Governance – in crisis? Governance challenges across Sectors and Globally, and their Relevance to Higher Education

CGHE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Higher education: changing global relations

March 1, 2017

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Outline

- Critical literature review – meta-analysis of 54,000+ scholarly texts on governance.

- Aims:
  - Conceptual mapping of governance theories ('analytical cartography');
  - Creating a possible analytical framework that might help better grasp processes, dynamics and complexities in/of (HE) 'governance'.

- Relevance to higher education governance research.

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Data for literature review
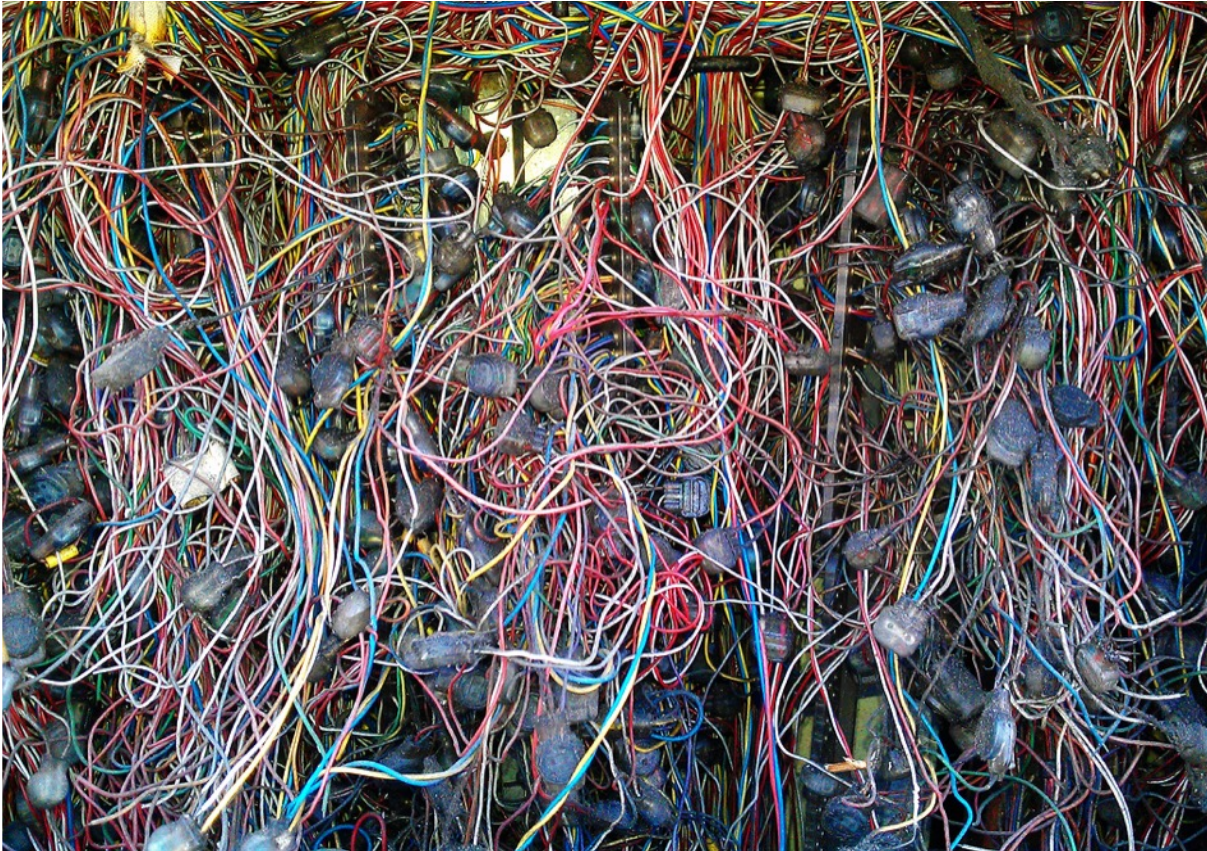
[This is how it all felt]

Initial texts: 54,000+

Recent handbooks: 7+

Books: app. 9,900 hits (from 1980)

Journal articles: app. 45,000 (from 1980)

After sorting: app. 250 books and 1,000 articles

Bibliographical cross-referencing

Files on individual authors

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(Some) Definitions

Public affairs scholar Robbie Waters Robichau (2011) argues that:

- 'Defining governance frequently involves the use of words like **networks, rules, steering, order, control, new, good and corporate governance, governing, and authority**.'
- Other useful phrases that provide insight of what governance is:
  - "**ordered rule**"
  - "**collective action or decision making**" (e.g., Ansell & Gash, 2008; Löffler, 2009; Milward & Provan, 2000; Stoker, 1998, 2004)
  - "**all patterns of rule**" whether formal or informal (e.g., Bevir, 2009, 2010; Imperial, 2005; Löffler, 2009)
  - "**exercise of authority**" (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2007; Stivers, 2008).'

Definitions in HE studies

Higher educations scholars **Emanuele Reale and Emilia Primeri** (2015):

- key concepts used in the general policy and governance literature and in the HE literature:
  - '**steering**' - instruments and arrangements externally developed and aimed at controlling academic institutions and behaviours;
  - '**government**' - the actions of governing taken by institutional actors in charge of the decision-making process;
  - '**governance**' underlines a change in the meaning of government and a new process of governing.
- In the HE context, the term '**governance**' refers to modes of social coordination undertaken by actors, that is, academic institutions, in the making and implementation of rules to provide a collective good.' (p. 20)

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Definitions by international organizations:

- The way " … power is exercised through a country's economic, political, and social institutions." –World Bank
- "The exercise of economic, political, and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels." UNDP
- "how any organization, including a nation, is run" (UNDP, 1997)
- "promoting fairness, transparency and accountability" – World Bank
- "a system by which business organizations are directed and controlled"- OECD

So, what is 'governance'?

