

## The university and society in Algeria, the limits of knowledge and society

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### Abstract:

**“The education system reflects the social order of a society and at the same time constitutes the basic means by which that order is sustained” (Michel CROZIER).**

Algeria's educational system today is no exception to this thesis, and so the university today is the image of Algerian society today, both of which present themselves as the product of a stormy and turbulent history for decades, i.e. since the colonial event (1830), society and the educational system have not stopped changing and transforming, and the Algerian university today is the product of these transformations, which witnessed at least four historical moments according to **Professor Djamel GUERID**, the first moment is the moment of establishment that was very slow with the establishment of the first medical school in 1832, and ended with the establishment in 1909 of four higher schools (medicine, literature, law and science) in one university, and this is the. This university at this moment had a dual function, one practical and the other ideological.

The second moment is the moment of the independent University of Algeria. At independence, the French university was renovated. So ‘the university remained French through its educational programmes, through its teaching staff and through its system of examinations and diplomas. It must be said that during this difficult period, the national state had a lot to do. It was completely preoccupied with reorganizing and managing the various state institutions, especially the political and economic ones. The university remained so French that when the French reformed their university in 1965, the temptation was great, on the Algerian side, to follow suit. But this renewal did not come without a struggle. At independence, the Algerian

university inherited two sections of the elite that were against each other and defended two different cultural projects (Western/Arab-Islamic).

The third moment is the moment of the University of Development Algeria based on the industrialization project. This brought the three factions of the elite into confrontation with each other, the first two mentioned and the third, the modernist movement, rising rapidly in power as a result of the development strategy. Each had its own cultural and social project. For the liberals, salvation was synonymous with maintaining high quality education and preserving high culture, both guaranteed by a global power, France. For the proponents of a 'return to origins', what is important is the restoration of all the qualities that make up the national character. For modernists, the question is posed in terms of existence or non-existence, modernization or decay.

The fourth moment was the liberalization of the Algerian university. There is no doubt that Algeria's transition from a command economy to liberalization took place under the worst conditions. What needs to be done so that the ideological apparatus that was built on the idea of state socialism can participate in the creation of a market economy society? Like other institutions, the university finds itself, or risks finding itself for a long time to come, at odds and thus unable to fulfill its functions.

Seven decades after independence, Algerian society has changed profoundly. So has its university. The transformation of the university institution is the result of a double action, a clear action, the action of reforms designed and implemented by the political authority in order to technically and culturally adapt the university to its different environments and mobilize it to serve the 'tasks of the hour.' The most important of these reforms, the July 1971 reform, saw the higher education system undergo profound changes in its structures, methods and philosophy. The most important of these reforms, the July 1971 reform, characterized the higher education system with profound changes in its structures, working methods and philosophy. An even more profound action that is nowhere publicized is that of society itself. Everything happened as if society decided, after a period of anticipation, to 'enter' the university, reclaims it, and makes it work according to its interests and logic.

**Keywords:**

Algeria, University Today, Society, knowledge, knowledge Society University, Reforms, Culture, Industrialization, Community Project, Educational Policy, Public Policy.

**Introduction**

Today, we are facing a real revolution equivalent in magnitude and impact to the industrial revolution, and it is happening before our eyes and at an astonishing speed, we are talking here about the knowledge revolution, or the cognitive revolution. Societies are moving from industrial civilization to knowledge civilization, in these societies, which have come to be called knowledge societies, knowledge is the basis of everything in various sectors, and Western societies in particular have moved from an industrial economy that depends on raw materials extracted from nature, which are characterized by the characteristic of depletion, to a knowledge economy that invested in the renewable human factor and the emergence of the image of development based on human development, and knowledge is the real engine of economic growth.

Just as industrial societies emerged from the womb of agricultural societies, so did knowledge societies emerge from the womb of industrial societies, and Western societies moved from material production to intangible production in the sense of knowledge. In light of this movement, the countries of the South, including Algeria, are notably absent. The gap has become wide. Scientific knowledge has not been controlled, indigenous knowledge has not been developed and codified to serve society, and there has been no proper investment in education, training, scientific research related to development, and new communication technologies in order to reduce the gap and catch up, albeit locally.

We move to a knowledge society when the share of intangible capital exceeds the share of tangible capital in the real stock of capital. According to economist Kendrick John, this shift occurred in the United States in 1973 (**Guerid, 2012, p12**). The transition to a knowledge society does not take place without raising some concerns. We wonder whether the new society, by elevating scientists to management, will not deal a blow to democracy.

The works of **BOURDIEU** (1930-2002) and his school propose understanding the university through a dual function, the first is the technical or technical function and the cultural function, the university as a device for producing qualifications and competencies and the university as an institution involved in spreading specific forms of consciousness in society. The second function is the dual internal function, which materializes through the reproduction of the university system in particular and the school system in general, and the external function, which results in the university's contribution to the formation of the various frameworks required by its environment.

