DOCTOR OF BUSINESS (DBA)

# Higher Education Between Myth, Enlightenment and Ideology: Private Business Schools in Germany Under the Spell of Neo-Liberalism

Rundshagen, Volker

*Award date:*
2016

*Awarding institution:*
University of Bath

# Higher Education Between Myth, Enlightenment and Ideology: Private Business Schools in Germany Under the Spell of Neo-Liberalism

Volker Martin Rundshagen

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Business Administration

University of Bath
School of Management
International Centre of Higher Education Management

April 2016

**Table of Contents**

## List of Figures

## List of Tables

**Acknowledgments**

I would like to express my gratitude to a number of individuals who have provided advice and assistance in various ways and thereby contributed to the completion of this doctoral thesis. First and foremost I would like to thank my first supervisor, Professor Rajani Naidoo. I am very grateful for her always encouraging attitude and the relentless inspiration she has provided throughout my intellectual DBA journey. She has fortified my conviction that higher education can make a profound difference in people's lives. Her guidance and patience have helped me greatly shape this thesis not only as a capstone to my doctoral studies, but also as a venture expressing my compassion for critical business school inquiry.

Special thanks also go to my second supervisor, Professor Yiannis Gabriel. His distinguished, thought-provoking academic work and his comforting attitude have enriched my mind. I enjoyed the fruitful conversations with him which particularly channelled my cogitations in the early stages of this thesis. He is an excellent listener and a generous provider of advice full of wisdom.

There are further dedicated DBA Higher Education Management community members to esteem: Dr Manuel Souto-Otero has shared his rich expertise in the field of research methods. I highly appreciate the time and effort he invested to provide feedback, which was invaluable in elaborating the methodology of this thesis. The administration office team in charge, especially Jill Siddall during the early stages and Lesa Cross all the way through to my thesis submission process, was always attentive during my DBA studies. Furthermore, fellow students of the unforgettable DBA 8 cohort provided moral support all along the way. Particularly the cheerful Bath meetings and stimulating e-mail threads with Jake Pringle, Emma Hunt, Natacha Durand and Tadhg Leane have contributed to me staying confident.

At Academy of Management annual meeting workshops, conversations with Professor Emma Bell and Dr Craig Prichard helped me sort the conceptual thoughts locating my work in the Critical Management Studies community; Dr Mike Pfarrer provided advice on content analysis. I appreciate the time and the wonderful ideas Professors Roland Schappert and Burkard Sievers shared with me to refine my imagery analysis approach.

There are several colleagues and friends who supported my writing process: Professors Dietmar Janetzko, Dirk Reiser, Florian Hummel, Markus Raueiser, Ingvill Mochmann, Matthias Herfert and Nicolai Scherle supplied materials, test-read passages of my work in progress and offered dialogues for the benefit of my reflection. Professor Guido Sommer, as dean of my department, espoused my temporary workload relief in highly pressured times. Professor Anke Scherer praised my critical writing on business school practices early on, which contributed to my encouragement to carry it through to the thesis venture. Philosophical soirées with Alexander von Reumont nourished my spirit. I am much obliged to Paul Harris who proofread this work as a native speaker and a convinced pluralist upholding a critical stance towards contemporary capitalism from an Anthropologist's perspective, thereby also morally supporting my line of inquiry.

It is noteworthy that I encountered many helpful staff members at libraries. Especially the devoted team of the University of Bath library was always supportive, whether in case of on-site inquiries or in online and distance loan matters. In addition I would like to thank receptionists at Universitäts- und Stadtbibliothek of Universität zu Köln, the British Library of Political and Economic Science, the Wilson Library of the University of Minnesota at Minneapolis, and the Main Library of the University of Georgia at Athens for providing hospitable guidance to me as a guest user of their marvellous facilities.

This thesis may not have been written without my very good friend and Master's degree companion Theodore Charles who persuaded me to pursue doctoral studies within the higher education area of inquiry. He understood, before I did, that in such context my passion could be converted best into meaningful research. The meetings and telephone conversations we have had over the years helped develop my thesis proposal, and they will hopefully continue to enrich both our spirits.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents, who have supported me all my life. In troubled (post-) war times they did not get the chance to pursue higher education. Yet, they have undoubtedly passed on their thirst for knowledge and critical thinking to me, along with the traits it takes to succeed in professional life as well as in a doctoral programme. In particular, they have morally and financially backed my pursuit of earlier degrees without which I would not have proceeded to this stage.

## Abstract

Financial crises and corporate scandals are eroding trust in corporate capitalism, and the role of business schools, educating protagonists of that system, is increasingly scrutinised. One of the arguments is that we are currently witnessing the rise and dominance of neo-liberalism. This thesis illuminates the notion of the latter as ideology, and explains it through the social theory concepts of myth, enlightenment and late modernity. It then considers the transition of Germany's higher education sector, where private business schools are taking off in a boom-phase within a neo-liberal political environment largely shaped by European Union policies. Within the realm of critical discourse analysis, five purposefully selected cases are studied to reveal the extent to which neo-liberal ideology has permeated private business schools in Germany. Accreditation reports issued by a quasi-governmental science council and also the schools' websites with their text and imagery are content-analysed. The core themes of performativity and consumer orientation emerge as essential vehicles of far-reaching neo-liberal permeation of all cases. However, there is neither a linear process nor a unified level of ideology infiltration. This level varies across business school philosophies: it is higher where Anglo-Saxon role models are pursued and lower where alternative philosophies drive the institutions. There are complex interrelations between business schools, students, lecturers and the accreditation body. Self-referential myths of neo-liberal origin build a base mesh with the tendency to turn all these stakeholders into recipients, enactors and thereby also disseminators of the already dominant neo-liberal ideology. However, it is also shown that there are moral obligations as well as leeway to resist. With these insights, this thesis contributes to an understanding of ideology dissemination through business schools in general, and it provides a new basis to evaluate societal implications of the extending sector of private business schools in Germany in particular.

**List of Abbreviations**

| | |
|---|---|
| AOM | Academy of Management |
| CDA | Critical discourse analysis |
| CME | Critical Management Education |
| CMS | Critical Management Studies |
| CSR | Corporate Social Responsibility |
| CT | Critical Theory |
| EU | European Union |
| GCR | Global Competitiveness Report |
| GDP | Gross domestic product |
| HE | Higher education |
| MNC | Multi-national corporation(s) |
| QCA | Qualitative content analysis |
| SIE | Self-interest explanations |
| WEF | World Economic Forum |
| WR | Wissenschaftsrat *(German science council)* |

# 1. Introduction

*Die Gewohnheit ist ein Seil. Wir weben jeden Tag einen Faden,*
*und schließlich können wir es nicht mehr zerreißen.*

*[Habit is a rope. Every day we weave a thread,*
*and finally we cannot tear it any more.]*

*Thomas Mann*

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the Doctor of Business Administration in Higher Education Management at the University of Bath. In this introductory part, the research rationale is outlined, and the research aim is presented and explained. Furthermore, the positioning of this thesis within the field of higher education (HE) studies and the associated literature as well as my own stance as a researcher is revealed. Finally, the theoretical framework and subsequent structure of this work is presented, and the links between the subsequent chapters are pointed out.

## 1.1 Thesis Motive

Various recent financial crises and scandals have eroded trust in corporate capitalism (e.g. Schäfer, 2009; Soltani, 2013) "with each new scandal pointing to new levels of selfishness, greed and dishonesty in business" (Swanson & Frederick, 2003: 24). These crises and scandals include particularly the global financial market turmoil initially caused by excessive subprime loan accumulation and trading in the United States, bursting in 2008 (e.g. Munir, 2011), and the so-called Euro crisis (e.g. Bohn & de Jong, 2011). They furthermore encompass large-scale financial fraud, which has gained more attention in the wake of the famous landmark cases of Enron in the United States and Parmalat in Europe (e.g. Kallio, 2007; Soltani, 2013); both left behind a devastated workforce, deprived pensioners and betrayed investors. There is also a range of misbehaviour such as cheating customers, violating human rights and harming the environment which has been labelled 'corporate social irresponsibility' (Lin-Hi & Müller, 2013). In one of the recent and more spectacular cases, lives were lost in Bangladesh where textile manufacturing buildings collapsed as a consequence of poor maintenance; an incident marking the culmination of appalling working conditions threatening a workforce busy producing goods for discount and even top-branded clothing store imperia of Europe and North America (e.g. Winston, 2014).

Arguably "[w]e are all humbled by the enormity of the crises undermining twenty-first-century society" (Adler, 2011: 208). To be precise, apparently not *all* are humbled: there are managers and (predominantly corporate) shareholders who benefit from the crisis-provoking system they sustain and promote. In consequence, corporate excesses are driven ever further, causing the scandals directly connected to the misbehaviour of big businesses as well as the presumably systemic crises of contemporary capitalism (e.g. Munir, 2011). Major sectors of the corporate world are falling apart in moral and ethical terms at the expense of society at large. "What we see at the moment is the destruction of the societal system through an amoral management ideology" (Huehn, 2008: 825). Therefore it is not surprising that many managers who are highly visible in the public eye have lost legitimacy "in the face of a widespread institutional breakdown of trust and self-policing in business" (Khurana & Nohria, 2008: 70).

In that very context, the contribution of business schools – claiming and expected to educate future managers and business leaders – to persistent corporate malpractice, and also their responsibility vis-à-vis society at large, has been scrutinised and debated (e.g. Donaldson, 2012; Mintzberg, 2004). The times when business schools "prided themselves on the quality of their education" (Starkey & Tiratsoo, 2007: 77) are over. The paradox that several of the contemporary crises featured above are "brewed in the cauldrons of the new economy" (Castells, 2010: xx) which is defined, among other aspects, by the higher levels of education of their protagonists, most of whom have undergone business school degree programmes, only adds to the need to reflect on management education. It has been suggested that business schools need to focus more on their value to society (Thomas & Cornuel, 2012), and we may have reached a turning point: criticism not only reaches business schools from the outside but also increasingly from the inside, represented by some of their leading professors (Birnik & Billsberry, 2008; Starkey, Hatchuel, & Tempest, 2004).

One of the main arguments in attempts to account for the developments highlighted above is that we have been witnessing the rise and dominance of neo-liberalism, which impacts not only the business scene but also HE systems worldwide. It has been argued that neo-liberalism prevails – despite the crises it abets and despite increasing doubts raised in public about its legitimacy (e.g. Streeck, 2013) – due to its powerful promotion through the forces gaining most from it: global corporations and financial market protagonists (Crouch, 2011). Ignoring the demand to cut back the positions of entitlement that such corporations have claimed (Mintzberg, 2013), the reign of neo-liberalism continues, and its orientations have reached mainstream politics "without regard for old partisan divides or national boundaries" (Mudge, 2008: 723). These politics enforce a system of income re-distribution to the very top, which is widely seen as illegitimate. "In any case, an increase in some people's relative wealth means a decrease in some others' relative wealth. There is no reason for the government of a society to promote that sort of sport" (Phelps, 2009: 3). Yet, that very 'sort of sport', which has arguably turned into an ideology (Flew, 2012), is practised further in the political realm, resulting in excessive and exclusive income increases for the 'super-rich' (e.g. Volscho & Kelly, 2012). Thus, it is not surprising that many constituencies are calling for a turnaround and a renunciation of such neo-liberal policies, which are also determining the route HE, including management education, has taken.

But a turnaround will not be easy, neither in politics, nor in the business world – and certainly not in the HE sector: universities have traditionally been understood as organisations with autonomy from outside interests (Bleiklie, Enders, & Lepori, 2013). This is no longer true as, under neo-liberalism, HE policy pressures universities to become an "input-output system which can be reduced to an economic production function" (Olssen & Peters, 2005: 324). As a consequence, a new dominant public pedagogy negates basic conditions for critical agency (Giroux, 2008), hence the alarming notion that neo-liberal mechanisms "have resulted in the structural and ideological undermining of academic capital" (Naidoo, 2010: 73). This very capital, however, is needed to foster independent inquiry, and also to educate citizens and in particular future business leaders who could enact the turnaround demanded.

Despite these overarching notions, it has to be acknowledged that manifestations of neo-liberalism occur differently across diverse national, institutional and organisational contexts (e.g. Brand & Sekler, 2009; Mudge, 2008). This thesis focuses on Germany, which is an interesting national case due to its current fundamental transition: we are witnessing the dismantling of the historical model of 'Rhenish Capitalism' that has served as an alternative to the investor-hailing 'neo-liberal Anglo-American model' primarily represented by the USA and the UK (Albert, 1991). Post-war Germany was historically associated with social market economy, which is seen in stark contrast to Chicago School liberalism, although Foucault analysed both as versions of neo-liberalism (Lemke, 2001). The social market economy unfolding in post-war Germany was characterised, among other aspects, by a balancing of various stakeholders' interests. That entailed political regulation and balanced legislation as well as a social contract observed by employers and employees alike. German management largely accepted the legitimacy and productivity of co-determination, and employee representatives or works councils were integral members of board-level decision-making (Locke, 1996).

Radical change came about with the (social-democratic) Schröder administration in 1998, which introduced major reforms typically associated with neo-liberal politics. The latter encompass the unleashing of market forces and competition, limiting the reach of political decision-making, and a strong orientation towards business in general and finance in particular (Mudge, 2008). The following (conservative) Merkel administrations have pursued that path further, thereby also raising more unease among constituencies questioning the benefits of neo-liberal pathways. Heated debates were sparked when the German *Bundeskanzlerin* proclaimed that democracy has to be 'market-compliant'. Interpretations in the public realm ranged from such democracy retaining at least some influence on markets to such democracy totally giving way to the reign of corporate interests, which would even entail violations of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany (e.g. von Altenbockum, 2012).

A recent speech by the German *Bundespräsident* Joachim Gauck at the 60$^{th}$ anniversary celebrations of the Walter Eucken Institute, which was established as a competence centre of socio-economic research in the tradition of the 'Freiburg School' – a major institution of German post-war liberalism (e.g. Lemke, 2001) – underscores Germany's ambivalent relationship with neo-liberalism. The speech sparked controversy, largely due to out-of-context quotes in the media, but also due to a lack of differentiation prevalent in debates on neo-liberalism and its history (Leicht, 2014). Considering the current pathway of neo-liberalism as a dominant crises-prone and scandal-provoking ideology, and also considering the largely ill-informed public debate in Germany, it seems that essential lessons of early neo-liberal thought have been lost:

> "Here in Freiburg – in times of totalitarian rule – independent minds conceived an order of freedom, an order which, in the aftermath of the Second World War and in times of great scepticism towards liberal economic systems, contributed to bringing Germans round to the concepts of the market economy and competition. A chapter in the history of freedom in the Federal Republic of Germany was written here. This is because freedom was introduced to society as an important topic, in that the notion of freedom in the economy was discussed. It is because freedom in society and freedom in the economy are intrinsically linked. Indeed anyone who desires a free society should advocate markets and competition and condemn the concentration of too much power in the hands of the few. Yet he must also be aware that a free society is based on conditions which markets and competition alone are not able to provide" (Gauck, 2014).

Gauck's reminder that rules are required to ensure freedom in society, promoted but not guaranteed through market economy and competition, is in line with Max Weber, considered one of the fathers of social science (Müller, 2014), whose 150$^{th}$ birthday was also celebrated in 2014. In his landmark work on the *Protestant Ethic* he pointed to the importance of responsibility, diligence and asceticism as foundations of capitalism and a viable market economy. His calls for rules guiding economic activity as well as for moderation by market participants seem timelier in our days than ever before.

The German HE sector is in transition. On the one hand, public universities, used to acting as strongholds of *Humboldtian* ideal traditions (e.g. Kerr, 2001), are trying to sort out their new roles derived from the Bologna process which strongly influences national HE policies in Europe (Witte, van der Wende, & Huisman, 2008). On the other hand, private institutions, predominantly business schools, are taking off in a boom-phase (Frank, Hieronimus, Killius, & Meyer-Guckel, 2011) with the political scene now also imposing competition onto the German HE sector (Pick, 2008).

## 1.2 Research Aim and Contribution

This connection of current neo-liberal ideology with business schools, which at the same time are passive subjects of HE policies and active educators of future business world protagonists, opens pathways for critical scholarly inquiry. Following the notions outlined in chapter 1.1, I understand this connection as a potential threat to society at large in general and to business schools' academic viability in particular. Therefore it is a typical research problem worth examining (Van de Ven, 2007). I am also motivated by the ambiguity of private business schools: on the one hand, they are HE providers and thus part of a sector that used to be the exclusive realm of public institutions in Germany and arguably still should serve public interests. On the other hand, they are market institutions in a private sector, expected to pursue self-interests (Lane, 2000).

Hence, my research question is: *To what extent has neo-liberal ideology permeated private business schools in Germany?* Five purposefully sampled cases in terms of size, specialisation and philosophy have been selected, and an analysis of their external representations is conducted through publicly available material on their websites and science council accreditation reports. These representations particularly encompass the business schools' role as HE institutions in society, their philosophy of provision and their strategic positioning. Sub-research questions, taking into account the case selection as well as overarching HE trends derived from the literature, are *which other (not neo-liberal) major principles influence these business schools*, *in how far do different business school founders' philosophies impact the presence of the differing principles,* and *in how far can signs of business school convergence be detected?*

The analysis and discussion of the findings reveal major implications of business school exposure to neo-liberal ideology and its permeation through them. This should encourage and inform further HE research debates, especially in the area of business school critique deliberating on the future directions of management education. With this thesis I aim to contribute an understanding of ideology dissemination through business schools in general, and a new basis to evaluate societal implications of the extending sector of private business schools in Germany in particular.

### 1.3 Positioning the Research

This thesis joins the increasing efforts of business school studies within the still underdeveloped field of HE research (Bleiklie et al., 2013) which is certainly expanding in scope and visibility. There is a growing body of academic literature embarking to explore current challenges and future directions of business schools. Most HE literature streams refer to the external environment; particularly (neo-liberal) policy changes leading to a 'managerialist' paradigm (e.g. Prichard & Willmott, 1997; Sabri, 2010; Winter, 2009) are elaborated on, whereby public institutions such as universities follow private for-profit organisation principles. There are attempts to understand the impact of such mechanisms on the academic freedom of faculty members (Sadler, 2011). Other research analyses how phenomena from within the field of HE impact business schools, such as rankings (Wedlin, 2006) and accreditation (e.g. Julian & Ofori-Dankwa, 2006). Covering a more micro perspective, particular cases of change management, hegemony and resistance at institutions are presented (Humphreys & Brown, 2002). With respect to students' roles, there are studies on epistemologies and values of business students (e.g. Savage & Page, 2000) and on the rising notion of student consumerism (e.g. Naidoo & Jamieson, 2005).

Several contributions are explicitly concerned with the ethical foundations of business education provision (e.g. Birnik & Billsberry, 2008; Childs, 2012), and a reflective critique is developed, also acknowledging the "daunting challenges we currently face not only as scholars but also as members of a faculty dedicated to developing the next generation of business leaders" (Khurana & Snook, 2011: 358). I agree with the assertion that there "could be no more opportune a time to reflect critically on business schools and the education they (we) profess to provide" (Currie, Knights, & Starkey, 2010: s1). Hence, I attempt to contribute to the academic knowledge about business schools through an understanding of how far business schools enact or disseminate principles adopted from neo-liberal ideology. Whereas the empirical scope of this research will be limited to selected cases of private business schools in Germany, I hope to create awareness among business school faculty members at large.

Referring to Germany, there is hardly any research coverage of private business schools. There is only a doctoral thesis on the success factors of private university management (Sperlich, 2008). Research on HE in Germany has been primarily occupied with HE reforms and their effects on public universities (e.g. Göztepe-Celebi, Stallmann, & Zimmer, 2002; Ostermann, 2002; Teichler, 2005). Particularly the Bologna process already mentioned in chapter 1.1 as a major case of European Union (EU) level reform impacting Germany is discussed in the literature. There is a doctoral thesis on the effects of this process on academic and vocational education (Hummel, 2008), which is also highly relevant for private business schools. Mostly, a critical stance is at the core of Bologna-related publications (e.g. Scholz & Stein, 2009; Winkel, 2010).

Beyond the German setting, HE discourses (e.g. Souto-Otero, 2011) enframe this study. Alvesson (2013) identifies a widely unfolding 'educational fundamentalism', which is driven by naïve faith in the positive effects of education. It is strongly associated with neo-liberal ideology. Some of its basic assumptions are:

- Education and its expansion are crucial for economic growth
- There are clear benefits from investments in education, also from the individual viewpoint
- Education is the solution to a great many problems, including unemployment and international competitive capability
- As much education as possible must be upgraded/relabelled as higher education

*(Adapted from Alvesson, 2013: 75f)*

Particularly the last aspect was confirmed for Germany in a study on private universities, pointing out that increasing proportions of entry-level jobs nowadays require academic degrees, so that high school graduates are drawn into the HE system in ever higher proportions (Frank et al., 2011). The study classified most private universities, most of which in turn are business schools, either as *Aufwerter* (meaning 'upgrader'), or as *Berufsorientierte* (meaning 'vocationally oriented'). Hence, these institutions have assumed the role of absorbing students who previously would have qualified for and entered the job market through apprenticeships or vocational schools. The system of the latter was traditionally seen as the strength of human capital formation in Germany (Dicke, Glismann, & Siemßen, 1994).

## 1.4 The Researcher's Stance

I am not entirely convinced that for the contemporary global élite "no other institution has played a more powerful role as an identity workplace than the modern business school" (Khurana & Snook, 2011: 360), as such a view may overestimate the influence of business schools on its graduates. It also overlooks that an élite does not necessarily have a business school background. However, I am willing to follow the assumption that HE institutions play a significant role in shaping values and life-paths of students (Brighouse, 2010), so it matters on which foundational basis they operate.

At an Academy of Management (AOM) 2011 workshop entitled 'Guiding Change in the Field of Management Science' protagonists highlighted the disappointing situation that business schools lag behind scientifically. Hence, these schools should reorient and acknowledge that "understanding how research can advance scientific and practical knowledge is an ongoing challenge for scholars" (Van de Ven, 2007: 1). Continued disputes about the foundations of organisational scholarship within academia (e.g. Boisot & McKelvey, 2010) aggravate such a challenge. A typology of academic inquiry paradigms as assembled by Lincoln and Guba (2000) is summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of major alternative inquiry paradigms

| | *Positivism* | *Post-positivism* | *Critical Theory et al.* | *Constructivism* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Ontology* | Naïve realism; objective reality is perfectly apprehendable | Critical realism; reality is partly objective and only imperfectly | Historical realism; virtual reality shaped by social, political, and other values | Relativism; reality is socially constructed |
| *Epistemology* | Objectivist; findings are objectively true and verified hypotheses are established as facts | Modified objectivist; more critical tradition, findings are probably true | Transactional/subjectivist; findings are value-mediated | Transactional/subjectivist; findings are created |
| *Quality criteria* | Conventional benchmarks of rigour; internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity | | Situatedness; erosion of ignorance, action stimulus | Trustworthiness and authenticity |
| *Axiology* | Propositional knowing about the world is an end in itself, is intrinsically valuable | | Propositional, transactional knowing is instrumentally valuable as a means to social emancipation | |
| *Action* | Not the responsibility of the researcher, threat to objectivity | | Empowerment; social transformation is end goal | Constructivist formulation mandates political training |

*(Adapted from Lincoln & Guba, 2000: 168ff)*

The above table helps to illustrate my paradigmatic positioning. A positivist stance would not serve my research purpose. Considering that my study will revolve around (neo-liberal) ideology, it is clear that neither the vague notion and considerable complexity of the latter concept nor its usual association with critical stances towards it (van Dijk, 1998) allow for objective findings of 'natural law' character. I also follow the insight that positivistic, quantitatively oriented research projects tend to be based on naïve assumptions and are "entirely uncritical of their methodological premises" (Alvesson & Gabriel, 2013: 249). As outlined in chapter 1.2, I understand neo-liberal ideology as a potential threat, which means I will operate on the basis of a critical stance and therefore predominantly in the 'Critical Theory et al.' inquiry paradigm. That means my findings will foster ambiguities, and they will be of value-mediated nature. My own values and those of the business schools under investigation, plus values defining the German HE setting and sphere, will influence my research results. That will inevitably make the latter prone to criticism, and certainly trigger discussions about interpretations, which, however, is in line with my research aim.

Critical Theory (CT) is a socio-philosophical school of thought and part of the Enlightenment tradition. Its basic concern is to analyse social conditions, to unveil unjustified use of power, and to free human beings from dependency, subordination, and suppression. To that end it criticises and tries to change established social traditions and institutions (Scherer, 2009) or social formations (Dant, 2003). One of the major intellectual roots of CT is the work of the Frankfurt Institute of Social Research, the so-called *Frankfurt School,* which was particularly dedicated to the multidisciplinary and critical analysis of modern capitalism. Further roots include Karl Marx's labour relations discussions, and also poststructuralist concepts, mainly associated with French sociologists and philosophers dealing with the interrelation of linguistic practice and social reality (e.g. Alvesson & Deetz, 2005; Scherer, 2009).

With my stance I join critical realists who, according to Bhaskar (2011), acknowledge the reality of events and discourses and insist that we have to identify the structures at work generating the latter so that we can understand – and in particular change – the social world. With commitment to such change aspirations I am in line with CT protagonists assuming “a transcendental realist ontology, an eclectic realist/interpretivist epistemology and a generally emancipatory axiology” (Easton, 2010: 119). Hence, critical realism accommodates the contradiction that there is a reality that exists independent of observers, but that there is also the at least in part socially constructed world, and it thereby creates an overlap with the constructivist inquiry paradigm. Critical realists first and foremost hold that there is no unmediated access to the world. They consider an entity to be real when it has causal efficacy and an effect on behaviour, and when it makes a difference. And there are different modes of reality: *materially real* refers to physical substance like water or mountains, *ideally real* to conceptual identities such as discourse or beliefs, *artefactually real* to entities such as manufactured goods being interpreted in different ways beyond their physical substance, and *socially real* refers to practices or states of affairs (Fleetwood, 2005).

In line with my research aim I join critical realists trying to provide an explanatory critique that can unleash emancipatory potential (Kilduff, Mehra, & Dunn, 2011). As a business school lecturer I am convinced that such potential will have to be unleashed within business schools to create a more viable and more legitimate future for them. I support the proposition that critical research seeks to provide impulses to overcome dominating constraints to human decision-making. To that end the object of study is considered in a wider cultural, economic and political context (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000). CT continues to provide territories for research communities. Particularly the field of Critical Management Studies (CMS) has emerged as an academic arena drawing upon CT and fostering a critical stance towards management:

> “The common core is deep skepticism regarding the moral defensibility and the social and ecological sustainability of prevailing conceptions and forms of management and organization. CMS’s motivating concern is neither the personal failures of individual managers nor the poor management of specific firms, but the social injustice and environmental destructiveness of the broader social and economic systems that these managers and firms serve and reproduce” (Adler, Forbes, & Willmott, 2007: 119).

Hence, in contrast to traditional management research approaches focusing on the understanding of techniques and legitimation of mainstream management thinking and practice, CMS community members question the authority of the latter (Alvesson, Bridgman, & Willmott, 2009). They see them as totalitarian and as catalysts of performativity (e.g. Grey & Willmott, 2005); an instrument to control individuals and systems (e.g. Fournier & Grey, 2000) working towards questionable ends. By and large,

> "CMS proponents are motivated by the concern with the role of management in the perpetuation and legitimation of unnecessary suffering and destruction, especially in the spheres of work and consumption. Many mainstream management scholars share this concern, but tend to leave it to their private, or nonprofessional lives; others feel that these misfortunes and problems are much exaggerated, view them as part of the human condition, or regard them as the inevitable price of progress. For CMS proponents, much of this suffering and destruction is remediable, and the desire to remedy it is a central motivating factor in their work" (Adler et al., 2007: 125).

Throughout their activities, CMS researchers have elaborated manifold topics, and a number of common themes have emerged. These are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Common themes in Critical Management Studies research

| *CMS theme* | *Definition/characteristics and research directions* |
|---|---|
| Challenging structures of domination | Belief that a better, qualitatively superior form of society is possible. Implied premise: the current capitalist, patriarchal, racist, imperialist, and productivist society contains within it the seeds of a possible transformation. |
| Questioning the taken for granted | Central to the CMS mission. Opposition against naturalisation of social relations. Questioning of management assumptions, and particularly their self-evidence claims. |
| Beyond instrumentalism | Challenging the view that the value of social relations in the workplace is essentially instrumental. Such assumption is critiqued as 'performativity' within poststructuralist streams of CMS. Instead, goals such as improving working conditions or collective self-development should be justifiable ends. |
| Reflexivity and meaning | Strengthen capacity to recognise how accounts of management are influenced by their authors' social position. Aim to raise awareness how meanings become dominant. |
| Power and knowledge | Analyses concerned with showing that forms of knowledge appearing neutral reflect and reinforce asymmetrical power relations. |

*(Adapted from Adler et al., 2007: 125-129)*

Currently, there is a renewed and growing interest in CMS, which is certainly also attributable to the recent crises and scandals mentioned in chapter 1.1. Calls for a broadened view of management not necessarily as totalitarian but as polyphonic add to the new appeal. They also show the potential of reconciling at least constructive management approaches and critical attitudes (Clegg, Kornberger, Carter, & Rhodes, 2006). I am convinced that the latter aspect has to be strengthened in business education. With this thesis I join the first two CMS themes featured in Table 2: I pursue the intent to challenge the structures of neo-liberal domination, and I am questioning the often taken-for-granted 'there is no alternative' assumption (e.g. Todhunter, 2013).

It deeply matters to me how we educate future business generations. Therefore, I agree that passionate conviction is required to research topics that matter (Adler & Hansen, 2012), contrasting with calls for 'neutral observer' positions of the researcher. Furthermore, I agree that meaningful research overcomes the hardly ever fruitful 'rigour vs. relevance' debate (Birnik & Billsberry, 2008; Starkey, Hatchuel, & Tempest, 2009) in order to support the advancement of both scholarship and policymakers or practitioners (Pettigrew, 2011; Van de Ven, 2007) in the HE sector.

I am committed to reflective research, of which there are several forms (Alvesson, Hardy, & Harley, 2008): on the one hand I operate in the area of reflexivity as *positioning practice*, acknowledging that research takes place within a broader social landscape influencing and interpreting it. On the other hand there is an element of *destabilising practice* exposing others' unreflective research (in my case rather unreflective HE practice or core values). The latter may "evoke a degree of omnipotence in that the reflexive researcher claims to possess insights that others do not" (Alvesson et al., 2008: 490). I disassociate myself from such intent and hope to contribute an interesting piece of research (Bartunek, Rynes, & Ireland, 2006) with the potential of inducing more reflection among passionate colleagues:

> "As we reflect, we might reclaim, or even discover, the issues we care most profoundly about, even while some colleagues continue to believe that caring, and the courage it demands, remain not only irrelevant but also distinctly outside the boundaries of scholarly management" (Adler & Hansen, 2012: 129).

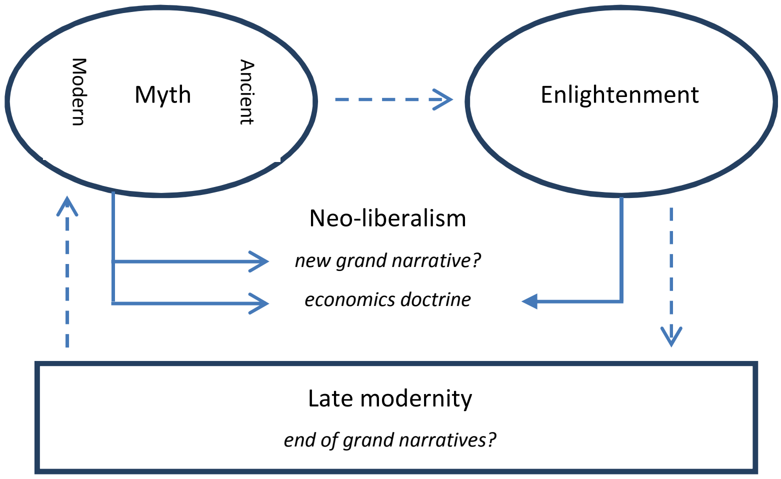
## 1.5 Thesis Framework

My theoretical framework reflects that HE research largely builds on concepts derived from the scientific areas of sociology, psychology or philosophy (Macfarlane & Grant, 2012). The former plays a key role, as sociology is identified as the only social science discipline which has kept up the relations to the issues concerning society as a whole (Habermas, 1981) and in particular as the science of chasing myths (Elias, 2014 [1970]). Such venture encompasses a critical basis, truth-seeking and struggling for interpretations of reality and its discursive bases (Antonio, 1991).

Lemke's (2001) work on Foucault's lecture at Collège de France points to a remarkable series of issues shared between the two aforementioned institutions inspiring my stance and informing my analysis: the *Freiburg School* with its economists providing essential foundations of the social market economy, and the *Frankfurt School* with its critical theorists. Both institutions emerged in Germany in the 1920s, and both dealt with a problem discussed by Max Weber as the 'irrational rationality' of capitalist society. They contributed to the discussion from different angles: The Frankfurt School "searched for a new social reality that would annul and overcome the irrationality of the capitalist economy", whereas the Freiburg School "opted for the opposite approach and endeavoured to re-define the economic (capitalist) rationality in order to prevent the social irrationality of capitalism from unfolding" (Lemke, 2001: 192f).

To provide an in-depth understanding of contemporary neo-liberalism and the associated discourses in the context of my thesis, I resort to the concepts of myth, enlightenment and late modernity, which are explored in chapter 2. They are widely considered interlinked and historically interdependent (e.g. Allen, 2014; Herf, 2012). Furthermore, they have in common that at their very core they are subject to the contradictory logic of the irrational rationality mentioned above. Ancient myths are widely considered irrational accounts on fantastic personalities or events, often with a religious dimension (e.g. Dant, 2003). Enlightenment took off to overcome such myths, and in particular the dogma of the Christian church through rationality and science (e.g. Cohen, 2010). The overreliance on rationality, however, partly turned irrational, and in the worst case enabled descent into barbarism (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2010 [1947]). The very notion of science and reason as ultimate sources of progress, constitutive of the modern era and capitalism, had turned mythical. Unfulfilled promises sparked the loss of trust in the metanarrative of progress (Lyotard, 1984). The period that followed and arguably still prevails can be referred to as late modernity (e.g. Giddens, 1991). The metanarrative void leaves room for various partly conflicting new narratives, some of which revert to modern myths (Dant, 2003). Against this backdrop, the emergence and the rise of neo-liberalism as the dominant ideology of our era will be explored. This ideology draws on seemingly rational science in the guise of economics, which in turn rests on modern myths and builds a foundation resembling the nature of medieval dogma (Muff et al., 2013). Figure 1 illustrates these theory framework interrelations.

Figure 1: Social theory framework




*(Own illustration)*

Based on that framework, the thesis proceeds as follows: chapter 3 outlines the context of private business schools in Germany, considering the overarching HE conceptualisation of the neo-liberal age, related EU-level policy and of course the specific national setting. In chapter 4 the methodology is explained and reflected on in detail. Chapter 5 summarises the major findings through intra-case analyses as well as a cross-case analysis. These findings and their implications are then discussed in depth. The conclusion follows in chapter 6. Finally, there is a reflection on this research in chapter 7. A complete listing of findings constitutes the appendix.

## 2. Understanding Neo-Liberalism Through Social Theory

*Ich kenne die Weise, Ich kenne den Text, Ich kenn auch die Herren Verfasser;*
*Ich weiß, sie tranken heimlich Wein Und predigten öffentlich Wasser*

*[I know the tune, I know the words, I also know every author;*
*I know they secretly drank wine, While publicly preaching water]*

*From the poem 'Ein Wintermärchen' [A Winter's Tale] by Heinrich Heine*

This chapter illuminates neo-liberalism through a critical lens. A framework of social theory concepts selected for their presence in critically oriented literature, and also for their manifold interdependencies throughout an ambivalent course of history is applied. To set the stage in chapter 2.1, neo-liberalism is defined. Its transformation over time as well as its rise as the dominant ideology of our era is outlined. Chapter 2.2 covers the concept of myth. The distinction between traditional and modern myth is highlighted, and the role of the latter in contemporary contexts is presented. The foundation is thereby laid for the perspective of understanding neo-liberalism "as a set of myths embedded in the institutional environment that tends to anchor political actors' orientations" (Mudge, 2008: 720). In chapter 2.3, the concept of enlightenment is explored. It is shown how it emerged as a movement to overcome myth and religious dogma, but it is also revealed how it reverts to myth itself to provide a fertile ground for new dogmas including neo-liberal ones. Chapter 2.4 explains the concept of late modernity and in how far it is a plausible classification of the current era. Major characteristics are underscored to emphasise how immanent aspects of irrational rationality (cf. chapter 1.5) provide fertile ground for neo-liberal ideology. Chapter 2.5 addresses the globalisation of capitalism and the mythical basis neo-liberal ideology draws upon to spread across continents. In his lectures at Collège de France, Foucault established that neo-liberalism's central point of reference and support is *homo oeconomicus* (Lemke, 2001); a paradigmatic case for a field of economics operating in the realm of doctrine as argued in chapter 2.6. Essential principles of neo-liberalism and their mythical and pseudo-enlightened roots are crystallised in chapter 2.7, and it is pointed out how they cause severe discontent. Chapter 2.8 concludes this section.

## 2.1 The Rise and Dominance of Neo-Liberal Ideology

In recent years, neo-liberalism has become an academic catchphrase and a popular concept in scholarly publications, although there is no unified definition of this concept (Boas & Gans-Morse, 2009). In academic writing the term neo-liberalism first appeared in the period between the two world wars. In the past it was employed almost in opposition to how it is used nowadays: it was coined by the so-called *Freiburg School* of German economists (cf. chapter 1.1) to denote a moderate economic philosophy (Boas & Gans-Morse, 2009). Their approach delineated an economy that would be distinct from both extremes of a state intervention-led economy on the one hand and market liberalism with its laissez-faire approach on the other hand. Frequently, the German economist Walter Eucken and the Austrian economist Friedrich August von Hayek are accentuated as protagonists of this school of thought, also known as *Ordoliberalismus* in the German-speaking sphere. It is further associated with Wilhelm Röpke, Franz Böhm, Leonhard Miksch and Alfred Müller-Armack (e.g. Ptak, 2013).

Whereas it remains debated in how far state regulation or intervention is actually endorsed by early followers of this school of thought – especially Hayek is usually associated much more with freedom of markets than with state intervention, as 'liberty' was his central credo (e.g. Amable, 2011), and he eventually became the charismatic centre of a laissez-faire thinker network (Mudge, 2008) – it is obvious that the role and the understanding of neo-liberalism has changed over the decades. Government regulation of markets became less and less accepted under the prevailing economic policy paradigms. That was different after the Second World War: Shipman (2002) points to cycles of the rise and fall of past government approaches, such as one in the 1950s and 60s where the role of the state in the economy was built up, followed by another cycle in the 1980s and 90s where this role was scaled back. However, he was wrong in anticipating that state intervention would come back by the first decade of the 21st century. It has been argued that with the collapse of the Bretton Woods system of fixed exchange rates in March 1973 a 'neo-liberal counterrevolution' against Keynesianism started its "triumphal march around the world" (Altvater, 2009: 73).

It is also frequently emphasised that a breakthrough of the shifted neo-liberalism was reached with the Thatcher and Reagan administrations in the United Kingdom and in the United States in the 1970s/1980s. Their policies displayed a combination of neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism with the central objective of marketisation, whereby market forces and competition, even among state-owned institutions such as universities, would rule (e.g. Fulcher & Scott, 1999). Furthermore, the very idea of the public sphere was discredited to emphasise the individual as the sole legitimate entity (de Beistegui, 2008). In a first step, deregulation was administered in the realm of international trade and finance.

> "The formation of crucial prices in the world economy, such as exchange rates and interest rates, were no longer based on official decisions and the state with its democratic legitimation. Instead, the decisions on exchange and interest rates were up to private actors – that is, multinational banks, speculative investment and other funds, and transnational corporations" (Altvater, 2009: 73).

In following steps, more and more areas were deregulated, liberalised or privatised, and this process has continued throughout government successions. Such policies seem in line with earlier versions of economic liberalism or laissez-faire paradigms also emphasising free markets. However, there is a major difference between early liberalism and contemporary neo-liberalism: the former insisted on a completely restrained role of the state, whereas the latter assigns an active role to governments. These are employed to ensure, through policymaking and even through interventions, that the goals of neo-liberalists are served.

> "The political sphere, along with every other dimension of contemporary existence, is submitted to an economic rationality, or put the other way around, not only is the human being configured exhaustively as *homo oeconomicus*, all dimensions of human life are cast in terms of a market rationality. While this entails submitting every action and policy to considerations of profitability, equally important is the production of all human and institutional action as rational entrepreneurial action, conducted according to a calculus of utility, benefit, or satisfaction against a micro-economic grid of scarcity, supply and demand, and moral value-neutrality. Neo-liberalism does not simply assume that all aspects of social, cultural and political life can be reduced to such a calculus, rather it develops institutional practices and rewards for enacting this vision" (Brown, 2003: 4f).

The aggressive pursuit of this new type of neo-liberal politics has eventually made a broader public aware of side effects, such as deprived population strata. The first vastly negative connotation of neo-liberalism already appeared, also in scholarship, in connection with Pinochet's dictatorship in Chile starting in 1973. In this context it was associated for the first time with a radical or fundamentalist form of liberalism (Boas & Gans-Morse, 2009). However, this neo-liberal experiment which went awry has not stopped the implementation of neo-liberal policies "in almost every society on the globe" (Brand & Sekler, 2009: 5), albeit in different forms and to varying degrees.

In Western Europe, where social democratic politics were uniquely powerful for much of the era following the Second World War, it is remarkable how even parties of the mainstream left adopted neo-liberalism (Mudge, 2008). Seemingly moderate neo-liberal versions re-entered the stage when Blair in the United Kingdom and Schröder in Germany, both inspired by Giddens's *Third Way* approach (Fulcher & Scott, 1999), replaced the long reigns of the respective conservative administrations in their countries. The Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, Denmark, Italy and Belgium followed with leaders espousing more deregulated markets. By the turn of the century "the 'neo-liberalised' lefts started to look more and more like an international political movement" (Mudge, 2008: 722), including the Clinton administration in the United States. Particularly the liberalisation of financial markets was hailed, and the belief that those would act to the benefit of the national economies, if not the world economy, was strong. The following view of neo-liberalism dominated:

> "Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes human wellbeing can be best advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterised by strong private property rights, free market, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices" (Harvey, 2005: 2).

However, it is increasingly doubtful in how far 'human wellbeing' can be reached or is even pursued by governments advancing neo-liberal agendas of the latest generation. "Certainly many of the features attributed to neo-liberalism are in crisis, or in suspension, or lack political, much less popular, credibility" (Clarke, 2010: 390).

As a consequence, there are voices claiming the end of neo-liberalism (e.g. Altvater, 2009). Yet, to date there is no sign of a political turnaround. Governments still pursue neo-liberal paths and withdraw from crisis management or future crisis prevention (Streeck, 2013). Banks 'too big to fail' and corporations claiming 'global player' status proceed in total ignorance of democratic legitimacy, despite earlier notions that capitalism needs the latter to survive (Gamble, 2001). The only reasonable explanation is that "neo-liberalism functions as an ideology" (DuRand, 2012: 37) with the intention

> "to shift power and resources to corporations and wealthy elites through the privatization of public assets, removal of 'public interest' regulations over large corporations, and tax cuts targeted towards the highest income earners" (Flew, 2012: 46).

Ideology is defined as "a set of basic beliefs about how the world works and about what is right or wrong" (McCarty, Poole, & Rosenthal, 2013: 38). An ideology assumes the task of interpreting the world (Ziegler, 2014). Unlike philosophy or theory, ideologies do not aspire to clarity or logical consistency of the underlying ideas. These ideas "legitimate certain social interests over others" (DuRand, 2012: 37); in the case of neo-liberalism the interests of the wealthiest few. Ideas are given specific interpretations within their particular structures (Festenstein & Kenny, 2005): neo-liberalists for example have not developed beyond Adam Smith's infamous 'invisible hand' as a simplified symbol of self-regulating markets autonomously granting the best outcome (Rosa, 2013b). Progress of thought or justification and readjustment of policies are not required within ideology.

And neo-liberal ideology becomes more dominant as it spans (or arguably controls) all political wings, with the exception of the non-mainstream, essentially marginalised left. In the United States neo-liberalism is associated with a powerful far right that has abandoned the enlightenment tradition (Chirot, 2008). In the European Union (EU), meanwhile considered a 'liberalisation machine' (Streeck, 2013), it prevails despite moderate parties present in several member state governments and EU parliament. Even European social democracy that seems not so convinced any more of the success of *Third Ways* is entrapped by neo-liberal realpolitik. And herein lies the greatest danger: "no phenomenon can be challenged when its self-representation is accepted as reality by its adversaries" (Carruthers, Hyman, & Somers, 2012: 618).

## 2.2 The Concept of Myth

There are manifold academic conceptualisations and debates related to myth, and to explore them would mean to enter a 'labyrinth of analysis' (Carpenter, 2012) going well beyond the scope of this thesis. Therefore, I confine this chapter to brief definitions and to the presentation of characteristics of myth playing a key role in contemporary neo-liberal ideology. In historical terms there are two distinct types of myth. The first one is traditional, referred to as *type one myth*, and the second one is modern, referred to as *type two myth* (Dant, 2003). The traditional myth is a historical story conveyed through fictitious narratives characterised by the involvement of supernatural persons and fantastic events. There are systems linking myths together, referred to as mythology (e.g. Carpenter, 2012). A famous example is ancient Greek mythology, featuring narratives such as Achilles deprived of invulnerability through one of his heels, or Odysseus who had to go through travails lasting for ten years.

The modern myth is a set of timeless stories claiming to describe causal relations between human action and natural consequences. While no characters with names or ascribed powers feature, there is still reference to effects caused by certain behaviour, such as illnesses provoked through one-sided diets (Dant, 2003). It has been suggested that there is a role of myth in modern culture as "a fictitious story that is commonly told with moral effect" (Dant, 2003: 19). However, not all experts agree that myth does indeed have to be fictitious. In archaic societies, it was understood as truth, whereas in other contexts it may assume the character of a fable or even invention (Eliade, 1999). There are various perspectives on the role and nature of myth: some theorists see it as subset of religion, some differentiate in describing traditional myth as religious and modern myth as secular, and others consider myth as vanishing or having already been replaced by science altogether (Segal, 1999), an idea related to enlightenment (cf. chapter 2.3).

It has been asserted that traditional myth can be a "precious possession because it is sacred, exemplary, significant" (Eliade, 1999: 1). Camus's (1999 [1942]) famous work of existentialist philosophy on the myth of Sisyphus illustrates the aforementioned exemplary nature very well. The ordeal of the protagonist is interpreted as a case in point of a revolt against the absurdity of life as a way of preserving one's dignity. And modern myth plays a continuing role in society and in social research (Dant, 2003) spanning an array from the general sphere of everyday life (Barthes, 2012 [1957]) to specific arenas like aesthetics in literature (Carpenter, 2012). Myth guides decisions and justifies events. It helps structure our sense of belonging to a particular culture, blurring the boundaries between truth and belief. "Combining the real with the ideal, it produces something of an ideal type that stretches beyond what the evidence will show" (Ferguson, 1992: 74). More pointedly, it is argued that whoever philosophises disregarding the state of the art operates in the 'business of myth' (Sloterdijk, 2005).

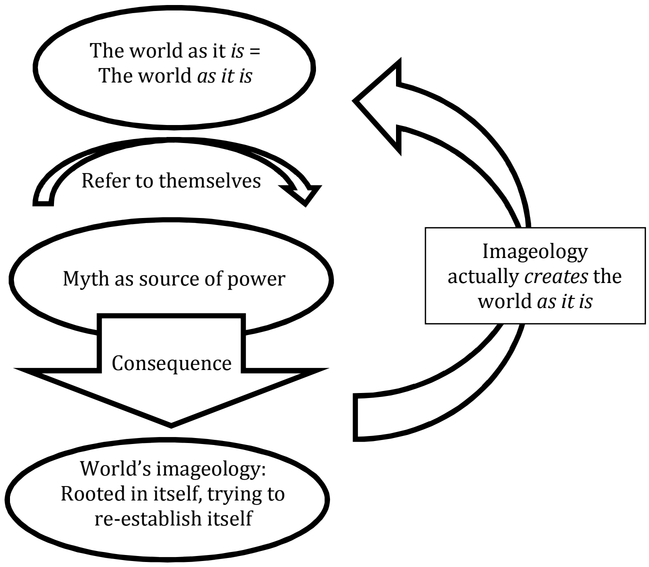
In such vein I follow the notion that myth (or mythology) is also a communication system so that everything that becomes part of a discourse can become a myth (Barthes, 2012 [1957]). Hence, the concept also feeds discourse analysis, which lies at the heart of my thesis methodology (cf. chapter 4.1). Modern myth assumes a prominent role in discourses of totalitarianism, as Ernst Cassirer's nuanced work has shown (Pedersen, 2009). Neo-liberal discourses are an example of that, and they rely on myths such as "free market equals democracy equals freedom" (Gehmann, 2003: 105); further ones follow in chapters 2.5 to 2.7. Myths play a crucial role in classifying certain assumptions (Ferguson, 1992) with manipulative intent (Barthes, 2012 [1957]). They are used to present a situation as natural and to prevent any discussion of alternatives. Modern myths are a "form of mass fraud" (Cohen, 2010: 592), and they

> "behave like dictators; they demand our exclusive attention, and this is what establishes their power not only in the metaphysical, but also in the physical domain. When I, as a modern man, conceive these tales as objective rules governing the world as it actually is, then their mythic will turn into the *objective per se*. […] This might explain the earnestness and relentlessness with which the 'rules' are implemented. Taking again the free market mythos as an exemplary case for one of the predominant holy tales of our times next to that of rationality: The conception of the world expressed in this myth claims to be more than a conception, but to be an objective rule which reads that in order to become free, more in fact, to become a real human being, free market (translated into operative terms, unrestricted Capitalism) is the only way to achieve this" (Gehmann, 2003: 115).

Thus, the myth is treated as natural law demanding realisation. Gehmann (2003) uses the example of the free market myth further to illustrate the mechanism that can be triggered: free markets have to be implemented, because it is pointless to neglect the law of nature. In addition it contains a mythic promise hard to resist because it appeals to most individuals as being 'free'. Hence, the phenomenon of a free market turns, by virtue of its function as a conduct-governing principle, from an integral part of an *assumed* order into one of a *realised* order. This is a distinct property of modern myth. "As opposed to the traditional myth, it is no longer confined to a tale *about* the world as it is (this, too), but it *becomes* the world as it actually *is*" (Gehmann, 2003: 115).

This property is also elaborated by Barthes (2012 [1957]) who ascribes the success of manipulative myths to the use of language and imagery comprising the means to transmit another implied message (at the second level) than the explicit (or first-level) one, "which is why Barthes calls myth a signifying act with a second-order reference" (Cohen, 2010: 592). And such second-order reference arguably can be self-induced and reinforced: Figure 2 illustrates the dynamics of how modern myths create facts or reality and thereby also represent a self-referential system in Luhmann's (2012) sense.

Figure 2: Modern myths and reality as autopoietic system of second order self-reference




*(Adapted from Gehmann, 2003: 116)*

## 2.3 The Concept of Enlightenment

Enlightenment is a concept promoting the independent use of one's own intellect and reason; an idea directed against superstition, prejudice, and fanaticism. Central to this idea are trust in rationality and a desire for emancipation. Owed to its provenance, enlightenment is also frequently referred to as a 'European project' (e.g. Geier, 2012). Placing it in the course of history, enlightenment is also a term denominating an era: the European epoch roughly between the English revolution of 1689 and the French revolution of 1789, or in a slightly extended perspective circa 1600-1800 from the foundation of the Royal Society to Kant (Sherratt, 1999). In that era the absolute power of the Christian church and of the state – and the latter predominantly refers to feudal or royal sovereigns – were broken (e.g. Tinker, 2004).

> "Central to the politics of Enlightenment thinkers was the rejection of the deep-seated belief that inequality and poverty were inevitable and reflected the natural state of human societies. […] By contrast, people like Voltaire, Condorcet, Rousseau, or Diderot blamed existing social arrangements, and what they called civilization, for the unjust systems that had appeared everywhere. They thought change necessitated the rejection of the doctrines and values, including religious ones, that sustained such 'imperfect' systems, and that rational knowledge would be the means to put an end to them and bring about the 'perfectibility of human kind'. Emancipation therefore meant precisely this break with the old, mostly feudal and 'traditional' societies, with their fixed relations of power and religious ideologies and restrictions" (Venn, 2006: 479).

The quest for emancipation as a reaction against the excesses of the feudal systems in Europe was guided by the motto of *sapere aude* – meaning 'dare to apply your own reason' (e.g. Geißler, 2012). The latter points to the advocated rise of reason, and also to the role of science as the source of disseminated knowledge. "The Enlightenment promised an autonomous subject progressively emancipated by knowledge acquired through scientific methods" (Alvesson & Deetz, 2005: 65). Hence, one of its fruits is modern science. Particularly positivist approaches presuming an objectively given world constituted by phenomena that can be rationally known and analysed by independent observers are associated with enlightenment (Boisot & McKelvey, 2010). It was also a formative phenomenon shaping modernity (Israel, 2011).

Enlightenment's focus on reason and rationality has generated substantial criticism. Whereas there has been a long tradition of academic inquiry devoted to knowledge acquisition and to technological know-how production, which has enabled the modern world, it has also been argued that the latter are "ambiguous blessings" (Maxwell, 2012: 665): they have enhanced humans' power to act, which has been used for the public good as well as to cause human harm, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Enlightenment is made responsible for diverse social pathologies, and Schmidt (1998) has identified three major lines of criticism addressing it. The first one argues that indifference of rationality to traditional norms and practices destroys social ties and leads to anarchy or brute force, and the French Revolution is quoted as a major example. The second one originates in the work of Nietzsche, and it points to a looming descent into nihilism through the devaluation of sense-providing values of a culture. And the third one, drawing on Hegel, emphasises the transformation into terror, partly enabled through enlightenment's insufficient acknowledgment of the limitations of its own reason or rationality conception.

The most famous account along the latter lines is the seminal work on the 'dialectic of enlightenment' (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2010 [1947]), which is also considered *the* landmark work of CT. This book was written under the impression of fascism and the Holocaust, and in it these two *Frankfurt School* protagonists argue that the promotion and extreme application of instrumental reason has led to the disaster-bound domination of internal and external nature. Implications have been fiercely debated in the social sciences (e.g. Allen, 2014; Herf, 2012; Honneth, 2000). Particularly the relationship between myth (cf. chapter 2.2) and enlightenment is subject of the book and the debates. On the one hand, it has been argued that enlightenment "sees itself first and foremost as myth criticism" (Cohen, 2010: 584). On the other hand, it has been argued that enlightenment itself reverts to mythology (Fleming, 2012), and that the 'dialectic' is also rooted in the tautology of instrumental rationality.

> "The enlightened critique of myth shows that it is itself a captive of myth. […] If the distinction between criticism and its object is erased, it follows that we must give up the enlightenment project, possibly along with the idea of emancipation that is based on it" (Cohen, 2010: 586).

In light of tremendous barbarity and bloodshed through revolutions and two world wars, it is not surprising that the project of enlightenment allegedly failed. However, it remains disputed if an extreme pursuit of enlightenment (at least in so far as it is considered a proxy of rationality and science-driven progress) is at the heart of disasters created and tolerated by humans or, to the contrary, its neglect:

> "It is true that part of the blame for both Communism and Nazism should indeed be ascribed to the attack by Western intellectuals on the liberal and humane Enlightenment tradition of which so many had become contemptuous" (Chirot, 2008: 257).

Indeed, the criticism may reduce enlightenment's values much more than justified. These actually went beyond pure scientific reason or rationality: values held high by enlightenment thinkers comprise happiness, reverence, and hope (Neiman, 2008). Those are currently no less valuable than in the past to fight all authoritarian powers that try to prevent the independent use of intellect and reason through responsible citizens. Its core principles of political freedom and protected property are still highly relevant, as there are persisting powers that do not value religious, intellectual, and economic freedom of people (Geier, 2012). Without a doubt – and despite their complex and turbulent contradictions, rivalries and interdependencies throughout the course of history – religion (e.g. de Botton, 2012), science (e.g. Maxwell, 2007) and capitalism (e.g. Haque, 2011) all have the potential to further contribute substantially to the future of humanity and a better world at large. A major prerequisite will be that the extremist views prevalent in all of those domains, comprising old and new dogmas undermining a viable and responsible future, are contained and overcome.

Therefore the calls to restore the integrity and probity of the enlightenment ideal (e.g. Neiman, 2008; Tinker, 2004) are not surprising. To such end, Habermas (1981) has suggested to re-define rationality and to establish a 'communicative' one, based on a cooperative process of open discourse aimed at reaching mutual understanding and agreement. And there remains a conciliatory finding about the famous 'dialectic' work:

> "Though Horkheimer and Adorno offer one of the darkest and most pessimistic diagnoses of the actual crisis of enlightenment, they nevertheless insist that the only cure for the ailments of enlightenment is more enlightenment" (Brunkhorst, 2000: 137).

## 2.4 The Concept of Late Modernity

Modernity delineates a historical period of transition from agrarian, traditionalist societies and feudalism toward capitalism, beginning with the era of industrialisation (e.g. Menzel, 1998). In the context of the latter, it is not surprising that the term 'modern age' is sometimes understood as a pseudonym of capitalism (Eagleton, 2011). Referring to science, the period is associated with the rise of positivism (Boisot & McKelvey, 2010), thereby also upholding enlightenment principles, and with social research emerging in contexts of transition (Giri, 2007). In social sciences, modernity has frequently been described as a social system associated with the rise of the nation-state and of fundamental rights representing such transitions, but also with more elusive concepts related to lifestyle, such as urbanisation (Venn & Featherstone, 2006).

As times have progressed, it has been disputed how to conceptualise (and how to label) the latter-day period appropriately. There is still the hardly fruitful dichotomy between 'modern' and 'post-modern' (Boisot & McKelvey, 2010), with the dilemma that the former seems out-dated, and the latter seems to have lost its appeal (or was never accepted by some theorists in the first place). Representative of critics is the view of post-modernity as "another alibi in the name of which intellectuals denounce the world for failing to live up to their expectations" (Readings, 1996: 6). However, the observation that the prefix 'post' may suggest "some failure of the modern" (Venn & Featherstone, 2006: 462), beyond unmet expectations, remains worth considering. According to Lyotard's (1984) landmark work on the 'postmodern condition', a loss of confidence in the metanarratives of progress and science spawned by enlightenment is constitutive of the shifted era.

Examples of discarded meta- (or *grand*) narratives furthermore include Christian, liberal-progressive, Marxist and fascist ones. Major reasons for their demise are their deterministic prejudices, their Euro-centrism supporting a colonialist world order, and a renewed consciousness of the need for polyvalent, non-totalitarian thinking. It had become apparent that such narratives were, in different ways and to varying extent, inappropriate attempts to seize the complexity of the world (Sloterdijk, 2005). However, that does not mean necessarily that modernity has ended. I follow the reasoning that we just have reached a new stage of, as its major institutions such as the nation-state are still there, but transformed. Hence, a *second* modernity (Beck & Lau, 2005), or a *late* modernity (e.g. Giddens, 1991) is unfolding. A determining characteristic of this late modernity is the emergence of global risks with wide scopes and far-reaching, not fully understood implications (e.g. Beck, 2008; Giddens, 1990).

These risks include in particular three realms (Beck & Lau, 2005). The first one is *ecological.* "We face a pervasive environmental crisis, with consequences from climate change to polluted oceans and ground water" (Adler, 2011: 209). Climate change, toxic and nuclear waste, desertification and other dismal phenomena are often described as 'problems', although they should rather be understood as 'symptoms' indicating the need for fundamental changes in conceptualising progress and development (Harman, 1993; Wright, Nyberg, De Cock, & Whiteman, 2013). However, it remains doubtful if such changes could reverse prevailing 'cascading ecological crises', defined as "abrupt ecological changes that propagate into societal crises that move through systems and spatial scales" (Galaz, Moberg, Olsson, Paglia, & Parker, 2011: 361).

The second risk realm is the threat of *terror attacks*. The most prominent version of current terrorism is probably violent radical Islamism. It gained worldwide attention through the attacks of 9/11 in 2001. With such acts, terrorists emulate the momentum of European expansion since 1492, enjoying a 'euphoriant asymmetry of pure attack' (Sloterdijk, 2005). Islamist extremists embody reactionary anti-modernity, sharing this stance with movements of the last century, including German fascism, Russian Bolshevism and Japanese imperialist nationalism (Mazarr, 2007). Thus, the paradox of the terrorism delineated above is that it fights modernity, the progression of which is promoting it as a significant phenomenon in the first place. As frightening as the (potentially omnipresent) attacks is the reaction of national administrations to govern terrorism through risk. This concept entails drastic prevention, arbitrary surveillance and the deployment of new technologies assisting the paradigm of enlisting every citizen under the category of suspicion (Aradau & Van Munster, 2007). In such a constellation, self-destructive tendencies seem inevitable on all the involved sides.

The notion of self-destruction, albeit in other guises, also plays a role in the third risk realm of *financial market crash*. Global financial markets have risen to surpass by far any other sector of the economy with transactions of unimaginable currency values completed in seconds online (e.g. Castells, 2010). This is probably a symptom of the "metatemporally based dynamic of circulation" (Lee & LiPuma, 2002: 205), which has taken over, aggregating crash-bound individual courses of action. Already more than a decade ago, a former German chancellor observed 'speculationism' (Schmidt, 1999), pointing to grand mergers and takeovers, and also pointing to overtrading of derivatives in real estate and security markets. With the 2008 subprime loan crisis triggering global economic chain reactions of financial meltdown, we have experienced a 'speculationist' financial regime based on the notion of rational bankers "who wouldn't do anything stupid en masse" (Brooks, 2011). However, the dilemma is that these bankers arguably have not even acted stupidly (which could prevent future mass-scale mistakes through learning), but perfectly in line within an internal logic of their interpretive community generating a 'culture of (in this case financial market) circulation' (Lee & LiPuma, 2002), which guarantees future crash occurrences.

