

# Book Review: *Internationalization and the Academic Profession* by Çalıkoğlu, Jones, and Kim. Springer Press, 2023. 238 pages. ISBN: 978-3-031-26995-0

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This book, edited by Çalıkoğlu, Jones, and Kim (2023), is the 24th volume in *The Changing Academy* series. Approaching the topic from a comparative perspective, the book examines how internationalization reshapes the academic profession across different higher education systems, and conceptualizes internationalization not merely as academic mobility or institutional collaboration, but as a process embedded in the interaction between governance structures, professional practices, and knowledge production. This perspective establishes an important connection between the volume and broader debates on the internationalization of higher education within the field of comparative education, particularly in explaining how institutional contexts shape academics' interpretations and enactments of internationalization. At the same time, many of the analyses remain largely situated within existing institutional and governance frameworks; consequently, the implications of power asymmetries and institutional disparities within the global knowledge system for the practice of internationalization warrant further critical examination.

The structure and content of the book are grounded in data from the *Academic Profession in the Knowledge-based Society* (APIKS) project, a large-scale international comparative study that investigates transformations in the academic profession within knowledge-based societies. The project analyzes university faculty members' working conditions, professional identity, participation in governance, and international engagement, while further examining how institutional environments and policy developments shape academic careers and knowledge production. The project employs a jointly designed questionnaire administered concurrently in more than twenty countries, including ten in Europe (e.g., Finland, Germany, Lithuania), six in Asia (e.g., Japan, Malaysia, Turkey), and four in the Americas (e.g., Canada, Chile). This book represents an important research output of the APIKS project and, adopting the academic profession as its analytical lens, explores how faculty members act simultaneously as agents and interpreters of internationalization, while comparing cross-national differences in internationalization practices across diverse institutional, cultural, and governance contexts.

Overall, the ten chapters in this volume may be broadly organized into three analytical dimensions. The first concerns the structural and institutional dimension, which examines internationalization from the perspective of higher education governance and policy frameworks. The second addresses the actor and professional dimension, focusing on faculty members as agents of internationalization and as intermediaries within institutional settings. The third concerns the knowledge and production dimension, which analyzes how internationalization shapes patterns of research collaboration and the unequal structure of global knowledge production. Through this three-level analytical framework, the volume

seeks to interpret the institutional implications of contemporary higher education internationalization by examining the interactions among institutional arrangements, professional practice, and knowledge production. One notable strength of this framework lies in its shift away from approaches that focus primarily on policy instruments or academic mobility, toward a more comprehensive understanding of the interrelationships among institutional governance, professional agency, and knowledge systems. The following discussion elaborates on each of these dimensions:

1. Structural and institutional dimension: Several chapters (e.g., Chapters 1, 3, and 10) draw upon perspectives from new institutionalism and governance theory to argue that internationalization is not merely a set of activities such as academic mobility or collaboration, but also entails the re-institutionalization of university governance structures. Comparative analyses of Argentina, Canada, Lithuania, Portugal, and Taiwan demonstrate that different governance arrangements shape both the degree of faculty participation in internationalization and the scope of their actions within these processes. As internationalization becomes increasingly incorporated into policy frameworks of evaluation and ranking, its meaning gradually shifts from academic exchange toward an indicator of institutional performance. This transformation reflects broader changes in global higher education governance. While these analyses effectively illustrate how internationalization becomes embedded within the institutional logic of higher education governance, they also suggest that once internationalization is institutionalized as a performance metric, its original function as a form of academic exchange and knowledge interaction may be weakened, and may instead become associated with competition and ranking pressures among universities.

2. Actor and professional dimension: The volume also emphasizes the role of faculty members as key actors in processes of internationalization. Several chapters (e.g., Chapters 2, 4, 5, and 6) employ perspectives from the sociology of professions and actor-oriented approaches to analyze differences in international engagement across generations and among faculty members with different professional identities. The findings indicate that overseas doctoral training and transnational academic experience often constitute important sources of knowledge mobility and academic capital. At the same time, these processes may reinforce the existing core–periphery structure of the global academic system. From this perspective, one of the book’s significant contributions lies in shifting the analysis of internationalization from institutional policy frameworks toward the level of professional practice, highlighting the interpretive and agentic roles of faculty members within institutional contexts. Nevertheless, the volume leaves room for further exploration of how academics negotiate tensions between professional autonomy and institutional expectations under varying governance pressures.

3. Knowledge and production dimension: The volume further examines the relationship between internationalization and global knowledge production. Several chapters (e.g., Chapters 7, 8, and 9) show that contemporary research collaboration networks remain centered in Europe and North America, displaying patterns of regional concentration and hierarchical stratification. In this context, internationalization functions both as an important resource for knowledge production and as a competitive arena that may generate exclusionary dynamics. Differences in institutional support across regions and disciplines further contribute to unequal opportunities for international collaboration and uneven patterns of research output. These observations suggest that internationalization should not be viewed solely as a mechanism that facilitates knowledge exchange; it may simultaneously reinforce existing power relations within the global knowledge system. From the perspective of comparative education, this issue is closely related to the center–periphery dynamics of the global academic system and to asymmetries among higher education systems in the production of knowledge.