'Governance' emerges from scholarship as (summative but not comprehensive):

- A set of structures, regulations, rules, norms, standards, mechanisms, processes and practices – formal, informal and embodied – that

both

  - regulate, coordinate, steer, and/or orchestrate (inter)actions

as well as

  - (re)produce socio-cultural, economic and political relations and values,

while at the same time

  - impact upon, define, and determine the outcomes of such interactions.

- The scope is usually to achieve field specific, practice oriented goals – broadly and/or narrowly defined.
- All these understandings of governance carry the (implicit) assumption that actors are embedded in, determined by and also shape such structures and processes.

So what do researchers do?

Berenskoetter argues that:

- "Most of the time, we take the meaning of our concepts for granted. (…) Usually concepts tend to be reduced to <u>static "variables"</u>, which are broken down into "<u>indicators</u>", without taking into account the rich history and multiple meaning of the concept underpinning the variable. The reasons for this range from the <u>modern belief </u>that we actually can arrive at the <u>true meaning of a concept</u>, which is singular and simple, to the more pragmatic view that <u>opening up concepts sows unnecessary confusion and goes against their very purpose of reducing complexity</u>. And so we usually resort to an <u>authoritative definition </u>that settles the matter by quoting a <u>well-known scholar </u>who presumably thought about the matter carefully and whose definition is popular and/or makes intuitive sense. <u>Having fixed the meaning of our concept (or so we believe) we go on with our research</u>." (2016: 1-2)

And what do governance researchers do?

- Just as Berenskoetter argues, governance literature usually uses isolated aspects of this composite 'definition', attempting to limit the focus of empirical research to a 'manageable' level.

- However, attempts to limit the scope of analysis can result in a loss of understanding connections, problems and processes, while at the same time still reproducing embedded weaknesses of the field.

What did we try to do? Looked for:

- Pre-determined commonalities

- 'Emergent' commonalities

(Some) pre-determined commonalities in governance scholarship

Disciplinary fields	Thematic field/ problem-focused approaches
'Governance' as a frequent/reoccurring focus for the following academic disciplines/fields: • International Relations • Political Science • Management Studies • Business Studies • Economics • (International) Law • Public Policy/Administration • Development Studies • Higher Education Studies Less frequently, but also a focus in the following disciplines/fields: • Sociology • Anthropology • History • Regional Studies • Geography	Most frequent thematic fields: • Theories/research methods • Corporate governance • Healthcare governance • Non-profit governance • Public sector governance • Education/HE governance • Urban governance • Energy (sector) governance • Environmental governance • Financial/fiscal/market governance • Central banks & governance • Development & governance • Human rights & governance • 'Alternative' governance (e.g. social enterprise; governance through social learning; governance through epistemic communities/creative commons are often grouped under this label by scholars)

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# 'Emergent commonalities'

Question: *Based on the scholarship, what are the common and/or most prominent problematiques within governance?*

- *actors; activities/practices; techniques/methods; scope; values; outcomes*

Shared and central organizing questions across scholarship:

