

The Perils of Philanthropy:

The Case of the Munk School

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The Academic Tradition

Universities have been a prominent feature of western societies for eight hundred years, and no doubt this has played a large part in the relative dominance of those societies. Universities always present, of course, the threat of devastating criticisms of the fondly-held beliefs or the behavioral norms of their host societies. In spite of this, they have been not only tolerated but supported financially, and encouraged to multiply. This could only happen if they were widely recognized as providing very important net benefits to society. Those benefits, available from no other source, would probably have been summarized under the headings of the singular *education* they offered and the scholarly *research* they pursued. The “education” was expected to consist of intensive training in critical thought and rational analysis, for a small number of very able and enthusiastic students, by immersing them in a rigorous apprenticeship under the guidance of practicing scholars; many of them would then bring the resulting habits of clarity and rigour to enhance the conduct of everyday affairs. The “research”, seeking ever more fundamental and general understanding of the world, was based on patient reflection and rigorous investigation, by scholars largely withdrawn from the distractions of daily concerns in order to generate entirely new understandings of the world --- in fact whole new paradigms of thought, which were offered to society as public goods. Some few of these discoveries would then be found to revolutionize features of society: governance, the economy, technical development, etc. Perceptions like these form the backbone of an “idea of the university” that we hope is still widely shared by Canadians, and that remained a useful approximation of reality, at least until twenty years ago when it began to come under serious attack

Various special conditions seem to be required if universities are to be able to continue in this path, and thus to offer society the expected benefits. It will be helpful to glance at one or two of them. From earliest days universities have insisted on self-government by the scholars in all academic matters. Indeed this was an important reason for the creation of the earliest universities, in Bologna and Paris (and they were in fact granted “self-governance”, by the Emperor and the King of France respectively). It was realized that only the scholars themselves understood the academic enterprise intimately enough to define the priorities of their institutions in a way maintaining its scholarly integrity, and to defend certain essential core values (see below). The principle was at least largely respected over the years, and has been expressed in most Canadian universities by requiring that decisions having academic consequences require approval by their “Senates”, consisting primarily of faculty members; in University of Toronto's unicameral governing structure the responsibility falls instead on the Academic Board of

the Governing Council. In any case, the claim is that academic integrity depends essentially on all academic matters being primarily under the control of the academics themselves, using some “collegial” mechanisms, within a university that must itself insist on its autonomy. We will have a chance to observe what happens if this rule is neglected by the University.

The most critical core value that needs to be defended by the academic community is that of “academic freedom”. Without this the academic enterprise is impossible and the university culture we describe must flounder. This requires that the scholar, wherever her adequately rigorous studies may lead, must be free from reprisals directed at either her or her institution. Indeed, the scholar should be free from any criticisms except those based on questions of rigour and relevance within her field. The absolutely central need of this protection is justly noted in the UofT “Statement of Purpose”¹: it is the *sine qua non* of the academy. We noted above a further important peculiarity of scholarly activity: that scholars need to be allowed to withdraw to a certain isolation from the short-term preoccupations of everyday life: it is this withdrawal that leads to the often satirical description of the university as an “ivory tower”. It is fundamental, however: if the scholar is expected to attend to everyday concerns, governed by the current conventional understandings, it becomes difficult or impossible to escape them to find truly new ways of apprehending the problems. So the university has the further responsibility of protecting the scholar's possibility of such withdrawal.

A Threatened Culture

It is widely understood these days, however, that our universities are being transformed, rapidly and profoundly, as a result of concerted pressures coming especially from the world of business and echoed by our governments. The intention (and it has even been made explicit²) is to “change the culture of the University” from something along the lines we've mentioned to one reflecting neoliberal ideology and its market-based values, constraints and mechanisms. Those “pressures” on the universities take several forms, including direct financial manipulation in the form of drastic shortfalls in public support of traditional university activities, combined with targeted funding of appropriately modified behaviour (by corporations and philanthropic foundations, federal granting agencies and so on, as well as by governments). The resulting changes in the universities are popularly known as “corporatization”, reflecting one source of the pressures, and also something of the nature of the resulting transformed institutions, including a commodified interpretation of academic pursuits (depending often on the adoption of entirely misleading imagined quantitative measures for academic accomplishment). In the universities one already sees classes with very many students (and are therefore deemed “efficient”), and of course not all those students are intellectually inclined. In this situation the traditional style of education --- an apprenticeship in critical thinking --- is not feasible, and it gets replaced by the transfer of bodies of “information”, in a trade-school manner. Or not even that, for in a good trade-school the skills of each particular trade would be nurtured in a way the universities do