In both cases, the university is approached in terms of production: The production of skills and qualifications, the production of culture, the production of national consciousness. The importance of this or that production depends on the historical phase and the social formation considered. The central body of society is, by definition, in constant change, and the university is constantly called upon to respond to new

demands and thus reform itself, i.e. adapt. **BOURDIEU, ALTHUSSER** (1918-1990) and others see the education system as an example of the reproduction and division of society. Whereas society is a permanent 'labour', the university is a constant adaptation and this is always done through orders called reforms.

The medieval university is not the University of the industrial revolution and is not sufficiently equipped to meet the demands of the knowledge society. As a result, thoughts and studies about the university in particular and education in general have become very intense in recent decades. Their reasons are the entry of societies into the knowledge civilization and their goals are to create the school of this civilization. These initiatives are often supported by major international or regional institutions such as the World Bank, UNESCO or the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Its centrality in the knowledge society is evidenced by the fact that the university is present even when it comes to dealing with other subjects. Thus, in 2000, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OCDE) published an important report on the knowledge society and knowledge management (OCDE, 2000), subtitled Education and Competence, the aim of the project was as follows: 'The idea was to explore the production, formulation and utilization of knowledge within today's society, against the backdrop of the question of knowledge. The ability of the education system to transform'.

### **The process of building a knowledge society university in Europe**

In the last decade of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century, this effort to transform education in general and the university in particular has been an absolute priority in Europe. Let us follow the transition to the knowledge university as it is taking shape in Europe under the Bologna Process and ask ourselves why this transition is problematic in our country. It is worth taking a moment to reflect on the form of university that prevailed in Europe for almost two centuries and that Europeans pledged to change at the end of the twentieth century. Von Humboldt (1767-1835), scholar, philosopher, liberal politician and reformer, was the originator of the modern university, a university that worked with national variables, needless to say, for decades. In this regard, an important fact must be emphasized, because it has no analogues today. It is the involvement in academic work of those whom Germany considered to be great thinkers and philosophers. Schelling, Fichte, Schleiermacher, von Humboldt and Hegel, as philosophers, wrote about the university. Fichte and Schleiermacher proposed their idea and project for the organization of the university, the former at the request of the authorities, the latter in reaction to the former's concept. Between Schleiermacher's liberal and open concept and Fichte's authoritarian and somewhat closed project, Humboldt did not hesitate and chose the proposal closest to his convictions.

The university, which he founded in 1809 and which opened its doors to students in 1810, is first and foremost characterized by its independence from the state. Humboldt defends the small presence of the state so much for fear of its tutelage that he only accepts financial support and even this is minimized. Because, as he rightly says, ‘the state is not interested (...) in knowledge and speech, but in character and action’. The university, independent of political power, the union of research and teaching, is independent of the practical goals that schools seek to achieve. It is liberal and ‘liberalism presupposes (...) an orientation towards order defined according to the model of an incomplete and unattainable rationality, open but endlessly pursued and functioning as a perfect organizer’. Humboldt writes that ‘everything, in the internal organization of higher scientific education, is based on respect for the principle that one should consider science not yet fully found, or unable to be fully found, and search for it relentlessly.’ (Alain Renaut, Jean-Pierre Pesron, Luc Ferry, 1979, p323).

This bias for liberalism and openness explains why this university does not impose any programme, why teachers enjoy the greatest freedom in designing their courses and methods, and why, as far as students are concerned, they go so far as to favour excess over guardianship. Humboldt did not stop at the theoretical foundations, but - before his resignation - made sure to proceed personally to the opening of the university, which on its first return (1910) welcomed 256 students and 52 teachers in its four faculties (law, medicine, philosophy and theology). He even took care to appoint the philosophers Fichte (Faculty of Philosophy) and Schleiermacher (Faculty of Theology) as deans and professors, and most people were attracted to his reformist concept.

First called the University of Berlin, then between 1828 and 1946 the University of Friedrich Guillaume and from 1949 the University von Humboldt, it was here that such illustrious names as the 19th-century philosophers, as teachers or students, succeeded each other. Fichte, Hegel, Feuerbach, Karl Marx as physicist Albert Einstein, Max Planck as poet Heinrich Heine as strategist and states man Otto von Bismarck. This is the university that taught 29 Nobel laureates. It is this university that the rest of Europe, and even America, has sought to imitate, following the example of the French authorities who sent the young educational sociologist Emile Durkheim to Germany to draw lessons for France.