All three risk realms contribute to the insight that "the very idea of controllability, certainty or security – so fundamental to first modernity – collapses" (Beck & Lau, 2005: 526). The diagnosis that we live in 'liquid times' (Bauman, 2007b), where social structures and institutional forms dissolve, adds to the notion of vanishing certainty. Beyond fluidity, there is tempo change (Rosa, 2013a) putting pressure on individuals. There is *technological acceleration*, enabled through smart and mobile digital 'steroids' (Friedman, 2006). There is also a general *acceleration in the pace of life*, despite the expectation that technological change should increase an individual's free time. According to Rosa (2013a), both the structural and cultural aspects of our institutions and practices are marked by a decreasing time period during which expectations based on past experience reliably match the future, making our relationships to each other and to the world fluid and problematic. The pressure culminates within accelerating, fluid and vague networks of the *information* or *knowledge society* (Castells, 2010). From a critical point of view we should consider the mythical tendencies of the latter:

> "In contrast to the common assumption that modern economies are knowledge societies, thriving on the accumulation of ever more calculable knowledge of the probabilities of individuals committing certain acts, and restraining or encouraging individuals to fashion their behaviour accordingly, the recent financial crisis suggests a different rationality was at play among those who were central actors during the collapse: many institutions that have survived, or even thrived, have been those most able to suggest risks were unknowable or not predictable in advance. Ignorance, not knowledge, has often been the most indispensable resource throughout the crisis" (Davies & McGoey, 2012: 65).

This statement strongly underlines the critique addressing ideology-driven economics obsessed with (pseudo-) rationality to be elaborated in chapter 2.6. Maybe we should follow the suggestion, however, to aspire at acquiring the property to deal with the unknown and the irrational that Taleb (2012) refers to as 'antifragility', rather than at ignorance. Thereby the crises borne by the risk society of late modernity, and in particular by neo-liberal economics-induced behaviour might be countered best.

In addition, a major drawback of ignorance should be acknowledged: it drives businesses onto the path of 'corporate social irresponsibility' (Lange & Washburn, 2012) where they benefit from the confusion of a fluid, accelerated and information-overloaded late modernity. Despite the perception of increased visibility via media, it has in fact become easier for corporations to conceal unethical behaviour (Zyglidopoulos & Fleming, 2011). Eventually the latter culminates in scandals such as those exemplified in chapter 1.1, and presumably there is a much vaster array of undetected or unreported cases. Whereas it remains debated what exactly qualifies as unethical or irresponsible behaviour – and there are differentiated and widely subjective perceptions of the severity of cases and their public reception (Lange & Washburn, 2012) – it is obvious that corporate conduct resulting in devastating consequences, such as ecological destruction or financial collapse highlighted above as major risks of late modernity, is hardly acceptable for a broader public audience.

Hence, the question remains why then such corporate behaviour, aggregating in particular the ecological and financial risks mentioned above, keeps proliferating. Substantial aspects of that will be covered in the following chapter, but there is also a direct connection with the shift from Fordist type (mass) production as the major driving force of the economy of modernity (e.g. Liagouras, 2005) toward consumption as the major driving force of late modernity: following the demise of the Puritan ethic of self-denial, or the Protestant ethic of hard work building the foundation of capitalism (Kaesler & Weber, 2013), consumption "has come to supplant religion, work and politics as the mechanism by which social status distinctions may be established" (Gabriel & Lang, 2006: 8). Bauman (2007a) distinguishes between consumption, which he portrays as a banal, integral part of life, and *consumerism*, described as social arrangement where human wants and longings are the principal operating force of society. The latter is pointed out here. In line with contemporary globalisation debates (cf. chapter 2.3), a globalised consumer culture (Ritzer, 2007) has gained momentum. There is the question if consumers are sovereign (Aldridge, 2003). In an interview conducted by Dandaneau and Dodsworth (2008), George Ritzer expresses the point of view that consumption is becoming increasingly important with a two-way relationship between consumers and producers. Thus, consumer demand also induces corporate behaviour. And increasingly, consumers act price-driven; arguably an obsessive 'buy cheap imperative' reigns, with devastating consequences provoked by the production system which turn out to be costly for society at large in many ways (e.g. Kotteder, 2013).

Modernity often implies forward movement (Negri, 2008), but it seems that the latest acceleration is rather directed backwards: already Max Weber's works on protestant ethics consider the danger for human beings living in late modernity to be turned into 'domestic pigs', experiencing the final surrender of enlightenment and political liberalism promises that humans should be enabled to shape their own destiny in democratic and self-determined structures (Rosa, 2013b). Even the concept of human rights, developed since the age of enlightenment, is eroding in late modernity (Kälin, 2013). Already Sigmund Freud fell into despair, deeply moved by the First World War, and gaining an insight into humans' disposition for retrograde steps (Schneider, 2014). Considering such philosophical cognitions, and also based on the awareness that the possession of sovereignty in the discourses of what is (not) desirable for consumers, and even more general, what is (not) a risk in late modernity (Beck, 2008), the call to work towards a 'New Critical Theory' (Beck, 2003) should not fall on deaf ears.

## 2.5 Globalisation of Capitalism

From a philosophical perspective it can be argued that "life on earth was global from the outset, as one fragile planet huddled for comfort against a cold and empty space" (Shipman, 2002: 5). There are many perspectives and also dimensions of globalisation. They are reflected in various academic theories developed in order to describe new configurations of space and time, economy and society, culture and identity, politics and environment through intertwined activities with impact into remoteness (Reuter, 2008; Sloterdijk, 2005). To inform the subsequent parts of this thesis, I have selected the following definition in lieu of many suitable ones. It portrays globalisation as "the worldwide diffusion of practices, expansion of relations across continents, organisation of social life on a global scale, and growth of a shared global consciousness" (Ritzer, 2010: 395). This definition captures the phenomenon's momentousness quite well, and it also leaves room to interpret the most notable recent developments in its wake as largely mythical discourse in the service of neo-liberal ideology.

There is no universally agreed point in history marking the beginning of processes we nowadays refer to as globalisation. There is no universal framework of distinguishable periods of the phenomenon, either. Table 3 summarises frequently described major phases of globalisation.

Table 3: Phases of globalisation

| *Phase* | *Approximate dates* | *Characteristics* | *Restructuring crises and seminal historic events* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mercantilist phase | 1492 - 1750 | • Expanding scope of Catholic church<br>• Mercantilist colonialism | Columbus in America, Magellan around globe |
| Incipient phase | 1750 - 1850 | • Emergence of unitary states<br>• Formalised international relations | Industrial revolution |
| Industrialist phase | 1850 - 1945 | • National independence, hegemony<br>• Conceptualisation of modernity | Depression, World Wars, Holocaust, atomic bomb |
| Uncertainty phase | 1945 - 1980 | • Postcolonial world<br>• Cultural and economic domination<br>• Accelerated modernity | Cold War<br><br>Oil crises |
| Neo-liberal phase | since 1980 | • Diffusion of culture of capitalism<br>• Multi-national corporations rising<br>• Further time-space compression | Fall of the Berlin Wall<br>Terror attacks of 9/11 |

*(Based on Murray, 2006: 88f and Robertson, 1992: 58ff)*

This overview illustrates that, the further we advance in the historic phases of globalisation, the more clearly economic perspectives move into the foreground. The driving forces shifted from the Catholic Church via nation states to corporations. Our era is coined by the globalisation of capitalism (e.g. Mann, 2011), of neo-liberalism (e.g. DuRand, 2012) and of associated liberalisation policies (Simmons & Elkins, 2004). As one consequence, multi-national corporations (MNC) have become central characters and emerged as 'global players' (Morss, 1991), acting on a stage astutely captured by Friedman's (2006) allegory of a 'flat world', symbolising the shrinking (meaning of) distance between locations and the vanishing of barriers to global commercial activity and financial transactions. This allegory is not without irony: it is commonly associated with the rather unenlightened medieval Christians' belief in the myth of Earth as a disk, which, however, is a myth itself (Russell, 1997). And in the following sections as well as in chapter 2.6 it will become more apparent that modern myths as well as an ambivalent relationship with enlightenment are key ingredients of the paradigm that "the world should be perceived through an economic prism" (Saul, 2009: 123) imposed on us by neo-liberal ideologists.

Their *hyperglobalist* perspective (Murray, 2006) has triumphed globalisation discourse. It emphasises unprecedented integration of global economic activity, mainly enabled through unrestricted flows of capital and information. A prominent mentor of this line of thought is Ohmae (1990, 1995) claiming that a global economy has overcome national boundaries and no longer needs political guidance (understood as restrictive). He asserts that only free-floating investment, industry, information technology, and individual consumers can provide the resources to meet the demand of the 'global citizen'. And the associated processes are perceived to unfold at an ever increasing pace. "There can be no doubt that we are in an accelerated period of globalization" (Murray, 2006: 87), in which we have "the capacity to work as unit in real time, or chosen time, on a planetary scale" (Castells, 2010: 101).

On the one hand, supporters from the field of economics, ranging from enthusiastic to nuanced, claim that economic benefits of globalisation are widely underappreciated, pointing to unprecedented opportunities to billions of people worldwide (e.g. Bhagwati, 2007). Balanced views acknowledging economic benefits of globalisation are also prevalent among other social scientists (e.g. Dahrendorf, 2002). On the other hand, critical views of economists disappointed about 'discontents' of globalisation have been published (e.g. Stiglitz, 2003), and there are rich contributions originating in other social sciences and offering interdisciplinary critique of globalisation as well as its reception in civil society (e.g. Herkenrath, 2012). Presenting the array of debates and disputes of 'globalists', 'anti-globalists', 'transformationalists', and 'post-globalists' (Lemert, Elliott, Chaffee, & Hsu, 2010) would go well beyond the scope of this thesis.

Therefore, the essential insight pursued here is that influential neo-liberal circles constrict the globalisation discourse to narratives of inflated economic advantage and 'unavoidability'. In such vein, critics are reduced to irrelevant voices who just "fear markets" (Wolf, 2000: 11). In many cases not fear but disillusionment is the driving force of critical accounts on globalisation. Moreover, the latter is unmasked as "a myth suitable for a world without illusions [which] robs us of hope" (Hirst & Thompson, 1999: 6). Table 4 summarises several myths that pave the way for aggressive enactments of neo-liberal ideology that will be covered further in following chapters.

Table 4: Selected myths about globalisation

| Myth | Characteristics/Explanation |
|---|---|
| The myth of 'big is better' | Based on the classic Adam Smith case for expansionist, competitive capitalism. Serves the doctrine of market liberalism as political ideology, public policy or corporate strategy. This categorical imperative overlooks the extent of hubris behind corporate expansion. As a consequence, free marketeers' belief in their own overextended metaphors shapes the phenomenon itself and accelerates financial bubbles bound to burst. |
| The myth of 'more is better' | Based on an ethos of excess and with an emphasis on deregulation, investment and consumption, this myth is central to free market economics. As a result, 'more' becomes a utilitarian justification for public policies and private practices of a 'greed era', revolving around increased competition (unrestricted by barriers to ownership or trading). |
| The myth of 'global cultural homogeneity' | Relates to notions of the 'global village' in a culturally intertwined world. This myth infers that the consumption of the same popular material creates a meta-culture whose collective identity is based on shared patterns of consumption, built on choice, emulation or manipulation. |
| The myth of 'the new world order' | There are elements of the creation of order *in* the world and of ordering *of* the world. The authorship is US-American, and the new world order mashes with the triumphalist 'end of history' claim (Fukuyama, 1989). |

*(Excerpts from Ferguson, 1992: 75ff)*

The first issue to consider is that these modern myths are manipulative (cf. chapter 2.2) through claims such as all humans "will eventually ride the continually rising seas of prosperity in boats, customised for each individual, that are impermeable to the environment" (Balakrishnan, Duvall, & Primeaux, 2003: 300). But the idyllic picture of the 'global village' has been exposed as being rather a series of "manor houses" for élites surrounded by "seas of poverty" (Burns, 1999: 124f), mainly separated by access to or lack of quality information and communication across reference groups. So the differences between the richest and poorest individuals around the globe are huge and continue to grow (e.g. Bauman, 2011), and the social downsides are neglected.

Another issue is that these myths lead us to believe in a homogeneous attitude of welcoming the trend. However, instead of vastly 'shared consumption' of popular culture, there is fragmentation and polarisation (Burns & Holden, 1995), even re-appearing nationalism (Saul, 2009). There are dialectic trends in our world "falling precipitously apart and coming reluctantly together at the very same moment" (Barber, 2000: 21). This view refers conflicts of nationalist or religious fundamentalism versus the off-springs of universalised markets with late modern consumerist attitudes (cf. chapter 2.4) propelling accelerated trade interaction and global free-market tales. We should consider that globalisation does not mean to lose ground just by not following the (US-driven) capitalist 'new world order' role model (Dahrendorf, 2003).

Besides cultural and social conflicts, these myths ignore ecologic risk (cf. chapter 2.4). There is a "major globalisation of environmental impacts of industrial production and consumption as well as concern about it" (Murray, 2006: 84). Already in the late 18th century intellectuals and natural scientists were concerned with climatic changes and deforestation, thus anticipating many of today's concerns (Ballantyne, 2002). Earth becoming fatal through current dogmas and the ensued human practice is diagnosed as the drama of globalisation (Sloterdijk, 2005). Referring to the initial definition, the practices diffused across most parts of the globe since the 1980s are associated with market liberalism (Shipman, 2002), justified with the above-mentioned myths. Instead of hailing those myths and 'free markets', well-dosed regulation would be beneficial, as we "need smart, not maximum globalization" (Rodrik, 2011: xix).

## 2.6 Neo-Liberalism and the Economics Doctrine

Neo-liberal paradigms incorporate principles (such as free-market supremacy), the provenance of which can be assigned to faculties of economics. These principles have come to dominate political and social spheres in most parts of the globe. “There is little doubt that economics has won the battle for theoretical hegemony in academia and society as a whole and that such dominance becomes stronger every year” (Ferraro, Pfeffer, & Sutton, 2005: 10). And it is not a differentiated, enriching, and ambiguity-embracing field of economics admitting diverse lines of inquiry, but a dangerously narrow version of this academic discipline that is serving as all-pervasive neo-liberal ideology supplier. Economists have “provided the intellectual armour that the policymakers invoked in the movement toward deregulation” (Stiglitz, 2010: xvii).

Economics of the neo-liberal vein are centrally based on the assumption of economic rationality. The belief in the latter has almost reached the status of a new world religion, coinciding with the decline of persuasiveness and acceptance of traditional religions and church (Senf, 2008), and contradicting earlier warnings expressed by a founding father of the social market economy (Rüstow, 2009). Unlike other social sciences, economics has “regressed to dogma” (Muff et al., 2013: 50). The concept at the core of this dogma is *homo oeconomicus*, classified as self-interest explanation (SIE) – and as fallacious (McMurtry, 2012), or even as the ‘lapse of economics’ (Thielemann, 2010). It is based on the assumption that human beings behave rationally, which refers to the systematic pursuit of maximised personal benefit.

Another popular concept applied in economic models is *ceteris paribus*: the analysis of (supposedly rational) behaviour adapting to situations where just one parameter changes and all others remain the same (e.g. Nida-Rümelin, 2011). The major problem of clauses of the latter paradigm is “that they can render vacuous the statements they are appended to” (Eliot, 2011: 215), which can be understood in two ways: firstly, if they are treated as semantically basic or as tautologies in the sense of ‘x is always true unless it is not’, no substantial insight remains. Secondly, if all disturbances affecting the statement are removed, vacuity is the consequence of their inexpressibility.

Such concepts are useful to understand how basic interactions of market participants are induced, and how individual members of society *ideally* behave in typical scenarios of commercial transaction. And one can assume that such basic concepts are even needed as a departure point to develop more specified insights that researchers could gain from diverse, more complex scenarios. Instead, SIE is upheld as a central truth despite the obvious shortcoming that "the simplistic account of human motivations based on self-interest comprehensively fails to recognise the real complexities of human behaviour" (Kay, 2009: 1). Urquhart (2012) argues that the (arguably extreme) pursuit of self-interest not only fails to provide for the well-being of individuals – as already discussed in chapter 2.1 – but that it actually is the 'annihilation of self': individuals reduced to insatiable benefit maximisers neither have reflective capacities nor a will, and they do not share common values, so that they are ultimately reduced to "automata of some kind" (Urquhart, 2012: 441).

Other factors driving human behaviour, including altruism (e.g. Rose-Ackerman, 1996), empathy (e.g. Rifkin, 2009), emotions (e.g. Lordon, 2013), 'animal spirits' (Akerlof & Shiller, 2009) and irrationality at large (e.g. Ariely, 2009), are ignored or dismissed by mainstream economics. Instead, the field of the latter rests on narrow, misguided interpretations of Adam Smith or neoclassical economics (Urquhart, 2012). Not only approaches over-relying on SIE, but even any approach assuming interest as motive in general, suffers from shortcomings (Folger & Salvador, 2008). The resulting inevitable question is asked by Pfeffer (2004: 12): "If economic theory is not so successful in understanding behaviour, how does its acceptance and indeed dominance persist?"

Ferraro et al. (2005) offer an intriguing explanation for such inconsiderate followership of economic theory. They show how social theories can become self-fulfilling. Firstly, that happens through the design of management practices and institutional arrangements: people acting on prescribed ideas introduce routines creating conditions favouring the predictions provided by the theory. Secondly, there is the transformation of theoretical assumptions into social norms about behaviour: theories may just describe how individuals ought to behave, yet thereby they build powerful norms contributing to a re-education of people who learn that the theorised normal behaviour is the only generally expected and acceptable real one, too. Thirdly, the language we use is essential: acting on the basis of a language provided by economists to portray assumptions and to channel norms into society, people will – at least to some degree – develop behaviour consistent with these norms and therefore also with the linguistic frame set. In other words, metaphors used by an academic discipline (here: economics) to refer to real-world phenomena are reified and eventually treated as the real thing (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). In this sense, neo-liberalism is not only identified as ideology, but also as a "constructivist project" (Brown, 2003) built upon self-referential modern mythology (cf. chapter 2.2).

Along with humans as rational actors, markets are required to be rational playing fields within the economic arena. And once again, a flawed assumption upheld in economics serves as an ultimate truth feeding neo-liberalism: the notion that markets behave neutrally towards conceptions of a desirable (or even good) life, because they only trade goods and services that market participants desire due to their rational preferences (Rosa, 2013b). Neither non-economic aspects of a 'good life', nor irrational behaviour facets of market participants are considered (e.g. Thielemann, 2010). Markets are proclaimed to be self-steered, following natural laws (i.e. in the absence of government regulation). If free market rules are considered natural law, instead of socially constructed and implemented or at least sanctioned concepts, it is pointless to oppose them. Market ideology comes in the guise of an over-simplified Darwinism. The assertion of this type of eternal law is an essential characteristic of totalitarian movements according to Hannah Arendt (Jessen, 2006). Such movements release business actors from the moral weighing up of their manoeuvres, and policymakers from fair balance in their ruling. In so far it is only consequent to diagnose a contemporary 'total economy' (Žižek, 2012) and to argue that "we live today under the tyranny of economics" (Hendry, 2006: 267).

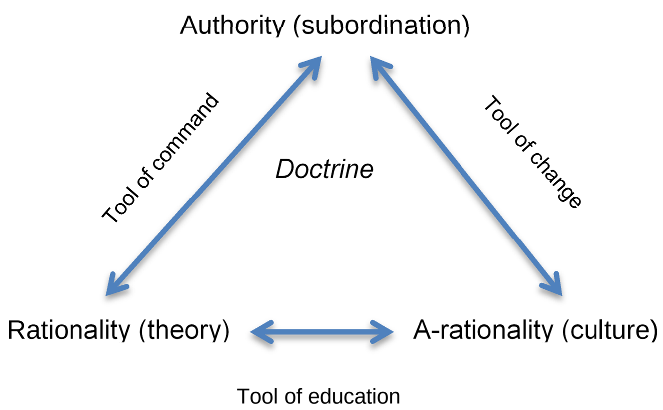
The totalitarian version of economics serving the neo-liberal agenda assumes the role of a doctrine (e.g. Rosa, 2013b). Høiback (2011) explains that the latter is historically associated with the military, and it is characterised as a set of solemnly endorsed and fundamental principles, which are usually centrally enforced. Or, using a sports metaphor, he underlines that a doctrinal approach is "to base the game on a permanent system and a particular way to play" (Høiback, 2011: 883). There are three elements of doctrine (Høiback, 2011): firstly, doctrine requires *theory* explaining why it is superior to all realistic alternatives. In the case of our contemporary economic doctrine it is even used to prevent alternatives. In Germany, the term *alternativlos* (meaning 'being without alternative') has become infamous, and it was voted *Unwort des Jahres* (non-word of the year) in 2010 by a jury of critical linguistic scientists every year selecting the most inappropriate and inhumane word from suggestions posted by the public (GfdS, 2014). The Merkel administration, flanked by reports of neo-liberal economists such as Sinn (e.g. 2010), attached this label to doubtful policies including the bailout of banks involved in the financial crisis, and also to guarantees allocated to mainly French and German banks buying government bonds of indebted southern EU member states.

Secondly, *culture* is essential, and doctrine is a cultural artefact. To have significant impact it has to be supported by a culture that has causal power, meaning the ability to induce people to act. It also has to be manipulative so that doctrine can master it instead of the other way round. Therefore it is so important for neo-liberal protagonists to establish an all-encompassing sphere (including every area and every aspect of life) dominated by neo-liberal principles so that the doctrine unfolds its power (cf. chapter 2.1). Such sphere has materialised in the forms of a fully economised society (Verhaeghe, 2013) and a globalised triumphal march of free-market economics (Müller, 2002).

Thirdly, doctrine needs *authority* so that its constituency will follow it. This authority is largely represented by employers and by politicians who, in unison, have succeeded in relentless efforts to blur differences between voluntary and enforced mobility, self-employment and precarity, or resigning and being made redundant (Streeck, 2013). It is also exerted by the richest people in world (often in their role as financial investors or shareholders via MNCs as vehicles) who have broadcast through substantially funded and increasingly influential lobby groups (e.g. George, 2014), and despite its obvious absurdity, the powerful message that allowing them to get ever richer through tax cuts, workforce salary cuts, and further market liberalisation – exclusively designed in their favour – will benefit society and everyone's wealth (Bauman, 2013).

Furthermore, based on how these three elements are balanced, three utilities of doctrine can be derived (Høiback, 2011): firstly, doctrine can be a tool of *command* to enhance cohesion and facilitate co-ordination. This function is most evident still in its original military context. Secondly, it can serve as a tool of *change*. When disaster is incurred, or the path pursued has materialised as impasse, it is supportive in re-orienting society's direction. The more astonishing it seems that, considering the current global financial crisis and also the recurring corporate scandal crises, no change is enacted, but instead the crisis-provoking system is promoted further (e.g. Streeck, 2013). Such conduct suggests that the economic doctrine elaborated above is used to prevent urgently needed change. Thirdly, it is a vehicle of *education,* whereby it presents essential knowledge the constituency is expected to possess. This function is of particular relevance for the business school context of this study, as this type of institution should theoretically play the role of disseminating essential economic knowledge in society, which opens up the question if the current crisis-prone doctrine should continue to be narrated, or an alternative one allowing for change instead. But at this point it remains to be studied in how far business schools – voluntarily or involuntarily – actually assume the role of doctrine disseminators. Figure 3 features the three elements and the utility span of doctrine.

Figure 3: The doctrinal utility span




*(Adapted from Høiback, 2011: 888)*

Alluding to the modernity versus post-modernity debate (cf. chapter 2.4), Verhaeghe (2013) has identified neo-liberalism, constructed with the help of economic doctrine, as a new 'grand narrative' dominating our culture and forming our identity. He summarises the essentials of the distorted neo-liberal image of humanity as follows:

> "Humans are competing creatures, primarily seeking their own profit. At societal level this is an advantage for all of us, because everyone will give his or her best in competition to reach the top. As a result we get better and cheaper products as well as more efficient services within a common free market without government interference. That is ethically correct, because the success or failure of an individual in the given competition depends entirely on the individual effort. Therefrom follows the importance of education in our world, which is a rapidly evolving knowledge economy in need of well-educated people with flexible skills. One HE diploma is good, two are even better, and lifelong learning is mandatory. Everyone needs to grow relentlessly. However, competition is merciless. Hence, there is a compelling necessity for employee performance reviews and permanent evaluation, namely controlled by an invisible central management hand" (translated from Verhaeghe, 2013: 109f).

The more such principles become modus operandi of society, subtly engrained in all spheres of life, the more likely it is that they behave like a self-referential mythology (cf. chapter 2.2). And the less likely it becomes that the doctrine is questioned or resisted. However, that does not guarantee the doctrine will self-sustain eternally.

> "Monolithic doctrines that are certain that they have a monopoly of wisdom and which crush all opposition usually end by being confronted by challenges to which they have no responses in their repertoire. This was the case with Soviet communism. Neoliberal ideologues certainly show strong tendencies in that direction, but the practical realities of life in democracies force them to compromise" (Crouch, 2011: 23).

But these democracies are under severe pressure in our neo-liberal era (e.g. Brown, 2003; Brunkhorst, 2010; de Beistegui, 2008) so that the forces for compromise weaken. Hence, even more responsibility rests on the shoulders of economics. It has the potential to contribute more than the turf for doctrine, if it ceases to be an obstacle to change (Roscoe, 2014) and moves work acknowledging flaws of economic theories to the centre (Krugman, 2009). Reconciling economics and disciplines such as moral philosophy, psychology or neuroscience in the emerging field of behavioural economics (e.g. Fetchenhauer et al., 2012; Rajko, 2011) could be a starting point.

## 2.7 Neo-Liberal Principles as Sources of Discontent

The long turn from post-war capitalism towards neo-liberalism has been met with an astonishingly low level of resistance (Streeck, 2013). Economists disseminating the vision of capitalism (in its latest version) as a perfect or nearly perfect system (Krugman, 2009) and providing the doctrine elaborated in chapter 2.6 may have contributed. The insecurity arising from late modern risk society highlighted in chapter 2.4 in general, and from permanent neo-liberal pressures in particular, prevents people from resisting (Jessen, 2006). However, more recently, the neo-liberal new 'grand narrative' has been challenged. Experts as well as the broader public, awakened through the crises and scandals pointed out earlier, realise that neither economists (Stiglitz, 2010) nor their economic assumptions (Harman, 1993), in so far as they worked overtly or covertly in favour of neo-liberal agendas, have served us well. Nowadays, there are even examples of conservative economists who consider the financial crisis triggered at Wall Street in 2008 a 'failure of capitalism' (Posner, 2009).

Capturing the debate of capitalism critique since its inception would neither be feasible nor appropriate here. Therefore, the focus will remain on current streams of critique addressing principles of neo-liberal ideology, inevitably intertwined with capitalism at large. The diversity of fields and voices contributing to the rising ocean of critique and to alternative suggestions is remarkable. They encompass 'sceptical economists' (Aldred, 2009) and, referring to German examples, reflective academics (e.g. Bergmann & Daub, 2012), conservative politicians (Geißler, 2012), even businesses and corporate managers who are concerned vis-à-vis the financial sector protagonists' excesses (Handelsblatt, 2012). Moreover, there is a global wave of publications of distinguished members of civil society, and of calls to oppose the neo-liberal reign (e.g. Hessel, 2011; Metz & Seeßlen, 2012). Theologians or dignitaries of church (e.g. Küng, 2010; Marx, 2008) plead for ethical re-orientation, even the pope has given remarkably clear speeches to that end (e.g. Goldfarb & Boorstein, 2013). The latest sign that capitalism critique and reflection is en vogue within academia, and more specifically in the realm of business and management schools, was the all-academy theme of the 2013 AOM meeting: 'Capitalism in Question'.

The first neo-liberal principle under scrutiny is the *free market mantra* upon which recent economic systems have been built (cf. chapter 2.6), and which is supposed to be (or aggressively sold as) the best possible means of economic social arrangement (e.g. Smith, 2012) – despite being archaic, arbitrary and based on myths.

> "The denizens of 'free marketology' today would have us believe that the 'globalizing' market economy requires laissez-faire just as it did in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when a nascent capitalist system began shaping the role of larger social structures" (Balakrishnan et al., 2003: 305).

Built on economic globalisation myths shown in chapter 2.5, a far-reaching paradigm of market fundamentalism is at work (Müller, 2002). It is undisputed that markets have strengths and have provided many benefits to societies throughout history, but it should also be common knowledge that they do not function well in various situations, so that government intervention can be helpful (e.g. Taylor, 2012). The latter is ignored in the construction of neo-liberal myths. Table 5 shows conditions that would have to exist for pure markets, and it attributes corresponding market failures.

Table 5: Required market characteristics and associated failures

| *Conditions for pure markets* | *Associated failures* |
|---|---|
| I<br>All prices are comparable; everything is traded | 1) Inability of market to deal with externalities<br>2) Problem of public and merit goods<br>3) Existence of goods without price<br>4) Transaction costs of exchanges |
| II<br>Market entry is without barriers, with multiple providers and purchasers | 5) Major, virtually immovable, barriers to entry exist in many sectors<br>6) Inequalities of wealth and power accumulate as a result of persistent entry barriers |
| III<br>Maintenance of a high transaction volume | 7) Failures of confidence inhibit potential buyers and sellers from entering the market |
| IV<br>Market participants are perfectly informed | 8) Major practical obstacles to fulfilment of this condition; inequalities in access to information |
| V<br>Economy and polity are separated | 9) Powerful interests, created by inequalities generated by 5) and 6), become insiders to political process |

*(Adapted from Crouch, 2011: 30)*

The proclaimed principle of a free market can be understood as a neo-liberal myth (Chang, 2010): a market only looks free if its underlying restrictions, which always exist, as there is always government involved, be it even to protect neo-liberal reign, are unconditionally accepted. Free-marketeers opposing regulation are as politically motivated as anyone demanding government intervention against which they claim to defend the market. “Their ideological cloak is to pretend that their politics is not really political, but rather is an objective economic truth” (Chang, 2010: 10).

There are more reasons to break away from the illusion of market objectivity: it draws otherwise public or civil-society controlled, and arguably not market-eligible areas into the system of market logic, and thereby into “this intellectual tyranny of economics” (Hendry, 2006: 268). This happens through more or less globally imposed policies referred to as deregulation, liberalisation, or privatisation (e.g. Shipman, 2002). Often there are devastating consequences associated with these policies, such as reduced quality of supply, deteriorating working conditions and/or dispossession of civil society, as examples from sectors as diverse as health care (e.g. Zuberi & Ptashnick, 2011), education (e.g. Nussbaum, 2010) or water (e.g. Ahlers, 2010) have illustrated. Certainly, there are differentiated sector outcomes in detail. There are even short-term benefits sometimes. The landmark case of liberalisation in the EU, the airline sector, has yielded reduced airfares, additional services and more efficient operations. However, the very same case (having been effective for some twenty years) has brought severe doubts to the fore if operating under incessant competitive pressures can even be economically sustainable (Button, Costa, Costa, & Cruz, 2011).

The frightening notion is the strong pressure building up, demanding more and more liberalisation (e.g. Jakobsen, 2010) as a goal per se, regardless of its positive or, in particular, negative outcomes. The ensued dynamic nourishes the increasingly totalitarian neo-liberal movement, which cannot stop until everything has been transferred into (a few privileged) private hands (Jessen, 2006). As a result, society at large is deprived in indebted nations, transformed from tax collectors to debtors in despair to find private lenders dictating their rules of the (already liberalised) financial markets (Streeck, 2013).

Furthermore, the free and objective market myth provides the convenience of liberating neo-liberal ideologues from moral constraints. Despite such indoctrinated economic claims, markets are not moral-free (e.g. Küng, 2010; Nida-Rümelin, 2011). Even Adam Smith, contrary to popular neo-liberal tales, had acknowledged that.

> "Finally, we must remember that Adam Smith based his 'invisible hand' theory on a marketplace morally accountable by an informed public. Contrast this with the murky shadow world of the Fed and Wall Street and it is abundantly clear that the public has virtually no insights into the practices of the banking elites" (Smith, 2012: 109).

Following 'free' market logic narrows down the world. People, public institutions and firms assumed to be rational market participants maximising benefit (see chapter 2.6) are left with only two choices under neo-liberal paradigms: profit maximisation (seen as imperative) or altruism (discarded as non-viable) (e.g. Thielemann, 2010). Unconditionality of moral responsibility, "evoked in each of us and silently yet poignantly appealed to by the very sight of an Other in need of succour, care and love" (Bauman, 2011: 74), is negated. Hence, 'free market' claims are based on a distorted as well as morally bankrupt understanding of freedom. They lead to unfree societies and individuals (e.g. Thielemann, 2010). Individual freedom is generated and maintained in personal relations, economic participation and the public political sphere (Honneth, 2011). Following Herbert Marcuse, real freedom would mean freedom *from* the market of the total economy, and not the freedom *of* markets (Metz & Seeßlen, 2012).

The second dubious neo-liberal principle is *competition/competitiveness*, 'worshipped' as a central enabler of value creation, growth, and relentless innovation (Thielemann, 2010). "The beauty of competition for the neo-liberal is that it offers both freedom as a principle and efficiency as a consequence" (Davies & McGoey, 2012: 71f). However, the principle of freedom is distorted, as deduced above, and the notion of efficiency in market fundamentalism is naïve and tends to ignore transaction and agency costs (cf. Table 5). It particularly overlooks that efficiency is not primarily reached through enterprises competing on price, but generated through a complex system of interrelations between market participants and regulatory institutions (Dörre, 2012).

There are mythical notions in the construction of competition in the service of neo-liberal ideology, such as an intentional blurring of micro and macro spheres: the distinguished scholar and management expert on strategy, Michael Porter, pointed out in an interview (Snowdon & Stonehouse, 2006) that competition among firms and competition among nations can be compared in conceptual frameworks, but adjustment is needed, such as different scorecards to assess success of competitors. He furthermore underlined that trade between nations theoretically is a positive-sum game, whereas competition between companies is a zero-sum game. However, under neo-liberal paradigms, nations are drawn into a downward spiral through the superimposition of zero-sum game competitiveness rules.

The latter becomes apparent in the 'Global Competitiveness Report' (GCR), which has been produced by the World Economic Forum (WEF) since 1979. "The GCR purports to be an objective scientific instrument, but is in fact based on ideology" (Bergsteiner & Avery, 2012: 391), misleading individuals, governmental and corporate officers toward decisions that are unethical in their application and effects. Table 6 features the major problems of the GCR, grouped in three categories with various subsections, and its methodology based on questionnaires.

Table 6: Problems with the Global Competitiveness Report

| Problem | Characteristics / Explanation of fallacies and how ethics are compromised |
|---|---|
| *Problem 1:*<br><br>Inclusion of ideologically contaminated indicators and questions (judgmental sins of commission) | *Hiring and firing*<br>• Ease of hiring and firing scores high competitive advantage<br>• 'Labour market flexibility': euphemism for low wages, no job protection<br>• Even in the US, known for a strong hiring and firing culture, studies show that the cost of rehiring staff cancel out the benefits of firing<br>• In many countries attracting and retaining qualified staff is much more valuable than hiring and firing, but this is not mirrored in the GCR<br><br>*Compensation, productivity and wage setting*<br>• Tales that lower wages equals higher productivity distort the picture<br>• Central wage setting scores low, individual company setting scores high, ignoring studies showing favourable results of central bargaining<br><br>*Research and development*<br>• Premise: high R&D expenditure translates into high innovation, although it captures only one aspect of innovation capability<br>• Capacities for systemic innovative capabilities are not captured |

| | |
|---|---|
| | *Sophistication of financial markets and soundness of banks*<br>• Questions to that end were dispensed with after 2009<br>• Sophisticated and innovative finance succeeded primarily in enriching itself, while trading 'subprime' products triggering the financial crisis<br>• There is no relation between 'sophistication' and 'soundness' of banks<br><br>*Ethics*<br>• Differing opinions in the world about what is ethical are not mirrored<br>• An Anglo-Saxon worldview that it is improper to expect organisational conduct to conform to principles of morality as underlying paradigm<br>• Macro, meso and micro levels of ethics are not differentiated<br>• Practices of corporations are not scrutinised in any regional context<br><br>*Gross domestic product (GDP) indices*<br>• Overreliance on GDP-related data<br>• It is not an effective measure of wellbeing, productive capacity (as it includes wasteful resource production or repair of damages from that)<br>• Income inequality, the role of the informal economy and the proportion of defensive expenditures such as prisons are not captured |
| *Problem 2:*<br><br>Exclusion of relevant indicators and questions (known to confer competitive advantage) | *Stakeholders*<br>• The extent to which corporations embrace a wide range of stakeholders is not considered<br>• Contribution of shareholders/owners is overstated, and contributions of others to corporate success is negated, raising ethical issues/injustice<br>• The consideration of European (and other) CEOs favouring, as a tendency, more long-term oriented relations than US counterparts, could lead to higher scores of their respective countries if included<br><br>*Corporate social responsibility (CSR) and ethics*<br>• It is not considered to what extent corporations embrace CSR<br>• Underlying presumption is that profits have to be generated at all costs to only serve shareholders/owners, all other activity is just 'charity'<br>• Simplified worldview that the rich are legitimately rich and the poor are legitimately poor leads to negation of any notion of social responsibility<br><br>*Other omitted indices*<br>• References to social and/or environmental sustainability<br>• Consideration of team vs. CEO loner's decision-making<br>• Country's capability of attracting and training qualified staff<br>• Proportion of firms independent of the financial markets<br>• The degree to which decisions are driven by short vs. long-term views |
| *Problem 3+4:*<br><br>Reliance on naïve opinions in lieu of hard science (judgmental sins of imprecision) and methodological problems | *Labour relations*<br>• Over-simplified, just based on a scale from 'generally confrontational' to 'generally co-operative'<br>• Strikes and other crucial issues of labour relations are omitted<br><br>*Methodological problems*<br>• A whole raft of questions in the GCR solicits rough opinions rather than drawing on available research data<br>• Input (e.g. size of domestic market) and output factors (e.g. GDP per capita) become a composite measure of competitiveness<br>• Baselines and benchmarks are arbitrary, and often *n* is too low |

*(Excerpts from Bergsteiner & Avery, 2012)*

Despite such severe ideological bias and its methodological shortcomings, the GCR is widely quoted and considered authoritative. It is consulted, among other purposes, to assess how the competitiveness of nations develops, as an example for Europe indicates (e.g. Fendel & Frenkel, 2005). Thus, there is a non-reflected adoption of the ethically compromised criteria of 'competitiveness'. Nothing is left of the original idea that competition at macro-level means the best ideas or most holistic concepts win, and manifold dimensions of competition are defined off the neo-liberal world.

The ideologically biased competitiveness can also be instrumentalised by industries and their lobbyists to pursue discursive agendas, like in the German finance sector (Langenohl, 2008). This sector highlights another pitfall of the competition imperative, linked to lobbyist involvement and also in combination with the privatisation mantra: paradoxically it spurs corruption, although the opposite was expected (Stiglitz, 2003).

> "Commercial banks and rating agencies, though by far not the only financial institutions involved in corrupt actions during the recent bubble and its subsequent bust, are apt examples for corruption by simulation. Banks extensively substituted the pursuit of profits for what traditionally had been their original task, that of serving as intermediaries for their customers" (Sievers, 2012: 31).

Corruption by simulation is defined to occur when someone pretends to fulfil a task without actually intending to do so (Chapman, 2003). And pretence plays a major role in neo-liberal ideology and the myths constructed within it, particularly regarding the 'unavoidability' of economic and capitalist globalisation (cf. chapter 2.5), and regarding the fate of individuals as subjects of the neo-liberal world (cf. chapter 2.6). As a consequence of such 'merciless' competition, there are losers, which is often concealed in debates under the neo-liberal lens praising the overall gains through competition (Thielemann, 2010). More and more individuals, industries and entire regions lose. There is a neo-liberal euphemism for the unsuccessful participants of (oftentimes corrupted) competition, and it is on loan from the military: 'collateral damage' (Bauman, 2011). Among the consequences of neo-liberal competition enactments are detrimental effects on individual health (e.g. Harrison et al., 2001) and also on individual identities, as well as on psycho-social wellbeing at large (Verhaeghe, 2013).

The third neo-liberal principle under scrutiny is *economic growth*. It is not exclusively neo-liberal, but a basic idea of economics; explained as the essential source of prosperity in countless textbooks. Growth in macroeconomics is measured in GDP increases. That is an insufficient measure of economic activity outcomes and especially of human progress and welfare, as many experts criticise (e.g. van den Bergh, 2009), see also Table 6. It may make some sense to equate GDP growth with prosperity increases in poor countries where people are living on less than $1 a day (Jackson, 2009). However, despite growth, poverty reduction has been very uneven across countries (e.g. Hillebrand, 2009), and there is the chastening observation that “growth did help the poor, but it was much better for the rich” (Edward, 2006: 1667).

In reconstruction or transition contexts the view of growth as driver of prosperity makes sense, too. An example of the former is the so-called *Wirtschaftswunder* of post-World War II Germany, although the explanation of the fast growth in that era may be less obvious than it seems (Dumke, 1990). An example of the latter is China, which has achieved impressive growth over the past decade and is often portrayed as the great success story of recent economic history (e.g. Fishman, 2005). Nevertheless, most Chinese citizens are still poor (e.g. Tseng, 2011), and a slowdown in poverty reduction has been described (Ram, 2013), putting the growth mantra in perspective.

There is a rise of wariness vis-à-vis economic growth in the contemporary developed world. Promises that the pursuit of the latter “will by itself deliver the other good things [such as] health, education, a decrease in social and economic inequality” (Nussbaum, 2010: 15) have already been written off as unfulfilled. Instead, there are worrisome distortions: Germany has accumulated ever-larger export surpluses in recent years, whereas real wages have declined continuously, which is heralded as a success of competitiveness instead of acknowledging aberrations (e.g. Lindner, 2011). Real wages have also decreased in the United States for a long time, where the top one per cent captured 95 per cent of the income gains in the first three years of recovery after the crisis triggered in 2008 (Saez, 2013). Vast majorities of populations of the Western world are seeing their standard of living decline, while there is an over-accumulation of capital among the richest few in the world (Brie, 2009).

Even growth at the business level, which represents the microeconomic perspective and has been accompanied by sustained interest from policy makers, practitioners and academics (Leitch, Hill, & Neergaard, 2010), is not entirely convincing as a tale any more. It is undisputed that viable businesses need a critical substance, and that growth beyond the critical mass offers perspectives such as job creation and other benefits for various stakeholders, including enhanced choices for consumers. Dominant, however, is a very imbalanced translation of growth into financial benefits: business income gains rarely reach employees and hardly benefit society at large. In the 21st century, the phenomena of 'jobless growth' and job insecurity have risen (Reich, 2000), leading to shrinking and unsteady income streams for the workforce. At the same time, there is a bizarre accumulation of wealth in corporations. It is enabled through intra-firm overpricing of intellectual property (Saul, 2009), which represents an example of accounting frameworks constituting economic reality (Chiapello, 2009), and through complex transnational tax avoidance manoeuvres (e.g. Kramer & Norris, 2013).

Huge criticism refers to dramatic impacts of current growth schemes on ecological realms. Four decades ago, the famous report to the Club of Rome entitled 'limits to growth' pointed to ecological constraints and the consequences of continuous exponential growth and resource exploitation. However, it was largely misinterpreted or ignored outright by decision-makers, and updated sequels have not changed economic pathways, either (e.g. Meadows, Randers, & Meadows, 2006). The myth that economic success has to come inevitably at the expense of the environment has been unmasked (e.g. Hart, 2010) but prevails in neo-liberal economic discourse. Alternatives are now discussed, ranging from elaborate concepts of sustainable growth (e.g. von Weizsäcker, Hargroves, & Smith, 2010) to reflections on 'prosperity without growth' (Jackson, 2009) and even to the revolutionary concept of 'degrowth' through downscaling production and consumption (Schneider, Kallis, & Martinez-Alier, 2010). Whereas unconditional anti- or pro-growth imperatives both may be "an unnecessary constraint on our search for human progress" (van den Bergh, 2009: 117), new paradigms such as understanding growth as a (qualitative) process rather than as a change in amount (Leitch et al., 2010) could be helpful on a more viable future path.

The fourth neo-liberal principle causing considerable discontent is *shareholder value*. It is probably the most pointed of various management principles enraging other stakeholders of businesses. “The dominant conception of a manager is of a morally neutral technician engaged in a world of purely rational problem solving” (Hendry, 2006: 267). But de facto managers are straitened by profit maximisation imperatives (Thielemann, 2010) – or wilfully identify with them to benefit themselves, too. The ensued corporate conduct “induces narcissistic self-interest in its role-holders to make as much money as possible” (Sievers, 2012: 28). Moreover, shareholder value thinking among executives leads to myopic tunnel vision in pursuit of short-term performance, at the expense of investment in long-term perspectives (Rappaport, 2006). The irrationality of such myopia is exemplified by the case of the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill: in trying to save $1 million a day by cutting safety measures, BP incurred a stock market value decline of nearly $100 billion (Stout, 2012) – and it has ruined a huge marine ecosystem, along with regional fishing and tourism industries.

Such devastating consequences of acquiesced uncontrollable risks are in line with the notions of liquid modernity and risk society introduced in chapter 2.4. And they are provoked by a collapse of long-term thinking with strong roots in mythical assumptions disseminated about shareholders. Table 7 summarises the most prominent ones.

Table 7: Widespread shareholder value myths

| *Mythical shareholder value assumption* | *Legal and economic facts* |
|---|---|
| Shareholders own corporations and are therefore entitled to get maximised returns. | Corporations are independent legal entities; juridical persons. Shareholders own share of stock; a contract with the corporation giving them limited rights under limited circumstances. |
| Shareholders are residual claimants, entitled to keep all profits left after a business has met all its other obligations. | Outside bankruptcy context, shareholders can only get money if a corporation has sufficient earnings (and the US context: if the board of directors confirms a dividend for payment). |
| Shareholders are principals and directors or managers are their agents. | A corporation and its board exist independently of shareholders. Stock is issued upon decision of the board of directors. By legal definition, the latter controls a corporation, not the shareholders. |
| All shareholders are pathologically impatient and favour short-term wins. | Shareholders are human beings with differing investment time frames and interests. |

*(Summarised from Stout, 2012)*

There is certainly a dynamic pulling more and more shareholders into short-term investment behaviour patterns, even against their original interest. This would point to an economic self-fulfilling theory (cf. chapter 2.6). Without a doubt, the myopic shareholder value and profit maximisation enactment is detrimental in several regards: short-term profit is boosted by cost-slashing measures (such as wage cuts and layoffs, inferior quality material purchases or squeezing suppliers). And maximised dividend payment to shareholders deprives corporations of future-oriented options such as investing in research and development (e.g. Chang, 2010). Hence, it has to be concluded that thinking and acting along shareholder value myth lines

> "discourages investment and innovation; harms employees, customers, and communities; […] causes companies to indulge in reckless, sociopathic, and socially irresponsible behaviors [and] threatens the welfare of consumers, employees, communities, and investors alike" (Stout, 2012: vi).

In more general terms, all paradigms seeing workforce and customers as management problems are as widespread in the corporate world as they are flawed. The moral order of the firm can only be strengthened if management is, in a reversal of investigation, understood as a stakeholder problem as well (Locke, 1996).

The four principles and their impacts elaborated above culminate in two overarching sources of discontent as aggregate results of accelerated neo-liberal policies based on self-referential mythology and ignorant irrationality of (economic) rationality. The first one is *inequality*. It is inherent in capitalism, as Piketty's (2013) enthusiastically received landmark work about 'capital in the twenty-first century' has just confirmed in great detail. And it is accepted, unless perceived as excessive (Zingales, 2012).

> "Some economic inequality is essential to drive growth and progress, rewarding those with talent, hard earned skills, and the ambition to innovate and take entrepreneurial risks. However, the extreme levels of wealth concentration occurring today threaten to exclude hundreds of millions of people from realizing the benefits of their talents and hard work" (Oxfam, 2014).

There are varying measurements and interpretations of the phenomenon, as "data on inequality are not free from controversy" (Reich, 2000: 101). The arguably most popular index of inequality is the so-called *Gini coefficient* (e.g. Sorger & Stark, 2013), expressing a state of total equality where everyone has the same income as 'zero' and a state of total inequality, where one person alone gets all income as 'one'. In a study capturing the period between 1985 and 2008, the OECD revealed that in a vast majority of its member countries income inequality has risen, with the largest increase registered for Germany and Sweden (OECD, 2011); countries once known for their welfare state and rather egalitarian orientations, but recently pursuing more or less aggressive neo-liberal agendas. Differences in levels of income inequality across OECD countries remain large, with the Gini coefficient ranging from 0.25 in Iceland to almost twice that value in Mexico and Chile (OECD, 2013). Considering the recent financial crisis and focusing on the top and bottom ten per cent of the population in 2007 and 2010, it becomes clear that lower income households lost more in the crisis and/or benefited less from the recovery (OECD, 2013).

Overall and beyond the OECD area, "the world has become a dangerously unequal place" (Beck, 2003: 458), and especially appalling are the mind-numbing dimensions of poverty (Hill & Rapp, 2009). Globally, inequality is dangerous because the gap between a few rich nations and an increasing number of not only poor, but 'failed states' (Saul, 2009) causes conflict, instability and regional wars that could easily spiral out of control. Within countries it is dangerous because it erodes democracy, the rule of law and the belief in market economy benefits in general (Stiglitz, 2013). By and large, neo-liberalism "has widened immensely the income and wealth gap, as the rich get richer and the poor get poorer and the middle gets squeezed" (DuRand, 2012: 31).

The second overarching source of discontent is *injustice*. It is closely linked to inequality, as the former largely causes the rapid progression of the latter. As with the other grand concepts informing this thesis, a debate of justice would go beyond its scope. There is only room here to highlight that, at opposite ends, there are John Rawls's theory of a totally just society (everyone is treated equal) versus Jeremy Bentham's version of utilitarianism (the greatest sum of benefits is just, irrespective of distribution) (e.g. Metz & Seeßlen, 2012; Thielemann, 2010). I follow Sen's (2005, 2009) and Nussbaum's (2002) approaches to *social justice* rooted in capabilities, which render a human being a "dignified free being who shapes his or her own life, rather than being passively shaped or pushed around by the world in the manner of a flock or herd animal" (Nussbaum, 2002: 123f). These approaches acknowledge a required balance of the value we attach to the pursuit of human fulfilment, removal of poverty and the entitlement to enjoy one's own efforts' results. Therefore, they even have the potential of a universal moral theory, if grounded by discourse ethics (Kleist, 2013).

The perception of social justice (and wellbeing) is relative. Relativism is higher in high-income countries, whereas absolutist concerns are more powerful when 'basic needs' are at stake (Corazzini, Esposito, & Majorano, 2012). In any case, relentless neo-liberal policies deprive populace of justice in several dimensions. A dramatic one is the exclusion of increasing strata of populace from opportunities (e.g. Metz & Seeßlen, 2012). This development has reached cynical levels, as 'equal opportunity' rhetoric accompanies a reality in which veritable opportunities remain reserved for rich lites (e.g. Chang, 2010). Based on neo-liberal mythology, 'everyone is responsible for themselves' narratives are disseminated, and they exemplify how neo-liberal ideology discredits the very concept of social justice (Butterwegge, Lösch, & Ptak, 2008).

Another dimension is the notion of environmental justice (Schlosberg, 2007), or rather injustice, which is defined as "the disproportionate exposure of socially vulnerable groups […] to pollution and its associated effects on health and the environment" (Higginbotham, Freeman, Connor, & Albrecht, 2010). This phenomenon is wide-spread, and its major characteristic is that poor communities suffer most from environmental degradation they neither cause nor have the power to prevent (e.g. Morrice & Colagiuri, 2013). Various studies have unveiled interdependence of government and corporations in reaping economic benefits of environmentally devastating activities while ignoring the harmful consequences for the local population and society at large (e.g. Higginbotham et al., 2010). Such scenarios are archetypical examples of the arbitrary externalisation of effects, such as environmental degradation (e.g. Stiglitz, 2013), only justifiable through economic dogma (cf. chapter 2.6).

Arguably, the most severe violation of justice is that neo-liberal protagonists do not obey their own rules but enforce them on others further down the line of command (or of lobbying influence): their conceptualisation of competition excludes putting up their very ideology for competition against alternatives. And their ‘free market’ principle only excludes regulation in favour of social or environmental protection purposes. “While neo-liberalism eschews state intervention into the market on behalf of labo[u]r, it welcomes state intervention on behalf of capital” (DuRand, 2012: 36).

Performance measurement and evaluations are used as top-down instruments of control exercised through senior management (McKevitt & Lawton, 1996). Moreover, lobbyists, managers and bankers enacting it are not permanently evaluated (unlike employees; cf. chapter 2.6). While neo-liberal rhetoric tends to emphasise performance and merit as the basis of income and wealth (implying that poverty is also deserved because the poor just do not work sufficiently or do not perform well enough), it reprieves top earners from that very logic. Many accounts have revealed that CEOs are overpaid (e.g. Chang, 2010), even without performing (Bebchuk & Fried, 2006). “At no point in history have so many non-risk-takers, that is, those with no personal exposure, exerted so much control” (Taleb, 2012: 6), without having to assume responsibility for the crises their system provokes (e.g. Argandoña, 2012; Sachs, 2009). And such claims are gaining prominence in public. Excessive manager compensation has become subject to fierce and changing discursive battles (Joutsenvirta, 2012), and there is no widespread belief in the neo-liberal ‘fairy-tale that performance is rewarded’ any more (e.g. Wiebe, 2014). In all respects, a provisional appraisal of the neo-liberal era is devastating:

> “The result of policy programmes based on these rules is by no means convincing: a rise in unemployment since neoliberalism has been the ideological basis of economic policy concepts in nearly all countries – and, if this did not happen, it was due to the expansion of the informal economy, of precarious labour; distribution of income and wealth became more unequal in most countries and in the world as a whole; the number of millionaires increased as well as the number of poor peoples; the future expectations of the working classes are dire under neoliberal capitalism; many economies are in crisis, and the effects on social systems, political stability and the natural environment are extremely negative. The balance of the neoliberal epoch is disastrous for the majority of people; temporarily it was a golden age for financial asset owners, but it was bad for labour” (Altvater, 2009: 75).

## 2.8 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has provided an understanding of contemporary neo-liberalism through a social theory framework comprising the concepts of myth, enlightenment and late modernity. The ambivalent interrelationship and interdependencies of these concepts were elaborated, and it was illustrated how neo-liberal ideology selectively draws on their realms. This ideology has risen to dominate all areas of life in most parts of the world, and it has been consequently developed into a totalitarian ideology. To capture how it transforms our lives it can be established that

> [n]eo-liberalism is a constructivist project: it does not presume the ontological givenness of a thoroughgoing economic rationality for all domains of society but rather takes as its task the development, dissemination, and institutionalization of such a rationality. That is, through discourse and policy promulgating its criteria, neo-liberalism produces rational actors and imposes market rationale for decision-making in all spheres. Importantly then, neo-liberalism involves a normative rather than ontological claim about the pervasiveness of economic rationality and advocates the institution building, policies, and discourse development appropriate to such a claim" (Brown, 2003: 4f).

The neo-liberal discourse mentioned in the quote above draws on myths constructed and maintained to justify this ideology and to declare it 'unavoidable'. These myths have been outlined, along with the self-referential qualities reifying the ideology's desired status quo. The ambiguous role of rationality partly turned into irrationality was highlighted, especially in the context of the dialectic of enlightenment. It remains open whether enlightenment principles have ultimately failed or if a new version of enlightenment more persistent in terms of its ideals can provide solutions for a more viable future of humanity. The extent and intensifying outreach of the major principles of neo-liberalism, free market, competition, economic growth and shareholder value were presented, and it was elaborated how they aggregate to catalysts of inequality and injustice worsening the life of a vast majority of people on this planet. In any case, the relation between mythical, rational and critical thought is still highly relevant (Cohen, 2010). And this very relation will underpin the following section: chapter 3 covers the context of private business schools in Germany, consisting of the neo-liberal environment at international level as well as the specific national situation of HE.

## 3. The Neo-Liberal Context of Private Business Schools in Germany

*Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire*

*William Butler Yeats*

This chapter illuminates the context of the organisations studied in the empirical part of this thesis; private business schools in Germany. It starts with the consideration of the broader international context of HE in the neo-liberal era elaborated in the previous section, and then filters down to the specific contemporary national context of HE in Germany. Chapter 3.1 addresses the universal role assigned to HE within neo-liberal ideology, leaving aside national variations of their enactment. Chapter 3.2 treats the rising phenomenon of student consumerism, which partly follows consequently from the exposure of society to neo-liberal principles, and partly has developed as a distinct issue of the so-called millennial generation entering HE. Whereas these first two chapters cover issues impacting HE in general, albeit to varying extents and with manifold specific characteristics prevalent in national or regional settings, the following two chapters capture phenomena that are specific to the realm of business schools: chapter 3.3 discusses the role of business schools in society, which of course partly draws on the role of HE in society in general, but in particular is questioned by a broader public audience in light of the corporate scandals and crises (cf. chapter 1.1) shaking up society, bringing debates about the legitimacy of business schools and their provision to the fore. Chapter 3.4 explains rankings and accreditation, which both have become bureaucratic mechanisms reinforcing the self-referential qualities of neo-liberal myths (cf. chapter 2.2) in the realm of international business schools. With chapter 3.5 the focus narrows down geographically and moves from the global or at least trans-national stage to the European level. Essential aspects of EU policy governing HE are highlighted, as they largely determine German policy as well. In chapter 3.6 the German HE scene is presented, with a strong emphasis on the role of the current neo-liberal reforms leading to substantial transformation of institutions and the field at large. It is established which role private business schools play in this scenario. Finally, a conclusion to this section is provided in chapter 3.7.

### 3.1 The Role of Higher Education in the Neo-Liberal Age

In Western society, university has always been a central part of culture (Natale, Sora, & Drumheller, 2012), and debates about what universities are for have been around for a long time. In part, they still draw on ancient Greece, where Plato, considered the inventor of the philosophy of education, elaborated on the crucial role of education in the preparation of just citizens for a just society (Williams, 2010). This aspect also leads to recent issues of social justice briefly discussed in chapter 2.7. Referring to enlightenment (cf. chapter 2.3), the university was seen as the embodiment of its social ideals, particularly in the philosophy of Immanuel Kant or Karl Jaspers (Krücken, 2013). In this vein, one view of HE is that the university assumed the role of a promoter of rationality and the science based on it. However, this view of the rational university might as well be considered one of the clichés the highly simplified views of university history, and of what universities should be, have become (Ash, 2006). Others doubt that this rationality of the university is (still) valid, considering the aberrations of teaching and even more so of research in areas compartmentalised to the extreme, while overwhelming problems of mankind remain unsolved. Hence, the rational university may well be understood as myth (Krücken, 2013).

Simplified views as well as myths are central to the conceptualisation of HE in our neo-liberal age. Most governments nowadays assume that the “primary if not sole purpose of university education is to increase the country’s economic productivity and competitiveness” (Hendry, 2006: 268). Hence, the field of HE has become subject to the principle of competition (cf. chapter 2.7), on the basis of which a ‘cultural political economy of competitiveness’ has been created, resulting in a great

> “emphasis on shifting university teaching and research from its ivory-towered intellectual isolation back into closer and more continuous contact with the economy, the state and the community as vital co-producers and consumers of useful knowledge” (Jessop, 2008: 32).

And there are three dimensions of competition affecting HE institutions in this view. Firstly, the latter assume the role of equipping their countries for global competition through the provision of graduates and the dissemination of knowledge. Secondly, they contribute to the attractiveness – and thereby competitiveness – of the country by selling education to international students and by attracting academic talent. And thirdly, HE institutions are subject to competition themselves, competing for students, highly qualified lecturers or researchers and public or private funding. It is the neo-liberal enactment of competition to which we can attribute the transformation of HE at large into a global commodity (Naidoo, 2010). A commodity is defined as a "product capable of catching the attention and attracting demand and customers" (Bauman, 2007a) and consequently in line with the late modern notion of consumerism treated in chapter 2.4. Polanyi (2001 [1944]) described the production factors of land, labour and money as 'fictitious commodities' not naturally intended for trade, hence undermined in their essential character through unregulated use. There is hardly a sphere not subjected to a process of *commodification* under the neo-liberal reign, and Burawoy (2014) argues that we nowadays have to understand knowledge as the fourth fictitious commodity produced and disseminated for those who can buy it. Referring to HE,

> "the development of a product or process specifically for exchange on the market rather than for its intrinsic 'use value', captures the shift from activities aimed at the acquisition of academic capital to activities intended for income generation. Forces for commodification therefore impact on universities by altering the nature of rewards and sanctions operating in higher education and are likely to impact on the social and academic missions of universities" (Naidoo, 2010: 73).

Based on the assigned function of an income generator as well as a beneficial tool for nations to compete on a global stage, HE is drawn into the realm of globalisation myths, particularly under the *hyperglobalist* lens (cf. chapter 2.5). The induced dimension of cross-border activities of universities is captured more accurately as 'internationalisation', which can be seen at the national/sector level as well as the institutional level (Knight, 2004). Concerning the former, it is defined as "the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education" (Knight, 2003: 2). At the institutional level, international co-operation, exchanges and linkages were already prominent in the 1950s, when universities were expected to contribute "to repair a world profoundly damaged and scarred by two World Wars" (Egron-Polak, 2012: 57). Idealistic effects of such exchanges certainly prevail, but the role has transformed into a commercial one, borne by a narrow neo-liberal perspective on HE.

Powerful and particularly narrow is the myth of a *return on education* through the building of 'human capital' (Krücken, 2013). This myth is woven into the concept of the knowledge society (cf. chapter 2.4). It is interesting to consider that this notion is by no means innovative but merely a case of history repeating itself. From 1750 to 1850, first in Britain and then in other parts of Europe, an economic development took off where minds, books, lectures, and education became central. Entrepreneurs equipped with know-how emerged within an industrial culture harnessing scientific knowledge and technology, thereby transforming the economic destiny of Western Europe (Jacob, 2013). We can even assume that already in the Stone Age knowledge must have been paramount for survival, as without the know-how of crafting hunting tools or shelters a favourable fate of the population of that era would have been hardly thinkable.

The myth of return on education is strong and repeated incessantly in neo-liberal discourse, despite the fact that more (higher) education itself is neither going to make a country richer (Chang, 2010) nor can it guarantee better individual careers. But the dissemination of political messages does not require disseminators who believe them:

> "It is hard to say to what extent many politicians and other supporters of education fundamentalism and the expansion of higher education are trapped by their own rhetoric and by verbose fantasies and wishful thinking about the beneficial effects of higher education, or to what extent they are simply being cynical" (Alvesson, 2013: 85).

