Policy Reviews in Higher Education

ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/rprh20

Two ideologies of openness: a comparative analysis of the Open Universities in the UK and Greece

Ourania Filippakou

To cite this article: Ourania Filippakou (22 Jan 2025): Two ideologies of openness: a comparative analysis of the Open Universities in the UK and Greece, Policy Reviews in Higher Education, DOI: 10.1080/23322969.2025.2453685

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/23322969.2025.2453685

POLICY REVIEWS IN HIGHER EDUCATION
https://doi.org/10.1080/23322969.2025.2453685

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Two ideologies of openness: a comparative analysis of the Open Universities in the UK and Greece

Ourania Filippakou

Department of Education, Brunel University of London, London, UK

ABSTRACT

Can the open universities in the UK and Greece be seen as representing two ideologies of openness? That is the main question this article poses. I argue that these institutions, shaped by their unique social, political and historical contexts, embody different interpretations of openness. The Open University in the UK was founded with a commitment to openness that aimed to democratise education and foster social equality, while the Hellenic Open University in Greece aligns its openness with the goals of developing a knowledge society within the framework of European integration. Despite these differences, both institutions share a complex ideological foundation that positions openness as a central, albeit divergent, guiding principle. However, what shapes the article is not this argument per se, but trying critically to reflect on the idea of openness as an epistemic and political position, and the ways in which the epistemology of higher education is embedded in the politics of both national reforms and international political relations.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received 11 September 2024
Accepted 6 January 2025

KEYWORDS
Pedagogy; knowledge; curriculum; higher education reforms; social justice

Introduction

The focus of this article is the idea of open universities, and its main purpose is to ask: what is it all about? Historically, knowledge and learning have been the main business of universities (Barnett 1994). So, where does the distinctiveness of open universities lie to bear the title 'open'? What, if anything, is or might be distinctive about the knowledge services that open universities, as learning institutions, offer? I suggest that open universities spring from different interests and reflect different ideologies. However, it is not merely that they bear the name 'open university'. I suggest that open universities may also share a common interest: to develop the idea of openness. The development of that interest, I shall argue, can legitimise open universities as distinctive higher education institutions – a foundational ideology for both the UK and the Hellenic Open Universities.

The argument unfolds in two main stages. First, I set the context by discussing the diversity of university models globally and examining how ideology intersects with

CONTACT Ourania Filippakou ourania.filippakou@brunel.ac.uk Brunel University of London, Uxbridge, UB8 3PH, United Kingdom

higher education. Open universities, as institutions of higher education, can be seen as carriers of ideology (cf. Barnett 1999; Giroux 2019; Habermas 1987), with the specific promise of openness. Open universities may possess two distinctive qualities: they function as institutions of higher education ('universities') and emphasise being 'open'. Then, I focus on two specific open universities: the Open University in the UK and the Hellenic Open University in Greece – representing the oldest and probably the youngest open universities in Europe, respectively.

My analysis will focus on the extent to which these institutions can be considered to have openness as their foundational ideological principle and the ways in which this principle was manifested in the establishment of these two open universities. The ideologies shaping the identities of these two universities are deeply embedded in their respective sociopolitical contexts, which are rooted in distinct historical eras and national frameworks. By exploring the origins of the UK Open University and the Hellenic Open University, I aim to elucidate the interpretations of openness that each institution embodies as sites of ideological complexity. Furthermore, I will identify and discuss the commonalities, if any, between these two open universities so that justify the shared title they bear.

I argue that both the UK and the Hellenic Open Universities were state-driven initiatives designed to promote a type of knowledge – that I shall term Mode 3 knowledge – that can be pedagogically described as knowledge *for* learning. The UK Open University was founded with an ideology of openness aimed at advancing democracy – probably Harold Wilson's most democratic achievement (Groombridge, quoted in Holloway 1979, 22) – under his leadership as Prime Minister. In contrast, the Hellenic Open University emerged as a state-driven project with substantial support from the European Union (EU), aligning its concept of openness with the EU's goals for a knowledge society.

The article argues that it is important to see 'openness' as both an epistemological condition and, when it comes to the relations of higher education and the state, as an explicit political project. The concept of 'openness' has historically provided meaning to the structures, processes, and practices of open universities, and that in many ways it is still expected to do so. However, what shapes the article is not this argument per se, but trying critically to reflect on the idea of openness as an epistemic and political position, and see the ways in which the epistemology of higher education is embedded in the politics of both national reforms and international political relations. The article concludes with a call for urgent, less Eurocentric rethinking of the intellectual role of open universities and their relationship to higher education policy. In an era marked by the decline of Western liberal democracies, this reimagining is critical for these institutions to retain their transformative potential and contribute meaningfully to global justice.

University traditions and models: A foundation for understanding open universities

An analysis of 'open' universities and their varied meanings must begin with an understanding of the diversity of university models globally. Conventional universities, shaped by distinct historical and socio-political contexts, embody different missions, structures, and ideological commitments (cf. Barnett 1990). These models – rooted in European, Anglo-American, and post-colonial traditions – reflect varying relationships between universities and the societies they serve (cf. Roberts, Rodriguez Cruz, and

Herbst 1996; Thorpe 2022). Examining these established forms provides an essential framework for understanding how open universities fit within, or diverge from, conventional higher education paradigms.

One influential tradition is the Humboldtian model that emerged in early nineteenth-century Germany. This model, developed by Wilhelm von Humboldt, is characterised by its dedication to the unity of research and teaching, academic freedom, and the cultivation of knowledge as a moral and intellectual endeavour. The Humboldtian university positions itself as an institution dedicated to intellectual pursuit, reflecting the German ideal of Bildung – a concept that encompasses education as both personal and moral development (Elton 2006). This model centres on the belief that higher education institutions should be free from external political or economic influence, thus upholding a university's autonomy and its role as a site of critical inquiry. The Humboldtian influence extended across Europe, and has been adopted, with variations, in other parts of the world where academic freedom and scholarly independence are valued as central to higher education (cf. Nybom 2003).

In contrast, the Napoleonic model, which arose in post-revolutionary France, aligns higher education more directly with state needs and aims to produce professionals suited for public service and administrative roles. In this model, universities act as instruments of state policy, focused on producing graduates with specialised training for civic and bureaucratic functions (cf. Neave 1996). This model positions the university in service to national priorities, embedding higher education within a framework that values practical outcomes over autonomous intellectual exploration. This state-centred approach illustrates a different orientation from the Humboldtian model, framing universities primarily as agents of national development rather than as merely independent centres of knowledge.

The Anglo-Saxon model, which took shape in the United Kingdom and later in the United States, brings yet another set of values to the landscape of higher education. Here, universities combine a commitment to liberal education with a more pragmatic engagement with public and market demands. British and American universities often emphasise institutional autonomy and public service, yet they operate within highly competitive frameworks that balance elite meritocratic standards with a rhetoric of accessibility (Trow 1993). Universities within the Anglo-Saxon model historically prioritise flexibility in governance and responsiveness to societal and individual needs, often blending public funding with private entrepreneurial ventures (Clark 1983, 1998). While this model promotes ideals of access and social mobility, it does so within a framework that increasingly integrates market values and expectations (cf. Tapper 2007; Williams 2002).

Outside these Western frameworks, universities in the Global South have often adapted European and Anglo-American models to address pressing local and national priorities (Altbach and Selvaratnam 1989). During periods of decolonisation, universities across Africa Asia, and Latin America were tasked with promoting not only academic advancement but also nation-building and social reform. These institutions served as vehicles for economic development, social equity, and the reduction of entrenched inequalities, objectives central to their missions in post-colonial societies (Altbach and Selvaratnam 1989). In such contexts, universities have often played a dual role, serving as both knowledge producers and means of societal transformation, reflecting broader agendas of social justice and economic self-sufficiency. For instance, in many African

universities, the mission has extended beyond academic achievement to include the promotion of indigenous knowledge and the rectification of historical injustices (Mamdani 1993). This commitment to equity and accessibility often distinguishes the Global South's approach, where universities frequently address systemic barriers to inclusion and advocate for social progress.

Further illustrating the variety within higher education systems, Filippakou, Salter, and Tapper (2012) argue that the idea of a 'system' is not merely a matter of geographical or territorial demarcation but reflects specific educational values, governance structures, and public roles embedded in each model. For example, within the UK itself, regional differences challenge the notion of a unified 'British' higher education system. Scotland's distinct approach, with its broader access policies, four-year degree programmes, and curriculum emphasising educational breadth, diverges significantly from the English model, which has historically adhered to more restrictive, specialised pathways. The devolution of education policy across England, Scotland, and Wales has reinforced these differences, demonstrating that even within a single nation-state, multiple educational philosophies and approaches coexist.

These varied models highlight the fact that universities fulfil multiple purposes and take distinct forms across different cultural and political contexts. The Humboldtian, Napoleonic, Anglo-Saxon, and post-colonial adaptations in the Global South represent not only different institutional structures but also competing visions of what higher education should accomplish. This diversity creates a rich context for examining open universities, which, while designed to increase accessibility, often build on these traditions in ways that reflect local needs and educational philosophies.

Forms and philosophies of open universities: global variants and educational missions

Open universities, established primarily to widen access to higher education, have developed into diverse models reflecting regional priorities, social missions, and pedagogical philosophies (cf. Tait 2013). While the foundational ideals of open universities include accessibility, lifelong learning, and flexibility, the concept of 'openness' has evolved across varying socio-economic and cultural contexts, challenging any singular definition of open education.

