

# Pastures New

*Odense University: the First 25 Years*

*by*

PER BOJE

*and*

KNUD J.V. JESPERSEN

*Edited by*

AAGE TROMMER

*Translation editor*

THOMAS PETTITT

Odense University Press 1991

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# Contents

Editor's Preface

By Knud J. V. Jespersen:

1. From Idea to Statute . . . . . 11
2. From Statute to Reality . . . . . 21
3. The »Students' University« gets its Students . . . . . 37
4. Life under Larsen's Law . . . . . 45
5. The Odense University Centre  
– from Dream to Pragmatism . . . . . 55
6. The University's Buildings – From the Technical  
College to Campus . . . . . 71
7. In the News . . . . . 87
8. The University and its Environment . . . . . 103
9. So What Did We Get for the Money? . . . . . 113

By Per Boje:

10. The 1980's: When the Going Gets Tough ... . . . . 125
11. Growth Through Adjustment . . . . . 137
12. The Natural Sciences . . . . . 143

---

<i>Contents</i>	13. The Humanities: A Metamorphosis . . . . .	149
	14. The Social Sciences Become an Independent Faculty . . .	165
	15. The Faculty of Medicine Fights for its Life . . . . .	175
	16. Research: Environments and Achievements . . . . .	187
	17. Changing Style at Twenty Five . . . . .	201
	18. Conclusion: Staying on Top . . . . .	211

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3. The »Students' University« gets its Students . . . . .	37
4. Life under Larsen's Law . . . . .	45
5. The Odense University Centre – from Dream to Pragmatism . . . . .	55
6. The University's Buildings – From the Technical College to Campus . . . . .	71
7. In the News . . . . .	87
8. The University and its Environment . . . . .	103
9. So What Did We Get for the Money? . . . . .	113

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---

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	16. Research: Environments and Achievements . . . . .	187
	17. Changing Style at Twenty Five . . . . .	201
	18. Conclusion: Staying on Top . . . . .	211

## Editor's Preface

It is both right and proper for a university to celebrate its 25th anniversary with due ceremony, and, in so doing, to remind itself and its friends of how it all started and what has happened in the meantime. So when the vice-chancellor and the Senate were devising plans for marking the anniversary these duly included a request to the Department of History that by the day concerned a book on the subject be completed.

The task of writing the history of a university can be approached in a number of ways, ranging from a scholarly monograph which leaves no stone unturned and documents everything with extensive footnotes, to a glossy coffee-table book with a lot of pictures and an accompanying text which eulogizes its subject without going into any depth and avoids anything remotely controversial. The present work attempts to chart a course equidistant between these two extremes.

The Department assigned the task to two of its academic staff, Senior Lecturers Dr. Knud J.V. Jespersen and Dr. Per Boje, with the undersigned head of department as editor. The group thus formed appreciated that the work in question should be addressed not only to university employees and those who, as students, had spent a part of their lives there, but also to members of the general public who may be interested in how Funen's university began as an idea in the minds of a few people, took form and developed into a substantial institution with approximately seven thousand students, academic staff and technical-administrative personnel.

Bearing this intended audience in mind it has been endeavoured to avoid taking anything for granted, and to offer a broad and hopefully readable account of the university's prehistory and the first 25 years of its existence. The centre of gravity is of course the university itself, but in the nature of things it has been impossible to avoid including to a certain degree general developments in the recent history of university politics, particularly in the form of relevant statutes enacted by

*Editor's Preface* the Danish Parliament and applied in practice by the Ministry of Education.

Odense University was a child of that expansion of the university sector which swept through much of the world in the 1960's and early 1970's. They sprang up everywhere, these »plate-glass« universities as they were somewhat condescendingly known in England, to meet the challenges of a new era in which elitist education was to give way to mass education. The higher learning was no longer to be the preserve of a privileged few. In Denmark this expansion involved a massive increase in admissions to the two existing universities in Copenhagen and Aarhus, and the creation of three new institutions: Odense University itself and the two university centres in Roskilde (1972) and Aalborg (1975). Then a halt was called; plans and endeavours to found a sixth university somewhere in southern Jutland got no further than the locally-financed research unit, the South Jutland University Centre.

Odense University should be seen in this context: it was one of the small new universities, but the oldest of them. It managed to become a reality, and certain basic principles for its structure and expansion were laid down, before the student revolt swept the country. On the other hand its relative smallness meant that the revolt never really took hold here, which is not to say that the revolt's major legacy to higher education, the statutes of 1970 and 1973 on university government, failed to have serious implications for Odense University as well.

Such interventions from without and from above have determined much of the book's structure. This is not based on the reigns of the individual vice-chancellors, but falls into two major sections with the most decisive ministerial measure of the period, the reform of budgetary procedures in 1980, providing the dividing line between them. The period before this is described by Knud J.V. Jespersen, the period after by Per Boje.

The differences this involves in terms of temporal distance and the conditions under which the university lived have also had their implications for the two authors' handling of their material. The initial fifteen years are fast becoming history in the sense that the questions and problems that were the burning issues of the day for people in the university have long since either been resolved or ceased to matter. The  
8 last ten years remain to a greater degree part of our everyday life, and

this part of the account is therefore more in the nature of a stock-taking.

The account by and large ignores the fact that associated with the university is a university library. This is neither conscious nor subconscious amnesia; the university is highly aware of the fact that without the library neither teaching nor research would be possible, and over the years cooperation between the university and Odense University Library has been exemplary. That the latter has nonetheless been »forgotten« is due partly to the fact that the library celebrated its own anniversary last year by publishing a retrospective account, partly to the library's institutional independence, belonging as it does under the auspices of a quite different ministry, the Ministry of Culture.

This English language edition of the university's history is a somewhat shortened version of the Danish original, in that material of primary interest only to the »locals« has been omitted; structure and content are otherwise the same, except on the odd occasions when peculiarities of the Danish educational system or its terminology have necessitated brief explanatory elaboration. Its purpose is to offer the university's foreign friends, contacts and guests the opportunity of hearing »The Tale of Odense University«, or rather just the beginning of what will be a much longer tale. The translation has been undertaken by students of the university's English Department and revised by lecturer Thomas Pettitt, while pro vice-chancellor Dr. Lars Ole Sauerberg has been responsible for deciding which parts of the Danish original were unfit for export.

Work on the book has received many forms of help from many quarters. The university's administration cooperated in the retrieval of archival sources, while Fyens Stiftstidende was kind enough to make available its picture archive. The publication of both versions of the book has been made possible by financial support from Ingeniør N.M. Knudsens Fond and Munke Mølle Fond. Odense University Press has offered all imaginable assistance in the production process; Inger Bjerg Poulsen drew the graphics in the Danish version, while Vivian Kapper typed up its text. Heartiest thanks to one and all.

Aage Trommer



# 1. From Idea to Statute



## **Copenhagen, Aarhus and Odense**

In many respects Odense University is a special case in the history of the Danish universities. In particular the nature and speed of its genesis differed markedly from those of its two predecessors, Copenhagen University and the University of Aarhus in Jutland. The former was founded by papal authorisation (as a seminary for priests) in 1479, and there followed several centuries of almost imperceptible growth: not until our own century, and especially after the Second World War, did it experience the explosive growth which transformed the old royal college into the king-size institution of higher education we

*A modest beginning: some of the first intake of 180 students, several in the peaked caps awarded at high school graduation, on their way to the great hall of the Technical College where the freshman reception took place on Wednesday 31 August 1966. (Fyens Stiftstidende, 1 September 1966).*

know today. Aarhus University, meanwhile, dates its inception from 1928, when a number of eminent citizens backed the founding of a Jutland alternative to the university of the distant capital. On this occasion the state restricted its role to not putting obstacles in the way of developments, although to be on the safe side the authorities made it clear that the foundation and running of the new university should not involve any financial demands on the Treasury. The university's progress was in consequence extremely slow, and a full twenty years were to pass before enrolment reached one thousand students.

By these standards Odense University's transformation from idea to reality was brief and hectic. The notion of a university for Funen was not seriously mooted until the early 1960's, but on 1 September 1966 the first batch of students was admitted, and only four years later the student body passed the one thousand mark which it had taken Aarhus twenty years to reach: a speed of development beating anything hitherto witnessed in the university sector. All this is symptomatic of the fact that Odense University was born under quite different circumstances from its elder sister-institutions. Among the more prominent factors presiding over the occasion were the active role of the state and the education-explosion of the 1960's.

#### **Odense University and the Newer University Centres**

Odense University likewise occupies a special place in relation to its younger siblings, the University Centres started some years later in Roskilde and Aalborg. The term »Centre« in both cases signifies that the University-proper was merely the core of an integrated complex of institutions of further and higher education, but the approaches to achieving this ideal varied. In Roskilde it was decided to build up a fully integrated Centre from scratch, whereas in Aalborg it was created by merging a number of educational institutions which already existed in the area, along with a number of programmes transferred to the new milieu. But in each case interim governing bodies were set up with all the powers necessary to realize the Centre-concept. The two younger universities were in other words both conceived and born as integrated Centres, giving a policy-making environment markedly different from what obtained in Odense.

Here too an integrated Centre was indeed the long-term aim of the authorities, but with regard to actually achieving it the educational institutions involved were left very much to their own devices to find a

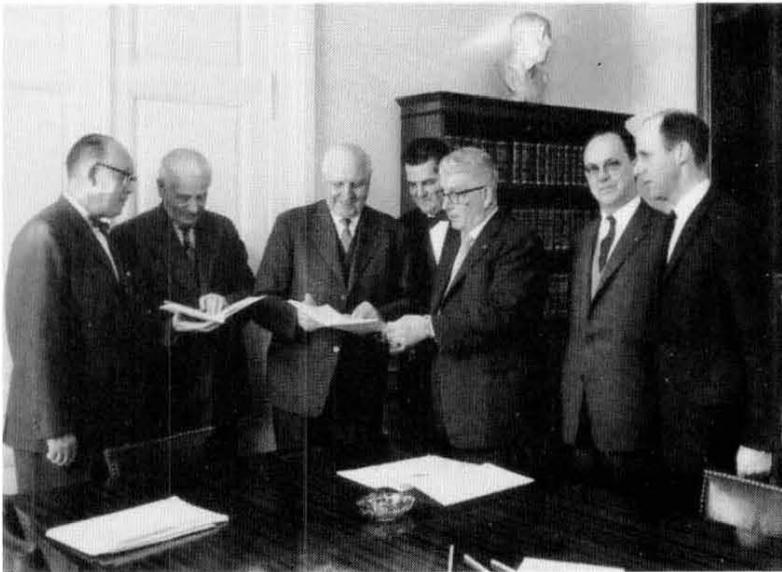
mutually acceptable *modus vivendi*. The result, after ten years of fruitless negotiations and manoeuvring, was the definitive collapse of the Centre concept in Odense, with the University in consequence permitted to emerge as an independent institution of higher education of the classic type. As such, Odense University was the last of its kind to be founded in Denmark, although the integration, after ten years' hesitation, of the local School of Business Studies has given the conventional model a somewhat lopsided look.

*From Idea  
to Statute*

The protracted uncertainty with regard to the future of the Centre stemming from the dithering of the authorities has left a significant mark on the short history of the University, and quite literally on the shape of the buildings which today provide the physical environment for its life and work. But that is a part of the story which comes long after the beginning; for in the beginning was the idea: the reality came later.

#### **The First Ideas ... and their Failure**

Determining just when and by whom the notion of a local university was first mooted is a somewhat arbitrary process. There is a good deal



*Mayor of Odense Holger Larsen is received by Minister of Education Jørgen Jørgensen on 22 January 1959 to present the city's proposals (which were turned down) for a medical faculty in Odense. On the far right of the picture is the city's chief executive officer at the time, Hugo Mayntzhusen. (Photograph: Jacob Maarbjerg, Politikens Pressefoto).*

*From Idea  
to Statute*

to suggest that the idea was first aired locally as early as 1955 by medical superintendent Mogens Lund, but only under semi-private auspices. Dr. Lund moved away from Odense shortly thereafter and nothing further happened until three years later, when in November 1958 another local worthy, the Civil Engineer Jørgen Christensen, submitted to the Town Hall an extensive dossier on his investigations into the project's desirability and feasibility. Jørgen Christensen's material pointed out that by virtue of its size, its thriving commerce, and not least its large, well-functioning hospital, Odense had all the qualifications for providing an appropriate environment for the country's third university, which as a matter of course would include a medical faculty to relieve the pressure on the two already in existence.

In the light of this material the municipal authorities decided to sound out the Government, and on 22 January 1959 the Mayor, Holger Larsen, if without a great deal of optimism, made the trip to Copenhagen for discussions with Minister of Finance Viggo Kampmann and Minister of Education Jørgen Jørgensen. As he half expected he met with a rebuff: the ministers explained that a major relocation of the scientific departments of Copenhagen University to a new site had just got under way, and that plans to expand at Aarhus were under consideration. Against this background the Minister of Education gave it as his view that a third university lay very much in the future. With this emphatic ministerial thumbs-down, Odense's hopes seemed to have died an early death.

#### **Further Ideas on a Faculty of Medicine**

But »seemed« was the operative word, for almost exactly a year later some decidedly more powerful players entered the arena. On 9 January 1960 the Funen Medical Association celebrated the 100th anniversary of its foundation, and the principal speaker at the commemorative gathering, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Johannes Frandsen, took the opportunity to urge the medical associations to work for the setting up of the country's third medical faculty in Odense. The two already in existence, he noted, were hopelessly overcrowded.

The assembly, and later the local press, took up the challenge with enthusiasm, but the same could not be said of Mayor Holger Larsen, who when urged by the Medical Association to lead another delegation to the Government refused on the grounds that the previous year's effort had been in vain. Nonetheless he remarked that things

might look different if he were supplied with convincing concrete evidence that a third medical faculty was indeed urgently needed.

This was therefore the next task, and here, for the first time, the Academic Association comes on the scene. On the initiative of Dr. Jørgen Hæstrup, the historian of the German occupation, this body arranged a round-table conference on 24 March 1960 in the city's Fourth of May hall of residence; its topic: »University Faculties in Odense«, with the Chief Medical Officer and three professors of medicine as the main speakers.

All present supported the idea of a medical faculty in Odense and the evening concluded with the setting up of a working-party with Civil Court Judge H. Ringberg as chairman. This group, which subsequently re-christened itself as the »Odense Faculties Committee«, was to coordinate the efforts being made, but the real work was done in three sub-committees dealing, respectively, with grants and halls of residence, library facilities and public relations, and the documentation of the aforementioned need for a third medical faculty – this last known for short as the »Need Committee«.

In the following months this self-appointed local group engaged in extensive lobbying to promote the cause, but the most tangible result of its efforts was the »Report on the Establishment of a Medical Faculty in Odense«, which was completed in the course of 1960 and offered extensive statistical documentation of the need for a third university. It argued strongly that this should be located in Odense, which was already a centrally-placed town with a strong tradition of education.

Looking back, it is extremely difficult to determine just what significance these local initiatives had in relation to the later decision to found a university in Odense. That they had some influence is likely, but what is beyond all doubt is the positive role played by the local mobilisation – prompted by these initiatives – in solving the many practical problems which cropped up once the decision on the new university and its location had been made. This was the case for example with regard to the unorthodox solution to the university's acute shortage of space in 1966, and in relation to the acquisition of student facilities such as halls of residence and the like. In all these local enterprise was decisive; but the governmental U-turn which led in the space of a few years from Jørgen Jørgensen's flat refusal to his successor, K. Helveg Pedersen's consent, was due to a quite different factor, the

*From Idea to Statute* current plans to relocate the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural College in Odense.

#### **The Plans for the Veterinary and Agricultural College**

These plans, the subject of lively debate in the period 1959-61, stemmed from the situation in Copenhagen. Like most of the capital's institutions of higher education, by the late 1950's the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural College was suffering an acute shortage of space, which, forecasts indicated, would merely grow worse in the future. At the same time there were many who considered it absurd that of all institutions a college of veterinary science and agriculture should be stuck in the middle of a major metropolis, rather than out where the cows were grazing and the crops growing. Hence the plans for a complete or partial relocation away from down-town Frederiksberg.

As a suitable site for relocation the choice lay effectively between Odense and Hillerød, and although the state already owned a couple of large experimental farms in Hillerød, there were nonetheless better arguments in favour of Odense, as the municipal authorities there were quick to point out. For the city had just recently purchased the 130-acre farm Kallerupgård on its south-eastern boundary with a view to urban expansion, and in 1959 had taken out an option on another, the 750-acre Hollufgård whose owner, Gunnar Hansen, was willing to sell. Odense played these cards by offering Minister of Agriculture Karl Skytte the use of Kallerupgård free of charge, and the option on Hollufgård. A new Veterinary and Agricultural College in Odense would therefore have at its disposal a contiguous area of no less than 880 acres in the immediate vicinity of the city.

This decided the matter. On 31 May 1961 the Danish Parliament passed a bill on the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural College which simultaneously catered for expansion and reconstruction of the Frederiksberg site and directed the minister to acquire as soon as possible the land in Odense needed for the institution's later relocation. Accordingly the Ministry of Agriculture shortly afterwards purchased the Hollufgård estate for 5.2 million crowns.

In the event this legislation on the expansion and relocation of the College was effective only with regard to the expansion – in Frederiksberg. Thanks to determined opposition, not least from the College's own staff, the Odense-project was never realized, remaining throughout a flimsy blueprint without real content, although not definitively

abandoned by officialdom until 1968. But despite their lack of reality with regard to the Veterinary and Agricultural College itself these plans had a very real significance in the foundation of Odense University three years later, as they did in the form taken by the university's buildings.

When the idea of a third university cropped up again it was convenient to link it with the plans for the Veterinary and Agricultural College, which could thus be kept afloat a little longer. And the state's owning those large areas on the south-eastern outskirts of Odense without having any immediate use for them also influenced the politicians' thinking. Such considerations doubtless carried some weight when in 1964 it was finally decided that Odense – rather than Haderslev or Ribe – should become the country's third university town.

### **The Overcrowded Universities**

That the notion of a third university actually developed into a realistic possibility was undoubtedly due first and foremost to the high demand for entry to the existing institutions of higher education in the early 1960's, combined with the forecasts that demand would increase further in following years.

Towards the end of the 1950's the baby-boom of the immediate post-war years was advancing through the educational system, including the academically-oriented high schools. Pressure on the system was increased by the steady rise in the proportion of each year-group opting for this form of secondary education, which in most cases led on to higher education. Thus in 1951 4.1% of 18-year-olds sat for the advanced school-leaving certificate qualifying for university entrance, in 1960 5.8%, and in 1963 7.3%. Comparison with Sweden and Norway permitted further growth to be predicted for the following years, with a projected 12-14% of the 18-year-olds qualifying for – and seeking – university entrance in 1970.

This development, which was also related to Denmark's belated transformation from an agricultural to an industrial society, and to the accelerating incursion of girls into the educational system, provoked an explosive growth in the number of school-leavers qualifying for university entrance, which in fact almost doubled between 1959 and 1963, from 3,300 to 6,170. If the forecasts proved accurate there would be 10,000 qualifying for entrance to higher education in 1970.

*From Idea  
to Statute*

An even more alarming picture emerged when planners examined the actual student numbers at the two existing universities. In 1960 a Ministry of Education panel of experts had forecast that by 1964 the number of new students entering the universities would reach 4,000, double the figure from 1959. But this level was reached by 1962, which meant that the panel's forecast of a total of 18,000 students at both universities in about 1970 was decidedly inaccurate. The whole system of higher education was in effect ready to explode in the hands of the politicians. By 1963 it was therefore glaringly obvious that steps must be taken to relieve the two beleaguered universities, which were close to death by suffocation.

#### **Legislation for a Medical Faculty**

For the politicians it was a logical step to combine these numerical realities with the Odense plans, which had themselves taken a somewhat more concrete form in the meantime. For on 16 June 1962 Parliament had passed a bill authorizing the Minister of Education K. Helveg Petersen (Radical-Liberal Party) to approve the foundation of a medical faculty in Odense. This was a response to the ever louder complaints of the professors of medicine about student overcrowding and intolerable working conditions. At the same time the local working-party in Odense, the »Faculties Committee«, had noted in its report of 1960 that in the medical field Denmark was lagging seriously behind the countries with which it liked to compare itself. Thus we had one medical faculty for every 2.3 million citizens, while the corresponding figure for Holland was 1.8 million, for Norway 1.7 million, Sweden 1.5 million, and Switzerland only 1.0 million.

In the parliamentary debate on this legislation it fell to Professor Morten Lange (People's Socialist Party) to make the obvious point that its passing would effectively determine the location of the country's third university in Odense; he added, with reference to the current plans for the Veterinary and Agricultural College, that the next step would evidently be a faculty of natural sciences to provide the necessary bridge between the planned medical faculty and the projected Veterinary and Agricultural College. The idea of a faculty was slowly being transformed into a vision of a university – perhaps a university of biological science. The question was no longer if Odense would get

### **The Statute to Establish Odense University**

*From Idea  
to Statute*

This question was resolved when the University Planning Committee, appointed on 29 June 1962, presented its findings in Report 346 of 23 December 1963. With one dissenting vote this committee, on which the universities as well as the Ministry were represented, concluded that everything pointed to the necessity of founding a third university before the end of the 1960's; that this university, in addition to the medical faculty already planned for Odense, should provisionally include faculties of arts and natural sciences, and finally, that these faculties should not be established as independent institutions but in connection with other forms of advanced research and teaching. The faculty concept was thus definitively abandoned, and replaced by the idea of a university. The report also concluded that in view of the decision already taken on the location of the medical faculty, and in the light of the plans for the Veterinary and Agricultural College, this idea should be brought to fruition in Odense.

This report and its conclusions formed the basis for Education Minister K. Helveg Petersen's introduction into Parliament in March 1964 of a bill providing for the foundation of a university in Odense. The bill's passage was so well managed that on its third reading it was passed by an almost unanimous parliament, with 123 votes in favour, none against, and four abstentions. The bill thus became law, and Odense University, in legal terms, was born.