Undoubtedly, there is a correlation between more investment in HE and greater economic prosperity or higher productivity (which just takes simplistic observations such as 'wealthier nations have more HE than poorer countries'), but there is no proven cause-and-effect relationship. Instead, inflated HE as a return-generator is a classic example of 'grandiosity' (Alvesson, 2013). The latter is

> "socially controlled, semi-realistic, and confined to loading an increasing number of phenomena with strongly positive, exaggerated meaning that generates attractiveness, success, and distance from the paltriness and mediocrity of everyday life" (Alvesson, 2013: 9).

This notion raises the suspicion that HE cannot (fully) deliver on the promises with which it has been (over-) loaded by neo-liberal governments. That does not mean their claims about HE benefits are outright untrue. At the public level, there are returns on investment in HE, even if measuring them is complex, and despite conclusions that similar effects could also be reached with alternative investments (e.g. Courtright & Fry, 2007). And at the individual level, HE also tends to pay off especially in the long run, even in countries where tuition fees are substantial, such as the US. In the attempt to evaluate the individual return on HE investment, a complex interplay of variables such as study programmes, intended occupation or willingness to take up debt is relevant (e.g. Oreopoulos & Petronijevic, 2013). However, the future of the economy in general and employment markets in particular, remains unforeseeable.

On a more critical note it is remarkable that, despite many years of intensified neo-liberal HE policies promoting 'widening participation' aspiring at enrolling around 50 per cent of a cohort (e.g. Bennett & Kottasz, 2006), income inequality is still rising in all respects, and so is jobless growth (cf. chapter 2.7). If higher proportions of intakes undergo HE without a corresponding increase in well-paid jobs, it will be unavoidable that again 'collateral damage' (Bauman, 2011) – here: un(der)employed graduates – will be left behind. Furthermore, there is the phenomenon of 'transnational academic capitalism' (Kauppinen, 2012), challenging the common assumption that HE promotes national economic competitiveness. Instead, due to circuits of knowledge operating transnationally, research and development networks of MNCs as well as the global financial system explicitly negating national relations benefit most. Hence, promised economic HE benefits are put in perspective, and societal values remain neglected.

> "Given that economic growth is so eagerly sought by all nations, especially in this time of crisis, too few questions have been posed about the direction of education, and, with it, of the world's democratic societies" (Nussbaum, 2010: 2).

These societies have benefitted from liberal arts traditions, encompassing the two paradigms of *philosophers*, fostering private goals, and of *orators*, emphasising civic goals of HE (Sandy, 2013). In particular, concepts of the latter tradition, such as beauty, participation and practical wisdom have contributed to a flourishing society, but are getting lost under neo-liberal HE arrangements. Hence, questions in how far (higher) education still benefits society at large and democratic values in particular, or in how far it has become detrimental to them due to neo-liberal influence, remain urgent.

Despite punctual resistance against the efforts to reduce education to a tool of GDP (Nussbaum, 2010), the neo-liberal reign has made HE subject to *performativity*. The general effect of the latter is

> "to subordinate the institutions of higher learning to the existing powers. The moment knowledge ceases to be an end in itself – the realization of the Idea or the emancipation of men – its transmission is no longer the exclusive responsibility of scholars and students" (Lyotard, 1984: 50).

Over 100 years ago, Max Weber was disappointed about the subservient role of the university (Murphy, 2009). Under neo-liberal powers, the next level is reached in this regard. HE institutions are reduced to factories producing employable graduates who thrive in (and contribute to the thriving of) the globalised economy. Narrowly defined degrees are obtained primarily through *training*, referring to skill acquisition, contradicting the notion of *education* fostering causal and critical thinking, analytics or abstraction (Lenzen, 2014). An ethical crisis within the field of HE is thereby provoked (Natale & Doran, 2012; Natale et al., 2012). One of its facets is that students entering HE become subject to influences validating competitive, professional, and financial success above the common good and particularly above service to the less advantaged (Brighouse, 2010).

In the last few decades, a "new cultural epoch of managerialism" (Shore & Wright, 2000: 58), if not a veritable "tsunami of rampant managerialism" (Taylor, 2003: 75), has marked the shift away from Keynesian welfare states toward neo-liberalism strongly impacting HE (Naidoo, 2008). Assuming a philosophical perspective, we could follow Brunkhorst (2014) to better understand managerialism. In his dialectical contemplation on the European Union, which has assumed a major role in promoting neo-liberalism and in imposing its rules on member states' citizens (cf. chapter 2.1), he elaborates on the interplay between the *Kantian constitutional mindset*, functioning as 'Dr. Jekyll' with good intentions of establishing a cosmopolitan republic of equal and free citizens on the one hand, and the *managerial mindset* working like 'Mr. Hyde' as the normative driver of evolutional adaptation to evil forces on the other hand. Mindset is understood as habitus, as mentality and as a generalised attitude of social groups towards themselves and other groups or society as a whole (Brunkhorst, 2014).

It is the mentality of bona fide administrators that has come to dominate HE in the neo-liberal era, and it is the treacherous notion of the correctness of their obedience to and technical implementation of the rules that undermines the liberality (arguably representing the Kantian mindset) that academics should foster (Lenzen, 2014). The managerial mindset is associated with the increased efficiency of organisations, and also with the reduction of public expenditure (e.g. Fulcher & Scott, 1999; Locke, 1996). As a result of fiscal austerity, public employees – including academics – 'feel the squeeze' of demotivating budget cuts (Kiefer, Hartley, Conway, & Briner, 2014). Nevertheless, most stakeholders acknowledge that aspects of efficiency could be beneficial in the HE sector, considering that universities were used, during centuries, to treat questions of resource allocation with nonchalance (Brenner, 2009). But the neo-liberal efficiency intent is detrimental to academic missions: there is diminishing academic autonomy, provoking instrumental behaviour of academics (Parker & Jary, 1995) increasingly involved in massified, assembly-line style production of graduates in 'McUniversity' operations (Parker & Jary, 1995; Prichard & Willmott, 1997). This refers to the 'McDonaldization of society', one characteristic of which is 'control' (Ritzer, 2012). The managerialist agenda has led to an "explosion of audit systems" (Shore & Wright, 2000: 65), and their rigidity has the "traits of militarism" (Locke, 1996: 3). On the one hand, neo-liberal discourse justifies such audit systems through calls for more HE accountability to taxpayers. On the other hand, there are academics opposing the audit culture, pointing to its debilitating impact on academic life (Murphy, 2009).

Neo-liberal ideology provokes the paradox that it prescribes accountability schemes threatening innovation in HE (Findlow, 2008) contradicting knowledge society notions requiring innovation. Furthermore, in opposition to the grandiose role of HE, these schemes "reduce learning to the lowest common denominator, undermine the possibility of critical thinking, and prepare young people to be docile" (Giroux, 2008: 103). Consequently, the university is diagnosed to be 'in ruins' (Readings, 1996), a 'grand failure' (Beverungen, Dunne, & Sørensen, 2008: 236) and even 'psychotic', with a totalitarian state of mind, a manic fixation on economic values and the reliance on magic (of the market and economic values) as major symptoms (Sievers, 2008).

### 3.2 Student Consumerism

Consumerism is a characteristic of late modernity, and the broader societal change from a modern to a late modern state (cf. chapter 2.4) is reflected in changes in regulations, production and consumption patterns (e.g. Ekelund & Jönsson, 2011). The latter are also impacting HE. Universities are transforming from state-controlled institutions into service providers in competitive markets (cf. chapter 3.1) and, consequently, into consumer-oriented corporations (Readings, 1996). Therefore, a 'consumerist turn' of HE has been diagnosed (Naidoo, Shankar, & Veer, 2011).

"Universities now face a proliferation of expectations and demands" (Gibbs & Murphy, 2009: 341) which are associated in particular with the so-called *millennial* generation currently entering HE. It is inevitably inaccurate to generalise *the* character of an entire generation. There are, however, certain character traits commonly attributed to millennials: they tend to have a 'want it all' and 'want it now' mentality, are self-centred, and they look for enticing, rewarding study (and also employment) environments, which enable a favourable work-life-balance. There are ambiguities and even contradictions, as millennials also tend to look for meaningful work and are prepared to contribute to society even if they are insecure in how to pursue that broader goal (Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010). Such developments are roughly in line with broader, long-term value changes toward 'postmaterialism', which have been observed in the Western world (Abramson & Inglehart, 1995).

Hence there is, on the demand side, a contemporary student generation used to narratives of the globalised economy, fast technological advances and diversifying populations. It is experienced in international travel, and it constitutes a demanding consumerist HE audience. On the supply side, there is the global commodity of HE, as mentioned in chapter 3.1. One of the dilemmas of commodified products is that they are hardly differentiated, so that providers (such as business schools) compete on their ability to stimulate the customers' (i.e. students') desire through effective marketing and advertising (Gottdiener, 1997). Attracting and then also satisfying their clientele can be seen as two sides of the same coin at universities. In an increasingly competitive and volatile market they need to create and communicate a well-crafted platform, which Bitner (1992) would refer to as 'servicescape'. Such a setting puts pressure on lecturers forced into emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983), alienating academics from their existence as 'homo academicus' (Bourdieu, 1984). In this vein, "the use of the consumer/student as a surrogate surveillance device" (Parker & Jary, 1995: 326) reinforces the detrimental developments highlighted in chapter 3.1.

It appears that demanding (prospective) students are examples of the neo-classical economic archetype of the sovereign consumer (Sakakibara, 1995). However, that very notion is an influential myth, which becomes evident for example through all-pervasive advertising aiming at manipulating consumers, which would be pointless if the latter were really sovereign (Aldred, 2009). The case of students confirms this view: among prospective students an ex ante quality uncertainty is prevalent (Mause, 2010). On their quest for a suitable university they manoeuvre at the unfavourable end of an information asymmetry (Duczmal, 2006).

Besides overstraining their sovereignty when it comes to choosing a place to study, there are additional and more severe risks associated with over-emphasising the consumer role of students. Once they identify with it, a loss of responsibility for their learning and even resistance to engage in the process of education could follow (Naidoo & Jamieson, 2005). Other important student roles are then also neglected, encompassing the *client* in need of expert guidance, the *citizen* with rights, and the *subject* with obligations, all of which express relations of membership and exchange (Sharrock, 2000) or co-production of education. Commodified producer-consumer interaction paves the way for distinct utilitarianism. Students enter HE too often with the goal of *having* a degree instead of *being* a learner (Molesworth, Nixon, & Scullion, 2009). The pressure to streamline their CVs and to amass employability credentials (cf. chapter 3.1) as efficiently as possible undermines the personal growth of students, and ultimately society, as it promotes self-exploitation instead of empowerment (Bloom, 2013). HE "should not only be about pleasing customers, but about giving them the intellectual resources to challenge established ways of doing things – however uncomfortable that may be for them and others" (Parker & Jary, 1995: 333).

### 3.3 Business Schools in Society

The question of what a business school should stand for increasingly affects not only management students, but arguably society at large (Reedy & Learmonth, 2009). To elaborate on it, it is worth considering the history of this type of institution. Business schools emerged in the latter part of the 19th century and early 20th century. In Europe, Germany and France were at the forefront of developing national higher business education systems (Amdam, 2007). Front-runners were the *Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales* in Paris founded in 1881 and several *Handelshochschulen* in Germany followed by several *handelshögskolor* in Scandinavia. All of them started outside universities. In the United States the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, also founded in 1881, was the pioneering institution (Engwall & Danell, 2011). They depended, in most cases, on support from rich entrepreneurs or the business world at large, which can be seen as compromising academic independence. "As a matter of fact, the scepticism towards the introduction of business studies into universities was as strong in the USA as in Europe" (Engwall & Danell, 2011: 433).

In the meantime, business schools have become major faculties, and they represent "one of the areas of greatest growth in universities over the past 50 years" (Friga, Bettis, & Sullivan, 2003). And, with substantial success in that regard, they have to assume the role of income-generators at many universities, particularly in the neo-liberal context highlighted in chapter 3.1. It is not surprising, therefore, that "at first blush, business schools are the success story of late twentieth century education" (Pfeffer & Fong, 2002: 78). However, in the early twenty-first century doubts about the success story have come to the fore. Particularly in the wake of the various recent corporate scandals and economic/financial crises already mentioned in chapter 1.1, the role of business schools in academia, in the business world and in society is being questioned, as business schools are supposed to supply (future) leaders and qualified managers. It has been argued that 'business schools have lost their way' (Bennis & O'Toole, 2005), and that they disseminate 'bad management theories' (Ghoshal, 2005) on an erroneous route towards intellectual oblivion.

Instead of guiding the business world, they at best analyse it, trying to make sense of what is going on in the outside world in hindsight. That is even more frightening once we consider the dismal state of management practice (e.g. Ghoshal, 2005). “If the duty of the intellectual in society is to make a difference, the management research community has a long way to go to realize its potential” (Pettigrew, 2001: S61). Rather than going this way, business schools are trapped in their self-imposed *rigour* versus *relevance* mantra (e.g. Birnik & Billsberry, 2008; Starkey & Tiratsoo, 2007).

*Rigour* usually refers to business schools’ attempts to reach academic excellence through research methodology comparable to that applied in natural, or so-called hard sciences; a phenomenon referred to as ‘physics envy’ (Bennis & O'Toole, 2005). In that process business schools have over-focused on prestigious publications. It is “more than scary” (Durand & Dameron, 2011: 563) that, in the name of science, publication pressure and starred journal obsession are imposed on faculty members so that the development of one’s own thinking, even academic freedom at large, is hindered. The ‘science’ pursued at business schools largely consists of distorted and narrow interpretations of economics (cf. chapter 2.6), and “theory, research, and teaching based on an assumption of […] unbridled self-interest are themselves some of the contributing causes of excesses that lead to scandal” (Folger & Salvador, 2008: 1128). Such an approach to science raises severe doubts in terms of legitimacy. This unbridled self-interest undermines the moral order at large, and an educational system over-emphasising individualism creates a dysfunctional society (Locke, 1996: 239). To be scientifically sound and socially legitimate, it can be inferred that business or management research must become more critical and especially more reflexive.

> “Although science embraces its own reflexive practice of scientific scepticism, a deeper suspicion of science can be found among lay persons who must deal in very personal ways with the limitations and negative consequences of scientifically-based interventions into their lives” (Lyng, 2012: 407).

Many stakeholders have to deal with consequences of management board decisions intervening into their lives. These are too often justified by economic theory taught at business schools resulting in defunct behaviour (Frank, Gilovich, & Regan, 1996).

*Relevance* refers to the practical use value of knowledge business schools generate. In line with arguments of chapter 3.1, overwhelming weight is assigned to serving the corporate sphere recruiting most of the graduates (Adler et al., 2007). Business schools claim to educate future managers, but management can hardly be taught in classrooms (Mintzberg, 2004) – at best, scholars and educators can support it as “knowledge brokers, feeding relevant and critically appraised evidence into organizations” (Briner, Denyer, & Rousseau, 2009) – and is not even a profession (Barker, 2010). As such, it requires a code of conduct and compliance overseen by a credible body (Khurana & Nohria, 2008). Until then, and until more viable practices are taught, side effects such as fostering greed (Wang, Malhotra, & Murnighan, 2011) and narcissistic behaviour (Westerman, Bergman, Bergman, & Daly, 2011) supersede the ‘practical’ value of management education. Thus, we should neither be surprised at the rise of corporate malfeasance nor at allegations that business schools have been ‘silent partners in corporate crime’ (Swanson & Frederick, 2003).

There are urgent and polyphonic calls to intellectually and morally rejuvenate the training of our future business leaders (Khurana, 2007). There are pleas to ‘reorient the business school agenda’ (Birnik & Billsberry, 2008), based upon a more meaningful purpose (Starkey & Tempest, 2008, 2009a) and on ‘reclaimed business ethics education’ (Swanson, 2004). Following the view that “education in general can be described as a way of empowering people to become active agents in the transformation of their societies” (Sauquet, 2012: 22), and drawing on CT traditions (cf. chapter 1.4), an orientation toward principles of Critical Management Education (CME) (e.g. Dehler, 2009; Ford, Harding, & Learmonth, 2010) should guide business schools.

> “Management education must play a critical role in addressing the global social and environmental challenges, as well as the dilemmas and issues they create for business. It needs to fundamentally rethink its purpose and how its customers should be served. Business schools should cease conforming to the current business and economic system; instead, they should start *transforming* the system. We believe that the mission of business and management educators in the twenty-first century is to become custodians on behalf of society, to enable and create the business system needed for a world worth living in” (Muff et al., 2013: 49f)”.

### 3.4 Rankings and Accreditation

Accreditation and certification of organisations is one strategy to create linkage between organisations and a field; it particularly confers external legitimacy and quality (Schneiberg & Clemens, 2006). Inspired by the work of Pierre Bourdieu, Wedlin (2006) has identified business education as a field in which HE institutions struggle to determine characteristics and stakes, and also to react to changes introduced in a specific area – such as the developments outlined in chapters 3.1 to 3.3 in general and EU policy-induced changes impacting HE in particular (covered in chapter 3.5).

There are rankings or league tables in various countries. Even more prominent are international listings such as the *World Universities Rankings* of the UK-based magazine Times Higher Education or the so-called *Academic Ranking of World Universities* released by Shanghai Jiao Tong University. Specifically devoted to MBA programmes of international business schools is the *Global MBA Ranking* of the business newspaper Financial Times. Rationales for business schools joining these listings include visibility in international markets and the positioning as (or creating the perception to be) a quality provider for prospective students. However, quality is an elusive concept when it comes to intangibles such as business school education, and there are severe and varied doubts concerning rankings' informative value and their social consequences (e.g. Amsler & Bolsmann, 2012).

Moreover, business schools increasingly seek certification, i.e. accreditation in the context of HE (Mause, 2010), to reinforce the communication of assured quality. At the programme level, German business schools typically apply for the label of approval issued by FIBAA, which is specialised in the field of economics and business administration (Berner & Richter, 2001). Institutions with international ambitions, especially in the MBA degree market, usually seek to acquire the British AMBA label, the European EQUIS label or the US-based AACSB accreditation. Dilemmas include looming conflicts of interest: the agencies collect a substantial fee from the business schools undergoing the accreditation process, and particularly in national accreditation agency contexts such as in Germany, they even compete with each other, whereas in the case of AACSB there has been a pointed focus on expansionist rather than pedagogic aims (Lowrie & Willmott, 2009). The resulting ethical issues can be compared to those of rating agencies coming to light in the context of the recent financial crisis (Scalet & Kelly, 2012). In addition, the well-intentioned idea of enhancing quality management through accreditation often remains unfulfilled, as the agencies compare submitted documents against defined standards, but not the accord of the however meticulously prepared documentation with reality (Brenner, 2009). Hence, the information value of the awarded label remains questionable.

There are also significant risks and downsides associated with both ranking and accreditation systems. These have come under scrutiny (e.g. Osterloh & Frey, 2012) as they endanger “the very health and vibrancy” of the business scholarship field (Adler & Harzing, 2009: 74). This diagnosis may be rooted in the narrowly defined rules and rankings criteria of an arbitrary nature (Adler & Harzing, 2009), thereby resembling the GCR criteria and methodology featured in chapter 2.7. Disciplining powers are unleashed, stifling innovation and differentiation moves, thereby reinforcing a tendency towards mimetic and isomorphic institutions (Wilson & Thomas, 2012). Such trends are counterproductive for business school creativity and ultimately even for quality, in so far as the latter is interpreted in other ways than just meeting ranking criteria. Rankings and also accreditation schemes represent the managerial auditing culture introduced in chapter 3.1. They have created a “lock-in situation” for business schools and their deans (Durand & Dameron, 2011: 563), as any move to bypass the strict rules set through the criteria could lead to downgrading and subsequently dwindling enrolment figures, funding cuts, or loss of reputation.

To undergo an accreditation process is a massive bureaucratic exercise deterring smaller institutions. And even in successful cases it binds resources that business schools otherwise could devote to more meaningful purposes instead of getting lost in ‘accreditocracy’ (Julian & Ofori-Dankwa, 2006). In the vein of HE ‘grandiosity’ (cf. chapter 3.1), rankings and accreditation have become a metaforce promoting the ‘Circean transformation from substance to image’ (Gioia & Corley, 2002) of business schools, thereby adding another mythical dimension to HE.

### 3.5 European Union Higher Education Policy

The EU pursues a neo-liberal agenda of deregulation and liberalisation (e.g. Olssen & Peters, 2005) based on the largely mythical concepts of *hyperglobalism* (cf. chapter 2.5) and the *knowledge economy* (cf. chapter 3.1). This is reflected in the Lisbon strategy of the EU and its 'governance architecture', within which HE has become a strategic factor in the process of European integration (Capano & Piattoni, 2011). The latter in turn serves the overarching avowal of the EU Commission and the EU Council to the ideologically biased theme of competitiveness à la GCR (cf. chapter 2.7). There is a departure from national traditions and cultures in various sectors, including HE, towards a script guiding national policy actors, a process referred to as 'Lisbonization' (Capano & Piattoni, 2011). This process entails structural reforms with far-reaching consequences in economic and social realms (e.g. Kegels & van der Linden, 2011).

Hence, it is obvious that regulation at EU level has a major impact on HE policies in its member states (e.g. Huisman & van der Wende, 2004). In particular – and despite national variations in terms of policy implementation – the subjugation to the logic of competition has become the most prominent common denominator. Especially the business education market already is highly competitive (e.g. Cornuel, 2007; Harvey, Novicevic, & Ready, 2006), and the university scene in general is expected to follow suit. The major instrument setting the frame for the above-mentioned HE reform agenda is the *Bologna process* (Witte et al., 2008). In 1999, a joint declaration of the European Ministers of Education of all EU member states plus Norway and Switzerland was convened in Bologna, and to date 47 nations participate (BMBF, 2013). This declaration states six objectives of primary relevance:

- Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees
- Introduction of two main degree cycles, undergraduate and graduate
- Establishment of a system of credits
- Promotion of mobility, overcoming obstacles to free movement
- Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance
- Creation of a European HE area

*(Adapted from European Commission, 1999)*

In the meantime and from a political perspective, the Bologna-induced structural HE reform is considered largely completed, and also as a European success story (Brändle & Wendt, 2014). However, such proclamations have not remained unchallenged, and there are a variety of critical accounts in national and supra-national contexts elaborating on the problems of the Bologna process. Whereas an overview of the ongoing Bologna debates would reach far beyond the scope of this thesis, it is highly relevant to note that the model of the European university ascribed to Wilhelm von Humboldt in 1810, based on a primacy of *Bildung durch Wissenschaft* – essentially referring to a concept of personality formation through the commitment to scientific methodology and cognition-oriented striving for truth, neutrality and incorruptibility (Lenzen, 2014) – has been replaced by a model based on the scripted principles of quality and transparency (Michelsen, 2010).

These two principles, which sound virtuous per se, are in line with neo-liberal logic unleashing disciplining (arguably totalitarian) powers (e.g. Lenzen, 2014) rooted in economic paradigms (cf. chapter 2.6). Allegedly they are first and foremost designed to dismantle academic autonomy, which used to be a distinctive characteristic of the European university (Moutsios, 2013). In this regard, the Bologna model of HE is considered as 'rationalised myth' where political rhetoric diverges from practical implementation (Schriewer, 2009), unfolding self-referential qualities (cf. chapter 2.2). The Lisbon agenda comprises, beyond the leitmotif of 'competitiveness' also institutional autonomy and accountability. However, the latter means that universities "must be able to account for the ways they spend public money and demonstrate their goals are in keeping with governmental strategies and public expectations" (Capano & Piattoni, 2011: 590), which de facto undermines major traits of autonomy.

In its technical details, the Bologna process is oriented towards an Anglo-Saxon model of HE, which understands education at university level at least up to the Bachelor's degree primarily as vocational education (Lenzen, 2014). This conjuncture has caused major transformations in those participating countries with HE systems that were fundamentally different in the pre-Bologna era, such as Italy, the Netherlands or Germany, where long-lasting degrees were characteristic (Capano & Piattoni, 2011).

### 3.6 The German Higher Education Scene

Following a long static period of the complex German HE landscape, which seemed resistant to any change (Welsh, 2009), neo-liberal HE paradigms (cf. chapter 3.1), and particularly the Bologna process (cf. chapter 3.5), have recently led to dramatic shifts. The Bologna reform has sparked substantial turbulence, controversy and (albeit futile) resistance. That is partly owed to the incompatibility of traditional German HE with the Anglo-Saxon model incorporating vocational goals into university education (cf. chapter 3.5). Germany took pride in its dual vocational education system based on school and industry co-operation (cf. chapter 1.3) supplying qualified workers and also in its humanistic ideals and independence of *Bildung* pursued at university level. And the controversy is also owed to the neo-liberal paradigm shift: traditionally, the university was responsible for the quality of its offers, but following Bologna and the managerial quality management regime (cf. chapters 3.1 and 3.5) universities are now responsible for student learning and its successful outcomes (Dysthe & Webler, 2010).

There are advocates and critics within and outside universities currently debating the Bologna process in Germany. Advocates primarily embrace the targets of life-long learning and of enhanced student and faculty mobility. But professors mostly foster a critical stance towards the Bologna process, yet there is differentiation between critique addressing its targets and critique addressing its implementation (Brändle & Wendt, 2014). In the former area, besides the general notion of university autonomy loss (cf. chapter 3.5), a major aspect of criticism is the dismantling of former German long-lasting *Diplom* or *Magister* degrees, which are now banned from German HE institutions (Hering, 2009). Especially the *Diplom-Ingenieur* degree, which enjoyed worldwide acclaim in the engineering scene, is frequently quoted. Bachelor degrees do not replace the abolished ones adequately, as employers do not even consider them academic (Lenzen, 2014), which is ironic in light of neo-liberal employability rhetoric (cf. chapter 3.1). In terms of implementation, most of the critique points to the de facto worsened student/faculty mobility, immense workload for faculty and students, excessive exam accumulation, dumbed-down study contents, assembly-line provision and reduced leeway for research (e.g. Brändle & Wendt, 2014; Lenzen, 2014).

Among German universities and in the academic scene at large, the Humboldtian ideal is still strong and mourned after, having served as an identity-constituting model of reference (e.g. Ostermann, 2002). Table 8 summarises its components.

Table 8: Components of the classical model of the research university after Humboldt

| Principle | Characteristics/Explanation |
|---|---|
| Freedom of teaching and learning | Humboldt believed in individual freedom, and therefore argued that students had as much right to choose their instructors and subjects as professors had to decide what and how they taught. |
| The unity of teaching and research | Learning is a collaborative enterprise, in which professors are not there for the students, but rather both are there for science and scholarship. |
| The unity of science and scholarship | There is no fundamental distinction in principle between the natural sciences and the humanities, because the concept of science ('*Wissenschaft'*) applies to both. |
| The primacy of 'pure' science over specialised professional training | Science and scholarship are understood as processes of inquiry, unfinished and perpetually sought after, instead of finished findings. Furthermore, they are not the discovery and repetition of things to be learned from textbooks, but an approach to learning, an attitude of mind, a skill and a capacity to think rather than specialised knowledge. |

*(Excerpts from Ash, 2006: 246)*

However, it is certainly ironic that this traditional model of HE can also be classified as myth. On the one hand, in their historic context, the admirable principles – the enduring meaning of which is stunning, considering "that Humboldt's ideals were created for a university at which at most 1% of a given age group studied, and therefore bear little relation to the realities of present-day mass higher education" (Ash, 2006: 248) – are problematic: under Humboldt, the university served the Prussian state apparatus and a strongly nationalist orientation of education (Beverungen et al., 2008). On the other hand, claims that Humboldt was the founding father of the modern research university and that his ideas were internationally admired misjudge the role of other protagonists, such as Immanuel Kant (Ash, 2006).

To distinguish between different types of the latter-day academic institutions in Germany, the generic term of *Hochschule* is frequently used. Sperlich (2008) identifies the following ones: *Universität* (university), *Pädagogische Hochschule* (teacher training college), *Kunsthochschule* (fine arts college) and *Fachhochschule* (polytechnics). The latter was introduced in the early 1970s, based on the rationale of social equality

(Göztepe-Celebi et al., 2002). It seems paradoxical that, whereas the notion of social equality is evaporating under the neo-liberal reign (cf. chapter 2.7), the *Fachhochschule* has become a success story. This is certainly attributable to its proximity to (labour) markets, its traditionally structured provision, and a strong focus on applied sciences. With such an orientation, this type of institution also supports Germany's commitment to increase the proportion of university graduates, which is in line with other OECD countries (cf. chapter 3.1). The explicit goal is to raise the academic education participation rate from 34 to at least 40 per cent (Frank et al., 2011), and the ensued process is well under way.

This process also entails the typical neo-liberal mechanism of transferring promised public service provision into private hands, including the approval of private HE institutions (von der Oelsnitz, 2009). There is no universal definition of private *Hochschulen* in Germany due to different levels of combined state and private involvement. Private institutions in a narrow sense are privately funded and also operated (Sperlich, 2008). The Bologna process-induced two-tiered degree structure enables the business model of private institutions in the first place, as the traditional German university degree system with its amorphous, unstructured programmes delivered at huge institutions would overburden the resources of private providers.

There are 415 *Hochschulen* in Germany with some 2.4 million students (BMBF, 2014). Almost a quarter of these institutions are private – most of them business schools holding *Fachhochschule* status (Frank et al., 2011) – although they only account for five per cent of all students. Private *Hochschulen* are required to undergo institutional accreditation. Furthermore, at public and private institutions alike, every degree programme has to be accredited. This accreditation is carried out by one of six competing agencies appointed by an accreditation council. This system of quasi-governmental bodies sparks controversy beyond general shortcomings (cf. chapter 3.4). Studies on the German accreditation practice point to the lack of a legal framework (Lege, 2009) and also to enormous opportunity cost, quality criteria that cannot be assessed by programme accreditation, and the lack of incentives to improve quality where needed (Suchanek, Pietzonka, Künzel, & Futterer, 2012).

### 3.7 Chapter Conclusion

This section has illustrated the challenging field of HE, and the complex German HE scene in particular, to set the stage for the subsequent empirical study and its analysis. It has become apparent that neo-liberal ideology as a trans-national force has assigned a utilitarian role to HE. The latter is seen as a global commodity and subjected to the logic of the principle of competition at various levels. A managerial mindset enforces the ideologically driven principles. But pressures on universities are not just rooted in neo-liberal control measures. Especially a new generation of consumerist students is challenging traditional ways of HE provision. With specific reference to business schools, the legitimacy issues they face were addressed. While external constituencies question the institutions' responsibility for corporate scandals and economic crises, the internal debate has hardly moved beyond the rigour versus relevance mantra. Neither the applicability of knowledge taught nor the academic validity of research conducted at business schools can be considered commonly accepted raisons d'être of business schools. But a re-orientation, in the meantime also demanded by many professors inside the institutions, will be even more difficult considering the disciplining regimes of rankings and accreditation, which are increasingly used as a basis of resource allocation, reducing the scope of business school presidents and deans even further. Having illuminated this dire environment of HE and business schools in general, the specific role of EU policy impacting on the national HE scene of Germany was emphasised. At the heart of the neo-liberal reform movement of HE is the Bologna process, which has driven the current major transformation of German HE. The Humboldtian ideal based on *Bildung durch Wissenschaft* has been replaced by a paradigm based on quality control, causing significant turbulence especially among established universities. The various HE institution types of Germany were presented, and it was shown how private business schools have emerged; on the one hand politically encouraged to absorb increasing cohorts owed to widening access schemes, on the other hand motivated by prospective market opportunities. Five of these business schools serve as case studies as explained in the following section, which will explain the empirical methodology of this thesis in detail.

## 4. Methodology

*Il ne faut pas craindre la lumière du soleil sous prétexte qu'elle n'a presque toujours servi qu'à éclairer un monde misérable*

*[We do not have to fear the sunlight under the pretence that most of the time it has served to illuminate a miserable world]*

*René Magritte*

This section explains the primary research approach pursued to achieve the research aim. It reflects my critical stance (cf. chapter 1.4), and it builds on the previous parts explaining neo-liberal ideology through social theory and its impact on HE. Chapter 4.1 specifies the empirical research approach. Chapter 4.2 outlines the applied processes of case study selection and data collection. Chapter 4.3 reveals the data analysis and coding patterns. Strengths and weaknesses of the respective approaches are reflected, and potential alternatives are evaluated. Chapter 4.4 addresses ethical considerations of this research, and chapter 4.5 presents a brief conclusion of this part.

### 4.1 Empirical Research Approach

This research unfolds in the realm of discourse analysis, the value, pitfalls, and potential of which is vividly discussed in the literature (e.g. Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011; Hardy & Grant, 2012). The conceptualisation of discourse guiding my study depicts the former as constitutive of the social world. More precisely, it can be defined as an “interrelated set of texts, and the practice of their production, dissemination, and reception” (Phillips & Hardy, 2002: 3). Discourse analysis is associated with Foucault’s work of the 1960s. He started looking for prerequisites that would have to be met so that a field of findings could be established as science, whereby prerequisites refers to internal rules a finding would have to follow to be accepted as true or valid (Quadflieg, 2008). The most important contribution of discourse analysis is its examination of how language constructs phenomena of the social world (Phillips & Hardy, 2002), and how it functions as a form of social practice (Fairclough, 1995).

Discourse analysis associates well with my critical stance outlined in chapter 1.4, as it opposes positivism (e.g. Bryman & Bell, 2011). Furthermore, it fits into the realm of CMS: the latter largely relies on discourse analysis, as discourses play an important role in constituting material reality including identities, values and contexts (Grant, Iedema, & Oswick, 2009). More specifically, this thesis draws on critical discourse analysis (CDA), acknowledging that language is a means of social construction, shaping and being shaped by society, and emphasising that language conveys power relations through its ability to order and to constitute the social world (e.g. Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000). Considering that organisations are major structures within this social world, it is not surprising that there is a growing body of research studying language produced by organisational actors (Loewenstein, Ocasio, & Jones, 2012). CDA derives findings and related interpretations from a wide range of texts such as news, political speeches, or advertisements, in order to expose potential underlying strategies that may in fact be ideological, seeking to shape the representation of events and persons for particular ends (Machin & Mayr, 2012).

The use of language attributable to neo-liberal principles (cf. chapter 2.7), as well as to other concepts or values, in constructing (or at least impacting) the social phenomenon of business education is central to the empirical examinations of this thesis. Using examples of private business schools in Germany, I assess the level of influence of neo-liberal ideology, highlighted as a potential threat (cf. chapter 1.2) to the viability and legitimacy of business schools – supplying future protagonists to the business world (cf. chapter 3.3) – on these institutions. In this research venture I follow the claim that CDA contributes well to understanding ideology in the contemporary sociology of management and capitalism (Chiapello & Fairclough, 2002). Furthermore, I follow the notion that CDA is part of critical social analysis with an

> "emphasis upon existing social realities as humanly produced constraints, which in certain respects unnecessarily reduce human flourishing or well-being and increase human suffering; upon historical explanation of how and why such social realities have come into being; and upon possibilities for transforming existing realities in ways that enhance well-being and reduce suffering" (Fairclough, 2012: 10).

### 4.2 Data Collection

Data are units of information recorded in a durable medium and products of procedures chosen by the researcher (Krippendorf, 2013). Data links the research purpose and the audience. In organisational studies all data are representations of at least aspects of organisational reality. However, not all representations are data, as there is the risk of selecting inappropriate accounts (e.g. through surveying the wrong target population in relation to the research purpose). As representations, data validly imply represented things (Stablein, 2006). In qualitative research there tend to be many sources of data (e.g. Strauss & Corbin, 2008).

This research is based on content analysis, which views data "not as physical events but as texts, images, and expressions that are created to be seen, read, interpreted, and acted on for their meanings, and must therefore be analysed with such uses in mind" (Krippendorf, 2013: xii). Content analysis is increasingly popular and accepted: a study revealed that between 1980 and 2005, a total of 98 articles published in major journals relied on this methodology in its diverse variations (Duriau, Reger, & Pfarrer, 2007). The nature of this research situates it in the field of qualitative content analysis (QCA), which is derived from a humanistic tradition and tends to be inductive (White & Marsh, 2006). It is often associated with critical forms of discourse analysis (e.g. Bryman, 2008). A major rationale is to understand and to present the 'big picture' (White & Marsh, 2006), in this case comprising a globalised economy paradigm (cf. chapter 2.5) and the ensued neo-liberal ideology dominance threatening the viability of HE (cf. chapter 3.1), particularly the legitimacy of business schools (cf. chapter 3.3).

To capture this 'big picture' I refrained from the collection of individual statements through questionnaires, also considering that responses collected with them "may be useful for specific issues but are probably too narrow in scope to encompass a total world view or ideology" (Seider, 1974: 805). I also discarded the option of conducting interview-based field research. While interviews can generate rich insights, especially if they are conducted in a flexible process such as in semi-structured or unstructured interviews (e.g. Bryman, 2008), they would primarily yield individual perceptions of neo-liberal ideology-related phenomena. They would also be subject to the performative nature of human utterances (Alvesson & Gabriel, 2013). The latter aspect also applies to focus groups, although they tend to give more differentiated insight, as individual viewpoints can be challenged by other participants and then be refined (e.g. Bryman, 2008). Overall, these approaches would still deviate from my research aim of tracing neo-liberal ideology at the level of organisational conception. Interview-based or focus group-driven research could be conducted as follow-up projects to capture perceptions of or contrasting views on the neo-liberal ideology prevalence revealed in this study. Furthermore, I have to acknowledge that the availability of interview partners or focus-group participants is restricted, especially considering that I would have needed access to people from institutions competing with the business school where I am employed, so that my role could be easily misinterpreted as one of soliciting confidential insights into competitors.

Hence, my content analysis is not rooted in self-generated content such as interview transcripts, but relies on documents instead. In the HE research realm, this approach has already proven to be useful in the analysis of ideology-driven policy (Souto-Otero, 2011). To remain feasible and also to be sufficiently detailed, the research needs to be limited to a manageable body of texts (Krippendorf, 2013). Therefore I have resorted to case studies. The case study generally helps to divide social reality into digestible units of analysis and consequently is "one of the most popular and most fertile design frames for researcher's work" (Thomas, 2011: ix). Oftentimes, richness is seen as a case study key strength, whereas rigour is seen as its key weakness (Gibbert & Ruigrok, 2010). This thesis draws on two uncontested case study benefits: firstly, as detailed studies they can serve an exploratory purpose to generate insights which can be used in a large-N context later on, and secondly, they can be used to generate theory and devise appropriate empirical tests (Abell, 2009). I furthermore aimed at gaining depth and more meaningful findings through a multiple-case study allowing for comparison and differentiation (e.g. Bryman & Bell, 2011).

A first challenge is appropriate case selection (Seawright & Gerring, 2008). For my venture, private or public business schools or faculties or a combination of both seemed suitable. Beyond considerations presented in chapters 1.1 and 3.6, practical constraints limited my choice to private *Hochschulen*: I do not have sufficient access to relevant documents of public ones. Within the choice of private business schools it remains challenging to define sampling targets. To add significance and to have comparable sample institutions, I only considered business schools that are fully privately owned and operated (cf. chapter 3.6), state-recognised and accredited. As of July 2013, there are 40 private HE providers of business or management education holding the highest state approbation (Wissenschaftsrat, 2013); the institutional accreditation awarded by the German science council, or *Wissenschaftsrat* (WR).

To ensure comparability of the criteria under which accreditation was awarded, and also taking into account that I intend to capture the current status quo of neo-liberal influence contributing to immanent crises and replicated corporate malpractice, I only considered more recent cases. There are five private business schools that have received ten-year WR accreditation approval since 2010 (there is also the status of being accredited for fewer years in the case of minor unsatisfactory issues to be resolved). These five cases also promise to offer contrasting situations; a driver of case study selection (Yin, 2014): they differ in size, specialisation, geographical location, ownership structure and founders' philosophy, allowing for the emergence of varying degrees of neo-liberal principles as well as other prevalent themes and thereby for a richer insight into the area of study. Table 9 shows an alphabetical case overview.

Table 9: The private business school cases of this thesis

| *Case* | *Institution* | *Location* | *Remarks* | *WR accred. awarded* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| # 1 | Alanus Hochschule | Alfter, Nordrhein-Westfalen | Anthroposophy background | 2010 |
| # 2 | EBS Universität für Wirtschaft und Recht | Wiesbaden, Hessen | Business and law school | 2012 |
| # 3 | ESMT European School of Management and Technology | Berlin | Founded by large corporations | 2010 |
| # 4 | Frankfurt School of Finance and Management | Frankfurt, Hessen | Specialised on finance sector | 2010 |
| # 5 | Karlshochschule International University | Karlsruhe, Baden-Württemberg | Youngest school, founded in 2004 | 2010 |

*(Own illustration)*

The following information on the case study business schools is derived from the respective WR accreditation reports: *Alanus (case # 1)*, named after the French polymath Alanus ab Insulis, was state-recognised in 2002, and it received a status as a Fine Arts College (cf. chapter 3.6). It has an anthroposophical background and orientation. Owner is the Alanus Foundation. There are six faculties, one of which is business, and as of 2009 there were 524 students enrolled. *EBS (case # 2)* was founded in 1971 as a business school and state-recognised as a *Fachhochschule* in 1989. In 2011, the law school was founded. As of 2012 there were 1,234 students enrolled. It is owned by a foundation in support of EBS. *ESMT (case # 3)* achieved state-recognition in 2003. 25 large corporations and industry associations founded the school which only offers MBA degrees. As of 2012 there were some 130 students enrolled. *Frankfurt School (case # 4)* is the successor of a bank academy established in 1957. In 2007 the school received its current name. It is still specialised in finance management and related business areas. As of 2009 there were 1,229 students enrolled. It is owned by a foundation. *Karlshochschule (case # 5)* was founded in 2004, also as the successor of an earlier academy. The school is characterised by a constructivist-interpretive approach to business and economics. As of 2010 there were 364 students enrolled. The owners are a foundation holding 94 per cent and the regional chamber of commerce holding six per cent.

CDA is particularly suited to analyse language that is provided in types of text such as organisational mission statements or websites (e.g. Bryman & Bell, 2011). Hence, firstly, I analyse the WR accreditation reports of the cases. These are published so that access is easily secured and uncompromising. The reports comprise ca. 70 pages each, assessing the school's respective position, proposition and quality against various standardised criteria established by the WR. Upon application to undergo the WR accreditation process, submitted by the private HE institution through the ministry in charge of the respective *Bundesland,* WR's accreditation committee forms a panel of six to eight members to conduct the process. For each case, a separate team is assembled. Academics of public universities with a suitable profile (e.g. public business professors in the case of the accreditation of a private business school), at least one academic of another private institution, one government representative of the *Bundesland* and usually even one student constitute the responsible panel. There are measures to prevent the partiality of appointed panel members (Wissenschaftsrat, 2015). Based on the assessment of the business school's documentation submitted ahead of time as well as a two-day on-site inspection by the panel, the WR produces and publishes the accreditation report.

Due to the WR status as a state-commissioned body, staffed with high-calibre scientists and representatives from the public sphere, an official and quasi-governmental perspective is captured. In light of the literature claims of the pervasiveness of accreditation (cf. chapter 3.4) and of the neo-liberal influence on HE policy at the EU and German level (cf. chapter 3.5 and 3.6), these represent a substantial source for analysis toward the research aim. However, these reports mainly represent an external perspective. An internal perspective is also required to trace neo-liberal and other themes prevalent at the core of business schools.

To that end and secondly, I analyse website texts of the case study institutions. Those represent a main channel to inform various stakeholders, and universities have discovered them as a useful communication channel (Hite & Railsback, 2010). All of the cases present pages portraying mission statements. The latter express an organisation's purpose and ambitions (Campbell, 1997), and they play an important role for the accreditation of business schools (Palmer & Short, 2008). It should just be acknowledged that mission statements are subject to conformity pressures, and they may have been set up more or less mindfully, yet they remain valuable study objects (Bartkus, Glassman, & McAfee, 2004). For my research aim and context, pages containing descriptions of programmes and/or strategic positioning are also relevant, unlike those limited to technicalities such as curricula, admission requirements etc. I am aware that website contents may change frequently due to updates (e.g. Krippendorf, 2013), but I assume that core contents such as mission statements are relatively stable, and I collected screenshots of all pages to analyse on the same day to ensure comparability.

Beyond language use, discourse also includes semiotic modalities such as photography (Fairclough, 1995). Therefore, thirdly, I analysed the visual images of the investigated websites. Thereby it is acknowledged that such visual material provides a rich field for research in general (Brinkmann, 2012) and for sociological analyses in particular (Breckner, 2012). I understand that the provision and the seeing of images take place in a particular social context mediating their impact, and also that images even have their own agency working in conjunction with other forms of representation, especially text (Rose, 2012). In addition, I follow the notion that CDA provides valuable analysis of dialectical relationships between discourse – represented in texts as well as visual images – and other elements of social practices, with an emphasis on (in many cases radical) changes taking place in contemporary social life (Chiapello & Fairclough, 2002), such as the intrusion of neo-liberal principles into the HE sector.

With this research approach, and in particular with the data collection process outlined above, I am confident of having explored the highly important dimension of the extent to which neo-liberalism has permeated private business schools in Germany. With regard to the analysis of the business schools' websites, it captures organisational (self-) representation (Keidel, 1997; Oberg, Schoellhorn, & Woywode, 2009), which is the process or the culmination of collective negotiation, discussion, exclusion and perhaps even coercion. I acknowledge that my study neither documents nor assesses the processes that led to such representations.

Likewise with the accreditation reports, my intent was to deconstruct the text as an object of study in its own right. Thereby I followed a poststructuralist pathway seeking "to unpack and disrupt dominant assumptions regarding what texts and practices mean" (Handsfield, 2011: 127) in the context of contemporary neo-liberal ideology influencing business schools. Hence, my focus was on the level of the organisations studied. While interviews or observation could reveal compliance, resistance or even subversion to neo-liberal ideology (and perceptions of these) at individual level, my analysis covers dominant representations at organisational level. This could serve as an important device to frame how the institution relates to other institutions as well as to frame stakeholders' practices and perceptions within and outside of the organisation.

## 4.3 Data Analysis

Following from my critical stance and research inquiry paradigm, gaining deeper understanding is essential, and my analysis is detached from methods of natural or physical sciences (e.g. Miles & Huberman, 1994). Consequently, QCA applied within my CDA approach guided my analysis process (cf. chapter 4.2). QCA systematically describes meaning of the material studied, and it specifies the angle from which data is examined. This points to a potential disadvantage of QCA: it does not permit to exploit the full meaning of materials described or analysed; it remains limited to respects that have to be specified by the researcher (Schreier, 2012). This is acceptable for the scope of this piece of research: as I am looking for traces of neo-liberal ideology infiltration of the business schools' conception, it is not required to exploit other aspects such as the intentions and implications of HE policy that could be discovered in the WR accreditation reports, or such as the marketing-related meanings of text and visual images on business school websites. Yet, I acknowledge that such aspects will also be relevant to complement a critical analysis of neo-liberal HE discourse at large. But these aspects go beyond the scope of my research aim and feasibility.

There are QCA variations (Flick, 2007). They have in common that they reduce data; on the one hand because not all information provided in the documents or websites is taken into account, and on the other hand because categories of the coding frame required to analyse the data tend to be at a higher level of abstraction than the more concrete data in the material (Schreier, 2012). Table 10 lists major QCA techniques.

Table 10: Qualitative content analysis techniques

| *QCA technique* | *Characteristics* |
|---|---|
| Summarising content analysis | Material is paraphrased. Less relevant parts are deleted, and passages with the same or very similar meaning are summarised in two phases. |
| Explicating content analysis | In opposition to the summarising technique: diffuse, ambiguous, or contradictory text is clarified through integration of the context. |
| Structuring content analysis | Search for types or formal structures in the text. Formal, content-based, or typology-generating structures are established. |

*(Summarised from Flick, 2007: 410ff)*

Ambiguous or diffuse statements are less likely in my research project, as there are no interview transcripts, which would probably contain personal and spontaneously generated utterances. Hence, the explicating technique does not make sense for my project. Instead, I conducted QCA combining summarising and structuring. Particularly the WR accreditation reports, as mentioned earlier, contain irrelevant passages, and some redundancies can be streamlined. The emphasis, however, is on content-based structuring to look for neo-liberal principles reflected and represented in the material, which requires interpretation in terms of identifying neo-liberal principles in the texts.

To facilitate that goal, the coding of the retrieved text data plays a crucial role in providing a valuable set of findings. Discussions of the coding and analysis of texts tends to include information on the procedures and tools (Carley, 1993); here, the focus is on the former. With reference to the latter, I acknowledge that there is a range of software packages designed to assist qualitative text analysis. However, I do not have access to such software at my workplace or at home, it is costly to buy an individual licence, and I also realise that it would have been time-consuming to familiarise myself with a software tool. Table 11 features basic coding choices researchers engaging in content analysis should consider.

Table 11: Selected coding choices for textual analysis

| *Choices* | *Options and issues to consider* |
|---|---|
| Level of analysis | Use of single words vs. use of phrases. The former is useful to contrast the results in a specific text with general usage; the latter is useful to capture broad-based concepts or terms. |
| Irrelevant information | Delete or skip irrelevant information vs. treating no information as irrelevant. The latter can be used to alter coding scheme later on. |
| Predefined or interactive concept choice | Predefined concepts vs. incremental developing of a list of concepts. The former is a prerequisite for automated coding. |
| Level of implication for concepts | Coding in terms of explicitly present concepts vs. implied concepts. Extracting the latter from texts is vital for many research projects, as meaning can get lost if only explicit concepts are considered. |

*(Adapted from Carley, 1993)*

Referring to these four choice options, I prefer phrases as level of analysis, as I clearly operate in the realm of the broad-based concept of neo-liberal ideology, although there are several keywords that emerged from the literature as well. Corresponding with the summarising QCA technique component mentioned above, I treated various parts of the WR accreditation reports and also of the business school websites as irrelevant information. With respect to the third choice, I applied the interactive concept, because there are also concepts and sub-themes not directly derived from the literature, but induced and interpreted as such. Furthermore, additional concepts (beyond neo-liberal principles) were detected in the material. Such flexibility causes more complexity in interpretation, but QCA is a flexible method by its very nature (e.g. White & Marsh, 2006), and rich pieces of information could get lost with a predefined concept approach. Consequently, my coding was designed to accommodate implied concepts related to the big picture of neo-liberal ideology, where much of the meaning can be expected to be implicit, and where the degree of clarity of ideology prevalence varies.

Due to my research approach, a combination of concept-driven coding and data-driven coding was appropriate. Following the former strategy, the researcher deduces codes from literature reviews and theory, sometimes also gained through existing studies or plain logic (Schreier, 2012). In my case, the literature points to neo-liberal principles (cf. chapter 2.7 and 3.1), which I translated into coded themes, as they appeared in the material investigated. The strategy of data-driven coding is inductive and thereby suitable in interpretivist and critical case study analysis, and particularly in QCA projects. Rich qualitative data usually contains more than anticipated (Schreier, 2012). Iterative reading and close perusal of the texts helps identify significant patterns (White & Marsh, 2006) so that additional codes emerged.

As mentioned above, coding assumes partly the role of a conceptual device in this thesis; hence it is an analytic process to generate – or at least inform potential generation of – theory, and also to open up data. In that process I started with a trial code subject to revision, enhancement, and refinement throughout the research process and followed recommendations to recode the material after two weeks. This approach is particularly helpful for individual researchers (Schreier, 2012). I derived the first set of concept-driven thematic codes for the WR accreditation reports and website texts from the literature elaborating "the usual suspects" (Alvesson, 2013: 121) of neo-liberal ideology covered in the literature review sections of this thesis: 'globalisation or internationalisation' (cf. chapters 2.5 and 3.1), 'knowledge economy' (cf. chapters 2.4, 2.6, 3.1 and 3.5), 'competition and market' (cf. chapters 2.6, 2.7, 3.1 and 3.5), 'performativity' (cf. chapter 3.1) and 'employability' (cf. chapter 3.1). Table 12 shows the neo-liberal themes and codes developed for the analysis of the selected text materials.

Table 12: Scheme of neo-liberal HE themes and codes

| | Neo-liberal principles impacting HE | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Theme 1<br>Globalisation/ Internationalisation | Theme 2<br>Knowledge economy | Theme 3<br>Competition and market | Theme 4<br>Performativity | Theme 5<br>Employability |
| Code | 1a) International students / faculty<br><br>1b) Cross-border co-operation<br><br>1c) Anglo-Saxon influence | 2a) Knowledge management and transfer<br><br>2b) Innovation and creativity | 3a) Ranking / league tables<br><br>3b) Accreditation<br><br>3c) Strategic positioning<br><br>3d) Branding / visibility / profile<br><br>3e) Offers and choice<br><br>3f) Growth<br><br>3g) Competition (also with public universities) | 4a) Student-related performance indicators<br><br>4b) Process and efficiency<br><br>4c) Performance<br><br>4d) Research and publications<br><br>4e) Quality control<br><br>4f) Third-party funding | 5a) Career / placement services<br><br>5b) Connection / liaise with world of work<br><br>5c) Co-operation with the business world, industry focus |

*(Own illustration)*

Further principles emerged also from the literature, as well as from the material studied. I have identified them as the 'Humboldtian ideal' (cf. chapter 3.6), encompassing traditional academic views and values, 'idealism', partly drawing on progressive views on potential or suggested (future) roles of business schools in society (cf. chapter 3.3) and partly from the case study material, and 'business school as business', which is also linked to neo-liberal trends such as commodification of HE (cf. chapter 3.1), but has to be understood as specific to the context of this study resorting to private business school cases. Table 13 presents these additional themes and corresponding codes for the analysis of the selected materials.

Table 13: Scheme of other HE themes and codes

| | Other principles impacting HE | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Theme 6<br>Humboldtian ideal | Theme 7<br>Idealism | Theme 8<br>Business school as business |
| Code | 6a)<br>Unity of research and teaching<br><br>6b)<br>Freedom of research, teaching, and learning<br><br>6c)<br>Knowledge for its own sake / humanist approach to education<br><br>6d)<br>Co-determination, independence of faculty members<br><br>6e)<br>Separation of ownership and academic activity | 7a)<br>Critical orientation and reflective abilities<br><br>7b)<br>Ethical orientation<br><br>7c)<br>Responsible stance<br><br>7d)<br>Broadening horizons | 8a)<br>Business model<br><br>8b)<br>Service orientation |

*(Own illustration)*

To interpret visual images, in this case those on the websites of the business schools studied, a range of complex theoretical traditions is available. Pictures and photos have gained more attention as objects of analysis in recent decades. To interpret their peculiarities, following leading thinkers of the field such as Panofsky, Barthes or Imdahl, connotations of language-mediated pre-knowledge would have to be suspended, corresponding with an approach of iconography (Bohnsack, 2003). To pursue my research aim, however, I explicitly have to consider the context of the visual images and photographs of the business schools websites. Therefore, I draw upon the field of semiotics, which is considered effective and has seen substantial use in qualitative research areas (Silverman, 2011). Semiotics “is concerned with the analysis of signs and the ways in which we all generate cultural meaning through using signs” (Schreier, 2012: 51). Based on Saussure, it is argued that a sign consists of a signifier (such as a word or picture) and a signified (such as a concept denoted by the former) (Eco, 1977). Signs convey meanings by representing something else (Schreier, 2012), and they derive their meaning from relations with and differences from other signs (Silverman, 2011). Table 14 summarises major characteristics of signs.

Table 14: Four characteristics of signs

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Signs bring together an image or word (the ‘signifier’, for example a picture of a deer on a road sign) and a concept (the ‘signified’, for example the call for driver’s attention to watch for animals). |
| 2 | Signs are not autonomous entities; they derive their meanings from their place within a sign system. What constitutes a sign is only its difference from other signs (for example the colour red is only something which is not green). |
| 3 | The linguistic sign is arbitrary. It does not have a natural connection with the signified. Different languages use different terms for concepts, and they can generate own concepts in a cultural context. |
| 4 | Signs can be put together through two main paths. Firstly, they can be combined (for example the order of a religious service) to form a syntagmatic relation. Secondly, they can be contrasted (for example saying ‘yes’ or ‘no’) in a mutually exclusive manner, resulting in a paradigmatic opposition. |

*(Adapted from Silverman, 2011: 330)*

For this thesis it is highly relevant how the images are related to the texts analysed. It is important to distil in how far they complement, reinforce, or contradict the written material in terms of conveying aspects of neo-liberal ideology or other principles. Hence, there is an emphasis on syntagmatic relations. Overall, my approach reflects the notions that photographs get meaning from their context (Becker, 1998), and that analysing photographic as well as textual data in qualitative research is a series of inductive acts

(Prosser & Schwartz, 1998). Previous research has applied various helpful analysis criteria. The number of photos displayed, featuring people versus objects, physical activity of people shown, and number of subjects are useful to study identity construction or profile building with visual imagery (Hum et al., 2011; Silverman, 2011). Particularly the latter aspect fits my research aim.

Discourse analysis, particularly CDA, and semiotics can be very well linked with QCA (Schreier, 2012; Zhang & O'Halloran, 2013). I draw on such beneficial methodological relation, also being aware of potential tensions that this combined approach can generate. QCA and discourse analysis tend to have different foci; the former typically is more descriptive. Also QCA and semiotics differ with the latter tending to a more in-depth description of meaning (Schreier, 2012). While QCA reduces data, semiotics can expand data through the integration of connotations extending into several levels of attached meanings (Eco, 1977). To resolve these tensions, I first and foremost stayed focused. My intention to contribute to a critical analysis of neo-liberal discourse in a business school context drove my data analysis, leading to a hierarchical order of the methods: QCA can serve a critical-interpretative attitude underlying discourse analysis (Schreier, 2012). Furthermore, the textual analysis guided my visual image analysis, which is limited to connotations linking the images to the themes and principles under investigation, thereby excluding iconographic notions mentioned earlier.

An aesthetically pleasing website has become an important vehicle of branding or integrated marketing programmes, not only of corporations but also of HE institutions (Hite & Railsback, 2010). Universities around the world are overhauling their websites (Zhang & O'Halloran, 2013). Linking back to the role of HE under neo-liberal reign (cf. chapter 3.1), it can be deduced that

> “[t]he reasons for these major overhauls rest not solely with the advancement of technology, but are deeply interwoven with the changing social context of their use. This, we argue, is one part of the process of aligning the university ever more closely alongside a set of ideas and values where universities are not based on sound traditions of knowledge, free thinking, the discipline of study, intellectual challenges, and mentoring by scholars, but around more abstract concepts and ideas that represent the values of managerialism and consumer capitalism” (Zhang & O'Halloran, 2013: 468).

These above-mentioned references to values of managerialism (cf. chapter 3.1) and consumer capitalism (linked to student consumerism, cf. chapter 3.2) guide the themes for the analysis of the case study website imagery. The ensued logic that business schools increasingly act as businesses (Starkey & Tiratsoo, 2007), already reflected in Table 13, extends into enactments of the business world for (prospective) students, in line with the notions of 'grandiosity' of HE (cf. chapter 3.1) and a 'servicescape' created for consumers (cf. chapter 3.2). One consequence of acting as a business requiring consumers' attention is the need to transmit corporate identity (e.g. Balmer, 2001), including the use of logos (Wilkins, 2011), via the website. Furthermore, the construction of corporations through pictures (Preston & Young, 2000) and the wide dissemination of business élite portraits in the business world (Davison, 2010) inform the coding scheme. The derived themes are therefore 'corporate identity', 'student activity' and 'business enactment'. Table 15 features the corresponding scheme.

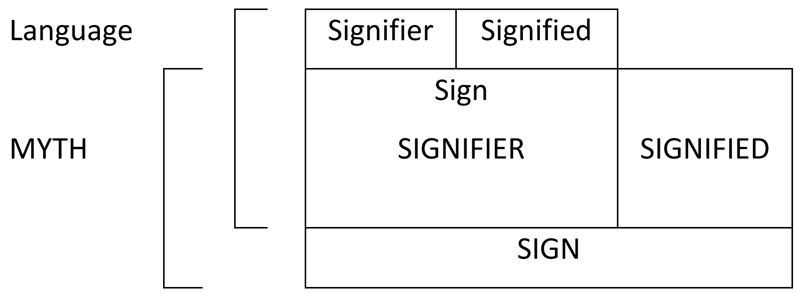
Table 15: Scheme of business school imagery themes and codes

| | Business principles impacting HE websites | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Theme 9<br>Corporate identity | Theme 10<br>Student activity | Theme 11<br>Business enactment |
| Code | 9a)<br>Logos and slogans<br><br>9b)<br>Architecture, building, campus, design features<br><br>9c)<br>Atmosphere / emotion / belonging | 10a)<br>Lecture / seminar / group work<br><br>10b)<br>Learning / reading / contemplation | 11a)<br>Business people / meetings / negotiations<br><br>11b)<br>Business locale |

*(Own illustration)*

Research of social phenomena entailing either several methods or several sources of data to gain greater confidence in findings tends to apply triangulation; a navigation metaphor, usually referring to efforts of locating an object's position (e.g. Bryman & Bell, 2011). My several sources of data are represented by WR accreditation reports and websites, and the latter consist of text as well as images. In combination with a cross-case analysis, this triangulation yields valuable insights into principles driving business school conception. A major aspect of my analysis is the implication of the signs discovered in the material related to the use, construction or dissemination of myth through the imagery (and partly also through its combination with the texts provided). To that end I draw on Barthes's (2012 [1957]) concept of two semiotic systems that myth comprises (cf. chapter 2.2). Figure 4 shows the overlapping levels of myth forming such a system.

Figure 4: Myth as semiotic system




*(Adapted from Barthes, 2012 [1957]: 259)*

A famous example of how to understand this system with its two levels is provided by Barthes (2012 [1957]) as follows: a cover of the magazine *Paris Match* shows a young dark-skinned soldier wearing a French uniform and saluting (presumably the French *tricolore*). At the first level, there is the sign of enacted military pride or obedience. However, the implied message is different; it is the 'proof that France is a great empire whose sons, irrespective of skin colour, faithfully serve under its flag and that there is no better answer to the opponents of alleged colonialism than the zeal with which this dark-skinned soldier serves his ostensible oppressors'. Hence, we can also understand the first level as *denotative*; it consists of what is depicted, and the second level as *connotative*; it communicates ideas, values or mythical meanings (Lobinger, 2012). Photographs are particularly suitable vehicles for the transmission of the latter as they tend to naturalise them (Van Leeuwen, 2001).

As a consequence of this thesis's qualitative line of inquiry, my research is primarily neither concerned with reliability questions (e.g. Popping, 2009), nor with the generation of testable hypotheses (e.g. White & Marsh, 2006), both being first and foremost associated with quantitative research methods. Instead, I pursue an analysis in line with the idea of 'interpretively rigorous' data handling, guided by the question if the findings are sufficient so "that I may trust myself in acting on their implications?" (Lincoln & Guba, 2000: 178). That translates for me into: will I change attitudes towards my role as an educator of future business protagonists?