- Who are the _actors_ in governance?
- What _practices/activities_ are associated with governance?
- What 'governance' _techniques/mechanisms_ are deployed?
- What is the _scope_ of governance?
- On what _values_ is governance based?
- What are the _outcomes_ of governance?
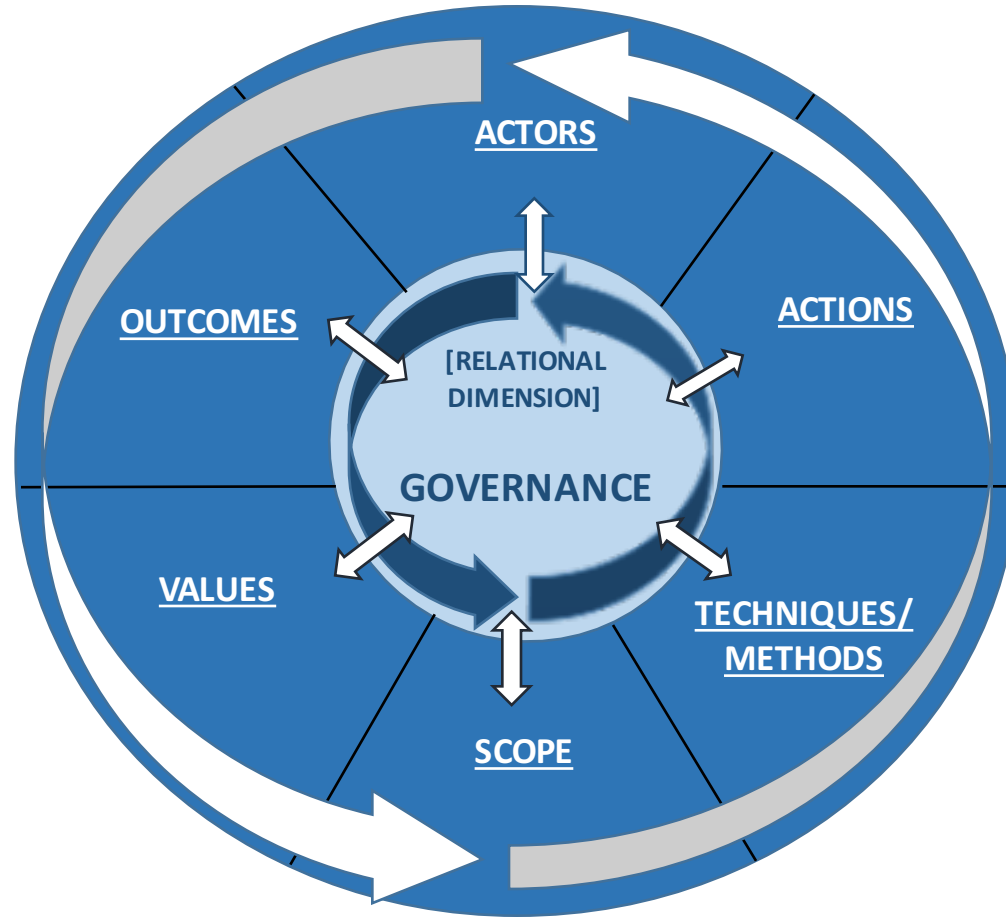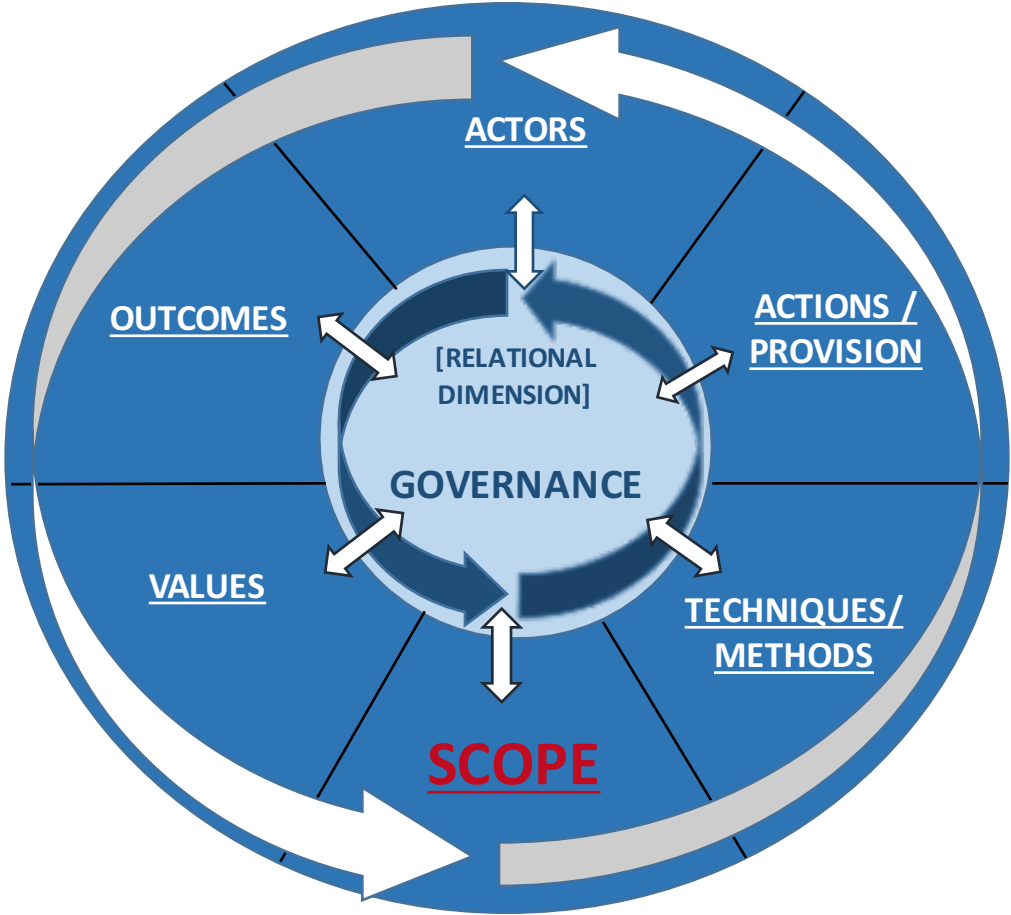