¹ www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/mission.htm (accessed 16 January 2011)

² See the, for example the Report of the Manley Panel on Commercialization and Technology Transfer at the University of Toronto November 16, 2004 (known as “the Manley Report”), p.12. Found at http://individual.utoronto.ca/paul_hamel/Documents/Documents_Page.html

not attempt. Also one sees researchers seeking marketable “innovations” (often treated as “intellectual property” rather than as “public goods”), a search that leads away from, rather than toward, the intended quest for genuine novelty in the form of deep understandings and truly new paradigms that can truly change the world. It is impossible to believe that, if these transformations are allowed to proceed, the resulting very different institution can possibly provide the peculiar social benefits that have come to be expected from universities --- and are accessible from *no other institution*. Trade schools and industrial development laboratories are course very worthwhile for their own quite different contributions: the concern is that they *not* be created at the large expense of *losing* the unique benefits of the university.

Case Study: Accepting the Munk Donation

The programme of corporatization is wide, and its comprehensive analysis is underway, both here and elsewhere³. The resulting transformation of the universities doesn't come all at once from the imposition of some coherent blanket design, however. Rather, it occurs piecemeal: an educational programme is abandoned here, a university service is commercialized there, basic research is replaced by industrial innovation somewhere else --- and each single step is too small to mobilize the broad concern and vigorous resistance, by academics and also the wider public, that the cumulative effects surely demand. We will examine in some detail what we see as one such step, recently introduced at the University of Toronto, namely the arrangements for the major expansion and re-design of UofT's programme for the study of international affairs.

The result, to be known as the Munk School of Global Affairs, depends on a very generous donation by the Peter and Melanie Munk Charitable Foundation. This donation is said to be accepted by “the University” under a legal contract, known as the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA)⁴, specifying responsibilities of both parties. We will first describe what little we know about how this particular contract came to be adopted (and call into question that procedure, as neglecting the basic requirement of substantial academic control of decisions with academic consequence). Afterwards we will review in some detail some contractual conditions which are specified in the MoA, attempting to put these conditions in context and to understand their implications for the academic life of the University. We identify a retreat from respect for the core values we have mentioned. One is led to ask to what extent the University of Toronto is still willing and able to defend core academic values and to assert academic priorities, given its present structure of governance and levels of involvement by the community.

The UofT President, David Naylor, announced in April, 2010, that the Peter and Melanie Munk Charitable Foundation would be making a donation of 35M\$, to assist in the establishment of the Munk School of Global Affairs. The announcement came as a complete surprise to nearly all the University's faculty members, reflecting the remarkable secrecy which seems until then to have surrounded the donation and the negotiations for agreement on the protocols governing its acceptance. The arrangements

³ for example see: *Selling Out: Academic Freedom and the Corporate Market* by Howard Woodhouse McGill-Queen's University Press 2009 and *The University in Chains: Confronting the Military-Industrial-Academic Complex* by Henry Giroux, Paradigm Press 2007

⁴ Available at http://individual.utoronto.ca/paul_hamel/Documents/Documents_Page.html

appeared as *faits accomplis*, and their details were not published and are still largely unfamiliar. This secrecy is disturbing, since it directly violates the tradition of ensuring that the community of scholars should have the greatest possible self-direction regarding academic matters. (How can we know what further new developments, again changing the character of the academic environment, are even now being planned behind closed doors?) We will see that the protocols of the MoA carry serious academic consequences. That being the case, the faculty members certainly expect, and the responsibilities assigned to the Academic Board by the Governing Council clearly anticipate, that the Academic Board of the Governing Council should be enabled to ensure appropriate discussion of these consequences, and to examine the Agreement's fit with the University's academic priorities⁵. In our opinion those “appropriate discussions” should have allowed for widespread consideration throughout the UofT faculty. This did not take place; instead the MoA seems to have been signed without even the minimal academic supervision that might have been provided by review and debate solely within the Academic Board itself: for the Agreement appears never to have been presented to the Board for review!

The MoA's actual provisions may offer, then, insight into what can be expected to follow -- abandonment of the basic principle of academic oversight of academically-significant decisions. With this in mind, we will examine further below a number of features of this MoA.