In sum, drawing on cross-national comparative data, the volume provides an important perspective for understanding the relationship between internationalization and the academic profession. By situating internationalization within the interactions among institutional governance, professional agency, and knowledge production, the book offers a useful analytical framework for examining contemporary transformations in higher education. At the same time, the discussion of power relations and institutional inequalities within the global knowledge system remains somewhat limited. In particular, the experiences of higher education systems in the Global South and their roles in knowledge production could be further developed. Future research might therefore reconsider the relationship between internationalization and knowledge production from perspectives such as the Global South and the de-centering of knowledge systems. Despite these limitations, the volume remains an important reference for understanding contemporary higher education internationalization, especially in its analysis of the interactions between governance structures and the academic profession, and it offers a thought-provoking comparative perspective for future scholarship.

In this volume, internationalization is conceptualized not merely as surface-level phenomena such as mobility, rankings, or collaboration within the global knowledge system, but rather as a governance framework that connects institutional structures, professional practices, and the logics of knowledge production. Evidence presented through the book's cross-national comparative analyses suggests that internationalization should not be understood as a single policy instrument. Instead, it operates as a recursive system in which institutional design, professional cultures, and knowledge production mutually shape and reinforce one another. Within this process, policy and governance logics establish the institutional framework for internationalization, while its concrete enactment depends on how faculty members and researchers interpret and respond to institutional expectations within their professional contexts. These actions, in turn, further shape the orientation and distribution of academic knowledge production. From this perspective, the analytical lens advanced in the book may be regarded as one of its key scholarly contributions. In contrast to earlier studies that often interpret internationalization primarily through indicators such as student mobility, international collaboration, or university rankings, this volume situates internationalization within the interaction among institutional governance, professional agency, and knowledge production. Such an approach broadens the analytical perspective of comparative education and higher education research by conceptualizing internationalization not simply as a policy outcome, but as an ongoing governance process jointly shaped by institutional arrangements and professional practice.

The arguments presented in the book also offer important implications for future research on higher education governance. First, they point to the need to move beyond the conventional divide between institutional analysis and actor-centered research. One important line of inquiry concerns how institutional norms are interpreted and adapted through professional practice. New institutional theory, as articulated by Meyer and Rowan (1977), suggests that the actual functioning of formal organizational structures depends on how actors implement and adjust institutional arrangements within specific contexts. Scott (2014) likewise emphasizes that institutions are sustained through the interaction of symbolic, cognitive, and normative elements. From this perspective, faculty members are not merely executors of institutional rules; they also serve as reproducers of institutional meaning. Through their professional judgment and academic practices, they may reinterpret and, to some extent, transform existing institutional arrangements. These studies therefore suggest that institutions should not be viewed as static structures, but rather as arrangements that are continuously interpreted and reshaped through professional practice and knowledge-related activities.

Second, the book also implies a broader reconceptualization of higher education governance. Governance should not be understood solely as a top-down institutional arrangement, but rather as a dynamic process

encompassing professional negotiation, cross-sector collaboration, and the localization of knowledge. De Boer et al. (2007) introduce the concept of negotiated governance, arguing that power relations within contemporary universities have gradually shifted from hierarchical command toward interactive coordination. Whitchurch (2008) similarly characterizes university governance as an increasingly collaborative network that spans administrative actors, academic professionals, and external stakeholders. From a broader global perspective, Marginson (2018) argues that the locus of higher education governance is gradually shifting from state-centered control toward multi-level systems of transnational negotiation, with internationalization serving as a key driver of this transformation. Nevertheless, from the perspective of this review, although the book successfully highlights the interaction between internationalization and university governance, its discussion of power relations and institutional inequalities within the global knowledge system remains relatively limited. For instance, the ways in which internationalization may reproduce existing global academic hierarchies, or shape the position of higher education systems in the Global South within knowledge production, are not explored in sufficient depth. A more explicit engagement with issues such as global knowledge power structures or the de-centering of knowledge systems would further strengthen the book's theoretical contribution to comparative education and global higher education studies.

Overall, through cross-national comparison and institutional analysis, the volume demonstrates that internationalization has become an important analytical lens for understanding transformations in university governance and the redistribution of knowledge power in higher education. In this sense, internationalization should not be reduced to quantifiable indicators such as rankings or mobility. Rather, it should be understood as a governance process that shapes the relationships among institutional arrangements, professional action, and knowledge production. From this perspective, the book offers a thought-provoking analytical framework for understanding contemporary higher education internationalization and opens up avenues for further scholarly discussion in this field.

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