The open and humanistic concept developed by von Humboldt is still predominant, especially within the university community. It is in the light of this concept that today's technocratic concept is being criticized. The Bologna Process itself began, which nevertheless gave rise to the entrepreneurial university and so, on 18 September 1988, nearly 400 university deans from all over Europe gathered in Bologna on the occasion of the ninth centenary of the founding of the University of Bologna. The establishment of the oldest university and the adoption of the Magna Charta Universitatum, a founding text that defines the

definition of a university and defines its place and function in society, during which time. According to the preamble of the charter, a university is 'an autonomous institution that critically produces and transmits culture through research and teaching'. Humanity (...) depends to a great extent on the cultural, scientific and technical development that takes place in the centers of culture, knowledge and research that real universities have become.

The intervention in higher education and scientific research is part of the European construction whose driving force is the economy in general and the knowledge economy in particular. Whoever says knowledge economy inevitably says university. Therefore, it is businessmen, or those in their place, international organizations or new ideologues who are stepping forward and showing the way. This new way of seeing has been theorized and legitimized by a whole host of mainly Anglo-Saxon thinkers. He develops, for example, this simple opposition: Before, there were 'Mode 1' universities where scholars asked and answered questions; today, 'Mode 2' universities are being created where questions are asked by society and answered by ad hoc groups of experts. It was even specified, in a threatening tone, that 'if universities don't adapt, we will do without them'.

In the end, the philosophy of deans and professors did not withstand the power of economic forces, and the concept of company men ended up imposing itself as a requirement of the new knowledge society. The university to be built next succeeded in emerging as the last word of modernity but with an extension of the classical European university, making it acceptable and even desirable to large segments of society.

In the long march towards a unified Europe, education in general and the university in particular could not, of course, be absent. The trouble was that in the face of heterogeneous European systems, different traditions, and highly sensitive national sensitivities demanding that each country take its own 'cultural exception' into account, there was little room for manoeuvre. Faced with the impossibility of unanimously selecting a member country's university system and elevating it to the status of a model for the whole of Europe, the builders of Europe, in a stroke of true genius, found a solution that no country could refuse: Go back in time and jump back a few centuries to find the first university in the history of Europe, which was European from the beginning. To return to Bologna is to rediscover Europe. It means choosing not between competition and confrontation, but between co-operation and alliance. Going back to the 11th century symbolically means erasing 900 years of confrontations and misunderstandings.' (GUERID, 2012, p22)

However, it should be remembered that the Bologna system has always existed in European education systems and even in those of the rest of the world. Firstly through the name of the university even

if the meaning has changed. It is no longer a union (*universitas*) but an institution. It is always headed by a rector. It is divided into faculties headed by deans. It has a three-tiered system with three university titles: LMD (Licence, Master and Doctorate). Moreover, the 'primitive' universities were European from the beginning because they received students from different European countries and because the common language used, Latin, was in Europe the language of teaching, philosophy, theology, science, publishing, and official and religious life.

The starting point for the construction of the new university (the knowledge society university) is presented as a clear observation: The world and Europe have changed profoundly and the university has remained hopelessly unchanged, a reflection of a society that has disappeared. In fact, the 19th century University cannot be of much help to society at the beginning of the 21st century. The requirements of a knowledge society are qualitatively different from those of an industrialized society. This explains the great gap between a rapidly changing society and economy and a university that has remained part of a society that no longer exists. After observation comes the moment of action: We must put an end to this harmful distortion, bring the university out of its wonderful and harmful isolation and bring it up to speed. And everything happens as if the intervention is self-imposed and reform means taking into account the objective evolution of reality and adapting the university to the world as it has become.

In this intervention, it is the economy that takes the lead. It is about putting the university at the service of the new society and the new economy. European construction is presented primarily as an effort to transcend the historical phase of the nation-state because what Europe intends to become, in the short term, is 'the most dynamic and competitive economic bloc from all parts of the world'. (Lisbon Treaty, March 2000). And it is not just any economy, it is the most advanced economy of all, the knowledge economy. It is nothing more and nothing less than 'making Europe the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world'. However, knowledge-based economies are 'fundamentally dependent on high investments in education and training, research and development, software'. And information systems. They are also characterized by the significant use of new information technologies, not only for interpersonal communication, but also for the creation of new knowledge.

Whoever says knowledge economy inevitably says university and the first task is to impose, from the outside, on this somewhat rebellious institution the transition to the knowledge age. This coercion and imposition, done in the name of society, is not neutral, in fact, it is a requirement of institutionalization.

I have shown that important economic pronouncements or decisions made by major international organizations preceded and prepared Bologna University. For example, in 1989 and 1995, the European

Industrialists' Round Table (ERT), an informal forum where the leaders of Europe's largest industrial and commercial companies meet, issued two reports that laid the foundations for the new market logic: Higher education that is more 'open' to new human resource management methods and better adapted to the requirements of companies would enable them to reduce their training costs. These reports were taken up by the European Commission at the end of 1995. At the same time, the World Bank published a brief document on the higher education funding crisis and concluded that the private sector should be privatized. In 1996, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) also published a report devoted to the innovation of educational service delivery. In the eyes of its authors, university systems are inflexible and inefficient, take too long to adapt to change, and are inefficient when it comes to transferring and putting into practice the knowledge gained.