Another issue to address is validity. It "refers to the issue whether an indicator (or set of indicators) that is devised to gauge a concept really measures that concept" (Bryman, 2008: 151). Table 16 shows various versions of validity to consider in research.

Table 16: Selection of validity versions

| *Validity version* | *Characteristics* |
|---|---|
| Validity as authenticity | Major aspects are *fairness*; the consideration of all stakeholder views (omission would be a bias), and *ontological authenticity*; for determining a raised level of awareness. |
| Validity as poststructural transgression | Central imaginary for validity is the *crystal*, which can be turned many ways, which reflects and refracts light. There are multiple angles of approach to the object of research. |
| Validity as an ethical relationship | Poststructural forms of validity bring ethics and epistemology together. The way in which we know is tied up with what we know and our relationship with research participants. |

*(Excerpts from Lincoln & Guba, 2000: 180ff)*

The highly controversial issue of research validity in my case is mostly in line with 'poststructural transgression', guiding readers and writers to "see the interweaving of processes in research: discovery, seeing, telling, storying, re-presentation" (Lincoln & Guba, 2000: 182). The 'crystal' metaphor also applies, as the impact of neo-liberal ideology and other principles has to be interpreted as multi-dimensional. Aspects of research participants do not apply. To inspire mindful HE dialogues, I agree with the 'trans-disciplinary over rigour' research plea. Incorporating CDA, such an approach can enhance "the capacity of existing critical paradigms […] to address dialectical relations between discourse and other social elements" (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 2010: 1217).

## 4.4 Ethical Considerations

Research ethics are important, even more so considering that research does not always adhere to the code of ethics existing for the research field covered, even in published articles (Frechtling & Boo, 2011). Typical ethical issues of field research have not arisen in this study. They would include harm to participants, invasion of privacy, deception, or lack of informed consent (e.g. Bryman, 2008). My use of published material to conduct a content analysis meets the criteria of unobtrusive data collection (e.g. Bryman & Bell, 2011). With reference to the consent aspect, I just endorse that the producers of the examined accreditation reports, website texts and website imagery do not know that those were used for this research and may not have been aware of such potential use. It has to be considered that these materials are directed at target audiences and may have to use certain bureaucratic or marketing-driven syntax to reach them. In addition, I acknowledge that having worked with private business school case studies entails the delicacy of researching the broader context and environment of the organisation where I am employed, bearing potential conflicts of interest (Tietze, 2012). However, I avoid severe issues in that area, as my workplace is not part of the case studies for my thesis.

## 4.5 Chapter Conclusion

An in-depth explanation and discussion of the CDA-driven empirical research approach following from my critical stance was presented. Five private business schools are selected as cases. They all hold recently awarded institutional accreditation, and they reflect different founders' philosophies. The material consists of accreditation reports and website texts analysed through QCA as well as website imagery analysed with an approach rooted in semiotics. The different coding schemes, derived from the literature and the material, were presented. As there are no research participants, no significant ethical issues have arisen. Potential conflicts of interest due to research conducted in my broader employment context are acknowledged, yet minimised. The following chapter analyses and discusses the findings.

## 5. Analysis and Discussion

*Und ich denk' mir, jeder Schritt zu dem verheiß'nen Glück*
*Ist ein Schritt nach ewig gestern, ein Schritt zurück*

*[And I think every step toward the promised fortune*
*Is a die-hard step, a step backwards]*

*From the song "Sei wachsam" by Reinhard Mey*

In this section, the findings generated through the empirical approach explored in the previous chapter are summarised, analysed and discussed in depth in order to develop a differentiated answer to the central research question of this thesis; *to what extent has neo-liberal ideology permeated private business schools in Germany?* A complete overview of the findings is featured as an appendix. Chapters 5.1 to 5.5 provide intra-case analyses of the respective institutions, and they summarise major patterns and weightings of (non-) prevalent themes distilled from the WR accreditation reports and the business schools' websites (cf. chapter 4.2). Incorporating triangulation, it is also assessed in how far findings complement or contradict each other. Moreover, a semiotics-based analysis to detect mythical mechanisms (cf. chapter 2.2 and 4.3) is featured. To that end and following the example of other HE-related studies (e.g. Ng, 2014), I resort to the consideration of selected case study images. The sub-research questions *which other (not neo-liberal) major principles influence these business schools* and *in how far do different business school founders' philosophies impact the presence of the differing principles* are addressed in chapter 5.6 with its cross-case analysis focusing on the (non-) prevalence or even dominance of neo-liberal and/or other principles. Hence, the last subordinate research question; *in how far can signs of business school convergence be detected* is also answered. Chapter 5.7 discusses major implications of the presence, intensity and nuances of the principles detected. An evaluation through the critical lens following my critical stance clarified in chapter 1.4 is also offered. This section is structured along the themes and codes derived in chapter 4.3 (cf. Tables 11-13 and also appendices), and it draws on the preceding theory and context sections. Finally, chapter 5.8 concludes this chapter.

## 5.1 Intra-Case Analysis of Case # 1

It is noteworthy that neither the WR accreditation report nor the website of the first case study institution, Alanus Hochschule (cf. chapter 4.2), feature any entries corresponding with the theme of *globalisation/internationalisation*, indicating that this institution so far has escaped the trend of exposing HE institutions to globalisation (or global competitiveness) paradigms highlighted in chapters 2.5 and 3.1. Its profile and/or philosophy are apparently not directed at attracting international students or at impressing domestic students with an international atmosphere at this point in time.

Whereas there is reference to the theme of *knowledge economy* in the WR accreditation report, emphasising an innovative approach of differentiation and a creative atmosphere, no explicit hints to that end appear in the website texts. However, the notion of creativity is arguably transported through the images on the website of Alanus Hochschule. The distinct campus architecture and several photos showing student activities point to creativity and/or at least to different approaches to studying in general and to studying business in particular.

The theme of *competition and market* is prominently featured in the WR report, with a focus on the branding/visibility aspect. Once again the institution's 'distinct profile' and its positioning as well as 'succinct corporate identity' are emphasised, although it is remarked that the faculty of business does not contribute significantly enough yet. The website text picks up the profile aspect with a strong emphasis on extraordinarily high quality and distinct provision, particularly through 'exceptional linking of art and science'. Alanus Hochschule thereby explicitly draws on beneficial, synergetic relationships between management and the arts, escaping societal conformity (Adler, 2006; Starkey & Tempest, 2009b). This website message is underscored by the imagery featuring the distinct campus architecture (as mentioned above), also showing sculptures on campus, and classroom settings/activities resembling art studio work.

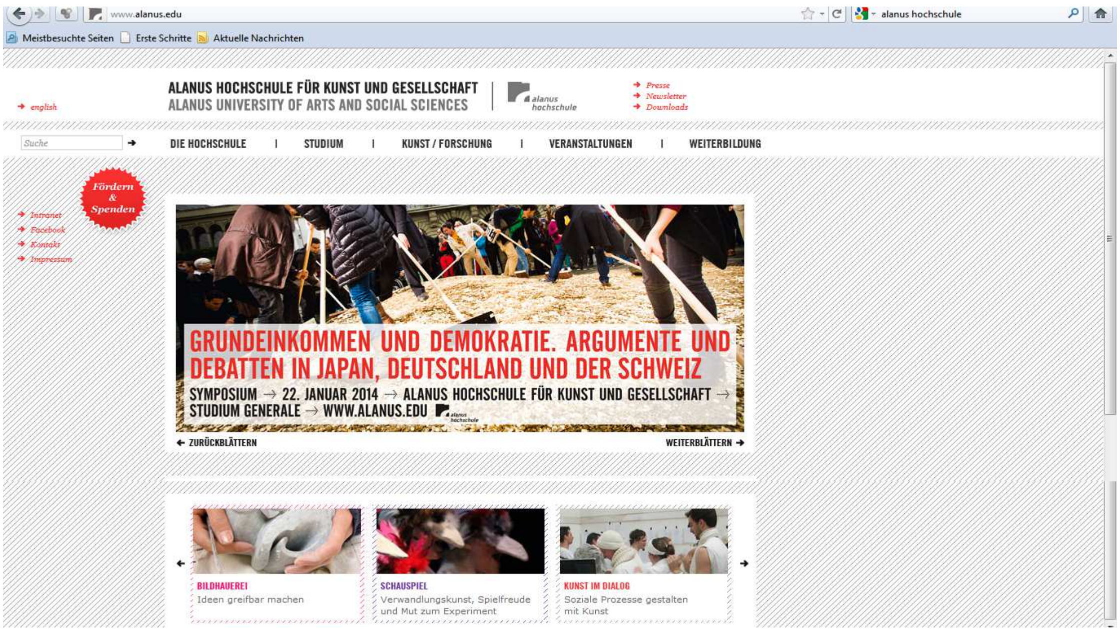
With reference to the theme of *performativity* it is remarkable that there is ample coverage in the WR report, but no coverage on the website. Hence, it is obvious that the science council assigns considerable importance to this topic, which is not considered important by the institution, at least not in terms of the need to communicate any emphasis on this area to stakeholders. The WR report particularly comments on 'yet insufficient performance-oriented research support schemes'. The lack of 'significant research output', and related to that a lack of third-party funding solicitation, is also criticised. Furthermore, the report focuses on quality control-related issues. It praises the prevalence of 'usual procedures' of lecture and lecturer evaluations by students and through graduate surveys. It is pointed out that results of these exercises are integrated into decision-making at Alanus Hochschule; even the newly created position of a prorector of research and quality assurance is pointed out. Although it is not explicitly mentioned how such decision-making is guided by evaluation outcomes, covert notions of coercive managerialism (cf. chapter 3.1) are implicit in such accounts, as it can be assumed that pressure is put on lecturers to conform with student expectations.

In terms of the theme of *employability*, the WR report focuses on aspects of co-operation with the business world. It points to a 'remarkable commitment of the benefactors' of Alanus Hochschule, and also to the close links with medium-sized companies in the region. However, a certain dependence on the 'circle of companies supporting' the institution is underlined. The website, both in terms of text and imagery, hardly comments on this theme, with the exception of a short mentioning of valuing 'practical experience and theoretical understanding' in a text on the Master degree programmes.

Acknowledging the independence of the Hochschule in scientific matters through the institutional setup reflects the theme of the *Humboldtian ideal* in the WR accreditation text. On the website, there is an explicit reference to Alanus's commitment to a traditional humanist education idea, which lies at the core of the institution. This notion links to the theme of *idealistic elements*, which is pronounced in the case of Alanus Hochschule. The WR report lauds 'opportunities of self-reflection' offered to students, and it asserts that the school has a mission of 'integrating artistic spirit into science' and of 'promoting the connection of art and philosophy with societal action fields of business administration', which clearly is a unique proposition among the business schools studied within this thesis. The website emphasises all three sub-themes in this area: a critical orientation, a responsible stance, and also the broadening of horizons. The text suggests that 'possession of foresight and thoughtfulness' and 'to look further than the end of one's nose' is important for students who are to assume responsibility for their own personalities and for society. The education of business protagonists who 'engage responsibly' is central to Alanus's mission, and this message is present in various text passages. Overall, there is relatively little text on the website of Alanus Hochschule, a significant proportion of which is devoted to these topics broadly classified as 'idealistic' for the purpose of this thesis. There are no findings for the theme of *business school as business*.

The last three themes exclusively cover the website imagery. Figure 5 shows the homepage to introduce theme 9, *corporate identity*. All webpages – apart from a few exceptions of full-screen photos – are designed with a grey hatched background area. In the foreground, there are white fields featuring photos and/or text introducing the related topics. There are varying font sizes; the basic text colour is grey.

Figure 5: The homepage of Alanus Hochschule




*(Source: www.alanus.edu, screenshot captured 20 December 2013)*

It is remarkable how many photos present campus buildings and their design elements, including sculptures and other art features, as mentioned earlier. The design appears modern, arguably ranging from state-of-the-art to rather experimental in character.

Furthermore, there is a certain orientation towards sustainability, which becomes visible through shapes known from low-energy houses and through natural materials like wood in the foreground. Relatively few pictures show atmosphere or emotion, those that do are transported through group compositions.

Such group photos dominate in the category of *student activity*: there are lecture and group work or seminar settings, almost all of which integrate architectural features of campus buildings, especially light-flooded rooms with large windows, wood and glass facades or art pieces/structures as background. This may well be interpreted as incorporated reminiscence of the role architecture plays in anthroposophy, and of its principles of correspondence between spiritual and material worlds (Gray, 2010), or at least as architecture deployed in support of the humanist HE paradigm outlined earlier in this chapter. In the sub-category of learning/reading/contemplation there are at least two matches; one photo showing handwritten text passages and another one showing a person in front of library shelves. There are no findings matching the theme of *business enactment* at Alanus Hochschule.

There are representations of myth (cf. chapter 2.2) in the case of Alanus Hochschule. Applying Barthes's semiotic system with two levels of signs (cf. chapter 4.3), and following the above-mentioned importance of architecture and interior design in this case, two example photos featured in Figure 6 are derived for analysis here.

Figure 6: Selected photos of Alanus website

*(Source: Alanus website, retrieved 20 December 2013)*

On the first photo, we see people carrying out work and interacting in a studio featuring a huge glass front and wooden walls. At the first level, this photo is a sign of student activity in an art or design class in the context of this *Kunsthochschule* (fine arts college;

cf. chapter 3.6). On the second photo, we see young people sitting at tables, listening or writing, and there is a tree-like sculpture outside. At the first level, this is a sign of students in a lecture scene.

At the second level, both signs become signifiers for a different approach to business education also provided at this institution. On the first photo, the room itself is unusual for a business studies context, and interaction of students freely moving about in the room during their work or studies departs from traditional business school frames. On the second photo, the sculpture contains the message of a strong link to nature. It also could carry the association that the meandering of thoughts (resembling the branch-like structures of the sculpture) is welcome and encouraged at Alanus. There clearly is a syntagmatic relationship (cf. chapter 4.3) between these photos and the statements of the written documents analysed referring to an institution combining in innovative ways the realms of business, the arts and philosophy. Hence, there is an overarching myth of the unique business education proposition rooted in humanist and anthroposophical traditions, which is clearly in opposition to neo-liberal myths explored in earlier sections.

### 5.2 Intra-Case Analysis of Case # 2

The theme of *globalisation/internationalisation* is strongly emphasised within the WR accreditation report of the second case study institution (cf. chapter 4.2), EBS Universität für Wirtschaft und Recht. First of all, EBS is mentioned as being one of the first *Hochschulen* in Germany to follow the Anglo-Saxon format of university education. The international dimension of the study programmes and also the international experience of faculty feature prominently. Furthermore, it is outlined that EBS wants to convey internationality, which is strengthened by an extensive network of co-operation partners. Despite this apparently internationally oriented self-conceptualisation, the website covers this theme only briefly and in a vague manner through a text passage on international co-operations and the vast partner network.

Referring to the theme of *knowledge economy*, the accreditation report only covers (again) the co-operation network. This time it points to partnerships between EBS and the business world, and also to a 'knowledge community' in general. Coverage on the website is equally scarce; it just alludes to knowledge dissemination and the provision of skills for mangers 'to exercise leadership in a globalised world'.

There is more consideration of the theme of *competition and market*. The WR report lauds the institution's strong positioning in the areas of research and teaching, and it establishes that EBS 'widely matches the business faculty of a state university' in terms of size and aspiration, among other criteria. In addition, the wide range of degrees and taught subjects is highlighted. On the website, EBS emphasises that the school is 'consistently ranked among the top universities' in Germany, thereby picking up on the prominent role of rankings and accreditation in the business school realm (cf. chapter 3.4). The aspiration of being or becoming a leading business school in Germany is explicitly and implicitly mentioned several times. It is notable that not only teaching-oriented or student experience-centred elements feature on the website, but that there are also research-related statements claiming 'high practical relevance in research' and 'noteworthy success' in establishing an international research reputation.

The theme most strongly covered in the WR report as well as on the website, at least throughout the texts, is the one of *performativity*, which assumes a major role also in neo-liberal HE paradigms (cf. chapter 3.1). In the WR report, there are hints to measurable technical details such as student-professor and dropout ratios, and there are also extensive comments on performance-oriented management structures and policies in place at EBS. Noteworthy in this regard are customised journal rankings to assess individual research performance of faculty members; as a result 'animated publication activity' is praised. Moreover, 'high importance' of quality assurance is emphasised, including the incorporation of students and alumni into evaluations and programme development initiatives. Finally, the successful acquisition of third-party funding for research is lauded due to significant acquisitions in the form of donations and sponsoring. However, in the category of competitive biddings and peer-review process-based funding schemes the performance requires 'further efforts'. On the website, EBS also points to the 'ideal' student-staff ratio. Furthermore, 'academic excellence' is claimed to be at work for the benefit of the education of 'first-class, responsible and creative executives'. There is also explicit coverage of the incentive system in place to encourage research activity.

The theme of *employability* is covered more strongly in the WR report than on EBS's website. In both documents, the notions of a strong network of co-operation partners from the business world, and of a practical orientation are underlined. The WR report repeatedly comments favourably on the 'integration of theory and practice' within the study programmes, and on the 'vocational competence' of graduates. Career and placement services offered are considered to 'surpass the extent usually prevalent' at HE institutions in Germany. On the website, EBS operates with the term of 'academic entrepreneurs' serving 'multiple constituencies'. Hence, a message of close ties between the institution and the business world features prominently.

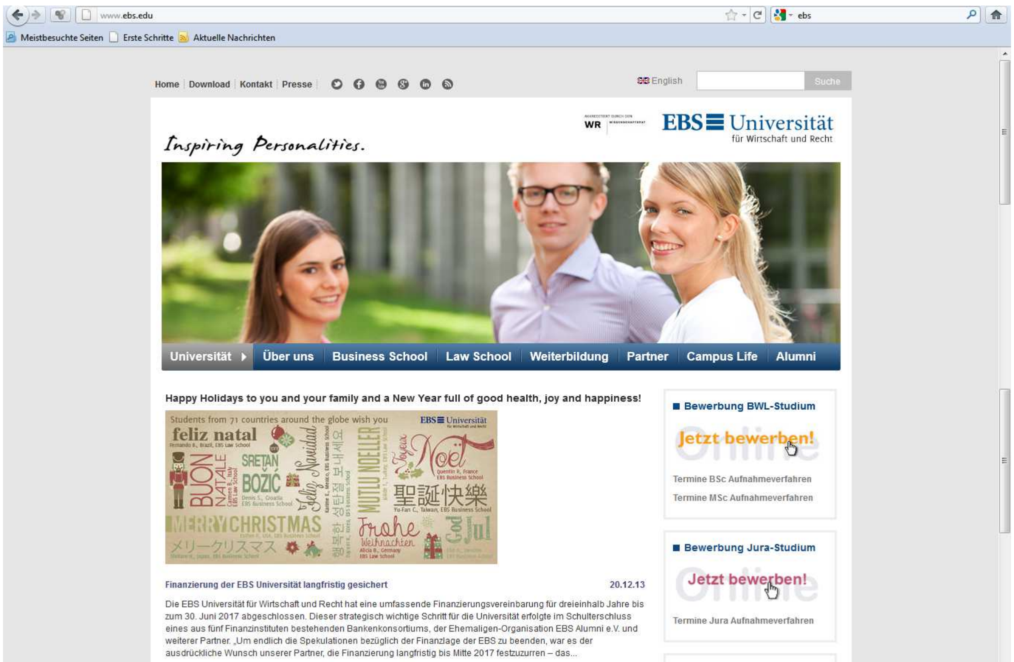
The *Humboldtian ideal* is only very briefly reflected in the WR report, stating that the academic management can decide independently from the owners. With reference to research, it is only stated that professors 'should pursue their individual research interests'. Such comment probably indicates that this is currently not the case.

In terms of *idealistic elements*, the WR report certifies 'acknowledgeable effort towards multidisciplinarity', but also recommends that EBS should 'open further their understanding of economic science' and seek scientific relations to other sciences. Furthermore, it is commented that analytical, theoretical and methodological skills of students need strengthening; pointing to shortcomings in this area typically associated with the Humboldtian ideal (cf. chapter 3.6). On the website, EBS quotes the term 'responsibility' several times without further specification. Stronger is the commitment expressed as one of five core values stating that their 'work as teachers and researchers is based on ethical values that emphasise honesty, truthfulness and the concern for human beings and the natural environment'.

The *business school as business* is only reflected briefly in the WR report. On the one hand, there is a favourable comment on the diversified financial structure of EBS, based on tuition fees, donations and public funding. On the other hand, the notion of service orientation shines through in intensive support for students offered. There are no findings of this theme on the institution’s website.

Referring to the business school’s website imagery, it is noteworthy that there are not many photos overall. Figure 7 shows the homepage to give an impression of *corporate identity*, which is mainly transmitted through campus photos and portraits of individuals. In particular, shots of historic buildings, including a castle ruin and a palace are featured. Furthermore, there is one photo of a ceremony inside a splendid historic hall; probably a graduation ceremony considered an important element of identity constitution at a school emphasising Anglo-Saxon HE traditions (as mentioned earlier).

Figure 7: The homepage of EBS




*(Source: www.ebs.edu, screenshot captured 20 December 2013)*

*Student activity* is sparsely covered; there are a few outdoor party group photos and students in classroom or seminar settings. There is a bit more coverage of *business enactment*. Images show gentlemen wearing business attire and a reception scene with people wearing gala attire. Furthermore, there is a newspaper or possibly internal newsletter clipping featuring business-related headlines and portraits along with the logo of a famous German company and – quite detached from the context or at least the other motives – a photo of the London skyline. The latter shows Tower Bridge and, in the background, the landmark office skyscraper commonly referred to as the 'Gherkin'. It may be meant to symbolise a globalised business world in general or the location of the powerful world of finance corporations. However, it is not without irony that sequestration was recently declared for the 'Gherkin' building by a court of law, as the owners have defaulted on interest payments (Rath, 2014).

This anecdote shows how the fast-paced business world can make symbols of success, power or positive dynamics vulnerable. And it leads to the area of myth-building as well. Figure 8 shows a photo selected to apply Barthes's semiotic system of two levels of signs constitutive of myth formation (cf. chapter 4.3) in the case of EBS.

Figure 8: Selected photo of EBS website

*(Source: EBS website, retrieved 20 December 2013)*

It shows a scene with young people sitting around a table with books and beverages. In the background there is a castle ruin encircled by ivy. At the first level, this is a sign for a relaxed student atmosphere. Students enjoy their group interaction outdoors. At the second level, this photo arguably transmits another message: studying at EBS is embedded in historical heritage, and long-standing tradition is fostered on campus. In connection with the institution's commitment to an Anglo-Saxon HE approach mentioned earlier, this setting invokes comparisons with Ivy League universities of North America. Hence, the myth of an Ivy League experience in Germany, where students get well educated and introduced into powerful business networks is built up.

### 5.3 Intra-Case Analysis of Case # 3

AT European School of Management and Technology (ESMT) as third case study (cf. chapter 4.2) the theme of *globalisation/internationalisation* plays a significant role. The WR report points out that the institution sees itself as an international school in the realm of leading European business school brands. Furthermore, the international student body with 90% coming from abroad is highlighted. On their website, ESMT also emphasises this notion, adding that the 32 faculty members represent 19 different nations. The attraction of talent 'from all over the world' is an explicit goal of ESMT. It is obvious that the raison d'être of this institution is strongly in line with HE as location factor strengthening the national economy of Germany (cf. chapter 3.1).

The theme of *knowledge economy* is also represented in both of the written documents. The WR report focuses on the aspect of knowledge transfer, which is positively recognised as an accomplishment of ESMT, and as such a much stronger one than at other universities in Germany. The website emphasises another aspect: the generation of knowledge 'to foster sustainable economic growth'. Hence, growth as a major principle of neo-liberal ideology (cf. chapter 2.7) is strengthened in the self-conceptualisation of ESMT. Furthermore, the development of new technology and innovations to master 'the multiple societal and entrepreneurial challenges of the future' is stressed as a strength and goal of the school.

The above-mentioned aspect of growth features in WR report entries, as ambitious growth targets of ESMT are underlined; the number of MBA applicants has already trebled, but further growth in actual student numbers is also evaluated as vital for the future of ESMT. Overall, entries related to the theme of *competition and market* build the category with most extensive coverage within the accreditation report. Other well-represented aspects are rankings and accreditation, where the outstanding positioning of the institution also in international comparison is lauded, as well as branding and profile. The latter is considered 'internationally visible', and the school's claim to reach a top position within the international business school scenery, and in particular within the 'highly competitive European market', is portrayed as realistic. ESMT is the only of the case studies of this thesis holding AACSB plus AMBA accreditation; beyond the FIBAA label most of the private business schools in Germany hold for their programmes. The website emphasises favourable positions of ESMT in various international rankings. It is remarkable that profile building is predominantly related to research activity and visibility rather than to student-oriented (or teaching) activity.

Another theme treated extensively in the WR report is *performativity*. Again, the research realm is prominent in this regard; the report points to publications placed in A and A+ journals. There is vast coverage of quality control aspects. ESMT's internal quality management concept is praised. It features, among other components, evaluations incorporating students' views and also research-reporting systems with 'relevant input and output figures'. Although the school's profile rests largely on research visibility as mentioned above, it is remarkable that the 'missing of teaching goals' leads to changes carried out 'accordingly' by Deans. These findings are in line with the mechanisms of managerialism explored in chapter 3.1. Another aspect of performativity is the proven 'advantageous position' of ESMT when it comes to acquisitions of third-party funding. On the website, there is only brief coverage of performativity. In line with the rankings and accreditation highlighted, this part on the website emphasises official research-based ranking positions. Moreover, there is praise of the attraction of grants thanks to the internationally renowned faculty members whose research provides 'cutting-edge' insights 'for the business community as well as the classroom'.

*Employability* is accounted for in brief but explicit comments of the WR report praising practical contents of high importance in degree programmes and executive trainings. Hence, beyond HE, further education is also emphasised. Moreover, the 'success factors of the German economy' are considered in the academic provision at ESMT. The science council also sees a competitive advantage in close connections of the institution with 25 internationally operating companies. This aspect also links back to the globalisation and internationalisation theme. On the website, ESMT points to the 'perfect environment to develop skills and build relationships' (certainly referring to career-enhancing networking activity). Furthermore, support and guidance of businesses is solicited on the website of ESMT.

*Humboldtian ideal* notions are also prevalent in the WR report, which lauds the autonomous steering of scientific issues by EMST members. Furthermore, it welcomes the room professors have in offering elective courses along their research interests. However, it is criticised that there is no possibility of a majority vote of professors over management interests in the senate. This can be considered a small but important hint that the enactment of academic freedom is not truly valued at the institution; at least not beyond the utilitarian aspect of marketing a strong research profile in competitive positioning efforts. Another hint in the same direction is the fact that there are no hints to this theme on the ESMT website.

The theme of *idealistic elements* is represented both in the WR report and on the website. On the one hand, there are various vague terms such as commitment to educating 'responsibly-acting people', 'cosmopolitanism' and 'respect for the individual' or the training of 'socially responsible leaders'. On the other hand, there are remarkable hints, both in the accreditation report and on the website, that ESMT's research and teaching acknowledges shortcomings of the dominant paradigm of economics (cf. chapter 2.6). The WR report even points to a profile 'based on the perception that classic, profit maximisation-oriented field of business studies needs to be broadened through a perspective of society as a whole.' The website furthermore refers to a 'Sustainable Business Roundtable' as a 'unique partnership between business and academia'. This concept is also illustrated on a website photo bearing this title and obviously showing one of these events.

The theme of *business school as business* is only reflected in a WR report statement outlining the importance of company trainings and further education offers in financing ESMT's operations. However, plentiful allusions to the world of business at large shine through on the website. The institution's *corporate identity* transmitted via website imagery focuses on the theme of business that is apparently constitutive of ESMT. Already the slogan ("The business school founded by business") gives such orientation away. Figure 9 shows the institution's homepage.

Figure 9: The homepage of ESMT


*(Source: www.esmt.org, screenshot captured 20 December 2013)*

The website design features a dark background and large photos on each page. Logos of big corporations and leading media channels head brief stories, most of which cover activities of ESMT faculty members, including research that generated findings of alleged interest for business executives and interviews portraying professors as experts in their respective management-related fields. Many of these stories resemble, in design as well as content, high-calibre business news channel stories.

Most of the photos at the top of the webpages show individuals wearing business attire who are placed in situations resembling business interaction much more than educational setting. Thereby, the themes of *student activity* and of *business enactment* overlap. Most seminar or classroom scenes could easily represent business meetings at corporations as well; a notable exception is one graduation ceremony photo. The varied selection of business world protagonists, some of whom are well-known CEOs, and of top-level politicians including *Bundeskanzlerin* Merkel – all apparently photographed at occasions at ESMT – adds to the impression of grandeur associated with big business spheres. The enactment of the latter is furthermore reflected in the presentation of architecture. The school resides in historic buildings in central Berlin, and they are impressive, as would be expected in the case of a stock exchange listed company, probably ‘global player’ (cf. chapter 2.1) headquarters. In addition, there are several pictures apparently set in large and/or very well equipped, stylishly decorated rooms resembling corporate board rooms.

Finally, it is noteworthy that the selection of individuals displayed represents gender, race and age diversity, which seems an imperative in times of anti-discriminatory and political correctness rhetoric, although prevailing practices rather reinforce than reduce inequalities (Gorski, 2006). Overall, it is striking how consequently ESMT’s website is driven by photographed business world elements and how it exhales the institution’s belonging to the realm of big business. This very notion is also at the centre of myth construction (cf. chapter 2.2) within a semiotic system (cf. chapter 4.3) in the case of ESMT. To illustrate this process two photos are considered and assembled for the purpose of this analysis in Figure 10.

Figure 10: Selected photos of ESMT website


*(Source: ESMT website, retrieved 20 December 2013)*

The first photo shows a gathering of about a dozen people wearing business attire, seated in a U-shaped arrangement. In the background, there is a flipchart, a whiteboard and a brochure rack. The image signifies a business meeting, and the printed subtitle indicates it is called ‘Sustainable Business Roundtable’. As an extended semiotic system, this photo means that at ESMT influential business experts meet to elaborate on the issues *du jour*; an acclaimed in-circle debates business world topics currently en vogue. In addition, I am inclined to argue that the above-mentioned topic of sustainability does not matter in the slightest for this myth construction process: the empty boards signal that content is irrelevant. Ironical observers might point out that the glossy brochures displayed on the rack in the background are least likely to be printed on recycled paper. In fact, ESMT’s website does not hint at all to measures making a university campus sustainable (Atherton & Giurco, 2011).

The second photo shows a man dominating the foreground and three people on a balcony in the background, looking towards a historic church. In the context of a business school this shows a casual scene with a sightseeing notion. As an extended semiotic system, a myth of power is conveyed. ESMT is located in the heart of formerly Prussian Berlin, and the combination of a grandseigneur and a balcony evokes pope audience allusions. ESMT is a place of grandeur for influential leaders. Hence, both photos reinforce key messages of the text materials analysed earlier. There are close ties to the world of corporations (well represented in nowadays lobbyist Berlin), and business enactment lies at the core of ESMT. The neo-liberal theme of competition in general (cf. chapter 2.7) and of HE institutions strengthening the competitiveness of national economies in particular (cf. chapter 3.1) is powerfully represented.

## 5.4 Intra-Case Analysis of Case # 4

The WR report on the fourth case study institution of Frankfurt School of Finance (cf. chapter 4.2) explores the theme of *globalisation/ internationalisation* in great detail. It mentions the 'international orientation' featured in the institution's mission, and the school's aim to be 'internationally noticed' also for reputable research. However, it emphasises that the school has not yet succeeded in attracting renowned scientists to the desired extent. Teaching is also identified as a driver of internationalisation; yet again the area is reported to need strengthening. Notably, the school's philosophy of tying on an Anglo-Saxon business school model is outlined, and so are considerable efforts in establishing international co-operations particularly for double degrees. The website displays considerably less emphasis on this theme: there is just a short passage about various programmes and joint ventures abroad. Hence, the so far only partly successful approach to international research acclaim is apparently not deemed noteworthy for website visitors. But the photos show a well-balanced composition of people with different gender, race and age, which is in line with the Anglo-Saxon role model influencing international business scene customs (cf. chapter 5.3).

*Knowledge economy* is a less prominent theme in the case of Frankfurt School of Finance. The WR report emphasises further education functions enacted in 'exemplary manner'. On the website, the commitment that 'everything we do is directly relevant to practical issues' is the strongest element with reference to this theme. Furthermore, consulting activities are praised, and a finance-driven definition of management as activities 'where managers deploy employees and resources in such a way that the company's goals are met as cost-effectively as possible' is featured. Hence, a clear orientation towards a utilitarian understanding of knowledge shines through.

There is vast coverage of *competition and market* across both types of written material analysed, but there are only two focal points. The WR report repeatedly considers the one of profile building in terms of research as still insufficient compared to the school's ambitions, but it acknowledges the specialisation in the area of finance as beneficial in this area. On the website, there are explicit remarks on ranking positions and accreditation achieved. In addition, the bold goal of becoming ‘one of the leading business schools in Europe and the top choice for education in finance by 2020’ is presented. The other focal point is growth. The WR report underlines the huge choice of specialisations within the finance realm, but also notes that many degrees only differ in too few modules. Yet, growth has been ‘impressive’ and is likely to continue. Further education training is identified as a likely future growth area, too. Continuing expansion plans are also emphasised on the website. But there is a contradictory aspect: Whereas the website maintains that ‘education is for us a market where success comes from providing excellent quality’, the WR report fears that the future growth, albeit ‘economically understandable’ could unfold ‘at the expense of quality’.

Hence, it remains unresolved whether Frankfurt School of Finance’s approach lives up to quality provision targets. Within the theme of *performativity*, which overall is the most widely covered one in the WR report, quality control features with an ambiguous message: on the one hand, the existing quality control incorporating evaluations of taught modules through student surveys is explicitly endorsed. The website also highlights such quality insurance measures in place. On the other hand, the WR report states that research performance has not achieved the ambitious standards the institution had formulated. The science council explicitly doubts if ‘considerations to implement individual salary bonuses according to performance criteria are suitable’. The website only refers to the strategic goal of increasing ‘total and high-level research output’. Furthermore, beyond research, the school ‘is determined to make a strong impact on international society’. Finally, this theme is also represented through a WR report recommendation to increase third-party funding of research. Hence, there is ample use of neo-liberal language of performativity (cf. chapter 3.1) in use.

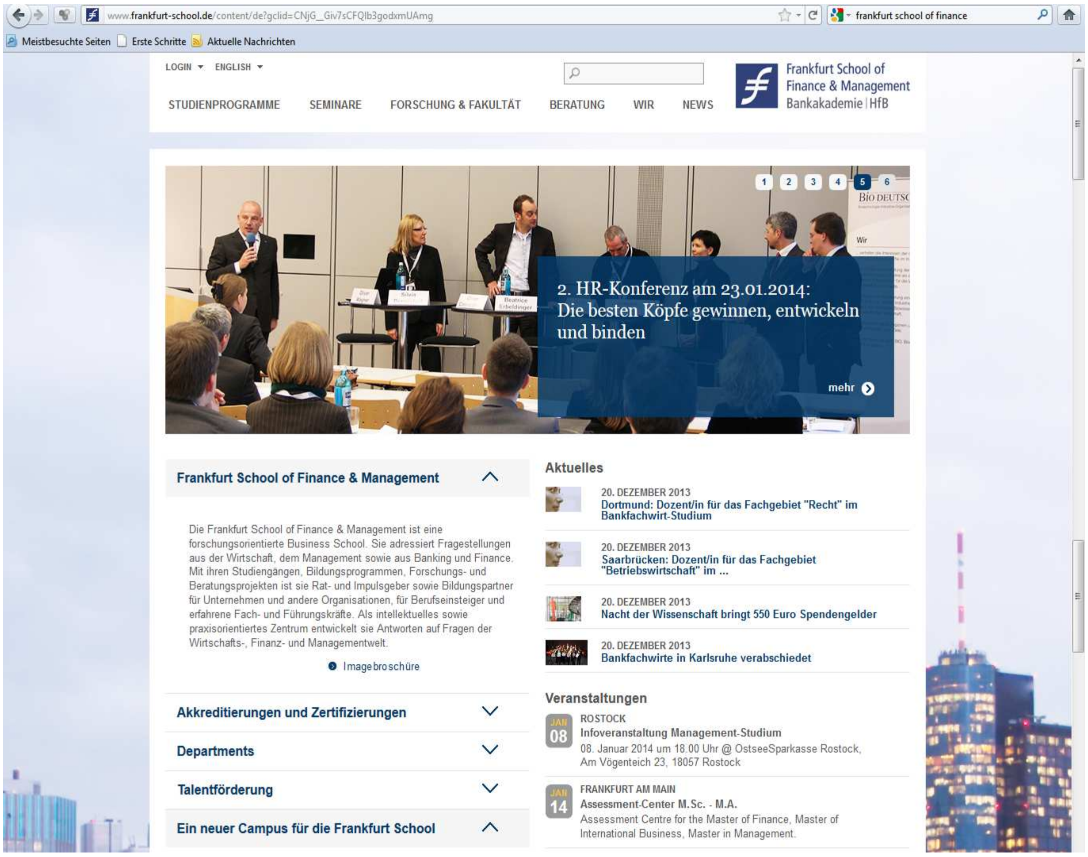
Unlike the website, the WR report also picks up extensively on *employability*-related aspects. Close co-operation with the business world, including endowed chairs, and high relevance are lauded, likewise the way in which Frankfurt School of Finance meets the needs of working students with various study programmes. However, there is criticism of the ‘too narrow understanding of business and economics sciences’.

The *Humboldtian ideal* is covered in the WR report in so far as the practices of Frankfurt School of Finance violate its principles in several respects: the institution plans ‘explicitly distinct professorship types (teaching, standard, and research professor)’, which contradicts unity of research and teaching. Furthermore, the report establishes that co-determination is structurally compromised and that the ‘unbundling of academic operations and ownership’ needs to be granted. There is only vague appreciation of research semesters the school offers to lecturers, referring to freedom of research. The school’s website does not relate to the Humboldtian ideal.

Whereas there are no findings related to the theme of *idealistic elements* in the WR report, the website claims that the institution acts ‘on a basis of trust, reliability and fairness’. Moreover, it pursues the education of ‘responsible experts and executives’. Almost equally scarce is the coverage of the theme of the *business school as business*. Both sources, the WR report and the website, point to the financial stability of Frankfurt School of Finance. The former document also highlights the importance of further education and industry trainings as a source of revenue. The latter document informs stakeholders of a ‘five-year financial plan’; thereby ironically reminding us of an instrument resembling communist-era planned economy (e.g. von Amerongen, 1974).

There is rich website imagery at Frankfurt School of Finance; the homepage is shown in Figure 11. Full-screen photos build the background over which text boxes and smaller images are placed to transmit subtopics. Overall, many photos displayed build two pillars: the first one consists of people, mostly shown in close-ups. There are either relaxed small group settings or individuals. Favourable statements on their experience with the institution are linked to the latter. The second pillar consists of buildings. *Corporate identity* is portrayed particularly through the featuring of campus architecture. Besides current buildings there are sketches of new campus buildings planned for the near future. They resemble modern corporate headquarter parks from the outside and latest-generation airport terminals – or arguably Fortune 500 corporate headquarters – from the inside. With these ambitious plans, Frankfurt School of Finance joins (albeit much larger) US business school counterparts in their trend towards becoming big players in the real estate sector (The Economist, 2014).

Figure 11: The homepage of Frankfurt School




*(Source: www.frankfurt-school.de, screenshot captured 20 December 2013)*

The theme of *student activity* is covered through seminar room or lecture scenes, notably showing mostly rather mature people wearing business attire so that a clear allusion to the prominent portfolio of industry trainings and further education is prevalent. The portrayed individuals and their business attire also represent *business enactment*. This theme is furthermore communicated via photos of the Frankfurt skyline. High-rise office buildings are iconic of the city of Frankfurt am Main and its banking scene and the school obviously does not waive the opportunity to employ this cliché in locating itself in the city of the finance industry they serve.

To illustrate how myth (cf. chapter 2.2) is constructed in the case of Frankfurt School of Finance, I have selected two exemplary photos from its website. They are featured in Figure 12. The first one shows a young man wearing glasses who seems concentrated on a point of attention somewhere in front of him. At the first level, in its context, it appears that a student is listening to a captivating lecture.

Figure 12: Selected photos of Frankfurt School website

*(Source: Frankfurt School website, retrieved 20 December 2013)*

A second level opens up once one notices the small logo on the spectacle frame. It represents an exclusive and expensive fashion brand preferred by a wealthy élite. Hence, the second level message is that an élite expresses their belonging to a preferred reference group. Its members play the game of financial success spurred through the knowledge or network gained at this place.

The second photo shows a computer-generated sketch of the above-mentioned new campus building complex. At the first level, it portrays a spacious, well-lit and multi-functional main hall with people roaming – in brief, an appealing forum of a business school. At the second level, it reinforces the growth message of the printed material analysed. A spectacular building is being designed which will accommodate a huge constituency of business students to enrol in the near future. In addition, this building matches the quest for large-scale real estate investments and the opulent display of (financial) power the banking sector broadcasts with its office towers in the city centre of Frankfurt am Main. Hence, this business school must also be powerful.

There is a syntagmatic relationship between the communicated vision of becoming one of the 20 leading business schools in Europe cited earlier in this chapter and these photos. Both images in particular complement the neo-liberal notion of 'return on investment into HE' (cf. chapter 3.1). It is also obvious that this institution moves comfortably in the realm of HE competition and fully embodies the 'business school as business' mantra. Ironically, it has become clear that the two namesakes of *Frankfurt School* with its Critical Theory heritage guiding this thesis and *Frankfurt School of Finance* as a case study of this thesis could hardly be further apart in their philosophy.

### 5.5 Intra-Case Analysis of Case # 5

The WR report on Karlshochschule International University, forming the fifth case study (cf. chapter 4.2), addresses the theme of *globalisation/internationalisation* with a positive evaluation of faculty members' international experience and of degree programmes taught in English. Co-operations with universities abroad are under way, and the report encourages the strengthening of this area, also considering that the name of this institution already makes a claim in that direction. Such aspirations are also highlighted on the website, along with the statement 'we see ourselves as an international institution with intercultural orientation'.

The WR accreditation document does not refer to *knowledge economy*. On the website, Karlshochschule points to their ideal of integrating trends into research and teaching. Furthermore, the institution 'aspires to a high degree of innovation' in its programmes. The integration of 'change and innovation' into the education provided plays a major role according to another statement.

Explicit coverage of the theme of *competition and market* is also rather scarce in both documents. It is remarkable that the WR report does not mention any aspects of profile building, positioning or branding. In contrast, the website highlights that the academic profile is 'coined by the epistemological interest in business and entrepreneurial activity'. Furthermore, the assumption that economic reality is constructed is formulated as constitutive of the school's identity. In the WR report, there is only acknowledgement that the school wants to enlarge its taught subject portfolio and that all current study programmes are accredited by an approved agency. The website of Karlshochschule also emphasises the accreditation awarded and, in addition, 'top results' achieved in national rankings. And the institution sees itself 'in competition for the best talents, ideas and tasks with other universities'.

*Performativity* and *employability* notions represent the largest coverage within the WR report. Referring to the former, the science council praises the 'long-term oriented incentive scheme' for professors to encourage research. Furthermore, quality assurance at Karlshochschule is 'amply regulated' in a lauded governance system. It is recommended that the school participate in acquisition rounds of third-party funding. The website points to a lecturers' ideal including the motivation 'to perform' and to 'transfer this stance onto the students'. Referring to *employability*, the WR report contains mixed messages: on the one hand, it approves of the addressing of market requirements through degree programmes tailored to meet the needs of booming industry sectors. On the other hand, considering the job market, it points to a 'just about acceptable' degree of specialisation of study programmes. Co-operations with the local chamber of commerce and businesses are lauded. The website complements these aspects. It emphasises that the institution feels 'obliged to be close to the market'. A focus on 'future-oriented industries and areas with a high need for academic specialisation' is also underlined. Karlshochschule is committed to becoming a 'marketplace' to bring together demand for HE and demand for qualified personnel.

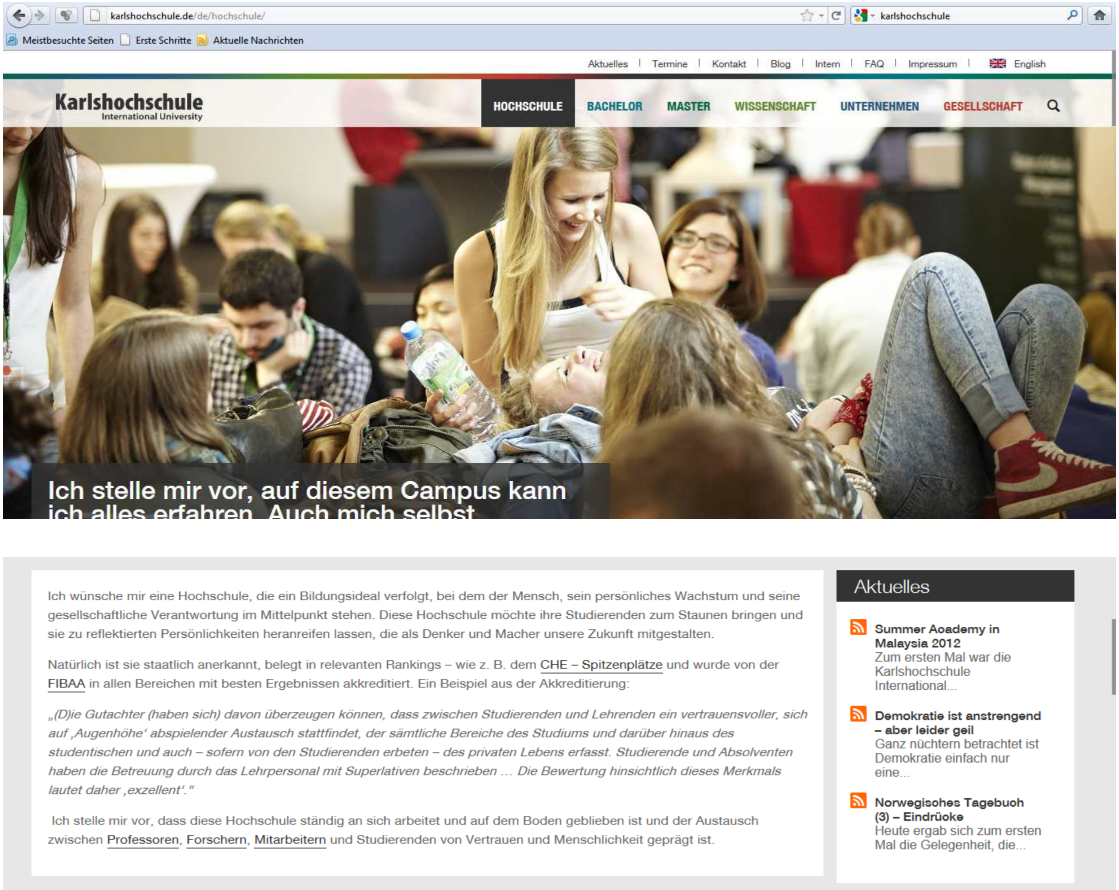
*Humboldtian ideals* are visible at Karlshochschule, according to the WR report, in so far as there is a commitment to granting academic freedom. The approach of establishing rules of a 'grassroots democracy', involving staff and students, is highlighted, and also the goal that students independently apply scientific methods. The website underlines the institution's commitment to the principles of academic self-administration and a 'participative co-operation of all participants', too. But the WR report, in contrast to the previous findings, also remarks that there is still too much influence of the owner, which could 'entail the endangering of the freedom of research and teaching'.

There is noteworthy and extensive coverage of *idealistic elements*. Particularly the website focuses largely on this theme. The creation of 'reflective personalities' is at the heart of Karlshochschule according to both the WR report and the website. The former document considers the efforts to promote social engagement of the students commendable. But it also concludes that the school does not yet sufficiently meet its claim to convey knowledge about ethically justified goals. The website quotes the student ideal of the institution as being 'capable of changing perspectives and of questioning its own respective conceptualisation of reality'. It furthermore explains that an education ideal placing 'the human being, his/her personal growth and his/her societal responsibility at the centre'. Many of the websites texts are written as expectations that (prospective) students might formulate. The message crystallises that young people studying at Karlshochschule will serve society in responsible ways and that they will develop themselves, something that is mainly enabled through reflective and change-embracing personalities.

The *business school as business* is reflected in the WR report through comments on the ('improved') financial situation, and in particular through the distinct service orientation of the institution. This aspect also is made clear on the school's website as the only contribution to this theme. The science council praises the good contact between teaching faculty and students and also comments on the high number of administration staff, which is justified to 'grant smooth study operations'.

Among the five case studies, Karlshochschule makes the most distinctive and impressive use of imagery on the website. Figure 13 shows its homepage.

Figure 13: The homepage of Karlshochschule




*(Source: www.karlshochschule.de, screenshot captured 20 December 2013)*

Full-screen photos build the entry to almost each sub-site or topic covered. Typically, there is a range of these relatively large photos alternating through an animated programmed display routine so that the first impression of viewers is more one of a cinema performance than a static gallery. There is ample use of colour variations, not only in terms of photos and occasional sketches on display, but also considering explanatory texts or at least headlines. Different study programmes or faculties are differentiated through different colours, too. *Corporate identity* through visuals is arguably a leitmotif of the institution. Constitutive of the atmosphere is apparently the interior architecture, with many open spaces, huge glass windows (instead of brick or concrete walls) and wooden decorations. Many of the photos show either light-flooded rooms or detailed design features. There are many allusions to atmosphere and emotion as enablers of an inspiring place to work and study.

Besides very few exceptions, the photos of this website show group settings and student interaction. There is vast material relating to the theme of *student activity*. There are dynamic discussion or workshop scenarios, but also individuals expressing contemplation. It is remarkable that almost playful workshop scenarios rather than lectures or business meeting scenes dominate. There is not a single photo of a traditional lecture assembly. Even in scenes set in lecture contexts, almost always students assume the role of teachers or moderators, certainly of active participants.

*Business enactment* can be interpreted in the case of a few photos either showing more mature speakers talking into microphones in front of a screen or wall featuring corporate logos, or displaying a meeting scene with middle-aged people wearing casual business style, and with laptops on a table. The interior of the school building resembles workspaces of ‘creative companies’ following a recent trend. “From training sessions to entire corporate culture setups, work is being reconfigured through play and, increasingly, work is represented as ‘play’” (Costea, Crump, & Holm, 2007: 153).

These notions of a playful work environment and reflective or contemplative activity also serve as myth-constituting elements on the website of Karlshochschule. Figure 14 displays two photos to apply Barthes’s semiotic system (cf. chapter 4.3) to this case.

Figure 14: Selected photos of Karlshochschule website


*(Source: Karlshochschule website, retrieved 20 December 2013)*

The first photo shows four young people sitting in a seminar room, looking at a pin board and a flipchart with written cards and notes on them. It is a scene of a typical student workshop. Together with the subheading (translated it reads ‘I imagine this *Hochschule* orientates itself towards real values’), it opens another meaning. It conveys the myth of a different kind of business school. The notes pinned onto the pin board, and also text on the flipchart, all handwritten in different colours, signal active and diverse contributions of students. The values pursued are not taught from a prescribed textbook and not lectured in a traditional teacher-centred setting; they are discovered, negotiated and reflected by self-motivated students.

The second photo shows a group of young people, casually dressed and also almost casually gathered. In the background, there is a middle-aged man gesturing and talking to the group. This is another student activity scene. The myth-constituting meaning once again revolves around a different philosophy at play at Karlshochschule. Here, the professor is coach or facilitator rather than lecturer imposing pre-defined knowledge on people in a lecture hall, and the sessions resemble creative meetings – encouraging students’ active involvement, possibly even providing a stage for discoveries and enthusiastic experimenting – rather than traditional lectures. Hence, both photos predominantly reinforce the idealistic themes of the documents analysed above and add a mythical dimension to them. The school is constructed as a do-it-yourself learning locale when it comes to capturing concepts of management from various perspectives. And, probably most important, it appears to be a democratic venue.

### 5.6 Cross-Case Analysis

Following the intra-case analyses, this chapter compiles and contrasts the major findings generated across the five case study business schools considered in this thesis. It is apparent that there are common threads that have emerged from the individual cases. And it is also clear that there are various particularities shining through the material analysed of the institutions studied. Furthermore, there are distinct differences in terms of prevalence and priorities of themes and issues across the sources analysed; WR accreditation reports versus business school websites. Therefore, this cross-case analysis unfolds in two stages: firstly, like the previous chapters, there is consideration of the contents revealed along the themes established for this research (cf. chapter 4.3), whereby the different provenance of the content is reflected: themes 1-8 relate to text materials, encompassing both accreditation report and website contents. Themes 9-11 only refer to website imagery. Secondly, there is consideration of cross-material content patterns that have emerged so that significant parallels and also remarkable differences between the sources of material employed as well as between the institutions studied are revealed and subjected to a discussion.

Theme 1, *globalisation/internationalisation*, is overall covered less extensively than expected, considering the importance of globalisation myths in the neo-liberal era (cf. chapter 2.5) and the strong focus on the competitiveness of nations (cf. chapter 2.7), which is also reflected within the realm of HE policy within the EU (cf. chapter 3.5). However, there are several remarkable findings in this area. There are various – and also varying – comments about the international orientation of the business schools studied. The only case featuring no explicit references to this theme is Alanus. Most explicit coverage can be noted for the cases explicitly following an Anglo-Saxon model of HE provision: EBS and Frankfurt School of Finance. Whereas the former focuses on an international network and international faculty, thereby emphasising a teaching-oriented perspective, the latter also sees reputable research as a driver of internationalisation, albeit the science council remarks that this goal has not been sufficiently reached yet. ESMT, the business school founded by large corporations, also shows significant orientation towards international outreach and profile building, particularly with the explicit aim of becoming a leading international business school. Thereby, these three institutions reflect a widely observed HE development that internationalisation moves to the centre of institutional strategies (Ennew, 2012). Also Karlshochschule sees itself as an international business school, although the profile and outreach in this regard are still much weaker than in the other three cases. It is clear that – besides the postgraduate-only business school of ESMT – the two smallest schools in terms of student numbers so far have expressed the least interest in or have achieved the least level of internationalisation. Thus, size may play an important role, as a critical substance may have to be reached first to realistically act as an international player.

Theme 2, *knowledge economy*, is reflected only in few explicit statements, but the previous five chapters have shown its prevalence in all business school cases studied. And the findings come in different guises: at Alanus, the innovative approach to studying business, based on the integration of arts and philosophy, is highlighted. The school also points out its aim to foster creativity in problem solving and in understanding the business world. Innovation also plays a role in Karlshochschule's self-portrait, in connection with a commitment to change management competency provision. These two institutions in this regard go beyond neo-liberal standard notions of knowledge economy (cf. chapters 2.4 and 3.1), where innovation is limited to inventing new products or services that can be commodified, and not to different approaches to the business world – let alone to the neo-liberal world order under way (cf. chapter 2.1). The other three cases feature knowledge economy allusions in more traditional ways. Particularly commitment to knowledge dissemination and transfer and to research and teaching with practical relevance dominate. In the case of ESMT, there is the most explicit commitment in this regard, including the creed to support and foster economic growth and the 'German economic success factors'.

Theme 3, *competition and market*, is a central area of findings across all five cases. The WR report assesses for all cases in how far they have established a distinct profile or positioning. Distinct profiles are diagnosed for Alanus and Frankfurt School of Finance. In the former case it is based on its unique approach to business education rooted in arts and philosophy, and in the latter case it is rooted in its strong specialisation in the finance and banking subject area. With regard to ESMT, a very promising and realistic claim to reach a top position in the international business school scene is acknowledged. Also EBS is seen in a strong position, albeit for a different reason: mainly the wide range of degrees offered is quoted here, and also the forerunner role of this school in terms of establishing Anglo-Saxon style HE in Germany. The science council sees only Karlshochschule as an institution with a lack of profile. On the schools' websites there is also ample coverage of this theme. Whereas Alanus and Karlshochschule inform their constituencies about the pursued unique approaches and epistemologies in their teaching or even in their very self-conceptualisation, the other three business schools prominently place their claims or visions to be or become leading business schools in Germany or even internationally. Besides Alanus, all case study institutions explicitly mention the accreditation(s) they hold and also the favourable positions in various rankings so that it can be assumed that is understood as a message of guaranteed quality as explained in chapter 3.4.

Theme 4, *performativity*, also largely rests on quality notions. The WR reports especially focus on the central meaning of quality control. In addition, there is strong consideration of output or measurable variables of the institutions' performance. The reports cover this theme much more than the website of any of the case study business schools. First of all, there are explicit assessments in how far adequate quality assurance measures are in place. In the case of Alanus the alleged lack of performance-oriented research schemes and a lack of research output are not well received by the science council. But there is also a partly contradictory message as to what is praised, as in the case of Frankfurt School of Finance, a research performance appraisal system based on salary bonuses is criticised as doubtful in terms of effectiveness (but notably not in terms of its goal). For all other cases, the WR reports laud in particular quality control and quality assurance systems in place. In particular, teaching evaluation schemes, incorporating if not solely based on student opinions are underlined as adequate and welcome. ESMT is the only institution with A or A+ journal publications by its faculty members, and that gets significant praise by the science council. On the websites, this theme is sparsely covered, with two exceptions: EBS emphasise their 'academic excellence' and incentive systems for lecturers performing in the research realm, and Alanus do not make any related claim.

Theme 5, *employability,* is also reflected in all five cases. But there is surprisingly little text on employment opportunities directly attributable to the education at the respective private business school or at least on dedicated career services provided. The latter is, in explicit terms, only acknowledged for the case of EBS where the science council considers this area outstanding. In the other cases there are instead just vague references to close connections with the business world in general or with specific companies in particular. The latter applies a bit more explicitly to Alanus, where the benefactors’ role in supporting the institution is emphasised in the WR report. But on the website, this school only points to practical experience valued in their programmes. ESMT emphasises the relationship building or networking opportunities at their institution. Karlshochschule is the only case for which the level of specialisation of degree programmes is explicitly raised: it is considered just acceptable by the science council and pointed out as a student opportunity to focus on future-oriented industries by the institution.

Theme 6, *Humboldtian ideal*, influences institutional accreditation, as private business schools need to establish structures separating ownership from academic operations. Hence, the famous principle of academic freedom features at least formally as a backbone of HE institutions. Therefore, WR reports refer in all cases to the degree to which these requirements are met. Violations (albeit not severe enough to prevent full accreditation) are particularly raised in the case of Frankfurt School of Finance, where the owner’s influence is still too high. In almost each of the case studies the WR report points to potential improvements in the area of academic autonomy. The report on Karlshochschule praises the grassroots democracy approach, making it the only institution included in this study to at least partly refer to the principle of freedom of learning, which complements freedom of research and teaching according to Humboldt (cf. chapter 3.6). For the business schools, academic autonomy seems remarkably unimportant. Their websites do not address any related issues, with one exception: Alanus mentions commitment to humanist education, which certainly is not exclusively

Humboldtian but related to it and important for the concept of *Bildung* (cf. chapter 3.6). In so far it can also be interpreted as an idealistic element.

Theme 7, *idealism*, segregates the cases. There is significant coverage for Alanus and Karlshochschule with precise concepts elaborated and only vague coverage for the other three cases. The former two schools are committed to the education of self-reflective personalities, fostering a critical stance to develop abilities of questioning assumptions commonly taken for granted. Furthermore, they point to broadening horizons, also through an integrated artistic and philosophical spirit (Alanus), and through the changing of perspectives (Karlshochschule). EBS and Frankfurt School of Finance just use vague terms such as 'responsibly acting leaders', 'trust' or 'reliability'. ESMT sends a mixed message: on the one hand, the self-conceptualisation of the school seems extremely business-driven and devoted to the corporate world; on the other hand the institution mentions the intention to question the commonplace economic paradigm of profit maximisation at the expense of society.

Theme 8, *business school as business*, is hardly covered. It is noticeable that the websites avoid this topic altogether – or, arguably, the schools act so decisively and naturally as businesses that there is just no need to mention related issues. The WR reports also make just a few comments, albeit important ones: in the cases of EBS, ESMT and Frankfurt School of Finance they acknowledge stable and healthy financial situations. It is noteworthy that this is not established for the two smaller institutions (apart from the graduate-only ESMT model, which however is well financed through its corporate and business association founders): Alanus and Karlshochschule. Referring to EBS and Karlshochschule, they also explicitly point to the service orientation of the institutions. Beyond the formal setup as for-profit ventures applicable for all five of the business schools considered in this thesis, the institutions of ESMT and Frankfurt School of Finance very consequently display their embedding in the business world. They absorb (and are absorbed by) the corporate scene, which also becomes apparent within the theme of corporate identity illuminated further in the following paragraph.

The first of the three themes exclusively related to website imagery is theme 9, *corporate identity*. Its presence is overwhelming on all five websites considered in this study. Obviously, all of the institutions examined for this study employ their websites to create visual representations of their identity. Such move is part of the process often described as corporate branding; a phenomenon that more recently has gained momentum also among universities (e.g. Ng, 2014). All of the five business schools show logos on their homepage, and distinctive logos are a frequent form of corporate sign values. Hence, the cases studied all engage in the realm of branding semiotics (Goldman & Papson, 2006). The brand creation or identity expression attempts of the five business schools have in common that architecture and design on campus plays a crucial role in conveying atmosphere and emotion. However, there are remarkably different accentuations across the cases.

Alanus and Karlshochschule use displays of modern, well-lit and unusual architecture, whereby the former case emphasises the buildings and sculptures outside, hence exterior design, and the latter case emphasises interior design of classrooms and particularly of common spaces. EBS and ESMT feature historic buildings on and next to their respective campuses, apparently playing with references to tradition, power and Ivy-league circles, which underlines the Anglo-Saxon role model they pursue. The latter was also explicitly acknowledged for Frankfurt School of Finance. This school shows substantial growth plans on computerised sketches of a new campus complex, and it also plays with the skyline of the finance and banking district city of Frankfurt am Main. Furthermore, people play important roles on the websites, and that leads to the last two themes we can understand as subordinated to corporate identity in so far as they seem to support the branding (or identity construction) efforts.