Estimates for the global number of open universities vary widely. Jung (2006) identified seventy two open universities, whereas Tait (2018a) referenced only fifty. These differences suggest that estimates can shift due to the scope, methodology, and evolving status of institutions. According to Contact North | Contact Nord (2024), over sixty five open universities globally now 'provide open and equal access to education'. Together, the world's ten largest open universities enrol over 16.5 million students, predominantly across Asia, Africa, and Europe. Prominent examples include the Indira Gandhi National Open University in India, with over 4 million enrolments, and the Open University of China, with approximately 3.5 million (Contact North | Contact Nord 2024). As Ramanujam (2009) points out, the legacy of open universities like the UK OU has been influential globally. UK OU's success encouraged the establishment of similar institutions across countries: for example, Thailand (1971, 1978), Pakistan (1974), and South Korea (1983).

The UK OU model is one of the earliest and most influential, marking a significant shift in higher education accessibility. Founded in 1969, the UK OU was designed to democratise access to higher education for adults who were unable to participate in traditional universities, emphasising a structured, state-supported model of education that remains widely respected. Built around a centralised curriculum, media-enhanced distance learning, and a network of support services, the UK OU model initially aligned with state policies favouring social mobility and the public good (cf. Perry 1976; Tait 2008). However, as higher education became increasingly shaped by market dynamics, the UK OU has faced challenges in balancing its founding ideals with pressures toward marketisation and efficiency, which have sometimes threatened its commitment to inclusive education (cf. Tait 2018b).

In Asia, open universities reflect a large-scale, community-centric approach to open education, with institutions like Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) in India and Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) in Pakistan serving millions of students across vast regions (Garrett 2016). IGNOU, founded in 1985, is one of the world's largest open universities, enrolling over four million students and emphasising affordability and localised access through an extensive network of regional centres (Garrett ibid). IGNOU's structure responds to India's diverse, multilingual population, adapting educational access to cater to varying socio-economic backgrounds and geographical challenges. Similarly, Universitas Terbuka (UT) in Indonesia offers a decentralised model that combines distance learning with on-the-ground support for students in remote areas, utilising flexible, blended methods designed to meet the needs of its widely dispersed population (Jung and Latchem 2007). These Asian open universities often incorporate technical and vocational training into their curricula, addressing local labour market needs while promoting lifelong learning.

African open universities, exemplified by the University of South Africa (UNISA), integrate principles of social equity and community engagement within their educational missions. UNISA stands as the oldest Open University, founded as an examining body in 1873 first and later transitioning to correspondence courses in 1946 (UNISA 2024). UNISA became a key institution for marginalised groups under apartheid, providing access to higher education for Black South Africans who were excluded from other universities (Beale 1992). In the post-apartheid era, UNISA continues to prioritise inclusivity, focusing on underserved communities and rural populations through distance learning and curricula that address critical issues such as health, sustainable development, and regional needs (Tait 2008). UNISA's model of open education is deeply aligned with socio-political objectives, seeking to reduce educational inequality and contribute to social justice through culturally relevant, locally responsive education.

This global diversity in open university models highlights the importance of contextualising openness within regional and cultural frameworks. The different traditions, structures, and philosophies of open universities worldwide reveal how openness is dynamically shaped by local demands and global educational trends. As such, understanding the complexity of these models provides a crucial framework for any comparative study of open universities, including those in Greece and the UK, where openness intersects with distinct historical and institutional realities.

Methodological approach

This conceptual article employs a comparative case-study approach of the Open University (OU) in the UK and the Hellenic Open University (HOU) in Greece, representing the oldest and one of the youngest, if not the youngest, open universities in Europe, respectively. Through this comparative lens, the article seeks to elucidate the distinct ideologies of openness that underpin each institution, aiming to develop an analytical framework in which the idea of openness and its implications for higher education can be better understood.

The study adopts a mixed-methods approach, integrating archival research with empirical data collection. Through the analysis of historical policy documents and the conduct of interviews, this research seeks to illuminate how 'openness' is both conceptualised and operationalised within these institutions, while also examining the ideological and practical foundations of openness in higher education across diverse national and historical contexts.

The first methodological layer focuses on archival research to explore the early conceptualisations and political foundations of openness at both universities. For the OU in the UK, primary sources include planning documents, policy briefs, and reports from the 1960s, which articulate the institution's original mission of promoting inclusivity and accessibility. These documents show how openness was framed within broader socio-political contexts, such as post-war efforts to democratise education. For the HOU in Greece, archival sources comprise legislative texts, government reports from the late 1990s, and European Union policy documents, which offer insights into the unique challenges faced by a nascent open university within the European and Greek educational landscape. These materials are critical for understanding how different national priorities shaped each institution's approach to openness.

Complementing the archival research, the second layer of the study involves empirical data drawn from semi-structured interviews with academics who joined both universities during their formative years. These interviews serve not only to illuminate the lived experiences of key institutional actors but also to fill gaps in the historical record, particularly with regard to the HOU, which is less documented in academic literature. A total of twenty academics were interviewed, ten from the OU and ten from the HOU, offering comparative perspectives that deepen the analysis. The qualitative data generated through these interviews provides a more concrete dimension to the theoretical discussion, allowing for a more grounded interpretation of how openness is operationalised and perceived within different institutional settings.

Together, the combination of archival and empirical methods strengthens the analytical framework, enabling a comparison of how the concept of openness has been adapted in two distinct higher education institutions. This methodological approach allows the article to go beyond a purely historical or policy-driven analysis, incorporating voices from within the institutions to reveal the dynamic and contested nature of openness in higher education.

Ideology and open universities

What is the relationship between ideology and open universities? Does such a relationship exist? By exploring their relationship, I want to explore whether a conceptual

connection between the two can be established. In 1990, Barnett identified three key links between ideology and higher education. 'First, ideology is found in theories and beliefs about higher education … Secondly, ideology influences the processes of human action and interaction within institutions of higher education … Thirdly, ideology constitutes an element of knowledge made available to the student in a programme of studies' (Barnett 1990, 79). In other words, Barnett suggests that different conceptions of higher education reflect various social interests, values, and aspirations. They embody distinct epistemologies and pedagogies, representing differing – and sometimes conflicting – ideologies. By examining these connections, we can better understand how the ideologies underpinning open universities shape their educational approaches and visions.

Theoretically, there is no single consensus on what constitutes a university or what it might become (cf. Barnett 2022; Tapper and Salter 1992). Historically, however, universities have undergone distinct evolutionary stages. The earliest phase, beginning with the establishment of the University of Bologna in 1088, was characterised by a focus on religious scholarship and teaching (Goeing, Parry, and Feingold 2021). This period was followed by the integration of teaching and research in the Humboldtian model of the early nineteenth century, which continued until after World War II. The post-war era, particularly with the rise of neoliberal ideology in the 1980s, heralded the 'entrepreneurial' or 'third-generation' university. This new phase emphasised market engagement and commercialisation (Clark 1998; Filippakou and Williams 2014; Shattock 2008; Slaughter and Leslie 1997). This evolution also signifies a move from 'Mode 1' knowledge – traditional, discipline-based academic knowledge – to 'Mode 2' knowledge, which prioritises real-world problem-solving, interdisciplinary collaboration, and societal relevance (Gibbons et al. 1994).

These changes in higher education emerged at the height of the welfare state in Western liberal democracies, during a time of significant transition from industrial to knowledge economies. This period was marked by profound socio-political and economic transformations, including increasing pressures on public funding, the demands of global capitalism, and the gradual erosion of the welfare state with the ascent of neoliberalism during and after the Thatcher-Reagan era (Deem 2001; Giroux 2019; Halsey 1992; Slaughter and Rhoades 2004). Just prior to this period, the influence of progressive ideological movements from the 1960s – such as feminist and civil rights activism as well as opposition to the Vietnam War – gained prominence and began to exert a lasting influence on educational practices.

Integral to these shifts and central to this evolution were the progressive pedagogical models that emerged during this time, including feminist, critical, and anti-colonial pedagogies (Filippakou 2017). Feminist pedagogies directly contested established power hierarchies, advocating for inclusivity, gender equity, and the reimagining of the classroom as a more egalitarian space (hooks 1994; Lorde 1984). Similarly, critical pedagogies, as articulated by thinkers like Freire (1970/2018) and Giroux (1984), worked to dismantle conventional ideologies and foster critical consciousness, encouraging students to question dominant social structures and strive for social justice. Anti-colonial pedagogies extended these critiques by addressing the enduring legacies of colonialism in academic knowledge production, promoting the inclusion of diverse and marginalised epistemologies (Said 1978). These progressive movements and pedagogical innovations did

not merely transform classroom practices; they also contributed to a broader reimagining of the university's social and political responsibilities.

In this context, the university's evolving role reflects a complex and often contested landscape, where shifting ideological paradigms intersect with university pedagogies. As universities moved away from traditional, religious, or scholastic models, they increasingly positioned themselves as drivers of societal change, embracing not only economic contributions but also the transformative potential of progressive educational frameworks. This dynamic interplay between competing ideologies underscores the university's ongoing negotiation of its role in shaping both knowledge economies and broader social justice initiatives.

In this broader historical context, the establishment of the OU in the UK represented a deliberate departure from the conventional university model, positioning itself as a more accessible and inclusive alternative. This shift is encapsulated in the very term 'open university', which signifies a move away from traditional educational practices. However, the concept of the open university cannot be confined to a single ideology. Instead, as this articles argues, it can be seen as a site of ideological complexity reflecting a range of societal interests and evolving ideologies, adapting to shifting social values and needs. This complexity arises from the openness of the term 'open,' and just as concepts like freedom and equity have been redefined in higher education (cf. Giroux 2024), the idea of openness in open universities can be understood in multiple, sometimes conflicting ways.