Therefore, the new university has to produce the skills needed by the economic system, and it is this system that defines these skills, which are not cognitively ordered but professionally ordered, and it is this system that decides how to transfer them. In the future, only application-oriented teaching and research will count. Knowledge will be applied or not. However, it is quite clear that a knowledge society cannot be satisfied with 'fully professionalized' because, in order to progress, it needs to produce more knowledge. To reiterate, this knowledge takes place and develops, to a large extent, in the university, not throughout the university, but in closed university spaces arranged for this purpose. It is because of this dual function that this institution becomes the object of interest of several parties, and the knowledge society shapes it in its own image.

This means, first and foremost, that the university is placed almost exclusively at the service of the economy. It completely changes the roles. 'The new university, says Michael Gibbons (Secretary General of the Association of Commonwealth Universities), must produce knowledge for knowledge industry companies as well as highly qualified employees well suited to their needs.' They are now called upon to produce the skills needed by the economic system, and it is the system that defines these skills. To begin with, the university must know that 'the acquisition of these skills is very different from the acquisition of knowledge as currently practiced by universities'. These 'fundamentally non-cognitive' skills 'cannot be transferred through traditional disciplines'. As a result, the university is required to profoundly revise its 'formative offer' by defining and diversifying it as much as possible to make it compatible with employers' expectations. The trend is to bring university education and higher vocational training as close as possible. Vocational training is now more important than cultural and scientific training. Pedagogical autonomy is the central element of the reform. Faculties are free to innovate their university courses, which determine the proliferation of diplomas offered and, in each sector, the proliferation of courses and units. 'The new

university courses have the following characteristics: Advanced and early specialization, fragmentation of knowledge through increasingly simplified courses designed to meet the definition of learning measured in terms of 'credits'.

### **The knowledge society university and the LMD system**

This means that to achieve the expected performance, the university must not only work in the service of the economy, but must act as an economic organization that must define its own requirements and values: Autonomy, competitiveness, employability and professionalism. The standardization of universities or rather the standardization of universities (through the LMD system) should ultimately lead to the construction of a common market for higher education in particular and education in general. This represents a complete break with the idea of the humanistic and open university developed by different people such as Humboldt, Neumann or Jaspers. Higher education is now a market.

On the basis of this 'idea of the university' as a body that almost exclusively serves the economy, the universities of the European Knowledge Society are gradually being established. This is called the Bologna Process. Going to Bologna means 'going back to jump better'. While exploiting the European historical fact of the invention of the university in the Middle Ages, we celebrate its best extension, Humboldt University, but let us immediately emphasize that it has fulfilled its historical mission: to support the formation of nation-states in Europe by giving them a soul, i.e. national identity and consciousness. It is no small thing to note that the builder of the unity of the German nation, Bismarck, was a product of the University of Berlin.

The new university, the University of the Knowledge Society, the one that reinvented the LMD system, presents itself as a systematic construction whose interim culmination was the creation of the Joint European University in 2010. It is important to remember its milestones and phases. We have just mentioned the meeting of 400 European deans on 18 September 1988, on the occasion of the ninth centenary of the oldest European universities, during which they adopted the famous Magna Charta Universitatum. On 30 June 1997, the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications for Higher Education in the European Region (Lisbon Convention) was concluded in Lisbon. On 25 May 1998, as part of the celebration of the 800th anniversary of the University of Paris (founded on 25 May 1198), four European ministers (France, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom) responsible for higher education signed the Charter for Higher Education. The Sorbonne University Declaration which states that 'the Europe we are building is not only a Europe of banks and economics; it must also be a Europe of knowledge'. It adds that Europe must 'promote and utilize (...) the intellectual, cultural, social and technical dimensions' largely shaped by its universities, which continue to play a central role in their development. A central role in their development.

A little earlier, French Minister Claude Allegri had asked a committee chaired by Jacques Attali to think about the university to be created in Europe. The latter presented its report at the beginning of May 1998 under the title 'For a European Model of Higher Education'. This report strongly inspired the ideas and actions taken thereafter. On 19 June 1999, 29 European countries signed the real birth certificate of the European Common University under the name of the Bologna Declaration. The so-called Bologna Process became a reality. For example, we agree to establish a 'system of legible and harmonized diplomas' with the first two levels of higher education: Bachelor's and Master's (LM). The principle of biennial meetings adopted in Bologna is respected, and each meeting adds one or more stones to the building of the university building. For example, in Berlin (2003), it was decreed that 'the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area are the two pillars of a knowledge-based society'. Also in Berlin we add the third level of studies: PhD. Now the LMD system is born. As a sign that the Bologna process is going well, at the last meeting it was decided to start thinking beyond 2010.