It was, to be precise, an enabling act, conferring on the Minister of Education the powers to make all necessary decisions to translate the statute's text into reality. This was done with a speed and determination which truly put to shame all conventional wisdom on the inertia of the state's administrative machinery.

### **Necessity or Chance?**

Looking back today – more than 25 years on – the decision to site the university on the rich pastures of the long-departed Killerup farmers may have acquired an aura of inevitability, but this was far from the case at the time. Many spoke strongly in favour of Southern Jutland, and in terms of national development plans Western and Northern Jutland had much to be said for them. Others felt that an expansion of the existing universities in Copenhagen and Aarhus was a preferable option. In comparison with many a major provincial town Oden-

*From Idea to Statute* se's only significant advantage was its large and excellent hospital; library facilities were not particularly good and unlike Aarhus on an earlier occasion Odense could not point to the availability of a large scholarly collection like the Statsbibliotek. So the foundation of Odense University should rather be characterized as the result of a fortunate conjuncture of coincidences, helped along by a fair amount of energetic lobbying by local interests.

The most decisive coincidence perhaps was the fact that Odense had Hollufgaard up its sleeve when the relocation of the Veterinary and Agricultural College became a matter of debate in 1961, and so was able to out-bid Hillerød. In purchasing the land the state made a direct financial commitment and was subsequently easier to hitch to the Odense bandwaggon. Even though the relocation of the Veterinary and Agricultural College remained a mirage throughout the planning phase this may well nonetheless have been the decisive factor which tipped the scales in Odense's favour. At the very least it played an important role in the decision to locate a new medical faculty in Odense, and also supplied grounds for supplementing it with a faculty of natural sciences.

The irony is, of course, that while Odense got its university, in the end the Veterinary and Agricultural College never came. This may merely underline the fortuitous and provisional character of much so-called planning, but in this instance we who are fortunate enough to work at Odense University and enjoy it have reason to be grateful for the outcome.

## 2. From Statute to Reality

### **Enter an Administrator**

In connection with the 1962 legislation on setting up a medical faculty in Odense the Minister of Education had already appointed a working party, chaired by one of the Ministry's permanent undersecretaries, Agnete Vøhtz, which was to resolve the practical problems involved. Known informally as the Odense Committee, it comprised representatives from all the parties involved, including local interests. Much preparatory work was done in this forum in the years 1962-64, and when in 1964 the legislation of 1962 was replaced by the statute on Odense University, the committee's remit was extended to encompass this broader project, whose accomplishment could take advantage of the progress already made.

Preparations did not really get going however until the government decided to assign the task to a single pair of hands, and to this end on 25 July 1964 advertised the position of University Administrator in Odense, the successful applicant to »supervise administrative work in connection with the new university centre and the commencement of teaching at the said institution, according to guidelines laid down by the Ministry of Education«. The appointment was made on 17 September 1964, effective as of 1 November, and the government's choice for this onerous task fell on the then forty-year-old chief of section at the Ministry of Finance, Bengt Bengtson.

A law graduate, Bengtson had excellent administrative qualifications for achieving the task, having since his graduation in 1951 pursued a distinguished career in the most demanding of the national ministries. Furthermore from the onset in Odense he displayed an enthusiasm, a talent for unorthodox solutions and a practical turn of mind which pushed the planning ahead in leaps and bounds and which brought him the local accolade of »Mr. University« – the man from whom a daily ration of the impossible could be confidently expected and for whom even miracles took only a short time.

*From Statute  
to Reality*

Bengtson's results, achieved with the help of a minimal staff, did not disappoint these great expectations. Scarcely two years after his appointment the university was a reality, and in 1971 he could style himself University Director. By now however the excitement and challenges of the happy start-up days were passing into history, and the workaday world of the university had gradually settled into a routine which did not consort well with Bengtson's pioneering instincts. So in 1973 he resigned to take up the post of Health and Social Services Director for the County of Funen, which at this time was in the process of rapid expansion, and he was replaced as University Director by the 47-year-old Bent Egede Fich, a principal officer from the Ministry of Education. Bengtson's undeniable achievement was the transformation of Odense University from a bundle of files in the domestic wardrobe to a substantial institution, whose permanent buildings were slowly going up on the fields of Killerup. The route from the one to the other was short, hectic, and liberally sprinkled with the improvisations at which Bengtson proved himself a master.



*As a physical entity Odense University began as no more than a couple of rented offices in Odense's Town Hall, from which University Administrator Bengt Bengtson ruled his tiny but growing empire. The first time the university's name figured on a doorplate (on 22 February 1965) was naturally a signal event, and it is here proudly displayed by Mr. and Mrs. Bengtson to two of the strongest champions of the university's foundation, Civil Engineer Jørgen Christensen (far left) and Dr. Jørgen Hæstrup. (Fyns Pressefoto).*



*The Academic Association for the Diocese of Funen was founded in 1964 and provided a valuable link between the authorities and the local community during the planning phase, contributing actively to the solution of practical problems such as the shortage of halls of residence. The association's first chairman, Dr. Jørgen Hæstrup (second from right) is here shown in discussion with (from the left) Building Society Director Knud Andersen, University Administrator Bengt Bengtson, and (far right) Civil Engineer Jørgen Christensen. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

And improvisation was certainly needed when, accompanied only by two secretaries, Bengtson moved into the modest office in Odense Town Hall which was to be the home of Odense University for the next two years. For in the light of the explosive increase in university admissions it was the government's desire that Odense University open its doors as early as 1965, or at the latest on 1 September 1966. This was in itself an outrageously short time-scale, and the situation was further exacerbated by the circumstance that in the field of higher education the basis for all forward planning, both locally and nationally, was extremely uncertain.

#### **Planning amidst Uncertainties**

For it was precisely at this period that the structure of the universities was emerging as a major topic of debate. In other countries there was lively experimentation with totally new organizational structures for both research and teaching, and in Denmark too serious questions were being asked about the advisability of the conventional divisions

*From Statute  
to Reality*



*Exactly a year before it opened its doors Minister of Education K.B. Andersen visited Odense to view the buildings going up to house the new university. He is pictured here on 1 September 1965 on the building site that in the year that followed became the Technical College's E-Wing, the university's first home; in the background can be glimpsed Hinderupgaard, which later housed the Students' Union. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

between institutions and faculties, not to mention government by professors. There was instead a swelling chorus in favour of academic centres cutting across the old academic boundaries. But despite a general unanimity on the necessity of change there was little agreement on precisely how it should be achieved.

This applied equally to Odense University, concerning which the authorities made vague noncommittal noises about the desirability of establishing a broadly-based centre, and accordingly christened the new institution Odense University Centre, but in practice it was left entirely to Bengtson and his staff to determine the shape such abstraction should acquire in reality. And there was still the uncertainty about the Veterinary and Agricultural College. Despite the legislation enacting its relocation to Odense, it became more and more obvious as time went by that this was unlikely to happen in the short term, if indeed at all, but for planning purposes it had to be assumed the move would take place.

Then finally there were the innumerable practical problems involved in starting something from scratch. For example a functioning University Library had to be established as soon as possible, in itself a task of Herculean dimensions; suitable temporary premises had to be found for the university while the permanent buildings were under construction; accommodation at halls of residence had to be provided for the anticipated influx of students; staff had to be appointed to work out degree curricula and build up research programmes.

#### **The Technical College Assists**

Accommodation for the university itself was the most urgent of these problems, since it was out of the question to await the construction of a permanent site whose size and shape were as yet something of a mystery. More or less realistic solutions contemplated in rapid succession at this time included temporary hire of the town's cinemas, of one or more of the city schools, and even of the Vegetable Growers' Association's auction hall: all proved on closer inspection too costly, impractical, or both. It was Odense City Architect Bent Christiansen, who at a meeting with Bengtson on 9 December 1964 came up with the unexpectedly simple solution connected with the Technical College, which in the following months met with the approval of all involved parties.

In 1961 Odense Technical College had commenced its move to a new suburban location on Hjallesvej, and by 1964 was well under way with the second phase of the major building works involved. It was already evident that a third phase, involving the construction of a further teaching wing (3,600 square metres) and a laboratory block (1,500 square metres), would soon be needed. In all its brilliant simplicity Christiansen's suggestion involved bringing forward this third phase to become a direct continuation of the second phase of building currently under way: the buildings could then be leased to the University until such time as the Technical College had need of them. This way the College got its new buildings put up in very good time, and, most significantly for present purposes, the University met its acute need for accommodation.

The various authorities implicated in the project proved both sympathetic and flexible, and by March 1965 Bengtson had successfully negotiated agreements with all parties. Out on the Tech site the builders and craftsmen could move straight on from phase two of the

*From Statute  
to Reality*

construction work to stage three, which would be ready to receive the first intake of students on 1 September 1966. This was indeed the case, and in this way »E-Wing« of the Technical College was the university's home during the first five years of its existence: cosy enough, although not all students appreciated parking their bicycles in the cellar also designated to receive the odd bits and pieces on their way to dissection in the Anatomy Department.

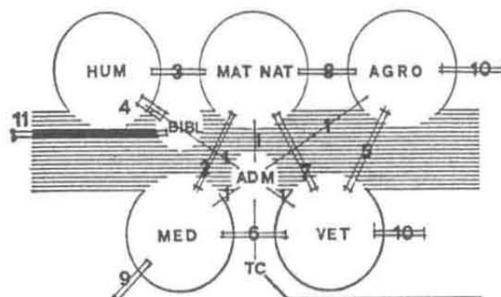
### **A Pan-Scandinavian Design Competition**

But if finding temporary accommodation was one problem, the long-term planning of the permanent physical environment for the completed university was another, and of a quite different character, requiring a fair amount of foresight, forethought, and appeal to experience elsewhere. In view of the complex and comprehensive nature of the task, after some initial hesitation the three Ministries involved – Culture (the University Library), Education (the University) and



*Architect (later Professor) Knud Holscher, with Mrs. Holscher, in front of a sketch of the project which won the design competition for the permanent buildings for Odense University. The picture was taken at the end of September 1966 in connection with the presentation of the prize of 150,000 Danish crowns. Knud Holscher's design, which is characterized by its extensive use of concrete and steel, was later also awarded the timber industry's Træprisen.*

*The basic concept in architect Holscher's design was a centre-structure in which a common administration and library provided a central link between the future Agricultural and Veterinary College and the University's faculties. The reality turned out to be rather different.*



*From Statute  
to Reality*

Agriculture (the Veterinary and Agricultural College) – opted for a pan-Scandinavian competition for designs for the project. The prospectus for the competition was published on 11 March 1966, with a closing date as early as the following 15 September, timed to coincide with the official inauguration of the new university. The terms of the competition were limited to the design of an integrated centre-building on the site previously acquired for the projected Veterinary and Agricultural College. It did not encompass the buildings alongside the Hospital which, in accordance with an earlier decision, were to house the clinical institutes of the Faculty of Medicine.

Winner of the competition, selected from among 42 entries, was the design submitted by the firm of Krohn and Hartvig Rasmussen, with Professor Knud Holscher as architect in chief. So it was this design which, if in a somewhat reduced format, slowly grew through the years 1971-83 into the substantial complex of buildings which we now associate with the name of Odense University. Occasion will be taken later to discuss further this monument to Danish education policy of the 1960's. In 1966 it was still only a few lines on paper with as much potential reality as the proverbial two birds in the bush: more significant for the moment was the bird in the hand, the availability of temporary premises at the Technical College. It was this that met the most important precondition for commencing teaching on 1 September 1966.

### **The University Library**

Another important precondition however was the establishment of a University Library, and this too was very much a race against time. If, as a vice-chancellor remarked on a later occasion, the Library's books

*From Statute  
to Reality*

were the oxygen-supply of research, breathing was at a critically shallow level in these early days. For in the absence of any existing substantial collection of scholarly books Odense had to start from scratch. In this context the willingness of numerous Funen squires to permit access to the numerous old books in their private libraries for research purposes was not a major factor, any more than the generous offers of learned societies and academic libraries elsewhere in the country to contribute their duplicate copies to the new University Library. Establishing a functioning academic library on a scientific basis is a long-term affair, and in this respect Odense was starting far too late.

The silver lining on this particular cloud was the Ministry of Culture's decision on 1 September 1965 to appoint the 43-year-old Torkil Olsen as the first Chief Librarian of Odense University Library, and to assign to him the task of establishing a working University Library in Odense in what would have to be record time. A university gradu-



*Several Funen squires kindly offered to make their private libraries available to the new university. The chairman of the Academic Association, Dr. Jørgen Hæstrup, is pictured here in the library of Sande-rungaard in 1965. Apart from the moral support it implied this noble gesture probably had little practical significance. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

*On 1 March 1966 the University Library moved to its own premises in the former shirt factory on Islandsgade. Chief Librarian Torkil Olsen is here seen receiving the catalogue of the library of the Studentforening, whose approximately 60,000 volumes had been incorporated into the new University Library a short time previously. (Fyns Pressefoto).*



*From Statute  
to Reality*

ate, Torkil Olsen had had experience of a university library as a librarian in Copenhagen, and had experienced building a new scholarly library following his appointment in 1957 as Senior Librarian at the Risø Research Laboratories of the Danish Atomic Energy Commission. To this double qualification for handling the task awaiting him in Odense can be added a drive and a talent for improvising which neatly matched that of the University Administrator.

With a modest budget and a small but steadily growing staff he managed, in an astonishingly short time and with considerable creativity, to make Odense Library a going concern, quickly developing into a smoothly functioning facility for the University's Departments. By the time the University opened in 1966 the Library's holdings had already topped 100,000 volumes. At that time the Chief Librarian was lord of an annual budget of 1.6 million Danish crowns and a staff of 23; by the end of 1989 the holdings had increased to 853,000 volumes, and the staff (measured in full-time positions) to 80. The major credit for this astonishing development must go to Torkil Olsen.

For the beginning was modest in the extreme: three small offices and some basement rooms at Odense Hospital. There was of course never any chance of room being found in the Technical College's E-Wing for this rapidly expanding institution, but at the beginning of 1966 the State acquired the premises of a defunct Shirt Factory on Islandsgade in the inner city, which for a relatively modest outlay could be converted into a library. This therefore became the University Library's address for the years to follow, until it began its slow pilgrimage towards the campus, a process that was not completed until 1977.

#### **Halls of Residence**

Another important problem calling for speedy action was the lack of places in halls of residence. The outlook was not encouraging: an enquiry conducted by Bengtson's colleague, Assistant Registrar Jørgen Steen Larsen, in September 1966 revealed that in Odense some 3,000 young people were studying at the city's various institutions of further education. Of these about 800 were married, and of the unmarried some 1,200 were living away from home. For the first category no provision at all was made in the city, while for the last there were but two halls of residence (the Technical College's Hall on Jagtvej and the 4th of May Hall on Østerbæksvej) with only 200 places between them. This was insufficient as things were, and would be hopelessly inadequate for the inrush of University students expected in the coming years. Even in comparison with Copenhagen and Aarhus, where the situation was anyway far from satisfactory, Odense scored badly. In Copenhagen a place at a hall of residence could be offered to 14% of the city's students; in Aarhus 11%. The corresponding figure for Odense was only 8%: something clearly had to be done, and done quickly.

#### **The H.C. Ørsted Hall of Residence**

When the local pressure-group, the »Odense Faculties Committee«, started work back in 1960 it at once appointed a sub-committee to look at student grants and halls of residence, which in turn spawned a 35-man »Committee for the Foundation of Student Halls of Residence in Odense«. Under the chairmanship of the Jørgen Christensen



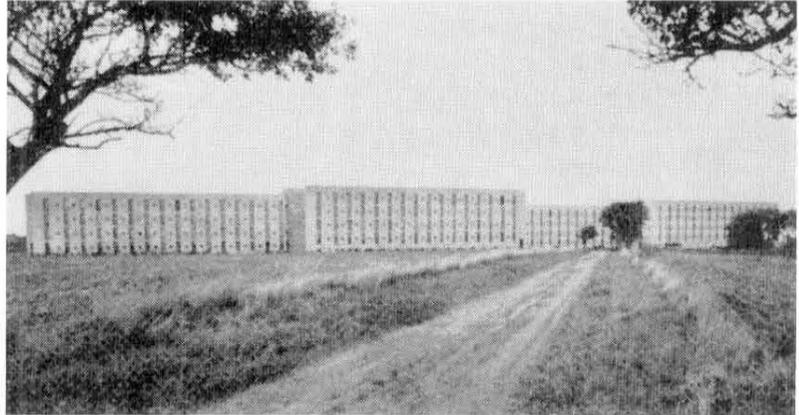
*There was a good deal of revolutionary waving of red flags at the opening of the H.C. Ørsted Hall of Residence on 17 May 1969. The fairly peaceful-looking demonstrator is here flanked by three of the key people in the hall's construction, the chairman of the Halls of Residence Committee, Civil Engineer Jørgen Christensen, the building's architect, Royal Inspector of Works Jørgen Stærmose, and the chairman of the buildings committee, retired Building Society Director Aage Jensen. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

mentioned previously it managed over the next few years to collect 3 million Danish crowns to this end, which it placed at the disposal of the committee's building group, a trio of local heavyweights – Mayor Holger Larsen, Contractor H. Møller-Jørgensen, and Aage Jensen, Managing Director of a major building society.

The whole complex of buildings, situated between the Technical College and the forthcoming campus site and named after the legendary Danish scientist H.C. Ørsted, was opened with a party for officials and new residents in May 1969. It housed altogether 560 students in single and married quarters, at a single blow trebling the number of places available in Odense.

But if those who had initiated and contributed to this substantial project had anticipated unqualified gratitude on the part of its beneficiaries, the student residents, they were to be disappointed. For while

*From Statute  
to Reality*



*The completed H.C. Ørsted Hall of Residence as it looked in the autumn of 1968. When it was opened the rent for a single room was 230 Danish crowns per month, 380 crowns (including light and heating) for a one and a half room flat in the single storey complex alongside it. (Nyt).*

it was abuilding the age of youth and student revolts had dawned, and a critical, condemnatory attitude to the establishment and all forms of authority was a must for any self-respecting young person. And in the eyes of some students at least the well-intentioned people behind the hall of residence project evidently represented just such capitalistic forces. In the days following the inauguration party the newspapers reported vandalism at the hall with overtones of this sort. In the small hours of the festive night unknown culprits had poured corrosive acid over the large bronze plaque commemorating the donors who had contributed to the project, necessitating extensive repair-work.

This did not, fortunately, put a stop to further initiatives, and the following years saw the construction of several new halls of residence – Rasmus Rask Hall close to the Teacher Training College in Bolbro for example, and most recently Thomas B. Thrige Hall on the University grounds – so that today Odense compares favourably with both Copenhagen and Aarhus with regard to the provision of student accommodation.

**The First Teachers**

Thanks to these community initiatives the matter of student accommodation did not unduly burden the University's administration, which was consequently all the more in a position to focus its attention on the final outstanding task, the appointment of the first team of

teachers. This meant first and foremost full professors, who under the administrative conditions prevailing at the time as individuals would be petty kings in their own departments and as a group the supreme legislative assembly for the university as a whole. So before they were appointed little further could be done with regard to practical policy-making.

It was envisaged that Odense University would initially comprise two faculties, of arts and medicine, respectively, and only later would the latter be split into separate faculties of medicine and natural sciences. The Ministry of Education accordingly applied to the Ministry of Finance on 24 March 1965 for 14 professorships to be included in the state budget for 1966-67, nine in the humanities and five in medicine/science. Approval by the relevant ministerial and parliamentary bodies was forthcoming by 26 June, after which the appointments procedure could be set in motion.

This in due course produced a team of professors of a somewhat youthful character compared to the equivalent groups in Copenhagen and Aarhus. Their average age on appointment was 42, with a distinct predominance of the 35-45 age-group. Only three were significant ex-



*The first four to be appointed to professorships at their first meeting at Odense Town Hall on 7 February 1966. Joined here by Chief Librarian Torkil Olsen and Administrator Bengt Bengtson (standing) they are, from left to right: Evling Ladewig Petersen (History), Bengt Algot Sørensen (Germanic Philology), Niels Åge Nielsen (Nordic Languages) and Kristine Heltberg (Slavonic Philology). (Fyns Pressefoto).*

ceptions to this rule: Søren Skovgaard Jensen (Classics), who at 29 was one of the youngest professors in the modern history of the Danish universities, and at the other extreme Niels Åge Nielsen (Scandinavian Languages) and Henning Krabbe (English), 53 and 60, respectively. At the time of his appointment Niels Åge Nielsen had no formal attachment to the university world, being a Senior Librarian at the State Library in Aarhus, but was nonetheless extremely familiar with its ways, having long occupied a research post at the University of Aarhus. Henning Krabbe in contrast was a high school teacher in Copenhagen, having no particular connection with the universities. On appointment all the remainder were well into classic careers in higher education, being teachers and researchers at university departments or scientific laboratories, and no fewer than eight of the twelve had qualified for the country's highest – doctoral – degree (and they were joined by a ninth, Skovgaard Jensen, shortly after his appointment). It was in other words a young and well-qualified group of academics who formed the core of the first team of professors in Odense. And with the exception of Niels Åge Nielsen and Bengt Algot Sørensen all were graduates of the University of Copenhagen: a lopsided pattern of recruitment which may have reflected the relative sizes of the two older universities. At all events the new University in Odense was dominated from the outset by Copenhagen's way of looking at things, as the first degree curricula clearly show, and for many years scholarly relations with Copenhagen remained a good deal more lively than those with Aarhus.