The evolution of higher education often spurs the development of new ideologies, with emerging institutions both reflecting and contributing to these shifts. This dynamic process is evident in the development of the OU in the UK and the HOU in Greece. The OU was established as an innovation aimed at making higher education more accessible and inclusive, diverging from traditional academic structures. Similarly, the HOU, while emerging later, reflects its own adaptation of the concept of openness within a different socio-political context. In the sections that follow, I will explore the specific historical contexts and ideological frameworks of the UK's pioneering OU and the HOU in Greece.

Founding ideologies: UK and Greece

The Open University in the UK

The idea of the open university originated with the Open University in the UK and has since evolved within the UK context. As Bell and Tight (1993, 1) note, the roots of this idea extend back nearly two centuries, with the Open University emerging as a more recent manifestation of open learning. The concept of an open university, however, was not entirely novel in British higher education. 'Many other British higher education institutions have also functioned, at least in part, as open universities during the last centuries' (Bell and Tight 1993, 1). The University of London, the Royal University of Ireland, and the University of St Andrews operated extensive distance examining systems (ibid). In the early 1960s, Michael Young published an article titled 'Is Your Child in the Unlucky Generation?' in Where? (Young 1962), proposing the concept of 'an Open University' to prepare individuals for the external degrees of London University.

Indeed, the concept of the Open University as a distance teaching institution was not entirely new and had already been successfully implemented in other countries. For instance, in the Soviet Union, it was reported that '60 percent of their engineers obtained their degrees in part through distance teaching' (Wilson, quoted in Holloway 1979, 2). Before the 1960s, when the idea of the Open University began to be realised, discussions about using broadcasting media for education had already started in the UK. In 1924, educationalist and historian J. C. Stobart, who was affiliated with the BBC, proposed the idea of a 'wireless university.' Additionally, between 1962 and 1963, R.C.G. Williams, Chairman of the Institute of Electrical Engineers, advocated for a 'televarsity' that would combine broadcast lectures with correspondence texts and visits to traditional universities (Perry 1976, 5, 6).

Yet, the OU was more than just an extension of these earlier distance education models. While distance teaching was the primary method employed by the OU to achieve its objectives, the university's foundation was deeply intertwined with specific political ideologies and social trends. As Harold Wilson, then leader of the Labour Party and the Opposition, who proposed the concept of the 'University of the Air' in 1963, noted, 'the decision to create the Open University, then known as the 'University of the Air,' was a political act' (Wilson in Perry's foreword, 1976: xi).

Wilson's vision for the 'University of the Air' was grounded in specific political changes he aimed to promote in the UK. The 'University of the Air' can be seen as a means of fostering a democratic society. As Brian Groombridge, a member of the OU Planning Committee, observed: 'The OU's arrival was a Big Bang in the social and educational history of Britain … [however], the Big Bang aspect was most dramatically evident in the political manner of the OU's creation … . But no one would have considered this to have been [Wilson's] most democratic achievement' (quoted in Holloway 1979, 22).

Walter Perry, the first Vice-Chancellor of the OU, identified 'three major postwar educational trends' that contributed to the university's creation: 'The first of these concerns developments in the provision for adult education, the second the growth of educational broadcasting, and the third the political objective of promoting the spread of egalitarianism in education' (Perry 1976, 1). The OU's unique character lay in its integration of broadcasting – specifically 'radio and television programmes which were integrated with written materials and transmitted by the BBC' (Horlock 1984, 1). While the growth of broadcasting was an important factor, it was not the central element in the emergence of the OU.

The university's development primarily stemmed from the need for adult education and the political commitment to a more egalitarian society. These two objectives were closely linked, especially when considering the context of the 1960s, where many adults – often from lower socio-economic backgrounds – had 'missed out' on higher education earlier in their lives. As highlighted in the Robbins Report (1963), these individuals, who had left school at 16 or 17, faced limited opportunities for further education (quoted in Horlock 1984, 1).

Thus, the promotion of educational egalitarianism – or at least the extension of equality of opportunity – was a fundamental rationale behind the concept of the OU. This commitment to equal access to higher education reflected a broader desire for a more democratic society, championed by the Labour Party. As Perry notes, the promotion of

educational egalitarianism was a powerful political motive 'particularly suited to Labour Party philosophy' (Perry 1976, 8).

However, the idea of the 'University of the Air,' which became a foundation of the Open University, originated with Harold Wilson. In September 1963, during a pre-election campaign speech in Glasgow, Wilson articulated his vision for this concept. He acknowledged, 'The proposal for a University of the Air certainly wasn't official Labour Party policy at this stage, except in the sense that I was running the party in a slightly dictatorial way; if I said something was going to happen, I intended it to happen' (quoted in Holloway 1979, 3). This proposal was notably absent from the Labour Party's manifesto for the 1964 general election, and after the Party's victory, 'no ministers were really keen on the University of the Air' (Holloway 1979, 3).

The lack of initial support from Labour Party members, despite the alignment with broader party ideals, presents a contradiction. Wilson attributed this resistance to the Treasury and the Department of Education, who were 'determined to kill it' due to concerns about reallocating funds (quoted in Holloway 1979, 3). This resistance suggests a complex interplay of interests within the Labour Party, with conflicting priorities among its members.

The idea gained significant momentum when Wilson appointed Jennie Lee as Minister of the Arts in March 1965. McArthur highlights her crucial role:

> 'Mr. Wilson knew that by selecting Jennie Lee to steer it into being he had chosen a politician of steely, imperious will, coupled both with tenacity and charm, who was no respecter of protocol and who would refuse to be defeated or frustrated by the skepticism about the university which persisted not only in the Department of Education and Science but also in the universities among MPs, and among the community of adult educators' (MacArthur 1974, 5).

Lee's appointment exemplified the diverse reactions within the Labour Party to Wilson's proposal, reflecting varying ideological stances. Despite early opposition, the eventual establishment of the OU demonstrates some ideological convergence within the Labour Party, indicating that Wilson's vision was both a personal initiative and a manifestation of broader socialist ideals.

Following Lee's appointment, the concept of the 'University of the Air' evolved significantly. Lee introduced two fundamental principles: autonomy – 'awarding its own degrees' – and openness – 'without any entrance qualification' (Holloway 1979, 4). Wilson's initial vision had proposed that a Trust would collaborate with established universities for examination facilities and external degrees, lacking both autonomy and a clear stance on entrance qualifications (quoted in Holloway 1979, 4). The incorporation of autonomy and openness allowed the OU to operate independently and define its approach to inclusivity. This transformation culminated in the renaming of the institution from 'University of the Air' to 'Open University,' underlining the connection between institutional autonomy and the implementation of a broad notion of educational openness, thereby providing 'genuine equality of opportunity for millions of people for the first time' (Perry 1976, 16).

The OU's founding ideology was further articulated by Lord Crowther, the university's first Chancellor, who in his 1969 inaugural address outlined the concept of 'openness' across four dimensions: openness to people, places, methods, and ideas (Tunstall 1974: x). This mission framework emphasised the university's commitment to inclusivity, not only by widening access but also by embracing innovative educational methods and

fostering diverse intellectual perspectives. It was part of broader ideological commitment to creating an educational environment that open-mindedness and critical thinking among both students and staff.

The evolution of the OU from Wilson's initial idea of a 'University of the Air' to its later incarnation as the OU reflects the dynamic nature of its founding ideology. While the idea has undergone significant changes over time, Perry (1976, 9) emphasised that Wilson's vision was 'the key that opened the door' to broader access to higher education. This access was not merely an expansion of educational opportunities but a profound political act that sought to redefine the social role of the university in the UK, aligning it with the broader ideological shifts towards inclusivity and social justice.

The OU serves as an example of how universities can act as carriers of ideology, reflecting and shaping the sociocultural contexts in which they are embedded. The establishment and evolution of the OU illustrate how the idea of openness in higher education can be both a product of specific political and social circumstances and an innovation for the development of new ideologies that continue to influence higher education today. The OU's commitment to openness in various forms – whether through its methods, ideas, or accessibility – has inspired similar developments in other open universities, such as the HOU in Greece, each adapting the foundational ideology of openness to its own regional and cultural context.

The Hellenic Open University in Greece

The HOU has a brief yet complex history, marked by its ongoing evolution and the complexity of its ideological foundations. As a relatively new entity, the HOU is still in its early stages of development, and its underlying principles of openness continue to evolve.

Established in 1997, the HOU is one of the most recent open universities, if not the most recent. The idea of an open university in Greece began to take shape around 1992, primarily among a few Greek academics and officials from the Ministry of Education (Lionarakis 2002, 1). Initially, the concept envisioned an academic institution organised as a consortium of existing conventional universities (ibid). However, the HOU as it exists today diverges significantly from this early vision. It has since become the 19th Greek State University, functioning with the same independence and autonomy as other Greek universities. According to Greek law, '[the Hellenic Open University], like all other state universities in Greece, is a Legal Person of Public Law (LPPL) completely independent and autonomous' (HOU 2024a).

The evolution of HOU can be compared to Harold Wilson's early vision for the OU in the UK. Both concepts began as proposals for institutions that would initially depend on existing conventional universities. In the UK, Wilson's 'University of the Air' was envisioned as a collaborative effort with existing conventional universities, reflecting a vision for integrating new educational approaches into the existing system. In parallel, the Greek concept also aimed to build on existing institutions and form a consortium of conventional universities but eventually evolved into a separate, self-governing entity. Ultimately, both open universities evolved into autonomous entities with their own principles and directions in higher education, although the OU was not initially integrated into the UK higher education system in the same way as other universities.

In the UK case, as previously discussed, Jennie Lee played a crucial role in adding the principle of autonomy to the foundation of the OU. In contrast, the development of the

HOU's concept and its emphasis on autonomy is less clear. Two significant changes in 1995 influenced this development: first, the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) formed the new government in Greece, replacing the New Democracy Party; second, the European Commission (EC) began financing the Hellenic Open University, leading to its consideration as a project 'of their own making' (Lionarakis 1999, 2).

