay representatives within its governing bodies. So there has been a real shift in the formal balance of power, with the academic faculty more restricted to sustaining academic programmes both in teaching and in research. However, how those general formal shifts actually impact in practice is a matter for research, and there is some evidence (especially from continental Europe) to suggest that change is often more cosmetic than real.

As equally (if not more) important are the possible variations in the functioning of the new model. With regard to this issue, the evidence sends out mixed messages: at one end of the continuum an almost hermetically sealed cadre of decision-makers who determine the policy direction of the university and at the other end (again with particular reference to continental Europe) the perpetuation of weak university governance, thanks to the continuing strength of the guilds. But between these two extremes there are possibilities for an alternative model, probably best exemplified by Burton Clark's entrepreneurial university, which draws upon examples from higher education institutions in the United Kingdom, continental Europe and the United States (all three of which provide the empirical evidence for this book).

It is this possibility that suggests the seeds of a reformulated collegial model for the university. In this model the role of the faculty is to manage and develop the academic mission of the university (its traditional function). The proposition is that academic programmes, whether they are research projects or undergraduate degrees, cannot be successfully delivered unless they are managed collegially. While this may require strong leadership and effective management it also means that the delivery of the end product is dependent upon cooperative action. A broad consensus, constructed through the participation of those who are responsible for delivery, is critical to ensuring success. The entrepreneurial university cannot be imposed from the centre, neither can research excellence or high status undergraduate degrees; the centre is a facilitator of the academic enterprise. In as much as academic development (as opposed to ongoing delivery) is likely to be costly, then it is inevitable that personnel in key administrative positions will be called upon to estimate risks and form judgements. However, it is risk management that has to be arrived at on the basis of evidence provided by those who are in the best position to know (to guess) what is likely to succeed – the academic estate.

Viewed in this way collegiality becomes a form of governance that is dependent upon the bridges constructed between the centre and the periphery as well as between the different interests within the university. It is not so much shared governance but rather joint governance. It is not a question of the charismatic leadership of president/rector/principal/vice-chancellor, the bureaucratic authority of senior management groups, the formal executive authority of councils or even the sovereignty vested in assemblies. Rather it is an interactive process built upon the trust established amongst the various institutional partners. While the centre may have the formal authority to make the key decisions (and must make those decisions) it is the process of decision-making that determines what those decisions will be. It is clear both where authority resides and how that authority should be exercised.

Central to the reformulated ideal of collegiality is the recognition by state and society that universities are most likely to meet the expectations placed upon them, as well as fulfilling those expectations they place upon themselves, if they remain autonomous institutions (the Humboldtian tradition retains its value). Autonomy does not mean that universities are free agents to plot the course of their development as they please. But it does mean that they will determine how they respond to the social and economic pressures within which they have to manoeuvre, including those pressures generated by their own established national traditions of higher

education. For collegiality to thrive it means the state has to trust the universities. In continental Europe the state has permitted a greater measure of institutional autonomy but in return requires greater accountability, but autonomy is hollow if the accountability mechanisms are too oppressive. Inevitably this would encourage bureaucratic rather than collegial response mechanisms, as occurred in the United Kingdom before opposition from within the universities forced the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) to move towards a 'lighter touch' model. The evidence, therefore, would suggest that there is a lot to play for. There is no inevitability about the intensity and direction that either state control or the intrusion of managerialism will take, and collegial resistance – as the battle between the QAA and frontline academics in the United Kingdom demonstrates – can reshape how they impact upon the university.

The Scenarios

The book has examined the development of higher education on a wide front through the prism of the collegial tradition. The first, and most obvious, point to make is that ideas do not survive unless they are already in tune with the unfolding character of a state and a society or unless they can be reformulated in a manner that empathises with that unfolding character. However ideas are not simply dependent variables because change is an interactive process incorporating a dialogue between theory and practice.