It seems remarkable, meanwhile, that the Governing Council (GC) itself (several members of which are also members of the Academic Board) would not, before approving execution of the MoA, have insisted on its being presented to the Academic Board. That it was not may be regarded as having prevented that Board from fulfilling its responsibilities. Actually, however, a review of the minutes of GC meetings in the months preceding the signing of the MoA failed to turn up any mention of the Munk Foundation bequest or of the MoA governing the arrangements for its use! This is mystifying. Can the whole matter have proceeded without consideration by the GC? If so, who was responsible? (It would raise interesting legal problems, since the MoA is formally a contract between the Munk Foundation and the Governing Council. In what way were the signatures on behalf of the GC authorized? These questions need still to be resolved.)

In response to our request, the Provost provided us in July with a copy of the Memorandum of Agreement covering the Munk bequest, and copies of several associated documents. The MoA appears to be signed on behalf of the Governing Council of UofT by the President, David Naylor, and Vice-President David Palmer, and is dated 23 November, 2009. It includes a preamble of 10 so-called “recitals” dealing with the context, then 23 numbered substantive items, followed by seven “schedules” giving details on some of those items. We discuss several of the items that seem of particular interest in the light of our earlier remarks.

⁵ The role of the Academic Board is described at www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/bac/ab.htm (accessed 16 January 2011). Quoting the description: “The Academic Board is responsible for matters affecting the teaching, learning and research functions of the University, the establishment of University objectives and priorities, the development of long-term and short-term plans, and the effective use of resources in the course of these pursuits”.

A Threat to Academic Freedom

In the exultant announcements by University administrators, the (new) Munk donation was said to be of 35M\$, intended to endow six professorships and five other fellowships (in addition to endowing the School's directorship and supporting some other activity). As the details of the bequest are spelled out in the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) it appears, however, that this figure represents a certain hyperbole: what has *actually* been committed at this time is 20M\$ --- still a princely sum, of course --- 5M\$ in each of 2010, 2011 and 2012, followed by 1M\$ in each succeeding year to 2017 --- which would endow three of the professorships and probably two of the fellowships.

It is then suggested that an "Additional Gift" of a further 15M\$ may possibly be forthcoming. This would occur, *if at all*, only later: "within twelve months of the Determination Date if *the Donor determines* that the University has achieved its Objective" (MoA, Item 4; emphasis added). This determination is however to be "*solely* that of the Donor and the Donor's determination shall be conclusive and binding" (*ibid.*). The "Donor" is officially the Peter and Melanie Munk Charitable Foundation. The definition of "Determination Date" is somewhat complicated (MoA, Item 2), but it cannot occur before 2017 and is likely to be many years after that, following Peter Munk's death. The "Objective" is specified (MoA, Recitals A and B) as "becoming one of the world's leading institutions for research, study and teaching" in the field of international studies.

This seems to us to raise very serious problems. It is clearly credible that, in view of the high stakes, there will be a marked disinclination for members or associates of the School to publish or make statements about matters which may seem opposed to the presumed interests of the Donor, and indeed a strong inhibition even against pursuing the study of matters which might lead to a dilemma of this kind. This could clearly also affect hiring decisions and the granting of tenure, the choice of visiting scholars, and cooperation with academies and NGOs here and elsewhere. In fact, academic freedom is evidently compromised seriously. (This at a time, too, when specific concerns about the environmental and human-rights implications of the behaviour of western, and particularly Canadian, mining interests, such as Peter Munk's firm Barrick Gold, are being increasingly scrutinized internationally, and also domestically as seen during the recent debate of Bill C-300 regarding the overseas conduct of Canadian-based transnational corporations.) It is very important to stress that this "chill" on academic freedom is to be expected quite independently of the actual, or any stated, position of the Donor about appropriate fields of study or about freedom of inquiry.

The University Administration therefore appears, unaccountably, to have accepted an agreement under which academic freedom is patently seen to be compromised in favour of real or imagined vested interests. We find it deeply disturbing that this could be the case.

The situation is likely to persist for some time. The University undertakes to arrange an "Independent Review" of the School in 2015/2016, with the possibility of a "follow-up" review within three subsequent years. It is only if Peter Munk should die

before completion of this review process, to put it roughly⁶, that its completion would trigger determination of whether the “additional gift” of 15M\$ would be forthcoming. Otherwise the “Determination Date” will follow by a year Peter Munk’s eventual death.