This shift reveals the significant role of external influences in shaping the university's direction and raises important questions: Was the development of HOU more a result of Greek governmental strategies during the 1992–1995 period, or did it reflect the EU's educational policies? Without EU funding, would the Greek government have pursued the open university concept with the same vigour? How has the EU's involvement influenced the principles and operational autonomy of HOU?

The European Commission's financial support was instrumental, suggesting that the HOU's creation was heavily influenced by EU priorities rather than solely by Greek political agendas. Lionarakis (1999, 2) argues that the HOU's incorporation into the Greek political agenda was contingent upon securing EU funding. This indicates that the university's establishment was significantly shaped by external European interests. Consequently, the HOU's development reflects not just Greek educational priorities but also a broader European initiative aimed at influencing higher education across the continent. The integration of autonomy into the HOU's framework stresses a convergence of local and EU-wide educational goals, revealing the complex interplay between national and supranational forces in shaping higher education institutions.

Openness as to people, openness as to places

Openness to people is a foundational principle for both the OU in the UK and the HOU in Greece. For the UK's OU, this principle initially focused on providing educational opportunities to individuals excluded from higher education. Jennie Lee, a pivotal figure in shaping the OU, reflected on her vision a decade after its establishment:

> '[The concept of the Open University] was not something that started in a moment. If you like, it goes back to all those years when Nye Bevan and I were together … We knew, both of us, from our backgrounds, that there were people in mining villages and agricultural villages who had left school at 14 or 15 (Nye left school when he was 14) who had first-class intellects' (quoted in Holloway 1979, 4).

Jennie Lee expanded Harold Wilson's initial idea of a 'University of the Air' to include a principle of openness aimed at offering higher education to those who had missed out due to socio-economic barriers. This principle reflected the Labour Party's ideology of inclusivity and democracy. Notably, Nye Bevan, Lee's husband and a former Labour Minister, was instrumental in establishing the National Health Service (cf. Klein 2019), aligning with the same ethos of public welfare and access as the Open University.

The OU's Planning Committee articulated its rationale in the 1969 publication Objectives for the OU: 'For long regarded as a privilege of the few, the opportunity to engage in higher education is at last becoming widely accepted as a basic individual right' (Report of the Planning Committee to the Secretary of State for Education and Science 1969, Paragraph 6). This raises a question: Was the Open University intended solely for those previously excluded, potentially excluding others who also wished to join?

Jennie Lee acknowledged the challenges in including specific groups without excluding others: 'The problem was how could you devise a scheme that would get through to them [who had left school] without excluding other people? The last thing in the world we wanted was a proletarian ghetto!' (quoted in Holloway 1979, 4). Thus, the UK Open University was founded on the principle of providing equal opportunities for all, reflecting a commitment to democratic openness. A professor who joined the OU in the early 1980s described his evolving understanding of openness:

> ' … I think looking back on it now, a sort of openness in a kind of closed way meant that there were these people who didn't have any other opportunities, so it should all be aimed at them, instead of openness meaning – well, whoever comes along can do it, you know, which is a different sort of openness … The whole education system has to be open and therefore we have to concentrate very hard on people that have no alternative, and I don't think that anymore. I think it's too difficult to do that. I think you have to … it's much more important to make sure that the thing is truly open, rather than trying to aim it too much at people who have no other alternative … '

The OU's policy of not requiring entrance qualifications allowed anyone to apply. As stated in the 1969 Planning Committee report: 'We took it as axiomatic that no formal qualifications would be required for registration as a student. Anyone could try his or her hand … ' (Paragraph 57). A lecturer from the UK OU described the process: 'It was what we call 'first come, first served,' no pre-selection. If your letter arrived the day before someone else's, you were ahead of them, and on some courses, there was a long waiting list.' This list included individuals who had not missed out on higher education, ensuring broad access at the undergraduate level.

Similarly, the HOU adheres to a philosophy of openness. At the undergraduate level, no entrance qualifications are required. For master's programmes, applicants must hold a relevant first degree, but beyond that, they are considered equally regardless of grades or curriculum vitae. If more applicants than places are available, a lottery system is used rather than a waiting list (HOU 2024). The law prioritises applicants older than 23. If there are still more applicants than available places, a lottery process is conducted first for older applicants, then for younger applicants if needed (ibid). This system enhances accessibility for students over 23 years old.

Despite its official openness to all ages, the data suggested that, at least in its early years, the HOU predominantly attracted older students. With approximately 51.000-52.000 applicants annually for around 5,000 places (HOU 2024c), managing a lottery for younger applicants proved challenging. Research by Panagiotakopoulos and Lionarakis (2001) indicated that most undergraduate applicants were between 23 and 35 years old, while the majority of master's applicants were between 26 and 35 years old. This suggested that the HOU indeed supported adult education and lifelong learning (2001: 13).

Interestingly, similar research conducted by the UK Open University in 1975 found that most of its initial applicants were also between 21–40 years old (79%) (McIntosh, Calder, and Swift 1976). This indicates that promoting adult education was a significant part of the UK Open University's mission (Wymer 1972). The question arises whether the Hellenic Open University was similarly conceived with an emphasis on adult education and whether it meets its original goals within Greek society.

According to Act 2552/97 (amended by Articles 14 of Act 2817/2000 and 3 of Act 3027/2002), the HOU's objectives include 'promoting scientific research as well as developing

technology and methodology in distance learning' (HOU 2024c). This focus on research and distance learning does not explicitly mention adult education or lifelong learning. Thus, a question remains: Is there a connection between the HOU's current mission and the promotion of lifelong learning?

An Associate Professor of the HOU explains that the university provides a crucial opportunity for higher education in Greece, given the high demand for university education:

> 'Now why the Open University was established in Greece … I would suggest that it was established to respond to the incredibly high demand for studies in Greek society. We have around 60% of a generation entering universities, which is unprecedented globally. Greek students studying abroad are the largest group worldwide, and 90% of Greek families wish for their children to attend university … '

This raises the question: If there is such high demand for higher education, why did the Greek government not establish a conventional university? One interviewee noted:

> 'First of all, the European Union provided funding … Consequently, a significant part of the project was financed by the EU, and it was obligatory to use that money in this direction. I believe the HOU is a combination of EU policy and a way to meet the increasing demand for higher education … '

Since the EU Ministers of Education viewed the HOU as their own project, it reflects both Greek and broader EU interests. The EU's focus on developing scientific research and distance learning aligns with its broader strategy to foster a knowledge-based economy. The Lisbon European Council in March 2000 set the strategic goal for the EU ' … to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion.' (European Parliament, March 2000). The EU also advocates for social inclusion and the creation of a 'European area of lifelong learning' to overcome barriers to education and provide learning opportunities for people's varied commitments (EU 2024).

Open universities, with their inclusive and distance-based approach, align closely with the European Union's vision of a transnational knowledge society. They can play a pivotal role in promoting lifelong learning and expanding access to education, embodying the EU's commitment to removing barriers and fostering continuous education opportunities. In this context, the Hellenic Open University can be seen as a reflection of the ideology of openness, actively integrating Greek citizens into the broader knowledge economy envisioned by the EU.

Cultivating independent learning

As previously discussed, the foundational missions of both the UK Open University (OU) and the Hellenic Open University (HOU) were historically characterised by their commitment to distance learning. This method played a pivotal role in making higher education accessible to a diverse and geographically dispersed student population. However, a defining feature of these institutions, particularly in their formative years, was their emphasis on independent study. This approach not only allowed students to engage with educational material at their own pace and location but also fostered a deeper sense of intellectual autonomy.

The historical significance of independence in these institutions extended beyond mere logistical flexibility. It was rooted in a broader educational philosophy that

emphasised the development of critical thinking, self-discipline, and intellectual ownership. As Dressel and Thompson argue, successful higher education should cultivate a student's ability to work autonomously, allowing them the freedom to determine both what they study and how they engage with it (Dressel and Thompson quoted in Percy and Ramsden 1980, 7). This raises a critical question: how did the UK OU and the HOU, within their respective historical and national contexts, seek to promote such intellectual independence?

The promotion of independent study was intricately tied to the pedagogical strategies and curricula that these institutions adopted in their early years. At both the OU and HOU, teaching methodologies, course design, and assessment mechanisms were carefully crafted to encourage self-directed learning. In examining the historical development of these universities, it is crucial to consider how their pedagogical models facilitated the principles of independent learning. By analysing the specific teaching methods employed by the OU in the UK and the HOU in Greece, we gain a deeper understanding of how these institutions institutionalised intellectual independence within their educational frameworks. This analysis not only illuminates their early commitment to fostering independent learners but also highlights their role in reshaping higher education during a period of significant social and educational reforms.

Openness to methods

The concepts of flexibility in pace and place, as well as the removal of physical and temporal barriers, had begun to emerge in various educational institutions before the establishment of the OU. However, it was the foundation of the OU fifty-five years ago that introduced a groundbreaking model of distance education, which profoundly transformed higher education. The OU innovatively combined correspondence-based tuition with broadcast media, integrating these previously underdeveloped methods to accommodate home-based students. Additionally, it incorporated face-to-face components, such as summer schools and tutorials, into its programmes. As an autonomous, publicly funded institution, the OU awarded its own degrees, setting new standards in distance education.

What distinguished the OU was not merely its adaptation or enhancement of existing distance-teaching methods, which were evident in other higher education institutions at the time. Rather, distance teaching became the core of the OU's educational philosophy and was embedded in its broader ethos of openness.