#### **Open for Business**

In the months leading up to the commencement of teaching on 1 September 1966 the newly appointed professors met regularly to work out joint guidelines for the extent and content of curricula in the various disciplines. Although there was much discussion at precisely this period on undertaking a thorough reorganization of university studies along the lines of the Anglo-Saxon bachelor-master-sequence, pressure of time led to Odense adopting something very like the degree structure obtaining in Copenhagen and Aarhus, although with some adjustments designed to reduce both the drop-out rate and the time students would take to complete their degrees. Perhaps the most radical change was the requirement that students in the humanities should



*The newly elected first Vice-Chancellor of Odense University, Professor Mogens Brøndsted, photographed 13 August, two days after his election, in front of a window in the Technical College's E-Wing. Professor Brøndsted was to deploy the authority of his office with great skill during the next five busy years of the university's development. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

start their minor subject concurrently with their major; a point was also made of giving students opportunity to express opinions on their studies on the academic boards which were to be established. It was also intended that students should have a voice on the university's governing bodies – if as yet with no vote, current legislation on university administration assigning the right to govern exclusively to full professors.

These cautious moves in the general direction of democracy provided the basis for the vigorous campaign conducted by the professorial team and administrator Bengtson in the course of the summer to market the new institution as a students' university: the place where their needs would be central. While clearly a genuine declaration of intent, this was equally an attempt to create a distinct image and to attract

*From Statute to Reality* customers to the new academic supermarket whose shelves were slowly filling with goods.

One thing remained to be done, however, before the doors to this educational emporium could be thrown open: the election of a vice-chancellor to be responsible for leadership within the university and to represent it in its relations with the authorities and the world outside. Under the rules obtaining at the time he was to be elected by and from among the full professors, and at a gathering on 11 August the choice fell on Mogens Brøndsted, 48, Professor of Scandinavian Literature. He thus became the first vice-chancellor of the new university, and in the following five busy years of construction and expansion performed in a competent and worthy manner the onerous duties incumbent on this position.

### 3. The »Students' University« gets its Students

#### **Freshman Reception**

So on Wednesday, 31 August 1966, the first intake of students invaded the new university, which had been heralded in the press as the »students' university« – in implied contrast to those benighted citadels of professorial oligarchy in Copenhagen and Aarhus. »Invaded« is perhaps too strong a term for the 180 young hopefuls who in the course of the summer had decided to try the exciting new world of Odense University rather than the familiar and overcrowded world of the existing institutions.

An initial intake of 180 students was in fact a pretty reasonable start, far better than what might have been expected from the journa-

*This unpretentious signpost, here subjected to the admiring gaze of Administrator Bengtson in early August 1966, pointed the way to Odense University's first home, the E-Wing of Odense Technical College. Its advice was soon to be followed by the university's first 180 students. (Fyns Pressefoto).*



*The »Students'  
University« gets  
its Students*

listic prophecies of doom of the summer, according to which hardly a single genuine student would turn up in Odense at the start of the academic year. These had been based on an investigation undertaken during the spring into the intentions of the matriculating classes at the country's high schools, which revealed that of the 8,000 pupils approaching the end of their school education only 52 were thinking of studying in Odense. This prompted the inevitable headlines of the sort, »Students' University Let Down by Students«, but in the event this did not happen; on the contrary, because of the obvious capacity limitations at this stage a number of applicants to the medical degree programmes had to be rejected and referred to Aarhus and Copenhagen.

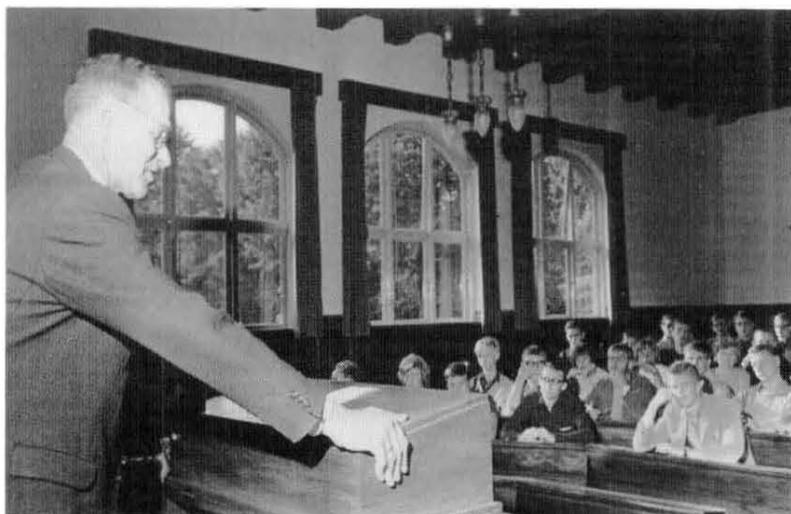
On the other hand the figure lay comfortably below what Administrator Bengtson and his staff had feared, that is a real »invasion« of students which would have swamped the limited resources available. The teaching staff was still small, and the rooms in the wing of the Technical College suitable for only smallish classes. A massive turnout would have led to an impossible situation and made the start even more fraught than it turned out to be.

Of the 180 student-pioneers who this Wednesday made their collective way to listen to the speeches of welcome in the great hall of the Technical College 59 had chosen medicine as their field, 105 a subject within the humanities, while 16 were still undecided. They had made their choice, but precisely what it entailed only the future would show.

In the meantime there was the freshman reception (not to be confused with the later matriculation ceremonies), which in the spirit of the »students' university« concept had been arranged by the University's (understandably provisional) Students' Council. Similarly in the spirit of the democracy and emancipation which were also to characterize the new university the reception – after speeches of welcome and advice – concluded with a quintessential Danish folk-ritual: social drinking at public (in this case the Student Council's) expense. Thus replete with beer and best wishes the new students could look forward to starting the real business of the term.

#### **Getting Started**

38 The University had made a particular point of starting regular classes on exactly 1 September, as an emphatic demonstration that here was



*The »Students'  
University« gets  
its Students*

*The first working day, 1 September 1966. Because of the numbers involved Professor David Favrhøldt's obligatory philosophy course for all students had initially to be conducted at the Dalum Agricultural College, whose Director, Vagn Fog-Petersen, is here seen welcoming the new university students. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

an effective institution that didn't waste time: this was also an implied thrust at the two older universities, which tended to let the start of teaching drift deeper and deeper into September. One break was allowed however, for the formal matriculation ceremony which was to be held in connection with the official opening celebrations on Thursday 15 September.

#### **The Opening Celebrations**

The University authorities, after much deliberation, had decided to celebrate the University's opening as close to the beginning of September as possible. There had been some thought of postponing it until the University was ready to move into its own, permanent buildings, but it was impossible to predict when this might be, and anyway it could be anticipated that the move would be a gradual one, making it difficult to choose the right moment; the idea had therefore been abandoned in favour of a day as close as possible to the starting date.

For practical reasons this proved to be September 15, and among the many guests at the inauguration were members of the royal family, several ministers and members of parliament, the latter particularly

*The »Students'  
University« gets  
its Students*



*Accompanied by Minister of Education K.B. Andersen, His Majesty King Frederik IX arrives at the university's inaugural celebration on 15 September 1966, and can here be seen shaking hands with Professor E. Ladewig Petersen, just recently elected as Dean of the Humanities Faculty. The latter is flanked by professors Kristine Heltberg and Niels Åge Nielsen, while to the far right can be seen Vice-Chancellor Mogens Brøndsted together with other members of the Royal Family. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

from Funen constituencies, local politicians and officials, representatives of the country's other institutions of higher education, the University's own staff, and, predictably at the »students' university«, students; all in all an assembly of over 600 people.

**The Vice-Chancellor's Chain of Office**

Among the speakers was the Mayor of Odense, Holger Larsen, who used the occasion to present the city's gift to its new University: a gold chain of office for the vice-chancellor with a handsome pendant bearing the University's crest and motto in gold against a background of blue enamel, and wrought by one of the city's most distinguished goldsmiths, C. Antonsen. In his speech of thanks on the University's behalf the newly elected vice-chancellor, Professor Mogens Brøndsted, interpreted the motto and the symbolism of the crest, a task for which, having been mainly responsible for both, he was well qualified and well prepared.

The crest took the form of a stylised, richly laden apple tree, circumscribed with the Latin sentence *Fructus Increscit Opera Novo in Agro*, which can be translated as »The Fruit Grows as we Cultivate the New Field«. Its appropriateness is enhanced by the further subtlety that the initial letters form the Latin word for Funen, *FIONIA*: a highly effective symbolism.

The same applies to the apple-tree symbol, which Rektor Brøndsted compared to the crests of the two older universities. Copenhagen has its eagle, its gaze lifted to distant heights, while Aarhus's two dolphins plumb uncharted depths. Odense's fruitful apple tree was in contrast firmly rooted in the good Funen earth – the new field – from whence its branches would spread out twixt orchard and hopgarden. Thus the new university's philosophy was precisely formulated in the symbolism of its crest. The latter has since been used diligently as the logo of the University's in-house newspaper, *Nyt*, as the official letterhead, and embossed on the medals awarded for prize-winning essays.

The vice-chancellors of Copenhagen and Aarhus briefly conveyed



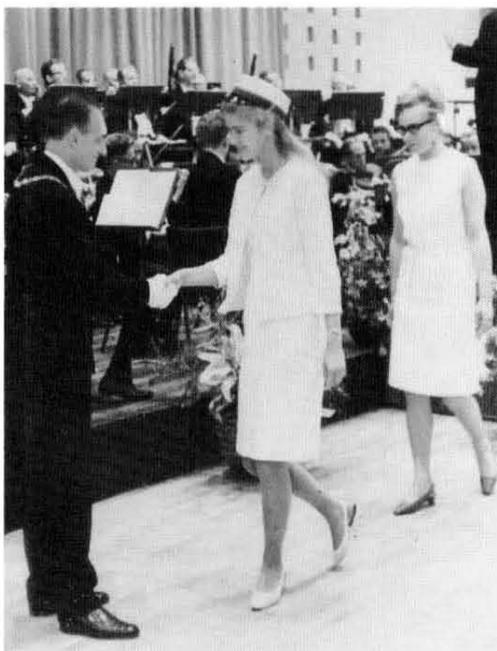
*Mayor of Odense Holger Larsen presents the city's gift – the vice-chancellor's golden chain of office – to Professor Brøndsted, who as the first to occupy the position received it on the university's behalf. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

*The »Students'  
University« gets  
its Students*

the best wishes of their universities, and in an unexpected contribution not envisioned by the official programme His Majesty King Frederik advanced to the podium to declare the new university well and truly open and to wish it good luck.

### **Matriculation**

The final feature was the matriculation of the students, symbolized by a handshake from the vice-chancellor, and this part of the inauguration concluded to the tones of Brahms' Academic Festival Overture. Participants could now draw breath for a couple of hours before the next item of the agenda, the gala performance at Odense Theatre. Those not dashing off to get into their party best could kill time by examining the little publication which had been placed on all the seats in the Technical College hall, the pamphlet »Odense University: From Concept to Reality«, prepared on the initiative of the Academic Association for the Funen Diocese. Under the editorship of Knud Mortensen, headmaster of a local high school, it offered a brief account of the university's short history up to the recent start of teaching. The point was made that Odense could claim to be an old university town, on the



*A formal handshake from the vice-chancellor (acknowledged by an efficient curtsy) at the matriculation ceremony during the inauguration celebrations. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

basis of the Odense Grammar School founded by King Christian IV in 1623 and dissolved in 1802: a truth to be taken with a fairly generous grain of salt, but digestable enough on such a festive occasion.

The pamphlet was however remarkable for a quite different reason, being in effect the first publication under the imprint of Odense University Press, which had been founded a few days previously as a joint venture between the University and a local printer, Andelsbogtrykkeriet. Its first director was Chief Librarian Torkil Olsen, and in the course of the next 25 years it established itself as one of the country's most enterprising midwives in the production of scholarly publications of every variety.

*The »Students'  
University« gets  
its Students*

### **A Regal Soirée**

The next stage of the inaugural junketings was the gala performance of Ibsen's »Hedda Gabler« at Odense Theatre. The theatre had originally planned to present Goethe's »Urfaust«, but the premiere at the end of August had been so slated by the critics that it was removed from the bill in favour of the tried and tested Ibsen production.

There followed a supper and dance at Odense Town Hall, and thus refreshed the guests could take themselves off to bed, and the new university get back in earnest to the daily grind out on that new field, which in keeping with the spirit of the times was soon to be renamed, American-style, »Campus«.

But for the time being conditions were modest in the extreme: two minifaculties manned by 12 professors and 25 teachers of other ranks; a small administration which had not merely to manage the daily tasks but plan future expansion on a budget of about 5 million crowns; 180 students; 5,100 square metres of rented floorspace in the Technical College's E-Wing and adjacent laboratory block which would have to be vacated on expiry of the five-year lease. From these modest beginnings the university started its rapid expansion and its slow leap-frogging from the Technical College to Campus and – in the case of some medical departments – to the area of the hospital.



## 4. Life Under Larsen's Law

### **Structural Problems and Student Revolt**

Odense University was founded at a time when the whole fabric of Danish society was under strain from the emergence of the new industrial civilization. In increasing numbers young people from traditional, rural communities migrated to the towns to seek their fortune in the growing industrial sector, or to acquire an education. The latter was consequently the goal of an increasing number of young people from non-academic backgrounds, who thereby also contributed to the explosive growth in education which characterized the sixties, and which in turn was greatly encouraged by the confidence in the blessings of education evinced not least by the leading Social Democrats of the time. Denmark's largest political party worked purposefully to open a hitherto elitist system of higher education to all young people qualified to benefit from it, whatever their social background. Such a policy ruled out any notion of restricted entry – on the contrary the whole idea was to admit as many qualified applicants as possible: the result was among other things the chronic overcrowding of the higher education sector which provoked the hasty establishment of Odense University.

This massive influx of young people, of whom many hailed from non-academic backgrounds, was like a time-bomb under the traditional university system, which had been developed to serve the needs of a small elite, whose upbringing had been designed precisely to prepare them for these studies, which in turn would qualify them for leading positions in society. It might be said that the massive influx of students presupposed educational mass production at a time when the universities were still at the craftsmanship phase. This produced tensions which had to be released in an explosion, and it came in 1968.

The structural problems within the Danish system of higher education had their parallels throughout the Western world, and perhaps most acutely in France, where the distance between a fossilized uni-

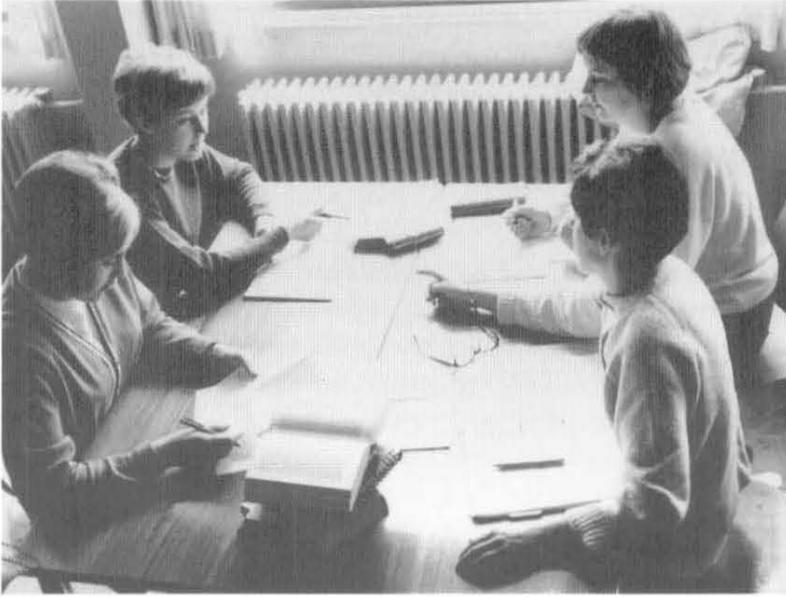
versity system and the demand for renewal was probably greatest. And the rebellious alliance of May 1968 between the Parisian students and discontented industrial workers provoked the great wave of unrest which has gone down in history as the student revolt. It was everywhere the signal for long-needed, thorough structural reforms.

In Denmark the revolt was far from manifesting itself in the violent character it displayed in France and Germany, although the University of Copenhagen did manage a few departmental sit-ins, and Vice-Chancellor Mogens Fog had to put up with a number of students making free of the official cigar-box and the VIP sherry. The relatively peaceful character of developments in these latitudes was due first and foremost to the failure to establish an effective alliance between students and workers – the hold of the Social Democrats on the trade unions being too strong a hindrance – as well as to the policy of appeasement adopted from the outset by the Danish authorities in contrast to their French and German counterparts: a policy which in the opinion of many conceded to the young rebels everything they asked for, sometimes almost before they had finished asking.

#### **The Strike of the Dons and the Statute on University Administration**

Doubtless just as important as the student revolt was the incipient unrest among the academic staff, which culminated in the lecturers' strike of the autumn of 1969 – the first of its kind – and which together with the student troubles gave the Liberal/Conservative/Radical-Liberal coalition government of the day a considerable scare. One of the declared aims of the strike was to force through the effective participation of non-professorial staff in the running of universities and other institutions of higher education: the iniquitous professorial oligarchy must be replaced and influence extended to include both junior academic staff and students. In this the campaign was more successful than anyone could have imagined: despite being the victim of one of the most spiteful campaigns of personal vilification of recent times Education Minister Helge Larsen (Radical-Liberal) was willing to go a long way to meet these demands for wider participation. The result was the completely new legal situation created by the statute of 4 June 1970 on the governing of universities.

46 Among the innovations established by the statute was the equality between all grades of academic staff with regard to the governing of



*Abandoned students trying to learn German without a teacher during the lecturers' strike in the autumn of 1969. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

the universities, with only the posts of vice-chancellor and pro vice-chancellor reserved to the holders of professorial chairs. But if this was the legislators' concession to the previous year's rebellious lecturers the students were not forgotten either, for the statute formally granted them representation on the governing bodies, where they were to occupy 33% of the places as against the academic staff's 67%. In the councils governing the individual departments this influence had however to be shared with the technical and administrative personnel, but on the other hand the students were accorded 50% of the places in the academic boards which determined the content and structure of each degree programme.

Thus the statute put an end to the era of professorial monopoly on power within the universities, and even its last bastion, the positions of vice-chancellor and pro vice-chancellor, fell with Parliament's revision of the statute in 1973. With a few minor modifications the statute has ever since provided the basis for the so-called self-government of institutions of higher education – »so-called« since from the end of the 1970's this autonomy has become increasingly illusory thanks to the increasingly heavy-handed interference of the Ministry of Education.

*Life under  
Larsen's Law*

This takes the form for instance of procedures for ministerial budgeting right down to the level of the individual faculty, and the systematic diversion of research funding from the individual institutions to central funds for which project-specific application must be made to the Research Councils.

#### **The Revised Statute of 1973**

Such developments were not however anticipated when the statute was revised in 1973, and indeed the revision aimed at reinforcing autonomy by further broadening representation on the governing bodies. Revision as early as 1973 was anticipated in the 1970 statute, which included a clause specifying a three-year trial period.

The parliamentary deliberations thus facilitated produced three significant changes. The first was an extension of the statute's application to all institutions of higher education rather than, as in 1970, just the universities. The desirability of such an extension had been expressed in the parliamentary debates accompanying the passing of the 1970 statute, but nothing came of it, perhaps because the pressure from the other institutions had not been as insistent as that from the universities. In the meantime – to the surprise of many – neither the world nor the universities had come to an end as a result of the changes. Indeed from the perspective of the politicians the statute had proved an invaluable lightning conductor, diverting conflicts along set, institutional channels, and by and large confining them to the individual institutions. The legislators' divide and rule policy had in other words proved so successful that any notion of returning to the pre-1970 system could be left out of consideration.

#### **The Third Estate**

The second innovation in the revised statute of 1973 was the abolition, already referred to, of the full professors' monopoly on the posts of vice-chancellor and pro vice-chancellor. Eligibility and voting rights with regard to both were now extended to encompass lecturers in tenured appointments, and this change had practical consequences in Odense as early as the following year, when a lecturer in history, Aage Trommer, was elected to succeed Professor Franz Bierring as vice-chancellor. Dr. Trommer was therefore the first lecturer to grace this position, and in fact lecturers have provided all vice-chancellors and most pro vice-chancellors in Odense ever since. With Copenhagen as

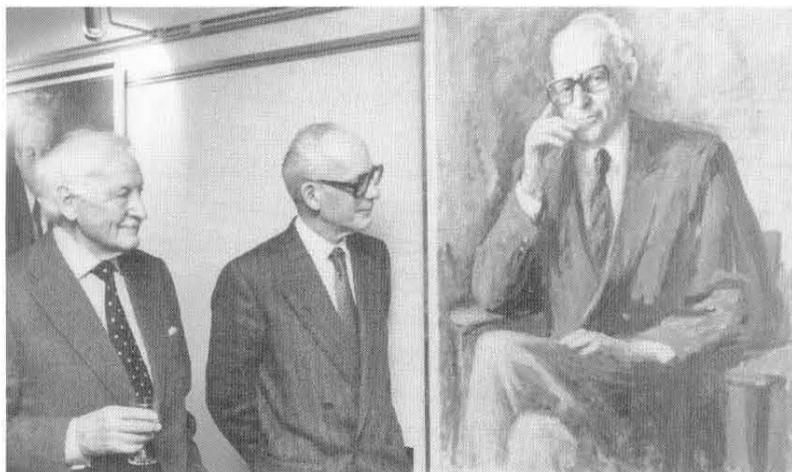
the single significant exception this has gradually been the case also at the other universities, in the course of time prompting some to opine that the statute merely replaced the ancien régime of the professors with a new oligarchy of lecturers. This is in some ways true, but hardly surprising, given the equality the statute established between the professors and the far more numerous lecturers.

On the other hand the statute created divisions on a quite different axis, bringing us to the third major innovation in 1973: the addition of a third estate to the two – teachers and students – which already formed the constituencies of the governing bodies. This third estate comprised the technical and administrative personnel, a hitherto ignored, and highly variegated, group of fellow workers – from the youngest messenger, through secretaries and laboratory technicians to the administrative chiefs – who ensured the day to day running of the whole business. This unobtrusive but highly necessary class of employees was first granted formal participation in the running of their workplace with the 1973 revisions of the statute on the government of the universities.