The arrangement with the Donor surrenders academic freedom and independence in a further way. Item 16 specifies that the “Director of the School shall meet annually with the Donor’s Board of Directors following delivery of [a] written report, to discuss the programs, activities and initiatives of the School”. That Board is in no way an academic body. The School’s Director is of course free to speak to it if he/she wishes to do so, and might well wish to keep such benefactors informed. But the propriety of there being a *requirement* to report to it, and to discuss with it the School's academic activities, is difficult to understand. It clearly relinquishes some University autonomy, and is readily perceived as opening the way to direct ongoing influence on academic decisions by outside interests and a corresponding further restriction on academic freedom. It therefore appears quite inappropriate. (It seems however to be in line with certain other undertakings made by the University in the MoA (Items 12, 13) which are mentioned below.)

To us there seems to be a further curious lack of internal coherence about the announced plans for the School. It is presumably the handsome Munk donation (*said* to be of 35M\$) that will allow the School to fulfill its Objective of “becoming one of the world’s leading institutions for research, study and teaching” in international relations. Indeed, so we are told. Janice Stein, the present Director, explains (in the Munk Monitor for Spring 2010) that “This gift ... will help establish the Munk School as a leading voice”; David Naylor, UofT’s President, refers to Munk generosity and says “their latest gift --- a truly remarkable benefaction --- will lift the Munk School to global significance”. Indeed, it is easy to believe it when we are told of the six endowed Chairs to be created, the five endowed Fellowships, and so on --- it sounds good! In fact the actual commitment of 20M\$ involves provision of endowment for three chairs and two fellowships, by 2017. Yet meanwhile an Independent Review (MoA, Schedule G), to be carried out in 2015/2016, is to be charged with answering the question “Is the School among the top few schools worldwide?” --- that is, with judging whether the announced “Objective” has *already* been reached. And the “determination” of whether the final 15M\$ will ever *reach* UofT (and thus whether the additional three chairs and three fellows may eventually exist) is made to depend on the Donor’s opinion as to whether the Objective “has been achieved” already (MoA, Item 4), having “regard to the reports of the Independent Review”! In fact realistically, as we see it, the Munk donation will have had insufficient time greatly to affect the School's academic accomplishments or its international recognition by the time of the Independent Review: it will already be 2013 before the first two Chairs will have been endowed (the third is not financed until 2017), 2012 for the two Fellowships. (The “Path for the School” (MoA, Schedule B) makes no mention of any bridging funds to accelerate this expansion; indeed it is explicit (Schedule E) that Chairs will be appointed only “as the endowment funding becomes available”). So when does the rabbit go into the hat? What is cause, and what effect?

⁶ The rather complicated complete definition of the “determination date” may be found in Item 2 of the MoA.

Mortgaging the Ivory Tower

When the Munk Centre moved into the sumptuously remodeled former student residence at the south end of Devonshire Place, the field of international studies seemed to have gained quarters unbelievably palatial compared to those of other fields of scholarship --- compare, for example, to those of the more basic disciplines on which this field itself depends. It is striking, therefore (and bound to cause some resentment) to realize that the disproportion is about to be enormously magnified in the planned expansion of the Munk School. The attractive former Dominion Observatory building (which the MoA describes, breathlessly but inaccurately, as the “Heritage Mansion”), at 315 Bloor Street (facing OISE), will be lavishly remodeled, at considerable expense (13.6M\$, covered by part of a grant from the Provincial government) to become the School’s new headquarters. To this will presently be added a substantial part of a new tall building just to the south on Devonshire Place: the University guarantees the School not less than 15000 square feet in that. And the former Munk Centre building at the other end of Devonshire Place will be retained. Overall, an amazing amount of publicly-financed space is being provided to what one used to consider one small sub-field of study.

Some features of this building programme seem disturbing. In particular, it very quietly emerges (MoA, Schedule A and Item 14) that a substantial part (up to one quarter) of the “Heritage Mansion” has actually been set aside (and is being remodelled) to accommodate a group called the Canadian International Council (C.I.C.)⁷. This organization is not part of the University, and indeed is not an academic organization at all. It can best be described as a right-wing ‘think tank’, comparable in its make-up and ideology to the Canadian Council of Chief Executives (C.C.C.E.)⁸ but with a self-interested focus on Canada’s posture in foreign policy and trade. The C.I.C. appears to be the creature especially of 18 high-profile Canadian corporations (including for example Scotiabank, the Power Corporation, Research-in-Motion, Goldcorp, Manulife, Magna International and of course Barrick Gold), the CEOs or Presidents of which constitute the C.I.C. Senate. Its Board of Directors combines such people with other influential people such as Perrin Beatty (now CEO of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce), Bill Graham (former Foreign Minister) and Janice Stein (current Director of the Munk School). They expect to house in the School’s new building their Director and an assistant, four Fellows and a further staff of 6, so will constitute a substantial presence; they are expected to share meeting rooms and other services, even a “dining room”, with the School.