Almost all European countries have adopted the LMD (Licence, Master and Doctorate) system. What we should remember is that building a common area of higher education or more generally building a common education market is actually part of the whole and that whole is the building of Europe itself. What we should also remember is that the new Single European University is presented as the product of an endogenous historical co-evolution. This means, in other words, that the European university reform movement is in fact the work of society itself, to use Alain Touraine's famous expression.

### **The Algerian university today**

In the previous development, the European university under construction was shown to fit harmoniously into the common historical development and participate in the construction of a knowledge economy and society. However, what we observe today is that the LMD system is moving towards globalization and is being adopted by many non-European countries. For example, the Maghreb countries. In 2004 (19-20 November), a meeting of deans and university presidents from the Maghreb countries and the French-speaking EU conferences was held in Marseille under the theme 'Higher education reforms in the Maghreb countries and future prospects'. 'The Bologna Process'. The aim is to build the Euro-Mediterranean region of higher education like the European region whose construction started in Bologna (1999). During this meeting, the Marseille Process was even discussed in line with the Bologna Process.

In Algeria, the European LMD system was implemented at the beginning of the 2004-2005 academic years in 10 out of 60 university institutions. Today (2011-2012), it has been rolled out to practically all

Algerian universities. The first Master's courses were opened at the beginning of the academic year 2007-2008.

The question that cannot be asked is: Is it possible to borrow the LMD system? The question derives its importance from the fact that the LMD system, we must repeat, presents itself primarily as a historical product of European society, as a contribution to the integration of European countries and as an adaptation of the university to the new era in Europe. In which knowledge becomes a motivating and structural element. As a result, in Algeria, there are difficult questions to be asked, some concerning society and others concerning the university.

Regarding the society, the problem is as follows: Is it possible to build a knowledge university in a society that is not a knowledge society, neither in reality nor in the project? Is it possible to do this by borrowing the university model from the Bologna Process as it seems that the public authorities are thinking and doing today in the context of globalization?

You cannot deny that knowledge is not unfamiliar territory in the Arab-Islamic civilization to which we belong. The scientific and philosophical movement from the 8th to the 10th century is a testament to this. What our ancestors did yesterday, we can do today, especially since we have conditions and means unknown to them. This is the theory. Practically, however, the observation is that the obstacles to acquiring knowledge are more numerous than the facilitating factors. It suffices at the outset to point out this contradiction between the two levels. The explicit and official level is characterized by a boastful and sometimes noisy celebration of knowledge. For example, a day called "Knowledge Day" (April 16). Qur'anic verses, hadiths, poems, sayings, and proverbs are often invoked in favor of knowledge and commented on extensively. The second level, however, relates to the reality of things: neither knowledge nor its bearers enjoy a particular status or position in society. Moreover, what has been observed is a generalization of a contemptuous attitude, and knowledge seekers are not far from appearing as a kind of poor and naive people who live outside of time.

To fully understand the matter, we must return to the correct definition of society as a complete and homogeneous whole, a system in which the various elements that constitute it generally evolve at the same pace. One cannot isolate a single element from the whole, for example, the education system or the field of knowledge, and make it operate at the pace of developed countries in the West. If the education and research system in South Korea is efficient, it is because the entire South Korean economy, especially its industry, has risen to the level of developed Western countries. A scientific renewal movement cannot start on its own because it is interdependent with all other societal bodies. It is evident today that the incentives for

knowledge, the demand itself, are absent. One can legitimately ask: Why do we seek knowledge? In fact, we do not see a strong demand for knowledge, whether within society as a whole, civil society, or the political community. And this demand cannot exist in a rent-seeking system, as this system is at odds with knowledge and (productive) work. "Just as under colonial rule," writes Darghini Arzqi, "formal and informal monopolies preserve knowledge and production and keep them in subjugation, fearing competition from their elites and preventing them from liberating themselves." And the famous "corporate restructuring" policy of the early 1980s had no other goal than to destroy the industrial elite that was at its peak at that time. (GUERID, 2012, p29)

In the society as a whole, the social demand for knowledge is extremely limited, and this weakness is primarily due to material reasons, such as poverty and low purchasing power, as well as cultural reasons, especially illiteracy or low levels of education. Naturally, daily bread comes before books, which become an unnecessary luxury for the majority. Maslow taught us that one cannot move on to secondary needs until primary needs are met. Additionally, changes in values must be taken into account. The value of knowledge, like the value of work, which once held a high position in the hierarchy of Arab-Islamic values, is declining and being replaced by other values related to the race for material goods, immediate gains, and a showy appearance.

Political authority has no urgent need for knowledge, and it is at the bottom of the hierarchy of concerns. Objectively, it is easier and more profitable to work with imported knowledge. The great advantage of oil is that it can be easily converted into dollars, and dollars can buy everything, including knowledge. This is what happened with the industrialization movement. Subjectively, those in power feel jealous of the bearers of scientific legitimacy and their privileges, and are not fully convinced of their legitimacy, to the extent that they consider them competitors.