Within the United Kingdom there was a powerful idea of the university incorporating values and traditions that shaped the relationship between the universities on the one hand and state and society on the other – autonomy, collegiality, the delivery of demanding programmes of undergraduate education, the independence of the research tradition, and higher education as a public service that transcended its formal academic brief. The emerging model of higher education that is taking root is the product of the interaction of new values and practices introduced side by side in a piecemeal process of change. And what has been true of the United Kingdom is equally true, perhaps even more so, of continental Europe and the United States.

Drawing upon the above overview of the broad developments in the collegial tradition we want to construct three differing perspectives on the ongoing state of play: continuity, reformulation and demise.

Continuity

In spite of all dire warnings of the demise of the collegial tradition that we have analysed in this book, it is important not to forget that it remains a powerful idea in any discussion of the development of higher education. It is perhaps now, however, of greater symbolic, than formative, significance – a little akin to the ritualistic references to both von Humboldt and John Henry Newman. But Oxford and Cambridge

continue as two collegiate universities and by any measure they remain in the top flight of world-class universities. The colleges continue to fulfil important academic functions and retain a significant presence in shaping the intellectual agendas at both universities. Moreover, the number of colleges has expanded in recent decades and the battles to retain traditional structures of university governance have been fierce. We are not looking at a mild collegial lamb that is being led to the slaughter.

Similarly those universities with residential colleges continue to reaffirm their importance both in attracting applicants and in adding to the quality of the undergraduate experience. Collegiality defined as the college experience may be retreating to a heartland (with the liberal arts colleges in the United States and Oxbridge at its very centre) but it remains a very significant force in the lives of many undergraduates. It can be argued that its relative decline is not a consequence of a weakening of its appeal but rather the result of powerful practical constraints – decent colleges are expensive to construct and sustain, and increasingly many students are not in a position to uproot and go to college.

The 'retreat to the heartland' proposition is also applicable to developments that are occurring with respect to the academic organisation of universities. The evidence is mixed: on the one hand the emergence of centralised administrative structures that suck in the periphery of the university, but on the other hand there is the entrepreneurial university that attempts to create a dynamic synergy between centre and periphery. Furthermore, it is difficult to imagine that effective teaching and research can be maintained unless there are collegial relations, no matter how constructed, amongst those responsible for the fulfilment of those tasks. In this model collegiality does not disappear but is confined to the smaller units of the university – departments, laboratories, colleges and research teams. This is not to deny that the smaller units will also have both managers and a leadership cadre, but the argument is that the closer you are to the delivery of the core functions of a university, the more essential it is to sustain a collegial ethos if you wish to be successful.

Rejuvenation

The continuity of the collegial tradition is dependent upon three variables: how deeply embedded it is in the fabric of institutions and the consciousness of those who exercise authority within them, the extent to which it can demonstrate continuing practical payoffs (even if the evidence is suggestive rather than conclusive) and the fact that it is critical to the conduct of teaching and research of a high standard. Continuity, therefore, is built around ingrained and purposeful resistance to change whereas reformulation is dependent upon thoughtful readjustments by both institutions and individuals in order to sustain the values of the collegial tradition, although not necessarily all of its manifestations.

Throughout the book we have provided examples of how the collegial tradition has adjusted to pressures for change. This is true of the three dimensions of collegiality that we have examined: governance and administration, colleges and commensality, and the delivery of the academic agenda. Colleges as institutions

and colleges as people (predominantly students and tutors) have made pragmatic adjustments in their relationships to the collegial tradition. In one sense it places collegial loyalties on a less-secure footing (the relationship is based more on personal and institutional self-interest) but it can also provide a powerful rationale for tutors and students to sustain their loyalty. The institution has to calculate the price it can afford to pay, while individuals have a clearer idea of the benefits (and costs) that accrue to them. Thus collegiality becomes an idea that is maintained more by an implicit bargaining process as opposed to assumed loyalties. While the romance in the relationship may be in decline, the glue may be more adhesive.