The background to this development was primarily pressure from the trades unions of the technical and administrative personnel, who wished their members to exert an influence commensurate with that of the students. The latter, after all, attended a particular educational institution for only a limited number of years, while the technical and administrative personnel formed part of the regular establishment, on a par with the tenured teaching staff. Their demand for participation consequently met a good deal of understanding both among politicians and at the educational institutions, and was also very much in line with the growing trend in the private sector at that time towards worker participation. And in the event later history was to prove the wisdom of the 1973 revision according statutory influence to the technical and administrative personnel: during the long, hot, ideology-ridden years of the student revolt this group provided a responsible and stabilizing factor in a sometimes extremely tumultuous existence.

To make room for this new constituency both teachers and students had to concede places in both the Senate and the Faculty Boards. In these, under the 1970 statute, the ratio of academic staff to students had been 2 to 1. Under the revised statute the general rule was that academic staff should occupy half the seats, while technical and administrative personnel and students should share the remaining half

*Life under  
Larsen's Law*



*It has become a tradition that on the completion of their terms of office university vice-chancellors should have their portraits painted, and the picture hung in the Senate chamber. This picture juxtaposes the portrait of Dr. Aage Trommer, Vice-Chancellor 1974-83, with its original, alongside the artist, Svend Saabye, as seen at the unveiling in 1989. Dr. Trommer, a historian, was the university's third vice-chancellor and – following the legislation of 1973 – the first non-professorial incumbent of the office. Following nine years as a high school teacher he was appointed as a lecturer at the Department of History in 1968, and in 1971 aroused considerable public attention with the publication of his doctoral thesis on railway sabotage in Denmark during the German occupation. He was active in university politics from a early stage, and on his election as vice-chancellor was dean of the Humanities Faculty. Behind Svend Saabye can be glimpsed the portrait of the university's second vice-chancellor, Professor Franz Bierring. (Birte Palle Jørgensen).*

equally, i.e. 25% to each group. In the academic boards teaching staff and students each continued to occupy 50% of the places.

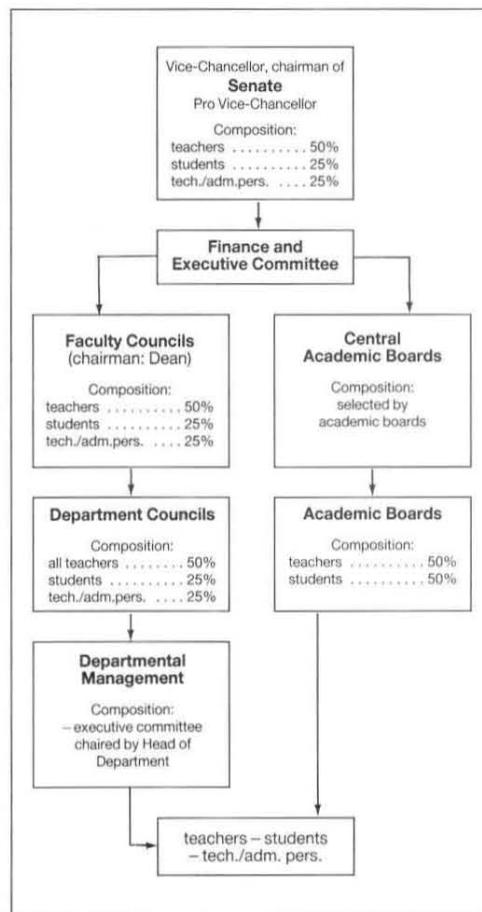
In this way the 1973 revisions produced a governing system in none of whose organs could a single group command a majority alone, but was obliged to reach an understanding with others. From a democratic point of view this was presumably an almost ideal construction, but few could deny that it was also inordinately time- and energy-consuming, and at the same time made the system vulnerable to external interference, for example from the Ministry of Education. Such a result was hardly accidental or without a degree of malice aforethought on the part of the politicians – it was at least eminently compatible with the divide and rule policy subsumed in the statute of 1970.

**For and against the Statute**

50 Ever since the statute came into force there has been recurrent debate on its expediency. Some – like Director Bengtson in a book published

in 1972 – have claimed that the system of government was much too expensive and consumed too many resources; others that it politicized decisions which could and should be made on a purely objective basis. The latter is probably too optimistic on the likely existence of apolitical objectivity, but it is incontrovertible that the system is expensive. Whether it is too expensive is debatable, but evidently the politicians have been willing to pay this price for the statute’s sedative effect on potential conflict. At the institutional level the system established by the statute turned out to be a good deal better than its reputation, although it quickly revealed two significant structural weaknesses – its dual form and the hybrid administrative-political character of the governing bodies.

*Life under  
Larsen’s Law*



*Diagram of the system of government established by the statute of 1973 with later amendments; note the binary structure. (Nyt).*

The dual form resulted from the systematic separation of curricular and teaching matters from that part of the basic governing structure which distributed and administered finance. Matters of the first kind belonged under the academic boards established for each programme and the central academic boards covering whole faculties, which had their own system of representation and extensive powers with regard to planning and decision-making in the field of degree curricula. But this sector of the structure had no financial responsibilities, no financial grants, and no budget. Budgetary responsibilities lay with the other, parallel governing hierarchy, comprising the Senate, the Faculty Boards and the Department Councils, whose system of representation was quite distinct from that of the academic boards.

Separating responsibility for planning and paying is an open invitation to irresponsibility, and this duality has in the course of time given occasion to numerous frictions. But as control over both budgeting and planning has since the late 1970's steadily seeped back into the corridors of power at the ministry these internal bickerings have been correspondingly diminished, in direct proportion to the reduction of the functions of the universities' governing bodies to the rubber-stamping of ministerial decisions and dispositions. The statute's internal contradictions were thus resolved with the de facto abolition of the university independence it was supposed to establish.

The dual character of the universities' governing bodies, which were to function both as administrative units in the day to day running of the institution and fora in which to debate and resolve conflicts of interest between different groups and confrontations between competing ideologies, built into them an acute risk that even the most humdrum matters would be politicized, with inefficiency and waste of time the inevitable consequence. This proved to be the case particularly in the early years, when the system was still new and ideological positions still held with some tenacity, but things slowly improved, with increased delegation of powers to smaller, viable committees, so that the administrative and decision-making processes gradually came to work fairly smoothly.

Here too a significant factor has been the shift of power back to the ministry and its organs as expansion has ceased, and as the system established by the statute has been transformed from independent decision-making to the execution of ministerial fiats with due regard for

In the course of Odense University's twenty-five year history the Danish universities have been gradually transformed from autonomous republics of letters – almost states within the state – to administrative sub-departments of the Ministry's Directory for Higher Education, which exercises extensive and detailed control. This development may be welcomed or regretted, but it is hard to imagine it could have occurred so smoothly without the hamstringing of the universities' strength built into the statute. In retrospect, and from this perspective, the statute can be characterized as a convenient device for the politicians' usurpation of power over the system of higher education. In this contest the waste of resources represented by a few academics spending too much time at meetings was a small price to pay as calculated by an enterprising minister of education.

#### **A New Career Structure**

The integration of the various grades of teaching staff built into the statute on university administration was taken a step further by the Circular on University Career Structure of 31 May 1973. According to this all full-time university teachers were to belong to one or other of the following three categories: professors, lecturers and assistant lecturers. This last was defined as the category into which new staff were to be recruited, while the job descriptions for the other two categories were almost identical with each other, apart from some vague remarks on the responsibility of professors to develop their fields and to supervise and encourage young scholars. Leaving aside the traditional differences in salary and terms of tenure there was now effectively an integration of professors and lecturers with regard to everyday duties. The old division between professors and the rest of the staff had been replaced by that between the professors and lecturers on the one hand and the untenured assistant lecturers on the other. The shock of the new system was greatly reduced for the involved parties by transitional arrangements ensuring that virtually all existing full-time academic staff ended up in the former group; and in the lean years that have followed new recruits in the form of assistant lecturers have been and remain very few and far between.

So both the statute and the circular erased old distinctions, and of course introduced new ones. Such radical changes inevitably and understandably provoked controversy, as even a cursory glance at the

*Life under  
Larsen's Law*

newspapers of the time reveals. Things were not always peaceful, and it would be fair to say that the statute on university administration was one of the most controversial pieces of legislation of recent times.

#### **The Statute: A Necessary Framework**

The statute had, and still has, a number of weaknesses, some of which have been discussed above. But it is also possible to speak well of it, and it was above all a necessary law. It brought to an end an archaic, patriarchal system of management which had proved unequal to dealing with the problems caused by the explosion in higher education, and which was anyway out of step with the political reality of the times. It was the governing bodies established by the statute which took on the task of transforming the institutions of higher education from craft workshops to units of educational mass-production: a task to which they have by and large proved themselves equal.

This alone is enough to justify the statute, but in addition it has facilitated necessary innovations in both research and teaching which would hardly have been possible under the old system. The latter prescribed for both the professors who ruled and those they ruled over fixed roles which were not conducive to the taking of initiatives; the statute and its many subsidiary ordinances effectively dissolved this blockage.

Finally the new management structure proved itself capable of absorbing and sometimes even resolving conflicts of interest as they emerged. In this respect it stood the test during the ruthless confrontations of the student revolt of the 1970's. Even during the severe ideological conflicts of this period the system did not collapse, although creaking and groaning a bit at times, even if, as pointed out by Director Bengtson, the work of the governing bodies consumed vast amounts of time. The structure proved itself sufficiently strong and sound, and it is not particularly reassuring to speculate what otherwise might have been the result.

## 5. The Odense University Centre – from Dream to Pragmatism

### **The Status of the Centre-Concept, 1974**

On 20 May, 1974, after a three-year interval, Odense University held its fourth commemoration, the first to take place in the still half-finished campus building which thereby enjoyed its official inauguration. It was also the first commemoration at which Aage Trommer was to present the vice-chancellor's report, having succeeded Franz Biering to the office only 20 days previously.

The account he offered to the tightly-packed audience amidst the iron and concrete comprised first and foremost a review of the preceding twelve months, but naturally enough given the three-year interval he also took the opportunity of going further back, and of looking forward, to produce a comprehensive assessment of the university's



*The Commemoration Celebration of 1974 was held amidst the construction works on the Campus site. The royal guests are here seen leaving with the recently elected Vice-Chancellor Aage Trommer (Photograph: Arne Bloch).*

*The Odense  
University Centre  
– from Dream  
to Pragmatism*

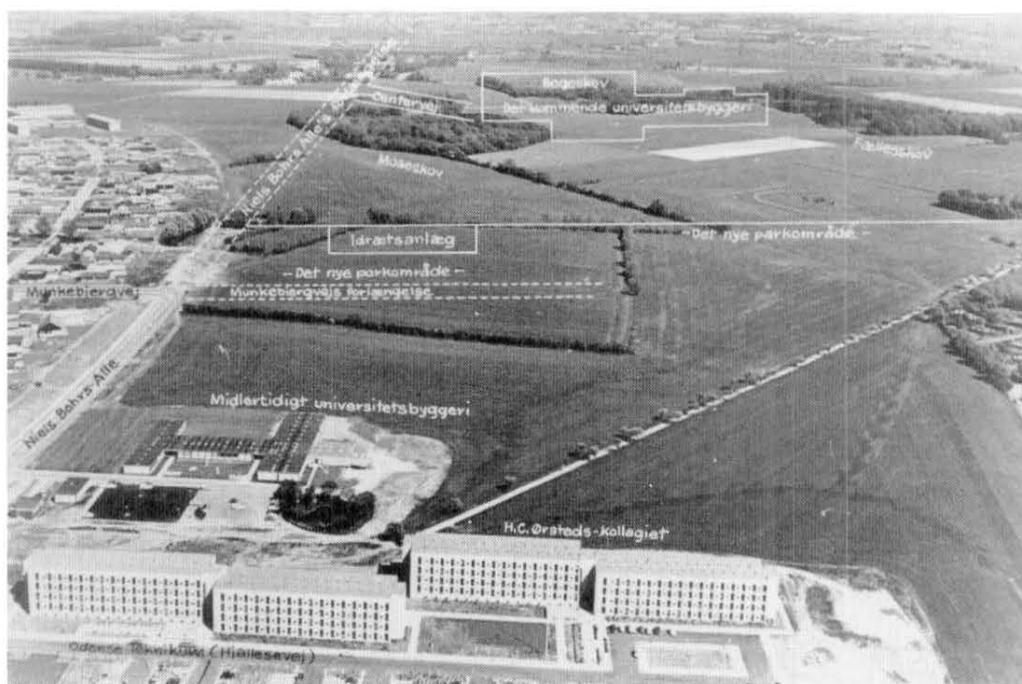
situation and development. This included the plans for a university centre, and in this connection he remarked that »If you dial the university's telephone number the switchboard operator will tell you you've got Odense University Centre, but it must be admitted that it has proved extremely difficult to advance the notion of a centre much further than the switchboard«. His general assessment, in concluding this section of his review, was that »there is still a long way to go before the centre becomes a reality«.

This assessment proved correct: a few years later the whole idea of a large integrated centre of higher and further education in Odense was dead and buried. Admittedly some individual institutions – the School of Business Studies for one – did enter into a close cooperation with the university, which all through of course had a close association with the University Library. But the vision of a great, all-embracing cooperation was definitively laid to rest. As guardian of the tomb was installed in its place a hybrid organization, the Council for the Coordination of Further Education on Funen, familiarly known (from its Danish acronym) as SVUF. This was however a pale reflection of the grandiose plans of former times, insufficient to prevent the ladies of the switchboard announcing merely, »Odense University« to callers.

#### **The Veterinary and Agricultural College as a Factor**

At the beginning, even before the university got going, there really was a grand vision of a gigantic educational business in Odense whose individual units would together form an emporium of higher studies from whose shelves individual students could select separate modules and combine them across traditional institutional boundaries to compose programmes specifically designed to meet their individual needs and ambitions. This vision had many supporters, including Director Bengtson, and was also quite in line with the 1960's favourite notions of breaking down conventional barriers between disciplines and institutions; it would be entirely natural for Odense, where from the start it was planned to combine a university with a Veterinary and Agricultural College.

This policy stumbled at the threshold, however, precisely because of uncertainties about the Veterinary and Agricultural College, uncertainties not resolved until 1968 and then resolved only in the sense that the plans to move the College to Odense were dropped. Added to this was the decidedly half-hearted support of the central authorities,



*Still a long way to go from plans to reality. This aerial photograph from the summer of 1970 shows the still largely undisturbed university area from a point high above Hjallesevej. In the foreground can be seen the four blocks of the H.C. Ørsted Hall of Residence and beyond it the first phase of the prefabricated buildings. The superimposed drawing shows the location of the future university buildings and the access roads to them. Note that at this time Niels Bohrs Allé reached only to Munkebjergvej and that when it was extended to Ørbækvej it did not go straight out as sketched here but followed the curve of the buildings in the top left of the picture. The university's first premises, the Technical College's E-Wing, are off the lower edge of the picture. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

symptomatic of which was the failure of the ministries involved to coordinate their contributions to the formation of the centre. The initiative was on the contrary left in the hands of the parties involved at the local level, where institutional interests as often as not acted as a brake on efforts at integration. And then even when the local parties had reached an agreement, progress invariably ran full tilt into the brick walls separating the administrative practices of the various ministries involved. The whole business of planning was therefore at an impasse which could not be resolved until the plans to move the Veterinary and Agricultural College were finally dropped in 1968.

#### **The Grand Centre Concept of 1970**

Thereafter it was possible to make a fresh start, and the first initiative appeared in the spring of 1970 in the form of a report from a ministe- 57

*The Odense  
University Centre  
– from Dream  
to Pragmatism*

rial sub-committee on university centres, established by the Council for Planning in Higher Education. In this report, which contributed to a more comprehensive white paper on the future organization of the universities, the committee provided a rough outline of its thoughts on the size and shape of the Odense centre. These amounted to a comprehensive vision encompassing all institutions of further and higher education on Funen, both existing and to come. Such was the full extent of the ambitions for the development of the Odense centre at this stage.

On a more practical level the report recommended that the centre initially should comprise the university, the local section of the Danish School of Educational Studies, the Social Services College, the Academy of Music and the School of Business Studies of Tietgen College. In the light of the recent and extensive building works at Odense Teacher Training College further integration was postponed until later. These specific proposals for integration were a tall order in themselves, involving institutions under the aegis of three separate ministries – Education, Culture and Social Services – and to simplify procedures the committee suggested that the matter be gradually shifted to a single ministry, or that an interministerial coordinating body be established to further the conduct of the centre's business. The ministry opted for the latter procedure in a directive issued in August 1971 which set up both an interministerial committee and, under it, a Centre Council, in which the principals, staff and students of all the institutions involved were represented.

**The First Results**

What then came of all these efforts? Not a great deal if measured in relation to the initial level of ambition, but nonetheless a number of quite concrete results which should not be underestimated. For example the intimate cooperation which right from the start had characterized relations between the university and the University Library led a number of departments to decide against establishing their own Departmental Libraries, as was normally the practice, and to use the open access sections of the University Library for this purpose instead. The money saved by this solution, which was pioneered by the History Department, was transferred to the University Library's account for book purchases. Duplication was thereby avoided, and

more titles could be acquired. This integration was and remains to the advantage and benefit of all parties, and the Library's current location at the heart of the campus building means that practical inconveniences are minimal.

In 1971 Physical Education was introduced as a subsidiary degree in Odense, and in accordance with the development plans for the centre it was established as a Department under the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Medicine. A small brick in the edifice of the centre was thereby put in place, and ever since encounters with muscular, sweating young persons, in various stages of sporting undress and wielding a variety of arcane implements, have become a familiar experience in corridors and canteens. When the faculty, according to plan, was split into two independent units, Physical Education joined the Faculty of Medicine, where it still belongs.

#### **Basic Studies Programmes and Interdisciplinary Studies**

Within the university itself the centre-concept also led to a number of moves towards integration in the form of experimentation with interdisciplinary basic studies programmes in the fields of medicine and natural sciences, the humanities, and the social sciences. These initiatives were prompted by the desire to make more efficient use of teaching resources, and to promote interdisciplinary approaches – a highly fashionable goal in the 1970's – among both teachers and students. Only in exceptional cases however did the results in any way measure up to these expectations. In particular the attempt to establish a common basic studies programme for the humanities went wrong right from the start, when so-called »progressive« forces appropriated the experiment and turned it into a mission station for marxist theories of scholarship. Fresh approaches were therefore the last thing it had to offer and it passed quietly away after a few years.

And more generally it must be conceded that these attempts at joint studies never came to have the significance with regard to either educational economy or the transgression of scholarly demarcations anticipated by those who initiated them. This was due not merely to the lack of ability or the ideological tunnel-vision of the people involved, but equally to the healthy and vigorous scholarly traditions of the individual disciplines, which were not prepared to be overrun without further ado. There was a good deal of justified concern among the academic staff that valuable scholarly traditions would be at risk

*The Odense  
University Centre  
– from Dream  
to Pragmatism*

in this interdisciplinary jungle, and it was argued that scholarly development should come from within the disciplines themselves – a view which ultimately triumphed over the interdisciplinary cause. In this way a professional ethic of scholarly responsibility drew a line in the sand in front of the efforts at integration, and the – in many ways encouraging – strength of the former at Odense University also explains in part the limited success here of the notion of an educational centre.

**Practical Collaboration**

Among the more concrete results of the plans for a centre mention should be made of the creation of a joint data processing centre for the institutions of higher education in Odense, based at the Technical College, and at the end of the 1970's the inclusion of the Danish Data Archives as a separate department under the direct authority of the university senate. The latter was a research and archival institution, originally established on an experimental basis in 1973 as a cooperative venture between the Danish Research Council for the Social Sciences, the Office of Statistics, the National Record Office and the Social Research Institute. Its purpose was to establish, maintain and run a central information bank for machine-readable data descriptive of social conditions, and to make them available to scholarship. Siting it in Odense was directly related to ministerial efforts to support the centre-concept, and its move in 1979 from H.C. Andersens Boulevard in Copenhagen to Hans Christian Andersen's home town is one of the very few instances of the wholesale transference of an institution from Copenhagen to the provinces.



*Lecturer Per Nielsen, head of Danish Data Archives, which in 1979 was transferred from Copenhagen to Odense University. The Data Archives are today located in the prefabricated buildings vacated by the university's departments and administration. (Dansk Data Arkiv).*

On an even more practical level the efforts at integration manifested themselves in the form of shared accommodation. The first example of this was the Technical College solution to the new university's space-problem, but as the temporary prefabricated buildings went up in the fields just to the east of the H.C. Ørsted hall of residence it became the university's turn to play landlord for some of the other institutions originally envisaged as forming part of the centre: for instance the School of Ergotherapy and Physiotherapy, the Social Services College and the School of Business Studies of Tietgen College.

*The Odense  
University Centre  
– from Dream  
to Pragmatism*

#### **Integration with the School of Business Studies**

With regard to the first two of these sharing accommodation was as intimate as relations became, although one of the university's professors, the historian Hans Christian Johansen, in addition to his professorial duties also functioned as Principal of the Social Services College in a transitional period in 1970-72. The School of Business Studies of Tietgen College in contrast provides our one substantial example of a successful integration within the university centre. Despite the energetic opposition of the School's leader, Erik Nielsen, and later of Helge Sindal, who succeeded him as principal in 1971, the university the same year received ministerial approval to offer a bachelor of commerce (H.A.) programme. With this decision the Ministry of Education had tipped the scales in favour of the university, and the complete integration of the School of Business Studies was now merely a matter of time. As a first step the School's public library was integrated into the University Library, and as of August 1977 full institutional integration was a reality. The School of Business Studies was absorbed or resolved into a whole series of departments and programmes in business economics and commercial language at the university, which can today offer a full range of mercantile and business studies, from short secretarial courses to the fully-fledged degree in Commercial Science.