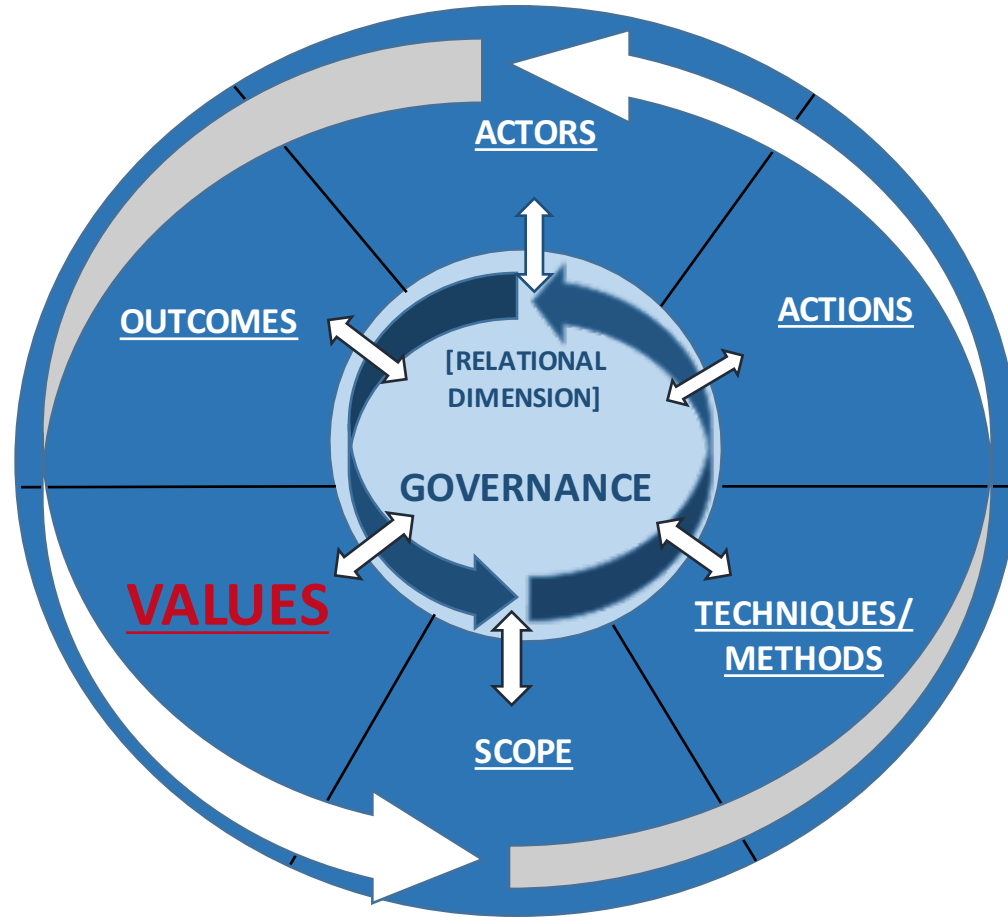
Governance and its analytical paradoxes
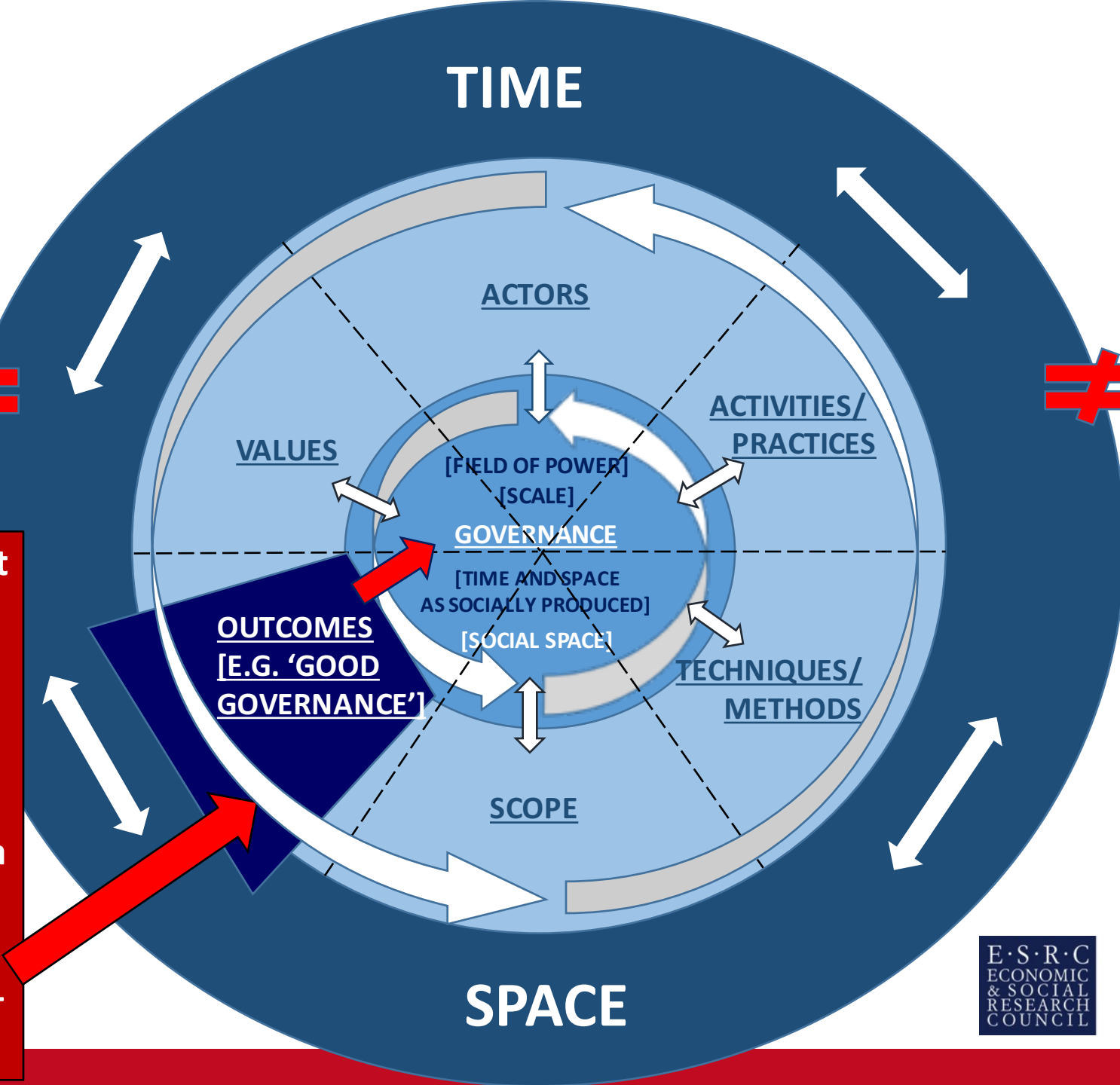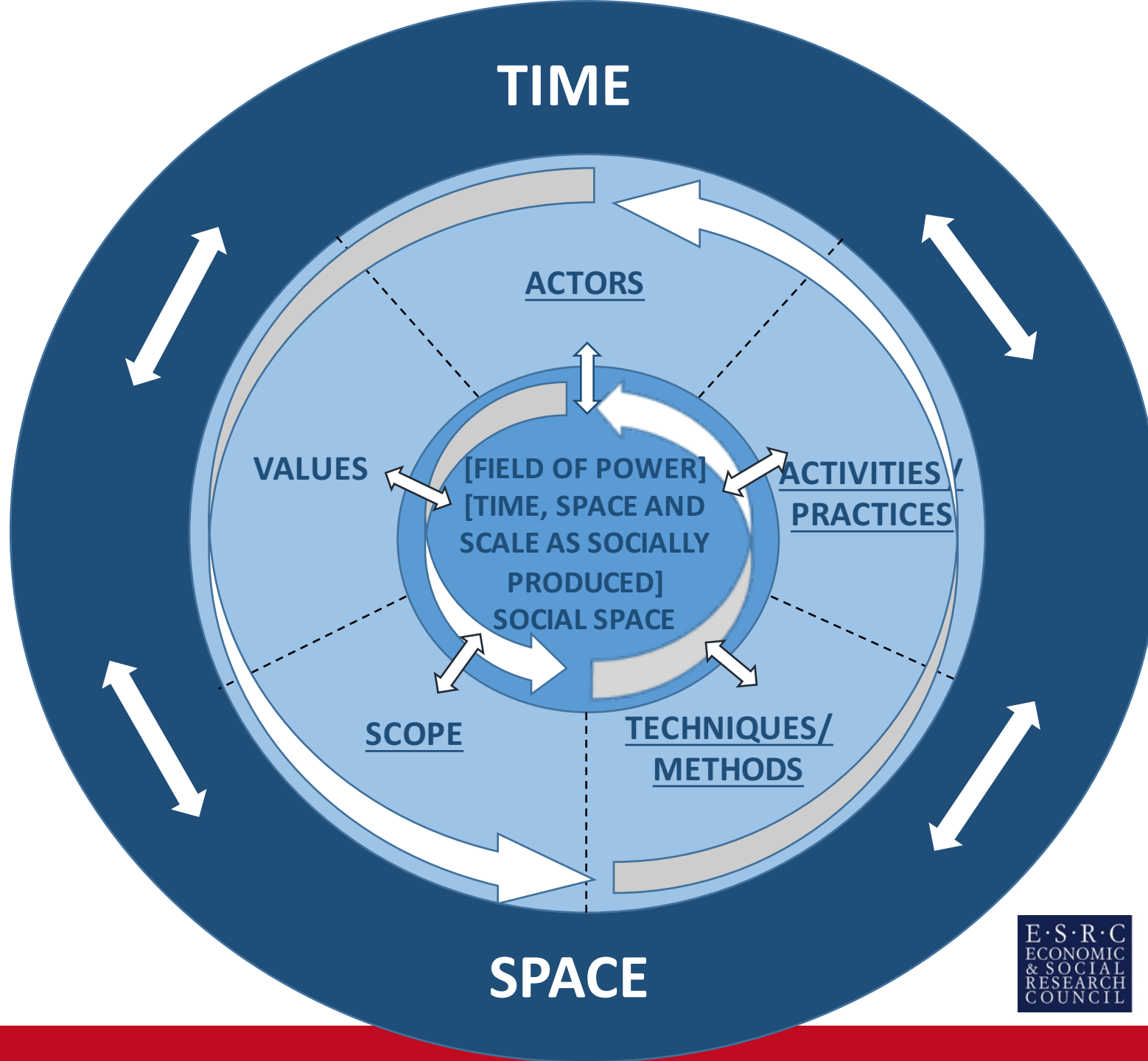
Relevance to Higher Education