Theme 10, *student activity*, reveals target and reference groups and also points to different philosophies of the owners or operators of the institutions. Alanus and Karlshochschule show predominantly group photos, and situations of learning or studying in class, at the library or in more open workshop settings. ESMT and Frankfurt School of Finance feature business people and students wearing business attire. Certainly that can be explained (at least in part) with the target groups including industry professionals seeking further education and a post-graduate constituency. Least prominent in this category is EBS, but even on their website there are a few group scenes or individuals on campus. All photos with individuals portray semiotic systems of facial expressions and body postures associated with positive emotive meanings (Feng & O'Halloran, 2012) such as happiness, engagement and curiosity.

Theme 11, *business enactment*, is also closely linked to the two previous two ones. Again, it is striking that Alanus and Karlshochschule show no or very little effort in staging business scenarios on their websites; the latter case just with more or less casual or playful connotations. EBS presents a few meeting scenes and the London skyline as an iconic business location. Frankfurt School of Finance uses the Frankfurt skyline, as mentioned above, and also business people and scenes in various settings. And the website of ESMT is largely business-scene driven. The two latter institutions use primarily visual portraits of an alleged business élite forming a significant way of communicating messages of leadership (Davison, 2010).

The intra-case analyses have shown that all institutions convey myths through their website imagery. Each case points to a different direction in detail. Nevertheless, there are common threads: two business schools portray themselves as powerhouses; ESMT through allusions to its location in the heart of Berlin and agenda-setting business roundtables, and Frankfurt School of Finance emphasising ambitious growth close to the city centre representing the continental European finance sector. With such corporate-oriented messages, these two institutions also communicate proximity to Anglo-Saxon élite university role models. EBS is the third business school pursuing this thread of self-conceptualisation, based on mythical borrowings from Ivy League traditions and architecture.

Contrasting these myths, Alanus and Karlshochschule transmit mythical messages of different business education provision. The former institution grounds it on an innovative connection of arts, philosophy and business studies visibly supported by campus architecture with anthroposophical borrowings. The latter institution bases it on playful interior architecture and eased group settings.

Hence, a closer look at the findings along the themes reveals common threads across the cases, but also frictions and inconsistent messages; arguably warring perspectives in the language of CMS or post-structuralism (Adler et al., 2007). One reason for that is the need to serve the largely contradictory goals of obtaining legitimation (i.e. WR accreditation) and of being successful in the market (i.e. to generate enrolments). Another reason roots within the latter goal: to build a corporate identity that enables success and that credibly mirrors its underlying philosophy, the institution in question may have to emphasise aspects that are more, less, or not at all in line with aspects the accreditation body demands or emphasises. The coverage of (sub-) themes, for example incentive schemes to promote 'excellent research' in the case of EBS or business enactment in the case of ESMT, is as revealing as their absence, such as the omission of business enactment in the case of Alanus; always largely depending on the business school's intended positioning vis-à-vis their constituencies. Tensions arise predominantly in areas the WR pointed out as weaknesses of the institution or where the business school's philosophy does not harmonise with measures prescribed under neo-liberal policies.

It should be acknowledged though, that the difference between the two types of material analysed already accounts for some of the inconsistent notions. Besides different emphases in terms of content, the following patterns emerged: the WR accreditation reports as official certification or evaluation of legitimacy draw essentially on technical language and bureaucratic terminology to inform the official sphere, whereas the websites mainly deploy marketing-driven language and visual communication addressing target groups among the broader public.

To summarise the findings and to facilitate further discussion, the themes derived for analysis are consolidated as follows: the overarching common theme, subordinating all other aspects discovered, is the principle of *competition and market* as major principle of neo-liberal ideology in general (cf. chapter 2.7) and of HE under neo-liberal paradigms (cf. chapter 3.1) in particular. The WR reports offer manifold considerations of how the institutions fare in comparison to other schools. And the websites address target groups (see above) in full awareness of competition among HE institutions.

Below this overarching theme, two core themes emerge from the different foci: according to the analyses, the WR reports largely concentrate on issues related to *performativity*. They assess how the business schools perform in relation to defined benchmarks influenced by neo-liberal HE policy (cf. chapters 3.5 and 3.6). Sub-themes are *knowledge economy*, as knowledge dissemination and transfer to the business world came through as a major requirement of well-performing HE institutions. By the same token, *employability* features here, expressed through close ties to the business world promising swift graduate absorption. Even the *Humboldtian ideal* fits into this theme in so far as the reports assess the structural enabling of academic freedom.

The websites in turn strongly focus on reaching a target audience, mainly composed of prospective students; hence *consumer orientation* as a core theme. To reach the target audience (and other stakeholders), all five cases foster *corporate identity*, in some cases incorporating *idealism* in various guises. The other coded sub-themes already are exclusively associated with the websites. Table 17 presents these consolidated themes. Despite overlaps in coverage and interpretable theme fringes, this consolidation will facilitate the subsequent analysis and discussion of major implications.

Table 17: Consolidated analysis themes

| **Competition and market** | |
|---|---|
| Core theme derived from WR reports:<br>**Performativity**<br><br>*Sub-themes*<br>Knowledge economy<br>Employability<br>Humboldtian ideal | Core theme derived from websites:<br>**Consumer orientation**<br><br>*Sub-themes*<br>Corporate identity<br>Idealism<br>Student activity<br>Business enactment |

*(Own illustration)*

"By now, market logic is firmly embedded in the rhetoric and discourse about business education" (Trank & Rynes, 2003: 202). This assertion can be confirmed for all of the business school cases studied in this thesis. They apparently act knowingly as participants of a competitive market and subject themselves to the associated rules. Yet, it has become apparent as well that some of the institutions considered within this research show a higher degree of neo-liberal ideology permeation than others.

In terms of the core theme that emerged for the WR reports analysed, *performativity*, particularly those schools orientated towards Anglo-Saxon role models, which are strongly associated with the neo-liberal conceptualisation of HE in general and the Bologna implementation in particular (e.g. Lenzen, 2014), leave more traces of influence than the others. EBS, ESMT and Frankfurt School of Finance emphasise and receive most ample and explicit praise for their performance and output orientation, in research and teaching. The value of publications is established via performance proxies such as the number of publications and especially the rating (such as A/A+) or ranking of journals featuring these publications. Hence, these institutions participate (and aspire even more to it) in the international business school nuisance of mass-producing 'formulaic research' (Alvesson & Gabriel, 2013) hailed as successful output as long as the name of the journal printing it is on the right list, irrespective of meaningful contributions to the scientific community or to the business world.

However, such enactment of 'rigour' (cf. chapter 3.3) seems to contradict the notion that these business schools cater primarily to the needs of the big business world and to students who want to succeed in it. Hence, the institutions address the latter target audience with messages assuring their devotion to the business world. There is an explicit credo of Frankfurt School of Finance: 'everything we do is directly relevant to practical issues'. This key statement documents the school's commitment to a performative and utilitarian conceptualisation of business education. No other case study institution is that frank about their raison d'être. All three 'Anglo-Saxon' cases show strong prevalence of knowledge economy and employability notions of performativity. Their close ties to the business world and corporate networks sending students, absorbing graduates and inspiring degree programme specialisations as well as 'relevant' contents of teaching are defining characteristics of business education provision in the neo-liberal era (cf. chapter 3.1). These three institutions confirm that "knowledge codified by business schools is increasingly becoming commodified, performance related, and factual" (Patriotta & Starkey, 2008: 326).

The other two cases of Alanus and Karlshochschule display less neo-liberal influence in the realm of *performativity*. They neither engage in high-profile publishing activity nor have the same level of (big) business network integration. They both emphasise more idealistic principles of business education, mainly based on broadened horizons and change of perspectives. Alanus in particular, with its unique combination of arts, philosophy and business provision, is in line with the credo that "studies within the humanities are indispensable for the rational and informed questioning of people's judgements, and indeed of their actions in general" (Hendry, 2006: 268).

These approaches block neo-liberal principles at the level of the institutions' values, which differ from the mainstream according to the philosophy of the founders. It goes beyond the feasibility of this study to assess in how far institutions' practice actually resists (or intends to do so) neo-liberal value enactment, but there seems to be more leeway to that end. Yet, both business schools still show neo-liberal permeation due to submission to quality control enforcement, which is a backbone of performativity and in particular of managerialism (cf. chapter 3.1). All institutions considered in this study, the three 'Anglo-Saxon' ones and the two 'Idealists' have ample coverage of this area as explored earlier. Vast exercises of quality assessment, largely based on evaluations regularly conducted and integrating the verdict of students and graduates, draw all five business schools into neo-liberal HE logic. However, it remains open whether such exercises are carried out voluntarily or just to conform to accreditation requirements.

All five case study business schools display strong *consumer orientation* with their websites. They use the constructive potential of images in the business world (Preston & Young, 2000), understanding that visual images are "heavyweight signs in business" (Davison, 2010: 165). Thereby they confirm the notion of business schools as businesses; operating within the service sector, a key characteristic of which is the intangibility of its offerings (e.g. Fitzsimmons & Fitzsimmons, 2013). Even more important therefore becomes the notion of image. In support of the latter, the use of visual material conveys corporate identity through aesthetic imagery throughout all web pages designed for a capturing first impression (Tuch, Presslaber, Stöcklin, Opwis, & Bargas-Avila, 2012). "A complex alchemy of image management takes place, as […] firms seek to manage impressions about themselves” (Davison, 2010: 165). Hence, all five institutions show symptoms of ‘expressive organisations’ (Schultz, Hatch, & Larsen, 2000) eager to communicate their identity to the outside world, which in these cases consists in particular of prospective student constituencies. It is just different which image, corporate identity or core message exactly they convey.

These messages largely rely on myth. With their myths, ESMT and Frankfurt School of Finance focus on a visual narrative of the modern business school playing a powerful role as identity workplace for a global élite (Khurana & Snook, 2011). To some degree, EBS joins this type of effort, too, albeit with a message referring not to the modern business school, but rather to a traditional approach to HE for the élite. But parallels do not form strictly along the ‘Anglo-Saxon’ versus ‘Idealist’ divide. Alanus and Frankfurt School both use imagery with architecture of (new) campus buildings largely relying on glass. The latter is identified as signature building material of our ‘image-conscious times’, in which management and even management schools turn to the fantastic, the magical and the alluring (Gabriel, 2005). And in terms of interior building design, Karlshochschule also moves in this direction.

Overall, the websites analysed confirm an understanding that students view the act of learning (or of studying business) as a commercial transaction (Naidoo et al., 2011). The students are confronted with a mythically loaded broadcasting of this transaction’s value. However, there is no uniform target group, and despite the overall consumerist attitude of the courted prospective students (cf. chapter 3.2) the latter come to campus with diffuse preferences and orientations as well as educational and non-educational desires (Saunders, 2014). On the one hand, studies conducted over two decades in Europe revealed that there has been a value change towards post-materialism and, among other consequences, the rise of green movements (Abramson & Inglehart, 1995). On the other hand, the more recently intensifying and all-pervasive dominance of neo-liberal ideology (cf. chapter 2.1) submits individuals to the strong and mythical paradigm of economic rationality and competitive pressures (cf. chapter 2.6), driving students to seek utilitarian provision within the HE system and universities to assume that a student’s primary identity is that of a customer (Saunders, 2014).

Against this backdrop of frayed-out student orientations, the five business schools try to attract the student consumer with innovative degree programmes, specialisation areas promising favourable job prospects, and/or with alternative business education provision. They combine partly contradictive messages of utilitarianism and honourable or feel-good values. The three 'Anglo-Saxon' institutions vaguely refer to responsibility of leaders, and ESMT also to sustainability. However, it remains unclear if they acknowledge that 'moving forward with the concept of responsible leadership' (Waldman, 2011) could advance the change urgently needed in light of unviable corporate practices (cf. chapter 1.1), or if they just participate in 'aspirational talk' on corporate social responsibility currently en vogue, but rarely inducing change in corporate action (Christensen, Morsing, & Tyssen, 2013). Even the images portraying diversity at ESMT and Frankfurt School of Finance reflect 'complicity with conservatism' rather than allegiance to social equality (Gorski, 2006).

The two 'Idealists' present interpretations of the business school as heterotopic space of experimentation and invention (Beyes & Michels, 2011); Karlshochschule through its playful environment. On the surface, this is an alternative approach to HE. And yet, it is fatefully linked to neo-liberal managerialism (cf. chapter 3.1) unfolding in consumerist late modernity (cf. chapter 2.4). In this context "highly managed play settings make corporations resemble frenetic Dionysiac machines in which the Narcissistic modern self seeks an utopia of perpetual fun" (Costea et al., 2007: 153). In such fun-driven settings, self-affirmation seamlessly turns into self-exploitation: unperceived, all personal resources are mobilised for productivity instead of the discovery of values.

> "Overall, business schools seem to converge toward a global model of management education that produces commodified, easy-to-transfer, universal knowledge and often neglects the intricacies of practice, the role of contexts, and the critical side of management" (Patriotta & Starkey, 2008: 323).

This generalised suspicion about the direction of business schools can be confirmed for the five private business schools in Germany treated within this thesis, albeit with differentiated appearances as well as presumably varying levels of voluntariness. Both core themes of performativity and consumer orientation represent strong forces, which effectively discipline institutions in the design, provision and communication of their proposition. But they still leave room for nuances of exegesis of the underlying principles and of differing philosophies. In the realm of performativity, convergence is mainly achieved through quality assessment (Engwall, 2007). To this effect, WR accreditation prescribes certain measures and their documentation. Institutions have to enact neo-liberal principles achieved through managerial control (cf. chapter 3.1), and if they do not perform sufficiently (such as Alanus*,* according to the WR report) they trigger reprimand ultimately threatening credibility vis-à-vis constituencies.

Due to consequent consumer orientation, the institutions present themselves more as 'business' than as 'school' (Starkey & Tiratsoo, 2007). Varying the characteristics of 'psychotic' universities quoted in chapter 3.1, an almost manic fixation on the 'magic of marketing' with a focus on corporate identity communication is a suitable diagnosis for all of the five business schools studied. Grandiosity (cf. chapter 3.1) is indeed triumphing through the attempts to give them a "well-polished and status-enhancing image" (Alvesson, 2013: 8). Those images, myth-supported and aesthetically staged, are certainly different. That points to the paradox that neo-liberal paradigms of privatisation enable alternative business school models, including idealistic ones that public institutions would not pursue in the first place, but that forces of convergence and economic reality actually limit these alternative efforts – the two 'Idealists' of this study are the smallest institutions, and their long-term financial viability seems most vulnerable. Ultimately, there is the dilemma that organisations have to follow the ideology and themes of the prevailing discourse or paradigms (Kallio, 2007).

The analyses of the previous chapters revealed that there are manifold traceable neo-liberal influences ideologically permeating private business schools in Germany. They have also shown that there are several other partly idealistic-progressive or more traditional principles, influencing the self-conceptualisation of such institutions. There are various levels and different degrees of these influences, which will be illuminated further and also evaluated in the following discussion. To that end, chapter 5.7 will move beyond the case-related findings, suggesting that larger issues are at stake in the context of neo-liberal influence on HE.

## 5.7 Discussion

In the following, major implications of the two core themes are considered, starting with *performativity*. In modernist theories, the organisational environment is understood to be an entity influencing organisations through the provision of resources, but also through the imposition of constraints and demands of adaptation (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006). Managerialism enforced through policymakers focused on performative aspects of HE represents such demand. As discussed above, a major symptom of performativity is the focus on quality control and assurance. It is a highly disturbing facet that the seemingly positive concept of quality acts as a self-referential myth (cf. chapter 2.2) reinforcing neo-liberal reign in the field of HE. Who does not want quality business school provision? However, the sovereignty to define quality, the criteria to assess it and the measures to enforce it are beyond the control of the affected stakeholders. "The master narrative of the knowledge economy combines with neoliberal templates to lay down the criteria for what is meant by high quality and relevant higher education" (Naidoo, 2010: 79). The coercive accountability regime outlined in chapter 3.1, enforced in the context of private business schools in Germany through the accreditation practice in place, forces business schools to focus on the production of employable graduates and the dissemination of knowledge defined as desirable in the 'globalised' and 'competitive' economy at large and the employment market in particular (cf. chapters 2.5 and 3.1).

This leads to the specialisation but also mostly trivialisation of knowledge, which goes hand in hand with narrowly defined skills accommodating business world preferences (e.g. Trank & Rynes, 2003). Late modernity (cf. chapter 2.4) "is characterised by the compartmentalisation of knowledge and the proliferation of arcane and inaccessible language games that are available only to initiated experts" (Zyglidopoulos & Fleming, 2011: 698). In the context of business schools, such language games are played according to the rules of neo-liberalism and its influence on HE policy. They become visible in terminology related to concepts of accreditation, ranking, evaluation, and output orientation. And they are (at least formally expected to be) enforced by bureaucratic regimes installed by the business schools.

Observers of the HE scene at large point to a decline of the authority of science. An optimistic account published a decade ago sees the potential of new knowledge spaces opening outside traditional academia and even that "the business school has the potential to become one of these new knowledge spaces" (Starkey et al., 2004: 1527); a new *agora* as place of mingling science, society, politics and the market. Undoubtedly, the private business schools in Germany considered for this thesis are institutions far outside traditional academia. And the two institutions I have labelled as 'Idealists' show some potential for functions resembling the agora analogy, at least in so far as they commit to broader perspectives of society through integration of liberal arts and philosophy or to grass roots democratic structures and personal reflection, respectively. But it has become obvious as well that the leeway for these alternative approaches is confined to a niche due to limited viability of their 'business model' – I use this term on purpose here to acknowledge that these institutions are businesses as much as educational venues – and due to accreditation convergence pressures. And it has also become obvious that the institutions I labelled 'Anglo-Saxon' are far away from even considering agora functions as understood above.

There are wider implications for society if business schools subjugate to performativity pressures (or even pursue performative HE as a proposition of their choosing). First of all it should be acknowledged that HE in the past was not free from performative considerations, as the myth of the Humboldtian ideal has revealed (cf. chapter 3.6). And knowledge provision for careers also has existed earlier. "Historically, of course, universities have been concerned with preparing students for careers and with providing credentials. However, this has been balanced with ideals drawn from the positive offerings of a liberal education" (Patriotta & Starkey, 2008: 324). It is fundamentally problematic that on the one hand, neo-liberal policy patterns suppress such positive offerings, and that on the other hand (apart from notable exceptions) private business schools do not even honour them. Considering that business schools claim and are expected to educate future business experts and even managers, and also considering that managers would greatly benefit from an education grounded in the humanities (Hendry, 2006), an obvious mismatch is currently propelled.

Maak and Pless (2009) advocate the idea that business leaders should act as agents of world benefit, at least taking an active co-responsibility in generating solutions to problems and thereby accept their role as citizens of the world. They point out that

> "the least we can expect from business leaders is that they recognize their *co-responsibility* for addressing *some* of the world's most pressing problems; not as one-dimensional agents of shareholder interests, but as active and reflective citizens of the world who happen to be managers and leaders in a corporation" (Maak & Pless, 2009: 539).

The performative business school does not promise to deliver management education for such a purpose. Even more frightening is the notion of ethics neglect to the point that we may have to consider that the performative business education currently practised (wilfully or unconsciously) engages in a betrayal of society. Pursuing a similar line of thought, Munir (2011: 114) deduces that "continuing to act as a cheerleader for big business" is not appropriate any longer. Nor is continuing to act as an agent of neo-liberal systems of performative HE, whose

> "economic conceptions of the role of education are seriously undermining our society's considerable achievements and need to be very vigorously challenged. Education is […] about the personal growth and development of individual human beings, and about the development of the ability to make sophisticated judgements of people and circumstances. Such judgements can never be reduced to calculation and form an essential part not only of leadership and governance but also of the social and political processes by which people are elected or otherwise appointed to leadership roles" (Hendry, 2006: 268).

The development of institutional ethos consistent with responsibility (Lozano, 2012) is essential. In the neo-liberal era "regulation always lags behind novel events, so that often it is only our ethics that can save us" (Donaldson, 2012: 5). Hence, it is easy to agree that "what is required is an increased ethical responsibility by individuals" (Amable, 2011: 12) to strengthen society. This cannot be achieved the neo-liberal way

> "heedlessly discarding skills that are needed to keep democracies alive. If this trend continues, nations all over the world will soon be producing generations of useful machines, rather than complete citizens who can think for themselves, criticize tradition, and understand the significance of another person's sufferings and achievements. The future of the world's democracies hangs in the balance" (Nussbaum, 2010: 1).

In the following, implications of the second identified core theme of *consumer orientation* are elaborated. From the perspective of business schools, tremendous marketing efforts are required to create a "flow of calculated commercial images that promise an aura of mystery, sensuality, and authentic difference" (Thompson, 2006: 352) convincing students to enrol. The notion of the student as consumer has been driving much change at universities and helped improve some aspects of the student experience (McCulloch, 2009). A favourable version of the latter is certainly an essential promise of private business schools in Germany competing with tuition-free public institutions and among each other.

There is a significant difference between not being oblivious to market considerations, including the interests of students in consumer roles, and allowing these factors to overwhelm the aspirations of HE institutions (Gardner, 2005). The five cases studied raise the suspicion that the latter development is strongly under way. However, in the interest of society as well as individuals, education should prepare for citizenship, employment and meaningful lives (Nussbaum, 2010) instead of just providing a favourable experience of consumption. That end requires a range of diversified talents. Beyond teaching the undoubtedly important traditional professional skills, HE institutions need to provide a fertile ground for the development of these talents. According to Brooks (2011), who pleas to overcome the dominant over-simplistic view of human nature separating reason from passion, they include:

- *Attunement*: the ability to enter other minds and learn what they have to offer
- *Equipoise*: the ability to serenely monitor the movements of one's own mind and correct for biases and shortcomings
- *Metis*: the ability to see patterns in the world and derive a gist from complex situations
- *Sympathy*: the ability to fall into a rhythm with those around you and thrive in groups

None of these are achievable with predominantly utilitarian-consumerist approaches to HE. Instead, the sociolinguistic and conceptual transformation from student to consumer reinforces already alarming levels of narcissism prevalent among business students (e.g. Westerman et al., 2011). That is alarming, considering the harm narcissistic (and otherwise pathologically misguided) people and ultimately organisations keep causing (e.g. Bakan, 2005; Sievers, 2012). And, at least with reference to the USA, research indicates that students of private business schools have a higher narcissistic personality inventory level than their counterparts at public institutions (Traiser & Eighmy, 2011). Similar findings are likely for Germany, particularly because of the tuition fee difference between private and public HE in that country (cf. chapter 3.6): the above-quoted study ascribed the difference in narcissism levels mainly to more affluent parents of private business school students who have always fulfilled their children's material desires.

Business schools, in line with universities in general, are facing a more and more demanding constituency (cf. chapter 3.2). Especially new undergraduate students' expectations of HE institutions are diverse and partly unrealistic (Voss, Gruber, & Szmigin, 2007). The alignment with student consumerism fostered at private business schools is likely to reinforce such unrealistic expectations. Even the implicit promise to fulfil many of the latter, albeit inevitably turning out futile in many cases, not only puts pressure on the institutions with strained resources and ill-serves society at large. It also ultimately betrays the interests of students who only at the surface benefit from being courted as paying customers with choices. Due to information asymmetry (cf. chapter 3.2) and also due to pressures through the consequent 'rationalised' neo-liberal economisation of life (cf. chapter 2.6 and 2.7), diffuse fears of failure on the job market drive much of the student-consumer behaviour. Sooner or later, clashes of student-consumers with the neo-liberal reality of the 'job market' are unavoidable.

Certainly, the millennial generation has reinforced changes within the HE sector with its search for meaning (cf. chapter 3.2). There are young people who see that "giving students skills in applying current commodified knowledge is like giving them a fish, whereas giving them professional education is like teaching them how to fish" (Trank & Rynes, 2003: 194). There are even encouraging examples of alert student initiatives demanding pluralist economic education (e.g. ISIPE, 2014). However, it is challenging for graduates to maintain such stance vis-à-vis an unforgiving job market. Unsurprisingly, there are too few students who follow their interests or calling and too many who listen to job market tales (Priddat, 2014). Employability has emerged as a mythical fantasy that organises identity around the desire to shape and exploit an employable self and that "directs desires for overcoming subjective alienation into an 'empowering' identity which paradoxically further conforms to managerial desires" (Bloom, 2013: 795).

Students emphasising their consumer role through a demanding quest for enchanting HE, ultimately promising to deliver employability in a pleasurable way, are trapped in a vicious circle of reinforcing neo-liberal ideology through a self-referential myth (cf. chapter 2.2): who would not agree that studying at an expensive institution, however pleasurable, has to pay off through well-paid employment, and that well-paid employment can best be granted by profit-maximising corporations? The alluring 'big business' world, already mimicked at marketing-savvy private business schools, will finally absorb a considerable proportion of graduates with nonchalance. Yet, these graduates may not accomplish what the myth leads them to believe.

> "The maximization of profit and its inherent hubris of greed is fostered and maintained, for example, by corruption through simulation, that is, by the corporation pretending to offer attractive employment and, by the very fact of making profit, contributing to the wealth of nations, if not humankind. Thus its roleholders permanently corrupt and betray themselves" (Sievers, 2012: 32).

Huehn (2008) points to Henri Fayol's famous assertion that managers must be wise and honourable judges. Otherwise they are "simpletons who have to follow Milton Friedman's mono-rule ethics of having to maximise the shareholders' returns" (Huehn, 2008: 832) who can neither be respected by employees nor respect themselves. Or, in the context of the German economy currently deemed so successful (e.g. Etzel, Hauptmann, & Schmerer, 2013), graduates inside and especially those outside of management functions will have to join the 'army of wage lackeys' producing for export (Thielemann, 2010). There is a clear link between the perceived value, and even the consumption, of HE and such cynical outcomes of employment. "If a society wants young people to take education seriously, it also has to be serious about finding good jobs for them when they want them. Otherwise, the youth will become cynical and disengaged" (Locke, 1996: 240). It is of course debatable what 'good' jobs are. But it is safe to assume that this notion would not encompass settings of self-betrayal.

And the betrayal of students might set in much earlier than on the job: the student experience will neither be favourable nor beneficial if it leads to a perception of business schools, envisioned as temples of entertainment and guaranteed employability prior to enrolment, as "money-grabbing institutions" with students as mere "throughput" (Gabriel, 2009: 384). Hence, both during their studies at (private) business schools as well as upon graduation and entry into the world of work, students are likely to experience the phenomenon of 'cognitive dissonance' caused through post-purchase disappointment and values-compromising decisions (Festinger, 1957).

Whether driven by a quest for an enchanting student experience or trying to meet the imperative to become most employable, students entering HE conceptualised as a commercial transaction alter traditional roles of students and lecturers as well as their intersections to the point where "previously integrated relationships between academics and students are likely to become dis-aggregated with each party invested with distinct, if not opposing, interests" (Naidoo, 2008: 47). A study revealed that many expectations are directed at teaching quality as an essential student experience ingredient. Lecturers should be knowledgeable, enthusiastic, approachable, and friendly. There is the overarching connotation that all these traits positively correlate with enabling students to pass tests and to succeed in career entry endeavours (Voss et al., 2007). However, just passing tests and succeeding in career entry the most pleasurable way is short sighted and misleading, as discussed earlier.

> "Although business schools and instructors certainly have an obligation to be responsive to students (and probably were not responsive enough in the past), there are grave dangers to making immediate career relevance the major criterion in deciding what and how to teach" (Trank & Rynes, 2003: 195).

Educators at private business schools face heightened pressure to be responsive to their consumerist audience. As a consequence of the strong emphasis on quality control in line with neo-liberal HE principles (cf. chapter 3.1) and revealed for all five case studies, students are provided with the means to evaluate learning and teaching. Outcomes of such evaluation exercises are highly influential, as they result in symbolic and material rewards and sanctions (Naidoo, 2008).

The subjecting of academic lecturers' work to utilitarian and consumerist mechanisms leads to an unfavourable transformation of the academic profession at the private business school. This transformation fits the big picture of neo-liberal restructuring of all spheres and its detrimental effects: especially “attempts to restructure professional cultures to comply with consumerist frameworks can unintentionally deter innovation, threaten academic standards, and create perverse incentives” (Naidoo et al., 2011: 1157). Signs are strong that the consumerist context of the five private business schools studied confirms the already raised suspicion that under neo-liberal reign academic labour (Lawrence & Sharma, 2002) as well as the key activities of teaching and learning (Naidoo & Jamieson, 2005) are commodified. This development turns business schools into potentially unattractive workplaces for qualified lecturers who are supposed to be a vital success factor at business schools.

Some studies show that professors are dissatisfied in their jobs and are feeling a loss of power (e.g. Parsons & Frick, 2008). Imposed roles of service providers and entertainers are unlikely to reverse such trends. These roles are associated with performative labour (Hochschild, 1983), also referred to as emotional labour. In essence the latter is a service industry creation relying on “relatively superficial and transient emotional displays” (Iszatt-White, 2013: 5f) enacted by the workforce. There are different levels of service work covering the whole range from low skilled to highly complex jobs, and the demands on a worker’s emotional labour is rising towards the latter (Payne, 2009), where the lecturer should arguably be categorised. Basically, there are three stances toward work: identifying too wholeheartedly – carrying the risk of burnout –, clearly distinguishing from the service act performed, and the ‘just an actor’ feeling, bearing the risk of estrangement and feeling of illusion making (Hochschild, 1983).

This last stance would seem particularly incompatible with a traditional professor’s self-image with its emphasis on intellect and academic superiority. A perceived downgrading to a mere entertainer or illusionist – or also educational assembly line-worker – can induce severe dissatisfaction. Evaluations through students and other imposed ‘quality assurance’ exercises add to potentially obnoxious working conditions. “Educators are not longer valued as they once were” (Natale & Doran, 2012: 194).

With reference to Germany, this aspect is also reflected in the observation that the implementation of economic imperatives provokes a rise of precarious working conditions in the HE sector (Lieb, 2012). However, the consequences of neo-liberal infiltration of HE institutions are much more profound and furtive: the HE system transformed according to market logic, with an emphasis on utilitarian goals and consumerist audiences, plays stakeholders off against each other.

Academics (arguably especially those at private business schools) are lined up against students, who do not seek or value knowledge per se, but teachable and learnable (and on top of that preferably entertaining) knowledge; a goal supported by mission statements praising 'customer satisfaction' and 'value for money' (Lenzen, 2014). Through coursework grades and lecturer evaluations the two stakeholder groups exert power with potentially harmful consequences for the other group, respectively. Just one negative mark or appraisal can reduce future prospects, as there are competitors out there who may have better credentials, waiting to benefit from someone dropping out of the game within the propagated cut-throat competition. In the economy, the HE institution re-defined as 'service provider' – and therefore ultimately the entire HE sector – is played off against other service sectors. Whereas HE can hardly be actually replaced by another 'product/service', it is nevertheless downgraded through such logic of 'service supremacy' and the associated rhetoric (Liesner, 2009).

In the specific context of Germany, HE is also played off against the traditionally strong sector of vocational apprenticeship-based education (cf. chapter 3.6). Discourses of *Überakademisierung* ('over-academisation') of professions versus *Fachkräftemangel* (lack of qualified candidates) in various trades spur rivalry across educational systems and pathways – and one of the consequences in turn is the discursive declaration of humans as manoeuvring powder of the *Wirtschaftsstandort* of Germany (Osel, 2014). There is the suspicion that the German government is more committed to 'Lisbon' with its goal to create 'the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world' than just to 'Bologna' (Lieb, 2012). Ultimately, the reduction of all organisations and individuals to objects in the service of economics and markets, defining value in perverted measurements of 'competitiveness' (cf. chapter 2.7) is reinforced.

Such trend is obviously detrimental and calls for resistance. The perspective of working in a cage narrowing ever further through the “intensification of performance indicator managerialism“ (Parker, 2014: 290f), and of ill-serving society at large and specifically students crossing one’s way in the process is a dire one for educators/researchers. More importantly and beyond concerns about the academic’s fate, there is a moral obligation to ‘confront managerialism’ (Locke & Spender, 2011) in its neo-liberal guises. This obligation roots in the understanding that education (of course including HE) is one of the goods that change their nature to the point of crowded-out morals if subjected to market forces and logics (Sandel, 2012). The intrinsic value of education is undermined, as is the distinctiveness of the university as an institution (Parker, 2014).

Optimistic CMS accounts always have upheld the notion that management ideology can be challenged, especially from within business schools where highly qualified people work at the intersection of analysing management practice and educating future protagonists of the field (Parker, 2014). In more general terms, (Welzer, 2013) points out that resistance is always possible and that there is, to varying degrees, always room for manoeuvre – especially in scenarios where the mythical discourse of the élites in power suggests otherwise. Hence, the question arises of how to resist.

Astonishingly enough, a fascinating account of an admittedly extreme case shows that resistance is least likely within mainstream business school “populated by responsibly autonomous professionals” (Parker, 2014: 290). Institutions like the “Anglo-Saxons” of this thesis probably attract and retain faculty members who largely agree with neo-liberal conceptualisations of HE or just promote their own career within it. Yet, it does not seem impossible to conduct critical lectures or to publish critique there. More promising may be resistance within alternative business schools that foster a critical culture, such as the ‘Idealists’ of this thesis: they resist the neo-liberal world view through their very existence and their variety of differentiated business education. Despite facing inevitable participation in a competitive market and managerial policy pressures, they create encouraging spaces of freedom. However, this freedom can be treacherous: neo-liberalism is efficient in exploiting freedom in its expressions such as emotion, play and communication clouding ultimate self-exploitation (Han, 2014).

### 5.8 Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter, the findings of the five case studies were analysed and discussed within the quest of answering the central research question; *to what extent has neo-liberal ideology permeated private business schools in Germany?* Following intra-case and cross-case analyses, I distilled *performativity* as an overarching core theme of the WR reports, and *consumer orientation* as a predominant core theme of the websites, respectively. It was shown that these two overarching themes are essential vehicles of far-reaching neo-liberal permeation of private business schools in Germany. However, there is neither a visible unified level of infiltration nor a linear process of subjecting HE institutions to the ideology. Instead, there is a complex mélange of interwoven principles and mechanisms. The business schools manoeuvre between bureaucratic accreditation requirements on the one hand and efforts of corporate identity formation through partly mythical messages to their constituencies on the other hand. With reference to the subordinated research questions *which other (not neo-liberal) major principles influence these business schools* and *in how far do different business school founders' philosophies impact the presence of the differing principles* it can be asserted that the founders' philosophies have a significant influence on principles detected. In summary, I compiled the two groups of *Anglo-Saxons* representing EBS, ESMT, and Frankfurt School of Finance and of *Idealists* composed of Alanus and Karlshochschule. The former group is more openly committed to neo-liberal principles with an emphasis on utilitarian study programme provision in the service of career endeavours. The latter group emphasises different approaches to business education in the service of personality formation based on more idealistic values such as liberal education, humanism or anthroposophy. However, the pursuit of the last subordinate research question; *in how far can signs of business school convergence be detected* revealed that overt and covert managerial conformity pressures lead to a tendency towards convergence, as even idealistic alternatives already comprise elements of neo-liberal principle enactment. The subsequent discussion elaborated manifold implications and issues at stake; pointing out the dangers of neo-liberal pressures on business school stakeholders, yet ending with the hopeful notion that resistance may still be possible.

## 6. Conclusion

*Sail on, sail on, O mighty Ship of State! To the Shores of Need, Past the Reefs of Greed, Through the Squalls of Hate Sail on, sail on, sail on, sail on*

*From the song "Democracy" by Leonard Cohen*

This thesis was written in partial fulfilment of the Doctor of Business Administration in Higher Education Management at the University of Bath. As outlined in the introduction, the motivation for the topic of this thesis is rooted in the recent accumulation of financial crises and corporate scandals, which keep eroding trust in corporate capitalism and, along with that, in the provision of business schools, the role of which has been vividly scrutinised in public as well as in emerging streams of HE research literature. This thesis was based on the main argument that we are currently witnessing the rise and dominance of neo-liberalism, which is impacting on HE systems worldwide, including business schools. Against the backdrop of the current manifestations of neo-liberalism in Germany, which in turn are strongly influenced by EU policy, this research aimed to analyse the extent to which neo-liberal ideology can be traced in the public representations of private business schools, recently forming a growth segment in that country. Therefore, my central research question was *to what extent has neo-liberal ideology permeated private business schools in Germany?*

I pursued a critical realist inquiry paradigm drawing inspiration largely from the realm of CMS. Furthermore, I followed the understanding of critique as motivation, mind-set and also academic aim going beyond criticism of specific, problematic beliefs and practices. The two latter often "are nurtured by, and serve to sustain, divisive and destructive patterns and structures", which are "neither necessary nor unavoidable" (Adler et al., 2007: 121).

The interdependent concepts of myth, enlightenment and late modernity provided the theoretical framework devised to understand contemporary neo-liberalism. Furthermore, the role of economics as a major academic supplier of neo-liberal ideology was illuminated. It is astutely summarised in the following statement:

> "This economic mindset, which is rooted in the ideology of market culture and based on the principle of economic self-interest, privileges private property over the common good, and arm's-length market over face-to-face interpersonal relationships. It prioritizes short-term over long-term interests, and treats money as the measure of all good. Over the last 30 years it has come to dominate not only our thinking about business and public administration, but also political thinking in general. Assumptions first introduced by economists to artificially simplify the analysis of purely economic phenomena are now taken for granted and employed willy-nilly across the realm of social life" (Hendry, 2006: 268).

A range of discontents associated with such ideologically driven neo-liberal economisation of all areas of life was illuminated. Completing the framework, the context of private business schools in Germany was presented. The national HE sector is in transition, largely due to reforms at EU level. In particular, the so-called Bologna process has led to massive changes that have to be understood as part of neo-liberal agendas. Whereas public universities are struggling with the implementation of the two-tier degree programme structure, private business schools have taken off in a boom-phase spurred by Bologna as well as by the opening of the market for private HE institutions, following the logic of competition held high in neo-liberal regimes.

To address the central research question, I analysed the five private business schools in Germany that have received WR accreditation since 2010. These institutions differ in size, specialisation areas, geographical location, ownership structure and founders' philosophy. Therefore, the following subordinate research questions were derived: *which other (not neo-liberal) major principles influence these business schools*, *in how far do different business school founders' philosophies impact the presence of the differing principles,* and *in how far can signs of business school convergence be detected?* The answers to the research questions and a concluding consideration of major implications feature on the remaining pages.

As an empirical research approach, I pursed a CDA in line with my critical stance and with a CMS-based inquiry. More specifically, I conducted a QCA of published material constitutive of private business school representations: WR accreditation reports and their own websites, whereby text as well as imagery was analysed of the latter.

Overall it turned out that neo-liberal principles and themes have strongly permeated the business schools studied in various respects. In all materials there are manifold explicit and also implicit traces of neo-liberal ideology, ranging from subtle language or imagery hints (that possibly can also be interpreted in different ways), to statements showing strong commitment to the enactment of neo-liberal principles. The core theme of *performativity* was derived from the analyses of WR accreditation reports. It comprises utilitarian conceptualisations of HE. Part of that is the notion of quality management and control. At all five cases study institutions the latter is (at least reported by the WR to be) taken very seriously and also enforced through a variety of mechanisms, including evaluations of lectures and faculty members through students.

And yet, there is also a differentiated picture in this regard: I classified three of the cases studied, EBS, ESMT and Frankfurt School of Finance as 'Anglo-Saxon'. In line with their founders' philosophies they follow the corresponding role model of career-driven and business élite education, which is strongly associated with neo-liberal HE provision. These three institutions emphasise utilitarian aspects. In particular, they promise a focus on employability of graduates, and they commit to serve the knowledge economy (which in turn is meant to serve national competitiveness; a favourite topic of neo-liberal regimes). They received ample and explicit praise by the WR for their performance and output orientation, in research and teaching.

The other two business schools studied, Alanus and Karlshochschule, can be categorised as 'Idealists'. They emphasise other principles than neo-liberal ones, most notably the broadening of horizons, a change of perspectives on the business world, and alternative ways of business degree provision. In this respect, they also clearly reflect the founders' philosophies, which are based on anthroposophical values in the former case, and unconventional teaching and learning methods in the latter one. In addition, both cases arguably honour humanist education principles in the broadest sense. There was much less, if any, prevalence of utilitarianism beyond the above-mentioned quality control aspects largely imposed through accreditation requirements and enforcement. Hence, it has also become clear that founders' philosophies drive values and their presence in themes derived from the material analysed.

The website analysis of the five case studies yielded the core principle of *consumer orientation*. First and foremost the construction of a strong corporate identity through website imagery, hence ‘brandscape’ creation (Goldman & Papson, 2006), was diagnosed. Aesthetic criteria and more or less consequent attempts to transmit coherent messages of the respective philosophy and business education provision propositions apparently play a key role in the web design. All institutions engage in image building – or brand communication – to attract prospective students, and such activity is seen as a “constitutive part of a public discourse that contributes to naturalising the neoliberal paradigm it draws on and signifies” (Ng, 2014: 153).

With the help of semiotic analysis I highlighted major myths the investigated business schools construct or convey in support of their corporate identity formation. In this regard, it is remarkable that the parallels did not consequently follow the ‘Anglo-Saxon’ versus ‘Idealists’ divide. Although the former group of schools largely shares a focus on narratives of powerful institutions that mirror the powerful world of corporations and that primarily serve as identity or career formation spaces of the (future) business élite, there are also other ‘coalitions’. The most remarkable of those is a common image thread of Alanus, Frankfurt School of Finance and Karlshochschule focusing on imagery underlining modern architectural details, if not entire campuses, with an overabundance of glass features.

All five websites analysed leave no doubt that the institutions know the consumerist inclination of their targeted students, and that they are aware of major characteristics of their millennial constituency. The latter comprise contradictions such as feelings of entitlement, thirst for entertainment, the quest for meaningful education (and corresponding career paths as a result of that), but also latent fears of failure in the job market, driven by all-encompassing neo-liberal pressures that tend to lead to a search for utilitarian degree programme options. This consumer orientation signals the business schools’ submission to market principles; first and foremost to competition. They compete for prospective students and arguably also for the acceptance of their models of business education, and beyond that for particular resources such as qualified lecturers or sponsoring/third-party funding.

That also reflects a tendency towards convergence. At an overarching level, business schools assume the role of businesses competing in the business education market. Paradoxically, even their differing philosophies and corporate identity messages are a sign of that process, as they ultimately signal the acceptance of the business schools' situation as competitors acting in the same marketplace imposing common rules or logics of how to compete and how to portray organisational propositions. At a bureaucratic level, obvious convergence is achieved prominently through the enactment of (or at least official commitment to) accreditation-induced principles; most notably quality management with its prescribed instruments.

Especially in this latter bureaucratic regard, a considerable degree of convergence is derived through the inflated use of the 'dehydrated language' (Adler, 2010) not only of management, but particularly of managerialism. With reference to EU policy documents about the future of European universities, Lenzen (2014) noticed that there have been only few texts throughout the history of education that are so devoid of contents. My five private business school cases from Germany underline that the neo-liberal language goes beyond technocratic policy texts. It encompasses the language of imagery, creating inflated notions of (seemingly) enchanting consumption spheres. Together, these languages (or language components) build a bizarre mélange constitutive of an augmented neo-liberal 'newspeak' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 2001).

It is frightening that business schools operating under neo-liberal auspices imposing market-orientation and bureaucratic confinement become "purposeful 'institutional entrepreneurs' who willingly participate in the oversimplification of business knowledge for profit" (Trank & Rynes, 2003: 199). Consequently it is induced that

> "[i]n such institutions one can […] educate people who dutifully do their work and professionally orientate in a globalised world; people participate in competition and who will find their jobs between the North Cape and Cape Town, and people who invent new windmills and energy-saving lamps, coloured boxes for pills and formalities for the banking sector. They will do what is asked of them and not have strange ideas. They will not generate new world views; they will not jump quantum leaps and not contribute to the enlightenment of humanity. In brief: they will be *ungebildet"* (translated from Lenzen, 2014: 78).

Such institutions could hardly be further away from the historic university founded by German idealists, which was understood to have a status as the site of critique (Readings, 1996). Instead, they are converting into protagonists of the recent tendency toward a utilitarian morality (Patriotta & Starkey, 2008). Such a current neo-liberal paradigm makes it difficult to foster intellectual pluralism (e.g. Birnik & Billsberry, 2008). The 'Idealist' cases of Alanus and Karlshochschule indicate that there are attempts to pursue different approaches and to move at least in part away from this paradigm. However, it was also revealed that some of those attempts of enriched or alternative business education provision ultimately reinforce the current paradigm, because they also serve enhanced productivity, employability and competitiveness and thereby are co-opted by neo-liberal powers. Truly different approaches seem possible, even if difficult to sustain because of the disciplining forces of bureaucratic-managerial control mechanisms. Furthermore, there are conformity pressures originating in the market (especially the job market signalling that only 'employable' graduates, i.e. young people educated in line with neo-liberal principles and the underlying economic doctrine will be absorbed and can look forward to promising careers). Hence, the economic viability of pluralist or alternative institutions appears much weaker.

Following Reedy and Learmonth (2009: 242), I am "not suggesting that business schools are monolithic blocs of neo-liberal zealots", the more so as the five case studies have shown differentiated levels of neo-liberal permeation and commitment to different values. However, the circumstances outlined throughout this thesis strongly suggest private business schools and their protagonists are caged in a systemic corset. Where faculty members are turned "into 'human resources' with no say for the affairs of their institution" and students are turned "into temporary consumers (but also 'human resources' under formation)" (Moutsios, 2013: 35) the questionable economic logic of self-interest maximisation as opposed to the education of a reflective and self-relational human (Zehnpfennig, 2012) will triumph and solidify neo-liberal paradigms. Hence, "the continued survival of certain neoliberal doctrines and presuppositions suggests that these may not simply be 'false' or 'exploitative' depictions of reality, but have become normative rituals in their own right" (Davies, 2014: 9f).

Neo-liberal normative rituals have become integral parts of private business schools in Germany (and presumably beyond). There are at least two dimensions of that notion: firstly, the institutions are controlled through accreditation bodies (particularly the WR) demanding bureaucratic exercises in exchange for certification, i.e. formal legitimacy. Secondly, there is the market with its competition logic constraining institutions to the provision of 'sellable' degrees. Thus, business schools practice under the terms of neo-liberal ideology and also disseminate it.

> "Institutions are ideological formations, not just in the sense that they are organized around languages that legitimate power as control over persons and things, but in that they produce powers by authorizing practices that constitute subjects and objects through which the authority relation is organized" (Friedland, 2009: 907).

Such mechanisms and practices apply to the WR as accreditation body as well as the business schools. Bureaucracies (such as accreditation and HE managerialism at large or internal schemes of the institution) enforcing these mechanisms can disable moral faculties (Hendry, 2006). If pursued to the extreme, the seemingly rational and purely technocratic enactment of ideological rituals can lead to devastating consequences as described in the seminal work on the 'banality of evil' (Arendt, 2006 [1963]).

There are complex interrelations between business education protagonists (business schools, students, WR as accreditation body) who are probably not aware of them. Nevertheless, they result in relentless ideology dissemination, as the actors fulfil altering roles of enactor, catalyst or recipient of neo-liberal principles. The roles do not require intentional ideology spreading to be effective, and their boundaries are blurred. The analysis within this thesis has also revealed that the realm of myth adds to the complexity of this arrangement. Self-referential myths of neo-liberal origin (such as 'high-quality' HE functions as a door-opener for great employment opportunities) build an almost inescapable base mesh. Individual business school myths of corporate identity or unique education provision complement them, and they can reinforce, confirm or even partly contradict the base myths. Such mechanisms oftentimes remain hidden for constituencies: myths impart order and shield us from the complexity of the world (Taleb, 2008). Their alluring messages draw us ever deeper into the mesh of the underlying ideology, unless we become aware and interrupt the circular process.

Whereas the actors' interrelations and roles in this process are complex and multi-dimensional, one of its outcomes is clear: the affected actors are played off against each other. Business schools compete for student enrolments and limited resources, and they also put pressure on students through marks culminating in grade point averages that may determine access to careers. Students compete against each other for career opportunities, and they also put pressure on institutions because they have a choice of where to enrol and on lecturers through evaluations with potentially harmful consequences. Lecturers compete for scarce academic jobs and also exercise pressure on students through marks (see above). All 'players' in the neo-liberal game face a merciless market following rules of (arguably perverted) competition imposed by government institutions enforcing neo-liberal policies and the ensuing routines.

An ambivalent institution in the context of this study is the WR. It is quasi-governmental through its composition of academics who formulate recommendations the government understands as binding (e.g. Bartz, 2007) in deciding whether private *Hochschulen* receive/keep a status of state-acknowledged HE provider (without which viable operations are illusionary). In this regard the WR is employed to enforce neo-liberal rituals at private HE institutions. That provokes the paradoxical situation that their small but fast-growing sector could function as a spearhead of experimentation in both directions: either for the advancement of neo-liberal practices enforced by the WR and selectively imposed on the public HE sector later, or for the creation of alternatives; provided that idealistic founders subversively circumvent some of the WR prescriptions.

Although it would be naïve to assume a central body in control, we should not lose sight of who benefits from the ideology roping the stakeholders in for its fortification.

> "Neo-liberalism represents an era in which businesses are stronger and more aggressive, and face less organized opposition than ever before. In this political climate they attempt to codify their political power on every possible front, and as a result, make it increasingly difficult to challenge businesses – and next to impossible – for nonmarket, non-commercial, and democratic forces to exist at all" (Chomsky, 1999: 8f).

Ignoring such detrimental trend, business schools, especially if businesses on their own, may have lost sight of what it means to be an educated person at the present time

(Gardner, 2005). “Explaining how business schools have arrived in their present predicament is undoubtedly a complex process and there are many and varied causes” (Pfeffer & Fong, 2004: 1510), but it is obvious that an all too servile attitude towards corporate capitalism and shareholder value logic are among them. “No system of education is doing a good job if its benefits reach only wealthy elites” (Nussbaum, 2010: 11). In order to leave the current destructive path, business schools, whether private or public, in Germany and elsewhere – along with businesses at large – should recognise that civilisation and the planet are their ultimate clients (Adler, 2011).

Holding the original German notion of *Bildung* in high regard, without mourning after “idealised conceptions of a mythical golden past” (Naidoo, 2003: 256), I join those who expect business schools to assume responsibility for the development of an educated society (Starkey et al., 2004). They need to “challenge […] dominant myths rather than socialize students into the status quo” (Stage, Muller, Kinzie, & Simmons, 1998: 57). To that end it is vital to understand the contemporary *figuration* (Elias, 2014 [1970]): individuals are not just surrounded by neo-liberal principles, but they disseminate and interact with or through them, until they become aware and resist. Honouring the political, ethical, and philosophical nature of management (Grey, 2004: 180), based on the ethical essence distilled from enlightenment social philosophy (Huehn, 2008) and on wisdom (Maxwell, 2012), could promote awareness.

Ideology is never harmless; it can liberate or oppress, and its weight can shift power relations (Ziegler, 2014). There is overwhelming evidence that neo-liberal ideology oppresses society at large, shifting power towards corporate élites. But accepting that our present does not have an exit (Comité invisible, 2007) would make an essential self-referential neo-liberal myth reality. There is a strong moral case for resistance. Examples show that leaving extreme places (Parker, 2014) or academia altogether (Welzer, 2013) are viable options. However, we should also seek to foster awareness and resistance at business schools through inspired teaching, strong-willed research or even alternative openings. “It is, of course, never easy to anticipate how historians will judge the period through which one lives” (Hay, 2011: 1). Let us accept the formidable challenge of making ours the one in which business schools renounce neo-liberalism.

## 7. Reflections

*Es ist gut, sich aus den Verhältnissen herauszulösen, die einem die Luft nehmen*

*[It is good to liberate oneself from the circumstances suffocating one]*

*Paula Modersohn-Becker*

This section provides reflection on the research conducted within this thesis and on the researcher's context. Firstly, it acknowledges the limitations of this research and its methodological approach. Secondly, it features recommendations for further research contributions to aid a better understanding of HE in general and business schools in particular under the spell of neo-liberalism. Thirdly, I offer personal reflections on the research conducted as well as its implications for my own professional development.

### 7.1 Limitations and Parameters

Self-critical reflection of the limitations of research adds credibility to data collection and analysis (Wallace & Wray, 2006). As mentioned in chapters 1.4 and 4.3, a major parameter of this research is its interpretation-dependent nature. In particular the examination of the incidence of ideology in discourse is interpretive (Budd, 2001). My intention to discover and understand the foundation of the discourse studied represents an 'interpretative' research attitude (Delius, 1953). There are limits to interpretation, and I honour Eco's (1999) point that the use and the interpretation of text are different and also Dennett's (1990: 178) conviction that interpretation "hinges on hypotheses" on authors' intentions. That leaves room for interpretations differing from my elaborations.

First of all, my central research question, which has driven this research and its written representation, deserves critical reflection. It has been *to what extent has neo-liberal ideology permeated private business schools in Germany?* In the meticulous process of crafting this question, I considered various versions of the exact wording, and I am aware of the potential ambivalence that has remained.

On the one hand there is the term of *extent*. Whereas the word could indicate an outcome that has been measured (or is measurable in some way), I acknowledge that my research pursuit was neither intended to nor actually has produced a measurable result in the sense of quantifiable data. My aim was to avoid a technocratic, even stable research result, and I wanted to focus on influence and the manifold traces of (neo-liberal) ideology, which are the result of complex and dynamic processes. With hindsight a word such as prevalence more adequately captures my intentions.

On the other hand there is the term of *permeation*. The term carries connotations of natural science, notably biology or chemistry, although I have produced research results that are not even close to representing exact science. Certainly, the natural science analogy allows for an intended subtle irony, as those two aforementioned ones are 'real' natural sciences, unlike the dogmatic version of economics guiding neo-liberal ideology and claiming the authority of natural law, as portrayed in chapter 2.6. But the main reason to opt for this term was to illustrate my understanding of the contemporary HE context as a figuration whereby a substance (neo-liberal ideology in the guise of various managerial and market-driven prescriptions) enters and infuses objects (HE institutions such as the business schools studied). In line with the biological role model, the related processes neither have to be one-dimensional nor one-directional, and the porosity of the infused objects can vary. Furthermore, I feel encouraged by a literature review conducted in a HE context that also points out the *permeation* of the public sector – including universities – by (neo-liberal) market *ideology* (Rinne & Koivula, 2005). Hence, my research has apparently moved along an established line of formulating academic inquiry into contemporary HE.

A set of limitations admittedly arises with regard to the effectiveness of answering my research question with the research conducted. As I confined my research to the level of the public representation of organisations according to the rationale outlined in chapter 4.2, it had to remain open in how far neo-liberal ideology permeation has reached other levels, or can be differentiated across those levels at the organisations studied. There is no account of the degree to which entities such as boards, managers, owners, employees, faculty members or students are 'permeated' or in how far they perceive processes of ideological permeation. In consequence, differences across the business schools considered in relation to representations came to light, but potentially varying degrees of ideology permeation and/or enactment, ideology-related tensions or indeed contradictions and resistances within these organisations remain unexplored. Theoretically, an optimal answer to the main research question would have considered and differentiated all of the above. Despite these limitations, I would argue that an analysis of the prevalence of neo-liberal ideology in how organisations represented themselves is of major significance in revealing the pervasiveness of neo-liberal ideology, which is manifest in various aspects mainly represented by the themes developed throughout chapter 4.3. In the context of the acknowledged limitations and parameters I would argue that the research has been valuable in providing first insights into the prevalence of neo-liberal ideology at the specified point of analysis and the possible trajectories of this prevalence and potential consequences. In this way my research provides important insights for educators, researchers and other stakeholders of the business school realm. It may also hopefully act as a catalyst to inspire further research into this area with a focus on analytical levels that have not been explored previously.

To discuss the limitations of this research in further detail, a closer look into the data sources follows. First and foremost I acknowledge that my data sources which consisted only of published printed and visual material do not provide insight into all the perspectives that would need to be considered to gain an all-encompassing picture of ideology permeation of organisations. Under ideal circumstances, data gathered from interviews with various stakeholders, recorded faculty meetings, internal management correspondence and in particular observations of meetings, lectures and marketing events such as open days at the business schools in question would have been combined to obtain a much more thorough idea about neo-liberal ideology and all the collective or individual bargaining, compliance, resistance, backlash and enactment or counter-action it provokes. However, it is obvious that such far-reaching inquiry faces serious feasibility constraints, besides evoking various ethical issues of social research.

Nevertheless, within these limitations this research has relied on effective material: documents are a valuable and often vital source of data in social research (Scott, 1990). They have effects, and the researcher has to ask how they function in their specific circumstances (Prior, 2003), which I did throughout this research venture. If these circumstances are ideology-related, and the research aim is to discover, trace and analyse the prevalence and/or intensity of ideology, and also the implications thereof, printed and published sources are particularly helpful and have effectively been used in a wide array of research fields and publications. Among many others, the example of Almgren (1997) shows how an analysis of the language reflecting relevant concepts derived from the literature and distilled into themes is highly effective in tracing ideology. It also shows that it is valuable to trace changes and trends in the use of language when comparing the same type of document over time, which could not be accomplished within this thesis representing a snapshot of the current situation.

The main theme derived from the first data source, science council (WR) accreditation reports, is *performativity* (cf. chapter 5.6). These reports are a type of administrative record. It is essential to understand that they are not neutral, but shaped by the political context in which they are produced and by underlying ideological assumptions (Scott, 1990); in this case the role of HE as performative contributor to neo-liberal purposes enforced through managerial regimes. The drive to expand these into wider economic, social, cultural and political spheres has promoted the rise and proliferation of managerialism, which has gone hand in hand with the rise of neo-liberalism (Klikauer, 2015). Using the British example, Vincent (2015) explains how the university was transformed from an institution that can be categorised as 'liberal-conservative' into a 'social-democratic' one and then into a neo-liberal institution. In particular, he points out how the neo-liberal case shifted HE conceptualisations with the help of language: under previous liberal conceptualisations, education "meant all-round cultural development of the person", whereas for neo-liberals education means "employability skills" (Vincent, 2015: 478). This account underlines that language plays a crucial role in the neo-liberal ideology permeation of HE institutions, which is strongly reflected in the documents I analysed with my deconstruction approach explained in chapter 4.2.

I acknowledge that the selected texts and websites are not equally informative as sampling units (Krippendorf, 2013), therefore possibly generating imbalanced outcomes across the cases compared. WR accreditation committees of varying compositions were in charge of the five business schools. As a consequence, different individuals or working groups authored the reports, accentuating different details and observations. They may even have had different foci in preparation of or during their visits to the institutions under investigation. This may also be owed to the fact that institutions under review have to submit self-documentation upfront, the contents of which are incorporated in the accreditation reports and sometimes co-determine the direction of inquiry conducted by the WR committee. Furthermore, the personal ideologies of the committee members could have influenced the reports' contents.

Websites also are a type of document, albeit not a traditional one (Scott, 1990). They are dynamic, hence subject to potentially frequent or sudden changes (cf. chapter 4.2). I am also aware that photographs and imagery are ambiguous by their nature (Becker, 1998). The main theme derived from the website analysis is *consumer orientation* (cf. chapter 5.6), which is central to neo-liberal market conceptualisations in general, as elaborated throughout the theory chapters. The business school websites analysed revealed in what ways neo-liberal principles of competition are enacted, along with other themes (cf. chapter 4.3). It should also be considered that marketing purposes as well as aesthetic criteria as drivers of website design are largely different to the technocratic requirements driving WR accreditation reports. This imbalance in the data sources might influence the analysis. However, with due acknowledgement of their differences, obtaining data from these different sources provides a richer analysis. Arguably it is also important to acknowledge that the websites of business schools differ even more than the accreditation reports, as they do not follow prescribed formats. Some institutions feature more contents than others, some focus more on texts, whereas others use more imagery. Yet, close analysis revealed that patterns, which are clear enough for meaningful interpretation, emerged from the material.

It is also important to acknowledge my own role. Texts (and the website imagery) have no reader-independent qualities (Krippendorf, 2013). The coding process entails interpretation on the part of the researcher (Bryman, 2008). In that role I have my own convictions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Both the WR reports and the websites are means of communication within a larger context. As a business school lecturer, I am more involved in it than external researchers would have been. That has certainly influenced my interpretations. I acknowledge that "not all communication is ideological" (Budd, 2001: 513) while at the same time upholding my interpretation of the findings as strong signs of enactment of, and compliance with, neo-liberal ideology with some of its specific prescriptions as well as with some of its diffuse occurrences. Without powerful neo-liberal ideology at work, the data sources would not exist or would look different. Focusing on organisational representation, I have not detected in how far business schools or individuals (try to) promote or resist ideology or in how far they (have to) play the system. The key point, however, is that the very fact of publishing the documents with their current accentuations means the institutions are implicated and have become subjects and objects of ideological permeation and dissemination.

The number of data sources analysed had to remain limited so I do not claim a representative outcome. Indeed as Easton (2010: 118) has indicated "[t]he sample size in any case study research project is never going to be large enough to qualify for the use of statistical inference". Therefore the analysis can be in-depth and compelling, yet it may lack precision and inferential strength (Carley, 1993). It does not necessarily provide evidence that the data sources are typical of those to be found in the entire context or field (Machin & Mayr, 2012). In my case it is obvious that the field of private business schools in Germany hosts at least somewhat diversified institutions, and that public universities or business faculties might differ significantly from private ones. At least, case studies tend to provide insights about the broader class (Ruddin, 2006).

Finally, the combination of WR accreditation reports written in German and business school website material published in English bears the potential issue of mismatched interpretation due to translation requirements. However, it could also be an asset of this research venture in so far as it shows how concepts are diffused across foreign language borders. Certainly, discursive and constructionist qualities of language (e.g. Bryman, 2008) could be subject to deflections where researchers perform translations.

### 7.2 Further Research Recommendations

In submitting recommendations for further inquiry into the areas of contemporary business education in general and private business schools in Germany in particular, I follow Thompson and Harley's (2012) suggestion that research on the causal powers of discourse needs to pay attention to actors and institutions as well as to extra-discursive conditions and constraints. A thorough understanding of mechanisms and consequences of the dissemination of neo-liberal ideology and its partly overt, partly covert, sometimes aggressive and often subtle permeation into all areas of society requires a range of differentiated research projects with varying units of analysis.

I consider it worthwhile to monitor and interpret developments of neo-liberal ideology permeation over time. There could be comparisons of the contents and the language of WR accreditation reports as well as business school websites published over five, ten or more years to see if changes occur and how trends emerge. Such trends could be contrasted with policy documents, especially Lisbon-related documents at EU level and (HE) policy documents as well as accreditation guidelines at national level to understand in which nuances overarching neo-liberal themes trickle down.