That this particular attempt at integration, despite considerable initial scepticism and later difficulties, should nonetheless succeed and develop in ways to the benefit of those involved, can to some extent be explained by the fact that it solved a number of acute problems for both parties. The School of Business Studies found a solution for its rapidly growing capacity crisis, and the university extended its range with a cluster of attractive programmes. Furthermore, the School of

*The Odense  
University Centre  
– from Dream  
to Pragmatism*

Business Studies did not need to fear being swallowed up in the great fusion: its student numbers were on a par with those of the university, and the fusion was therefore between roughly equal partners. This same fear of being swallowed up probably played a role in those attempts at integration – for example with various teacher-training programmes – which despite lengthy negotiations eventually came to nothing.

#### **A Last Waltz with the Academy of Music**

Distrust in the willingness of a large conglomerate centre to properly safeguard the interests of the smaller institutions integrated into it achieved what may be its most eloquent formulation in an article published in the university periodical *Nyt* in July 1975 by Sven Erik Werner, the then principal of the Funen Academy of Music. The Academy had throughout been reckoned as a part of the centre, and in the



*On several occasions in the 1970's plans were put forward to transfer the Department of Local History from the University of Copenhagen to Odense. The initial idea was to house it in Odense's old Hospice for Maiden Centlerwomen, but in 1975 attention turned to the bucolic Hollufgaard (picture). All came to nothing, however: the Department of Local History stayed in Copenhagen, joining a lengthening list of institutions whose transfer might have given substance to the concept of an educational centre in Odense. Hollufgaard was taken over by Odense's city museums. (Nyt).*

building plans space had been reserved for a concert hall and rehearsal rooms (on the site now graced by the administration block). However the financial cutbacks following the 1973 oil crisis had postponed this phase of the building programme to a time well in the future, with the result that the Academy of Music faced several further years of work under the miserable conditions provided by its current premises on Kronprinsensgade. It was this prospect which had prompted the principal to reach for his pen, and he thereby – doubtless unintentionally – prompted the debate which a year later led to the official abandonment of the plans for a centre as originally conceived, and the final dissolution of the centre's governing council in 1980.

Principal Werner's article itself had a clear and concrete purpose, »to query whether it is at all reasonable to carry out the plans for constructing an expensive music conservatory on the Campus site«. This unusually forthright expression of views was prompted by the circumstance that a little earlier the Ministry of Culture had placed its premises in Islandsgade at the disposal of the Academy of Music; these would become available on completion of the University Library's move to the Campus building, due shortly.

The Academy in consequence faced a difficult dilemma: keep the bird in the hand (Islandsgade plus half a million crowns for converting the premises), or go for the two in the bush (the Campus site). The purpose of Principal Werner's article was to see if the latter were actually within range; he got his answer at once in the form of an editorial footnote to the article to the effect that while the senate would duly express its support for the move to the Campus site, it was not disposed to back this up by engaging (even provisionally) to establish a (subsidiary) degree in music at the university.

#### **Debating in the Heat of Summer**

In these circumstances few would blame the governors of the Music Academy for choosing the safer option and moving to the Islandsgade premises, which despite repeated assurances to the contrary were to remain its home for many years. With the backing of the Ministry of Culture the Academy had put a rocket through the centre project and displayed in a most wretched fashion both the lack of coordination at government level and the impotence of the centre council in times of financial stringency.

The Academy's action prompted an ironic comment in the next issue of *Nyt* from the principal of Odense Teacher Training College, Holger Melson. He observed that the centre council had apparently to all intents and purposes given up, and under the impact of the lean times, reinforced by disturbing developments at Roskilde University Centre, was just hanging on to things as they were. If the centre project was to be brought out of its current malaise, new initiatives would have to come from above or from without.

In the same issue the university vice-chancellor, Aage Trommer, responded to Erik Werner's article. He regretted the Academy of Music's repudiation of cooperation with the centre, but also used the opportunity to emphasize the university's pragmatic attitude to the integration plans. This provoked a renewed intervention from principal Werner, in which he noted with some irony the meagre achievements thus far of cooperation within the centre, and hinted indirectly that the cause was probably a lack of commitment on the part of the university itself. The debate thus concluded in this atmosphere of resentment and mutual distrust, itself quite characteristic of the mood of the mid-1970's.

#### **A New Minister of Education: Ritt Bjerregaard**

In February 1975 Poul Hartling's minority Liberal government was voted out of office and replaced by a Social Democratic minority government in which Ritt Bjerregaard held the post of Minister of Education. Since the time of her first election to parliament in 1971 Ritt Bjerregaard had displayed something of an appetite for power and indeed had already been Minister of Education for a few months in 1973. This was merely a brief interlude however; but in 1975 she returned to the post, which this time she held on to for the next three years.

Her willingness and ability to govern and reform were given free reign in this period, not least in relation to higher education. During her period in office a comprehensive system of ministerial advisory and planning bodies was established which over the next decade was to completely eclipse all previous efforts at constructing centres by legitimising the gradual transformation of the entire system of higher education into one enormous educational centre with the Ministry of Education as its board of governors. The tools applied to this end were



*Minister of Education Ritt Bjerregaard graced with her presence most of the commemoration celebrations held at the university during her term of office. She is photographed here in 1978 as Prince Henrik, accompanied by Vice-Chancellor Aage Trommer, makes his entry. Beside her stands her husband, Søren Mørch, lecturer in history at the university from as early as 1966 and today leader of the Centre for Middle East Studies. Behind the vice-chancellor can be glimpsed the pro vice-chancellor of the time Lecturer Annelise Bach, who before her untimely death devoted much time and effort to the duties of the office, notably in resolving the many problems involved in moving departments from the prefabricated buildings to the campus site. (Photograph: Arne Bloch).*

national planning, restricted entry and central budgetting on the basis of educational productivity (measured in terms of students passing exams) and research man-years – a terminology which became increasingly familiar during Ritt Bjerregaard's time as Minister of Education. No one could be in any doubt that a new minister had arrived, and that the new broom did not just sweep problems under the carpet but reached even the most remote corners of the educational system.

#### **The Minister's Christmas Greetings**

Ritt Bjerregaard had in many respects a special relationship with Odense University – she had for example been admitted as a student right at the beginning in 1966. It is hardly surprising therefore that she felt called upon to intervene in the debate on the plans for a centre in Odense. This took the form of a Christmas message published in *Nyt*, with the debate of the preceding summer as its point of depar-

*The Odense  
University Centre  
– from Dream  
to Pragmatism*

ture. It carried the programmatic title »Odense University Centre is here to stay« clearly reflecting the minister's views: it was time to get going.

The article outlined the areas in which she found cooperation within a centre both sensible and practicable, with a poorly concealed threat that if the parties in Odense couldn't manage this themselves it would not be difficult to sort things out from the top. The article concluded by urging the institutions involved in Odense to submit constructive proposals before the following summer, to the extent that they wished at all to influence the Ministry's decisions on the formation of a centre. The wish expressed by Holger Melson in the summer debate for new initiatives from above had been more than amply fulfilled.

#### **Local Reactions**

This ministerial message was heard loud and clear in Odense. Right at the start of the new year on the initiative of the university's committee for administrative structure four working parties were established: three bilateral groups in which university representatives were joined, respectively, by representatives from the Social Services College, the School of Ergotherapy and Physiotherapy, and the School of Business Studies of Tietgen College, and one coordinating group comprising representatives from the governing bodies of all four institutions. Their task was to assess the desirability of coming together to form a centre, and in the case of a positive conclusion to offer practical suggestions on how this might be done. The absence of the teacher-training sector from this think-tank was due to the circumstance that a committee appointed by the ministry was already engaged in exploring the feasibility of integration in this area.

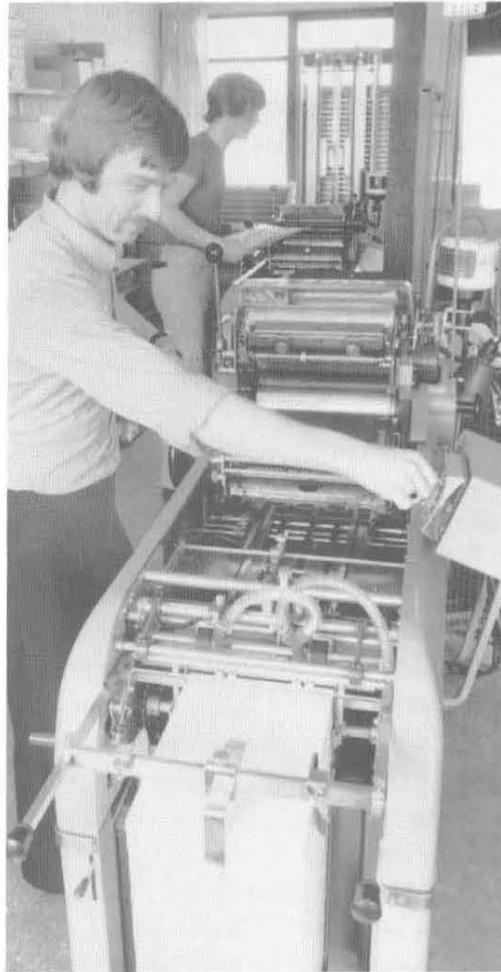
The results of the investigations of the working parties became available at the end of April 1976, and they were little short of disheartening for supporters of the centre concept. Without exception all had unanimously concluded that there was for the time being nothing to be gained from the formation of a centre or increased integration: on the contrary they anticipated that the widely differing administrative structures, conditions of employment and curricula of the institutions concerned would be an unending source of troubles. The local conclusion was therefore unequivocal: no further integration before the ministry had sorted out the aforementioned structural problems.

The university senate endorsed these conclusions at a subsequent meeting, and they consequently became the university's official reply to the minister's initiative. In his commemoration report shortly afterwards the vice-chancellor could therefore conclude in brief: »It has not been possible to point to such administrative or educational advantages stemming from an integration, let alone research advantages, as would legitimize proceeding further in this direction at the present time«.

#### **Respect for the Dead**

These words became the epitaph of the efforts to create a large, integrated educational centre in Odense, which could now be diagnosed

*The business of whether Odense should be a complex educational centre or a classic university had a voracious appetite for paper to publish recommendations, reports, minutes, and the like, but in other ways too a university is decisively dependent on the printed word. Almost from the beginning, therefore, the university set up its own printing office to facilitate the rapid production of compendia, other teaching materials, minutes of meetings, and so on. Typographer Jørgen Størmosse was appointed as University Printer and has followed the whole evolution from the primitive beginnings to the current high-technology printing-house. He is pictured here in 1972 at one of the earliest printing machines set up in the prefabricated buildings, the picture fortunately failing to reproduce the infernal racket it made. (Fyns Pressefoto).*



*The Odense  
University Centre  
– from Dream  
to Pragmatism*

as dead as a doornail. This did not mean that at a stroke all plans of future cooperation had been dropped, but merely that the desire in Odense was to continue along the pragmatic path followed hitherto. The fusion between the university and the School of Business Studies the following year demonstrated the continued vitality of these efforts. Cooperation was to grow naturally out of the Funen soil rather than be imposed on the hapless institutions from above by ministerial directives. This had been the attitude in Odense from the start, and with this tradition behind him the vice-chancellor could conclude his commemoration speech with the following earnest appeal for peace and freedom from external interference: »... our views should be heard in good time and from time to time perhaps even listened to. One should think twice before interfering with an organism that has hitherto managed to function under such conditions as it has been afforded«.

These remarks were clearly directed at the minister who, being present, had for the moment little option other than to listen, and to learn that any systematic moves in the direction of a centre in Odense would have to be undertaken without the support of the local parties, who would be glad to see an end to outside interference. Her vision of an educational centre in Odense was thus dead and buried, for in the face of such robust local unity the minister chose discretion as the better part and let the matter rest.

#### **The Pragmatic Centre**

Ritt Bjerregaard still had an ace up her sleeve – it would be very unlike her not to. As a prelude to Odense University's first Open Day in October 1978 she wrote a feature article on the university in the region's daily newspaper, *Fyens Stiftstidende*. While acknowledging that the idea of a centre was now definitively abandoned she took the opportunity of outlining the contours of a new organization for regional cooperation in further and higher education, which would replace the now dissolved centre council as a coordinating body. Shortly after this she embarked on the fateful trip to Paris which was to cost her her place in the government and it was therefore under her successor that the circular was issued which led to the setting up of the Council for the Coordination of Further Education on Funen. Under its auspices many of the 1970s' dashed hopes for an integrated educational centre lived on as pale reflections of their former selves.



Odense University was not born as a centre, but as a classic university. Many hoped that it would grow into a large, handsome university-centre, but while it did become large and perhaps handsome it never turned into a centre, probably because the means to effect the transformation had been missing right from the start. Nonetheless a good deal was achieved in the 1970's along the pragmatic path preferred locally – the most striking result probably the integration of the School of Business Studies – all in all fair enough.

Only an educational planner quite out of touch with the local environment and dazzled by a vision of an ideal centre would be tempted to characterize the efforts at institutional cooperation in Odense as a failure. This they were not, and indeed on the contrary they succeeded a good deal better than in most other places since they after all were allowed to develop at a tempo and to an extent suitable to local conditions. With organic sedateness and grace the Odense appletree spread its branches further and further out over the Funen orchard. A more harmonious interplay between growth and integration is hard to imagine – or is it?

*The bookshop in the Campus buildings was until a few years ago called the Centre Bookshop, a reminiscence of the old plans for an educational centre. It is now called the Students' Bookshop. The university's distance from the town centre made the establishing of a bookshop locally a necessity right from the start, and like the rest of the university's units it led something of a peripatetic existence before finding a permanent home in the campus buildings. (Photograph 1981: Ole Bjørndal Bagger).*



## 6. The University's Buildings – From the Technical College to Campus

### **The Campus Building Inaugurated, 1974**

Unlike its three predecessors the university's fourth commemoration on 20 May 1974 did not take place in the great hall of the Technical College, but in the permanent Campus building, or to be more precise in its as yet half-completed building-section 22, intended to house the Department of Molecular Biology, part of the Department of Biochemistry, and the University Library. In honour of the occasion an interim ceremonial hall had been cleared of building materials and rigged with a lectern and rows of chairs for the participants. The whole atmosphere was deeply imbued with the fragrance of freshly poured concrete, and in common with other participants the royal guests of honour had been obliged to make their approach to the venue along tortuous paths through the organized chaos prevailing in this busy building site, which indeed was one of the largest in the country.

The reason why the university authorities, despite the manifest inconveniences this entailed, decided on the Campus site as the venue for the commemoration ceremonies was simply that the latter were also to function as the official inauguration of the permanent buildings, which was after all something of a milestone in the university's short history. Although the Departments of Anatomy and Chemistry had jumped the gun somewhat by moving out in the autumn of 1973 the inauguration of the building in 1974 nonetheless marked the university's transition from the nomadic phase to a settled existence in a permanent home. All the same a further nine years were to pass before the migration was entirely over.

### **From Technical College to Prefabs**

It all started in the over 5,000 square metres leased from Odense Technical College. For the first few years the bright, businesslike E-Wing provided a functional and completely adequate context for the daily life of the modest new university, with plenty of room for the few 71

*The University's  
Buildings – from  
the Technical  
College  
to Campus*



*On 16 May 1968 the traditional garlands could be displayed to mark the topping out of the university's first buildings of its own, the prefabricated Block M east of the H. C. Ørsted Hall of Residence, formally opened the following 20 September. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

hundred souls who at the time constituted the whole institution. Indeed the classrooms were a trifle on the large side for the classes in them, and professors' offices seemed more like small ballrooms. Only the lecturers were cramped into small anterooms, but this was still a time when they knew their place in the hierarchy, and there were no complaints.

As by degrees both the teaching staff and the student body increased in numbers conditions became gradually more cramped, and as starting work on the permanent buildings at the same time seemed to be increasingly delayed, it was time for improvisation number two. It came to fruition in 1968 in the form of the first section of the prefabricated buildings which was officially opened by Helge Larsen, the Minister of Education, on September 20. In accordance with the period's fashion for anonymous lettering and numbering the new prefabricated building was christened with the prosaic name of »Block M«. This underlined its institutional continuity with the premises at the Technical College, although more poetical souls were inclined to believe it stood symbolically for »Milepost« or »Midway«. There was a suggestion it should be dubbed »the Eastern Bloc«, but whether from geographical or ideological considerations was never quite clear.

The new prefabricated building provided 2,200 square metres of floor space and therefore constituted a 50% increase in the area available to the university. It was to house the Departments of Biochemi-

stry and Physiology along with offices for academic staff from the humanities. It had been put up in record time in the course of the summer by the firm of Reska from Birkerød, who made a speciality of rationalized, rapid construction using prefabricated elements. At the time of its inauguration the building had in fact been fully occupied and taken over by its new residents, who soon felt at home in these unpretentious but quite comfortable surroundings.

The taking into commission of Block M was the commencement of the university's long march towards the Campus building. In subsequent years one prefabricated building after another went up on the site to be used for classrooms, offices, laboratories, libraries, a canteen and other facilities, so that eventually by the beginning of the 1970's the whole university – leaving aside the clinical departments at the hospital – was pretty well assembled in the low prefabricated buildings now amounting to some 21,000 square metres. Only isolated units remained at the Technical College, whose rooms would nonetheless still be used for teaching until the expiry of the leasing arrangements some years later.

#### **Under the Low Roofs**

But most of the university's life in the first half of the 1970's was conducted in this half-way-house, where the low prefabricated buildings provided the context for a literally down-to-earth fellowship. Part of the picture too were the perplexed field-mice and disoriented hares, who in common with the rest of the local fauna had had their lives hopelessly disturbed by this buzz of activity on the once so peaceful field.

The prefabricated buildings were an exceptionally practical and flexible solution to the university's accommodation problems in this

*The University's  
Buildings – from  
the Technical  
College  
to Campus*

*With a little imagination the regular interruption of the long white walls of the prefabs by the black uprights can be felt to resemble the characteristic half-timbering of Funen's rural architecture. (Nyt).*



*The University's  
Buildings – from  
the Technical  
College  
to Campus*

transitional phase. At the same time, in all its down-to-earth unpretentiousness, it was inexpensive; no superfluous ornamentation, no executive suites, just a fully rationalized, rapidly erected building in one storey comprising standardized rooms linked by a simple system of corridors. More elementary and inexpensive it couldn't be done.

Despite its lack of pretention this building nevertheless had its aesthetic qualities. It was in close contact with nature – into which one trod by merely opening the door – and the regular division of the long, white walls by the black uprights could with a little condescension be felt reminiscent of the half-timbering of Funen vernacular architecture, whose human dimensions are a highly characteristic feature. Like the old farmhouses it just fulfilled its function without calling attention to itself.

The latter quality could also have its disadvantages, however. A colleague relates that when he travelled from Copenhagen to Odense to take a look at his new place of work for the first time he wandered up and down Niels Bohrs Allé unable to catch sight of the university. Only after much vain searching did it occur to him it might be nestling behind the low hedge of dog roses he had passed by several times without noticing anything that remotely resembled a university. Right from the start, at least as regards buildings, Odense University was a very down-to-earth place.

The prefabricated buildings did however have one serious drawback, the lack of sound-proofing. The problem was most acute in the sections built first, one of whose residents – admittedly with a reputation for pointed remarks – claimed that he could clearly hear when his colleague next door was picking his teeth. In the units put up later the sound-proofing was decidedly better, although the light building materials effectively ruled out a fully satisfactory solution to the problem.

All in all the »barracks« – as the prefabricated buildings were familiarly referred to – functioned excellently, and there were doubtless many, among both staff and students, who were secretly sorry when their turn came to move into the permanent buildings. It is also presumably a testimonial to the durability and flexibility of the prefabricated buildings that today, twenty years on, they are still being used for an ever-changing variety of purposes.

**The Departments Associated with the Hospital**

74 Even before the first section of the temporary, prefabricated buildings

*Odense University's first permanent building, the Department of Pathology on J.B. Winsløvsvej alongside the hospital: its four storeys provided a floorspace of 7,300 square metres. (Photograph 1970, Nyt).*



*The University's Buildings – from the Technical College to Campus*

was taken into commission in the summer of 1968 an unobtrusive start had been made to the university's permanent site. This did not concern however the winning project of the great Campus competition, but the buildings for the clinical departments in the area of the hospital, which the former had not included. These buildings were planned ultimately to house the six university departments in the fields of pathology, forensic medicine, genetics, microbiology, hygiene and social medicine. The task of planning and construction had been assigned to the local firm of architects Boeck-Hansen and Stærmose, with royal surveyor Jørgen Stærmose as architect in chief. The project was to be carried out in three stages, the whole to be completed before 1978, and at a total cost of around 50 million crowns.

In May 1968 the first sod was cut for phase one – designed to house the Department of Pathology – on the site abutting J.B. Winsløvsvej, and thereafter work advanced rapidly. Less than two years later, on 20 March 1970, the building was officially inaugurated with a modest ceremony at which the press and the invited guests had the opportunity of viewing the university's first permanent building.

Architect Stærmose and his staff had provided a fine and well-appointed building, which with its functionalist architecture was in harmony with the rest of the hospital buildings. The 7,300 square metres of floor-space, distributed over four storeys, provided all the space the Department of Pathology required, including all the necessary classrooms, offices and laboratories; there were also animal pens and a common room, all in a light and friendly ambience. The style of the building was businesslike without at the same time seeming too austere: little wonder that the pathologists, headed by Professor Jør-

gen Ringsted, were enthusiastic about their new workplace, whose construction-costs furthermore were as low as 20 million crowns.

In succeeding years the remaining phases were constructed according to plan, so that by the end of the 1970's the departments housed in the hospital area occupied in all 22,000 square metres of floor-space divided between three buildings in the same style as the Department of Pathology. These buildings today house the different departments and sections, whose work is all closely related to the hospital's.

#### **A Building Goes Up**

Following a year of tragedy and high farce in which the architect's original plans were adapted to meet new financial realities, excavation work on the Campus site itself began in 1970, and actual building in the early summer of 1971. First came the laying out of all the supply lines, then the boiler room, actually a heating centre with the capacity to supply a small town, and then the Departments of Anatomy, Cytology and Chemistry. Thereafter progress was steady and the whole project was completed and in use by 1980.