The Higher Education system – ideal-typical models
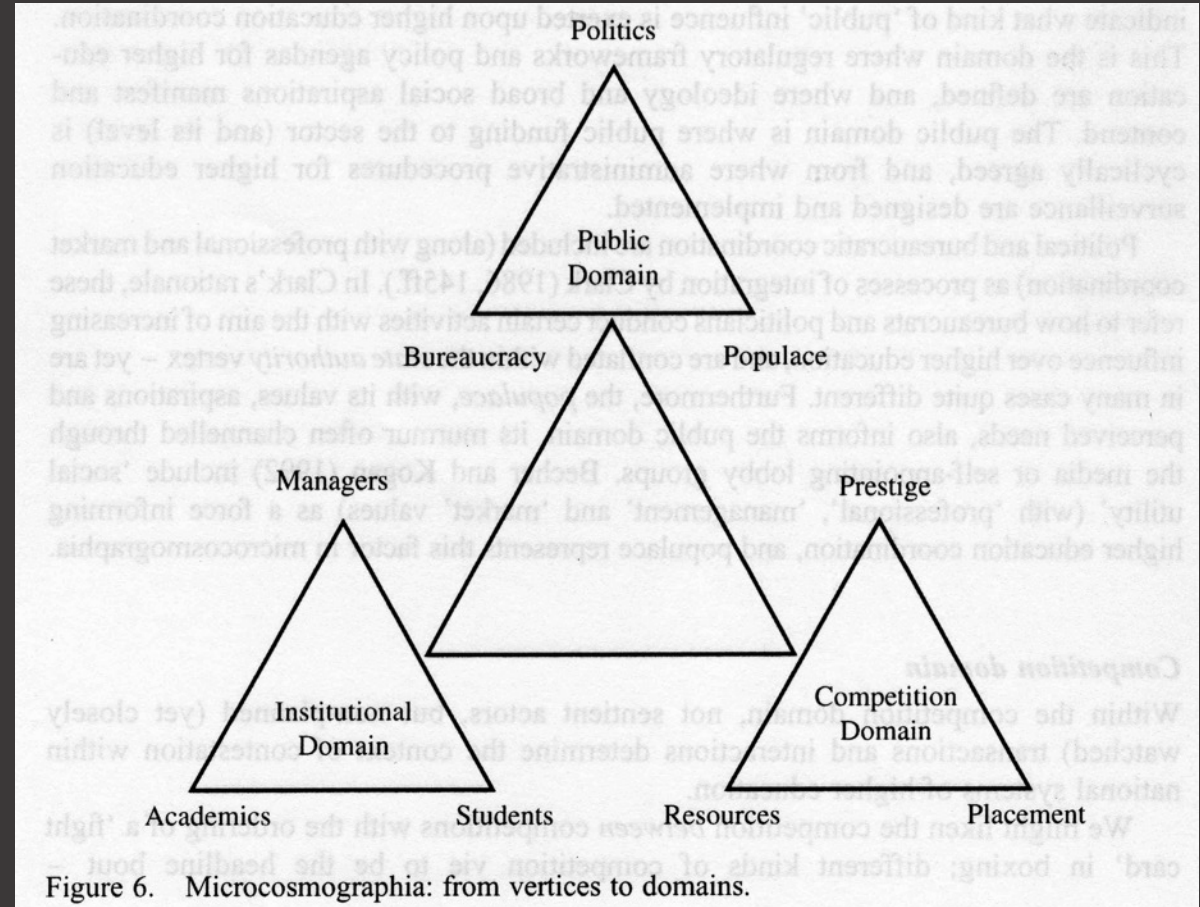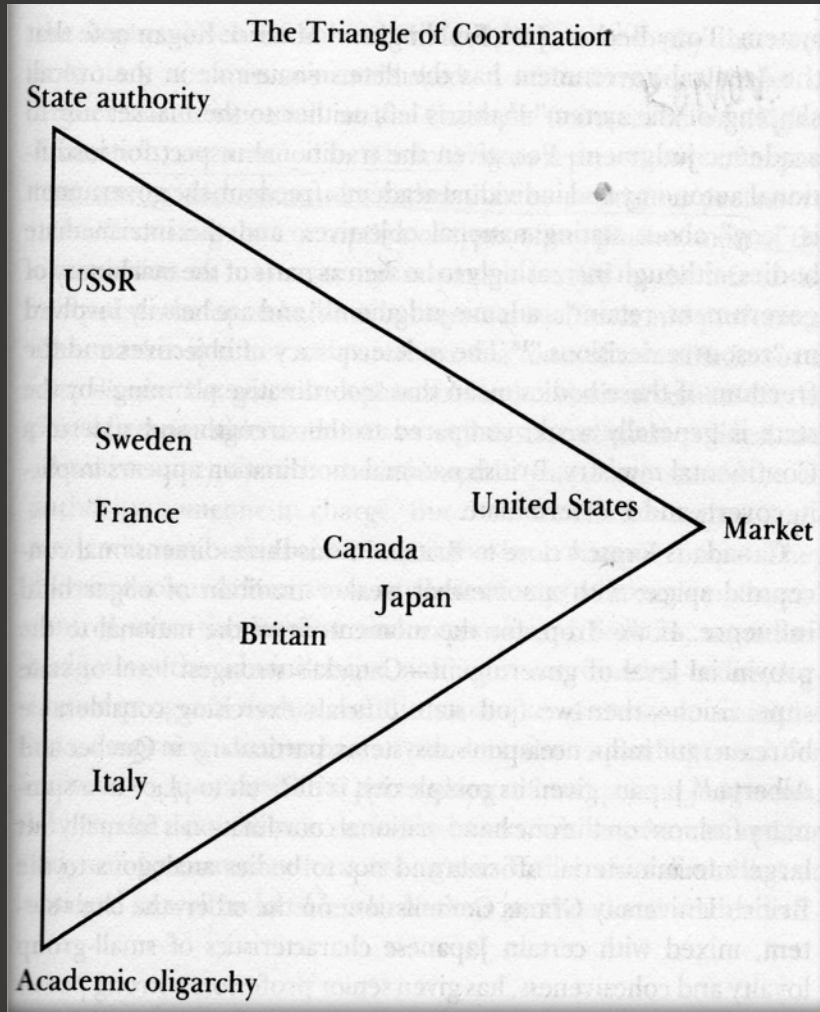
Burton R. Clark (1983: 143)