At the institutional level, longitudinal studies focusing on individual business schools seem promising in terms of unveiling changes in the prevalence and nature of neo-liberal themes over time. Especially the institutions I labelled *Idealists* in this thesis could be interesting objects for further research, as they are based on founding philosophies that are not in line with neo-liberal ideas in the first place, yet may be compromised or adapted. Apart from different types of private business schools it would of course be interesting to compare private and public institutions to find out whether significant differences in the enactment of neo-liberal principles occur.

According to my discussion of implications, neo-liberal business education provokes harmful consequences. I would therefore recommend studies of the perception of such consequences at the level of the individual, including a focus on personal or institutional conflicts. It also seems promising to conduct inquiry within selected business schools to unveil processes leading to the organisational representations studied in this thesis.

### 7.3 Personal Reflection

As a passionate business educator and also as a CMS proponent (cf. chapter 1.4), I am "motivated by concern with the role of management [let me add 'education and business schools' here] in the perpetuation and legitimation of unnecessary suffering and destruction, especially in the spheres of work and consumption" (Adler et al., 2007: 125). My concern has been nourished over several years by occurrences and anecdotal observations at my workplace as well as an increasing awareness of fundamental problems rooted in a neo-liberal HE context. Conversations with my colleagues, with researchers at academic conferences, and in particular with DBA faculty members and fellow students at the University of Bath have encouraged me to pursue this research in my doctoral thesis, not least because many of these distinguished and committed personalities share my concerns about alarming trends.

While findings generated go beyond what I had expected in terms of their richness, it was more challenging than anticipated to interpret them, especially with regard to the imagery analysis. It took various stages of experimentation with sample material and the advice of experts to find the way I finally pursued. The completion of this thesis is also the completion of an intellectually enriching and often exhausting journey. But by no means do I understand it as the completion of my skills, which I wish to further develop and refine over the years to come.

I may not get the chance to accomplish the latter within academia, considering its current state. Nevertheless, reflective research pieces can have therapeutic qualities (e.g. Learmonth & Humphreys, 2012), an aspect which I have valued throughout this thesis. Research is inherently a human activity involving not only our reasoning capacities, but also our emotions and attitudes (Comstock, 2012). As long as I conduct critical inquiry – outside academia if need be – these will be an integral and beneficial part of it. Finally, my most essential insight is that it is extremely important to analyse the spread and reach of adverse and destructive ideologies in order to develop ideas and practices of resistance as well as in order to sustain personal and human values through the very belief in alternatives.

**References**


Abell, P. 2009. A Case for Cases: Comparative Narratives in Sociological Explanation. ***Sociological Methods & Research***, 38(1): 38-70.

Abramson, P. R., & Inglehart, R. 1995. ***Value Change in Global Perspective***. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

Adler, N. J. 2006. The Arts & Leadership: Now That We Can Do Anything, What Will We Do? ***Academy of Management Learning & Education***, 5(4): 486-499.

Adler, N. J. 2010. Going beyond the dehydrated language of management: leadership insight. ***Journal of Business Strategy***, 31(4): 90-99.

Adler, N. J. 2011. Leading Beautifully: The Creative Economy and Beyond. ***Journal of Management Inquiry***, 20(3): 208-221.

Adler, N. J., & Hansen, H. 2012. Daring to Care: Scholarship that Supports the Courage of Our Convictions. ***Journal of Management Inquiry***, 21(2): 128-139.

Adler, N. J., & Harzing, A.-W. 2009. When Knowledge Wins: Transcending the Sense and Nonsense of Academic Rankings. ***Academy of Management Learning & Education***, 8(1): 72-95.

Adler, P. S., Forbes, L. C., & Willmott, H. 2007. Critical Management Studies. ***The Academy of Management Annals***, 1(1): 119-179.

Ahlers, R. 2010. Fixing and Nixing: The Politics of Water Privatization. ***Review of Radical Political Economics***, 42(2): 213-230.

Akerlof, G. A., & Shiller, R. J. 2009. ***Animal Spirits: How Human Psychology Drives the Economy, And Why It Matters for Global Capitalism***. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Albert, M. 1991. ***Capitalisme Contre Capitalisme***. Paris: Seuil.

Aldred, J. 2009. ***The Skeptical Economist***. London: Earthscan.

Aldridge, A. 2003. ***Consumption***. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Allen, A. 2014. Reason, power and history: Re-reading the Dialectic of Enlightenment. ***Thesis Eleven***, 120(1): 10-25.

Almgren, B. 1997. ***Germanistik und Nationalsozialismus: Affirmation, Konflikt und Protest***. Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis.

Altvater, E. 2009. The failure of neoliberalism in the financial market crisis. ***Development Dialogue***, 51: 73-86.

Alvesson, M. 2013. ***The Triumph of Emptiness: Consumption, Higher Education, and Work Organization***. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Alvesson, M., Bridgman, T., & Willmott, H. 2009. Introduction. In M. Alvesson, T. Bridgman, & H. Willmott (Eds.), ***The Oxford Handbook of Critical Management Studies***: 1-28. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Alvesson, M., & Deetz, S. 2000. ***Doing Critical Management Research***. London: Sage.

Alvesson, M., & Deetz, S. 2005. Critical Theory and Postmodernism: Approaches to Organization Studies. In C. Grey, & H. Willmott (Eds.), ***Critical Management Studies: A Reader***: 60-106. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Alvesson, M., & Gabriel, Y. 2013. Beyond Formulaic Research: In Praise of Greater Diversity in Organizational Research and Publications. ***Academy of Management Learning & Education***, 12(2): 245-263.

Alvesson, M., Hardy, C., & Harley, B. 2008. Reflecting on Reflexivity: Reflexive Textual Practices in Organization and Management Theory. ***Journal of Management Studies***, 45(3): 480-501.

Alvesson, M., & Kärreman, D. 2000. Taking the Linguistic Turn in Organizational Research: Challenges, Responses, Consequences. ***The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science***, 36(2): 136-158.

Alvesson, M., & Kärreman, D. 2011. Decolonializing discourse: Critical reflections on organizational discourse analysis. ***Human Relations***, 64(9): 1121-1146.

Amable, B. 2011. Morals and politics in the ideology of neo-liberalism. ***Socio-Economic Review***, 9(1): 3-30.

Amdam, R. P. 2007. Business Education. In G. Jones, & J. Zeitlin (Eds.), ***The Oxford Handbook of Business History***: 581-602. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Amsler, S. S., & Bolsmann, C. 2012. University ranking as social exclusion. ***British Journal of Sociology of Education***, 33(2): 283-301.

Antonio, R. J. 1991. Postmodern Storytelling Versus Pragmatic Truth-Seeking: The Discursive Bases of Social Theory. ***Sociological Theory***, 9(2): 154-163.

Aradau, C., & Van Munster, R. 2007. Governing Terrorism Through Risk: Taking Precautions, (un)Knowing the Future. ***European Journal of International Relations***, 13(1): 89-115.

Arendt, H. 2006 [1963]. ***Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil***. London: Penguin.

Argandoña, A. 2012. Three Ethical Dimensions of the Financial Crisis, ***IESE Business School Working Paper WP-944***. http://www.iese.edu/research/pdfs/di-0944-e.pdf: Accessed 15 February 2014.

Ariely, D. 2009. ***Predictably Irrational: The Hidden Forces That Shape Our Decisions*** (Revised ed.). New York: HarperCollins.

Ash, M. G. 2006. Bachelor of What, Master of Whom? The Humboldt Myth and Historical Transformations of Higher Education in German-Speaking Europe and the US. ***European Journal of Education***, 41(2): 245-267.

Atherton, A., & Giurco, D. 2011. Campus sustainability: climate change, transport and paper reduction. ***International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education***, 12(3): 269-279.

Bakan, J. 2005. ***The Corporation: The Pathological Pursuit of Profit and Power***. New York: Free Press.

Balakrishnan, U., Duvall, T., & Primeaux, P. 2003. Rewriting the Bases of Capitalism: Reflexive Modernity and Ecological Sustainability as the Foundations of a New Normative Framework. ***Journal of Business Ethics***, 47: 299-314.

Ballantyne, T. 2002. Empire, Knowledge and Culture: From Proto-Globalization to Modern Globalization In A. G. Hopkins (Ed.), ***Globalization in World History***: 115-140. London: Pimlico.

Balmer, J. M. T. 2001. Corporate identity, corporate branding and corporate marketing: Seeing through the fog. ***European Journal of Marketing***, 35(3/4): 248-291.

Barber, B. 2000. Jihad vs. McWorld. In F. J. Lechner, & J. Boli (Eds.), ***The Globalization Reader***: 21-26. Malden: Blackwell.

Barker, R. 2010. No, Management Is Not a Profession. ***Harvard Business Review***, 88(7/8): 52-60.

Barthes, R. 2012 [1957]. ***Mythen des Alltags***. Berlin: Suhrkamp.

Bartkus, B. R., Glassman, M., & McAfee, R. B. 2004. A Comparison of the Quality of European, Japanese and U.S. Mission Statements. ***European Management Journal***, 22(4): 393-401.

Bartunek, J. M., Rynes, S. L., & Ireland, R. D. 2006. What Makes Management Research Interesting, and Why Does it Matter? ***Academy of Management Journal***, 49(1): 9-15.

Bartz, O. 2007. ***Der Wissenschaftsrat***. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag.

Bauman, Z. 2007a. ***Consuming Life***. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bauman, Z. 2007b. ***Liquid Times: Living in an Age of Uncertainty***. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bauman, Z. 2011. ***Collateral Damage: Social Inequalities in a Global Age***. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bauman, Z. 2013. ***Does the Richness of the Few Benefit Us All?*** Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bebchuk, L., & Fried, J. 2006. ***Pay Without Performance: The Unfulfilled Promise of Excecutive Compensation***. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Beck, U. 2003. Toward a New Critical Theory with a Cosmopolitan Intent. ***Constellations***, 10(4): 453-468.

Beck, U. 2008. ***Weltrisikogesellschaft***. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Beck, U., & Lau, C. 2005. Second modernity as a research agenda: theoretical and empirical explorations in the 'meta-change' of modern society. ***The British Journal of Sociology***, 56(4): 525-557.

Becker, H. S. 1998. Visual Sociology, Documentary Photography, and Photojournalism: It's (Almost) All a Matter of Context. In J. Prosser (Ed.), ***Image-based Research: A Sourcebook for Qualitative Researchers***: 84-96. London: Falmer Press.

Bennett, R., & Kottasz, R. 2006. Widening Participation and Student Expectations of Higher Education. ***The International Journal of Management Education***, 5(2): 47-65.

Bennis, W. G., & O'Toole. 2005. How Business Schools Lost Their Way. ***Harvard Business Review***, 83(5): 96-104.

Berger, P. L., & Luckmann, T. 1966. ***The Social Construction of Reality***. New York: Anchor.

Bergmann, G., & Daub, J. 2012. ***Das menschliche Maß: Entwurf einer Mitweltökonomie***. München: oekom.

Bergsteiner, H., & Avery, G. C. 2012. When Ethics are Compromised by Ideology: The Global Competitiveness Report. ***Journal of Business Ethics***, 109(4): 391-410.

Berner, H., & Richter, R. 2001. Accreditation of Degree Programmes in Germany. ***Quality in Higher Education***, 7(3): 247-257.

Beverungen, A., Dunne, S., & Sørensen, B. M. 2008. University, Failed. ***Ephemera***, 8(3): 232-237.

Beyes, T., & Michels, C. 2011. The production of educational space: Heterotopia and the business university. ***Management Learning***, 42(5): 521-536.

Bhagwati, J. 2007. ***In Defense of Globalization*** (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bhaskar, R. 2011. ***Reclaiming Reality: A Critical Introduction to Contemporary Philosophy***. London: Routledge.

Birnik, A., & Billsberry, J. 2008. Reorienting the Business School Agenda: The Case for Relevance, Rigor, and Righteousness. ***Journal of Business Ethics***, 82(4): 985-999.

Bitner, M. J. 1992. Servicescapes: The impact of physical surroundings on customers and employees. ***Journal of Marketing***, 56(2): 57-71.

Bleiklie, I., Enders, J., & Lepori, B. 2013. Introduction: Transformation of universities in Europe. ***Higher Education***, 65: 1-4.

Bloom, P. 2013. Fight for your alienation: The fantasy of employability and the ironic struggle for self-exploitation. ***Ephemera***, 13(4): 785-807.

BMBF. 2013. Organization and Structure of the Bologna Process, http://www.bmbf.de/en/13195.php?hilite=bologna+process: Accessed 30 October 2013.

BMBF. 2014. Hochschulen. http://www.bmbf.de/de/655.php: Accessed 25 February 2014.

Boas, T. C., & Gans-Morse, J. 2009. Neoliberalism: From New Liberal Philosophy to Anti-Liberal Slogan. ***Studies in Comparative International Development***, 44(2): 137-161.

Bohn, F., & de Jong, E. 2011. The 2010 euro crisis stand-off between France and Germany: leadership styles and political culture. ***International Economics and Economic Policy***, 8: 7-14.

Bohnsack, R. 2003. Qualitative Methoden der Bildinterpretation. ***Zeitschrift für Erziehungswissenschaft***, 6(2): 239-256.

Boisot, M., & McKelvey, B. 2010. Integrating Modernist and Postmodernist Perspectives on Organizations: A Complexity Science Bridge. ***Academy of Management Review***, 35(3): 415-433.

Bourdieu, P. 1984. ***Homo academicus***. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. 2001. NewLiberalSpeak: Notes on the new planetary vulgate. ***Radical Philosophy***, 105: 1-4.

Brand, U., & Sekler, N. 2009. Postneoliberalism: catch-all word or valuable analytical and political concept? - Aims of a beginning debate. ***Development Dialogue***, 51: 5-14.

Brändle, T., & Wendt, B. 2014. Kritiker und Befürworter - Die Wahrnehmung des Bologna-Prozesses durch Professorinnen und Professoren. ***Beiträge zur Hochschulforschung***, 36(1): 46-69.

Breckner, R. 2012. Bildwahrnehmung - Bildinterpretation: Segmentanalyse als methodischer Zugang zur Erschließung bildlichen Sinns. ***Österreichische Zeitschrift für Soziologie***, 37: 143-164.

Brenner, P. J. 2009. Bologna-Prozess als Organisationsform der Ineffizienz. In C. Scholz, & V. Stein (Eds.), ***Bologna-Schwarzbuch***: 89-105. Bonn: Deutscher Hochschulverband.

Brie, M. 2009. Ways out of the crisis of neoliberalism. ***Development Dialogue***, 51: 15-32.

Brighouse, H. 2010. Globalization and the Professional Ethic of the Professoriat. In E. Unterhalter, & V. Carpentier (Eds.), ***Global Inequalities and Higher Education: Whose interests are we serving?*** 287-311. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Briner, R. B., Denyer, D., & Rousseau, D. M. 2009. Evidence-Based Management: Concept Cleanup Time? ***Academy of Management Perspectives***, 23(4): 19-32.

Brinkmann, S. 2012. ***Qualitative Inquiry in Everyday Life: Working with Everyday Life Materials***. London: Sage.

Brooks, D. 2011. The New Humanism, ***New York Times***. http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/08/opinion/08brooks.thml?_r=1: Accessed 09 Feb 2012.

Brown, W. 2003. Neo-liberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy. ***Theory and Event***, 7(1): 1-29.

Brunkhorst, H. 2000. The Enlightenment of Rationality: Remarks on Horkheimer and Adorno's Dialectic of Enlightenment. ***Constellations***, 7(1): 133-140.

Brunkhorst, H. 2010. Democracy under pressure: The return of the Dialectic of Enlightenment in the world society. ***Civitas***, 10(1): 153-171.

Brunkhorst, H. 2014. ***Das doppelte Gesicht Europas***. Berlin: Suhrkamp.

Bryman, A. 2008. ***Social Research Methods*** (3rd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bryman, A., & Bell, E. 2011. ***Business Research Methods*** (3rd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Budd, J. M. 2001. Instances of Ideology in Discursive Practice: Implications for Library and Information Science. ***Library Quarterly***, 71(4): 498-517.

Burawoy, M. 2014. Facing an unequal world. ***Current Sociology***, 63(1): 5-34.

Burns, P. M. 1999. ***An Introduction to Tourism and Anthropology***. London: Routledge.

Burns, P. M., & Holden, A. 1995. ***Tourism A New Perspective***. Harlow: Prentice Hall.

Butterwegge, C., Lösch, B., & Ptak, R. 2008. ***Kritik des Neoliberalismus*** (2nd ed.). Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.

Button, K., Costa, Á., Costa, F., & Cruz, C. 2011. Problems of cost recovery by European airlines since market liberalization. ***Transportation Planning and Technology***, 34(2): 125-138.

Campbell, A. 1997. Mission Statements. ***Long Range Planning***, 30(6): 931-932.

Capano, G., & Piattoni, S. 2011. From Bologna to Lisbon: the political uses of the Lisbon 'script' in European higher education policy. ***Journal of European Public Policy***, 18(4): 584-606.

Carley, K. 1993. Coding Choices for Textual Analysis: A Comparison of Content Analysis and Map Analysis. ***Sociological Methodology***, 23: 75-126.

Carpenter, S. 2012. Mystification et esthétique moderne. ***Romantisme***, 156(2): 13-24.

Carruthers, B. G., Hyman, R., & Somers, M. R. 2012. On Colin Crouch's The Strange Non-Death of Neoliberalism. Cambridge, Polity, 2011. ***Socio-Economic Review***, 10(3): 605-623.

Castells, M. 2010. ***The Rise of the Network Society*** (2nd ed.). Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Chang, H.-J. 2010. ***23 Things They Don't Tell You about Capitalism***. London: Penguin.

Chapman, J. 2003. Hatred and Corruption of Task. ***Organisational & Social Dynamics***, 3(1): 40-60.

Chiapello, E. 2009. Die Konstruktion der Wirtschaft durch das Rechnungswesen. In R. Diaz-Bone, & G. Krell (Eds.), ***Diskurs und Ökonomie: Diskursanalytische Perspektiven auf Märkte und Organisationen***: 125-149. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.

Chiapello, E., & Fairclough, N. 2002. Understanding the new management ideology: a transdisciplinary contribution from critical discourse analysis and new sociology of capitalism. ***Discourse & Society***, 13(2): 185-208.

Childs, J. 2012. Demonstrating the Need for Effective Business Ethics: An Alternative Approach. ***Business and Society Review***, 117(2): 221-232.

Chirot, D. 2008. That Enlightenment Question Again. ***Society***, 45(3): 257-259.

Chomsky, N. 1999. ***Profit Over People: Neoliberalism and Global Order***. New York: Seven Stories Press.

Chouliaraki, L., & Fairclough, N. 2010. Critical Discourse Analysis in Organizational Studies: Towards an Integrationist Methodology. ***Journal of Management Studies***, 47(6): 1213-1218.

Christensen, L. T., Morsing, M., & Tyssen, O. 2013. CSR as aspirational talk. ***Organization***, 20(3): 372-393.

Clarke, J. 2010. After Neo-Liberalism? ***Cultural Studies***, 24(3): 375-394.

Clegg, S. R., Kornberger, M., Carter, C., & Rhodes, C. 2006. For management? ***Management Learning***, 31(1): 7-27.

Cohen, A. 2010. Myth and Myth Criticism following the Dialectic of Enlightenment. ***The European Legacy***, 15(5): 583-598.

Comité invisible. 2007. ***L'insurrection qui vient***. Paris: La Fabrique.

Comstock, G. 2012. ***Research Ethics: A Philosophical Guide to the Responsible Conduct of Research***. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Corazzini, L., Esposito, L., & Majorano, F. 2012. Reign in hell or serve in heaven? A cross-country journey into the relative vs absolute perceptions of wellbeing. ***Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization***, 81(3): 715-730.

Cornuel, E. 2007. Challenges facing business schools in the future. ***Journal of Management Development***, 26(1): 87-92.

Costea, B., Crump, N., & Holm, J. 2007. The spectre of Dionysus: play, work, and managerialism. ***Society and Business Review***, 2(2): 153-165.

Courtright, S. H., & Fry, C. G. 2007. Public Rates Of Return On Higher Education Investments, By State. ***Journal of College Teaching & Learning***, 4(8): 13-26.

Crouch, C. 2011. ***The Strange Non-Death of Neoliberalism***. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Currie, G., Knights, D., & Starkey, K. 2010. Introduction: A Post-crisis Critical Reflection on Business Schools. ***British Journal of Management***, 21: s1-s5.

Dahrendorf, R. 2002. Anmerkungen zur Globalisierung. In P. Kemper, & U. Sonnenschein (Eds.), ***Globalisierung im Alltag***: 13-25. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Dahrendorf, R. 2003. ***Die Krisen der Demokratie: Ein Gespräch mit Antonio Polito***. München: C. H. Beck.

Dandaneau, S. P., & Dodsworth, R. M. 2008. A consuming passion: An interview with George Ritzer. ***Consumption Markets & Culture***, 11(3): 191-201.

Dant, T. 2003. ***Critical Social Theory***. London: Sage.

Davies, W. 2014. ***The Limits of Neoliberalism: Authority, Sovereignty and the Logic of Competition***. London: Sage.

Davies, W., & McGoey, L. 2012. Rationalities of ignorance: on financial crisis and the ambivalence of neo-liberal epistemology. ***Economy and Society***, 41(1): 64-83.

Davison, J. 2010. (In)visible (in)tangibles: Visual portraits of the business elite. ***Accounting, Organizations and Society***, 35: 165-183.

de Beistegui, M. 2008. The Erosion of Democracy. ***Research in Phenomenology***, 38: 157-173.

de Botton, A. 2012. ***Religion for Atheists: A non-believer's guide to the uses of religion***. London: Hamish Hamilton.

Dehler, G. E. 2009. Prospects and Possibilities of Critical Management Education: Critical Beings and a Pedagogy of Critical Action. ***Management Learning***, 40(1): 31-49.

Delius, H. 1953. Descriptive Interpretation. ***Philosophy and Phenomenological Research***, 13(3): 305-323.

Dennett, D. C. 1990. The Interpretation of Texts, People and Other Artifacts. ***Philosophy and Phenomenological Research***, 50(Suppl.): 177-194.

Dicke, H., Glismann, H. H., & Siemßen, S. J. 1994. Vocational training in Germany, ***Kiel Working Papers, No. 622***.

Donaldson, T. 2012. Three Ethical Roots of the Economic Crisis. ***Journal of Business Ethics***, 106(1): 5-8.

Dörre, K. 2012. Die neue Landnahme: Dynamiken und Grenzen des Finanzkapitalismus. In K. Dörre, S. Lessenich, & H. Rosa (Eds.), ***Soziologie - Kapitalismus - Kritik***, 4th ed.: 21-86. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Duczmal, W. 2006. ***The Rise of Private Higher Education in Poland: Policies, Markets and Strategies***. Universiteit Twente, Netherlands.

Dumke, R. H. 1990. Reassessing the Wirtschaftswunder: Reconstruction and Postwar Growth in West Germany in an International Context. ***Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics***, 52(2): 451-492.

DuRand, C. 2012. Neoliberalism and Globalization. In C. DuRand, & S. Martinot (Eds.), ***Recreating Democracy in a Globalized State***: 27-37. Atlanta: Clarity Press.

Durand, T., & Dameron, S. 2011. Where Have All the Business Schools Gone? ***British Journal of Management***, 22(3): 559-563.

Duriau, V. J., Reger, R. K., & Pfarrer, M. D. 2007. A Content Analysis of the Content Analysis Literature in Organization Studies: Research Themes, Data Sources, and Methodological Refinements. ***Organizational Research Methods***, 10(1): 5-34.

Dysthe, O., & Webler, W.-D. 2010. Pedagogical Issues from Humboldt to Bologna: The Case of Norway and Germany. ***Higher Education Policy***, 23(2): 247-270.

Eagleton, T. 2011. ***Why Marx Was Right***. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Easton, G. 2010. Critical realism in case study research. ***Industrial Marketing Management***, 39(1): 118-128.

Eco, U. 1977. ***Zeichen: Einführung in einen Begriff und seine Geschichte***. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Eco, U. 1999. ***Die Grenzen der Interpretation***. München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag.

Edward, P. 2006. Examining Inequality: Who Really Benefits from Global Growth? ***World Development***, 34(10): 1667-1695.

Egron-Polak, E. 2012. Internationalization of Higher Education: A Few Global Trends and Regional Perspectives. In C. T. Ennew, & D. Greenaway (Eds.), ***The Globalization of Higher Education***: 57-69. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Ekelund, L., & Jönsson, H. 2011. How does Modernity Taste? Tomatoes in the Societal Change from Modernity to Late Modernity. ***Culture Unbound***, 3: 439-454.

Eliade, M. 1999. ***Myth and Reality*** (Reissue ed.). Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.

Elias, N. 2014 [1970]. ***Was ist Soziologie?*** (12th ed.). Weinheim: Beltz-Juventa.

Eliot, C. H. 2011. Hempel's Provisos and Ceteris Paribus Clauses. ***Journal for General Philosophy of Science***, 42(2): 207-218.

Engwall, L. 2007. The anatomy of management education. ***Scandinavian Journal of Management***, 23(1): 4-35.

Engwall, L., & Danell, R. 2011. Britannia and her Business Schools. ***British Journal of Management***, 22: 432-442.

Ennew, C. T. 2012. Around the World in 80 Ways: Routes to Internationalization in Higher Education. In C. T. Ennew, & D. Greenaway (Eds.), ***The Globalization of Higher Education***: 70-90. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Etzel, D., Hauptmann, A., & Schmerer, H.-J. 2013. Dessecting the German export miracle: Plant-level evidence. ***Economic Systems***, 37: 387-403.

European Commission, 1999. Bologna Declaration, http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/bologna/bologna.pdf: Accessed 05 July 2013.

Fairclough, N. 1995. ***Critical discourse analysis: the critical study of language***. Harlow: Longman.

Fairclough, N. 2012. Critical Discourse Analysis. In J. P. Gee, & M. Handford (Eds.), ***The Routledge Handbook of Discourse Analysis***: 9-20. Abingdon: Routledge.

Fendel, R., & Frenkel, M. 2005. The International Competitiveness of Germany and other European Economies: The Assessment of the Global Competitiveness Report. ***Intereconomics***, 40(1): 29-35.

Feng, D., & O'Halloran, K. L. 2012. Representing emotive meaning in visual images: A social semiotic approach. ***Journal of Pragmatics***, 44: 2067-2084.

Ferguson, M. 1992. The Mythology About Globalization. ***European Journal of Communication***, 7(1): 69-93.

Ferraro, F., Pfeffer, J., & Sutton, R. I. 2005. Economics Language and Assumptions: How Theories Can Become Self-Fulfilling. ***Academy of Management Review***, 30(1): 8-24.

Festenstein, M., & Kenny, M. 2005. ***Political Ideologies***. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Festinger, L. 1957. ***A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance***. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Fetchenhauer, D., Azar, O. H., Antonides, G., Dunning, D., Frank, R. H., Lea, S., & Ölander, F. 2012. Monozygotic twins or unrelated stepchildren? On the relationship between economic psychology and behavioral economics. ***Journal of Economic Psychology***, 33(3): 695-699.

Findlow, S. 2008. Accountability and innovation in higher education: a disabling tension? ***Studies in Higher Education***, 33(3): 313-329.

Fishman, T. C. 2005. ***China, Inc.: How the Rise of the Next Superpower Challenges America and the World***. New York: Scribner.

Fitzsimmons, J. A., & Fitzsimmons, M. J. 2013. ***Service Management: Operations, Strategy, Information Technology*** (8th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Fleetwood, S. 2005. Ontology in Organization and Management Studies: A Critical Realist Perspective. ***Organization***, 12(2): 197-222.

Fleming, K. 2012. Odysseus and Enlightenment: Horkheimer and Adorno’s Dialektik der Aufklärung. ***International Journal of the Classical Tradition***, 19(2): 107-128.

Flew, T. 2012. Michel Foucault's The Birth of Biopolitics and contemporary neo-liberalism debates. ***Thesis Eleven***, 108(1): 44-65.

Flick, U. 2007. ***Qualitative Sozialforschung: Eine Einführung***. Reinbek: Rowohlt.

Folger, R., & Salvador, R. 2008. Is Management Theory Too "Self-ish"? ***Journal of Management***, 34(6): 1127-1151.

Ford, J., Harding, N., & Learmonth, M. 2010. Who is it That Would Make Business Schools More Critical? Critical Reflections on Critical Management Studies. ***British Journal of Management***, 21: s71-s81.

Fournier, V., & Grey, C. 2000. At the Critical Moment: Conditions and Prospects for Critical Management Studies. ***Human Relations***, 53(1): 7-32.

Frank, A., Hieronimus, S., Killius, N., & Meyer-Guckel, V. 2011, ***Rolle und Zukunft privater Hochschulen in Deutschland.*** Essen: Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft.

Frank, R. H., Gilovich, T. D., & Regan, D. T. 1996. Do Economists Make Bad Citizens? ***Journal of Economic Perspectives***, 10(1): 187-192.

Frechtling, D. C., & Boo, S. 2011. On the Ethics of Management Research: An Exploratory Investigation. ***Journal of Business Ethics***, 106(2): 149-160.

Friedland, R. 2009. The Endless Fields of Pierre Bourdieu. ***Organization***, 16(6): 887-917.

Friedman, T. 2006. ***The World is Flat: The Globalized World in the Twenty-First Century***. London: Penguin.

Friga, P. N., Bettis, R. A., & Sullivan, R. S. 2003. Changes in Graduate Management Education and New Business School Strategies for the 21st Century. ***Academy of Management Learning & Education***, 2(3): 233-249.

Fukuyama, F. 1989. The End of History? ***The National Interest***, 16: 3-18.

Fulcher, J., & Scott, J. 1999. ***Sociology***. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gabriel, Y. 2005. Glass Cages and Glass Palaces: Images of Organization in Image-Conscious Times. ***Organization***, 12(1): 9-27.

Gabriel, Y. 2009. Reconciling an Ethic of Care with Critical Management Pedagogy. ***Management Learning***, 40(4): 379-385.

Gabriel, Y., & Lang, T. 2006. ***The Unmanageable Consumer: Contemporary Consumption and its Fragmentation*** (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

Galaz, V., Moberg, F., Olsson, E.-K., Paglia, E., & Parker, C. 2011. Institutional and Political Leadership Dimensions of Cascading Ecological Crises. ***Public Administration***, 89(2): 361-380.

Gamble, A. 2001. Neo-Liberalism. ***Capital & Class***, 25(3): 127-134.

Gardner, H. 2005. Beyond Markets and Individuals: A Focus on Educational Goals. In R. Hersh, & J. Merrow (Eds.), ***Declining by Degrees: Higher Education at Risk***. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gauck, J. 2014. Festveranstaltung zum 60. Jubiläum des Walter Eucken Instituts, http://www.bundespraesident.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/Reden/2014/01/140116-Walter-Eucken-Institut.pdf?__blob=publicationFile: Accessed 20 March 2014.

Gehmann, U. 2003. Modern Myths. ***Culture and Organization***, 9(2): 105-119.

Geier, M. 2012. ***Aufklärung: Das europäische Projekt***. Reinbek: Rowohlt.

Geißler, H. 2012. ***Sapere aude! Warum wir eine neue Aufklärung brauchen***. Berlin: Ullstein.

George, S. 2014. Macht ohne Rechenschaft: Der globale Lobbyismus. ***Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik***, 6: 83-92.

GfdS. 2014. Unwörter des Jahres, http://www.gfds.de/aktionen/wort-des-jahres/unwoerter-des-jahres/: Accessed 30 January 2014.

Ghoshal, S. 2005. Bad Management Theories Are Destroying Good Management Practices. ***Academy of Management Learning & Education***, 41(1): 75-91.

Gibbert, M., & Ruigrok, W. 2010. The "What" and "How" of Case Study Rigor: Three Strategies Based on Published Work. ***Organizational Research Methods***, 13(4): 710-737.

Gibbs, P., & Murphy, P. 2009. Implementation of Ethical Higher Education Marketing. ***Tertiary Education and Management***, 15(4): 341-354.

Giddens, A. 1990. ***The Consequences of Modernity***. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Giddens, A. 1991. ***Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age***. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Gioia, D. A., & Corley, K. G. 2002. Being Good Versus Looking Good: Business School Rankings and the Circean Transformation ***Academy of Management Learning & Education***, 1(1): 107-120.

Giri, A. K. 2007. Creative Social Research: Rethinking Theories and Methods and the Calling of an Ontological Epistemology of Participation. ***Dialectical Anthropology***, 30(3-4): 227-271.

Giroux, H. A. 2008. ***Against the Terror of Neoliberalism: Politics Beyond the Age of Greed***. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers.

Goldfarb, Z. A., & Boorstein, M. 2013. Pope Francis denounces 'trickle-down' economic theories in critique of inequality, ***The Washington Post***. http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/pope-francis-denounces-trickle-down-economic-theories-in-critique-of-inequality/2013/11/26/e17ffe4e-56b6-11e3-8304-caf30787c0a9_story.html: Accessed 04 February 2014.

Goldman, R., & Papson, S. 2006. Capital's brandscapes. ***Journal of Consumer Culture***, 6(3): 327-353.

Gorski, P. C. 2006. Complicity with conservatism: the de-politicizing of multicultural and intercultural education. ***Intercultural Education***, 17(2): 163-177.

Gottdiener, M. 1997. ***The Theming of America: dreams, visions, and commercial spaces***. Boulder: Westview Press.

Göztepe-Celebi, E., Stallmann, F., & Zimmer, A. 2002. Looking back: Higher Education Reform in Germany. ***German Policy Studies***, 2(3): 0-22.

Grant, D., Iedema, R., & Oswick, C. 2009. Discourse and Critical Management Studies. In M. Alvesson, T. Bridgman, & H. Willmott (Eds.), ***The Oxford Handbook of Critical Management Studies***: 213-231. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gray, F. 2010. Rudolf Steiner: Occult Crank or Architectural Mastermind? ***Architectural Theory Review***, 15(1): 43-60.

Grey, C. 2004. Reinventing Business Schools: The Contribution of Critical Management Education. ***Academy of Management Learning & Education***, 3(2): 178-186.

Grey, C., & Willmott, H. 2005. Introduction. In C. Grey, & H. Willmott (Eds.), ***Critical Management Studies: A Reader***: 1-20. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Habermas, J. 1981. ***Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns***. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Han, B.-C. 2014. ***Psychopolitik: Neoliberalismus und die neuen Machttechniken***. Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer.

Handelsblatt. 2012. Die Realwirtschaft schlägt zurück, ***Handelsblatt***: 7-9. 24-26 August 2012.

Handsfield, L. J. 2011. Disruptive Comprehension Instruction: Deconstructing, Resituating, and Rewriting Texts. ***Theory Into Practice***, 50(2): 125-132.

Haque, U. 2011. ***The New Capitalist Manifesto***. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press.

Hardy, C., & Grant, D. 2012. Readers beware: Provocation, problematization and … problems. ***Human Relations***, 65(5): 547-566.

Harman, W. W. 1993. Rethinking the central institutions of modern society: science and business. ***Futures***, 25(10): 1063-1070.

Harrison, L. K., Denning, S., Easton, H. L., Hall, J. C., Burns, V. E., Ring, C., & Carroll, D. 2001. The effects of competition and competitiveness on cardiovascular activity. ***Psychophysiology***, 38: 601-606.

Hart, S. L. 2010. ***Capitalism at the Crossroads: Next Generation Business Strategies for a Post-crisis World*** (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall.

Harvey, D. 2005. ***A Brief History of Neoliberalism***. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Harvey, M. G., Novicevic, M., & Ready, K. J. 2006. Managing Change in Business Schools: Focus on Faculty Responses. ***Journal of Education for Business***, 81(3): 160-164.

Hatch, M. J., & Cunliffe, A. L. 2006. ***Organization Theory: Modern, Symbolic, and Postmodern Perspectives*** (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hay, C. 2011. Pathology Without Crisis? The Strange Demise of the Anglo-Liberal Growth Model. ***Government and Opposition***, 46(01): 1-31.

Hendry, J. 2006. Educating Managers for Post-bureaucracy: The Role of the Humanities. ***Management Learning***, 37(3): 267-281.

Herf, J. 2012. Dialectic of Enlightenment Reconsidered. ***New German Critique***, 39(3 117): 81-89.

Hering, T. 2009. Bologna als traurige Mogelpackung. In C. Scholz, & V. Stein (Eds.), ***Bologna-Schwarzbuch***: 107-111. Bonn: Deutscher Hochschulverband.

Herkenrath, M. 2012. ***Die Globalisierung der Sozialen Bewegungen: Transnationale Zivilgesellschaft und die Suche nach einer gerechten Weltordnung***. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.

Hessel, S. 2011. ***Indignez-vous!*** (14th ed.). Montpellier: Indigène Editions.

Higginbotham, N., Freeman, S., Connor, L., & Albrecht, G. 2010. Environmental injustice and air pollution in coal affected communities, Hunter Valley, Australia. ***Health & Place***, 16(2): 259-266.

Hill, R. P., & Rapp, J. M. 2009. Globalization and Poverty: Oxymoron or New Possibilities? ***Journal of Business Ethics***, 85(1): 39-47.

Hillebrand, E. 2009. Poverty, growth, and inequality over the next 50 years, ***FAO Expert meeting on How to Feed the World in 2050***. 24-26 June.

Hirst, P., & Thompson, G. 1999. ***Globalization in Question*** (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Polity Press.

Hite, N. G., & Railsback, B. 2010. Analysis of the Content and Characteristics of University Websites With Implications for Web Designers and Educators. ***Journal of Computer Informations Systems***, 51(1): 107-113.

Hochschild, A. R. 1983. ***The Managed Heart: commercialization of human feeling***. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Høiback, H. 2011. What is Doctrine? ***Journal of Strategic Studies***, 34(6): 879-900.

Honneth, A. 2000. The Possibility of a Disclosing Critique of Society: The Dialectic of Enlightenment in Light of Current Debates in Social Criticism. ***Constellations***, 7(1): 116-127.

Honneth, A. 2011. ***Das Recht der Freiheit***. Berlin: Suhrkamp.

Horkheimer, M., & Adorno, T. W. 2010 [1947]. ***Dialektik der Aufklärung*** (19th ed.). Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag.

Huehn, M. P. 2008. Unenlightened Economism: The Antecedents of Bad Corporate Governance and Ethical Decline. ***Journal of Business Ethics***, 81(4): 823-835.

Huisman, J., & van der Wende, M. 2004. The EU and Bologna: are supra- and international initiatives threatening domestic agendas? ***European Journal of Education***, 39(3): 349-357.

Hum, N. J., Chamberlin, P. E., Hambright, B. L., Portwood, A. C., Schat, A. C., & Bevan, J. L. 2011. A picture is worth a thousand words: A content analysis of Facebook profile photographs. ***Computers in Human Behavior***, 27: 1828-1833.

Hummel, F. 2008. ***A Case study analysis of the effects of the Bolgna Declaration on higher and vocational education in Germany***. University of Sheffield, Doctoral Thesis.

Humphreys, M., & Brown, A. D. 2002. Narratives of Organizational Identity and Identification: A Case Study of Hegemony and Resistance. ***Organization Studies***, 23(3): 421-447.

ISIPE. 2014. International Student Initiative for Pluralism in Economics, http://www.isipe.net: Accessed 10 October 2014.

Israel, J. 2011. ***Democratic Enlightenment: Philosophy, Revolution, and Human Rights 1750-1790***. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Iszatt-White, M. 2013. Introdution: the 'Managed Heart'. In M. Iszatt-White (Ed.), ***Leadership as Emotional Labour: Management and the 'managed heart'***: 1-12. Abingdon: Routledge.

Jackson, T. 2009. ***Prosperity without Growth: Economics for a Finite Planet***. London: Earthscan.

Jacob, M. C. 2013. ***The First Knowledge Economy: Human Capital and the European Economy***. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jakobsen, M. L. F. 2010. Untangling the impact of Europeanization and globalization on national utility liberalization: a systematic process analysis of two Danish reforms. ***Journal of European Public Policy***, 17(6): 891-908.

Jessen, J. 2006. Fegefeuer des Marktes. In J. Jessen (Ed.), ***Fegefeuer des Marktes: Die Zukunft des Kapitalismus***: 105-120. Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung.

Jessop, B. 2008. A Cultural Political Economy of Competitiveness and its Implications for Higher Education. In B. Jessop, N. Fairclough, & R. Wodak (Eds.), ***Education and the Knowledge-Based Economy in Europe***: 13-39. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Joutsenvirta, M. 2012. Executive Pay and Legitimacy: Changing Discursive Battles Over the Morality of Excessive Manager Compensation. ***Journal of Business Ethics***, 116(3): 459-477.

Julian, S. D., & Ofori-Dankwa, J. C. 2006. Is Accreditation Good for the Strategic Decision Making of Traditional Business Schools? ***Academy of Management Learning & Education***, 5(2): 225-233.

Kaesler, D., & Weber, M. 2013. ***Die protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus*** (4th ed.). München: C. H. Beck.

Kälin, W. 2013. Late modernity: Human rights under pressure? ***Punishment & Society***, 15(4): 397-411.

Kallio, T. J. 2007. Taboos in Corporate Social Responsibility Discourse. ***Journal of Business Ethics***, 74(2): 165-175.

Kauppinen, I. 2012. Towards transnational academic capitalism. ***Higher Education***, 64: 543-556.

Kay, J. 2009. The Rationale of the Market Economy: A European Perspective. ***Capitalism and Society***, 4(3): Art. 1.

Kegels, C., & van der Linden, J. 2011. Competitiveness, productivity, competition and structural reforms: the Belgian case. ***Reflets et perspectives de la vie économique***, L(3): 27.

Keidel, R. 1997. Organizational Representation: Process, Structure, Mindset. ***Journal of Management Inquiry***, 6(3): 210-219.

Kerr, C. 2001. ***The uses of the university*** (5th ed.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Khurana, R. 2007. ***From higher aims to hired hands: The social transformation of Amercian business schools and the unfulfilled promise of management as a profession***. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Khurana, R., & Nohria, N. 2008. It's Time to Make Management a True Profession. ***Harvard Business Review***, 86(10): 70-77.

Khurana, R., & Snook, S. 2011. Commentary on 'A Scholar's Quest' - Identity Work in Business Schools: From Don Quixote, to Dons and Divas. ***Journal of Management Inquiry***, 20(4): 358-361.

Kiefer, T., Hartley, J., Conway, N., & Briner, R. B. 2014. Feeling the Squeeze: Public Employees' Experiences of Cutback- and Innovation-Related Organizational Changes Following a National Announcement of Budget Reductions. ***Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory***.

Kilduff, M., Mehra, A., & Dunn, M. B. 2011. From Blue Sky Research to Problem Solving: A Philosophy of Science Theory of New Knowledge Production. ***Academy of Management Review***, 36(2): 297-317.

Kleist, C. 2013. A Discourse Ethics Defense of Nussbaum's Capabilities Theory. ***Journal of Human Development and Capabilities***, 14(2): 266-284.

Klikauer, T. 2015. What Is Managerialism? ***Critical Sociology***, 41(7-8): 1103-1119.

Knight, J. 2003. Updated internationalization definition. ***International Higher Education***, 33: 2-3.

Knight, J. 2004. Internationalization Remodeled: Definition, Approaches, and Rationales. ***Journal of Studies in International Education***, 8(1): 5-31.

Kotteder, F. 2013. ***Billig kommt uns teuer zu stehen: Das skrupellose Geschäft der globalisierten Wirtschaft***. München: Ludwig.

Kramer, A. E., & Norris, F. 2013. G-20 Backs Plan to Curb Tax Avoidance by Large Corporations, ***The New York Times***. http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/20/business/global/g-20-nations-back-plan-to-curb-corporate-tax-evasion.html?_r=0: Accessed 06 February 2014.

Krippendorf, K. 2013. ***Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*** (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Krücken, G. 2013. Die Universität - ein rationaler Mythos? ***Beiträge zur Hochschulforschung***, 35(4): 82-101.

Krugman, P. 2009. How did economists get it so wrong? ***New York Times Magazine***. http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/06/magazine/06Economic-t.html?_r=2: Accessed 02 April 2013.

Küng, H. 2010. ***Anständig wirtschaften: Warum Ökonomie Moral braucht***. München: Piper.

Lane, J.-E. 2000. ***The Public Sector: Concepts, Models and Approaches*** (3rd ed.). London: Sage.

Lange, D., & Washburn, N. T. 2012. Understanding Attributions of Corporate Social Irresponsibility. ***Academy of Management Review***, 37(2): 300-326.

Langenohl, A. 2008. How to change other people's institutions: discursive entrepreneurship and the boundary object of competition/competitiveness in the German banking sector. ***Economy and Society***, 37(1): 68-93.

Lawrence, S., & Sharma, U. 2002. Commodification of Education and Academic Labour - Using the Balanced Scorecard in a University Setting. ***Critical Perspectives on Accounting***, 13(5): 661-677.

Learmonth, M., & Humphreys, M. 2012. Autoethnography and academic identity: glimpsing business school doppelgängers. ***Organization***, 19(1): 99-117.

Lee, B., & LiPuma, E. 2002. Cultures of Circulation: The Imaginations of Modernity. ***Cultures***, 14(191-213).

Lege, J. 2009. Akkreditierung als rechtlicher Systemfehler. In C. Scholz, & V. Stein (Eds.), ***Bologna-Schwarzbuch***: 59-68. Bonn: Deutscher Hochschulverband.

Leicht, R. 2014. Gaucks Rede zum Neoliberalismus war überaus notwendig, ***Zeit online***. http://www.zeit.de/politik/deutschland/2014-01/gauck-neoliberalismus-rede: Accessed 20 March 2014.

Leitch, C., Hill, F., & Neergaard, H. 2010. Entrepreneurial and Business Growth and the Quest for a "Comprehensive Theory": Tilting at Windmills? ***Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice***, 34(2): 249-260.

Lemert, C., Elliott, A., Chaffee, D., & Hsu, E. 2010. ***Globalization: A Reader***. Abingdon: Routledge.

Lemke, T. 2001. 'The birth of bio-politics': Michel Foucault's lecture at the Collège de France on neo-liberal governmentality. ***Economy and Society***, 30(2): 190-207.

Lenzen, D. 2014. ***Bildung statt Bologna!*** Berlin: Ullstein.

Liagouras, G. 2005. The political economy of post-industrial capitalism. ***Thesis Eleven***, 81: 20-35.

Lieb, W. 2012. 'Goldader Bildung': Über den Trend zur Privatisierung, marktkonforme Hochschulen und Bologna. ***Forschung und Lehre***, 19: 802-804.

Liesner, A. 2009. Dienstleistungsprimat als Autonomiedemontage. In C. Scholz, & V. Stein (Eds.), ***Bologna-Schwarzbuch***: 69-75. Bonn: Deutscher Hochschulverband.

Lin-Hi, N., & Müller, K. 2013. The CSR bottom line: Preventing corporate social irresponsibility. ***Journal of Business Research***, 66(10): 1928-1936.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. 2000. Paradigmatic Controversies, Contradictions, and Emerging Confluences. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), ***Handbook of Qualitative Research***, 2nd ed.: 163-188. London: Sage.

Lindner, F. 2011. Following Germany's Lead to Economic Disaster, ***Social Europe***. http://www.social-europe.eu/2011/12/following-germanys-lead-to-economic-disaster/: Accessed 04 February 2014.

Lobinger, K. 2012. ***Visuelle Kommunikationsforschung***. Wiesbaden: Springer VS.

Locke, R. R. 1996. ***The collapse of the American management mystique***. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Locke, R. R., & Spender, J.-C. 2011. ***Confronting Managerialism: How the Business Elite and Their Schools Threw Our Lives Out of Balance***. London: Zed Books.

Loewenstein, J., Ocasio, W., & Jones, C. 2012. Vocabularies and Vocabulary Structure: A New Approach Linking Categories, Practices, and Institutions. ***The Academy of Management Annals***, 6(1): 41-86.

Lordon, F. 2013. ***La Société des Affects: Pour un structuralisme des passions***. Paris: Editions du Seuil.

Lowrie, A., & Willmott, H. 2009. Accreditation Sickness in the Consumption of Business Education: The Vacuum in AACSB Standard Setting. ***Management Learning***, 40(4): 411-420.

Lozano, J.-F. 2012. Educating Responsible Managers. The Role of University Ethos. ***Journal of Academic Ethics***, 10: 213-226.

Luhmann, N. 2012. ***Soziale Systeme: Grundriß einer allgemeinen Theorie*** (15th ed.). Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Lyng, S. 2012. Existencial Transcendence in Late Modernity: Edgework and Hermeneutic Reflexivity. ***Human Studies***, 35(3): 401-414.

Lyotard, F. 1984. ***The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge***. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Maak, T., & Pless, N. M. 2009. Business Leaders as Citizens of the World. Advancing Humanism on a Global Scale. ***Journal of Business Ethics***, 88(3): 537-550.

Macfarlane, B., & Grant, B. 2012. The growth of higher education studies: from forerunners to pathtakers. ***Higher Education Research & Development***, 31(5): 621-624.

Machin, D., & Mayr, A. 2012. ***How To Do Critical Discourse Analysis***. London: Sage.

Mann, M. 2011. ***Power in the 21st Century: Conversations with John A. Hall***. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Marx, R. 2008. ***Das Kapital: Ein Plädoyer für den Menschen***. München: Pattloch.

Mause, K. 2010. Considering Market-Based Instruments for Consumer Protection in Higher Education. ***Journal of Consumer Policy***, 33(1): 29-53.

Maxwell, N. 2007. ***From Knowledge to Wisdom: A Revolution for Science and the Humanities*** (2nd ed.). London: Pentire Press.

Maxwell, T. 2012. Arguing for Wisdom in the University: An Intellectual Autobiography. ***Philosophia***, 40: 663-704.

Mazarr, M. J. 2007. ***Unmodern Men in the Modern World: Radical Islam, Terrorism, and the War on Modernity***. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McCarty, N., Poole, K. T., & Rosenthal, H. 2013. ***Political Bubbles: Financial Crises and the Failure of American Democracy***. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

McCulloch, A. 2009. The student as co-producer: learning from public administration about the student-university relationship. ***Studies in Higher Education***, 34(2): 171-183.

McKevitt, D., & Lawton, A. 1996. The manager, the citizen, the politician and performance measures. ***Public Money & Management***, 16(3): 49-54.

McMurtry, J. 2012. Behind Global System Collapse: The Life-Blind Structure of Economic Reality. ***Journal of Business Ethics***, 108(1): 49-60.

Meadows, D., Randers, J., & Meadows, D. 2006. ***Limits to Growth: The 30-Year Update***. London: Earthscan.

Menzel, U. 1998. ***Globalisierung versus Fragmentierung***. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Metz, M., & Seeßlen, G. 2012. ***Bürger erhebt euch! Versuch über Postdemokratie, Neoliberalismus und zivilen Ungehorsam***. Hamburg: Laika.

Michelsen, S. 2010. Humboldt meets Bologna. ***Higher Education Policy***, 23: 151-172.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. 1994. ***Qualitative Data Analysis*** (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Mintzberg, H. 2004. ***Managers Not MBAs***. Harlow: Pearson.

Mintzberg, H. 2013. Rebalancing Society, http://www.mintzberg.org: Accessed 01 October 2013.

Molesworth, M., Nixon, E., & Scullion, R. 2009. Having, being and higher education: the marketisation of the university and the transformation of the student into consumer. ***Teaching in Higher Education***, 14(3): 277-287.

Morrice, E., & Colagiuri, R. 2013. Coal mining, social injustice and health: a universal conflict of power and priorities. ***Health & Place***, 19: 74-79.

Morss, E. R. 1991. The New Global Players: How They Compete and Collaborate. ***World Development***, 19(1): 55-64.

Moutsios, S. 2013. The de-Europeanization of the university under the Bologna Process. ***Thesis Eleven***, 119(1): 22-46.

Mudge, S. L. 2008. What is neo-liberalism? ***Socio-Economic Review***, 6(4): 703-731.

Muff, K., Dyllick, T., Drewell, M., North, J., Shrivastava, P., & Haertle, J. 2013. ***Management Education for the World***. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Müller, H. C. 2014. Wirtschaft braucht Moral. ***Handelsblatt***, 7-9 February: 50-56.

Müller, K. 2002. ***Globalisierung***. Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung.

Munir, K. A. 2011. Financial Crisis 2008-2009: What Does the Silence of Institutional Theorists Tell Us? ***Journal of Management Inquiry***, 20(2): 114-117.

Murphy, M. 2009. Bureaucracy and its limits: accountability and rationality in higher education. ***British Journal of Sociology of Education***, 30(6): 683-695.

Murray, W. E. 2006. ***Geographies of Globalization***. Abingdon: Routledge.

Naidoo, R. 2003. Repositioning Higher Education as a Global Commodity: Opportunities and challenges for future sociology of education work. ***British Journal of Sociology of Education***, 24(2): 249-259.

Naidoo, R. 2008. Building or Eroding Intellectual Capital? Student Consumerism as a Cultural Force in the Context of Knowledge Economy. In J. Välimaa, & O.-H. Ylijoki (Eds.), ***Cultural Perspectives on Higher Education***: 43-55. Dordrecht: Springer.

Naidoo, R. 2010. Global Learning in a NeoLiberal Age: Implications for Development. In E. Unterhalter, & V. Carpentier (Eds.), ***Global Inequalities and Higher Education: Whose interests are we serving***: 66-90. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Naidoo, R., & Jamieson, I. 2005. Empowering participants or corroding learning? Towards a research agenda on the impact of student consumerism in higher education. ***Journal of Education Policy***, 20(3): 267-281.

Naidoo, R., Shankar, A., & Veer, E. 2011. The consumerist turn in higher education: Policy aspirations and outcomes. ***Journal of Marketing Management***, 27(11-12): 1142-1162.

Natale, S. M., & Doran, C. 2012. Marketization of Education: An Ethical Dilemma. ***Journal of Business Ethics***, 105(2): 187-196.

Natale, S. M., Sora, S. A., & Drumheller, M. 2012. The Importance of the University in the 21st Century: Ethical Conflicts and Moral Choice. ***Journal of Academic Ethics***, 10: 1-8.

Negri, A. 2008. Contemporaneity between Modernity and Postmodernity. In T. Smith, O. Enwezor, & N. Condee (Eds.), ***Antinomies of Art and Culture: Modernity, Postmodernity, Contemporaneity***: 23-29. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Neiman, S. 2008. ***Moral Clarity***. Orlando: Harcourt.

Ng, C. J. W. 2014. Semiotizing Capitalism in Corporate Brand Enactment: The case of Singapore's coporatized universities. ***Critical Discourse Studies***, 11(2): 139-157.

Ng, E. S. W., Schweitzer, L., & Lyons, S. T. 2010. New Generation, Great Expectations: A Field Study of the Millennial Generation. ***Journal of Business Psychology***, 25: 281-292.

Nida-Rümelin, J. 2011. ***Die Optimierungsfalle: Philosophie einer humanen Ökonomie***. München: Irisiana.

Nussbaum, M. 2002. Capabilities and Social Justice. ***International Studies Review***, 4(2): 123-135.

Nussbaum, M. 2010. ***Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities***. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Oberg, A., Schoellhorn, T., & Woywode, M. 2009. Isomorphism in Organizational Self-Representation in the World Wide Web? Institutionalization Process Regarding Internet Presentation of Organizations. ***Academy of Management Annual Meeting Proceedings***, 8(1): 1-6.

OECD. 2011. An Overview of Growing Inequality in OECD Countries: Main Findings, http://www.oecd.org/els/soc/49499779.pdf: Accessed 08 February 2014.

OECD. 2013. Crisis squeezes income and puts pressure on inequality and poverty. In OECD (Ed.), http://www.oecd.org/els/soc/OECD2013-Inequality-and-Poverty-8p.pdf: Accessed 08 February 2014.

Ohmae, K. 1990. ***The Borderless World***. London: Collins.

Ohmae, K. 1995. ***The End of the Nation State***. New York: Free Press.

Olssen, M., & Peters, M. A. 2005. Neo-liberalism, higher education and the knowledge economy: from the free market to knowledge capitalism. ***Journal of Education Policy***, 20(3): 313-345.

Oreopoulos, P., & Petronijevic, U. 2013. Making College Worth It: A Review of the Returns to Higher Education. ***The Future of Children***, 23(1): 41-65.

Osel, J. 2014. Konkurrenz zwischen Ausbildung und Studium wird künstlich herbeigeredet, ***Süddeutsche.de***. http://www.sueddeutsche.de/bildung/2.220: Accessed 29 August 2014.

Osterloh, M., & Frey, B. 2012. Academic Ranking between the "Republic of Science" and "New Public Management", ***EFMD Higher Education Research Conference***. Horgen, Switzerland.

Ostermann, H. 2002. 'Rotten at the Core?' The Higher Education Debate in Germany. ***German Politics***, 11(1): 43-60.

Oxfam. 2014. Working for the few, ***Oxfam Briefing Paper 178***. http://www.oxfam.org: Accessed 05 February 2014.

Palmer, T. B., & Short, J. C. 2008. Mission Statements in U.S. Colleges of Business: An Empirical Examination of Their Content With Linkages to Configurations and Performance. ***Academy of Management Learning & Education***, 7(4): 454-470.

Parker, M. 2014. University, Ltd: Changing a business school. ***Organization***, 21(2): 281-292.

Parker, M., & Jary, D. 1995. The McUniversity: Organization, Management and Academic Subjectivity. ***Organization***, 2(2): 319-338.

Parsons, J., & Frick, W. 2008. Why Professors Hate Their Jobs: A Critique of the Pedagogy of Academic Disengagement. ***Culture Society and Praxis***, 7(2): 30-49.

Patriotta, G., & Starkey, K. 2008. From Utilitarian Morality to Moral Imagination: Reimagining the Business School. ***Journal of Management Inquiry***, 17(4): 319-327.

Payne, J. 2009. Emotional Labour and Skill: A Reappraisal. ***Gender, Work and Organization***, 16(3): 348-367.

Pedersen, E. O. 2009. ***Die Mythosphilosophie Ernst Cassirers: Zur Bedeutung des Mythos in der Auseinandersetzung mit der Kantischen Erkenntnistheorie und in der Sphäre der modernen Politik***. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann.

Pettigrew, A. 2001. Management Research After Modernism. ***British Journal of Management***, 12: S61-S70.

Pettigrew, A. 2011. Scholarship with Impact. ***British Journal of Management***, 22: 347-354.

Pfeffer, J. 2004. How Economic Language and Assumptions Undermine Ethics: Rediscovering Human Values, ***Paper prepared for the Inaugural Lecture of the Rafael Escola Chair of Ethics at the School of Engineering of the University of Navarre in San Sebastian, 30 April 2004***.

Pfeffer, J., & Fong, C. T. 2002. The End of Business Schools? Less Success Than Meets the Eye. ***Academy of Management Learning & Education***, 1(1): 78-95.

Pfeffer, J., & Fong, C. T. 2004. The Business School 'Business': Some Lessons from the US Experience. ***Journal of Management Studies***, 41(8): 1501-1520.

Phelps, E. S. 2009. Refounding Capitalism. ***Capitalism and Society***, 4(3): Art. 2.

Phillips, N., & Hardy, C. 2002. ***Discourse Analysis: Investigating Processes of Social Construction***. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Pick, D. 2008. Towards a 'Post-Public Era'? Shifting Frames in German and Australian Higher Education Policy. ***Higher Education Quarterly***, 62(1/2): 3-19.

Piketty, T. 2013. ***Le capital au XXIème siècle***. Paris: Editions du Seuil.

Polanyi, K. 2001 [1944]. ***The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time***. Boston: Beacon Press.

Popping, R. 2009. Some views on agreement to be used in content analysis studies. ***Quality & Quantity***, 44(6): 1067-1078.

Posner, R. A. 2009. ***A Failure of Capitalism: The Crisis of '08 and the Descent into Depression***. Boston: Harvard University Press.

Preston, A. M., & Young, J. J. 2000. Constructing the global corporation and corporate constructions of the global: a picture essay. ***Accounting, Organizations and Society***, 25: 427-449.

Prichard, C., & Willmott, H. 1997. Just How Managed is the McUniversity? ***Organization Studies***, 18(2): 287-316.

Priddat, B. P. 2014. ***Wir werden zu Tode geprüft: Wie man trotz Bachelor, Master & Bologna intelligent studiert*** Hamburg: Murmann.

Prior, L. 2003. ***Using Documents in Social Research***. London: Sage.

Prosser, J., & Schwartz, D. 1998. Photographs within the Sociological Research Process. In J. Prosser (Ed.), ***Image-based Research: A Sourcebook for Qualitative Researchers***: 115-130. London: Falmer Press.

Ptak, R. 2013. ***Vom Ordoliberalismus zur Sozialen Marktwirtschaft: Stationen des Neoliberalismus in Deutschland***. Opladen: Leske + Budrich.

Quadflieg, D. 2008. Sprache und Diskurs: Von der Struktur zur différance. In S. Moebius, & A. Reckwitz (Eds.), ***Poststrukturalistische Sozialwissenschaften***: 93-107. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Rajko, A. 2011. ***Behavioural Economics and Business Ethics: Interrelations and Applications***. Abingdon: Routledge.

Ram, R. 2013. Income elasticity of poverty in developing countries: updated estimates from new data. ***Applied Economics Letters***, 20(6): 554-558.

Rappaport, A. 2006. 10 Ways to Create Shareholder Value. ***Harvard Business Review***, 84(9): 66-77.

Rath, G. 2014. Londoner Wahrzeichen in Insolvenz, ***Unternehmerzeitung***: 25 April. http://www.unternehmerzeitung.ch/wirtschaft-und-politik/international/gherkin: Accessed 01 July 2014.

Readings, B. 1996. ***The university in ruins***. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Reedy, P., & Learmonth, M. 2009. Other Possibilities? The Contribution to Management Education of Alternative Organizations. ***Management Learning***, 40(3): 241-258.

Reich, R. 2000. ***The Future of Success: Working and Living in the New Economy***. New York: Vintage.

Reuter, J. 2008. Globalisierung: Phänomen - Debatte - Rhetorik. In S. Moebius, & A. Reckwitz (Eds.), ***Poststrukturalistische Sozialwissenschaften***: 263-276. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Rifkin, J. 2009. ***The Empathic Civilization***. New York: Tarcher/Penguin.

Rinne, R., & Koivula, J. 2005. The Changing Place of the University and a Clash of Values: The Entrepreneurial University in the European Knowledge Society. ***Higher Education Management and Policy***, 17(3): 91-123.

Ritzer, G. 2007. ***The Globalization of Nothing 2***. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press.

Ritzer, G. 2010. Globalization and McDonaldization: Does it All Amount to … Nothing? . In G. Ritzer (Ed.), ***McDonaldization: The Reader***, 3rd ed.: 395-410. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press.