We are assured they must pay “market rent”: this is disingenuous --- University academic buildings are not part of the office rental market, and for good reason. To have an address in the University immediately confers a respectability and validation, based on the University’s reputation for disinterested study. Why would this group have been invited to move in? Why would we offer enhanced validity to *any* outside group, but especially to an evident pressure group for a certain set of special interests? In this way

⁷ www.onlinecic.org (accessed 16 January 2011)

⁸ www.ceocouncil.ca (accessed 16 January 2011)

the University foregoes a measure of that very reputation for impartiality from which others, such as the C.I.C., seek to benefit.

But it is more sinister. As we have stressed above, and elsewhere⁹, and is well understood, a prerequisite of critical thought and academic freedom is protection of scholars from pressures to involve them in the everyday affairs of vested interests of the regular commercial and governing worlds; it is therefore one of the responsibilities of the University to *minimize* such pressures by ensuring the possibility of a certain isolation from them on the part of its scholars --- indeed that can even be seen as one of the essential purposes of having the University: its “ivory tower” aspect. The present proposal is that members of the School should share premises, and even meeting rooms and services, with a narrow pressure group having its own interests in foreign relations issues! This is clearly designed to work in the *opposite* direction of *maximizing* the outside pressure from vested interests and to distract the scholars endlessly. This is surely totally inappropriate. It is hard to imagine how such a proposal would have been made, impossible to think how representatives of the University could possibly have assented. One way or another, this choice needs to be reversed, to provide the scholars of the School with the protection they deserve.

There is a further proviso in the Space Plan for the School (MoA, Schedule A) that is so offensive that it fair takes one’s breath away. To quote:

The main entrance of the Heritage Mansion will be a formal entrance reserved only for senior staff [of] and visitors to the School and the CIC.

It goes on to explain that there will be other entrances around the corner on the side street (Devonshire Place), usable by lesser folk. The re-establishment of hierarchy and associated privileges seems to be a corollary of the transformations being urged on the universities, but this proposal seems extreme even within that context. What is proposed lies far outside the social norms of the University. Think of it. The main entrance of the School, remodeled at considerable *public* expense, is to be restricted to “senior staff” (defined how?), while everyone else, including their assistants and students and even their less-senior Faculty colleagues, are to walk around to a back door! Furthermore the same privilege is to be accorded to the CIC, so the restriction would mean that members of the University are excluded from using an entrance into a University building (which will often be that of their own School!) although members of a non-academic group are accommodated. The awkwardness would be excruciating. The likelihood is clearly that it would detract seriously from an atmosphere of collegial cooperation: to what end? (Happily, if the “senior staff” are also serious scholars, they are unlikely to be willing to tolerate such an arrangement. On the other hand one may doubt whether such people would in the first place be willing to *accept* positions in an institution wishing to establish such a regime.) How could those purportedly negotiating on behalf of our University have come up with, or acceded to, a proposal so far from what is acceptable?

⁹ See for example John Valleau and Paul Hamel, “Idea and reality: The University and our universities”, Chapter 6 of “Academic Callings”, eds. Janice Newson and Claire Polster, Canadian Scholars' Press (Toronto, 2010)

Clashing Emphases and Foregone Autonomy

An independent review of the School is scheduled for 2015-2016 (MoA: Item 13 and Schedule G). Evaluations of the quality of scholarship are a regular experience at UofT, and are expected to consist of peer review by a panel of scholars from elsewhere working in the relevant discipline. One would expect the only point of the MoA's even mentioning such a review for the Munk School would be to commit to a definite date (although, as suggested above, the date proposed is perhaps too soon to be very useful), and only to mention in passing the purpose --- of evaluating the scholarship of the School --- and the method --- of peer review. The actual description of the intention looks different in spirit from that, and is rather ambiguous and perhaps worrying.