The uniqueness of the OU lies in its integration of diverse teaching methods, particularly the combination of distance teaching with face-to-face engagement. This hybrid model can be traced back to the organisational structure established within the institution. Full-time academics at the OU were responsible for designing and preparing teaching materials and for delivering distance education. In contrast, part-time academic staff, known as associate lecturers, were tasked with 'dealing with students' written work and guiding and counselling them about their studies and progress' (Planning Committee, Paragraphs 71-72).

A senior academic who joined the OU in 1969, now an Honorary Research Professor at the institution, reflects on the revolutionary aspect of this teaching approach. She emphasises that the most significant innovation was the clear division of two distinct roles:

curriculum development and student interaction, including assessment and support. This division of labour, introduced at the founding of the OU, remains a cornerstone of its educational model.

Further elaborating on this structure, a professor with extensive experience in both full-time and part-time capacities at the OU describes the division:

> 'It's the regions where the students have access. They don't have any access to us, at all. PhD students do, because they're here, they're based at the campus. The rest of the students are here, based … it's like a pyramid structure, you know. You've got Milton Keynes, then you've got [thirty/thirteen] regions, I'm not sure … And then each region will be in charge of the students, say if a student is doing sociology in the region of Cambridge, there will be a sociology lecturer in Cambridge who will be in charge of all the associate lecturers who teach that course. The main person who the students relate to, their tutor really, are called associate lecturers. They teach the course materials we provide. So if they have any problems, like once a month they go for a tutorial, if they have any problems they talk about them with that tutor there.'

At the top of this 'pyramid' structure are the full-time academic staff, responsible for shaping the curriculum and preparing teaching materials, with research as a central component of their duties. These staff members are based primarily at the OU's main campus in Milton Keynes, where further divisions of academic labour exist (cf. Castles, 1974; Salaman and Thompson 1974). At the base of the pyramid are the associate lecturers, distributed across various regions, who maintain direct contact with students and are responsible for student assessments.

This organisational model prompts important questions: What was the rationale behind the division of teaching responsibilities? Does this structure align with the democratic ideals of openness that the OU advocates? And if not, why was it consistently accepted that direct student contact would be the responsibility of part-time staff (cf. Perry 1972)? While the use of distance-learning techniques was initially a way to overcome barriers to higher education participation, enabling the OU to reach a wide audience, one could argue that without such a division of labour, the institution might not have been able to serve as many students as it intended – a key objective from the outset.

Similarly, the Hellenic Open University (HOU), Greece's first university dedicated to distance education, embraced this model as a core element of its mission. By adopting distance learning, the HOU significantly reshaped the Greek higher education landscape (HOU 2024a). This shift aligned with broader European Union objectives, as outlined in the Commission's Memorandum on Lifelong Learning. The Memorandum advocates for more open and flexible formal learning environments, allowing learners to pursue individualised learning pathways, a fundamental transition in the move towards a knowledge-based society (EU 2024).

Within this context, the adoption of distance education at the HOU can be viewed as a strategic effort to create an open and flexible institution that fosters independent learning. As will be further explored, the promotion of independent learning emerged as a key educational objective for both the OU and the HOU. Their curricula, teaching methodologies, and the broader knowledge produced by these institutions reflect their commitment to fostering autonomy and adaptability among learners.

Openness of subject boundaries and knowledge

The openness of subject boundaries and receptiveness to diverse forms of knowledge are fundamental characteristics of open universities. These institutions were established with a mission to foster independent study and cultivate intellectual autonomy. Historically, this openness has been reflected in the design of their curricula, which embraced a wide range of disciplines and encouraged interdisciplinary exploration. By doing so, open universities created learning environments that empowered students to pursue knowledge according to their individual interests and lived experiences. The openness of the curriculum, therefore, not only mirrors the institution's educational philosophy but also plays a crucial role in promoting independent study.

In higher education, curricula serve as both a reflection of institutional values and a guide for realising its educational vision (cf. Giroux 1981). As Bernstein (1971a, 47) argues, 'curriculum defines what counts as valid knowledge', while Salter and Tapper (1994, 5) note that knowledge confers ideological power within higher education. This suggests that curricula have the capacity to shape both the intellectual content and the ideological underpinnings of an institution. In the context of open universities, the curriculum not only reflects the institution's ideology but also directs students and faculty towards specific forms of knowledge that align with that ideology. A curriculum that is not open – rigid and narrowly defined – restricts the diversity of ideas and channels learners toward particular beliefs, reinforcing specific ideologies and limiting opportunities for independent thought.

Originally, the UK Open University (OU) was designed with an open curriculum that transcended traditional subject boundaries, strongly promoting interdisciplinary study. The Planning Committee, in its draft statement, emphasised that the OU degree should be a 'general degree', covering a broad range of subjects rather than being confined to a narrow specialty. According to the committee:

> 'The degree of the Open University should, [we considered], be a 'general degree' in the sense that it would embrace studies over a range of subjects rather than be confined to a single narrow specialty. In our view, the Open University degree should not aim to compete with established universities … Instead, the Open University should be complementary, offering part-time students a broadly-based higher education, well-suited to the teaching techniques available to the Open University' (Planning Committee, Paragraph 55).

This reveals that while the UK OU functioned as a university, it operated with a broader and more open vision of higher education compared to established institutions. This commitment reflects an educational ideology prioritising the democratisation of knowledge and education.

Two important points emerge from this. First, the UK OU's commitment to an open curriculum not only aimed to disseminate knowledge but also fostered 'education in breadth' (cf. Bernstein 1971b, 169). The institution sought to create a democratic educational environment where students could develop critical capacities and become aware of the ideologies embedded in their learning. Second, the OU contributed to the democratisation of knowledge by producing its own learning materials. It was one of the first universities to create materials specifically designed for independent learning, significantly expanding access to higher education.

The development of a new epistemology within the OU further exemplifies its innovative approach. Gibbons et al. (1994) introduced the concepts of 'Mode 1' and 'Mode 2' knowledge to describe different approaches to knowledge production. Mode 1 knowledge refers to traditional, discipline-based knowledge, characterised by systematic, propositional claims subject to peer review. Mode 2 knowledge, on the other hand, emerges from real-world problem-solving contexts and is inherently interdisciplinary.

The OU's approach can be understood as contributing to a form of knowledge that transcends these distinctions, what might be termed 'Mode 3' knowledge – knowledge *for* learning. Like Mode 2, Mode 3 is interdisciplinary and grounded in context, but it differs in its focus on learning and accessibility rather than academic inquiry or professional application. Mode 3 knowledge is designed to be inclusive, providing learners with the tools and materials necessary for independent study within a structured and supportive environment. This form of knowledge production bridges the gap between the systematic rigour of traditional academic knowledge (Mode 1) and the practical, problem-solving orientation of interdisciplinary knowledge (Mode 2). However, unlike Mode 2, which addresses specific real-world problems, Mode 3 is crafted to facilitate learning on a broader scale, making higher education more accessible to diverse populations.

The HOU similarly adopted this approach, producing its own learning materials in a Mode 3 framework. As a Professor and founding member of the HOU remarked:

> 'I would also like to highlight a pedagogical dimension of openness, particularly in relation to the teaching material of the Hellenic Open University. I believe that a significant evolution of the Hellenic Open University in Greece lies in its incorporation of considerations from western societies regarding higher education in our country. When I used to give lectures to the authors of the HOU's teaching material, I would humorously, albeit seriously, remark: 'You should write books in a way that your grandmother can understand.' I use the example of a grandmother as a reader without a specialised educational background to emphasize this point.'

The OU pioneered this Mode 3 knowledge in the UK, and nearly three decades later, the HOU followed suit, integrating this pedagogical approach into Greek higher education. However, this knowledge production approach has also been subject to criticism.

One critique focuses on the 'packaged' nature of the course materials provided to students at both the OU and HOU. These materials – texts, activity books, and tapes – are distributed in advance, eliminating the need for students to seek out resources independently. While this system offers convenience and structure, some argue that it diminishes the opportunity for independent exploration. However, for distance learning institutions, particularly those serving students with limited access to educational resources, such as those in rural areas or prisons, this approach is often necessary.

Another critique centers on the simplified language used in these materials, which some describe as 'digested' or oversimplified. This plain language makes the material more accessible but arguably less academic. Such language aligns with Mode 3 knowledge, designed primarily for learning rather than rigorous academic inquiry (as in Mode 1) or professional application (as in Mode 2). In a distance learning context, where students have limited direct interaction with tutors, the guidance provided by this style of material is crucial.

In conclusion, while Mode 3 knowledge may seem to limit independent inquiry, it represents a significant innovation in the history of higher education. The OU, through its use of Mode 3 knowledge, has fostered intellectual independence within a structured, supportive framework. In the next section, I will further explore how the OU balanced structure and autonomy, contributing to its distinct role in the evolution of higher education.

Openness to society, openness of ideas: The UK case

As previously discussed, openness to ideas has been a foundational principle of the OU. This commitment is reflected not only in its provision of a broad-based higher education and open curricula but also in its critical engagement with the societal restrictions on intellectual discourse. This critical stance was particularly evident in the early Social Sciences courses, which examined and challenged prevailing social structures and ideologies. In its formative years, the OU's curriculum did more than simply reflect an ethos of openness; it actively challenged societal limitations on the dissemination and exploration of knowledge, particularly with its Social Sciences courses serving as a critical space for questioning entrenched norms and power structures.

The Social Sciences at the OU were closely linked to the emergence of the 'new sociology of education', a movement that positioned itself as 'an alternative for sociological inquiry in education' (Young 1971, 2). Notably, in 1971, the launch of the OU's first course in the Sociology of Education, School and Society, coincided with the publication of Knowledge and Control, an influential text that introduced and advanced this new sociological perspective (Young 1998, 38). This text became central to the course, symbolising a pivotal shift in educational theory towards a critical examination of how knowledge is constructed and controlled.