The university, however, is a matter of preparing it to be a university of science. First and foremost, we must acknowledge that today's Algerian university is not detached from its history, and the weight of this history continues to cast its shadow on the present. Until the reforms of 1971, the university was liberal and elitist, a faithful expression of colonial society and then of Algerian society in the first decade of independence. The number of students was low, and the sciences were a minority compared to professions leading to liberal arts, law, and medicine in particular. During the colonial period, when Algerian representation at the university was symbolic, scientific representation was even more symbolic. In 1882, out of 35 Algerian students in total, none were in the sciences, while 28 were in law, i.e., 80%. The situation remained the same after the establishment of the University of Algiers. There were only 4 science students out of 47 in 1920-1921, 14 out of 92 in 1930-1931, 22 out of 147 in 1940-1941, and 48 out of 386 in 1950-

1951. On the eve of November 1st, "scientists" were the least represented, numbering only 62, while in literature they numbered 165, in law 179, and in medicine and pharmacy 101. In the first years of independence until the reforms of 1971, the number of "scientists" remained low, representing 20.24% of the total number in the period 1970-1971.

The comprehensive reform of 1971 would change this situation. It shattered the classical liberal university and inherited and established in its place a completely different university that was opposed to it in all respects. Thus, it put an end to the university's autonomy, organized training around specializations that became administrative entities or institutes, and placed the relationship between training and the workplace at the forefront. This reform was one of the requirements of the development strategy implemented with the first four-year plan (1970-1973). Recognizing that the traditional university could not be of great benefit in producing the skills it urgently needed, the state undertook to build a university that met its ambitions. Expanding the base of higher education was also a demand of society. For it, this was a kind of historical revenge that resembled a movement to occupy the lands left vacant by the colonists in 1962, which took the form of reclaiming something that colonial violence had stolen.

In his book "The Algerian Exception" (**GUERID, 2007**), Professor Djamel GUERID extensively studied the process of establishing the industrial system of education and training. This began with the formulation of a doctrine during the national "training and development" seminars that brought together, on three occasions (November 1968, January 1970, and March 1971), both trainers and skilled labor users. This new concept of education revolves around a central principle that presents itself as an axiom and a dogma: the economy comes first; the economy is paramount. More specifically, it is from the economy that the education system derives its philosophy, operating principles, and content. It directs most of its products towards it. In short, it is from the economy that it derives its legitimacy. Moreover, the education and training apparatus is not only subject to the production apparatus, but it is itself seen as a production apparatus. Therefore, the education and training system is judged economically in terms of efficiency and profitability.

The fundamental ideas put forward during these meetings would form the doctrinal basis for all subsequent projects, namely the projects of technological institutes, higher education reform, and the basic applied arts school. In this concept, the university is seen as a production unit, like a factory that manufactures products (executives) from raw materials (students). It is this concept that explains and justifies the intervention of users in the education and training system. They are the first to decide on the definition of training (it is a productive investment), the type of manager to be trained (a technician who is immediately usable and operational), the hierarchy of sciences and specializations to be taught (at the top,

exact sciences and technologies), and the methods of their distribution (dominance of TP practical work, TD directed work, and the repetition of practical training in institutions).

It is worth noting that this concept is very close to the one that governs the construction of the European university today. The comprehensive reform of the university in 1971 had several important implications, such as the rapid growth in the number of students in general and female students in particular, the expansion of the university network, and a shift in the relationship between cultural sciences and natural sciences in favor of the latter. All of this contributed to the development of a culture of rationality in society. However, it appears that this momentum could not continue due to the lack of continued construction of the industrial society itself. The decline of the industrial society led to the decline of the "industrial" university.

Elsewhere, deeper reasons have been contemplated for the failure of Algeria's "industrial revolution", as it was not a societal action upon itself. Historians like Fernand Braudel and anthropologists like Georges Balandier take seriously this living entity that is society, which no one can manipulate at will or attack without retribution. It happens to react by "refusing", even taking revenge, as it lives its own life that cannot be thwarted without harm. Braudel argues that if European industrialization succeeded, it was because society was complicit and gave the green light in advance. In Algeria, industrialization came from the outside and presented itself as an imposition, as a graft. Most speakers considered society to be nothing more than dough to be shaped or a resistance to be reduced for the common good of its members and for its benefit.

As an institution of socialization or an ideological apparatus, the university faces the challenges of a society undergoing long-term change. Drawing on the characteristics of various existing social and cultural patterns, it performs, in confusion, heterogeneous if not contradictory functions. The first step, therefore, is to determine the nature of the current university and its relationship with its environments.