The review panel is described as “Blue-Chip”. What that may mean escapes us. What leaves one worrying is that it is *not* anywhere specified to be a panel of scholarly peers, as one would expect; indeed peer review is nowhere mentioned. So does “Blue-Chip” imply something other than the purely scholarly panel of peers required for evaluating academic quality? Again, in such a review one looks simply for evaluations of the quality of the scholarly work in question, but here the character of the expected report seems to be pitched elsewhere, in terms of competition and ranking (with respect to what is unclear), rather than simply quality --- we see the corporatist reliance on quantification however spurious. Indeed the overall charge to the panel is to ask whether the School is “among the top few schools worldwide”, is “in the top tier”, and to “assess its position in the field”. What does this mean? “Top” in what respect? These do not seem to us to be appropriate categories for judging academic value. Surely the questions need to be directed instead to rigour and imagination --- not easily ranked definitively --- and to cooperation rather than competition with fellow-scholars, but such qualities are not mentioned. When finally some “measures of success” are proposed (in Schedule G), one finds suggestions to which numbers can indeed be attached, but which inevitably do not relate in any direct way with actual scholarly accomplishment --- it is the fallacy of false and misleading quantification.

Meanwhile there is a more explicit concern to raise about the provisions for this review process. The (Blue-Chip) review panel is asked (unless the School is found to be already “in the top tier”!) to “make recommendations for improvement”, and also to reconvene for a “follow-up review” after a few years, which may also generate recommendations. Very often, of course, useful suggestions can follow from such reviews. But under the MoA, Item 13, the University becomes committed --- in fact it “covenants” --- to “take all steps necessary, at its expense, to implement such recommendations”. Now this seems outrageous. Decisions about the actions of the University must continue to be taken by the University, not by an outside agency, however well-meaning. The idea of covenanting in advance to accept as-yet-unknown recommendations by outsiders is insupportable. It represents an abdication of responsibility, indeed in principle even a surrender of academic freedom, and needs to be repudiated decisively.

Similar problems (including a further surrender of the University's autonomy) arise in connection with a remarkable emphasis on a “branding” process for the School (MoA: Item 12 and Schedule F), as though it were something like McDonald's or Calvin Klein. It makes the description “corporatization” sound particularly apt! In that

commercial context, “branding” is the establishment of instant recognition of a firm or product, and of uncritical acceptance of its claims, usually with the help of advertising involving limited viewpoints and a casual attitude to the truth --- these are not academic virtues! It is not clear what branding is supposed to mean in the present context, but the plan is to spend 2M\$ on the exercise (at a time when valuable programmes are under threat due to modest financial shortfalls). What is thought to be the *academic* benefit justifying this?

Included is a surprising focus on the image of the School in the media. The University undertakes to engage a “media tracking service to evaluate the progress of the School's branding strategy” and to hire a “media consultant to develop a media strategy and ramp up media coverage of activity at the School”. What we find very disturbing is a promise by the University “to undertake such measures and actions as suggested by this evaluation to be most effective in further enhancing the impact and reputation of the School”. This is, once again, a covenant to accept future unknown proposals from an external source: a further surrender of University autonomy (and thus of academic influence) in matters likely to have academic effects. Media visibility is entirely different from academic value. The former purpose is often sought by over-simplification, refraining from critical analysis of popular views and so on: it is unlikely that the two aims can be maximised simultaneously. So conflict with academic values is inherent, and the suggested “measures” are likely to involve constraints on scholarship or its publication. In that case, the covenant is formally an agreement to follow external advice, in the pursuit of media popularity, and even at the possible expense of academic values, including in principle even academic freedom.

Who's Steering, Anyway?

The Munk School is not the only example in the University current or recent dramatic expansions of individual fields of study: one thinks of Management (the Rotman School), Mining Engineering (the Lassonde Institute), and so on. But they are few, and in each case (as recognized by the names) spectacular philanthropy was required to initiate the development in view of the slim support our governments currently offer. We must be grateful and pleased, as long as the expansions match academic needs and are not so disproportionate as to have negative effect. To many members and alumni of the University, the resources lavished on specific areas of the University appear, however, to be seriously distorting the entire institution as to its academic priorities, and even in its outward appearance. A new pattern for the University seems to be emerging, in which a small number of expensive and spectacular units, corresponding to the interests of wealthy donors, are accompanied by second-class facilities and meagre support for the bulk of the equally-deserving scholars of the University. It can be symbolized by the contrast between the Rotman expansion dominating St George Street and, to its south, the cramped and ill-maintained facilities central to students and scholars of the Faculty of Arts and Science. The disproportion is distressing and counter-productive.