The new sociology of education was critical in its analysis of the relationship between knowledge, curriculum, and societal power structures. As Young (1998, 36) notes, it examined 'issues concerning knowledge and the curriculum and their relationship to the distribution of power in society'. This approach challenged traditional curricula by exposing how they validated particular kinds of knowledge, perpetuating dominant ideologies (Bernstein 1971a). The School and Society course exemplified this critique, with key texts such as *Schooling and Capitalism* (1971) legitimising Marxist perspectives that had previously been marginalised in mainstream academic discourse. These readings granted Marx credibility as a thinker, 'in contrast to the way Marx was traditionally treated as synonymous with Satan' (Jennison 1995, 93). Thus, the OU's openness to ideas extended beyond academic inclusion to a more profound critique of the ideologies underpinning societal and educational structures, especially capitalism.

The rapid dissemination of the new sociology of education's ideas was facilitated by several factors. First, the School and Society course attracted thousands of teachers, who became a key audience for these readings. Second, the course texts were made widely available at affordable prices, ensuring their accessibility to a broad public (Young 1998, 38). Third, the widespread network of part-time tutors, many of whom also worked in polytechnics and other higher education institutions, played a pivotal role in spreading these ideas. As one senior academic from the Social Sciences department recalled, 'we had thousands of part-time tutors who were working in other universities, largely in polytechnics, and they picked up all the material'.

This broad dissemination of critical ideas inevitably led to tensions between the OU and the Conservative government of the late 1970s and early 1980s. The university, particularly its Social Sciences curriculum, became a target of the government's ire due to its perceived ideological opposition. The Secretary of State, Keith Joseph, was notably critical, accusing the OU of being 'politically motivated, ideologically unsound, and its standards suspect' (Christodoulou 1995, 43). Anastasios Christodoulou, one of the founders of the OU and its Secretary from 1968 to 1980, recalled: 'The moment the Conservatives won that 1970 election, we sat back to see if we'd have our throats slit … We survived. But we had to pay a penalty, [Thatcher] cut our grant by seven percent, just to show who was the boss' (Christodoulou 1995, 43).

This conflict between the OU and the Conservative government stresses the ideological tensions that the institution's openness to ideas generated. The university's curriculum, with its critique of capitalism and openness to alternative perspectives, was viewed by the government as an intellectual threat. The OU was seen not merely as an educational institution but as a political force that challenged the government's policies and ideological stance. It was seen by the government as part of the political opposition, which was then considered 'weak and disorganised' (Eagleton 1991, 34). Through its curricula, the OU not only provided educational opportunities but also became a platform for contesting dominant societal narratives and a significant political force, capable of threatening established power structures.

The historical origins of the OU are inextricably linked to its commitment to openness – not only in terms of expanding access to education but also in fostering critical engagement with societal ideologies. The early Social Sciences courses exemplified how the university used its open curriculum as a vehicle for challenging dominant power structures, particularly capitalism, positioning the OU as both an educational and a political institution capable of influencing broader societal debates.

Evolving ideologies and institutional trajectories

This article examines the ideological foundations of two open universities – the UK OU and the HOU – using them as case studies to illustrate distinct approaches to 'openness' in higher education. Both institutions share a foundational commitment to accessibility, yet they reflect unique socio-political contexts, leading to different educational visions. These variations reveal the ideological complexities within their conceptions of openness, showing how educational missions are deeply rooted in historical and political contexts.

As shown in Figure 1 (page 51), both universities were founded with openness as a guiding principle; however, their applications of this principle diverge significantly. The UK OU, established in 1969, embraced openness to expand life chances and promote social egalitarianism, embodying a post-war commitment to democratising higher education. It was part of a broader movement that positioned educational reform as a means for societal transformation. Innovative in its mission, the UK OU sought to make higher education accessible to those traditionally excluded from academic institutions. Its epistemic orientation, grounded in the Western European social democratic values of the 1960s, positioned higher education as a public good, essential for empowering individuals and fostering a participatory society. In its early years, the university's

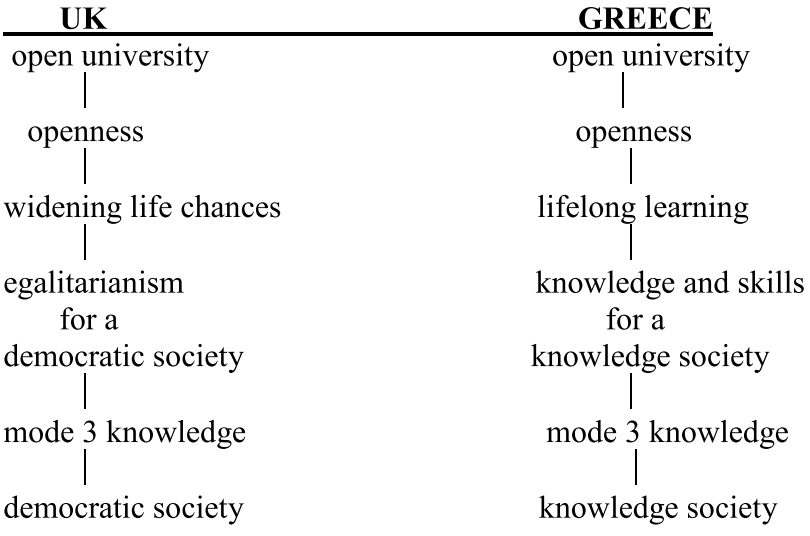

Figure 1. The UK and the Hellenic Open University: their conceptual ladders.

commitment to inclusivity was reflected in pioneering distance-learning models designed to dismantle educational barriers and facilitate social mobility.

In contrast, the HOU, established in 1997, emerged within a different ideological framework. Shaped by EU policies linking higher education to economic goals, the HOU positioned openness as a pathway to professional development within a global knowledge economy. This marked a shift from the UK OU's initial emphasis on democratising knowledge to a conception of openness more closely aligned with economic imperatives. At the HOU, knowledge seems to be valued for its contribution to economic productivity, reflecting a more utilitarian view of higher education, where access is viewed as a strategy to produce a competitive workforce aligned with market demands.

These divergent origins underline significant ideological distinctions: while the UK OU's model of openness was shaped by egalitarian ideals aimed at democratising higher education, the HOU's framework aligns with an EU-driven approach, seeking inclusivity within the knowledge economy. This emphasis reflects a broader European vision of lifelong learning, framing accessibility as a way to empower individuals within a competitive, knowledge-based economy. Despite these differences, both institutions have converged around what this article terms 'Mode 3 knowledge' – a model that combines open access with structured learning frameworks to fulfill their educational missions and social impact.

These distinctions prompt critical questions about the evolving ideological trajectories of the UK and Hellenic Open Universities. Are their ideological stances truly distinct, or do they share common ground? If overlaps exist, how have these shifted over time? Established fifty-five years ago, the UK OU faces the challenge of retaining its original democratic ideals while adapting to contemporary pressures (cf. Hutton 2018, Kayne 2018; Davies 2024). Has its focus on lifelong learning and employability brought it closer to the HOU's economic orientation? Similarly, as both universities navigate new educational and societal challenges, we must consider whether they are ideologically converging or

diverging in response to external forces such as globalisation and shifting national priorities.

Over time, as neoliberal policies have reshaped global higher education, the epistemic and political foundations of both the UK OU and HOU have also evolved (cf. Filippakou 2022). The UK OU, while retaining its leadership in distance learning, has increasingly adapted to the pressures of financial sustainability, efficiency, and technological integration. This shift has led to rising tuition fees and a growing emphasis on employability, aligning the institution more closely with market-driven education models (cf. The Guardian 2018). Its current slogan, 'The Future is Open', signals a continued commitment to accessibility, yet it now also reflects a redefinition of openness that seems to prioritise economic alignment and technological innovation (cf. OU 2024). Similarly, the HOU's trajectory illustrates the impact of European neoliberal policies that emphasise economic competitiveness, reinforcing an epistemic orientation anchored in economic strategy. This approach continues to position openness as a mechanism for developing a skilled, competitive workforce attuned to the global knowledge economy.

The tensions within both institutions reveal the competing priorities characterising open universities today, balancing accessibility with the pressures of marketisation. Despite their distinct origins, both the UK OU and the HOU increasingly reflect a neoliberal orientation that prioritises employability and market alignment, inviting a re-examination of their roles in either perpetuating existing socio-economic structures or enabling social change. The concept of openness in open universities is inherently political. As open universities like the UK OU and HOU navigate the complex, shifting landscape of contemporary higher education, it is essential to recognise both their progressive ambitions and the challenges they face.

Ideological divergence and common challenges in open universities

As neoliberal pressures continue to reshape higher education, open universities, such as the UK OU and the HOU, face a critical dilemma: can higher education, especially in its open-access form, resist the inclination to reproduce existing social, economic, and political structures, or can it genuinely act as a transformative force? Historically, higher education has played this dual role, operating as both a mechanism for perpetuating the status quo and as a site for critical engagement capable of fostering social change (Aronowitz 2000; Bourdieu 1988). Open universities, with their original mission of democratising access to education, now find themselves at a complex juncture.

The UK OU and HOU, founded on ideals of social transformation, are now increasingly pressured to conform to market-driven priorities. The concept of 'openness' has, in many cases, narrowed to focus on economic productivity and workforce development. What was once envisioned as a democratic and civic space now faces the challenge of reconciling its foundational mission with neoliberal demands, emphasising efficiency and economic outcomes over civic empowerment.

In contrast, open universities in the Global South – including institutions like India's Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), South Africa's University of South Africa (UNISA), and Pakistan's Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) – uphold a justice-centered vision of openness. For these institutions, access goes beyond economic inclusion; it embodies a commitment to community empowerment, social justice, and the recognition

of indigenous knowledge. This broader vision of education resists the neoliberal model and suggests that open universities worldwide can serve as agents of socio-economic and political change. By redefining 'openness' as a means of empowerment, these universities challenge the trend of commodifying higher education.