Ritzer, G. 2012. ***The McDonaldization of Society*** (20th anniversary ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Robertson, R. 1992. ***Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture***. London: Sage.

Rodrik, D. 2011. ***The Globalization Paradox***. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Rosa, H. 2013a. ***Social Acceleration: A New Theory of Modernity***. New York: Columbia University Press.

Rosa, H. 2013b. ***Weltbeziehungen im Zeitalter der Beschleunigung***. Berlin: Suhrkamp.

Roscoe, P. 2014. ***I Spend, Therefore I Am: The True Cost of Economics***. London: Penguin-Viking.

Rose, G. 2012. ***Visual Methodologies*** (3rd ed.). London: Sage.

Rose-Ackerman, S. 1996. Altruism, Nonprofits and Economic Theory. ***Journal of Economic Literature***, 34: 701-728.

Ruddin, L. P. 2006. You Can Genralize Stupid! Social Scientists, Bent Flyvbjerg, and Case Study Methodology. ***Qualitative Inquiry***, 12(4): 797-812.

Russell, J. B. 1997. The Myth of the Flat Earth, ***Paper for the American Scientific Affiliation Annual Meeting***. http://www.asa3.org/ASA/topics/history/1997 Russell.html: Accessed 17 January 2014.

Rüstow, A. 2009. ***Die Religion der Marktwirtschaft*** (3rd ed.). Münster: LIT Verlag.

Sabri, D. 2010. Absence of the academic from higher education policy. ***Journal of Education Policy***, 25(2): 191-205.

Sachs, J. D. 2009. Rethinking Macroeconomics. ***Capitalism and Society***, 4(3): Article 3.

Sadler, D. R. 2011. Academic freedom, achievement standards and professional identity. ***Quality in Higher Education***, 17(1): 85-100.

Saez, E. 2013. Striking it Richer: The Evolution of Top Incomes in the United States, http://elsa.berkeley.edu/-saez/saez-UStopincomes-2012.pdf: Accessed 20 January 2014.

Sakakibara, E. 1995. The End of Progressivism. ***Foreign Affairs***, 74(5): 8-14.

Sandel, M. 2012. ***What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets***. London: Penguin Books.

Sandy, M. 2013. Tracing the Liberal Arts Traditions in Support of Service-learning and Public-engaged Scholarship in the Humanities. ***Humanity & Society***, 37(4): 306-326.

Saul, J. R. 2009. ***The Collapse of Globalism: and the reinvention of the world***. Victoria: Penguin Australia.

Saunders, D. B. 2014. Exploring a Customer Orientation: Free-Market Logic and College Students. ***The Review of Higher Education***, 37(2): 197-219.

Sauquet, A. 2012. Business Schools and Society: Opportunities and Accountability. ***EFMD Global Focus***, 6(1): 22-25.

Savage, M., & Page, S. 2000. Business and Arts Students. ***Journal of College Student Psychotherapy***, 14(4): 43-55.

Scalet, S., & Kelly, T. F. 2012. The Ethics of Credit Rating Agencies: What Happened and the Way Forward. ***Journal of Business Ethics***, 111(4): 477-490.

Schäfer, U. 2009. ***Der Crash des Kapitalismus***. Frankfurt am Main: Campus.

Scherer, A. G. 2009. Critical Theory and its Contribution to Critical Management Studies. In M. Alvesson, T. Bridgman, & H. Willmott (Eds.), ***The Oxford Handbook of Critical Management Studies***: 29-51. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Schlosberg, D. 2007. ***Environmental Justice: Theories, Movements, and Nature***. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Schmidt, H. 1999. ***Globalisierung: Politische, ökonomische und kulturelle Herausforderungen*** (2nd ed.). Berlin: Siedler.

Schmidt, J. 1998. Civility, Enlightenment, and Society: Conceptual Confusions and Kantian Remedies. ***American Political Science Review***, 92(2): 419-427.

Schneiberg, M., & Clemens, E. S. 2006. The Typical Tools for the Job: Research Strategies in Institutional Analysis. ***Sociological Theory***, 24(3): 195-227.

Schneider, C. 2014. Krieg ist Fiktion. ***Sonntaz***, 24/25 May: 20-22.

Schneider, F., Kallis, G., & Martinez-Alier, J. 2010. Crisis or opportunity? Economic degrowth for social equity and ecological sustainability. Introduction to this special issue. ***Journal of Cleaner Production***, 18(6): 511-518.

Scholz, C., & Stein, V. 2009. ***Bologna-Schwarzbuch***. Bonn: Deutscher Hochschulverband.

Schreier, M. 2012. ***Qualitative Content Analysis in Practice***. London: Sage.

Schriewer, J. 2009. "Rationalized Myths" in European Higher Education. ***European Education***, 41(2): 31-51.

Schultz, M., Hatch, M. J., & Larsen, M. H. (Eds.). 2000. ***The Expressive Organization: Linking Identity, Reputation, and the Corporate Brand***. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Scott, J. 1990. ***A Matter of Record: Documentary Sources in Social Research***. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Seawright, J., & Gerring, J. 2008. Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research: A Menu of Qualitative and Quantitative Options. ***Political Research Quarterly***, 61(2): 294-308.

Segal, R. A. 1999. ***Theorizing about myth***. Boston: University of Massachusetts Press.

Seider, M. S. 1974. American Big Business Ideology: A Content Analysis of Executive Speeches. ***American Sociological Review***, 39: 802-815.

Sen, A. 2005. Human Rights and Capabilities. ***Journal of Human Development***, 6(2): 151-166.

Sen, A. 2009. ***The Idea of Justice***. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Senf, B. 2008. ***Die blinden Flecken der Ökonomie*** (5th ed.). Kiel: Verlag für Sozialökonomie.

Sharrock, G. 2000. Why Students are not (Just) Customers (and other reflections on Life After George). ***Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management***, 22(2): 149-164.

Sherratt, Y. 1999. The Dialectic of Enlightenment: a contemporary reading. ***History of the Human Sciences***, 12(3): 35-54.

Shipman, A. 2002. ***The Globalization Myth***. Cambridge: Icon Books.

Shore, C., & Wright, S. 2000. Coercive accountability: The rise of audit culture in higher education. In M. Strathern (Ed.), ***Audit Cultures: Anthropological studies in accountability, ethics and the academy***: 57-89. London: Routledge.

Sievers, B. 2008. The Psychotic University. ***Ephemera***, 8(3): 238-257.

Sievers, B. 2012. Towards a Socioanalysis of Capitalist Greed. ***Critique***, 40(1): 15-39.

Silverman, D. 2011. ***Interpreting qualitative data*** (4th ed.). London: Sage.

Simmons, B. A., & Elkins, Z. 2004. The Globalization of Liberalization: Policy Diffusion in the International Political Economy. ***American Political Science Review***, 98(1): 171-189.

Sinn, H.-W. 2010. Rescuing Europe. ***CESifo Forum***, 11(August).

Sloterdijk, P. 2005. ***Im Weltinnenraum des Kapitals***. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Smith, R. D. 2012. The Debt Crisis and the Loss of Freedom: A Call for Moral Imagination. ***Journal of Human Values***, 18(2): 101-112.

Snowdon, B., & Stonehouse, G. 2006. Competitiveness in a Globalised World: Michael Porter on the Microeconomic Foundations of the Competitiveness of Nations, Regions, and Firms. ***Journal of International Business Studies***, 37(2): 163-175.

Soltani, B. 2013. The Anatomy of Corporate Fraud: A Comparative Analysis of High Profile American and European Corporate Scandals. ***Journal of Business Ethics***, 120(2): 251-274.

Sorger, G., & Stark, O. 2013. Income redistribution going awry: The reversal power of the concern for relative deprivation. ***Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization***, 86: 1-9.

Souto-Otero, M. 2011. Making Higher Education Work: A Comparison of Discourses in the United Kingdom's Conservative and Labour Parties' General Election Manifestos between 1979 and 2010. ***Comparative Education Review***, 55(3): 293-314.

Sperlich, A. 2008. ***Theorie und Praxis erfolgreichen Managements privater Hochschulen in Deutschland***. Berlin: Berliner Wissenschaftsverlag.

Stablein, R. 2006. Data in Organization Studies. In S. R. Clegg, C. Hardy, T. B. Lawrence, & W. R. Nord (Eds.), ***The SAGE Handbook of Organizational Studies***, 2nd ed.: 347-369.

Stage, F. K., Muller, P. A., Kinzie, J., & Simmons, A. 1998. Creating Learning Centered Classrooms: What Does Learning Theory Have to Say? ***ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report***, Vol. 26. Washington, D.C.: George Washington University.

Starkey, K., Hatchuel, A., & Tempest, S. 2004. Rethinking the Business School. ***Journal of Management Studies***, 41(8): 1521-1531.

Starkey, K., Hatchuel, A., & Tempest, S. 2009. Management Research and the New Logics of Discovery and Engagement. ***Journal of Management Studies***, 46(3): 547-558.

Starkey, K., & Tempest, S. 2008. A clear sense of purpose? The evolving role of the business school. ***Journal of Management Development***, 27(4): 379-390.

Starkey, K., & Tempest, S. 2009a. From crisis to purpose. ***Journal of Management Development***, 28(8): 700-710.

Starkey, K., & Tempest, S. 2009b. The Winter of Our Discontent: The Design Challenge for Business Schools. ***Academy of Management Learning & Education***, 8(4): 576-586.

Starkey, K., & Tiratsoo, N. 2007. ***The Business School and the Bottom Line***. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stiglitz, J. 2003. ***Globalization and its discontents***. London: Penguin.

Stiglitz, J. 2010. ***Freefall: Free Markets and the Sinking of the Global Economy***. London: Allan Lane.

Stiglitz, J. 2013. ***The Price of Inequality***. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Stout, L. 2012. ***The Shareholder Value Myth***. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. 2008. ***Basics of Qualitative Resarch: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*** (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Streeck, W. 2013. ***Gekaufte Zeit: Die vertagte Krise des demokratischen Kapitalismus***. Berlin: Suhrkamp.

Suchanek, J., Pietzonka, M., Künzel, R. H. F., & Futterer, T. 2012. The impact of accreditation on the reform of study programmes in Gemany. ***Higher Education Management and Policy***, 24(1): 1-24.

Swanson, D. L. 2004. The Buck Stops Here: Why Universities Must Reclaim Business Ethics Education. ***Journal of Academic Ethics***, 2: 43-61.

Swanson, D. L., & Frederick, W. C. 2003. Are Business Schools Silent Partners in Corporate Crime? ***Journal of Corporate Citizenship***, 9: 24-27.

Taleb, N. N. 2008. ***The Black Swan***. London: Penguin.

Taleb, N. N. 2012. ***Antifragile: Things that Gain from Disorder***. New York: Random House.

Taylor, P. 2003. Humboldt's rift: managerialism in education, and complicit intellectuals. ***European Political Science***, 3(1): 75-84.

Taylor, T. 2012. ***The Instant Economist: Everything You Need to Know About How the Economy Works***. New York: Plume.

Teichler, U. 2005. ***Hochschulstrukturen im Umbruch: Eine Bilanz der Reformdynamik seit vier Jahrzehnten***. Frankfurt am Main: Campus.

The Economist. 2014. Build it and they may come: Management schools are on a building spree: 18 January. http://www.economist.com/node/21594316: Accessed 22 January 2014.

Thielemann, U. 2010. ***System Error: Warum der freie Markt zur Unfreiheit führt***. Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung.

Thomas, G. 2011. ***How to do your Case Study***. London: Sage.

Thomas, H., & Cornuel, E. 2012. Business schools in transition? Issues of impact, legitimacy, capabilities and re-invention. ***Journal of Management Development***, 31(4): 329-335.

Thompson, C. J. 2006. The McDonaldization of Enchantment and Consumers Practices of Re-Enchantment: A Dialectic View of Transformative Consumption. ***Advances in Consumer Research***, 33(352-354).

Thompson, P., & Harley, B. 2012. Beneath the Radar? A Critical Realist Analysis of 'The Knowledge Economy' and 'Shareholder Value' as Competing Discourses. ***Organization Studies***, 33(10): 1363-1381.

Tietze, S. 2012. Researching Your Own Organization. In G. Symon, & C. Cassell (Eds.), ***Qualitative Organizational Research***: 53-71. London: Sage.

Tinker, T. 2004. The Enlightenment and its discontents: Antimonies of Christianity, Islam and the calculative sciences. ***Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal***, 17(3): 442-475.

Todhunter, C. 2013. Margaret Thatcher and the Triumph of Crony Capitalism: “There is No Alternative (TINA)", http://www.globalresearch.ca/margaret-thatcher-and-the-triumph-of-crony-capitalism/5330573: Accessed 15 June 2014.

Traiser, S., & Eighmy, M. A. 2011. Moral Development and Narcissism of Private and Public University Business Students. ***Journal of Business Ethics***, 99(3): 325-334.

Trank, C. Q., & Rynes, S. L. 2003. Who Moved Our Cheese? Reclaiming Professionalism in Business Education. ***Academy of Management Learning & Education***, 2(2): 189-205.

Tseng, N.-H. 2011. China is richer, but most Chinese are still poor, ***CNN Money***. http://finance.fortune.cnn.com/2011/02/17/china-is-richer-but-most-chinese-are-still-poor/: Accessed 02 February 2014.

Tuch, A. N., Presslaber, E. E., Stöcklin, M., Opwis, K., & Bargas-Avila, J. A. 2012. The role of visual complexity and prototypically regarding first impression of websites: Working towards understanding aesthetic judgments. ***International Journal of Human-Computer Studies***, 70: 794-811.

Urquhart, R. 2012. The price of the market: pursuit of self-interest as annihilation of self. ***International Review of Economics***, 59: 431-457.

Van de Ven, A. 2007. ***Engaged Scholarship***. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

van den Bergh, J. C. J. M. 2009. The GDP paradox. ***Journal of Economic Psychology***, 30(2): 117-135.

van Dijk, T. 1998. ***Ideology: A Multidisciplinary Approach***. London: Sage.

Van Leeuwen, T. 2001. Semiotics and Iconography. In T. Van Leeuwen, & C. Jewitt (Eds.), ***The Handbook of Visual Analysis***: 92-119. London: Sage.

Venn, C. 2006. The Enlightenment. ***Theory, Culture & Society***, 23(2-3): 477-486.

Venn, C., & Featherstone, M. 2006. Modernity. ***Theory, Culture & Society***, 23(2-3): 457-465.

Verhaeghe, P. 2013. ***Und Ich? Identität in einer durchökonomisierten Gesellschaft***. München: Verlag Antje Kunstmann.

Vincent, A. 2015. The Ideological Context of Impact. ***Political Studies Review***, 13: 474-484.

Volscho, T. W., & Kelly, N. J. 2012. The Rise of the Super-Rich: Power Resources, Taxes, Financial Markets, and the Dynamics of the Top 1 Percent, 1949 to 2008. ***American Sociological Review***, 77(5): 679-699.

von Altenbockum, J. 2012. Marktkonforme Demokratie? Oder demokratiekonformer Markt?, ***FAZ.net*** http://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/harte-bretter/marktkonforme-demokratie-oder-demokratiekonformer-markt-11712359.html: Accessed 25 March 2014.

von Amerongen, O. W. 1974. Economic Relations With the Soviet Union. ***Eastern Europe***, 01: 3-12.

von der Oelsnitz, D. 2009. Privatisierung als neue Fessel der 'entfesselten Hochschule'. In C. Scholz, & V. Stein (Eds.), ***Bologna-Schwarzbuch***: 137-155. Bonn: Deutscher Hochschulverband.

von Weizsäcker, E. U., Hargroves, K., & Smith, M. 2010. ***Faktor Fünf: Die Formel für nachhaltiges Wachstum***. München: Droemer.

Voss, R., Gruber, T., & Szmigin, I. 2007. Service quality in higher education: The role of student expectations. ***Journal of Business Research***, 60: 949-959.

Waldman, D. A. 2011. Moving Forward with the Concept of Responsible Leadership: Three Caveats to Guide Theory and Research. ***Journal of Business Ethics***, 98: 75-83.

Wallace, M., & Wray, A. 2006. ***Critical Reading and Writing for Postgraduates***. London: Sage.

Wang, L., Malhotra, D., & Murnighan, J. K. 2011. Economics Education and Greed. ***Academy of Management Learning & Education***, 10(4): 643-660.

Wedlin, L. 2006. ***Ranking Business Schools: Forming Fields, Identities and Boundaries in International Management Education***. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Welsh, H. A. 2009. Higher Education Reform in Germany: Advocacy and Discourse. ***German Politics & Society***, 27(1): 1-23.

Welzer, H. 2013. ***Selbst Denken: Eine Anleitung zum Widerstand*** (2nd ed.). Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer.

Westerman, J. W., Bergman, J. Z., Bergman, S. M., & Daly, J. P. 2011. Are Universities Creating Millennial Narcissistic Employees? An Empirical Examination of Narcissism in Business Students and Its Implications. ***Journal of Management Education***, 36(1): 5-32.

White, M. D., & Marsh, E. E. 2006. Content Analysis: A Flexible Methodology. ***Library Trends***, 55(1): 22-45.

Wiebe, F. 2014. Die Linke und die Marktwirtschaft, ***Handelsblatt***: 51. 14-16 February.

Wilkins, A. 2011. School choice and the commodification of education: A visual approach to school brochures and websites. ***Critical Social Policy***, 32(1): 69-86.

Williams, I. 2010. Plato and Education. In R. Bailey, R. Barrow, D. Carr, & C. McCarthy (Eds.), ***Sage Handbook of Philosophy of Education***: 69-83. London: Sage.

Wilson, D. C., & Thomas, H. 2012. The legitimacy of the business of business schools: what's the future? ***Journal of Management Development***, 31(4): 368-376.

Winkel, O. 2010. Higher education reform in Germany: How the aims of the Bologna process can be simultaneously supported and missed. ***International Journal of Educational Management***, 24(4): 303-313.

Winston, A. S. 2014. ***The Big Pivot: Radically Practical Strategies for a Hotter, Scarcer, and More Open World***. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press.

Winter, R. 2009. Academic manager or managed academic? Academic identity schisms in higher education. ***Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management***, 31(2): 121-131.

Wissenschaftsrat. 2013. Liste der abgeschlossenen Akkreditierungsverfahren, http://www.wissenschaftsrat.de/download/archiv/Akkreditierungen.pdf: Accessed 01 October 2013.

Wissenschaftsrat. 2015. Leitfaden der Institutionellen Akkreditierung nichtstaatlicher Hochschulen, http://www.wissenschaftsrat.de/download/archiv/4395-15.pdf: Accessed 01 February 2015.

Witte, J., van der Wende, M., & Huisman, J. 2008. Blurring boundaries: how the Bologna process changes the relationship between university and non-university higher education in Germany, the Netherlands and France. ***Studies in Higher Education***, 33(3): 217-231.

Wolf, M. 2000. Why this Hatred of the Market? In F. J. Lechner, & J. Boli (Eds.), ***The Globalization Reader***: 9-11. Malden: Blackwell.

Wright, C., Nyberg, D., De Cock, C., & Whiteman, G. 2013. Future imaginings: organizing in response to climate change. ***Organization***, 20(5): 647-658.

Yin, R. K. 2014. ***Case Study Research: Design and Methods*** (5th ed.). London: Sage.

Zehnpfennig, B. 2012. Wie ökonomisch ist Bildung? Ein unzeitgemäßer Einspruch. ***Forschung und Lehre***, 10: 796-798.

Zhang, Y., & O'Halloran, K. L. 2013. 'Toward a global knowledge enterprise': university websites as portals to the ongoing marketization of higher education. ***Critical Discourse Studies***, 10(4): 468-485.

Ziegler, J. 2014. ***Retournez les fusils! Choisir son camp***. Paris: Seuil.

Zingales, L. 2012. ***A Capitalism for the People***. New York: Basic Books.

Žižek, S. 2012. ***Totalitarismus***. Hamburg: Laika.

Zuberi, D. M., & Ptashnick, M. B. 2011. The deleterious consequences of privatization and outsourcing for hospital support work: the experiences of contracted-out hospital cleaners and dietary aids in Vancouver, Canada. ***Social Science & Medicine***, 72(6): 907-911.

Zyglidopoulos, S., & Fleming, P. 2011. Corporate accountability and the politics of visibility in 'late modernity'. ***Organization***, 18(5): 691-706.

## Appendix A1: Accreditation Report Findings of Case # 1

| *Theme / Code* | *Original* | *Translation* |
|---|---|---|
| Theme 1: Globalisation/Internationalisation<br>*No findings* | | |
| Theme 2: Knowledge economy | | |
| 2a)<br>Knowledge management and transfer | Die an der *Alanus-Hochschule* etablierten Gesprächsformen, Mentorate, eine *open door policy* sind erfolgreiche Formen und Bausteine eines institutionalisierten Wissensmanagements. | The at *Alanus Hochschule* established conversation forms, mentoring, open door policy are successful variations and building blocks of an institutionalised knowledge management. |
| 2b)<br>Innovation and creativity | […] stellt dies einen interessanten, möglicherweise innovativen Ansatz in der Differenzierung des Hochschulsystems dar. | […] this represents an interesting and possibly innovative approach to the differentiation of the university system. |
| | Die insgesamt positive Entwicklung der Hochschule zeigt sich in einer kreativen Atmosphäre […]. | The overall positive development of the Hochschule is reflected in a creative atmosphere […]. |
| Theme 3: Competition and market | | |
| 3b)<br>Accreditation | Seit 2006 wurden alle neuen und bestehenden Studienangebote akkreditiert. | Since 2006 all new and existing study programmes have been accredited. |
| 3c)<br>Strategic positioning | Die Alanus Hochschule stellt in ihrer Fächerausrichtung […] eine Besonderheit im deutschen Hochschulsystem dar. | With its subject alignment, *Alanus Hochschule* constitutes distinctiveness within the German university system. |
| 3d)<br>Branding / visibility / profile | Insgesamt ist es der Alanus Hochschule gelungen, in der Verbindung von Kunst und Bildungswissenschaft ein eigenes Profil zu entwickeln. | In summary, *Alanus Hochschule* has successfully developed a distinct profile with the combination of art and education science. |
| | Insgesamt ist das Profil der Hochschule bereits gut sichtbar. | Overall, the profile of the *Hochschule* is already well visible. |
| | Der Fachbereich Wirtschaftswissenschaften […] hatte noch nicht ausreichend Zeit, […] zum Profil der Hochschule entscheidend beizutragen. | The faculty of economics and business sciences […] has not had enough time yet […] to contribute decisively to the profile of the *Hochschule*. |
| | Die insgesamt positive Entwicklung der Hochschule zeigt sich in […] einer prägnanten Corporate Identity. | The overall positive development of the *Hochschule* is reflected in […] a succinct corporate identity. |
| Theme 4: Performativity | | |
| 4c)<br>Performance | […] Forschungsleistungen der wissenschaftlichen Fachbereiche. | […] research performance of the scientific departments. |
| | Die Hochschule sollte ihre Pläne | The *Hochschule* should implement |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | hinsichtlich einer leistungs-bezogenen Forschungsförderung kurzfristig umsetzen. | their plans regarding performance oriented research support schemes at short notice. |
| 4d)<br>Research and publications | Es hat sich noch nicht in nennenswertem Ausmaß in Publikationen niedergeschlagen: Die Publikationsleistung der Professoren und Professorinnen beträgt […]. | It has not resulted in a substantial array of publications yet: the publication performance of the professors amounts to […]. |
| | Die Durchsicht der Publikations-listen zeigt, dass mehrheitlich Publikationen in D- oder E-Zeitschriften […] oder in nicht blind begutachteten Beiträgen vorliegen. | The examination of publication lists shows that there are predominantly publications in D or E journals or contributions without peer review processes. |
| 4e)<br>Quality control | Im Bereich der Qualitätssicherung führt die Hochschule die üblichen Maßnahmen wie Evaluation der Lehrveranstaltungen durch Studierende und Absolventen-befragungen durch. | In the area of quality control the *Hochschule* conducts the usual procedures such as evaluation of lectures through students and graduate surveys. |
| | […] entwickelt die Hochschule ein Konzept für ein umfassendes, kontinuierliches und kohärentes Qualitätsmanagementsystem. | […] the *Hochschule* develops a concept for a comprehensive, continuous, and coherent quality management system. |
| | An einer kleinen Hochschule ist neben einem formalisierten Qualitätsmanagement-System die interne Kommunikation von großer Bedeutung. | At a small *Hochschule*, besides a formalised quality management system, internal communication is of great importance. |
| | Daneben beginnt die Alanus Hochschule aber auch damit, ein umfassendes System der internen und externen Qualitätssicherung zu entwickeln und implementieren. | In addition, *Alanus Hochschule* begins to develop and to implement a comprehensive system of internal and external quality control. |
| | Es gibt regelmäßige Lehr-evaluationen der einzelnen Veranstaltungen durch die Studierenden und auch Absolventenbefragungen. Die Ergebnisse dieser Lehrevaluationen werden dem neu eingerichteten Prorektor für Forschung und Qualitätssicherung mitgeteilt, der sie in Entscheidungen der Hochschulleitung einbezieht. | There are regular teaching evaluations of the individual lectures through students, and also graduate surveys. The results of these teaching evaluations are communicated to the newly created position of a prorector of research and quality assurance, who integrates them into management decisions at the *Hochschule*. |
| 4f)<br>Third-party funding | Dem Fachbereich ist es bislang lediglich gelungen, einmalig Drittmittel in Höhe von […] einzuwerben. | The department so far has only succeeded to acquire third-party funding once, amounting to […]. |
| | Der Hochschule wird daher dringend empfohlen, auch weitere Drittmittel, insbesondere in einem wettbewerblichen Verfahren begut-achtete, einzuwerben. | Therefore it is strongly recommended that the *Hochschule* solicits further third-party funds, especially those awarded in competitive biddings. |

| Theme 5: Employability | | |
|---|---|---|
| 5a) Career/placement services | Auch gelungen ist, kooperierende Unternehmen […] zu gewinnen, die Studienplätze finanzieren und Praktikumsplätze zur Verfügung stellen. | There has been successful activity to attract businesses financing study places and offering internship positions. |
| 5c) Co-operation with the business world, industry focus | Bemerkenswert ist auch das Engagement der Stifter […], die nicht nur die Neu- und Umbauten der beiden Campus finanziert haben, sondern auch ganz wesentlich zum Kapitalstock […] beigetragen haben. | Also remarkable is the commitment of the benefactors […], who have not only financed the new construction and refurbishments at the two campuses, but who have also substantially contributed to the capital stock […]. |
| | Die enge Verknüpfung mit Unternehmen kann zu erhöhten Handlungskompetenzen beitragen. | The close linkage with companies can contribute to enhanced competencies. |
| | […] die allerdings zumeist dem Kreis der die Hochschule auch anderweitig unterstützenden Unternehmen angehören. | […] which, however, mostly belong to the circle of companies supporting the *Hochschule* also in other ways. |
| | Beeindruckend stellt sich die Kooperation der Hochschule mit mittelständischen Unternehmen dar, insbesondere mit einigen Handelsunternehmen, die zum Teil auch Studienplätze der BWL finanzieren. | The co-operation of the *Hochschule* with medium-sized companies is impressive, particularly in the case of several trade companies, which partly finance study places at the business faculty. |
| Theme 6: Humboldtian ideal/traditional academic values | | |
| 6e) Separation of ownership and academic activity | Die Unabhängigkeit der Hochschule vom Träger in wissenschaftlichen Angelegenheiten ist institutionell gewährleistet. | The independence of the Hochschule with reference to scientific matters is institutionally secured. |
| Theme 7: Idealistic elements | | |
| 7a) Critical orientation and reflective abilities | Die Studierenden […] erfahren viele Möglichkeiten und Gelegenheiten der Selbstreflexion in ihren Studien. | The students […] experience many possibilities and opportunities for self-reflection during their studies. |
| | […] wäre ein größeres Gewicht auf empirische Methoden zu wünschen, die zur kritischen Auseinander-setzung mit Praxis und Forschung anleiten. | […] a greater emphasis on empirical methods encouraging the critical examination of practice and research would be desirable. |
| 7d) Broadening horizons | Ihrem Leitbild - Integration der künstlerischen Handlungs-kompetenz und des künstlerischen Geistes in die Wissenschaft und der philosophischen und kunstwissen-schaftlichen bzw. ästhetischen Reflexionsfähigkeit in die Kunst-ausbildung sowie Förderung der Verbindung von Kunst und Philosophie mit gesellschaftlichen | By and large, this *Hochschule* meets its mission of integrating artistic competence and artistic spirit into science and of integrating reflective abilities in philosophical and artistic sciences or aesthetics into arts education, and furthermore of promoting the connection of art and philosophy with societal action fields of business administration. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Handlungsfeldern in der Betriebs-wirtschaft […] - wird die Hochschule weitgehend gerecht. | |
| | Die Studierenden der Wirtschafts-wissenschaften profitieren sehr stark von der engen Verbindung und Vernetzung zu den künstlerischen Bereichen der Hochschule. Sie sind dialogfähig zu den Künsten […]. | The business students benefit very strongly from the close interconnectedness with the arts-related departments of the *Hochschule.* They are capable of dialogue with the arts […]. |
| Theme 8: Business school as business<br>*No findings* | | |

## Appendix A2: Website Text Findings of Case # 1

| *Theme / Code* | *Original* | *Translation* |
|---|---|---|
| Theme 1: Globalisation/Internationalisation<br>*No findings* | | |
| Theme 2: Knowledge economy<br>*No findings* | | |
| Theme 3: Competition and market | | |
| 3b)<br>Accreditation | Alle Studiengänge sind akkreditiert und staatlich anerkannt. Im Mai 2010 erfolgte zudem die institutionelle Akkreditierung der Alanus Hochschule durch den Wissenschaftsrat. Außerdem erhielt sie das Promotionsrecht für den Fachbereich Bildungswissenschaft. | All study programmes are accredited and state-recognised. In addition, in May 2010 the institutional accreditation of the science council was awarded. Furthermore, *Alanus Hochschule* was conferred the right to award doctoral degrees in education sciences. |
| 3d)<br>Branding / visibility / profile | Die Alanus Hochschule hat einen hervorragenden Ruf in der Qualität der Lehre und glänzt durch eine hervorragende Ausstattung. Sie ist ein Aushängeschild für die gesamte Region im Bereich der Hochschulbildung. | *Alanus Hochschule* has an excellent reputation for quality of teaching, and it is brilliant in terms of equipment. It is a figurehead for the entire region in the area of higher education. |
| | Die Alanus Hochschule steht für eine enorm hohe Qualität der Aus-bildung. Die besondere Verbindung von Kunst und Wissenschaft prägt das einzigartige Profil dieser Hochs. | *Alanus Hochschule* stands for an extraordinary high quality of provision. Its exceptional linking of art and science coins the unique profile of this *Hochschule*. |
| Theme 4: Performativity | | |

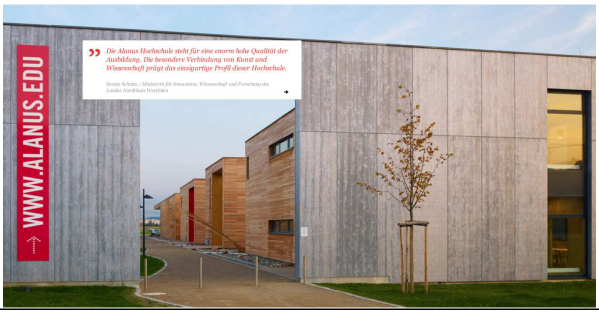
| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *No findings* | | |
| Theme 5: Employability | | |
| 5b)<br>Connection/liaise with world of work | Unser Masterstudiengang spricht den Menschen als Ganzen an und legt Wert auf Praxiserfahrung und Theorieverständnis sowie Herz und Verstand. | Our Master's degree programme addresses the human holistically and values practical experience and theoretical understanding as well as heart and mind. |
| Theme 6: Humboldtian ideal/traditional academic values | | |
| 6c)<br>Knowledge for its own sake / humanist approach to education | Mit ihrem Namen bezieht sich die Hochschule auf Alanus ab Insulis […], der bereits im Mittelalter eine humanistische Bildungsidee in Zusammenhang mit den Sieben Freien Künste lehrte. Er vertrat schon damals die Vorstellung, dass Studieren die Bildung des Menschen zum Menschen durch Interdisziplinarität bedeutet und über ein reines Fachstudium hinaus geht. | With ist name the *Hochschule* refers to Alanus ab Insulis […] who taught a humanist education idea in connection with the seven free arts already in the medieval era. He represented in those days the idea that studying means the forming and educating of people to humans through multidisciplinarity, going beyond a mere technical skill formation. |
| Theme 7: Idealistic elements | | |
| 7a)<br>Critical orientation and reflective abilities | BWL studieren an einer Kunsthoch-schule? Wofür kann das gut sein? Um über den Tellerrand hinaus zu blicken, neue Sichtweisen zu erkennen, zukunftsfähige Metho-den zu entwickeln, kreative Denk-ansätze zu fördern, einen Perspek-tivwechsel anzuregen, sich selbst zu kennen, bevor man andere führt. | Studying business at an art university? What could that be good for? To look beyond one's own nose, recognise new perspectives, develop future-proof methods, support creative thinking, encourage change of perspective, know oneself before leading others. |
| 7c)<br>Responsible stance | Wir wollen junge Menschen dazu ermutigen, die Entwicklung ihrer Persönlichkeit und der Gesellschaft selbst in die Hand zu nehmen und sich mit Engagement und Verantwortung einzubringen. | We want to encourage young people to assume responsibility for the development of their own personality and for society and to engage responsibly. |
| | Verantwortungsbewusst und gesamtgesellschaftlich relevant können nur die handeln, die den nötigen Weitblick sowie Tiefgang mitbringen, um Wirtschaft in all ihren Facetten zukunftsfähig zu gestalten. Universalisten stellen die neue Generation von Gestaltern dar, sind flexibel, kreativ, vernetzt, breit aufgestellt – und doch einzigartig! | Only those who possess foresight and thoughtfulness can act responsibly and with relevance for society at large in order to create a viable future of the economy with all its facets. Universalists represent the new generation of creators. They are flexible, creative, linked-up, well-placed and yet unique. |
| 7d)<br>Broadening horizons | Das Studienangebot bietet in seiner Kombination die Chance des Dialogs und der gegenseitigen Inspiration | The study programme portfolio offers in its combination the chance for dialogue and mutual inspiration |

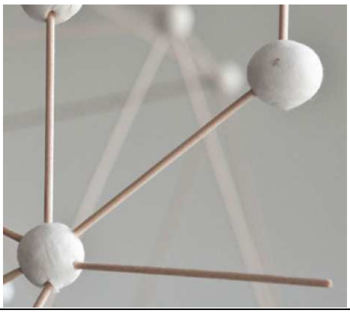
| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | der unterschiedlichen Fachrichtungen in interdisziplinären Projekten. | of the different subject areas and faculties in interdisciplinary projects. |
| | Ein kultur- und geisteswissen-schaftliches Studium Generale ergänzt das Fachstudium und wird für Studierende aller Studiengänge fachübergreifend angeboten. Das Curriculum umfasst Vorlesungen und Seminare zu Philosophie, Ästhetik, Kunstgeschichte, Literatur-wissenschaft, Pädagogik sowie Sozialwissenschaften. | A cultural and social sciences 'Studium Generale' adds to the specialisation area studied and is offered for students of all study programmes. The curriculum encompasses lectures and seminars in the areas of philosophy, aesthetics, art history, literature studies, pedagogy and social sciences. |
| Theme 8: Business school as business<br>*No findings* | | |

## Appendix A3: Website Imagery Findings of Case # 1

*All images retrieved 20 December 2013 from www.alanus.edu*

| Theme 9: Corportate identity | |
|---|---|
| 9a)<br>Logos and slogans | ALANUS HOCHSCHULE FÜR KUNST UND GESELLSCHAFT<br>ALANUS UNIVERSITY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES \| alanus hochschule |
| 9b) Architecture, building, campus, design features | |

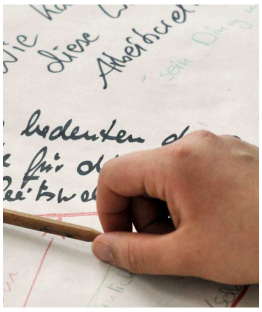


9c) Atmosphere / emotion / belonging

Theme 10: Student activity

10a) Lecture / seminar / group work

| 10b) Learning / reading / contemplation |
|---|
|   |
| Theme 11: Business Enactment<br>*No findings* |

**Appendix B1: Accreditation Report Findings of Case # 2**

| *Theme / Code* | *Original* | *Translation* |
|---|---|---|
| | Theme 1: Globalisation/Internationalisation | |
| 1a) International students/faculty | Ihre historischen Wurzeln liegen im Angebot international ausgerichteter Studiengänge […]. | It is historically rooted in offering internationally oriented study programmes. |
| | Ihre besonderen Stärken liegen in der internationalen Dimension ihres Studienangebotes [und] den internationalen Erfahrungen eines Großteils ihrer Professorinnen und Professoren […]. | Its particular strengths are the international dimension of its study programmes [and] the international experiences of the majority of its professors. |
| | Mit ihrem […] englischsprachigem betriebswirtschaftlichen Studien-angebot ist die Hochschule […] auch für ausländische Studierende von Interesse. | With its Anglophone business study programme offer, the *Hochschule* is interesting also for international students. |
| | […] auch und besonders für eine berufliche Laufbahn im internationalen Umfeld. | […] also and in particular for a career in international settings. |
| | Von besonderer Bedeutung waren […] die Berufung von forschungsstarken, auch interna-tional verankerten Wissenschaft-lerinnen und Wissenschaftlern sowie die weitere Internationa-lisierung der Studienprogramme. | Of particular importance was […] the appointment of research-oriented and also internationally positioned scientists as well as the further internationalisation of the study programmes. |
| | Der von der Hochschule erhobene Anspruch an Vermittlung von | The *Hochschul* claim of conveying internationality and intercultural |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Internationalität und interkulturellen Sichtweisen wird insgesamt überzeugend eingelöst. | perspectives is, all in all, honoured convincingly. |
| 1b) Cross-border co-operation | Die EBS kann auf ein äußerst umfangreiches weltweites Netzwerk von Praxispartnern und Partnerhochschulen verweisen. | EBS can point to an utterly comprehensive world-wide network of practical partners and partner universities. |
| 1c) Anglo-Saxon influence | Damit war sie eine der ersten deutschen Hochschulen, die das aus der anglo-amerikanischen Hochschultradition bekannte Format […] mit dem deutschen Hochschulsystem verband.<br>Dem anglo- amerikanischen Modell folgend legt die Hochschule Wert auf eine anwendungsorientierte Ausbildung. | Thereby being one of the first German *Hochschulen*, which connected the format […], known from the Anglo-American university tradition, with the German higher education system.<br>Following the Anglo-American model, the *Hochschule* values an application-oriented education. |
| Theme 2: Knowledge economy | | |
| 2a) Knowledge management and transfer | […] und bevorzugter Kooperationspartner in der internationalen Bildungs- und Wissensgemeinschaft zu werden.<br>Die *EBS Business School* kann auf ein äußerst umfangreiches Netzwerk von Praxispartnern und Partnerhochschulen verweisen, wodurch ein hoher Wissenstransfer […] gegeben ist | […] and to become preferred co-operation partner within the international educational and knowledge community.<br>EBS can point to an extremely wide-ranging network of partners in the realms of business practice and universities. Thereby a high degree of knowledge transfer […] is granted. |
| Theme 3: Competition and market | | |
| 3b) Accreditation | Bisher wurden alle Studiengänge durch die FIBAA oder AMBA akkreditiert. | So far all study programmes have been accredited by FIBAA or AMBA. |
| 3c) Strategic positioning | Der Hochschule ist es gelungen, sich […] in Lehre und Forschung national und international stärker zu positionieren.<br>[…] selbst formulierte[r] Anspruch, in den nächsten fünf Jahren zur führenden wirtschaftswissenschaftlichen Universität in Deutschland aufzusteigen [und] den Anschluss an die führenden Business Schools in Europa herzustellen […] | […] the *Hochschule* succeeded in positioning itself stronger in research and teaching, nationally and internationally.<br>[…] self-formulated claim of rising to become the leading business school in Germany in the next five years [and] to close up to the leading business schools of Europe […] |
| 3d) Branding / visibility / profile | Besonders in der wirtschaftswissenschaftlichen Forschung konnte sie in den zurückliegenden Jahren an Reputation gewinnen.<br>Die Hochschule sollte […] die bestehenden [Center] inhaltlich eindeutiger profilieren und rascher mit akademischem Leben füllen. | Particularly in economy and business research it has gained reputation throughout recent years.<br>The *Hochschule* should […] profile the existing [centres] more clearly and fill them more quickly with academic life. |
| 3e) | Ihr personeller Ausbau ging einher | Its staff expansion came along with |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Offers and choice | mit einer Erweiterung und Ausdifferenzierung des Lehrangebots und der Fächervielfalt.<br>Gegenwärtig bietet die EBS ein breites Spektrum an betriebswirtschaftlichen Fachrichtungen an […]<br>Auf Bachelor-Ebene werden neun, auf Master-Ebene 24 Dual Degree Optionen mit Hochschulen weltweit angeboten. | an extension and further differentiation of the study offers and the variety of courses.<br>Currently, EBS offers a wide range of business and economics subjects.<br>At Bachelor's level there are nine, at Master's level there are 24 dual degree options with universities world-wide. |
| 3f)<br>Growth | […] die sich überzeugend in das strategische (Wachstums-)Konzept der Hochschule integriert.<br>Die weiteren Aufwuchsplanungen sind nicht unrealistisch. | […] which is convincingly integrated into the strategic (growth) concept of the *Hochschule*.<br>The plans of further growth are not unrealistic. |
| 3g)<br>Competition (also with public universities) | […] hat ergeben, dass die EBS den wissenschaftlichen Maßstäben einer Hochschule, die einer Universität gleichzustellen ist, entspricht.<br>In Größe, Zusammensetzung, Anspruch und auch wissenschaftlicher Leistungsfähigkeit entspricht die EBS heute in weiten Teilen einer betriebswirtschaftlichen Fakultät einer staatlichen Universität. | […] has revealed that *EBS* meets the scientific standards of a Hochschule corresponding with a university.<br>In terms of size, composition, aspiration, and also scientific capability, EBS widely matches the business faculty of a state university today. |
| Theme 4: Performativity | | |
| 4a)<br>Student-related performance indicators | Betreuungsrelation Professuren zu Studierende im Fall Term […].<br>Äußerst niedrige Abbrecherquote | Student-professor ratio in the fall term amounts to […].<br>Extremely low drop-out rate |
| 4b)<br>Process and efficiency | […] hochschulweite[r] Strategie- und Restrukturierungsprozess | [...] *Hochschul*-wide strategy and restructuring process. |
| 4c)<br>Performance | Die Hochschule verwendet hochschulspezifische Journal-Rankings bspw. zur Bewertung von kumulativen Dissertationen und für die Bewertung von Forschungsleistungen im Rahmen von Zielvereinbarungen. Für die Überprüfung hochschulinterner Bewertungen kann das ein gangbarer Weg sein, nicht aber für die über die Hochschule hinaus wirkende Bewertung von Forschungsleistungen. Der Hochschule wird empfohlen, ausschließlich bestehende und in der wissenschaftlichen Gemeinschaft anerkannte Journallisten zu verwenden. | The *Hochschule* uses customised journal rankings, e.g. to assess cumulative doctoral dissertations and research performance within the framework of target agreements. This can be a feasible solution for internal assessments or performance controlling, but not for the evaluation of research performance beyond the institution. It is recommended that the *Hochschule* should only use existing journal lists that are recognised within the scientific community. |
| 4d)<br>Research and | Im Ergebnis haben die eingeleiteten Maßnahmen zu einer regen | The initiated measures have resulted in animated publication |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| publications | Publikationsaktivität geführt. | activity. |
| 4e)<br>Quality control | Im Sinne der Qualitätssicherung der Lehre muss die Hochschule sicherstellen, dass diese durch hauptamtliches wissenschaftliches Personal […] erfolgt. | For the purpose of quality assurance of teaching, the Hochschule needs to ensure that lectures are rendered by full-time academic personnel […]. |
| | Die Hochschule misst der Qualitätssicherung und -entwicklung erkennbar hohe Bedeutung bei. | The *Hochschule* visibly ascribes high importance to quality assurance and development. |
| | Studierende, Lehrende und ebenso Alumni sind durch regelmäßige Evaluierungen in die Weiterentwicklung des Studienangebotes eingebunden. | Students, lecturers, and also alumni are incorporated into the ongoing development of the study offers through regular evaluations. |
| 4f)<br>Third-party funding | Darüber hinaus weist die Hochschule […] ein insgesamt hohes Drittmittelaufkommen auf. | Furthermore, the *Hochschule* features an overall high volume of third-party funding. |
| | Die Hochschule kann seit Jahren […] überdurchschnittlich hohe Drittmitteleinwerbungen verzeichnen. Diese setzen sich zum ganz überwiegenden Teil aus Spenden und Sponsoring sowie aus Erlösen aus der Auftragsforschung zusammen. Es bleiben daher weitere Anstrengungen nötig […], um insbesondere den Bereich der wettbewerblich im peer-review-Verfahren vergebenen Drittmittel der öffentlichen Forschungsförderung von einem bislang niedrigen Niveau deutlich zu erhöhen. | Since years, the Hochschule has registered above-average third-party funding acquisitions. They mostly consist of donations and sponsoring and also of revenues generated through commissioned research. Therefore, further efforts remain necessary to significantly increase particularly the realm of competitive, peer-review process biddings - related to publicly funded research projects - from its henceforth low level. |
| Theme 5: Employability | | |
| 5a)<br>Career/placement services | […] verschiedene zusätzliche Dienstleistungen (Career Services […]) übersteigen das an deutschen Hochschulen üblicherweise vorzufindende Maß. | […] miscellaneous additional services (career services […]) surpass the extent usually prevalent at German universities. |
| | Stellenangebote für die Studierenden vielfach noch während des Studiums | Job offers for students often already during their studies |
| 5b)<br>Connection/liaise with world of work | […] stark praxisorientierte Kultur als Business School […]. | […] strongly practice-oriented culture as business school […]. |
| | […] legt die Hochschule Wert auf eine anwendungsorientierte Ausbildung. | […] the *Hochschule* values an application-oriented education. |
| | […] mit dem Ziel der Aus- und Weiterbildung von Führungskräften für nationale und internationale Wirtschaftsunternehmen. | […] with the aim of educating and training executives for national and international businesses. |
| | […] Integration von Theorie und Praxis und der Einbeziehung von Fallstudien und Praxisprojekten in | […] integration of theory and practice and the inclusion of case studies and practical projects into |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | ihre Lehre. | teaching. |
| | Die Praxiskenntnisse des Lehrpersonals und der hohe Stellenwert von Lehrbeiträgen durch Dozentinnen und Dozenten sowie Gastreferentinnen und Gastreferenten aus der unternehmerischen Praxis sind hierfür weitere Ausweise. | The practical knowledge of teaching staff and the high significance of teaching contributions by lecturers and guest speakers coming from the business world are further indications of this. |
| | […] ausgepägte[r] Praxis- und Berufsfeldbezug | […] marked practice and vocational field reference |
| | Damit stellt das Lehrangebot […] in hohem Maße eine Berufsbefähigung der Absolventinnen und Absolventen sicher. | Thereby the study offer […] grants the vocational competence of graduates to a large extent. |
| 5c)<br>Co-operation with the business world, industry focus | Ihre besonderen Stärken liegen in […] den vielfältigen Kooperationen und Partnerschaften mit der Wirtschaft […]. | Its particular strengths encompass the manifold co-operations and partnerships with the business world […]. |
| | […] hat die Hochschule zudem erste Voraussetzungen geschaffen, stärker interdisziplinäre Bezüge zwischen ihren Lehrstühlen, den besonders angesprochenen Wirtschaftsbranchen und verschiedenen Regionen und regionalen Märkten herzustellen. | […] moreover, the *Hochschule* has created a first basis to provide stronger interdisciplinary relations between its professorships, the particularly targeted industries, and various regions and regional markets. |
| | Die Kooperation mit Wirtschaftsunternehmen und anderen Organisationen sind überaus überzeugend und in dieser Intensität an nur wenigen Hochschulen anzutreffen. | The co-operations with businesses and other organisations are greatly convincing, and can be found at only few universities to that extent. |
| Theme 6: Humboldtian ideal/traditional academic values | | |
| 6b)<br>Freedom of research, teaching, and learning | Die Professorinnen und Professoren sollten ihre individuellen Forschungsinteressen verfolgen. | The professors should pursue their individual research interests. |
| 6e)<br>Separation of ownership and academic activity | […] ist prinzipiell sichergestellt, dass die akademische Leitung in Angelegenheiten der Lehre und Forschung ihre Entscheidungen unabhängig von ihrer Trägerin […] treffen kann. | […] in principle it is secured that the academic management can take decisions in teaching and research matters independently from the *Hochschul* owners. |
| Theme 7: Idealistic elements | | |
| 7c)<br>Responsible stance | […] die Förderung von Sozialkompetenz u.a. durch vielfältige Möglichkeiten zum studentischen Engagement […] sind integrale Bestandteile aller Studiengänge […]. | […] the encouragement of social competence e.g. through various opportunities for student involvement […] are integral parts of all study programmes […]. |
| 7d)<br>Broadening horizons | Die Vermittlung allgemeiner Bildungsinhalte durch das obligatorische *studium universale* | The conveyance of general educational subjects through the obligational *studium universale* […] |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | […] sind integrale Bestandteile aller Studiengänge […]. | are integral parts of all study programmes […]. |
| | Die Lehre an der Hochschule weist ein anzuerkennendes Bemühen um Interdisziplinarität auf. | Teaching at the *Hochschule* exhibits an acknowledgeable effort towards interdisciplinarity. |
| | […] sollte die Hochschule ihr Verständnis der Wirtschaftswissenschaften weiter öffnen und die für Forschung und Lehre wichtigen wissenschaftlichen Bezüge zu anderen Sozialwissenschaften […] suchen. | […] the Hochschule should open further their understanding of economic science, and it should seek the scientific relations to other social sciences, which are important for research and teaching. |
| | In der Weiterentwicklung ihrer Lehre sollte die EBS jedoch verstärkt Wert auf die analytisch-theoretischen und methodischen Kompetenzen ihrer Studierenden legen. Hierzu zählt auch die Fähigkeit des fachübergreifenden Problemlösens und der Bearbeitung gesamtgesellschaftlicher Problemstellungen. | However, in their further development of its teaching, EBS should value more strongly the analytical, theoretical, and methodlogical skills of their students. This area also comprises the capability of interdisciplinary problem-solving, and of treating issues concerning society as a whole. |
| Theme 8: The school as business | | |
| 8a)<br>Business model | Externe Dozentinnen und Dozenten erbringen zum Teil erhebliche Lehrleistungen. | External lecturers partly render considerable teaching assignments. |
| | Die Hochschule hat eine bewusst diversifizierte Finanzierungsstruktur gewählt, die auf den Säulen Studiengebühren, private Zuwendungen, Auftragsforschung, öffentliche Förderung und sonstigen Erlösen basiert. | The Hochschule has deliberately chosen a diversified financial structure. It is based on the pillars of tuition fees, private donations, commissioned research, public funding, and miscellaneous revenues. |
| 8b)<br>Service orientation | Eine intensive Betreuung der Studierenden durch das Lehrpersonal […] übersteigen das an deutschen Hochschulen üblicherweise vorzufindende Maß. | An intensive support of students through teaching staff […] surpasses the extent usually prevalent at German universities. |

## Appendix B2: Website Text Findings of Case # 2

| *Theme / Code* | *Original text as provided in English on website* |
|---|---|
| Theme 1: Globalisation/Internationalisation | |
| 1b) Cross-border co-operation | This excellence makes us a sought-after co-operation partner in Europe for other academic institutions, firms, and public sector organisations. |
| Theme 2: Knowledge economy | |
| 2a) Knowledge management and transfer | As thought leaders, we aim to inspire future leaders: We develop and disseminate knowledge and provide the skills that enable the decision makers of today and tomorrow to exercise leadership in a globalised world in ways that are professional and responsible to their stakeholders and to society at large. |
| Theme 3: Competition and market | |
| 3a) Ranking / league tables | EBS is consistently ranked among the top universities in all national university rankings. |
| 3c) Strategic positioning | We aim to consolidate and improve our position as a leading business school in Germany and be perceived as such within the European business school landscape. |
| 3d) Branding / visibility / profile | Looking back over the past 40 years, EBS has long made a name for itself as one of the leading business schools in Germany. |
| | Our university is built on a strong foundation. Since its inception in 1971, EBS has played a pioneering role among German business schools and today it is one of the most highly regarded business studies faculties in the country. |
| | EBS has a clearly defined profile: academic excellence; high practical relevance in research, undergraduate/graduate and executive education; a strict course of internationality, integrated study abroad; intensive fostering and support of personal development. |
| | Although establishing an international reputation in research is a long-term undertaking, noteworthy success is already visible. |
| Theme 4: Performativity | |
| 4a) Student-related performance indicators | Students know their professors: student/faculty ratio is virtually ideal. |
| 4c) Performance | [One of the five core values]: Performance - striving for excellence in all we do and inspiring others to do the same. |
| | A society that strives for success and harmony needs men and women who will become first-class, responsible and creative executives, lawyers and managers. A university will only be able to guarantee an education to accomplish this when, from the outset, in addition to equipping students with expert knowledge it fosters individual personal development and the ability to work in teams and as part of a complex network. |
| | Through academic excellence and thought leadership we have gained a reputation as a powerful motor for business, politics and society. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | As the world's leading universities and business schools have shown: The individual and social competence and the integrity of graduates from leading universities is of paramount importance for the stability and success of societies.<br>Leveraging our own strengths as well as the expertise […] we aim to achieve excellence in all we do. This excellence makes us a preferred school for students of business administration.<br>[One of the five core values]: Impact – engaging in work that leads to measurable change. |
| 4d)<br>Research and publications | As early as 2003, EBS was the first university in Germany to introduce an incentive system for research output that especially rewards the publication of articles in internationally renowned journals and participation in top-ranked international conferences.<br>EBS is investing systematically in expanding internationally competitive research activities.<br>As a consequence of its strengthened position in research EBS is developing into an attractive research location.<br>Over the last few years, EBS has strengthened its senior faculty through the addition of several researchers who are well-established in the international community in their respective research fields, and who contribute considerably towards strengthening the top position of EBS. |
| Theme 5: Employability | |
| 5b)<br>Connection/liaise with world of work | All students at EBS are aiming for more than just a degree. Choosing to study at EBS is always, even for parents, a decision to become part of the wide-reaching and ever growing EBS alumni community, whose members are able and willing to take on responsibility. |
| 5c)<br>Co-operation with the business world, industry focus | Drawing on […] our strong network of contacts in industry, we see ourselves as academic entrepreneurs who seek and address new challenges relating to the multiple constituencies which we serve. |
| Theme 6: Humboldtian ideal/traditional academic values<br>*No findings* | |
| Theme 7: Idealistic elements | |
| 7c)<br>Responsible stance | [One of the five core values]: Responsibility - realising that our actions affect others and accepting accountability for their consequences. Our work as teachers and researchers is based on ethical values that emphasise honesty, truthfulness and the concern for human beings and the natural environment in which we live. |
| Theme 8: The school as business<br>*No findings* | |

**Appendix B3: Website Imagery Findings of Case # 2**

*All images retrieved 20 December 2013 from www.ebs.edu*

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Theme 9: Corportate identity</th></tr>
<tr><td>9a)<br>Logos and slogans</td><td>Inspiring Personalities.<br>WR<br>EBS Universität für Wirtschaft und Recht<br>EBSolutely well educated!</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">9b) Architecture, building, campus, design features<br><br><br><br></td></tr>
</table>