For various reasons related to its particular history and cultural duality, which reinforced its capacity for resistance, the university was the last institution to be penetrated by society. It follows, then, that the chances of renewing the university and the entire educational system cannot come from the internal capacities of the institution alone. They will depend, to a large extent, on the outcomes of ongoing social and political reorganizations. The Algerian university is no longer what it used to be. From being a small Algerian institution for the use of new elite, as it was in the early years of independence, it has transformed into a heavy, complex, and sprawling machine.

Today, we face the reality that the university, like all other institutions, is the product of a history spanning more than sixty years of nationalization and socialization, where the state and society have been in conflict over controlling and seizing it. The report prepared by academics about their university lacks self-satisfaction. It corresponds with the significant backwardness in the fields of knowledge and work. However, we should not forget that the university is a social institution and reflects the true state of society. If it is currently in crisis, it is because society as a whole is in crisis, a crisis that is also evident in other institutions such as the family, the company, and the hospital.

The point to consider is that we are dealing with new students who have new interests and new ways of being, thinking, and behaving. For instance, their relationship with studies and knowledge is different. To understand this, we must consider the following three facts. The first consists of the devastating effects of what was the focus of previous training: memorization. Students have not been taught to "think with their minds". In a rapidly expanding knowledge society that liberates the human mind by depositing knowledge in electronic media, the Algerian student finds himself seriously handicapped.

The second point concerns the impacts of this relationship on the future in general and the professional future in particular. Central to this context is the idea of unemployment. Students of all specializations know that when they leave university, they will not find a job, and they also know that the degree is no longer the decisive or differentiating factor in employment. The main result is the rejection or dissatisfaction with university work.

The third point relates to the specific cultural impacts of socialization. The new behaviors of many students are nothing but a reproduction, on the scale of the micro-university world, of increasingly common social practices. One can cite phenomena such as the devaluation of work, success through indirect means, cheating, violence, or threats against teachers, or their corruption.

However, the discouraging effects of this socialization didn't seem to have overwhelmed students; instead, they often led to the adoption of opposing attitudes. Students have finally seen it all: the university's approximate organization, the poor life in university neighborhoods, the relentless decline in the level of education, and the occupation of the representative field by active minorities completely separate from their interests. You have to listen to the new students who compared going to university to achieving a dream to measure the extent of their disappointment. Many speak of shock. This is the university! As for the older students, who have become more "realistic" and helpless, they have only one desire, which is to leave this institution as soon as possible and start caring only about the grade. Many people think about emigration

from the beginning and systematically prepare for it, for example, by learning a major foreign language or working to enable them to gather initial capital.

However, it is important to say what sets this university apart. It can be emphasized that it fought two great battles, a battle in which it largely won, which is the battle of quantity, the battle of numbers. The most striking illustration of this is the remarkable explosion in the number of students. In 1954, the number of Algerian students was 503. In the period 2000-2001, their number was 500,000, a thousand times more; and from 2011-2020, their number exceeded 1,500,000. The second battle was largely lost; it is the battle of quality, culture, and knowledge. This counter-performance is particularly evident in the continuous decline in the levels of training provided and in the decline of the university's weight in society.

University graduates are unfamiliar with the world of work and have not acquired the necessary skills to perform their jobs at the university, and university graduates who have become managers do not really know how to implement these skills. Moreover, the new attitudes and behaviors developed by students consist of apathy, withdrawal, and great anxiety about the future. Thus, the relationship between the teacher and teaching is marked by communication and misunderstanding. The daily practice of the profession and the relationships with students generate a real "existential anxiety" for the teacher. Hence, the professor asks himself ultimate questions about the meaning of what he does: "What am I doing in this classroom? What do I do with these students who do not care about what is happening? Am I talking to stone statues that hear nothing and understand nothing?". (**Khawla Taleb Al-Ibrahimi, 1998**)

Field research has shown that the student component has changed and with it the culture in the university. They ended up imposing themselves on the institution and imposing their vision of the world and their culture. Students from the middle class and low-income segments also found themselves in specialties that do not guarantee them work. This has created a blur in the professional project of this category (students). (**DERRAS, 2021**)

The elite university has gradually and subtly become a mass university. The problem is that it was not prepared to teach large numbers. It did not know how to do so. And there is also the problem of job opportunities, as previously mentioned. Their scarcity is the reason behind the emergence of a new phenomenon: unemployment among university graduates. This, which was previously limited to a few specializations, especially social sciences, has spread to all sectors, including medicine, architecture, and information technology. After becoming an overcrowded and uncontrollable institution, the university ceased to interest the elite, who began to seek alternative solutions. The first was to leave the national university and send their children to Western universities. This training would give them a significant

advantage in competing for high-level positions, decision-making, and leadership. The second solution, which is still hypothetical, is to open private universities, at least in specializations that lead to positions of power, wealth, and prestige. This possibility is likely to be realized very quickly.