Only the university's administration remained in the prefabricated buildings, until, after a further three years, it could move to the permanent administration block built with a separate grant on the site originally intended for the Academy of Music. The completed Campus building comprised a total floor-space of nearly 106,000 square metres, which when added to the 21,000 square metres of the prefabricated buildings and the roughly equal extent of the Departments at the Hospital gives a total for the university as a whole of some 148,000 square metres, or a floor-space roughly equivalent to 37 acres of land. This colossal building project was throughout supervised by the Buildings Administration with Head of Secretariat C.O. Persson as local coordinator, aided by the university's own administration.

To all this was added a large new swimming pool to the proper international standards and, at the beginning of the 1980's, a substantial sports facility to the east of the Campus building constructed in cooperation with Odense City Council for the use of a local sports club named, Danish-style, after the year of its foundation: B (for ball-games) 1913. This cooperation has subsequently proved to the benefit of all involved, and only temporary disgruntlement was caused when, at the opening ceremony, Vice-Chancellor Trommer offered his



hearty congratulations on their new facilities to B 1909 – a quite different local sports club. The members of B 1913 present were quick to forgive a vice-chancellor who had merely displayed in public his wretchedly inadequate understanding of the world of sport.

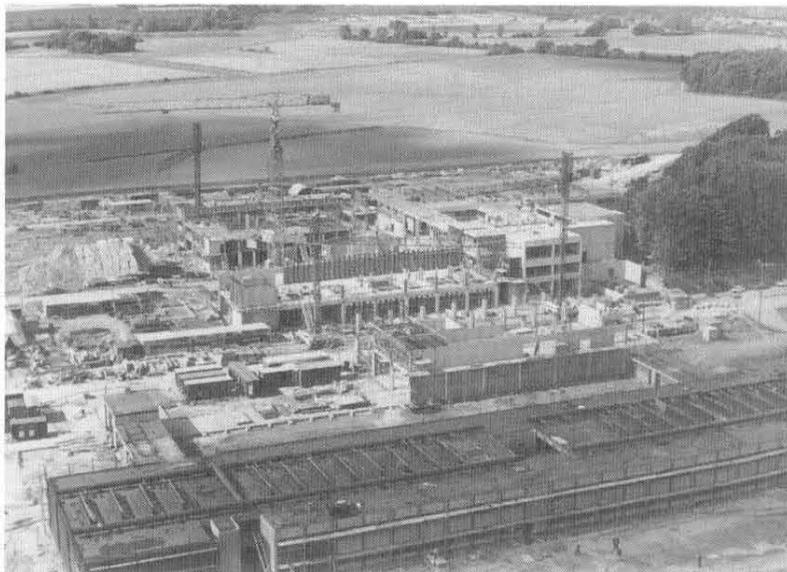
So what did the Danish state, the citizens of Odense, and those whose everyday duties took them to the university, actually get for the approximately half a billion crowns it had cost the tax-payers to construct the university buildings? Put very prosaically they got a floor-space approximating to about 27 acres of land, about the size of a small farm. This floor-space was divided between classrooms and auditoria, offices, libraries and laboratories, equipped with all the modern apparatus necessary for the university to live up to its two major duties of conducting research and offering teaching at the highest international level; this after all, was what it was all about.

#### **A Monument to its Times**

In addition they got an impressive monument – the permanent Campus building – to a specific epoch in the history of Danish education. In »Rustenborg« (the rusting castle), as it was soon christened, you have an architectural manifestation so distinct, and so typical of its

*The campus buildings going up in the mid-1970's, seen from the south and looking towards Niels Bohrs Allé. Note the care taken to avoid damaging the three small woods in the area. (Photograph: Arne Bloch)*

*The University's  
Buildings – from  
the Technical  
College  
to Campus*



*This aerial view was taken a couple of years after work started on the campus buildings, and gives a good impression of its complicated structure, as well as of the vast quantities of cement that went into its construction. In the background beyond the fields the white prefabricated buildings can be glimpsed in front of the more massive walls of the H.C. Ørsted Hall of Residence. (Photograph: Arne Bloch).*

time, that it is quite impossible to avoid adopting an attitude towards it, whether you are on a brief visit or experience it from inside day by day. One is attracted, repelled or fascinated by encountering this colossal, rust-brown giant of a building which in all its horizontal might seems to grow out of the landscape as you approach it, and which in a strange fashion both melts into and dominates the strictly regimented lawns and earthworks which lie like fortifications around it. In its grandeur and consistently contemporary architecture the whole complex demands a response – no observer can remain merely indifferent.

In its own fashion therefore Odense University became as characteristic an expression of its own times as the old main building of Copenhagen University in Frue Plads and Aarhus University. The former was erected by P. Malling in 1836 in a neoclassical style which was entirely in line with the ideals of urban architecture of the period, and contributed to an unusually harmonious square in the midst of old Copenhagen dominated by the Church of Our Lady, the Metropolitan School and the university's main building itself. Similarly C.F. Møl-

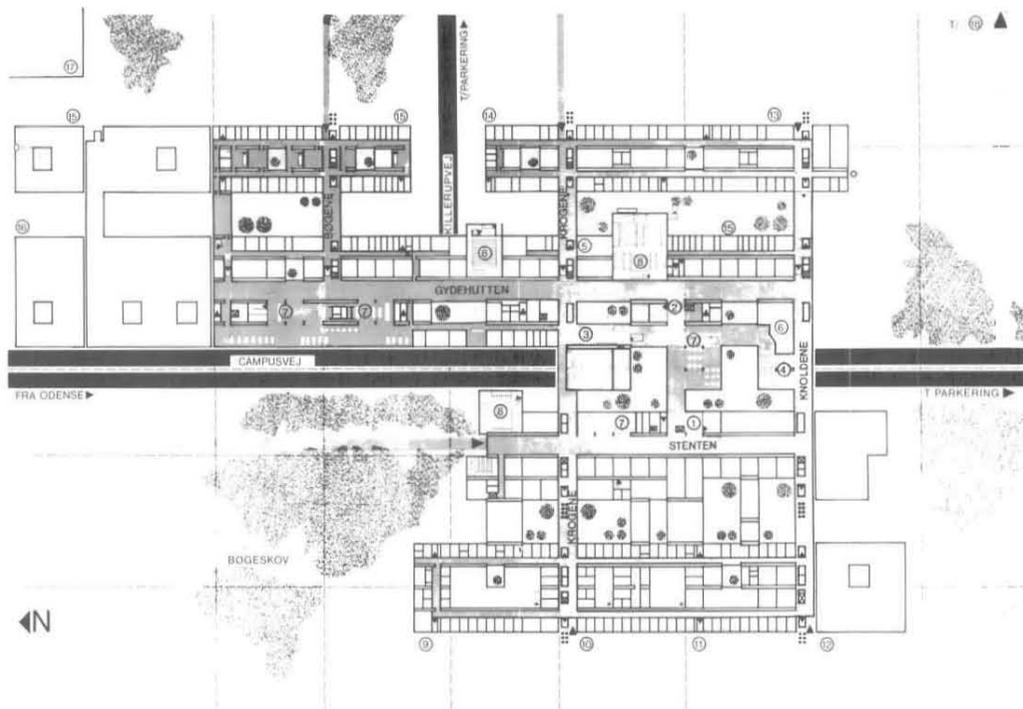
ler's inspired university buildings in Aarhus reflect very much the puritanical and functionalist architectural styles of the 1930's. The many separated buildings which together constitute the university complex were a result partly of the very hilly terrain, partly of the circumstance that this university was built bit by bit as funds became available. In a masterly fashion the whole is held together however as an architectural unity by the common building material – the yellow brick – and by a single idiom in the form.

In contrast to this Odense University was conceived as one huge, compact structure – or in the words of the architect, »a single, large urbanised building complex with internal communication between all function-areas«. The idiom of the building is that of industrial architecture, reflected in the choice of materials: concrete – lots of concrete – glass, and facades of corten-steel, reputed to rust only on the surface without internal corrosion. All the building's colours are consequently derivatives to complement the red-brown rust.

This large, integrated structure, built in a single sequence, was the physical manifestation of the fact that the state, with all its economic and organizational resources, supported the project, in distinct con-

*The University's Buildings – from the Technical College to Campus*

*The architect's ground-plan of the Campus buildings in 1978. The sections indicated in outline have since been built, as has the building housing the university's administration in the bottom left-hand corner, the location originally envisioned for the Academy of Music.*



trast to the situation when Aarhus University was being built. Odense University's building in consequence reflects the modern, omnipotent Welfare State, which takes upon itself the responsibility – including the obligation to plan – for the future of its citizens.

#### **A Gigantic System of Communications**

The building itself was raised on pillars straddling the Campusvej – Killerupvej road junction which was to lead traffic to and from the parking-lots. In accordance with the modified plans these were placed around the periphery and not, as originally envisaged, directly under the building. The floor-space thus saved was instead devoted to access areas, storage facilities and other utility rooms.

Entering by one of the stairways from street level – none of which qualifies as the main entrance which the building singularly lacks – one comes up into the building itself, which is reserved exclusively for pedestrians. The whole complex is built around a rectangular network of broad indoor corridors or malls running along and across the building at regular intervals. Two broad central malls run along the building's longer axis, crossed by the so-called 100-metre corridors. Along this system of major corridors, each 7.2 metres broad, it is possible to move quickly and efficiently from one end of the building to another without encountering major obstacles. In other words the building is constructed as a single, huge communications system whose basic concept is community, movement and cooperation across academic frontiers – entirely in keeping with the original concept of an educational centre.

Classrooms, auditoria and other common facilities such as the canteens and the book store are placed in direct connection with these main corridors, while the departments themselves with their offices and laboratories are kept around the peripheries, away from the major traffic arteries. Like a string drawn through the building the University Library is situated at first floor level above the longest of the central corridors, thus ensuring the shortest distance to its resources from every point in the complex.

The building itself was put up as a strictly rational and industrialised structure on the basis of a standard 7.2 by 7.2 metre module, facilitating highly standardized construction procedures, all rooms in the building having measurements which are fractions or multiples of this

basic unit. So both in its manner of construction and its final form the building was again very much an expression of the industrial culture which produced it.

*The University's  
Buildings – from  
the Technical  
College  
to Campus*

#### **A Building without a Centre**

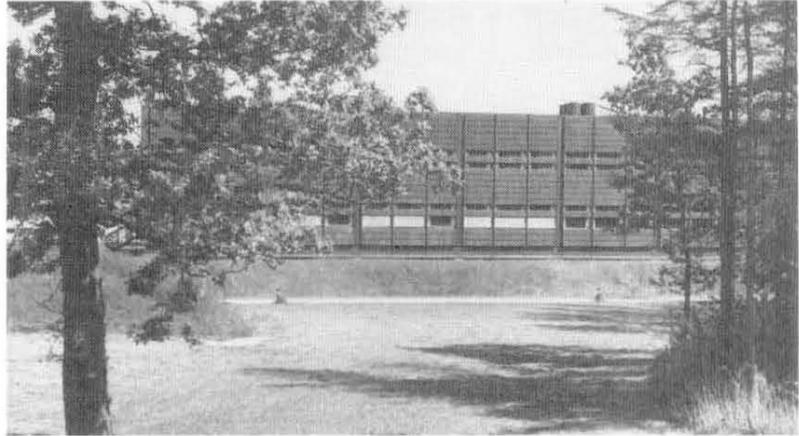
Everyone who frequents Odense University has doubtless discovered that despite this highly developed system of communications the building is difficult to find your way around, and not less so when it comes to giving directions to others. This is due not merely to the extraordinary size of the building and the anonymous uniformity of the corridors, but equally to the fact that here is a building without a real centre or a fixed point of reference. In the old main building of Copenhagen University there was never any doubt that the centre was the main stairway beneath the eagle that searched the sky; at Copenhagen's main railway station you could always agree to meet under the clock.

Analogous recognizable points of reference are singularly lacking in Odense University's building. Its centre is not a single point but a line running through the building with a driveway (Campusvej) at basement level, a communication corridor on the ground floor and library on the first floor. The building does not rest around a single point but moves around a central axis; it is built not for rest but for movement.



*The compact, dark mass of the building contrasting attractively with the snow-bedecked surroundings. (Nyt).*

*The University's  
Buildings – from  
the Technical  
College  
to Campus*



*Harmony between building and surroundings. (Nyt).*

This very basic characteristic of the great building derives from the conditions prevailing at its conception. It was planned and projected at a time – the 1960's – when more than ever before the future of higher education was in the melting pot. There was general agreement that the old boundaries between disciplines and institutions must come down, but as yet no certainty as to what would take their place, beyond some vague notions of integrating disciplines and establishing educational centres. Added to this was the uncertainty about the future of the Veterinary and Agricultural College and the steadily growing pressure of student numbers.

The difficult task facing architect Knud Holscher was therefore to construct a building that would meet a number of vaguely formulated requirements for a largely unknown future. His solution was the centre-less communication system with built-in flexibility. If need be it could be extended almost indefinitely longways or crossways without destroying the building's balance. The long corridors which seem to disappear into infinity, the many entrances of equal importance distinguishable only by the letters assigned to them, the endless surfaces of rusting steel, are all concrete manifestations of the unresolved and ill-defined planning situation prevailing in the field of higher learning during the educational explosion of the 1960's.

**Harmony and Conflict**

82 Although the building is thus fairly unambiguous in its symbolism it contains nonetheless a number of internal contradictions which over

the years have provoked both surprise and alarm. The most obvious is probably the building's refined seclusion, its almost hidden location behind the woods at a safe distance from the beaten track. There is an irrefutable irony in the fact that the first really major university building in the history of democratic Denmark should be placed where only the initiated could find the way to it. The location ensured from the start that no one went there without a specific purpose. This could be interpreted either as an expression of elitist thinking on the part of the planners, or as a sort of bashfulness about investing so much of the taxpayers' money in a single educational project. Either way its location has imposed on the university an isolation from the local community which has not been without its problems, and which has proved difficult to overcome.

Then there is the quite startling contradiction between the landscape surrounding the building and its interior lay-out. Responsibility for shaping the immediate topography was from the beginning assigned to landscape architect Jørgen Vesterholt, who set great store by preserving as much of the original landscape as possible, for example by ensuring the survival of the three small woods on the site. Only in the immediate vicinity of the building was there radical adjustment with the building of ramparts and the laying down of lawns: the remainder of the quite substantial area was adapted only with extreme

*The University's  
Buildings – from  
the Technical  
College  
to Campus*



*The central malls end with glass walls looking out onto the surroundings, but otherwise the contrast between outside and in – witness the lights which burn even on bright sunny days – is almost tangible. (Nyt).*

*The University's  
Buildings – from  
the Technical  
College  
to Campus*

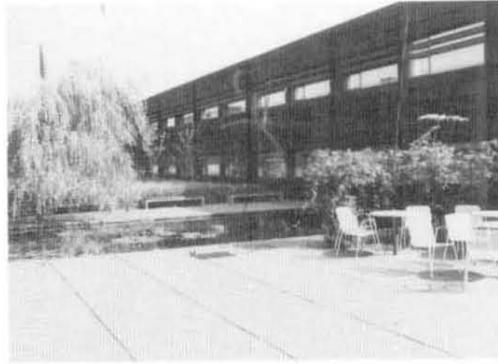
care, rather in the style of an English park. The result was a very attractive and scenic landscape in excellent harmony with the massive, enclosed shape of the rust-brown building.

But once inside the building one derives scant pleasure from Vesterholt's efforts, for the building closes in on itself and its denizens. The windows overlooking the surroundings are of quite modest dimensions, their area further reduced by the broad exterior horizontal shutters, which contribute substantially to minimizing the already sparse daylight penetrating into the building. Light within the building is predominantly artificial, and the many light bulbs and neon tubes emphasize the sense of being indoors, cut off from the world outside: rather in the manner supermarkets paint all their windows so customers won't be distracted by events outside and can concentrate on the real business of buying as much as possible.

Correspondingly most classrooms have only skylights, some not even that, and those with windows look out onto interior yards and light-wells. Quite apart from structural constraints this situation is undoubtedly the result of a deliberate effort to create within the building a constant, synthetic environment independent of diurnal or seasonal rhythms – an environment conducive to the steady production of scientific knowledge under regulated conditions. After a working day in this environment it can be a startling experience on the way to the parking lot to discover that the sun is still shining and the woods are still green in Vesterholt's landscape.

The third and last of the contradictions is the conspicuous contrast between the impressive central corridors with their generous provision of space and the usually cramped areas occupied by the departments, in which the teachers' offices are typically of the size of a full-grown wardrobe, earning them among some the designation »lecturers' cells«. In all fairness it should be conceded that their modest and unsuitable size was not a feature of either the original plans for the building or the modified project of 1970, in both of which they were twice as big. The reduction was a consequence of a later financial cut-back which involved the risk that some departments might end up permanently stranded in the prefabricated buildings with all the inconveniences this entailed. It was therefore decided at the local level that all should squeeze a little closer so there would be room for everybody, and it was the teachers' offices which bore the brunt of the contraction.

*One of the inner courtyards:  
the building has many such,  
each with its individual  
character. (Nyt).*



*The University's  
Buildings – from  
the Technical  
College  
to Campus*

### **The Delights of Working in a Monument**

Despite all these intramural inconveniences and the sporadically cramped accommodation the great building turned out to function quite well. After a nomadic existence of nearly a dozen years Odense University could at last settle down into its permanent home. In this way the university acquired the stable and suitable conditions for its daily life and work it had been looking for from the start. The age of improvisation was now long over, and even the age of planning was coming to an end. What remained was the workaday business of research and teaching whose results would determine whether it had all been worth the investment of money and effort.

But with the permanent buildings the university – not to mention Denmark as a whole – acquired more than a workplace: it also inherited a unique monument which in its power and its disturbing tensions between harmony and conflict closely reflected the civilisation – the welfare state – which had raised it. The same cannot be said of many modern buildings: it was grand in its design and gigantic in its realization. Should someone in a distant future seek a suitable architectural expression of the mentality and dreams which dominated the prosperous Denmark of the 1960's they could hardly do better than point to Odense University: for in building it a democratic welfare state raised an impressive monument to itself.



## 7. In the News

### **The University and the Press**

Odense university started life amidst a blaze of publicity. It was not to be wondered at that the local media in particular, especially in the early years, looked upon university topics as highly newsworthy: the new institution was after all a novel, alien element in the city's life. In addition, as we have already seen, the start occurred with dramatic speed, urged on by the full support of the legislature and the government. The beginning of Aarhus University some 40 years earlier had occurred at a comparatively gradual rate spread over many years and its newsworthiness was in consequence correspondingly lower.

But in Odense it seemed that nothing was too insignificant for coverage in the local papers. Thus on 29 March 1971 Fyens Stiftstidende could report, under the headline »Odense Professor at Dinner for King«, that Professor Henning Krabbe had visited Seattle and Vancouver to participate in an academic conference and while there had joined the local Danish Club for its annual dinner on the King's birthday. On 6 March 1972 Fyns Tidende in turn informed its readers that Professor Brøndsted proposed shortly to attend a conference in Kiel. The university's first professors could hardly complain at a lack of media interest in their comings and goings.

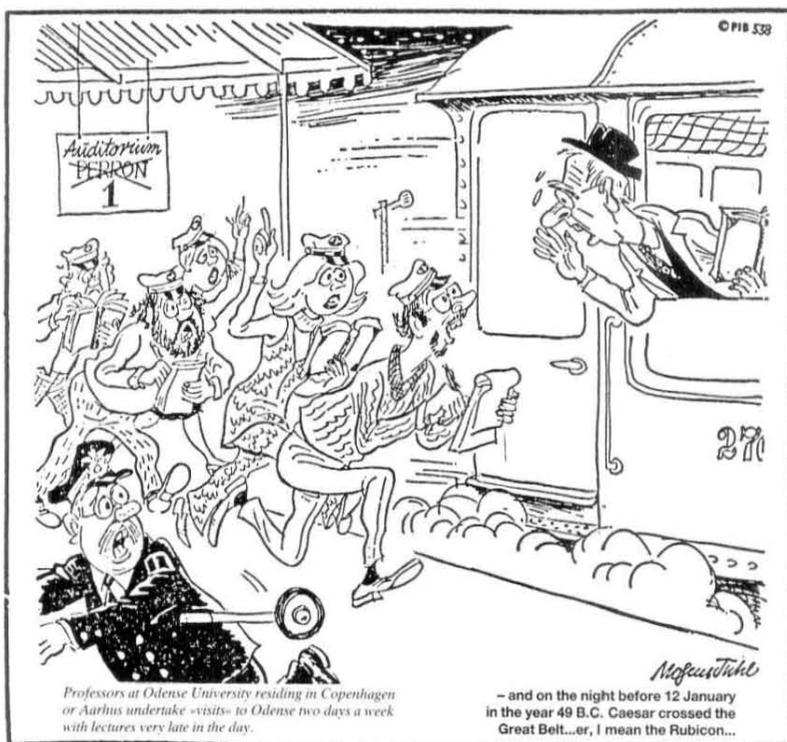
But just as interesting as gossip of this kind were the genuine scandals which could divert the reading public. In this connection similarly the university provided useful copy, at least during the first ten years or so. Later on media interest diminished considerably, and today we could probably blow up a whole wing without getting onto the front page. This may not be all to the bad: a quiet life, as the proverb says, is the best life.

But back in the late sixties and early seventies the university was emphatically newsworthy, and it may be of interest to glance briefly at a few of the items that attracted media attention; it goes without saying they were also talking points within the university's own walls.

*In the News* **The Intercity Professors**

This affair was apparently first brought to the public's attention in a substantial article by Karsten Lindhart in *Morgenposten* on 30 November 1969, in which he reported that three years after the university's opening fully a quarter of the teachers had yet to move to Funen, and continued to reside in Copenhagen or Aarhus; their presence in Odense was therefore restricted to one or two days a week. The journalist had interviewed a couple of the delinquents concerned as well as some of their students; the latter were generally-speaking understanding, and the article was couched in a purely informative tone.

