**Marek Kwiek, *Changing European Academics. A comparative Study of Social Stratification, Work Patterns and Research Productivity*.
New York 2019. Routledge, pp. 274**

DOI: 10.15804/tner.2019.57.3.20

European academics have been changing continually for the last decade. Higher education reforms around the world have led to changes in academic work and life. The newest publication written by Marek Kwiek presented in this review gives the reader a complex insight into the current condition of the academic profession. Based on extensive international research, the author presents a comprehensive study of eleven countries in Europe. *Changing European Academics* published by Routledge discusses the situation of increasing stratification across Europe in a very thoughtful way.

Marek Kwiek's book focuses on a critical approach to higher education reforms and changes in terms of university governance and funding. He is among the most well-known scientists in higher educational policies and international comparative studies of the academic profession. He is a Professor at Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland as well as a Director of the Center for Public Policy Studies and also a UNESCO Chair expert in Institutional Research and Higher Education Policy. Marek Kwiek is known for the following publications: *Knowledge Production in European Universities*, *National Higher Education Reforms in the European Context* and *The University and the State*. This newest book is supported greatly by his long experience of research into higher education.

The aim of this publication is clearly presented in the wide-reaching introduction. This part specifically describes previous research and publications which can be treated as a base for the present book. With this in mind the author presents "a panoramic view of the academic profession — specifically, from the university

sector–across Europe in 11 national systems (Austria, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom)” (Kwiek, 2018, p. 7). Apart from the introduction, there are also seven chapters, statistical appendices and an extensive bibliography. The language of the introduction is very personal and clearly inviting, encouraging the reader to turn to the following chapters. Each of the chapters brings a new educational perspective into light, accompanied by the author’s data and reflection.

The first chapter is focused on the stratification of academic performance as well as inequality in the production of knowledge. The author is widely “discussing research performance differentials across Europe, with specifically defined top research performers contrasted with their lower performing colleagues” (Kwiek, 2018, p. 16). He also describes the rarely discussed theme of highly productive academics. This part provides information about a large-scale and cross-country corroboration of systematic inequality in knowledge production which is commonly argued among the academics. The discussion is mostly based on work produced by Lotka and de Solla Price who have argued inequality in knowledge for the first time in sociology of higher education. The results presented from the countries studied show that research productivity is heavily stratified and complex nowadays. The reader will find elaborated explanation on that in the following chapters. What is more, this part is more about exploring the links of productivity with international collaboration differentials which explains also the stratification in this particular area. In this chapter the author shows several research paths which explain his international comparative study. The career paths which are defined by the role of the university in society are explained and described with the conducted research. The results show 11 case studies of national, higher educational systems in Europe. The amount of data helps to fully understand the insight of different forms of stratification in European academic careers. The author’s main aim is to present theoretical background from the sociology of science as well as the Changing Academic Profession survey to be able to analyse and explain significant differences between the higher education systems in various countries.

Chapter Two examines highly paid academics employed in universities in countries mentioned before. According to the author, this particular research differs from and goes beyond previous studies of salary. This chapter represents the valuable and empirically supported approach taken in this particular publication. The reader will find many explanations about current highly paid academics in Europe. The two types of implications announced by Marek Kwiek are crucial for understanding national academic labor markets in Europe.

The next chapter is devoted to the applicability of selected theoretical models of university governance to the 11 higher education systems analysed. The title of this part suggests that it will focus on the collegiality and university governance which is perceived as stratification of academic power. In this chapter the reader will find academic collegiality defined as well as reflections on the institutional and instrumental vision of the university. This analysis enabled the author to define academic attitudes and beliefs in European higher education systems.

The following part is focused on international research stratification and collaboration between international research collaboration (IRC) and international research orientation (IRO). These have been studied at the micro-level of individual academics from the university sector, both cross-generationally, cross-disciplinarily and cross-nationally. Information presented in this chapter differs from existing literature in Europe and focuses on the new findings. The writer's line of thought is very structured and well-presented in this chapter.

Chapter five is dedicated to patterns in teaching, research, and productivity across academic generations. This part is a response to the relatively few quantitative comparative studies of teaching and research in the academic profession. It also raises the question of non-publishers in academia and the question of investment in teaching time vs research time. The innovative study shows the time spent by faculty on various academic activities across academics of all age groups. This chapter should be of special interest to young academics.

The sixth section is focused on academic age stratification in terms of predictable careers in volatile institutional environments. What is interesting is that this chapter uses qualitative empirical material in contrast to all the other parts in this book. Factors which emerged from this study have a powerful impact on the current and future academic labour market. It is also a fundamental part of the book which shines a perfect spotlight on the major milestones in the academic career in European universities regardless of age or reforms throughout European higher education systems.

The seventh and final chapter summarises the whole publication. Apart from widespread conclusions, the author also presented the implications of policy on academic performance stratification. In general, this section also refers to all the issues listed by the author in the previous chapters with short descriptions. The reader will also find recommendations for future research as well as its predictable restrictions. Moreover, the part about socioeconomic, demographic and political contexts makes this publication even more understandable and readable.

Changing European Academics has a presentable and clear structure. Each component of the book is comprehensive and coherent in its language and content.

The studies presented and the choice of the countries makes it a guidebook on social stratification, work patterns and research productivity in Europe. This work confronts common misconceptions of academic work and what is more important, discusses new dilemmas in terms of social and economic environments in higher education. Taken together, these findings highlight a remarkable role for getting to know better current and historical changes in academic institutions and careers. On the whole the book provides an opportunity to understand the importance of the highly stratified academic profession which without any doubt should be important for practitioners, managers and policy makers in higher educational worldwide.

Reference

Kwiek, M. (2018). *Changing European Academics: A Comparative Study of Social Stratification, Work Patterns and Research Productivity*, London and New York: Routledge.