It does not appear that this pattern of growth corresponds to any set of priorities established within the academic ranks of the University. (We note that the Munk MoA did claim, in its opening “Recital”, that “International studies is a top academic priority at the University”. We suppose that statement to have no content. Indeed, one hopes it doesn't: the idea of there being a ranking of this sort, influencing the support offered our

various chosen fields, established secretly by some unknown persons, is entirely objectionable!) Nevertheless the decision was taken, somewhere, to accept the Munk donation for the purpose of the large further expansion of work on international affairs. This inclination to do so was no doubt enhanced by the province's grant to provide new space for the School, and by significant funding by the federal government for the creation of a Centre on Global Security within the Munk School¹⁰, apparently after direct lobbying by Peter Munk¹¹. (It is also curious to note that Peter Munk was lobbying the Federal government for the creation of a specific *academic* program within the University of Toronto. The University of Toronto was not listed, however, as the group for which Peter Munk was working.) Was there at least some serious opinion, generated by a wide spectrum of our fellow-scholars, that the field was one particularly ripe for the discovery of significant new and deeply transforming understandings? We would be happy to see that such arguments could be made, for this field or the others that have recently been greatly expanded.

The acceptance of such directed philanthropy needs some thought, therefore, and we return to the vital need for academic direction of the development of the University. Naturally the offer of substantial amounts of money to the hard-strapped University is in itself appreciated, and very welcome, so there will always be an inclination toward its acceptance. Things are not so simple, however, except in the unusual case that the field of application of such donations is left entirely to the discretion of the University itself. If, as usual, there are strings attached, the academic community must be allowed to reflect on the wisdom of acceptance --- and the choice will often be far from self-evident.

Take the 20M\$ Munk donation as example. Its acceptance precipitated a lot of new commitments to the Munk School by the University itself: these include increased operating funds and salaries equivalent to devoting 39M\$ of endowment funds, as well as the ongoing costs of maintaining the greatly expanded accommodation, the expense of foregoing (deregulated) tuition fees for the Master of Global Affairs programme (expected to be well over 1M\$ per year), and so on. (This is not to mention the 50M\$ of grants obtained from the federal and provincial governments to aid the Munk School development, which no doubt meant forfeiting some possibilities of securing such grants for other purposes). Now that the donation has been accepted (by whose decision, actually?) the above large amounts of support *have become unavailable* for distribution among the many units of the University in dire need of support: this is the result of the choice that has been made. The point is that the alternative of *rejecting* the donation is not at all unreasonable, and it certainly deserved proper discussion within the University. It is well to recall this summer's crisis in the Faculty of Arts and Science, where many very unacceptable changes within the Faculty were proposed due in large part, according to the Dean, to financial shortfalls. There are real and significant choices to be made, and it is only academics themselves who are equipped to evaluate the trade-offs, but they have not been allowed to do so.

¹⁰ <http://media.utoronto.ca/media-releases/uoft's-munk-school-gets-25-million-from-federal-government-for-new-centre-on-global-security> (accessed 16 January 2011)

¹¹ <http://www.ocl-cal.gc.ca/eic/site/lobbyist-lobbyiste1.nsf/eng/home>; Inactive Registration: 768854-265842-1 and 781740-262242-1 (accessed 16 January 2011)

Where Do We Go From Here?

We are forced to conclude that the University has, in this whole event, failed to protect adequately principles on which depend the academic health of the community and the long-run benefits it can provide society. Decisions were required at two levels. One was the basic questions of whether to accept the Munk donation, along with its targeted purpose of a massive further expansion of the School of Global Affairs, and to divert for this purpose substantial University resources that would otherwise have been available elsewhere in the University. Then the specifics of the legal protocols under which the donation would be accepted, detailed in the Memorandum of Agreement, needed to be negotiated. In both cases the decisions seem to have been made in substantial secrecy. As we have discussed, the decisions carry serious consequences for the academic health of the University, and at least some of these are by our estimation quite negative. According to the traditions of the University, substantial academic direction is demanded whenever academic matters are in question, so this was surely required in the present case. We consider the University would certainly have protected its principles far more adequately in that case.

We have no way of knowing who authorized, instead, what were in practice secret negotiations, nor who then carried them out. We can only suppose that some group of senior administrators were responsible. This conforms of course to the characteristic “corporatization” tendency towards hierarchy and to replacing collegial deliberations with top-down management. Decisions can often be arrived at more quickly that way, it is true --- but we believe there is much less hope that the decisions will serve scholarly needs correctly.