The problem, as we have alluded to on a number of occasions, with the reformulation thesis, is that there are no clear-cut boundaries as to how far the concept of collegiality can be stretched before it becomes something very different. However, this has always been an issue (note the radical changes that Rothblatt charted in the nineteenth century identity of Cambridge), and it is not one that is confined to the idea of collegiality alone. However, to say that there is a general problem does not resolve the matter. Without attempting to enter the uncharted waters of precise measurement, it is possible to say that many of the traditional ingredients of the collegial tradition are still to be found: federal systems of government in which responsibility for key functions is shared, residential colleges, a commitment to undergraduate teaching that embraces more than professional training and an acceptance that the academic enterprise needs to be driven as much from the bottom upwards as managed from the top down.

Demise

Continuity and reformulation, however, must be placed within the context of the broad pattern of development within higher education. We may point to both continuity borne of resistance and reformulation as the product of pragmatic compromises but there is plenty of evidence to support the hypothesis that the collegial tradition is in relative decline and its presence in higher education is now marginal.

The founding of new collegiate universities is virtually impossible. Besides the costs of such a venture, there is the problem of drawing up statutes that would ensure a constructive sharing of the key functions between the university and its college(s). Of course, the constitution of the United States provides a dramatic counter-argument but it emerged out of a particular historical context and has evolved over time in response to changing circumstances. The US constitution is not an invention but the product of an evolutionary (if dramatic) process of historical change. The hypothesis is that likewise collegiate universities cannot be created but have to evolve out of established institutional structures and procedures.

The attempts to introduce collegiate universities in the United States did little more than produce residential colleges, which were already embedded in the American tradition of higher education. The University of California, Santa Cruz, undoubtedly represents the boldest contemporary endeavour to establish a collegiate

university but, while it may still be unique amongst the campuses of the University of California, it cannot be described as a collegiate university. It is possible to point to a range of ad hoc reasons to account for this outcome with the implication that if the circumstances had been more propitious the outcome would have been different. However, we would maintain that collegiate universities have to be the product of evolution and cannot be created. Thus from the beginning Santa Cruz would be something else other than a collegiate university.

Moreover, the consortia of American liberal arts colleges appear to be entrapped at the inter-collegiate stage of development with little incentive to move beyond that model. Furthermore, there is no societal dynamic to suggest that they need to do otherwise. Within England the pressures upon the federal models of governance are destabilising university/college patterns of interaction either by increasing the power of the university (Oxford and Cambridge) or by strengthening the move towards independence on the part of the colleges (London and Wales).

Undoubtedly, the collegial tradition, defined as residential colleges and the social interaction that they create, remains popular. But this is essentially a taste for a limited segment of society and, within the mass model of higher education, is somewhat marginalised. It is a classic example of collegiality retreating to its heartland. More significant is the academic organisation of the university because this is a matter that impacts upon all institutions of higher education. While we have pointed to continuity (and resistance) as well as pragmatic reformulation, it cannot be denied that the pervasiveness of the managerial revolution has eroded the collegial governance and administration of the university – including how it conducts it academic affairs. The managerial impulse (for example, in the entrepreneurial university) may operate in a fashion that interacts constructively with collegial values, and within segments of the university the collegial tradition may persist or even experience a revival. But this is rather like clutching at straws in the midst of a hurricane. Nonetheless, there is still sufficient contradictory evidence (built around continuity and reformulation) to suggest not the demise of the collegial tradition but rather its containment within shrinking parameters. Are the barriers sufficiently strong to ensure that the hurricane will not claim a complete triumph?

If we conclude with a somewhat pessimistic scenario for the future of the collegial tradition, it is important to place this within the framework of the wider development of higher education, and more particularly the fact that the governance of higher education at large is in a state of flux. Perhaps what is more remarkable about the idea of collegiality is not that it is under pressure but that it has survived for so long. In a time of considerable flux it remains a reference point for contemporary developments. Can the same be said of the emerging models of the university? Will they prove any more effective responses to the challenges that the university will face in the twenty-first century? Or will the most viable models prove to be those that embrace at their very cores the idea of collegiality with strong respect for and trust in the academic guild?