Academic research has invested in most areas of social reality, but it has consistently shown a strange avoidance of itself. "As Professor Ibrahim Salhi points out (**SALHI, 1998**), despite highlighting their social and cultural problems, actors in university life remain relatively silent as long as they have not been forced to develop real thinking, either about the institution or their own practices, which can pass in the same way in the field of public communication.

As a result, ideas and actions in this field were left to the initiative of ministerial supervision, which naturally showed more interest in seeking the consensus of the "university family" on its own projects, except through the real participation of this "university family" itself in developing a consensus strategy for the university. The university, therefore, found itself "more influenced by orders than by genuine calls for deep reflection.

In reality, academics have long operated on the basis of a real separation between the workplace of the university (teaching) and the subject of study and thought at the university (research). The transition from one situation to another has proven to be very difficult because it has revealed unexpected facts that were difficult to accept. Thus, the awakening was particularly brutal. It is that the university seen by the eye and research tools has nothing to do with the University of the teacher/professor. This is nothing more than a place and time (a lecture hall and two or three weekly sessions) and nothing else. It is no wonder, then, that the university appears to its professors as a completely unrecognizable reality. This explains why, far from description and analysis, the tone of the clerics was often one of surprise and disbelief, and sometimes resentment and anger.

What academics discover is another reality. A reality full of contradictions and imbalances. It is worth noting that the terms that recur in this group are terms of difficulty, narrowness, stagnation, disappointment, deterioration, dysfunction, abnormality, distortion, contradiction, inconsistency, inadequacy, deviation, and crisis.

Different approaches were then tried to try to identify and understand what the university has become, and the origins, forms, and scope of the newly emerging phenomena. Whether one wondered what the university owes to society, or about the distant or recent history of the institution, or about the form that this or that phenomenon has taken (and this moves from the science of pedagogy to administration through

space) or about the revolution of the specialties being taught or, finally, in terms of products, the conclusion is the same: decline is happening everywhere.

The university As a result of the incongruous actions of the state and society. The paradox is that neither the state nor society finds its account in this institution, which no one claims and everyone denounces, its basic functions are lost or overlooked in any case, and the institution becomes for its managers a space for maneuvering with the aim of social or political advancement. (GUERID, 1998), and we approach the university as a reality with two faces, an administrative face and an educational face, and we conclude that the Algerian university today can be defined as an administration with an educational orientation. (BENCHEHIDA, 1998)

Beyond their different environments, universities are places of multiple imbalances to such an extent that one may wonder whether the imbalance is not what characterizes the current university in itself. The distortion is evident in the university space itself. It is clear that the university has an "evil" - it is "evil" in its space. And it is not a matter here of the old universities that are collapsing today due to the number of students, nor of the new universities that were created and established very quickly in different places, but it is about the "beautiful flower" of Algerian universities, those that were built for the glory of science and technology.

Let us consider the "contradiction between the culture of the project and the culture of Algerian society" and also the gap between what was supposed to be a functional masterpiece and what was obtained as a monument to non-operation. "The enormous size, the repetition of standard units, the lack of distinction between spaces, the absence of appreciation signs, and a project design that did not take into account the man, physically and culturally, born of all pieces and at great cost, a structure devoid of humanity, its particularity is to create a void within and around it. (MADANI, 1998)

The future of the university. Starting from the idea that the relationship between the university and society is shifting from being regulated by politics to being determined by the market, we notice that the assets and resources currently available to the university institution are very poor. (Anser El AYACHI, 1998)

## Conclusion

Our exploration has highlighted the pressing challenges confronting our universities. The decline in their national impact, the deterioration of educational quality, and the weakening of their regional and international rankings are undeniable.

It is imperative that we reimagine our universities. To achieve this, we must:

- **Revitalize** academic programs by aligning them with market demands and fostering innovation.
- **Empower** universities by granting them greater autonomy and providing adequate funding.
- **Attract** top talent through competitive salaries, supportive environments, and opportunities for international collaboration.
- **Forge** strategic partnerships with industry, government, and civil society to address societal challenges and drive innovation.
- **Embrace** technology to enhance teaching, learning, and research.

The transformation of our universities requires a collective effort from policymakers, academics, students, and the broader community. The future of our nation hinges on the success of our universities.

Stakeholders within and around the university hope that the Algerian university will find its mission in skills training, knowledge production, and transfer.

We must rethink and reconsider the university. This means thinking within the framework of society rather than within the framework of the university itself. The latter is merely one example of the former. As a societal institution, the university may enjoy relative autonomy, but it remains, for the most part, dependent on society as a whole.

Identifying all the 'problems' hindering the normal performance of the university will not be difficult, and this is to some extent what has been done with all these workshops that were organized during June 2023 at the level of departments, faculty members, the university, regional and local areas, and finally at the national level. This initiative is useful even if it is merely a form of 'echo reactions' and goes beyond the usual administrative appeals. However, its drawback is that it is carried out hastily, while the fundamental problem remains the definition of the university that should be established in Algeria first.

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