Along with the many colleagues with whom we have discussed these matters, we had supposed that the Academic Board remained as one sure line of defence. That is, on hearing of the bequest we assumed that both the basic trade-offs of the decision to accept the donor's donation and intentions, and also the details of the required Memorandum of Agreement, would have been presented to the Academic Board for detailed review and debate, well before any such agreement would be signed. (As our analysis makes clear, nothing short of examination of the *details* of the MoA would suffice --- that's where the devil is!) We were also comforted by the supposition that had the Academic Board noted disturbing issues they would have flagged them and provoked broader faculty attention. In the event, as it turns out, the Agreement was not even made available to the Board! This means there was no way it could fulfill its responsibilities (nor even know it was failing to do so). This is surely completely unacceptable.

In the 1990s two rather similar philanthropic proposals raised similar anxieties in the University: the Rotman bequest for the School of Management and an earlier Munk bequest to inaugurate the Centre for International Affairs. In both cases¹² the Agreements required inappropriate undertakings on the part of the University and contained threats to academic freedom; in the Rotman case there was a possibility of redirection of funds in the event of the donor's dissatisfaction. In the Rotman case the Agreement was at least brought before the Academic Board at the last minute; in the Munk case it was signed without going to Academic Board, and one only later learned of the details when they

¹² An excellent brief synopsis can be found in the UTFA Newsletters of February 8 and 25, 1998.

were “leaked” by the student newspaper, the Varsity. In both cases the Faculty Association reacted vigorously, and in both cases there was quickly brought forward a substantially altered revision of the Agreements, in which the worst features of the originals were removed. That is, the validity of the principled criticisms was accepted, and corrective action was taken by the University and the donors.

Some sort of response to the rejection in the present case of the Academic Board's vital role is surely demanded. One possibility would be a demand, for example jointly by the Academic Board and the Faculty Association, for reconsideration of the MoA, as in the similar cases just described. A difficulty lies in the fact that the very existence of the deal was (for what reason?) essentially unknown for nearly half a year, and it is now over a year since it was signed --- a year in which plans contingent on the Agreement have been going ahead. At the very least, the Board could choose nevertheless to carry out now its own review of the matter, first assuring itself that serious academic consequences are indeed involved, declaring its consequent responsibility, and formally complaining at having been prevented from discharging that responsibility. A still more direct alternative would be for the members of the Academic Board to resign, on principle, over the failure to respect their role.

Fundamentally, the whole episode points undoubtedly to an urgent need for some reform of the governance of UofT. One problem seems to be that the Academic Board is itself not an entirely convincing defender of academic principle: A very large proportion of its members are appointed or are *ex officio*, several are administrators --- it is not the overwhelmingly scholarly body one might like. But its real problem is likely its place as a mere Board of the Governing Council. In a properly framed bicameral structure, by contrast, decisions on all important matters would be expected to require approval of the Senate and therefore they would necessarily appear on its agenda and their academic significance would be evaluated. There appears to be some recent interest around the University in this possibility of returning to the traditional bicameral structure of Senate plus Board of Governors, but this could of course only follow a serious and prolonged campaign.

Review of the details shows that the Munk bequest for the School of Global Affairs was accepted with completely inadequate academic oversight, with the result that the trade-offs implicit in that acceptance were in turn never properly explored, and the resulting Memorandum of Agreement contains several protocols carrying grave threats to basic academic values, including academic freedom. Hopefully, in retrospect, we can all --- faculty, members of the Academic Board and the Governing Council, administrators, etc. --- agree that the events display very serious shortcomings in the way we have come to govern this University. If that is the case, we can surely work together to design improved arrangements. In the long run that could involve amending the University of Toronto Act under which the University operates, but that would certainly take a while: we need also to address steps that could be taken for the more immediate future. Basically, we need for now to agree on a set of rules that would preclude the possibility of by-passing academic supervision of decisions and priorities, supervision which is central to preserving the University's academic culture and integrity. Our proposal would be that constituencies of the University, including at least the Governing Council and the Academic Board and the Faculty Association, agree to setting up jointly a committee,

including active scholars, charged with proposing such rules for subsequent approval by the constituencies or by the faculty as a whole. We would be happy to convene a preliminary meeting of representatives of these constituencies for the purpose of discussion of such a possible process, if that would be helpful. We welcome of course a vigorous, collegial and productive debate of these matters.