9c) Atmosphere / emotion / belonging

Theme 10: Student activity

10a) Lecture / seminar / group work

Theme 11: Business Enactment

11a) Business people / meetings / negotiations


11b) Business locale

## Appendix C1: Accreditation Report Findings of Case # 3

| *Theme / Code* | *Original* | *Translation* |
|---|---|---|
| | Theme 1: Globalisation/Internationalisation | |
| 1a) International students/faculty | Die ESMT versteht sich weiterhin als forschungsorientierte, internationale *School of Management*. Sie will […] dabei insbesondere den europäischen Kontext berücksichtigen. | *ESMT* still sees itself as research-oriented, international school of management. It particularly […] wants to consider the European context. |
| | Die ESMT [sieht] Ähnlichkeiten mit international führenden Business Schools wie die INSEAD und die London Business School, die sie als ihre Vorbilder ansieht. | ESMT [sees] similarities with international leading business schools such as INSEAD and London Business School, which it considers as their archetypes. |
| | Die Studierenden der ESMT sollen auf Führungsaufgaben in der globalisierten Wirtschaft vorbereitet werden. | The students of ESMT are to be prepared for leadership roles in the globalised economy. |
| | Die Studierendenschaft ist mit einem Anteil von ca. 90 Prozent ausländischer Studierender sehr international. | The student body is very international, with a share of 90% students from abroad. |
| 1b) Cross-border co-operation | Neben engen Kooperationen mit Gründerunternehmen unterhält die ESMT eine Vielzahl nationaler und internationaler Partnerschaften. | Besides close co-operations with its founding companies, ESMT fosters a large number of national and international university co-operations. |
| | Theme 2: Knowledge economy | |
| 2a) Knowledge management and transfer | […] auch Beiträge […], die Transferleistungen über ein fachwissenschaftliches Publikum hinaus darstellen. | […] also contributions […], which represent transfer accomplishments beyond a scientific audience. |
| | Seit Gründung der Hochschule gab es zwei Transfer-Spinoffs, die in direktem Zusammenhang mit Know-how stehen, das an der Hochschule entwickelt wurde. | Since the *Hochschule* was founded, there have been two transfer spinoffs, which are in direct relation with know-how developed at the *Hochschule.* |
| | Als *Business School* hat die ESMT eine stärker transfer-orientierte Ausrichtung als dies bei vielen anderen Hochschulen der Fall ist. Ihre Transferleistungen sind daher positiv zu würdigen. | As business school *ESMT* has a more transfer-oriented direction than most other universities. Therefore, its transfer accomplishments should be positively recognised. |
| | Theme 3: Competition and market | |
| 3a) Ranking / league tables | […] sowie einige gute Platzierungen in einschlägigen Rankings erlauben […] festzuhalten, dass dieser Anspruch teilweise schon eingelöst | […] as well as several good places in pertinent rankings allow […] to establish that this claim is partly realised already. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | ist. | |
| | Die ESMT sieht hinsichtlich ihrer internationalen Reputation und ihrer Attraktivität für Studierende auch Rankings als einen wichtigen Teil der externen Qualitätssicherung an. | With regard to its international reputation and its attractiveness for students, ESMT considers rankings as important component of external quality assurance. |
| | Die Hochschule ist […] in ihrer Auffassung zu unterstützen, dass Rankings für die substantielle Beurteilung wissenschaftlicher Qualität kein zuverlässiger oder auch nur hinreichender Indikator. Gleichzeitig ist es sinnvoll, deren Bedeutung für Studierende und ihre Eignung anzuerkennen, eine nationale und internationale Sichtbarkeit der ESMT sowohl zu dokumentieren als auch zu erzeugen. | The *Hochschule* should be supported in its view that rankings are no reliable or even sufficient indicator for the substantial evaluation of scientific quality. Nevertheless it makes sense to acknowledge their meaning for students and their aptitude to document as well as to generate national and international visibility of ESMT. |
| 3b)<br>Accreditation | [Die Hochschule hat] ihre MBA-Studiengänge mehrfach akkreditieren lassen (FIBAA, AMBA, AACSB). | [The *Hochschule* has] obtained multiple accreditation of their MBA study programmes (FIBAA, AMBA, AACSB). |
| 3c)<br>Strategic positioning | Der Wissenschaftsrat sieht in der Bildung der drei Forschungsschwer-punkte […] eine überzeugende und inzwischen sehr gut umgesetzte Strategie, die geeignet ist, der noch jungen Hochschule ein international sichtbares Profil zu geben. | The science council sees in the creation of the three research focus areas […] a convincing and, in the meantime very well implemented, strategy, which is appropriate to give an internationally visible profile to the still young *Hochschule.* |
| 3d)<br>Branding / visibility / profile | Die EMST zeichnet sich allerdings auch durch ausgewiesene, international sichtbare Forschungs-leistungen aus, die der Wissenschaftsrat hiermit würdigt. | However, ESMT also distinguishes itself through internationally visible research performance, which the science council herewith appraises. |
| | Ihr besonderes Profilmerkmal ist eine sehr enge Verbindung der Inhalte von Betriebs- und Volkswirtschaftslehre. | Its particular profile characteristic is the close connection of contents of business studies and economics. |
| | Der Anspruch der *School*, einen Platz unter den Top-*Business Schools* einzunehmen wird sowohl von nationalen wie auch internationalen *peers* sowie der Arbeitsgruppe für einlösbar gehalten. | The school's claim to reach a place among the top business schools is considered realistic by national as well as international peers, and also by the science council committee. |
| | Die Hochschule hat überzeugend dargelegt, dass sie Reputation als ihre wichtigste Währung ansieht. | The Hochschule has argued convincingly that it considers reputation its most important currency. |
| 3e)<br>Offers and choice | Die Hochschule bietet ihren Studierenden verschiedene Stipendienprogramme an. | The Hochschule offers several scholarship schemes to its students. |
| | Die Anzahl der Wahlmöglichkeiten | The number of choice options […] |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | [...] könnte erhöht werden. | could be enlarged. |
| 3f)<br>Growth | Die Gutachtergruppe ermutigt die Hochschule [...], ihr Wachstum binnen der kommenden fünf Jahre [...] deutlich stärker zu forcieren. | The assessor group encourages the Hochschule to push its growth within the following five years. |
| | Auch hier scheint angebracht, dass sich die ESMT mit den ihren Wachstumszielen einhergehenden strukturellen Anforderungen besser auseinandersetzt. | Also in this regard, it seems advisable that ESMT faces up to the structural requirements, following from its growth targets, in a better way. |
| | Die Bewerberzahlen für den Vollzeit-MBA haben sich [...] verdreifacht. Parallel sind auch die Studierendenzahlen gestiegen. | The applicant number for the full-time MBA programme has trebled [...]. Parallel to that, the student numbers have also increased. |
| | Die steigenden Bewerberzahlen sind als Ausweis der zunehmenden Reputation der ESMT bei Studieninteressierten zu werten. | The growing applicant numbers can be interpreted as document of enhancing reputation of *ESMT* among prospective students. |
| | Die Arbeitsgruppe hält es für dringend geboten, dass die Hochschule die Zahl der Bewerberinnen und Bewerber erhöht, um ihrer eigenen Zielsetzung gerecht werden zu können. | The task group considers it vital that the Hochschule increases the number of its applicants in order to live up to its own goals. |
| 3g)<br>Competition (also with public universities) | Diese Prüfung [...] hat ergeben, dass die ESMT den wissenschaftlichen Maßstäben einer Hochschule, die einer Universität gleichzustellen ist, entspricht. | This inspection [...] has shown that *ESMT* corresponds with the scientific benchmark of a *Hochschule* which is to be equated with a university. |
| | Bei der Rekrutierung von Studierenden stehe die ESMT zudem mit weiteren, international aktiven *Schools of Management* im Wettbewerb. | Regarding student recruitment, ESMT finds itself in competition with others, internationally active schools of management. |
| | Die ESMT operiert im nach eigener Einschätzung hochkompetitiven europäischen Markt der *Business Schools.* | ESMT operates, according to its own assessment, in the highly competitive European business school market. |
| Theme 4: Performativity | | |
| 4a)<br>Student-related performance indicators | Ebenso ist das gute Betruungsverhältnis von Professorinnen und Professoren zu Studierenden zu loben. | By the same token, the good student-professor ratio is to be praised. |
| | Die Studienabbruchquote gibt die Hochschule für beide Studiengänge mit jeweils [....] an. | The drop-out rate is quoted by the *Hochschule* to be [...] for both study programmes, respectively. |
| 4d)<br>Research and publications | Da die Hochschule über ausreichende Finanzmittel verfügt und ihre Professuren entsprechend ausstattet, definiert sie ihre wissenschaftliche Qualität in erster Linie über qualitativ hochwertige Publikationen. | As the Hochschule has sufficient financial means at its disposal, and equips the professorships accordingly, it defines its scientific quality primarily through qualitatively high-class publications. |
| | Auch leisten die Zielvereinbarungen | Also the target agreements in the |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | im Bereich Forschung nach Auffassung der Gutachterinnen und Gutachter einen wichtigen Beitrag zur Qualitätssicherung. | area of research, according to the assessors' opinion, contribute significantly to quality assurance. |
| | In allen Bereichen sind in den vergangenen Jahren Publikationen in A und A+ Zeitschriften platziert worden. | In recent years, publications have been placed in A and A+ journals In all research areas. |
| 4e)<br>Quality control | Der Wissenschaftsrat würdigt ausdrücklich das *tenure*-Verfahren der ESMT, das eine nachhaltige Qualitätssicherung gewährleistet. | The science council appreciates explicitly the tenure procedure at ESMT, which grants an enduring quality assurance. |
| | Begrüßt wird dabei besonders die konsequente Ausrichtung auf Qualität in der Präsenzlehre. | The consequent quality-orientation regarding teaching is particularly welcome. |
| | Die ESMT beschreibt ihr System zur Qualitätssicherung als „leitbildori-entiertes Qualitätskontrollsystem". Sie verfügt über ein internes Qualitätsmanagementkonzept […] | ESMT describes its quality assurance system as "mission statement-oriented". She has an internal quality management concept […] |
| | Kern der internen Qualitäts-sicherung sei vor allem, klare Verantwortlichkeiten zu schaffen. Es gibt regelmäßige Lehr-evaluationen, die Studierende, Berufspraxis, Wissenschaft und Wirtschaft mit einbeziehen. Relevante Input- […] und Output-Größen fließen in ein Berichts-system ein. Die ESMT führt zudem eine Absolventenstudie durch. | At the core of the internal quality assurance there is the primary task of defining clear responsibilities. There are regular teaching evaluations incorporating students, professional practice, science, and the business world. Relevant input and output variables are processed in a reporting system. In addition, ESMT conducts an alumni survey. |
| | Dokumentiert das Berichtswesen oder eine Evaluation, dass ein Lehrziel verfehlt wurde, werden der *Dean of Degree Programs* und der Direktor der MBA Programme aufgefordert, einsprechende Änderungen vorzunehmen. | In case the reporting or an evaluation documents that a teaching goal was missed, the Dean of Degree Programs and the director of the MBA programmes are demanded to carry out changes accordingly. |
| | Die Leistungen der ESMT im Bereich der Qualitätssicherung sind ausdrücklich zu würdigen. | The performance of ESMT in the area of quality assurance is explicitly welcome. |
| 4f)<br>Third-party funding | Die Bedeutung von Dritt- und vor allem Fördermitteln hat […] deutlich zugenommen. | The importance of third-party funding and subsidies has increased significantly […] |
| | Die Hochschule befindet sich angesichts der Finanzkraft ihrer Stifter und deren, in vergangenen finanzierungsrunden deutlich gewordenen Unterstützungswillen in einer sehr vorteilhaften Lage. | Considering the financial power of its benefactors, and their will to support the school, which has become apparent in previous funding rounds, the Hochschule is in an advantageous position. |
| Theme 5: Employability | | |
| 5b)<br>Connection/liaise with | Aus dem Selbstverständnis als *School* heraus richten sich die | According to the self-conception as school, both master degree |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| world of work | beiden Masterstudiengänge der ESMT, wie dies auch international in MBA Programmen üblich ist, an praxisorientierte Studierende. | programmes of ESMT target, as is internationally common among MBA programmes, practice-oriented students. |
| | Die Hochschule engagiert sich darüber hinaus im Bereich der Weiterbildung. | The Hochschule furthermore is engaged in the area of training and further education. |
| | Gleichzeitig betont die ESMT, dass bei der Weiterbildung von Führungskräften praktische Inhalte große Bedeutung hätten. | At the same time, ESMT emphasises that practical contents have high importance in the training provided for executives. |
| 5c)<br>Co-operation with the business world, industry focus | Das primäre Ziel der Stifter ist es, über die ESMT eine international anerkannte und nachgefragte Managementausbildung zu ermöglichen, die im Unterschied zu bestehenden Angeboten insbesondere die Erfolgsfaktoren des deutschen Wirtschaftssystems mit berücksichtigt. | It is primary goal of the benefactors to create, via ESMT, to enable an internationally renowned and demanded management education, which particularly considers, as opposed to other providers, the success factors of the German economic system. |
| | [Die ESMT] sieht […] einen gewissen Wettbewerbsvorteil in der engen Verbindung zu 25 international operierenden in Deutschland ansässigen Unternehmen. | [ESMT] sees […] a certain competitive advantage in the close connection with 25 internationally operating companies head-quartered in Germany. |
| Theme 6: Humboldtian ideal/traditional academic values | | |
| 6a)<br>Unity of research and teaching | Gemäß ihrem Leitbild fördert die ESMT nach eigenen Angaben die Verknüpfung von aktuelle Forschung und Lehre. | According to its mission statement, the *Hochschule* promotes the nexus of current research and teaching, according to own declarations. |
| | [Die Gutachtergruppe] rät der ESMT […] dazu, die Verbindungen zwischen Forschung und Lehre zu stärken. | [The task group] advises *ESMT* to strengthen the links between research and teaching. |
| 6b)<br>Freedom of research, teaching, and learning | Umso begrüßenswerter ist, dass die ESMT ihren Professorinnen und Professoren bei Wahlfächern auch die Möglichkeit lässt, Kurse entlang eigener Forschungsinteressen anzubieten. | All the more welcome it is that *ESMT* leaves its professors room to offer elective courses along their own individual research interests. |
| 6d)<br>Co-determination, participation, independence of faculty members | […] dass wissenschaftliche Belange von Mitgliedern der Hochschule vollständig autonom gesteuert werden. | […] that scientific issue are steered in completely autonomous manners by members of the *Hochschule.* |
| | Jedoch muss die Hochschule […] gewährleisten, dass ohne Mitwirkung der Hochschulleitung eine Professorale Stimmenmehrheit im Senat gegeben ist. | However, the *Hochschule* needs to ensure that a majority vote through professors in the senat is possible without interference of the *Hochschul* management. |
| Theme 7: Idealistic elements | | |
| 7c)<br>Responsible stance | Die Hochschule verbindet nach eigenen Angaben unternehmerisch | The *Hochschule* combines, according to their own statements, |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | denkende und verantwortlich handelnde Menschen, die sich zu Weltoffenheit und Respekt vor dem Individuum bekennen. | entrepreneurial-minded and responsibly-acting people, who commit to cosmopolitanism and respect for the individual. |
| 7d)<br>Broadening horizons | Dem Forschungsprofil der ESMT liegt die Auffassung zugrunde, dass die klassische, auf Gewinnmaximierung ausgelegte Betriebswirtschaftslehre um eine gesamtgesellschaftliche Perspektive erweitert werden müsse. Zudem wichen auch viele Märkte stark von der Vorstellung eines idealtypischen Marktes mit perfekt rationalen Akteuren in der Volkswirtschafts-lehre ab. Sie würden durch Unternehmensversagen oder individuelle systematische Entscheidungsfehler von Kunden oder Investoren beeinflusst. Deshalb benötige umgekehrt auch eine volkswirtschaftliche Sichtweise ein detailliertes Verständnis darüber, wie Unternehmen und Individuen Entscheidungen treffen. Entsprechend wählt die ESMT einen inter- bzw. transdisziplinären Ansatz […]. | The research profile of ESMT is based on the perception that the classic, profit maximisation-oriented field of business studies needs to be broadened through a perspective of society as a whole. Moreover, many markets deviate strongly from the idea of an ideally typical market with perfectly rational actors as dominant in economics. They are influenced by business failure or individual or systematic decision mistakes of customers or investors. Therefore, in turn, also an economic perspective needs a detailed understanding of how companies and individuals derive decisions. Accordingly, ESMT chooses an interdisciplinary and trans disciplinary approach […]. |
| Theme 8: The school as business | | |
| 8a)<br>Business model | Zu einem größeren Teil finanziert sich die ESMT […] mit firmenspe-zifischen und offenen Weiter-bildungsangeboten. | To a large part, ESMT finances its operations through tailor-made company trainings and open further education offers. |

## Appendix C2: Website Text Findings of Case # 3

| *Theme / Code* | *Original text as provided in English on website* |
|---|---|
| | Theme 1: Globalisation/Internationalisation |
| 1a)<br>International students/faculty | [A word from the Dean of International Relations]: When I came to the young business school ESMT […] I was surprised by just how international it was. |
| | With only 32 faculty members at [ESMT] they represent 19 different countries. |
| | The internationality of ESMT plays an important role. |
| | ESMT attracts talented, passionate, creative students from all over the world. |
| 1b)<br>Cross-border co-operation | ESMT maintains cooperations with a variety of national and international partners in science and industry at an institutional and program level. |
| | Theme 2: Knowledge economy |
| 2a)<br>Knowledge management and transfer | With a heritage rooted in European values and the potential of technology, ESMT develops and imparts new knowledge to foster sustainable economic growth. |
| 2b)<br>Innovation and creativity | In order to master the multiple societal and entrepreneurial challenges of the future and to secure our welfare in a sustainable manner, it is necessary to develop and launch new technologies and drive innovation forward. The area of competence management of technology focuses on how the development and market introduction of new technologies can be successfully designed from an individual, corporate, industrial, and societal perspective. |
| | Theme 3: Competition and market |
| 3a)<br>Ranking / league tables | According to the rankings of the most important news and business magazines in Germany and worldwide, ESMT takes a leading position. |
| | ESMT has been ranked 29th in the Financial Times global ranking. […] The EMBA program at ESMT is once again the highest ranked stand-alone program in Germany. |
| | [Which MBA]: The business school entered the ranking at 30th, placing 1st in Germany and 8th in Europe. |
| | [FT Executive Education 2013]: ESMT is the only business school based in Germany to be included in the ranking and is the highest ranked school within the DACH countries. |
| | [FT Executive MBA 2012]: [ESMT] is ranked 1st out of all global EMBA programs for the career progress of its graduates 3 years after course completion. |
| | ESMT has placed 29th worldwide and 4th in Europe in the Aspen Institute's ranking Beyond Grey Pinstripes. |
| 3b)<br>Accreditation | ESMT has received accreditation from AACSB in 2012 […], AMBA in 2009 […], and FIBAA in 2006 […]. These accrediations highlight the quality of the school's faculty, teaching, and research and ensure that ESMT meets the same high standards of education as all of the world's leading business schools. ESMT is currently one of only two business schools in Germany to |

| | |
|---|---|
| | hold accreditations from both AACSB and AMBA. |
| **Theme 4: Performativity** | |
| 4d) Research and publications | ESMT's research concept, developed by the full-time faculty, sets three major research areas which pertain to a certain area of expertise: leadership and social responsibility; European competitiveness; management of technology. |
| | [Handelsblatt ranking]: Based on publications in A+ journals, ESMT is 5th for all German-speaking (DACH) countries. |
| | ESMT faculty chooses the School because of its singular environment, excellent research conditions, the strong business and academic networks. |
| | Our diverse faculty is recognised in top international academic publications. Research findings also provide cutting-edge and profound insights for the business community as well as the classroom. |
| 4f) Third-party funding | Excellent research by ESMT's international faculty continually attracts grants from various funding sources. |
| **Theme 5: Employability** | |
| 5b) Connection/liaise with world of work | ESMT's unique atmosphere and extraordinary learning centers in Berlin and Schloss Gracht provide the perfect environment to develop skills and build relationships lasting lifetimes. |
| 5c) Co-operation with the business world, industry focus | The ESMT journey has been a remarkable one. From modest beginnings to top rankings, faculty excellence, a dynamic student body, and world-class facilities – the Journey is only partially complete. And requires your support and guidance. |
| **Theme 6: Humboldtian ideal/traditional academic values** *No findings* | |
| **Theme 7: Idealistic elements** | |
| 7a) Critical orientation and reflective abilities | Within the area of competence of European Competitiveness, both the classical problems of market failure – through market power, external effects such as pollution, asymmetric information distribution or hold-up problems – and regulatory and policy failures are examined. In addition, ESMT examines the importance of recent behavioral theoretical approaches for the understanding of markets and their regulation. |
| 7c) Responsible stance | The area of Leadership and Social Responsibility deals with questions such as how socially responsible leaders should be trained and supported. It focuses on how different business objectives – such as entrepreneurial profit orientation and the requirements of environmental protection – can be reconciled and implemented in the company. |
| | The Sustainable Business Roundtable (SBRT) represents a unique partnership between business and academia, allowing all parties to debate and discuss the challenges and opportunities in mainstreaming sustainability practices within a collegial and open setting. |
| **Theme 8: The school as business** *No findings* | |

**Appendix C3: Website Imagery Findings of Case # 3**

*All images retrieved 20 December 2013 from www.esmt.org*

| Theme 9: Corportate identity |
|---|
| 9a) Logos and slogans<br><br>esmt<br>ESMT. The business school founded by business. |
| 9b) Architecture, building, campus, design features<br><br><br><br> <br><br>  |

9c) Atmosphere / emotion / belonging




Theme 10: Student activity

10a) Lecture / seminar / group work


10b) Learning / reading / contemplation

Theme 11: Business Enactment

11a) Business people / meetings / negotiations


11b) Business locale

## Appendix D1: Accreditation Report Findings of Case # 4

| *Theme / Code* | *Original* | *Translation* |
|---|---|---|
| | Theme 1: Globalisation/Internationalisation | |
| 1a) International students/faculty | Das ambitionierte Leitbild, „eine führende Business School in Deutschland mit internationaler Ausrichtung zu sein“ […]. | The ambitious mission of being a leading business school in Germany with international orientation […] |
| | Die Zielsetzung der Hochschule, auch in der Forschung eine „international wahrgenommene, reputationsgetriebene Business School“ zu sein […] | The aim of the *Hochschule* to be an internationally noticed, reputation-driven business school also in the realm of research […] |
| | Auch ist es der Frankfurt School nicht gelungen, in dem von ihr selbst erwartetem Maß namhafte (internationale) Wissenschaftle-rinnen und Wissenschaftler zu gewinnen, die international sichtbar Forschungsergebnisse publiziert haben. | Furthermore Frankfurt School has not succeeded in gaining to the internally expected degree, renowned (international) scientists, who have published internationally visible research results. |
| | Lehre und Forschung sind an der Frankfurt School in vielerlei Hinsicht international ausgerichtet. | Research and teaching at *Frankfurt School* are internationally oriented in many regards. |
| | […] Anteil ausländischer Studierender in den Master-Studiengängen […] für eine inter-national ausgerichtete Business School vergleichsweise niedrig. | […] share of foreign students in the Master degree programmes […] relatively low for an internationally oriented business school. |
| | Bei der Einstellung weiteren […] Personals sollte die Hochschule nicht zuletzt ihrem eigenen Anspruch nach Internationalität | In their recruiting and hiring efforts, the *Hochschule* should, not least, account more strongly for its own claim for internationalisation. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | stärker Rechnung tragen.<br>Insbesondere bei den internationalen Hochschulpartnerschaften kann die Frankfurt School […] erhebliche Aktivitäten vorweisen. | Especially in the area of international university partnerships, Frankfurt School displays considerable activity. |
| 1b)<br>Cross-border co-operation | Die Master-Studiengänge werden in Kooperation mit Partnerhochschulen im Ausland angeboten, den Studierenden steht die Möglichkeit eines Doppelabschlusses mit einer ausländischen Partnerhochschule offen. | The Master degree programmes are offered in co-operation with partner universities abroad, students have the option of obtaining a double degree with a partner university abroad. |
| 1c)<br>Anglo-Saxon influence | Die Hochschule will damit an die Tradition angelsächsischer Business Schools […] anknüpfen. | Thereby, the *Hochschule* wants to tie on the tradition of Anglo-Saxon business schools. |
| Theme 2: Knowledge economy | | |
| 2a)<br>Knowledge management and transfer | Die Hochschule sieht dabei vielfältige Rückbezüge der Weiterbildungsangebote auf ihre akademische Lehre und Forschung, so der Transfer aktueller Erkenntnisse der betriebswirtschaftlichen, bankbetriebswirtschaftlichen, volkswirtschaftlichen und auch rechtlichen Forschung in die betriebliche Praxis.<br>Die Frankfurt School setzt damit den Weiterbildungsauftrag einer Hochschule vorbildlich um. | With regard to its training and further education offers, the *Hochschule* sees various references to its academic research and teaching, such as the transfer of current insights from business studies, banking business studies, economic, and also legal research into business practice.<br>*Frankfurt school* thereby enacts the further education mandate of a university in an exemplary manner |
| Theme 3: Competition and market | | |
| 3b)<br>Accreditation | Die Frankfurt School hat alle ihre Studiengänge von einer nationalen Akkreditierungsagentur akkreditieren lassen. Die Strategie, mittelfristig externe Akkreditierungen im internationalen Bereich anzustreben, ist in Bezug auf den internationalen Anspruch der Hochschule zweckmäßig. | *Frankfurt School* has obtained accreditation of all study programmes from a national accreditation agency. The strategy of seeking external accreditation from an international body in the medium term is appropriate with regard to the international claim of the *Hochschule*. |
| 3c)<br>Strategic positioning | Das ambitionierte Leitbild, „eine führende Business School in Deutschland mit internationaler Ausrichtung zu sein“ und […] „Standards zu setzen“ […]<br>Gleichwohl bedarf die internationale Positionierung und Sichtbarkeit der Frankfurt School weiterer Anstrengungen.<br>Die [WR-]Arbeitsgruppe […] ist aber nicht davon überzeugt, dass sich diese Anstrengungen, wie sie die Hochschule in ihrer Forschungsstrategie […] formuliert hat, in | The ambitious mission of being a leading business school in Germany with international orientation and to set standards […]<br>Nevertheless, the international positioning and visibility of *Frankfurt School* requires further efforts.<br>However, the [science council] committee […] is not convinced that these efforts, as formulated [...] in the research strategy of the *Hochschule*, will result in increased |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | naher Zukunft in vermehrten Publikationen […] niederschlagen [wird]. | publications […] in the near future. |
| | Die Hochschule […] hat erkannt, dass für eine international ausgerichtete Business School eine eigenständige Forschung ein entscheidendes Qualitäts- und Differenzierungsmerkmal darstellt. | The *Hochschule* […] has recognised that independent research activity represents a decisive characteristic of quality and differentiation for an internationally oriented business school. |
| | Die Weiterbildungsangebote sind in die Gesamtstrategie der Hochschule gut eingebunden. | The further education offers are well integrated into the overall strategy of the *Hochschule*. |
| 3d) Branding / visibility / profile | Die Zielsetzung der Hochschule, auch in der Forschung eine „international wahrgenommene, reputationsgetriebene Business School" zu sein […] | Particularly in economy and business research it has gained reputation throughout recent years. |
| | […] Entwicklung des wissenschaft-lichen Profils […] | […] development of a scientific profile […] |
| | Es ist der Hochschule als Ganzer bisher nicht gelungen, die wissenschaftliche Sichtbarkeit ihrer Forschung signifikant zu erhöhen […] | The *Hochschule* has not succeeded yet in increasing the scientific visibility of its research significantly […] |
| | Die Hochschule steht […] vor der Aufgabe, […] international sichtbare Forschungsschwerpunkte heraus-zubilden. | The Hochschule faces the task of establishing internationally visible research focus areas. |
| | Erfreulich ist, dass der Träger sich bereit erklärt hat, die stärkere wissenschaftliche Profilierung der Hochschule durch die Bereitstellung weiterer Finanzmittel zu ermöglichen. | It is gratifying that the owner has agreed to enable a stronger profile-building of the *Hochschule* through the provision of further financial means. |
| | Zusammengefasst werden im Bereich „Finance" einzelne, aber in der Summe zu wenige überzeugende Forschungslei-stungen mit von der Frankfurt School angestrebter internationaler Sichtbarkeit erbracht. | In summary, in the area of "finance" there are individual, but in sum too few convincing research accomplishments of international visibility, although the latter are aspired at by Frankfurt School. |
| 3e) Offers and choice | Ihr breites Lehrangebot mit Schwerpunkten in Finance und Management […] | Its broad range of taught subjects with the core areas of finance and management […] |
| | […] mit deutlich erweiterten Wahlmöglichkeiten, wird die Attraktivität des Lehrangebotes weiter erhöhen. | […] with significantly enhanced choice options will further increase the attractiveness of the teaching proposition. |
| | Die Hochschule weist trotz ihrer Vielzahl von Studienangeboten eine ausgesprochen starke Fokussierung auf die Finanzwissenschaft auf. | The *Hochschule* exhibits, despite its multiplicity of study programme offers, a pronounced focus on financial sciences. |
| | Mit dem Bologna-Prozess führte die | With the Bologna process *HfB* |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | HfB […] ein diversifiziertes Angebot von Bachelor- und Master-studiengängen ein. | introduced […] a diversified offer of Bachelor and Master degree programmes. |
| | Positiv hervorzuheben ist die Absicht der Frankfurt School, die englischsprachigen Angebote bereits in den Bachelor-Studiengängen zu erweitern […] | It should be positively underscored that *Frankfurt School* intends to enlarge the English-language programmes already at Bachelor's level. |
| | Mit der Anreicherung des finanz-wirtschaftlichen Studiums um rechtliche, weitere ökonomische und philosophische Fragestellungen und ihren Lehrangeboten im Bereich Gesundheitsmanagement setzt die Hochschule zudem interessante Schwerpunkte, die in dieser Form an anderen Hoch-schulen nicht angeboten werden. | Enriching the finance study programmes with legal, additional economic, and philosophical topics, and also with their offers in the area of health management, the *Hochschule* furthermore establishes interesting emphases, which are not offered like that at other universities. |
| | […] unterscheiden sich die gegenwärtigen Studiengänge doch oftmals nur in wenigen Modulen. | […] the current study programmes often only differ in a few modules. |
| | So soll in Zukunft nur noch ein Master-Studiengang Finance, dieser aber mit deutlich erweiterten Wahl-möglichkeiten angeboten werden. | In the future, only one Master's study programme 'finance' shall be offered, but it will have significantly enhanced choice options. |
| 3f)<br>Growth | […] dass die Hochschule eine ausgesprochen positive Wachs-tumsentwicklung verzeichnet. | […] ensures that the *Hochschule* displays a positive growth development. |
| | Insgesamt kann davon ausgegangen werden, dass […] Weiterbildung ein Wachstumsbereich der Frankfurt School bleiben wird. | Overall it can be assumed, that training will remain a growth area of Frankfurt school. |
| | Die Frankfurt School hat eine ambitionierte Wachstumsstrategie im Bereich der Lehre. | Frankfurt School has an ambitious growth strategy in the area of teaching. |
| | Die Hochschule muss darauf achten, dass diese quantitativ beein-druckende und ökonomisch nach-vollziehbare Aufwuchsplanung nicht zu Lasten der Qualität […] geht. | The *Hochschule* needs to ensure that this impressive quantitative, and economically understandable, growth plan does not unfold at the expense of quality […] |
| 3g)<br>Competition (also with public universities) | Ihr breites Lehrangebot […] ist von Umfang und Inhalt mit dem staat-licher Einrichtungen vergleichbar. | Its broad range of taught subjects […] is comparable with the one of public institutions, concerning scope and contents. |
| Theme 4: Performativity | | |
| 4a)<br>Student-related performance indicators | Die Betreuungsrelationen sind im Vergleich zu staatlichen Einrichtungen sehr gut. | Student-staff ratios are very good in comparison to public institutions. |
| 4b)<br>Process and efficiency | […] Konzentrationsprozess auf wenige Master-Studiengänge […] | [...] process of concentration on few Master's degree programmes […] |
| | Die Hochschulleitung hat in der | *Hochschul* management has |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Vergangenheit und bis heute einen beeindruckenden Entwicklungsprozess initiiert und intensiv begleitet. | initiated and intensively accompanied an impressive development process in the past and to date. |
| | […] „Jahre der Konsolidierung", die Hochschule beabsichtige, angesichts der Vielzahl von Studienangeboten Prioritäten zu setzen. | […] "years of consolidation", the *Hochschule* intends to set priorities, considering the variety of study programmes offered. |
| 4c)<br>Performance | Der Wissenschaftsrat erkennt die Anstrengungen an, welche die Hochschule […] unternommen hat, um die Forschungsleistungen zu steigern. | The Science Council acknowledges the efforts made by the *Hochschule* to increase the research performance. |
| | […] durch adäquate Forschungsleistungen zu untermauern. | […] to underpin through adequate research performance. |
| | Es ist der Hochschule als Ganzer bisher nicht gelungen, die wissenschaftliche Sichtbarkeit ihrer Forschung signifikant zu erhöhen […] | The Hochschule has not succeeded yet in increasing the scientific visibility of its research significantly […] |
| | Wesentlich hierfür ist, dass sie […] forschungsaktive Wissenschaftlerinnen und Wissenschaftler […] gewinnen kann. | To that end it is essential that it […] can attract research-active scientists. |
| | Einzelne Forscherinnen und Forscher zeigen ausweislich ihrer Publikationen hervorragende Leistungen. | Individual researchers display excellent performance regarding their publications. |
| | Die Forschungsleistungen im Bereich „Finance" […] zeigen ein insgesamt heterogenes Bild. | The research performance in the area of "finance" shows an overall heterogeneous result. |
| | Die bisherige Praxis, Forschungsleistungen zum Gegenstand von Zielvereinbarungen zu machen, hat […] nicht in ausreichendem Maße zu überzeugenden Forschungsleistungen geführt. | The present policy of integrating research performance into target agreements, has not […] led to convincing research results to a sufficient degree. |
| | Unterstützenswert sind grundsätzlich alle Aktivitäten […] zur Steigerung der Publikationstätigkeiten. Ob die Überlegungen der Hochschule zur Einführung individueller Gehaltszuschläge nach Leistungskriterien dazu geeignet sind, bleibt offen. | All activities to enhance publication activities […] are generally worth supporting. It remains open, however, if the considerations of the *Hochschule* to implement individual salary bonuses according to performance criteria are suitable. |
| 4d)<br>Research and publications | […] und dies durch Publikationen nachzuweisen, die den national und international anerkannten Standards der Betriebswirtschaftslehre entsprechen würden. | […] and to substantiate that through publications, which would meet the nationally and internationally accepted standards of business and economics research. |
| | Auch ist es der Frankfurt School nicht gelungen, in dem von ihr selbst erwartetem Maß namhafte | Furthermore Frankfurt School has not succeeded in gaining to the |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | (internationale) Wissenschaftlerinnen und Wissenschaftler zu gewinnen, die international sichtbar Forschungsergebnisse publiziert haben. | internally expected degree, renowned (international) scientists, who have published internationally visible research results. |
| | Die [WR-]Arbeitsgruppe […] ist aber nicht davon überzeugt, dass sich diese Anstrengungen […] in vermehrten Publikationen in wissenschaftlich hoch anerkannten Journals (z.B. in Journals mit Ranking A oder B oder in für bestimmte Fachgebiete entsprechend hoch anerkannte Publikationsorganen) niederschlagen [wird]. | However, the [science council] committee […] is not convinced that these efforts [...] will result in increased publications in scientifically highly acknowledged journals (e.g. journals rated A or B or in correspondingly categorised publication organs of special interest areas). |
| | […] das Bemühen zur Publikation in referierten Zeitschriften zu erkennen, Publiaktionen in renommierten internationalen Zeitschriften finden sich insgesamt jedoch wenige. | […] visible endeavours to publish in refereed journals, but there are only few publications in internationally renowned journals. |
| | Während einige Professorinnen und Professoren einen quantitativ und qualitativ beachtlichen Forschungsoutput vorweisen können, gilt dies […] für die Mehrzahl […] nicht. | Whereas some professors produce a quantitatively and qualitatively remarkable research output, this does not apply for the majority of them. |
| 4e)<br>Quality control | Der Frankfurt School wird aus dem Grund einer externen Qualitätskontrolle […] empfohlen. | For reasons of external quality control, it is recommended to Frankfurt School to […] |
| | An der Frankfurt School besteht gegenwärtig kein Gremium […] im Sinne einer internen Qualitätssicherung. | At *Frankfurt School* there is currently no council […] in terms of internal quality control. |
| | Ein Gremium für eine kritische Begleitung und Bewertung der wissenschaftlichen Ausrichtung und Leistungen im Sinne einer internen Qualitätssicherung besteht an der Frankfurt School nicht. | At *Frankfurt School* there is no panel for the critical supervision and assessment of the scientific orientation and performance in the sense of an internal quality assurance. |
| | Die bereits eingeführte Praxis […] zur Sicherung der Qualität der Lehre, regelmäßige Evaluationen der Lehrveranstaltungen durch schriftliche Befragung der Studierenden durchzuführen, wird befürwortet. | The already introduced policy […] of regularly conducting evaluations of taught modules through written surveys among the students, to assure the quality of teaching, is endorsed. |
| 4f)<br>Third-party funding | Die [WR-]Arbeitsgruppe […] ist aber nicht davon überzeugt, dass diese Anstrengungen […] zu einem deutlichen Anstieg der im Wettbewerb mit anderen Forschungsinstitutionen eingeworbenen Drittmittel führen werden. | However, the [science council] committee […] is not convinced that these efforts [...] will result in a substantial increase in third-party funding acquired in competition with other research institutions. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Die Frankfurt School konnte […] ihr Drittmittelvolumen […] beachtlich steigern. Die Anzahl eigenfinanzierter Forschungsprojekte überwiegt jedoch […] deutlich. | Frankfurt School could increase their third-party funding volume considerably. However, the number of self-financed research project prevails clearly. |
| | Unter den fremdfinanzierten Forschungsprojekten […] finden sich nur wenige im Wettbewerb eingeworbene Drittmittel. | Among the externally financed research projects […] there are only few with third-party funding acquired in competitive biddings. |
| Theme 5: Employability | | |
| 5b) Connection/liaise with world of work | […] spricht die Hochschule in besonderer Weise die Bedürfnisse berufstätiger Studierender an. | […] the *Hochschule* particularly addresses the needs of working students. |
| | […] Weiterbildung von Bankmitarbeiterinnen und Bankmitarbeitern, die noch heute Kernbestandteil des Weiterbildungsangebots der Hochschule ist. | […] training of bank personnel, which to date still is core feature of the further education offer of the *Hochschule*. |
| | […] liegt die Publikationsleistung vorrangig im Bereich praxisrelevanter Veröffentlichungen. | […] the publication performance lies primarily in the area of practically relevant publications. |
| | Mit ihren berufsbegleitenden Angeboten entspricht die Hochschule in besonderer Weise den Bedürfnissen von berufstätigen Studierenden. | With its part-time study offers, the *Hochschule* meets the needs of working students in a particular manner. |
| 5c) Co-operation with the business world, industry focus | Die Hochschule weist […] eine ausgesprochen starke Fokussierung auf die Finanzwissenschaft auf. | The *Hochschule* exhibits, […] a pronounced focus on financial sciences. |
| | Mit ihrem Fokus auf die Finanzwirtschaft weist die Hochschule ein zu enges Verständnis der Wirtschaftswissenschaften auf und entfaltet nur sehr eingeschränkt die für Forschung und Lehre wichtigen wissenschaftlichen Bezüge in einem komplexen Feld. | With its focus on finance industry the *Hochschule* displays a too narrow understanding of business and economics sciences and unfolds the scientific relations, which are important for research and teaching in a complex field, only in a very limited manner. |
| | Entstanden ist eine Hochschule, die der Bank- und Finanzwirtschaft ein weithin anerkanntes akademisches Lehrangebot von hoher Praxisrelevanz bietet und […] den vielschichtigen Qualifizierungsbedürfnissen der Finanzdienstleistungsbranche in ganz besonderer Weise entspricht. | A Hochschule has emerged, which offers a widely acknowledged academic education portfolio of highly practical relevance to the banking and finance sector […], and which matches the eclectic qualification needs of the financial services industry. |
| | Das Kuratorium der Hochschule […] erfüllt für eine wirtschaftsnahe Hochschule wie die Frankfurt School eine wichtige Funktion für eine notwendige enge Zusammenarbeit mit Wirtschaftsunternehmen. | The board of trustees performs an important function for a *Hochschule* fostering proximity to the business world, in terms of granting close co-operation with businesses. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Durch ihre Gesellschafter und das Kuratorium verfügt sie über sehr gute Kooperationen mit der Bank- und Finanzwirtschaft. Diese zeigen sich unter anderem in der hohen Anzahl von Stiftungsprofessuren, der Durchführung von Forschungs- und Strategieprojekten für die Wirtschaft und in der Vielzahl von in Unternehmen angefertigten Abschlussarbeiten der Studierenden. | Through its associates and board of trustees, it has at command very good co-operations with the banking and finance sector. These are reflected, among other aspects, in a high number of endowed chairs, research and strategy projects conducted for businesses, and in the variety of students' theses completed at companies. |
| | Zur Stärkung des Finanzplatzes Frankfurt sollte die Frankfurt School Anknüpfungspunkte zu [benachbarten Hochschulen] in Lehre und Forschung prüfen. | To strengthen the finance business location of Frankfurt, *Frankfurt School* should consider links with [neighbouring universities] in research and teaching. |
| Theme 6: Humboldtian ideal/traditional academic values | | |
| 6a) Unity of research and teaching | […] indem sie explizit verschiedene Professurtypen (Lehr-, Standard-, und Forschungsprofessur) plant. | […] by planning explicitly distinct professorship types (teaching, standard, and research professor). |
| 6b) Freedom of research, teaching, and learning | Forschungsfreiräume erhalten die Hochschullehrerinnen und Hochschullehrer auch durch ihren […] Anspruch auf ein Forschungs-/Praxissemester und durch die weitreichende Entlastung von administrativen Aufgaben. | The *Hochschul* lecturers also achieve latitude for their research through their entitlement of a research or practice semester and through far-reaching relief from administrative tasks. |
| 6d) Co-determination, participation, independence of faculty members | Die Hochschule weicht hier von partizipativen Nominierungs- und Bestellungsmodi der Hochschulen in Deutschland ab. | Here, the *Hochschule* deviates from participatory nomination and appointment modes of universities in Germany. |
| 6e) Separation of ownership and academic activity | Zur Wahrung der akademischen Unabhängigkeit muss die Frankfurt School durch geeignete institutionelle Regelungen eine Entflechtung zu ihrem Träger sicherstellen. | To grant academic independence, Frankfurt Schools needs to insure an unbundling of academic operations and ownership through suitable institutional regulations. |
| | […] widerspricht der Vorsitz einer Berufungskommission durch den Präsidenten dem Prinzip der Trennung der akademischen Leitung und der Aufsicht des Trägers […] | […] the president's chairmanship of an appointments committee contradicts the principle of separating the academic leadership and the ownership supervision […] |
| Theme 7: Idealistic elements<br>*No findings* | | |
| Theme 8: The school as business | | |
| 8a) Business model | Die finanzielle Lage der Hochschule ist sehr gut, sie verfügt über ein erfolgreiches Geschäftsmodell. | The financial situation of the *Hochschule* is very good, it has a successful business model. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Die Weiterbildungsangebote sind für die akademische Lehre und Forschung auch von großer ökonomischer Relevanz, da die dort erzielten Erlöse zur Finanzierung der akademischen Lehre und Forschung verwendet werden. | The further education and training offers are of high economic relevance for the academic teaching and research as well, as the revenues generated there are used for the academic activities. |
| | Die positive Entwicklung der Einnahmen belegt eindrucksvoll die rege Nachfrage nach Weiterbildungsangeboten der Frankfurt School. | The positive development of the revenues impressively underscores the intense demand for training offers at *Frankfurt School*. |

**Appendix D2: Website Text Findings of Case # 4**

| *Theme / Code* | *Original text as provided in English on website* |
|---|---|
| Theme 1: Globalisation/Internationalisation | |
| 1b) Cross-border co-operation | We have 86 regional education centres throughout Germany and various joint ventures and programmes abroad. |
| Theme 2: Knowledge economy | |
| 2a) Knowledge management and transfer | Because we constantly incorporate the very latest business thinking, topics and trends into our curricula, our professional education programmes regularly set standards. |
| | Frankfurt School of Finance & Management acts as a mentor to individuals, companies and organisations aspiring to key roles in business, society, government and research. Everything we do is directly relevant to practical issues and real-life applications, in Germany and worldwide. |
| | [We] run numerous international consulting projects. All educational, research and consulting activities are focused on finance and management. By finance, we mean crossfunctional activities at all companies that deal with financial management. And by management, we mean classical corporate leadership. Where managers deploy employees and resources in such a way that the company's goals are met as cost-effectively as possible. |
| | We advance and disseminate sustainable international business practices in finance and management through education, research, training and advisory services. |
| | Both our research and advisory services enhance business and government, and contribute to the advancement of scientific knowledge. |
| Theme 3: Competition and market | |
| 3a) Ranking / league tables | Frankfurt School's position in rankings proves the success of its study and research programmes. |
| | Frankfurt School ranked 27 in FT Global Masters in Finance Ranking. |
| | Frankfurt School places sixth in Wirtschaftswoche […] |
| 3b) Accreditation | Accreditation is a process of external review used in education to assess programs and institutions for quality assurance and quality improvement. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | It is helpful in many aspects, from ensuring that students are learning relevant material to evaluating such things as student services, faculty qualifications, curricula, mission, governance, administration, institutional resources, and relationships with internal and external constituencies.<br>The process of accreditation provides Frankfurt School with an opportunity for critical self-analysis, and typically includes self-evaluations, peer-reviews and the review of strategic plans. In this way, it is an incentive for self-improvement and an opportunity for consultation and advice from experts of other institutions. |
| 3c)<br>Strategic positioning | […] the vision to become one of the leading business schools in Europe and the top choice for education in finance by 2020. |
| 3e)<br>Offers and choice | We offer top class degree courses and continuing education options in seven different programme divisions. |
| 3f)<br>Growth | Frankfurt School of Finance & Management originated in the financial sector, but today our services enjoy increasing appreciation in other business sectors as well. In the future, we will be continuing to expand our national and international networking with the business community. |
| 3g)<br>Competition (also with public universities) | As a private business school competing with other private and public institutions of higher education, we aim to guarantee leadership in value-added education services through quality management.<br>Education is for us a market where success comes from providing excellent quality. Our achievements speak for themselves. |
| Theme 4: Performativity | |
| 4c)<br>Performance | The strategic goals are reviewed each year by Frankfurt School's Management Committee, and data on the fulfillment of the objectives in the plan are likewise collected and reviewed annually. With that, Frankfurt School is determined to make a strong impact on international society […]. |
| 4d)<br>Research and publications | [From strategic goals]: Increase total and high-level research output. |
| 4e)<br>Quality control | The quality management system at Frankfurt School sets demanding goals and objectives for both students and faculty, and ensures that these goals meet our stakeholders' expectations for higher education, advisory services and research.<br>The quality management unit […] oversees Frankfurt School's accreditation processes and likewise supervises the quality management system. |
| Theme 5: Employability<br>*No findings* | |
| Theme 6: Humboldtian ideal/traditional academic values<br>*No findings* | |
| Theme 7: Idealistic elements | |
| 7b)<br>Ethical orientation | We act on a basis of trust, reliability and fairness. We show mutual respect for each other in our work and pursue our common goals faithfully and honestly. |
| 7c)<br>Responsible stance | Based on research and practical experience, we educate our students to be responsible experts and executives. |

| Theme 8: The school as business | |
|---|---|
| 8a)<br>Business model | As a forward-thinking organisation, Frankfurt School maintains five-year strategic planning alongside its five-year financial plan. […] Frankfurt School is convinced that its strategic goals will move the school along the right path by accentuating its core products, i.e. education and education-related services. |
| | [From strategic goals]: Maintain financial stability. |

**Appendix D3: Website Imagery Findings of Case # 4**

*All images retrieved 20 December 2013 from www.frankfurt-school.de*

Theme 9: Corportate identity

9a) Logos and slogans

Frankfurt School of
Finance & Management
Bankakademie | HfB

9b) Architecture, building, campus, design features

9c) Atmosphere / emotion / belonging





| Theme 10: Student activity |
|---|
| 10a) Lecture / seminar / group work<br> <br> <br> |
| Theme 11: Business Enactment |
| 11a) Business people / meetings / negotiations<br>  |






11b) Business locale





## Appendix E1: Accreditation Report Findings of Case # 5

| *Theme / Code* | *Original* | *Translation* |
|---|---|---|
| Theme 1: Globalisation/Internationalisation | | |
| 1a) International students/faculty | Mit der prominenten Platzierung einer internationalen Orientierung in ihrem Namen erhebt die Karlshochschule einen hohen Anspruch […] | With the prominent placement of an international orientation in the name, Karlshochschule raises a substantial claim […] |
| | […] hat die Hochschule schon Fortschritte erzielt, indem zwei Studiengänge vollständig in englischer Sprache sowie Auslands-semester und internationale Exkur-sionen […] angeboten werden. | The Hochschule has achieved progress through offering two study programmes completely taught in English language and through offering international excursions […] |
| | Im Rahmen der Weiterentwicklung der Internationalisierung fehlt es außerdem derzeit an der finanziellen Unterstützung von Auslandsreisen. | In terms of the further develop-ment of Internationalisation, there is currently a lack of financial support of travel abroad. |
| | Die internationale Ausrichtung der Lehrinhalte der Bachelorstudien-gänge ist sachgerecht ausgeprägt. Dies zeigt sich insbesondere an der Internationalität der Lehrenden und deren internationalen Erfahrungen und dem Angebot eines Auslandsstudiums mit Dual Degree-Abschluss. | The international orientation of the taught subjects within the Bachelor programmes is appropriate. This is reflected particularly in the internationality of the faculty members with their international experience, and also in the offer of a dual degree study option abroad. |
| | Kennzeichnend für die interna-tionale Ausrichtung ist, dass zwei Studiengänge […] durchgängig in englischer Sprache angeboten werden […] | Characteristic for the international orientation is that two study programmes […] are completely provided in English […] |
| 1b) Cross-border co-operation | Die Kooperationen mit Hochschulen im europäischen und außereuropä-ischen Ausland dienen derzeit insbesondere dem Studierenden-austauch. | The co-operations with universities abroad, within and beyond Europe, currently serve predominantly the exchange of students. |
| | Begrüßenswerterweise strebt die Karlshochschule den Aufbau von „Full-Scale-Verbindungen“ an, die neben dem bilateralen Austausch in Lehre und Forschung auch die Entwicklung gemeinsamer Studien-gänge umfassen sollen. | It is welcome that *Karlshochschule* aspires at establishing ‘full scale connections’. These would encompass, besides the bilateral exchange in research and teaching, also the development of joint study programmes. |
| | Grundsätzlich fehlt es aber an institutionellen Kooperationen mit andeern Hochschulen auch im internationalen Kontext. | Generally, however, there still is a lack of institutional co-operations with other universities, also in the international context. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Theme 2: Knowledge economy<br>*No findings* | | |
| Theme 3: Competition and market | | |
| 3b)<br>Accreditation | Alle Studiengänge sind von einer vom Akkreditierungsrat anerkannten Agentur […] akkreditiert. | All study programmes are accredited by an agency approved by the accreditation council. |
| 3e)<br>Offers and choice | Die Hochschule ist zugleich bemüht, ihr fachliches Spektrum zu erweitern. | The Hochschule aims to enlarge its taught subject portfolio. |
| Theme 4: Performativity | | |
| 4a)<br>Student-related performance indicators | Die durchschnittliche professorale Betreuungsrelation liegt derzeit bei […] | The average student-faculty member ratio currently amounts to […] |
| 4c)<br>Performance | Durch ein längerfristig angelegtes Anreizsystem, das forschungsbezogenes Budget und Personal einschließt, sollte es gelingen, jeder Professorin bzw. jedem Professor eine entsprechende Verankerung zu gewährleisten. | Through a long-term oriented incentive scheme, encompassing research budgets and personnel, it should be possible to grant each professor their corresponding embedding. |
| 4d)<br>Research and publications | Insgesamt ist somit positiv festzustellen, dass Forschung durch Initiative Einzelner eine große Unterstützung durch die Hochschule erfährt. | Therefore, it is overall positive that research based on individual initiatives meets great support of the *Hochschule.* |
| 4e)<br>Quality control | Die Maßnahmen zur Qualitätssicherung sind in einer Ordnung zur Qualitätsentwicklung und -sicherung […] umfänglich geregelt. | The measures to grant quality assurance are amply regulated in a system governing quality development and assurance. |
| 4f)<br>Third-party funding | […] und die Möglichkeiten, Drittmittel für die Forschung einzuwerben, von der Hochschule engagiert gefördert werden.<br>Außerdem wird empfohlen, sich vermehrt an der Einwerbung von Drittmitteln zu beteiligen. | […] and possibilities of soliciting third-party funding for research is dedicatedly supported by the *Hochschule.*<br>Furthermore, it is recommended to increasingly participate in the acquisition of third-party funding. |
| Theme 5: Employability | | |
| 5b)<br>Connection/liaise with world of work | Die Hochschule setzt ihr zentrales Ziel, die Studierenden durch praxisbezogene Lehre und Weiterbildung zur selbständigen Anwendung wissenschaftlicher Erkenntnisse und Methoden in der Berufspraxis zu befähigen, überzeugend um.<br>Der Praxisbezug des Studiums ist sehr gut ausgeprägt. | The *Hochschule* convincingly implements its central goal - to enable students to independently apply scientific insights and methods to employment-related contexts - through practice-oriented teaching and training.<br>The practical orientation of the study programme is very well pronounced. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Die hohe Praxisorientierung entspricht dem Leitbild der Karlshochschule. | The strong practical orientation corresponds with the mission of *Karlshochschule*. |
| 5c)<br>Co-operation with the business world, industry focus | Mit diesem Studienangebot soll neuen Berufsbildern in der Energiewirtschaft entsprochen werden. | This study programme offer is intended to correspond with new job profiles in the energy sector. |
| | Damit verwirklicht die Karlshochschule […] Ansätze einer gelungenen Ausrichtung der Studienangebote an bestehenden Marktbedürfnissen. | Thereby Karlshochschule materialises approaches of a successful orientation of their study programmes according to market requirments. |
| | Die hohe Bedeutung der Karlshochschule für die Region ist von den Kooperationspartnern aus Wirtschaft und öffentlichen Einrichtungen überzeugend verdeutlicht worden. | *Karlshochschule's* high importance for the region has been convincingly pointed out by co-operation partners from the business world as well as the public sector. |
| | Angesichts der Situation auf dem Arbeitsmarkt ist die Spezialisierung der Studiengänge gerade noch akzeptabel und sollte nicht weiter vorangetrieben werden. | Considering the job market situation, the specialisation of the study programmes is just about acceptable and should not be driven further. |
| | Hervorzuheben ist die ausgeprägte und engagierte Zusammenarbeit der Professorinnen und Professoren mit den Lehrbeauftragten aus der Praxis. | It should be pointed out that there is a distinctive and engaged co-operation of the professors with the external lectures from the business world. |
| | Ausdrücklich begrüßt wird die Bürgschaftserklärung der […] in Höhe von […], wodurch eine ordnungsgemäße Abwicklung der Hochschule im Falle eines Scheiterns gesichert werden soll. | It is explicitly acknowledged that there is a declaration of suretyship by […], amounting to […], to guarantee a regular liquidation of the *Hochschule* in case of failure. |
| | Besonders hervorgehoben werden die Kooperationen mit de Industrie- und Handelskammer and […]. Gleichwohl bedarf es weiterer - nicht nur regionaler - Kooperationspartner, deren Berufs- und Praxisfelder den Studienangeboten der Karlshochschule entsprechen. | The co-operations with the chamber of commerce and […] are emphasised. Nevertheless, further co-operations - beyond the region - are required, the practical and job fields of which correspond with the study offers at *Karlshochschule.* |
| Theme 6: Humboldtian ideal/traditional academic values | | |
| 6a)<br>Unity of research and teaching | […] ein einem Maß auf die akademische Eigenständigkeit der Hochschulleitung Einfluss zu nehmen, das geeignet ist, die Freiheit von Forschung und Lehre zu gefährden. | […] to influence the academic independence of the *Hochschul* management to an extent, which could entail the endangering of the freedom of research and teaching. |
| | Der Präsident bekennt sich zur Gewährleistung der akademischen Freiheit und der wissenschaftlichen Qualität. | The president is committed to granting academic freedom and scientific quality. |
| 6d) | Das Hochschulleben gestaltet sich | Life at the Hochschule is designed |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Co-determination, independence of faculty members | nach den Regeln einer von allen Beteiligten befürworteten und gelebten akademischen "Basisdemokratie" und ist geprägt durch eine individuelle Beteiligung der Studierenden […] | according to the rules of a widely accepted and practiced 'grassroots democracy', and it is characterised by an individual involvement of students. |
| | Empfohlen wird außerdem eine Stärkung des Senats, insbesondere seiner Beteiligungsrechte. | Furthermore, the strengthening of the senate is recommended, and in particular of its participation rights. |
| 6e)<br>Separation of ownership and academic activity | Verantwortlich dafür ist insbesondere die Entflechtung der Personenidentität von Präsident und Träger. | Responsible for this is particularly the disentanglement of the dual role of the president and owner. |
| | […] lässt dem Einfluss des Trägers auf das Präsidium weiterhin zu viel Raum. | […] there still is too much room for the influence of the owner. |
| Theme 7: Idealistic elements | | |
| 7b)<br>Ethical orientation | Dem Anspruch der Hochschule, Orientierungswissen als ein Wissen um ethische gerechtfertigte Ziele an die Studierenden zu vermitteln, wird die Hochschule jedoch noch nicht in ausrechendem Maße gerecht. | The *Hochschule* does not yet come up sufficiently to its own claim to convey orientational knowledge to students as knowledge about ethically justified goals. |
| | Gleichwohl ist die Verankerung des Schwerpunktes Ethik in allen Studiengängen noch nicht abschließend gelungen. | Anyhow, to anchor the emphasis on ethics in all study programmes has not been successfully finalised yet. |
| 7c)<br>Responsible stance | Anerkennenswert sind die Bemühungen der Hochschule, das soziale Engagement der Studierenden zu fördern und bei ihnen die Bereitschaft zur Reflexion ethischer Fragestellungen zu erreichen. | The efforts of the Hochschule to promote the social engagement of the students and to achieve their preparedness to reflect ethical questions are commendable. |
| Theme 8: The school as business | | |
| 8a)<br>Business model | Die finanzielle Situation der Hochschule, deren Einnahmen überwiegend aus Studiengebühren bestehen, konnte […] positiv weiterentwickelt werden. | The financial situation of the Hochschule, whose revenues predominantly consist of tuition fees, has improved further […] |
| | Als sinnvolle Maßnahme ist eine breit gefächerte und intensive Sponsorensuche zu betrachten. | A wide-ranged and intense quest for sponsors is to be considered useful. |
| 8b)<br>Service orientation | Der Fokus liegt […] auf einer ausgeprägten Dienstleistungs-orientierung in Verbindung mit einem unternehmerischen Führungsstil. | The focus is on […] a distinct service orientation In connection with an entrepreneurial leadership style. |
| | Besonders positiv zu bewerten ist der gute Kontakt zwischen Lehrenden und Studierenden, der aufgrund der kleinen Gruppen | Especially positive is the good contact between teaching faculty and students, which can be fostered due to the small learning groups. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | gepflegt werden kann. | |
| | Diese vergleichsweise hohe Anzahl [von Verwaltungsmitarbeitern] wird von der Hochschulleitung plausibel damit begründet, dass in der derzeitigen Entwicklungsphase nur so ein reibungsloser Studienablauf garantiert werden kann. | The *Hochschul* management plausibly justifies this relevant high number of [administration staff members] with the reasoning that the latter is required in the current development phase to grant smooth study operations. |

## Appendix E2: Website Text Findings of Case # 5

| *Theme / Code* | *Original* | *Translation* |
|---|---|---|
| Theme 1: Globalisation/Internationalisation | | |
| 1a) International students/faculty | Wir verstehen uns als eine internationale Einrichtung mit interkultureller Ausprägung. | We see ourselves as international institution with intercultural orientation. |
| 1b) Cross-border co-operation | Wir streben Partnerschaften mit vergleichbaren Hochschulen im Ausland […] an. | We aspire at co-operations with comparable universities abroad […]. |
| Theme 2: Knowledge economy | | |
| 2a) Knowledge management and transfer | [Hochschul-Ideal]: erspürt, durch Wettbewerbsorientierung, seismographisch Entwicklungen und Trends und integriert sie in Forschung und Lehre. | [*Hochschule* Ideal]: senses, seismographically and through orientation towards competition, developments and trends and integrates them into research and teaching. |
| 2b) Innovation and creativity | Dabei streben wir einen hohen Grad an Innovation in unseren Programmen an und machen das Thema ‚Change und Innovation' zum Gegenstand der Ausbildung | We aspire at a high degree of innovation in our programmes and make the topic of 'change and innovation' part of education. |
| Theme 3: Competition and market | | |
| 3a) Ranking / league tables | Natürlich ist sie staatlich anerkannt, belegt in relevanten Rankings […] Spitzenplätze ... | Of course it is state-recognised, holds top positions in all relevant rankings […] ... |
| 3b) Accreditation | ... und wurde von der FIBAA in allen Bereichen mit besten Ergebnissen akkreditiert. | ... and has been accredited by FIBAA in all areas with top results. |
| 3g) Competition (also with public universities) | Wir stehen […] im Wettbewerb mit anderen Hochschulen um die besten Talente, Ideen und Aufgaben. | […] we are in competition for the best talents, ideas and tasks with other universities. |
| Theme 4: Performativity | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 4c)<br>Performance | [Hochschullehrer Ideal]: hat Lust auf Leistung und exzellente Lehre und vermittelt dies auch Studierenden. | [Lecturer Ideal]: is motivated to perform and transfers this stance also onto the students. |
| 4d)<br>Research and publications | Unser akademisches Profil ist geprägt von dem Erkenntnis-interesse an wirtschaftlichem und unternehmerischem Handeln. Wir gehen davon aus, dass wirtschaftliche Realität durch Zuschreibung, Interpretation und Aushandeln von Sinn und Bedeutung seitens der Handelnden konstruiert und inszeniert wird und wirtschaftliche Interaktion kulturell und sozial überformt ist. | Our academic profile is coined by the epistemological interest in business and entrepreneurial activity. We assume that economic reality is constructed and staged through attribution, interpretation and negotiation of sense and meaning through the actors. We also assume that economic interaction is culturally and socially (re) shaped. |
| Theme 5: Employability | | |
| 5b)<br>Connection/liaise with world of work | Wir sind der Marktnähe verpflichtet. Bei der Entwicklung neuer Studiengänge konzentrieren wir uns schwerpunktmäßig auf zukunftsträchtige Branchen und Bereiche mit einem hohen Bedarf an akademischer Professionali-sierung. | We feel obliged to be close to the market. In the development of new study programmes, we focus on future-oriented industries and areas with a high need for academic professionalisation. |
| 5c)<br>Co-operation with the business world, industry focus | [Die Hochschule] wird damit zum Marktplatz zwischen den Bedürfnissen der Nachfrager nach Bildung und den Bedürfnissen der Nachfrager nach qualifizierten Mitarbeitern. | [The *Hochschule*] thereby becomes a marketplace between the needs of education demanders and the needs of demanders of qualified personnel. |
| | Wir verfolgen das strategische Ziel einer möglichst weitgehenden Integration von Theorie und Praxis durch Kooperation mit der Wirtschaft. | We pursue the strategic goal of a far-reaching integration of theory and practice through co-operation with the business world. |
| Theme 6: Humboldtian ideal/traditional academic values | | |
| 6d)<br>Co-determination, independence of faculty members | Wir bekennen uns zu den Grundsätzen der akademischen Selbstverwaltung und einem partizipativen Miteinander aller am Hochschulleben Beteiligter. | We are committed to the principles of academic self-administration and a participative co-operation of all participants in life at the *Hochschule.* |
| Theme 7: Idealistic elements | | |
| 7a)<br>Critical orientation and reflective abilities | Diese Hochschule möchte ihre Studierenden zum Staunen bringen und sie zu reflektierten Persönlich-keiten heranreifen lassen, die als Denker und Macher unsere Zukunft mitgestalten. | This *Hochschule* wants to make its students marvel, and to let them maturate to reflective personalities who co-create our future as thinkers and actors. |
| | [Studentisches Ideal]: fähig zum Perspektivenwechsel und zum Hinterfragen der jeweils eigenen | [Student ideal]: capable of changing perspectives and of questioning the own respective conceptualisation of |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Wirklichkeitskonstruktion. | reality. |
| | Unsere Didaktik ist geprägt vom Dreiklang von Instruktion, Konstruktion und Reflektion in den einzelnen Modulen und Lehreinheiten. | Our didactic is characterised by the triad of instruction, construction and reflection in all modules and individual units of teaching. |
| 7b)<br>Ethical orientation | Ich stelle mir vor, dass diese Hochschule ständig an sich arbeitet und auf dem Boden geblieben ist und der Austausch zwischen Professoren, Forschern, Mitarbeitern und Studierenden von Vertrauen und Menschlichkeit geprägt ist. | I imagine that this *Hochschule* permanently strives to self-improve, that it is down to earth and that the interaction between professors, researchers, staff and students is characterised by trust and benevolence. |
| | Dazu gehört […] auch Orientierungswissen. [Dies] ist ein Wissen um ethisch gerechtfertigte Zwecke und Ziele. | That encompasses […] orienting knowledge. [This] is knowledge of ethically justified purposes and goals. |
| 7c)<br>Responsible stance | Ich wünsche mir eine Hochschule, die ein Bildungsideal verfolgt, bei dem der Mensch, sein persönliches Wachstum und seine gesellschaftliche Verantwortung im Mittelpunkt stehen. | I desire a *Hochschule* pursuing an education ideal, which places the human being, its personal growth and its societal responsibility at the centre. |
| | Wir gehen von dem Bildungsideal eines vielseitig interessierten und gebildeten jungen Menschen aus, der zur Übernahme von Verantwortung bereit ist, Führung als Dienst an seinen Mitmenschen und der Gesellschaft begreift. | We assume the education ideal of a young person with multifaceted interests and skills, who is prepared to assume responsibility and who understands leadership as service to fellow human beings and to society. |
| | Als Bürger wünsche ich mir eine Hochschule, die Verantwortung übernehmen will, weil sie weiß, dass ihre Fähigkeiten und Kenntnisse für viele andere von großem Nutzen sind. Deshalb setzt sie ihr Wissen und ihre Tatkraft dafür ein, die Gesellschaft zum Positiven zu verändern und zu prägen. | As citizen I desire a university that wants to assume responsibility, because it knows that its abilities and knowledge are of great use value for many others. Therefore it contributes its know-how and energy to the positive change and to the coining of society. |
| 7d)<br>Broadening horizons | [Studentisches Ideal]: in der Lage, auf der Basis fundierten Fachwissens und einer guten akademischen Ausbildung auch hinter die Kulissen des scheinbar selbstverständlichen zu blicken. | [Student ideal]: capable, on the basis of sound knowledge and good academic education, to look behind the scene of the seemingly taken-for-granted. |
| | [Hochschullehrer Ideal]: begreift die Hochschule weniger als Ort der Instruktion und mehr als Raum zur Ermöglichung eigener Lernerfahrungen und Kompetenzentwicklung. | [Lecturer Ideal]: understands the *Hochschule*, rather than as locale of instruction, as a space for enabling of own learning experiences and competence development. |
| Theme 8: The school as business | | |

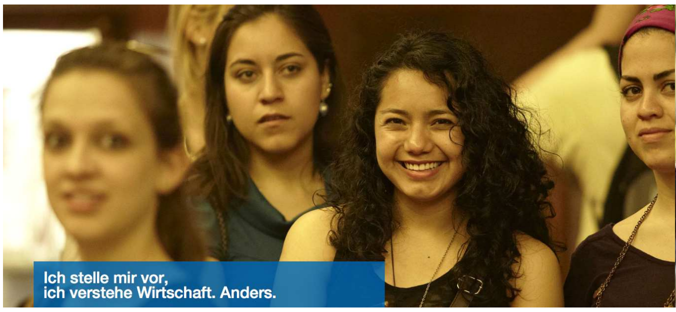
| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 8b)<br>Service orientation | Wir gehen aus vom Ideal einer Hochschule, die sich – im Wortsinne – als Dienstleister gegenüber den Studierenden, der Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft begreift. | We assume the ideal of a *Hochschule*, which – literally – understands itself as service provider to students, businesses and society. |

**Appendix E3: Website Imagery Findings of Case # 5**

*All images retrieved 20 December 2013 from www.karlshochschule.de*

| Theme 9: Corportate identity | |
|---|---|
| 9a)<br>Logos and slogans | Karlshochschule International University |
| 9b) Architecture, building, campus, design features | |

9c) Atmosphere / emotion / belonging





Theme 10: Student activity

10a) Lecture / seminar / group work



10b) Learning / reading / contemplation



Theme 11: Business Enactment

11a) Business people / meetings / negotiations