It nonetheless contained politically explosive matter, appearing as it did only three weeks before a massive public hearing on the future of the university centre at Odense City Hall, with the participation of numerous politicians, led by Minister of Education Helge Larsen. Lindhardt's article consequently supplied part of the agenda for this important debate.



An Intercity professor as depicted by cartoonist Mogens Juhl, although to judge from the platform number (renamed »lecture-hall« for the occasion) the train would be unlikely to get him to Copenhagen or Aarhus. (*Fyens Stiftstidende* 10 December 1969).

In the intervening weeks the story continued to run in the newspapers, the tabloids in particular having a field day, and the matter was seen as symptomatic of the antiquated system of government in higher education. It was also a gift to cartoonists, who could show professors passing through at great speed or giving lectures at the railway station. The university's governors attempted to calm things down, and indeed on the day before the great hearing in Odense Fyens Stiftstidende carried a leader which dissociated itself from the »professor-hunt« into which the debate had degenerated – evidently a fit of cold feet over a story which broke, ironically, in a sister-paper from the same publishing house.

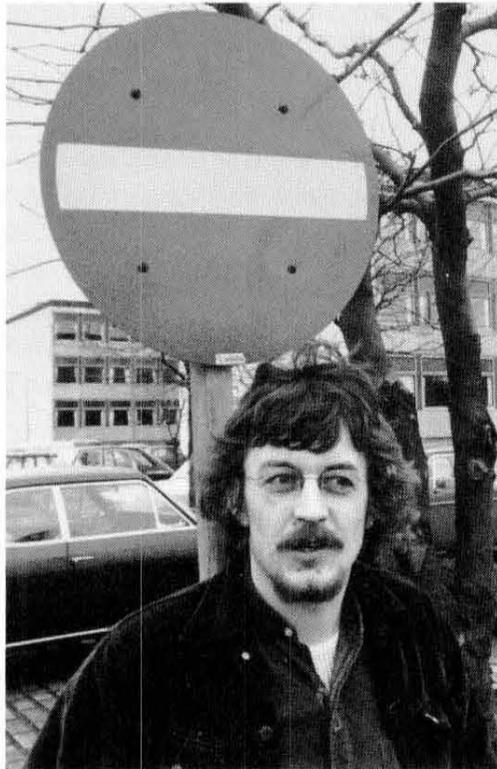
But on the day of the hearing itself, 13 December 1969, the local press could reveal a significant thickening of the plot, to the effect that the university authorities had reported to the ministry a disagreement over the payment of allowances. It transpired that some of the dons still resident in Copenhagen had put in for travel and meal allowances for attending meetings in Copenhagen as if they lived in Odense and travelled from there, while in fact having to make only a short trip on the Copenhagen subway. The debate flared up again with renewed vigour, and did not die down until several months later. The press was unanimous in condemning this sort of creative accounting, and in due course the legal experts at the ministry concurred.

This sad business did little to improve the public reputation of university teachers, but it was nonetheless one of their own number who said what had to be said in the matter. Tage Kaarsted – who following his appointment in 1968 to the chair of modern history had at once moved lock, stock and barrel from Aarhus to Odense – told the enquiry: »To my mind we belong here: we should drink Odense's Albani beer, smoke its Tørring cigars, and in regular fashion become part of the local community«. This was putting it the way the public could understand and approve, and provided a watchword by which he and his colleagues have done their best to live ever since. And it became routine to insert into advertisements for full-time teaching positions the condition that the successful applicant should take up residence on Funen.

#### **Student Radicalism: The Case of the Welder**

A good deal of news of a quite different kind was provided by the radicalization of the student movement, and we may take up the story in

*In the News* the halcyon days of the student revolt, more specifically 1973. By this time the marxist-inspired revolt among students had definitely reached Odense, with significant consequences for the students' organizations, whose idiom was transformed from the earlier demands for better conditions and participation in decision-making within the existing framework to outright revolutionary rhetoric. In pursuit of their joint aims of bringing class war into the university and forming a revolutionary alliance with the workers the revolutionary guards at the forefront of this movement found an ideal cause célèbre at the beginning of the new academic year in 1973. It concerned a young man, trained as a welder, whose application for admission to the university had been rejected because of his lack of academic qualifications – whether this was a genuine application or a deliberately staged provocation is impossible to judge at this distance, but is anyway not really relevant. The fact is that the student politicians seized on the case which in the way they expounded it to the media became a symbol of class oppression. Here was a living and talking worker who wanted to



*NO ENTRY to the university. The dejected face of the rejected welder with the university in the background was a favourite icon in the dailies at the beginning of the academic year in 1973. But he didn't do so badly, and has since carved out a respectable career in the trade union movement. (Fyns Pressefoto).*



*From 1972 onwards direct action by student protesters against the authorities became more and more frequent. One of the first of this type occurred in March 1972 when a group of students attempted to gain access to a confidential meeting of the Centre Council. The reaction of Vice-Chancellor Franz Biering was to suspend the meeting, and the picture shows the situation a moment or two thereafter. In the foreground, facing away from the camera, are Professor Hans Chr. Johansen (History) and Chief Librarian Torkil Olsen. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

improve his education but was denied the chance because of the system's machinery of suppression.

In media terms this was a lucky strike for the militant student leaders, and it was at the same time a sensitive issue for the Danish establishment as for many years it had been the official policy of the Social Democratic Party, now in government, to broaden access to higher education and to break the monopoly of the higher school certificate as qualifying for admission. The Odense rejection therefore prompted questions in parliament from Social Democratic politicians, and Minister of Education Knud Heinesen announced that the criteria for admission would soon be subjected to renewed consideration. The university marxists could claim a victory on points, having caused disarray in the ranks of the establishment and weakened the self-confidence of the system.

But victories too have their price, and for the marxist-dominated student organizations the price of effective, determined effort was the loss of breadth in the movement. The actions of the student revolt

*In the News* were all planned and controlled by a quite narrow, ideologically tightly-knit group with distinct elitist tendencies. Although decision-making procedures had a superficially democratic look to them, there were numerous instances where the inner circle had scant regard for the democratic rules of the game: on the contrary, on the old principle that the end justifies the means it manipulated away to reach its revolutionary goals. The result was a growing passivity among the ideologically uncommitted students and a pessimistic laissez-faire attitude on the part of more moderate student circles – for whom the active inner circle could therefore to a degree claim to speak.

But only to a degree, for in the autumn of 1973 there were clear signs of a split within the ranks of students in Odense. The broad federation of local student organizations, SUO, had in reality already broken up in the course of the summer, when the students from the town's other educational institutions were unwilling to follow the extreme policies of those from the university. And as the autumn waned even from the far left wing a critical voice was heard, so highly pitched that it resounded through both the media and the university's corridors: the episode has gone down in university history as the newsletter affair.

#### **The Newsletter Affair**

With the financial support, incidentally, of the university, a daily newsletter had been launched in the spring of 1973 as a forum for debate and means of communication among the students, with the Student Union having editorial responsibility. The duplicated sheet of A4 paper was distributed daily in canteens and other places of general resort, so staff and students could read about the latest assaults on the established system. Then on Monday 5 November 1973 appeared Newsletter No. 116 with a – to put in mildly – somewhat sensational supplement.

The latter contained a veritable rigmarole over the signature of a student at the Department of Nordic Studies. Evidently impatient at the lack of results achieved by the revolutionary struggle, and in an attempt to put some momentum into things he made a vehement attack on the student leaders for their exclusivity and pseudomarxism. In itself this was not particularly remarkable; what was remarkable was the extraordinarily scatological idiom of the article and its extremely

slandrous attack on the university's governors and individual, named teachers at various departments. The article manifestly transgressed norms of decency and applied a standard of debate unacceptable here or anywhere else. As the papers so strikingly put it, here was clearly a case of a confused student running amok, carried away by misguided ideological fanaticism. There were many who nearly choked on their open sandwiches at lunch that day.

It was immediately evident that such behaviour could not be without its consequences. For some days the university authorities under the leadership of Vice-Chancellor Franz Bierring contemplated sending down the student, which would be tantamount to putting an end to his studies. In the end the university senate, as the responsible authority in the matter, abstained from this solution. Instead, at an extraordinary meeting called a week after the publication of the notorious article, it was decided to let the student off with a serious reprimand, and otherwise to leave it to those affronted themselves to bring private actions for slander – which none of them, however, wished to do.

The soft landing made by the senate on this embarrassing issue was accompanied by a rather humorous justification: since his formulations revealed that at the moment of composition the student concerned was not in full control of his grammar, it would be a shame, in sending him down, to deprive him of the chance of acquiring in due course a more suitable style. The real reason was more likely to avoid the risk of supplying the student rebels with a martyr, however unqualified. Whether the student ever improved his grammar is unknown to history; it is however on record that eighteen months later he quietly left the university without in the mean time having made any discernible academic progress.

In its moderate reaction the university leadership demonstrated its strength, while conversely the affair also revealed the weakness of the student revolt. Despite earnest challenges to do so no student leader had had the courage or the guts to repudiate in public the wording of the disgusting article: at most there were some half-hearted shrugs regretting its »questionable allegations«, accompanied by veiled threats of a »violent reaction« if the student concerned were sent down. A movement ready to share responsibility for even such puerile aberrations demonstrated not only its ideological infatuation but its debility as well. The result of the whole rather tasteless affair was

*In the News* therefore a victory on points to the established system, as represented by the university authorities. More and more students therefore openly turned away in understandable disgust from a movement which was clearly in the process of completely losing touch with reality. The student revolt was rapidly developing into the sectarian struggle of a small group of paramount chiefs whose indian braves – who should have given breadth to the movement – were taking to their heels in all directions.

#### **The Absalon Letters**

Middle-class Denmark had long been twiddling its thumbs and letting the left-wing students' movement make all the running; but this situation too was coming to an end. In the same autumn that the revolt in Odense got into deep water in the aforementioned newsletter affair there were increasing signs of a middle-class counter-offensive in preparation. It is typical of the paranoid atmosphere prevailing in the world of higher education in these turbulent years that things started in a way unmistakably reminiscent of the underground organizations of the time of the German occupation.

In the course of the autumn several so-called Absalon Letters made their appearance at the university. These were leaflets which from a manifestly non-socialist point of view and without extenuation sought to unmask the so-called student revolt as a straightforward ideological war whose objective was the destruction of existing society. The anonymous articles went out of their way to reveal the manipulations of the rebels and their undisguised contempt for democratic procedures; they were signed, »ABSALON – a wide circle of Danish citizens«.

It was never fully determined who was actually behind these leaflets, but there was much that pointed to groups with roots going back to the war-time resistance movement, and it is evident that these circles also included a number of students with conservative views who could not or dared not voice their opinions in any other way. Under cover of anonymity however they could and did express views which in the marxist-dominated student assemblies of the time could be voiced only by those with the contempt for death of a kamikaze pilot.

Predictably the reaction of the inner circle of the student movement was sharply condemnatory. With no hint of conscious irony a spokes-

man expressed extreme outrage that innocent students should be exposed to articles with such content, and declared menacingly that »steps would be taken to reveal the identity of Absalon, whatever consequences this might entail for the individuals concerned«. This response at least confirmed that the deliberate anonymity of the Absalon group was not merely empty nostalgia for the good old days of the resistance but a sensible security measure. All this provided topics of conversation for the office parties of Christmas 1973.

At the following year's elections the moderate students emerged out of hiding for the first time and put up candidates for places on the governing bodies, some of whom were elected in close contests with representatives of the Student Union. This wing of the student movement has since been represented at various levels in the university's system of government. Its simple presence offered an alternative to the hardline commissars who for a short period in the early 1970's had set the tone of student participation in the governing bodies. Looking back today, after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the ideological collapse of Eastern Europe, at these humourless and self-important years of struggle it is hard to take their battles quite seriously. They seem light years away from our present reality in which the major threat comes not from a subversive student movement but from an interfering busybody of an Education Ministry. But in those days we probably all regarded the constant ideological struggle with the utmost seriousness. It is easy in retrospect to discern the immaturity and amateurism characterizing the student revolt, but at the time it seemed threatening enough, and the representative system imposed by the statute on university government ensured, furthermore, that it was able to disturb the university's daily life over several years.

#### **A Change of Climate**

The Absalon letters were in a way an omen of the new times which were just around the corner and of the shift in the ideological winds which was increasingly noticeable as the year came to an end. But there were signs even earlier. Denmark's entry into the Common Market at the beginning of the year had left the ruling Social Democrats weakened and split, and in the course of the autumn the first energy crisis was upon us. Both contributed significantly to provoking the sense of crisis which later in the year was felt by most people.

*In the News* It was intensified further by the results of the general election of December 4, the so-called landslide election, as Liberal leader Poul Hartling christened it, which doubled the number of parties represented in parliament from five to ten, and which added Mogens Glistrup's Progress Party, with no less than 28 seats, to the landscape of Danish politics. For all the established parties the election was a disaster, not least for the Social Democrats, who lost no less than 24 seats, while the Conservative Party's parliamentary representation was almost halved. Political life had been shaken to its foundations by the strength of the electorate's protest. The immediate result however was Poul Hartling's minority Liberal government, which sought as best it could to govern the country in this new age of the wolf-pack, as socialist parliamentarian Sigurd Ømann darkly put it.

The sudden change in the political climate was matched in the microclimates of the institutions of higher education, in which the temperature fell in more than one sense. Both university authorities and the media virtually from one day to the next lost interest in and patience with the student revolt which had hitherto claimed so much attention, and the rebellious students suddenly found out what it meant to appeal to deaf ears. There were instead new items on the agenda: savings, cutbacks, improving efficiency, and increasing graduate unemployment; the taxpayers' money was now to be spent with greater care than ever before.

#### **The Great Sauna Scandal**

But within a year, on 4 November 1974, *Morgenposten* could reveal under a three-column headline that the university's permanent building would include no less than two sauna cabins for the free use of both staff and students. As the media were already questioning the provision of a bus to transport students free of charge between the prefabricated buildings and the new campus this new affair prompted a nation-wide debate on university spending in times of crisis.

As matters developed internally and in the press it became evident that the university authorities could not long remain silent. So at the beginning of December there appeared both in *Nyt* and the local newspapers a lengthy account by the university's vice-chancellor, Aage Trommer. Its intention was to put things in perspective and to insist, as his headline put it, that »The University is More than a Bus

*The notorious bus, on hire from Marslev Turistfart, pictured outside the prefabricated buildings. (Fyns Pressefoto).*



By way of preface the vice-chancellor acknowledged that the sauna was something of a lapse – an installation which had seemed reasonable at the planning stage way back in the golden sixties when it seemed that the standard of living would go on rising, and which had somehow survived parliament’s significant reductions of the building project in the spending cuts of 1969 and 1971. The bus service in contrast he insisted was a reasonable solution to the real problem of getting students from buildings at some distance from each other in the short break between lectures or laboratory sessions: it would not have been necessary, he added pointedly, had the corporation bus-routes been extended sufficiently to match urban development in the university’s part of town.

#### **Town and Gown**

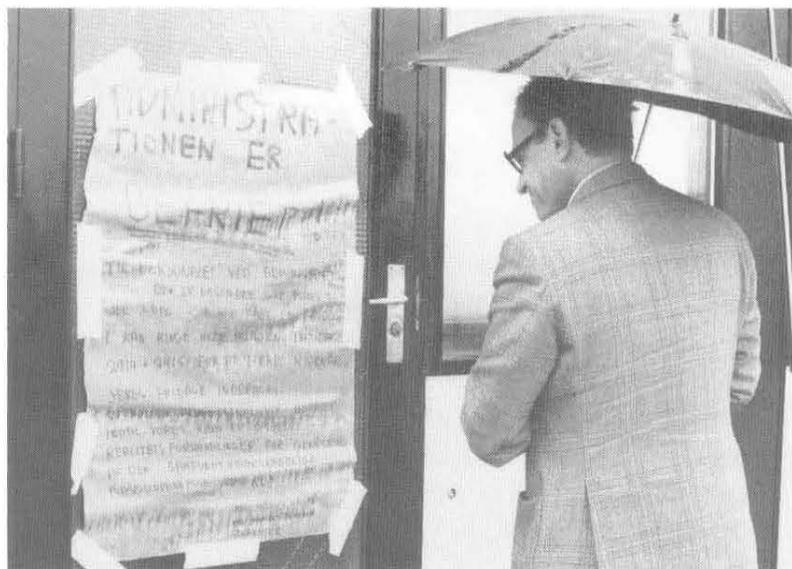
Having thus nodded in the direction of the current debate the vice-chancellor devoted the body of his article to his more positive purpose, a review of the university’s activities and achievements in research and teaching: it was on these, he asserted, and not on matters like the bus and the sauna, that the university should properly be judged. That such a distortion of perspective in the public mind could occur however, made it clear that the university had neglected too much its relationship with the community. The article therefore concluded with a promise of greater openness in the future and by announcing specific arrangements that would offer the public better opportunities of getting to know how the university actually used the taxpayers’ money. This was the origin of the open days which since

*In the News* 1978 have repeatedly attracted thousands of visitors who were able to see with their own eyes that their local university was other and more than their newspapers might have led them to believe.

#### **Occupation and Liberation.**

The next event to claim public attention was the occupation by students of several departments and the administrative offices in the spring of 1977. This was mainly part of a nationwide campaign to resist governmental plans to discontinue some degree programmes at the troubled university centre in Roskilde, although some Social Sciences departments in Odense were under threat as well. In April some departments were occupied, or, as the students put it, »liberated«, for a few days, after which they withdrew in good order and left the facilities concerned to those who worked there.

But some days later the story was partly repeated, only now with the university's administrative offices, at this time still in the prefabricated buildings, as the target. Early on the morning of April 22 a group of students obtained possession of the cleaning staff's keys to the administration building, and carried out another »liberation«. It lasted



*Braving the threat of molten lead poured from the ramparts, Lecturer Palle Spore, Department of Romance Languages, deconstructs the bulletin issued by the students who had not merely occupied but »taken over« the university administration: but the old firm was effectively back in business by Monday morning. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

over the weekend, the group of about 50 students involved receiving considerable media attention, but by the morning of Monday April 25 it was all over: the »liberators« driven out by the building's legal »occupiers« led by Vice-Chancellor Trommer. Having returned the day before from an official visit abroad and after consultation with the heads of the administration and the police he had decided that the administrative offices must the next morning be cleared of demonstrators come what may. It would be simply intolerable to permit the occupation to run its course and so admit he was powerless against a group of students.

With the vice-chancellor in the lead and the police as a discreet rear-guard the de-occupation got going at 6.30 Monday morning. The invading liberators literally caught the demonstrators in their beds – or rather sleeping-bags – and when, still half asleep, they had been hustled out into the chill of the morning the students had to admit defeat, after which they quietly plodded their separate ways home. Thanks to his resolute action the vice-chancellor could register a knock-out victory and score important points in the media.

In the following week the whole action ebbed away in an attempt to stage a boycott of teaching. Its impact was limited, however, thanks largely to the simple fact that attendance at classes is not compulsory anyway.

### **The Golden Crowbar**

Despite these tactical defeats on a broader strategic level the demonstration was quite a success from the students' point of view. After all they had successfully attracted enhanced public attention to the government's planned cutbacks, and this was precisely their aim. Compared to earlier demonstrations the spring offensive was distinctly well organized and well disciplined. This was almost certainly because this time the enemy was not within the university but lurking in the Ministry of Education in Copenhagen. The leaders of the occupation repeatedly insisted that their action was not directed against the university or its employees but exclusively against the central authorities. The most important goal was therefore attracting media coverage and to avoid being confused with vulgar trouble-makers internal discipline was vital. The student leaders therefore went to considerable lengths to ensure this, and had for example drafted a set of rules on



*A moment of high ceremony: in a hushed silence broken only by the clicking of cameras student leader Jens Lind presents Vice-Chancellor Trommer with the gilded crowbar at the commemoration celebrations in 1977. (Photograph: Arne Bloch).*

»Etiquette for Activists in the Liberated Areas«, in which the point was made that even in the course of the class struggle there were certain practical things that needed doing. From the appended checklist it could be gathered that these included emptying ashtrays, collecting empty bottles and watering the flowers: this was a very Danish way to conduct a revolution, but also symptomatic of an honest desire to behave in a disciplined manner.

The media's real hero however was Vice-Chancellor Trommer, whose undaunted counter-attack attracted considerable attention and ensured a happy ending to a business that might have developed in ways highly inconvenient for the university authorities and the powers that be. So he may have won this round of the public relations war, but if so the students staged a vigorous come-back at the following commemoration in June. The Student Union's speaker at the ceremony, Jens Lind, concluded his address by presenting Trommer – who, he said, had displayed great skill with such an implement during the re-occupation of the preceding April – a gold-plated crowbar, inscribed with the words, »Break down the walls around the university«. The episode provoked considerable mirth among the large audience, and with this gesture the students turned their public relations defeat into a small victory.

So the whole business of the occupation was handled by both sides with a reasonable sense of humour, in which it differed greatly from the unrelenting and humourless clashes of the beginning of the decade, suggesting perhaps that the wind force of the controversy had now slackened sufficiently to allow the occasional smile. It also dis-



*From the end of the 1970's the thrust of students' demonstrations was directed increasingly against the government's attempts at cut-backs. Just before Christmas 1980 a group of students carried out a demonstration in defence of the university's grants in which black humour was allowed free play. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

played another new feature which was to become more prominent in the 1980's, in that the enemy was now no longer an abstract capitalism somehow personified in the local authorities, but rather the ministry's Directorate for Further and Higher Education. The latter gradually took over the role of the stern father to whom students and staff, as time went by with increasing unity, could relate to critically or even rebelliously.

Although a number of students and the odd teacher continued to speak of class struggle and express themselves in the idiom of marxist dogma, university marxism was in reality a spent force in 1977. It had long ago demonstrated that it was unusable as a guide to action for student movements. Thereafter the end of unimpeded growth in the education sector and the growing centralization of decision-making finally did for it. Class struggle was succeeded by the struggle for survival: this was the major theme of the eighties.