- 'Actor' centered model

- 'Developed' world centered (+ nation states)

- You have to move within 3 reference points – no place to move away if none of these is strong / functional (no agency of order)

- Once we have these three 'actors' they tend to be reified and turned into the 'Other' – binary oppositions

- We start thinking in 'hierarchies' of power – narrow understanding of power – seen as intentional – should be decoupled

- Each of these are huge and complex fields in their own right – no space to reflect that

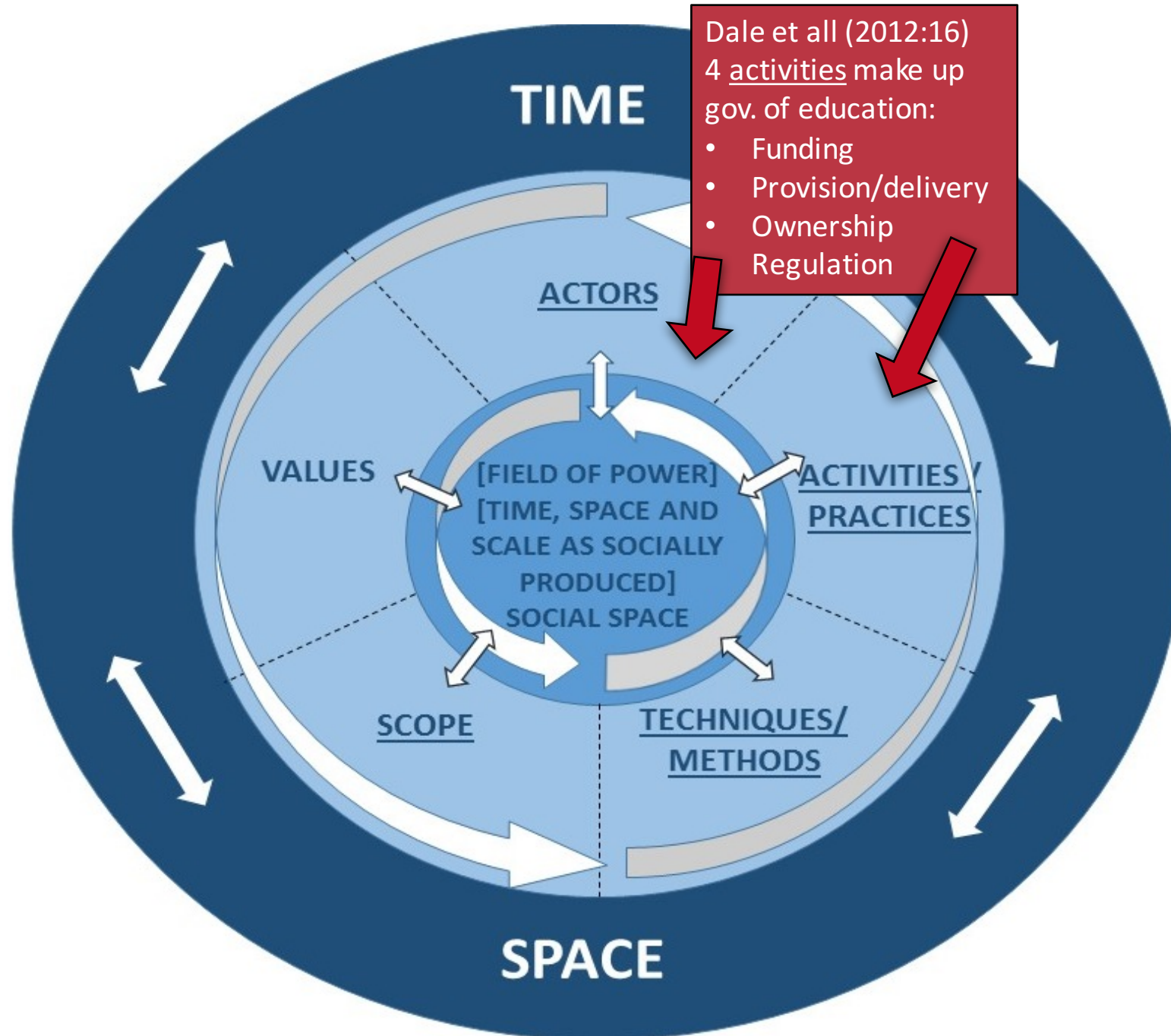- Clark makes a complex analysis but _despite_ of his model, not necessarily because of that

The Triangle of Coordination

State authority

USSR

Sweden

France

United States

Market

Canada

Japan

Britain

Italy

Academic oligarchy
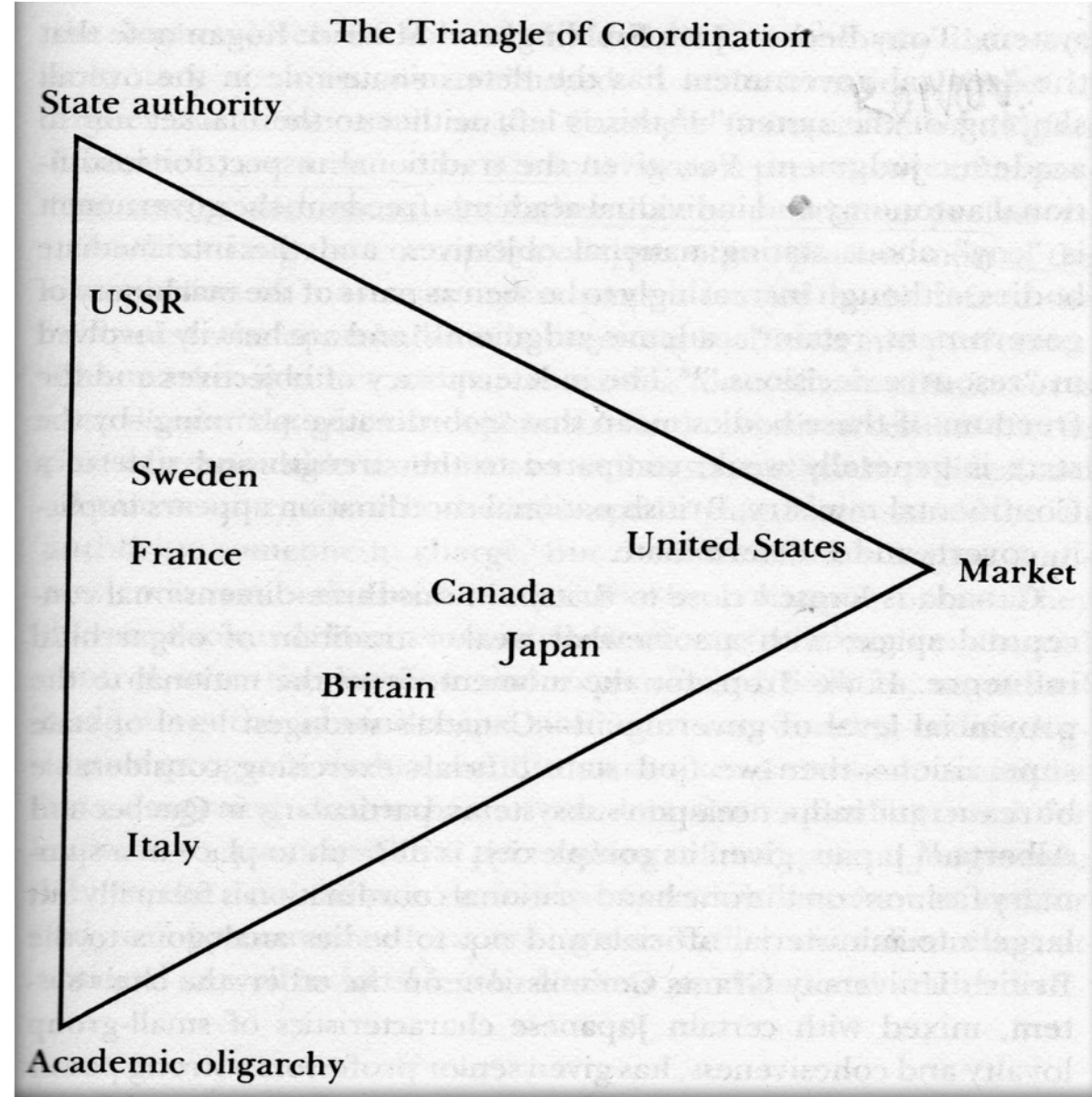
The HE system – ideal-typical models