This commitment to justice gains urgency amid global political crises. Scholars such as Noam Chomsky (2020) and Henry Giroux (2021) have argued that higher education must oppose growing authoritarianism, economic inequality, and the erosion of democratic values. Giroux's warning of 'neoliberal fascism' (2022) and Chomsky's critique of rising authoritarianism underscore the necessity of fostering civic literacy, defending intellectual freedom, and resisting market-driven pressures that threaten the democratic role of higher education.

Judith Butler's concept of 'precariousness and grievability' also offers insight into the ethical responsibilities of open universities in addressing exclusion. Butler (2009) argues that 'an ungrievable life is one that cannot be mourned because it has never lived; it has never counted as a life at all'. For open universities, this concept stresses the need for a substantive vision of openness that values all lives, especially those marginalised by global inequities. These institutions must choose whether they will reinforce socio-economic exclusion by reducing 'openness' to functional access or adopt a transformative model that elevates marginalised voices.

The frameworks of Boaventura de Sousa Santos and Paulo Freire add depth to this discussion. Santos' (2014) concept of an 'ecology of knowledges' advocates for the inclusion of marginalised and community-based knowledge systems, framing openness as a decolonial project. Freire's vision of education as a 'practice of freedom' emphasises education's role in empowering individuals to challenge oppressive structures (Freire, 1970/2018; Freire 1998). These perspectives shift the notion of openness from mere access to a broader commitment to social and epistemic justice, encouraging critical dialogue and collective agency.

In the midst of the current multiple crises, young people, particularly those engaged in global protest movements, increasingly expect higher education to prioritise social justice and critical thought (Carnegie 2022; Harper 2024; Sengupta, Banerjee, and El-Lahib 2024). Recent surveys (Bhardwa 2017; Horn and Moesta 2020; UCAS 2021) show that many young people view higher education not only as a route to employment but also as a pathway for personal, intellectual, and social growth. Terry Eagleton (2010) contends that higher education should be a space for 'thinking critically about the world in the name of justice, tradition, imagination, human welfare, the free play of the mind or alternative visions of the future'. These aspirations challenge open universities to reaffirm their democratic missions, resisting the utilitarian pressures that increasingly shape higher education discourse.

Conclusions: the future of open universities and broader conceptions of openness

In light of these global challenges, open universities bear a moral responsibility to engage meaningfully with the communities they serve. Hannah Arendt (1961, 2005) emphasises that critical engagement and knowledge are essential to moral responsibility. For Arendt, as for Giroux and Freire, fostering civic literacy is critical in equipping individuals to

confront rising authoritarianism and social inequalities. Open universities must therefore reaffirm their commitment to developing critically aware citizens who can challenge injustice, rather than succumbing to pressures that privilege economic utility above all.

To remain faithful to their founding missions, the UK OU and HOU must resist narrow, market-centric definitions of 'openness' and instead embrace justice-oriented frameworks that emphasise inclusivity and critical engagement. By doing so, these institutions can reclaim their transformative purpose and reposition themselves not as mere instruments of workforce development, but as crucial spaces for societal transformation.

Ultimately, the future of open universities depends on their capacity to expand the meaning of 'openness'. By embracing anti-colonial, feminist, and anti-racist pedagogies, these institutions can articulate an inclusive vision that opposes global inequalities and inspires a citizenry equipped to tackle today's complex challenges. Through this commitment, open universities can reaffirm their role as critical institutions dedicated to fostering a more just and equitable world.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

This work was supported by Academy of Athens.

References

Altbach, P. G., and V. Selvaratnam (Eds.). 1989. *From Dependence to Autonomy: The Development of Asian Universities*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Arendt, H. 1961. *Between Past and Future: Six Exercises in Political Thought*. New York: Viking Press.

Arendt, H. 2005. *Responsibility and Judgment*. Edited by Jerome Kohn. New York: Schocken Books.

Aronowitz, S. 2000. *The Knowledge Factory: Dismantling the Corporate University and Creating the True Higher Learning*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Barnett, R. 1990. *The Idea of Higher Education*. Buckingham: SHRE and Open University Press.

Barnett, R. 1994. *The Limits of Competence: Knowledge, Higher Education and Society*. Buckingham: SHRE and Open University Press.

Barnett, R. 1999. *Realizing the University in an Age of Supercomplexity*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Barnett, R. 2022. *The Philosophy of Higher Education: A Critical Introduction*. London: Routledge.

Beale, M. A. 1992. "The Evolution of the Policy of University Apartheid." Collected Seminar Papers. Institute of Commonwealth Studies. 44: 82-98. Accessed November 5, 2024. https://sas-space.sas.ac.uk/4228/1/M_A_Beale_-_The_evolution_of_the_policy_of_university_apartheid.pdf.

Bell, R., and M. Tight. 1993. *Open Universities: A British Tradition?* Buckingham: SHRE and Open University Press.

Bernstein, B. 1971a. "On the Classification and Framing of Educational Knowledge." In *Knowledge and Control: New Directions for the Sociology of Education*, edited by F. M. in Young, 47–69. London: Collier-Macmillan Publishers.

Bernstein, B. 1971b. "Open schools, open society?" In *School and Society: A Sociological Reader*, edited by B. R. Cosin et al., 95–105. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Bhardwa, S. 2017. "Why do Students go to University and how do they Choose Which One?" *Times Higher Education*. Accessed November 5, 2024. https://www.timeshighereducation.com/student/news/why-do-students-go-university-and-how-do-they-choose-which-one.

Bourdieu, P. 1988. *Homo Academicus*. Translated by Peter Collier. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
Butler, J. 2009. *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* London: Verso.
Carnegie, M. 2022. "Gen Z: How Young People are Changing Activism." *BBC*. Available at: https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20220803-gen-z-how-young-people-are-changing-activism (accessed 5 November 2024).
Chomsky, N. 2020. "The World is at the Most Dangerous Moment in Human History." *The New Statesman*. Accessed November 5, 2024. https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2020/09/noam-chomsky-the-world-is-at-the-most-dangerous-moment-in-human-history.
Christodoulou, A. 1995. "Walter Laid into her Something 'orrible'." In *Lifting it off the Page: An Oral Portrait of OU People*, edited by T. Dalgleish, 43–44. Milton Keynes: The Open University.
Clark, B. 1983. *The Higher Education System: Academic Organization in Cross-National Perspective*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Clark, B. 1998. *Creating Entrepreneurial Uuniversities: Organisational pathways of transformation*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
Contact North | Contact Nord. 2024. "TeachOnline: Searchable Directory of More than 65 Open Universities Worldwide." Accessed November 5, 2024. https://teachonline.ca/tools-trends/universities.
Davies, W. 2024. "How the Tories Pushed Universities to the Brink of Disaster." *The Guardian*. Accessed November 5, 2024. https://www.theguardian.com/politics/ng-interactive/2024/jul/02/how-the-tories-pushed-universities-to-the-brink-of-disaster.
Deem, R. 2001. "Globalisation, new managerialism, academic capitalism and entrepreneurialism in universities: Is the local dimension still important?" *Comparative Education* 37 (1): 7–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/03050060020020408.
de Sousa Santos, B. 2014. *Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide*. London: Routledge.
Eagleaton, T. 1991. *Ideology: An Introduction*. London: Verso.
Eagleton, T. 2010. "The Death of Universities." *The Guardian*. Accessed November 5, 2024. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/dec/17/death-universities-malaise-tuition-fees.
Elton, L. 2006. *The Idea of the University: A re-examination*. London: Routledge.
European Union. 2024. Accessed February 1, 2024. http://www.europa.eu.int/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc?smartapi!celexplus!prodDocnumber&leg=en.
Filippakou, O. 2017. "Towards a New Epistemic Order: Higher Education after Neoliberalism." In *Higher Education in Austerity Europe*, edited by J. Nixon, 185–198. Bloomsbury.
Filippakou, O. 2022. *Rethinking Higher Education and the Crisis of Legitimation in Europe*. London: Routledge.
Filippakou, O., B. Salter, and T. Tapper. 2012. "Higher Education as a System: The English Experience." *Higher Education Quarterly* 66 (1): 106–122. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2273.2011.00506.x.
Filippakou, O., and G. Williams. 2014. "Academic Capitalism and Entrepreneurial Universities as a New Paradigm of 'Development'." *Open Review of Educational Research* 1 (1): 70–83. https://doi.org/10.1080/23265507.2014.964645.
Freire, P. 1998. *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civic Courage*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
Freire, P. 1970/2018. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London: Bloomsbury.
Garrett, R. 2016. "The State of Open Universities in the Commonwealth: A Perspective on Performance, Competition and Innovation." Accessed November 5, 2024. https://oasis.col.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/1962dec2-d3c1-4a5b-8b4c-62bd0963e95d/content.
Gibbons, M., C. Limoges, H. Nowotny, S. Schwartzman, P. Scott, and M. Trow. 1994. *The New Production of Knowledge: The Dynamics of Science and Research in Contemporary Societies*. New York: Sage.
Giroux, H. A. 1981. *Ideology, Culture & the Process of Schooling*. Philadelphia, PA: Falmer/ Temple University.
Giroux, H. A. 1984. *Ideology, Culture and the Process of Schooling*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Giroux, H. A. 2019. *Neoliberalism's War on Higher Education*. Chicago: Haymarket Books.
Giroux, H. A. 2021. "Rethinking Neoliberal Fascism, Racist Violence, and the Plague of Inequality." *Communication Teacher* 35 (3): 171–177. https://doi.org/10.1080/17404622.2021.1923772.
Giroux, H. A. 2022. *Pandemic Pedagogy: Education in a Time of Crisis*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
Giroux, H. A. 2024. "Hijacking Freedom: Ron DeSantis and the Scourge of Fascist Politics." *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies* 46 (3): 506–525. https://doi.org/10.1080/10714413.2024.2370101.
Goeing, A. S., G. Parry, and M. Feingold (Ed.). 2021. *Early Modern Universities: Networks of Higher Learning*. Leiden: Brill.
The Guardian (Editorial). 2018. 'The Guardian View on the Open University: Issues, not Just Personalities." *The Guardian*. Accessed November 5, 2024. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/apr/09/the-guardian-view-on-the-open-university-issues-not-just-personalities.
Habermas, J. 1987. "The Idea of the University: Learning Processes." Jürgen Habermas and John R. Blazek. Special Issue on the Critiques of the Enlightenment. New German Critique. No. 41, (Spring - Summer, 1987): 3-22.
Halsey, A. H. 1992. *Decline of Donnish Dominion: The British Academic Professions in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Clarendon Press.
Harper, T. A. 2024. "America's Colleges Are Reaping What They Sowed." *The Atlantic*. Accessed November 5, 2024. https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2024/05/college-activism-hypocrisy/678262/.
Holloway, L. 1979. *The First Ten Years: A Special Edition of Sesame to Mark the Tenth Anniversary of The Open University 1969-1979*. Milton Keynes: The Open University.
hooks, b. 1994. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge.
Horlock, J. K. 1984. *The Open University after 15 years*. Manchester: Manchester Statistical Society.
Horn, M. B., and B. Moesta. 2020. "A Not-So-Tidy Narrative." Inside Higher Education. Accessed November 5, 2024. https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2020/01/06/pervasive-narrative-students-are-going-college-just-get-job-isnt-always-so-true.
HOU (Hellenic Open University). 2024a. "EAP: Main University." Accessed February 1, 2024. http://www.eap.gr/english/university/main_university.htm.
HOU (Hellenic Open University). 2024b. "EAP: General Studies." Accessed February 1, 2024. http://www.eap.gr/studies/A_4.htm.
HOU (Hellenic Open University). 2024c. "EAP: Today." Accessed February 1, 2024. http://www.eap.gr/general/today.htm.
HOU (Hellenic Open University). 2024d. "EAP: Law." Accessed February 1, 2024. http://www.eap.gr/general/law.htm.
Hutton, W. 2018. "The Open University gave Millions of Britons a Second Chance. Now it needs one itself." *The Guardian*. Accessed November 5, 2024. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/apr/14/open-university-gave-millions-of-britons-second-chance.
Jennison, K. 1995. "Hither and Yon." In *Lifting it off the Page*, edited by T. Dalgleish, 93. Milton Keynes: The Open University.
Jung, K. S. 2006. "A Comparative Study on the Institutionalization of Open Higher Education system." Seoul, Korea: Hanyang University. Accessed November 5, 2024. http://dcollection.hanyang.ac.kr/public_resource/pdf/000000020002_20181210001132.pdf.
Jung, I., and C. Latchem. 2007. "Assuring Quality in Asian Open and Distance Learning." *Open Learning: The Journal of Open, Distance and e-Learning* 22 (3): 235–250. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680510701619885.
Kayne, L. 2018. "A further blow to the Open University." *The Guardian*. Accessed November 5, 2024. https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/aug/28/a-further-blow-to-the-open-university.
Klein, R. 2019. "The National Health Service (NHS) at 70: Bevan's double-edged legacy." *Health Economics, Policy and Law* 14 (1): 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1744133117000354.
Lionarakis, A. 1999. "Distance, but not Distant Education-The First Steps into the 21st Century: the Greek Case." In *Centre National d'Enseignement a Distance, Melanges-L'Enseignment a Distance a l'aube du troisieme mellenaire*. France: CNED.