Salazar & Leihy (2013: 60)

The Triangle of Coordination

State authority

USSR

Sweden

France — United States

Canada

Japan

Britain

Italy

Market

Academic oligarchy

Politics

Public Domain

Bureaucracy — Populace

Managers — Prestige

Institutional Domain — Competition Domain

Academics — Students — Resources — Placement

Figure 6. Microcosmographia: from vertices to domains.

- Dale, Roger, Yuri Kazepov, Risto Rinne, and Susan Robertson. "Scales, Discourses and Institutions in the Governance of Educational Trajectories in Europe." Governance of Educational Trajectories in Europe: Pathways, Policy and Practice. Ed. Andreas Walther, Marcelo Parreira Amaral, Morena Cuconato and Roger Dale. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016. 55–74.
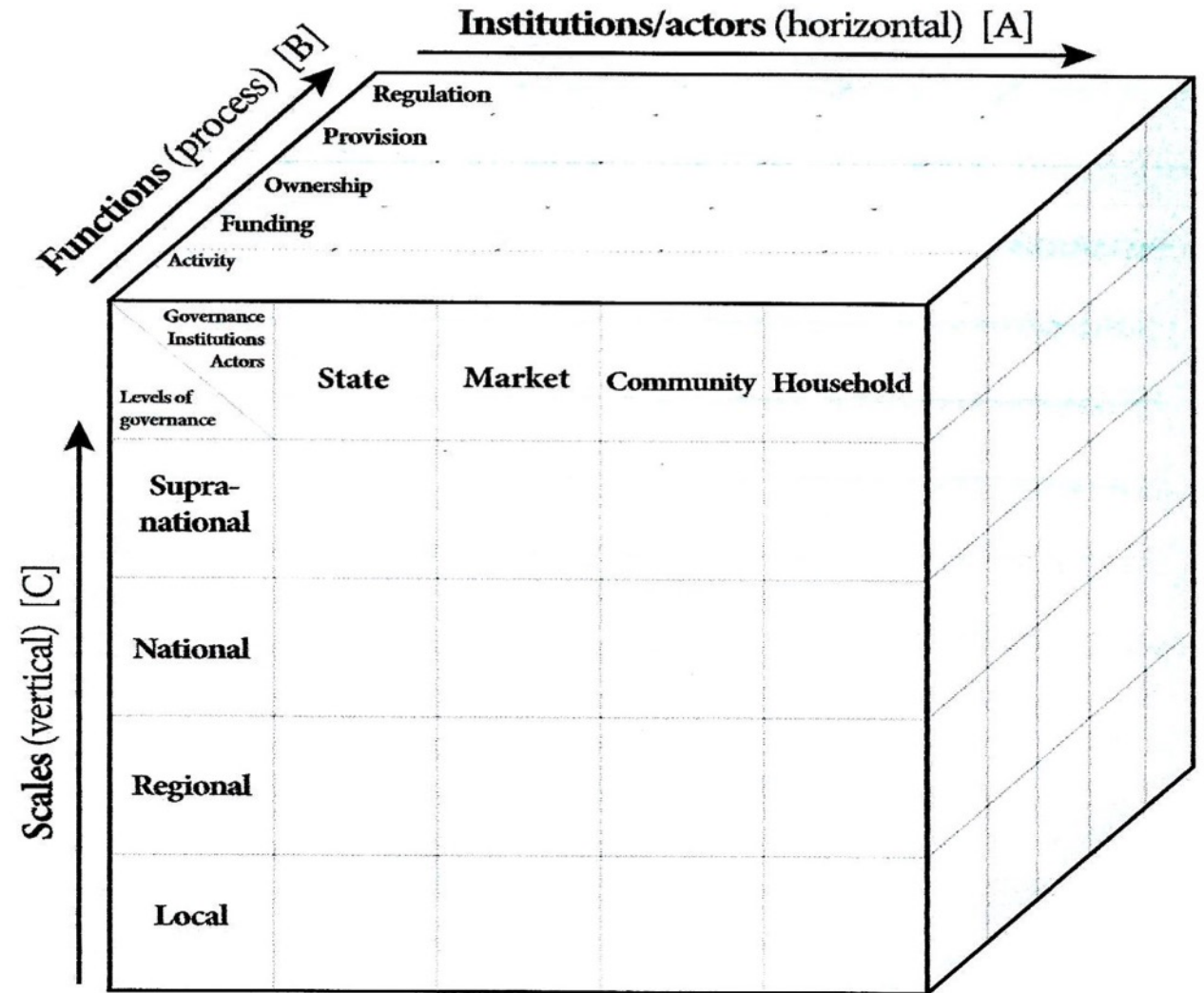

Figure 3.1 Activities, institutions and scales in the governance of education

Source: Adapted from Dale et al., 2012: 12, drawing on Dale, 1997

Thank you!