Lionarakis, A. 2002. "The Hellenic Open University from Within." First International Symposium New Horizons in Educational Communication and Technology. Turkey: Anadolu University (Open University).
Lorde, A. 1984. *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. Trumansburg, NY: Crossing Press.
MacArthur, B. 1974. "An Interim History of the Open University." In *The Open University Opens*, edited by J. in Tunstall, 3–20. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
Mamdani, M. 1993. "University Crisis and Reform: A Reflection on the African Experience." *Review of African Political Economy* 58:7–19.
McIntosh, N. E., J. A. Calder, and B. Swift. 1976. *A Degree of Difference: A study of the first years' intake of students to the Open University of the United Kingdom*. Surrey: Society into Higher Education Ltd.
Neave, G. 1996. "The Evaluation of the Higher Education System in France." In *The Evaluation of Higher Education Systems*, edited by R. Cowen, 66–81. London: Kogan Page.
Nybom, T. 2003. "The Humboldt Legacy: Reflections on the Past, Present, and Future of the European University." *Higher Education Policy* 16 (2): 141–159. https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.hep.8300013.
The Open University Planning Committee. 1969. *The Open University: Report of the Planning Committee to the Secretary of the State for Education and Science*. London: Her Majesty's Stationary.
OU. 2024. "The Open University: The Future is Open." Accessed November 5, 2024. https://www5.open.ac.uk/centres/policing/news/open-university-future-open.
Panagiotakopoulos, C., and A. Lionarakis. 2001. "The Profile of the Applicants of the Hellenic Open University (HOU) in the first year of its establishment (academic year 1999–2000)." First Pan-Hellenic Conference of Open and Distance Learning. Greece: Hellenic Open University.
Percy, K., and P. Ramsen. 1980. *Independent Study: Two Examples from English Higher Education*. Surrey: The Society for Research into Higher Education Monographs.
Perry, W. 1972. *The Early Development of the Open University: Report of the Vice-Chancellor January 1969-December 1970*. Bletchley, UK: Open Univ., Walton.
Perry, W. 1976. *Open University: A Personal Account by the First Vice-Chancellor*. Milton Keynes: The Open University Press.
Ramanujam, P. R. 2009. *Distance Open Learning: Challenges to Developing Countries*. Delhi, India: Shipra Publications.
Roberts, J., A. Rodriguez Cruz, and J. Herbst. 1996. "Exporting Models." In *A History of the University in Europe*, edited by Hilde de Ridder-Symoens, 256–282. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Said, E. 1978. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books.
Salaman, G., and K. Thompson. 1974. "The OU Academic." In *The Open University Opens*, edited by J. Tunstall, 120–124. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
Salter, B., and T. Tapper. 1994. *The State and Higher Education*. Essex: The Woburn Press.
Sengupta, P., P. Banerjee, and Y. El-Lahib. 2024. "Student Protests: How the University Perpetuates Colonial Violence on Campus." *The Conversation*. Accessed November 5, 2024. https://theconversation.com/student-protests-how-the-university-perpetuates-colonial-violence-on-campus-230075.
Shattock, M. 2008. *Entrepreneurialism in Universities and the Knowledge Economy: Diversification and Organisational Change in European Higher Education*. Berkshire: McGraw-Hill – SRHE & Open University Press.
Slaughter, S., and L. Leslie. 1997. *Academic Capitalism: Politics and the Entrepreneurial University*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
Slaughter, S., and G. Rhoades. 2004. *Academic Capitalism and the New Economy*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
Tait, A. 2008. "What Are Open Universities For?" *Open Learning: The Journal of Open, Distance and e-Learning* 23 (2): 85–93. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680510802051871.
Tait, A. 2013. "Distance and e-Learning, Social Justice and Development: The Relevance of Capability Approaches to the Mission of Open Universities." The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning. Accessed November 8, 2024. www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/1526/2632.

Tait, A. 2018a. "Open Universities: The Next Phase." *Asian Association of Open Universities Journal* 13 (1): 13–23.
Tait, A. 2018b. "Open Universities: The Next Phase." *Asian Association of Open Universities Journal* 13 (1): 13–23. https://doi.org/10.1108/AAOUJ-12-2017-0040.
Tapper, T. 2007. *The Governance of British Higher Education: The Struggle for Policy Control*. Dordrecht: Springer.
Tapper, T., and B. Salter. 1992. *Oxford, Cambridge and the Changing Idea of the University: The Challenge to Donnish Domination*. Buckingham: SRHE & Open University Press.
Thorpe, R. 2022. "The Idea of a Post Colonial University." *PRISM: Casting New Light on Learning, Theory and Practice* 4 (1): 4–14. https://doi.org/10.24377/prism.ljmu.0401211.
Trow, M. 1993. "Comparative Perspectives on British and American Higher Education." In *The European and American University since 1800*, edited by S. Rothblatt and B. Wittrock, 280–302. Cambridge University Press.
Tunstall, J. (Ed.). 1974. *The Open University Opens*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
UCAS. 2021. "Where Next? What Influences the Choices School Leavers Make?" Accessed November 5, 2024. https://www.ucas.com/file/435551/download?token=VUdlDVFh.
UNISA. 2024. "A Brief History of Unisa, UNISA." Accessed November 5, 2024. https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Unisa-History-and-Memory-Project/Themes/All-themes/A-brief-history-of-Unisa.
Williams, G. (Ed.). 2002. *The Enterprising University*. Buckingham: Society for Research into Higher Education & Open University Press.
Wymer, I. K. 1972. *The Open University and Adult Studies*. Wolverhampton: Ivor K. Wymer.
Young, M. 1962. "Is Your Child in the Unlucky Generation?" *Where?* 10:3–5.
Young, M. F. D. (Ed.). 1971. *Knowledge and Control: New Directions for the Sociology of Education*. London: Collier MacMillan.
Young, M. F. D. 1998. *The Curriculum of the Future: From the 'new sociology of education' to a critical theory of learning*. London: Falmer Press.