## 8. The University and its Environment

### Campus and Village Pond

The university's building has one further internal contradiction which was not touched on earlier and which impinges not on the eye but the ear, to a somewhat comical effect. This is the naming of the corridors which connect the various parts of the building.

One approaches the university by driving along Niels Bohrs Allé, passing on the way the H.C. Ørsted Hall of Residence, then turning right onto Campusvej, which leads into the midst of the Campus complex. Having come so far it is possible to turn left onto Killerupvej to find a parking space. From there it is possible to penetrate into the building itself along one of the four transverse 100-metre corridors – choosing between Knoldene, Krogene, Bøgene and Agrene – and soon reaching one of the wide longitudinal thoroughfares which rejoices in the name of Gydehutzen. Advancing still further into the building one crosses the other central thoroughfare, called Stenten.

In the course of this pilgrimage among the place-names the associations are constantly changing, from scientific superstars through American mega-universities to the village pond of the long-gone Killerup farmers. This quaint contrast has its own history, shining an in-



*This entrance – officially known as »J« – leads in to the hundred-metre corridor more romantically named »Bøgene« (the Beeches). (Nyt).*

teresting sidelight on the university's ambivalent status as both an international centre of higher learning and a local institution.

The term »Campus« for the approximately 750 acres of university grounds – and hence »Campusvej« for the road leading to its centre – we owe to the university's first professors. This was before the time of the great demonstrations against the Vietnam War, and before anti-Americanism got a firm grip on academic youth. Odense University was founded at a time when American-English names on products were still good for sales. At the behest of the Ministry of Education the first corps of teachers therefore found it natural to follow an American example and dub the university grounds »Campus«. This remained thereafter the official term, although it continued to have a foreign ring and to sound a bit precious to well-tuned Danish ears – and it has clearly been troublesome to those who have addressed letters to the university at »Campingvej« or »Kampusvej«.

The nostalgic sounding (and quite untranslatable) names of the thoroughfares in the campus building's internal traffic system are in contrast the result of a competition in which the university's staff and students were invited to submit suggestions. Among the entries received the Buildings Committee selected the one submitted by then Senior Research Fellow Henrik M. Jansen, which suggested using the old place- and field-names which in former times had been associated with the campus area, that is when the land still belonged to the farmers in the lost village of Killerup, enclosed in 1790. The notion of using names to symbolize the place's historical connections to the village community of bygone days caught on, and in this way the vernacular idiom of the old peasant society came into its own again in the futuristic building.

#### **The Larger World and the Local Community**

This question of names had – and still has – a further implication, in offering a glimpse of the ambivalent nature of an institution like a university. On the one hand there is an international orientation, as there has to be if the place is to survive as an academic institution: science and scholarship do not respect national boundaries, and can thrive only in a context of international cooperation and competition. This aspect of a university's activities is not tied to a particular place and cannot be restricted by local considerations if its results are to be

viable. Names like Niels Bohr, H.C. Ørsted and Campus in the university's topography reflect this feature of its life and work.

On the other hand the university is also a part of the local community in which it is situated. It cannot thrive in splendid isolation and the citizens of the community for their part have a reasonable expectation that they should derive some advantage from this major source of knowledge in their midst. If this does not happen they cannot be blamed for responding with resentment, as happened for example with the business of the commuting professors in 1969. A successful and harmonious development requires in other words reciprocal respect and a lively interplay between the local community and the university. Using the old place-names for the university's internal thoroughfares – despite its tinge of nostalgia and an unintended comic effect – represented a desire to symbolize an attachment to the local community on Funen. The intention was to emphasize that this was Funen's university: it was born here, its home was here, it was from here its world started.

Thus right from the start the university lived simultaneously in two worlds: the unbounded world of scholarship, which did not respect distance or linguistic barriers, and the equally demanding immediate environment, the local Funen community. Odense university has done its best, if with uneven success, to make its mark in both of these worlds.

#### **International Connections**

Taking an objective view it would probably have to be acknowledged that the university has better lived up to the first of these commitments than to the second. It was not long at any rate before researchers from the university's various departments started to make a name for themselves at international conferences, and as visiting professors or guest lecturers at foreign universities. The young corps of teachers displayed from the start a vigorous appetite for scholarly travel and publication, which in the course of relatively few years put Odense firmly on the map of most academic fields – an impression easily confirmed by leafing through the annual reports.

The university and town soon played host themselves to a steady stream of scholarly conferences and symposia, many of which were also welcomed by a reception at the city hall. By and by it became a

*The University  
and its  
Environment* tradition for the university to mark such events by flying the flags of the participating nations, and with increasing frequency the flags of foreign nations flew alongside Denmark's white cross from the flag station on Campusvej as a symbol of the ever livelier international exchange of learning. Foreign guest lecturers also made frequent appearances, particularly in the early years when grants for this purpose were more plentiful, to share new learning and new theories with staff and students.

The driving force behind all this restless activity, which relative to size was probably a match for that anywhere else, was doubtless first and foremost the realization precisely that by almost any yardstick Odense University was only a small institution with limited scholarly resources. It was evident to all right from the beginning that the precondition for surviving and making a mark in the highly competitive international scholarly arena was openness and outwardly oriented activity. The university's small size simply did not offer a congenial environment for the growth of the feeling of self-sufficiency sometimes to be met with in larger institutions.

#### **Foreign Teachers**

This openness was also evidenced in the university's appointing in its first ten years a quite considerable number of teachers from outside Denmark. This was almost a matter of course at the modern language departments, but many foreign teachers, particularly Swedes, were also appointed in these years to other humanities departments as well as in the natural sciences and medicine. This policy was also a consequence of the great explosion in appointments which around 1970 had literally swept the Danish graduate market clean of qualified applicants, so it was necessary to go further afield to find them.

Although on a single occasion in the mid-1970's the appointment of so many foreigners provoked some sporadic criticism there seems to be little doubt that their presence has provided the university's corps of teachers with a bracing intellectual challenge and a refreshing international flavour which has prevented its atrophying into a barren provincial complacency. And for their part most of the foreign scholars appointed at the time have come to find themselves sufficiently at home that they have remained at the university.

The variegated composition of the academic staff and the fortunate non-appearance of complacency have resulted in Odense University

still at the age of 25 retaining its vitality and openness more or less intact. This is despite the fact that the centre of gravity in the age-profile of the academic staff is slowly but surely passing the 50-year mark, and that the almost permanent moratorium on new appointments prevents anything but the most modest renewal of its composition. Admittedly we cannot as yet, unlike the large American universities, bask in the reflected glory of a gallery of Nobel prize-winners, but many of the university's researchers over the years have been awarded other honours for their scholarly achievements, and the university is furthermore well represented in most of the academic organisations and associations of international repute. Altogether Odense University has reason to be satisfied with its efforts in the world of scholarship.

### **The University and the Local Community**

It is less easy to be categorical about the university's efforts locally, on Funen and in Odense. The relationship between gown and town was from the start characterized by an inconsistency and an ambivalence in some ways reminiscent of a love-hate relationship. In the happy days of 1966 the city welcomed its new university with open arms, and to judge from the newspaper reports the reciprocal willingness to cooperate apparently knew no bounds. Public interest in the new arrival was enormous, and attitudes, not least in the local press, were overwhelmingly positive: a radiant future was depicted through rose-tinted glasses.

But everyday reality soon asserted itself, and as the denizens of the university, untrained in Public Relations, revealed themselves as quite ordinary people with their fair share of the usual weaknesses and conflicts, affection rapidly cooled. It was replaced by a more realistic kind of coexistence, which under stress could modulate into scepticism or outright indignation. This was due partly to the fact that university stories – particularly the more sensational – were for several years reckoned highly newsworthy, partly to differing linguistic registers, and partly to the university appreciating rather late in the day the necessity of a cultivating a deliberate image towards the local community in whose midst it found itself.

Communication problems were probably least acute for the medical people, who had the hospital – where most people after all found themselves sooner or later – as a convenient channel between gown

and town. The public were thereby accorded a chance of seeing the medicine-men in action and perhaps experiencing the beneficial effects of their arts; but who had ever seen a real life humanities scholar, other than when perhaps a specimen of the species appeared in the newspapers in some or other sensational story? What exactly did they do for their high salaries, and was it any use? The humanities evidently suffered from something of a credibility gap in their relations with the local public, and from some points of view to a degree still do.

#### **Good Intentions and Poor Results**

Certainly Professor Kaarsted had advised his colleagues as early as 1969 to drink Albani beer and smoke Tørring cigars, in other words to participate whole-heartedly in the life of the local community, but what was the point when one could read in the papers that about a quarter of the university's teachers still did not wish to live in that local community but rather preferred the larger scholarly milieux of the two older university towns? This was hardly promising.

For a time this sort of embarrassing revelation threatened to completely obscure the fact that by far the greater part of the university's employees were in fact making considerable efforts to reduce the distance between the city and the university. The university's first vice-chancellor Professor Brøndsted and Director Bengtson both made heroic efforts to bridge the empathy-gap, and the 33-year old dean of the humanities faculty, Professor Søren Skovgaard Jensen, went so far as agreeing to stand as a Conservative candidate in the city council elections of 1970. He had previously displayed a distinct flair for university politics and was now to enter the arena of local government. It was not to be, however, for he was pipped at the electoral post by an even younger party colleague who also had connections with the university, if only as a history student. It was in this way that the go-ahead young Conservative Søren Møller started on a distinguished career in local politics which within ten years was crowned with the post of alderman in charge of schools and culture in Odense.

The block in communications remained a problem, however, even though many of the academic staff did their duty as guest speakers at meetings of local societies and associations, and offered extra-mural lectures and courses under the aegis of the »Folkeuniversitet«, whose national office moved to Odense and moved in with the university in

1971. Things didn't improve when the student revolt, led by students of the humanities in particular, got under way in the early 1970's. Its excesses were not appreciated by the general public, who generally speaking were at a loss as to why the university authorities could not keep their young rebels in order. The student revolt with its hysterical ideological rhetoric contributed significantly to deepening the already considerable lack of understanding between town and gown.

#### **The 1976 Agreement on Cooperation**

It was not until the eve of the local elections of 1974 that a serious dialogue got under way that was to significantly ameliorate the lack of reciprocal understanding and lead to the first real agreement on cooperation between the city and its university. The initiative for this was taken by the then Lecturer – now Professor – in the Department of Nordic Studies Hans Bekker-Nielsen, who in a short article in *Nyt* of 5 October 1973 asked a series of specific questions of the city's politicians and urged them to suggest how practical cooperative ventures could be worked out. In the course of the winter local politicians presented their suggestions in turn both in *Nyt* and in the local newspapers. All these suggestions were offered in a constructive and accommodating spirit, and the ice was thereby definitively broken. Two years later, on 26 August 1976, there emerged a comprehensive, formal agreement on cooperation, signed by Odense City Council and the university senate, delineating some general contexts within which cooperation in all imaginable fields could be conducted.

The most important thing however was not so much its formal content as its function as a confidence-building device. The city had thereby demonstrated its readiness and willingness to cooperate, and the university the will and ability to commit itself to putting its now extensive expertise at the disposal of the local community of which it was a part. This agreement, combined with the gradual fading of the student revolt and the emergence of regionalism as the flavour of the month at the ministry's Directorate for Higher Education finally bridged the communication gap and created the basis for successful cooperation to the benefit of all parties.

This development was further facilitated by the fact that the university's departments of business economics were at this time in the process of being rapidly built up. One of the subject's professors, Niels

*The University  
and its  
Environment* Christian Knudsen, in particular was in the process of successfully developing an extensive network of contacts with a wide range of people involved in business on Funen. The confidence in the university's usefulness and ability thus carefully established was a significant precondition for the improvement in the local climate from the middle of the 1970's. Professor Knudsen's later career is incidentally in its way an excellent illustration of the new climate of cooperation in that he is today the managing director of a major local bank while remaining a consultant – that is a loosely attached – professor at the university.

#### **The City of Odense: A History**

In the course of time the cooperation between the city and the university has proceeded on various levels, its most striking results being at one extreme the sports facilities mentioned earlier shared with B 1913, and at the other the monumental ten-volume History of Odense published at the rate of one volume a year in the decade leading up to the city's celebration of its 1000 years of recorded history in 1988. The initiative for the latter project was launched in 1976 by the mayor of Odense, Verner Dalskov, at a city hall reception for a group of young Scandinavian historians attending a conference arranged by the university's History Department. As the general agreement on cooperation between the city and the university was in the process of being concluded a specific agreement on cooperation on the city's history could be worked out quickly within its framework.

An editorial committee was set up, its members being Museum Director Niels Oxenvad and City Librarian Carsten Tofte from the city's own institutions, and from the university history Professors Hans Chr. Johansen and Tage Kaarsted, the latter committee chairman. One of the university's young historians, Jørgen Thomsen, was appointed as editorial secretary to take care of the practical business of publication. A broad segment of the university's historians, supplemented by individual scholars from outside, undertook to write the work's individual volumes as part of their research obligations, while the city made available to the project an index-linked grant of 200,000 crowns over eight years.

The first volume – Jørgen Hæstrup's gripping account of life in Odense under the German occupation – appeared in 1979, and thereafter with great regularity a new volume was presented at the town hall

each year at Christmas time until the last was ready in the jubilee year itself. This was not merely a publishing achievement but also the best possible practical expression of the new spirit of cooperation which had replaced the mutual suspicion of earlier times.

*The University  
and its  
Environment*

#### **Opening Doors – Open Days**

But the university itself and its increasingly massive building complex remained uncharted territory for the inhabitants of the island and the city. Neither its location nor its architecture encouraged casual visits to look around, even though the place was public property and open to the public. To be sure the university held annual commemorations, during which the institution briefly exposed itself to the public gaze, but throughout the 1970's they remained occasions for specially invited VIP's and anyway offered only limited opportunities of gaining an impression of the university's everyday life.

The realization that this isolation was damaging for the university's local repute prompted efforts at improving public relations, including the active encouragement of visits by local politicians and associations



*The commemoration celebrations have of late developed into a huge party for students and personnel at which even the central malls have to be converted into a banqueting hall. (Nyt).*

*The University  
and its  
Environment*

for a guided tour of the institution. In the slightly longer term this greater openness manifested itself in the form of actual open days, in which all the university's departments were opened to the general public. The first arrangement of this type was held on a weekend at the beginning of October, 1978, following substantial publicity in the press, and was a great success with the general public.

In the course of two hectic days nearly 8,000 people from Funen visited the university, first and foremost to see the huge building, but also to gain an impression of the whole institution and its many facets by seeing it for themselves. In so doing the many visitors were able to appreciate that the university was other and more than the bus and sauna scandals beloved of the press: a large and many-sided workplace for people who took their work seriously. Most importantly of all perhaps visitors might leave with the comforting feeling of having visited their own university.

This open day probably contributed more than anything else to finally erase the traces of alienation which had long clung to the institution: Funen's university became from then on really the people of Funen's university. Such positive results clearly invited a repetition, despite the many efforts that the preparations required, and open days became a regular event through the 1980's, cementing the good relations between town and gown which after many misunderstandings and false starts had finally started to grow in the mid-1970's.

Through many ups and downs therefore the university had eventually managed to find a suitable balance between its two worlds – the wider milieu of international scholarship and the smaller, local one. It produced a whole new feeling of peace and harmony both inwardly and outwardly. The university could at last base its activities on the certain security of being part of a harmonious and well-functioning local environment, and the people of Funen – justifiably, we are vain enough to assert – were able to feel pleased with and proud of their small but well-functioning university, which as a young teenager had finally learnt how to get on in both the big world and the little.

## 9. So What Did We Get for the Money?

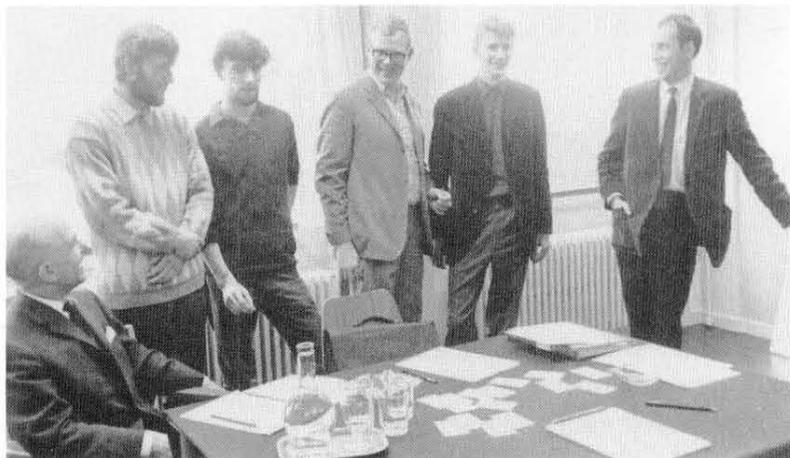
### **Running Costs and Student Numbers**

The purpose of a university is to communicate existing knowledge at the highest level and to contribute through research to the formation of new knowledge. These purposes cannot be achieved without money – a lot of money – for buildings, apparatus, travel, salaries and everyday running and upkeep. Odense University has cost Danish society a good deal of money and continues to do so. The complete construction costs alone amounted to over half a billion crowns as money was valued at the time, to which were added the regular running costs and salaries for a rapidly growing institution with a rapidly growing staff. To this should further be added sums not appearing on the university's own budget, such as grants and other forms of support for a body of students which grew from about 180 in 1966 to ca 4,500 in 1977.

### **Graduate Production in the 1970's**

Put rather simply a university can be said to manufacture two products: graduates and research results. Through their studies the graduates have qualified themselves for appointment to posts for which their particular knowledge and insight are considered requisite or appropriate. This knowledge and insight are documented by means of examinations which together shape the final qualification of the individual graduate. It is therefore possible to make an assessment of the university's activity on the educational side by counting the number of final examinations, that is, the number of graduates who have been deemed to have reached a sufficient level of qualification to be let loose on society and commerce. This rough and ready measurement says nothing of course about the graduates' other individual qualities, but is the only one that is feasible. And in all its crudity it should be able to provide some indication of the university's development as an educational institution.

*So What did  
We Get for  
the Money?*



*The first four candidates in the obligatory philosophy course shown after passing the examination on 23 January 1967, flanked by the external examiner, Head Librarian Jørgen Ochsner (seated) and Professor David Favrholdt. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

As such Odense University started absolutely from scratch with a group of students who were just beginning their undergraduate studies: it is therefore hardly surprising that some years were to pass before its first graduates came off the production line. Only in the longer term did the university become what it was intended to be, a means of relieving pressure on the overcrowded older universities. In the first years indeed almost the opposite was the case, as Odense attracted grants and teaching resources without being able to offer any immediate return. But in 1970 the new university could boast its first graduates – all in the humanities – and thereafter as each examination season came round they appeared in steadily increasing numbers in a similarly broadening spectrum of degree subjects.

The increase in graduate numbers and degree subjects through the 1970's can be followed in detail in the university's examination statistics published in the annual report. The total production of graduates up to 1980 was 1,555, including intermediate level qualifications such as the teaching certificate in physical training, whose first students completed the course in 1972, and the bachelor of commerce (H.A.), whose first graduates appeared in 1975. Medicine supplied the larger part of the rest, with 574 graduates, quite in accordance with the original intentions behind the founding of the university. The first class of 14 doctors left the university in 1972, after which 50-100 more graduated annually for the rest of the decade.

The other large class of graduates came from the humanities faculty, to which administratively the social sciences also belonged. The first full degree in a humanities subject was awarded in 1970, but the person concerned had jumped the gun by starting at Copenhagen University before 1966; it was not until the following year that the first ten »home-made« Odense graduates were awarded their degrees, and thereafter followed a regular production of about 50 graduates a year, with the figure tending to rise. The first graduates in the social sciences (cand.rer.soc.) emerged in 1975, while the first class of ten students reading for the highest degree in commercial science (cand.merc.) did not graduate until 1979.

A science graduate did not appear until 1974, as the university's science degree structure was not fully established until fairly late: the first years were devoted to setting up the basic degree programme which also gave access to medical studies. Only when that was in place did science graduates begin to emerge at a modestly accelerating tempo.

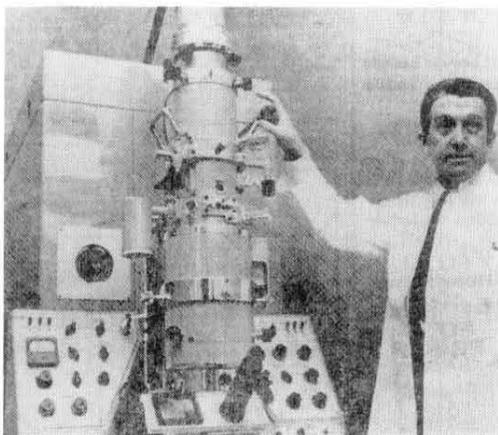
In addition to the types of degree just surveyed the university also produced 47 graduates of higher degrees (lic.phil.; mag.art.) qualified not so much for employment outside the university sector as for academic appointments at this or some other institution of advanced research.

### **Measuring Research Productivity**

The second of the university's products is new knowledge in the form of research results. This aspect of the work of the academic staff is communicated and documented in a variety of different ways: for example in regular teaching – a university teacher being in principle a researcher who also teaches – in papers presented at academic conferences, in written reports, articles published in scholarly journals, or books.

There have from time to time been heated debates – Odense has had them too – on how best to measure the quantity and quality of research results, at the level both of the entire institution and the individual researcher. Each time however the debates have concluded without much to show for them, and there is consequently as yet no generally accepted means which can encompass the phenomenon's many imponderables. And it is indeed doubtful whether there ever will be one,

*So What did  
We Get for  
the Money?*



*Odense University's first major piece of equipment, an electron microscope capable of enlarging objects up to 250,000 times, is presented to the public by Professor Franz Bierring in January 1967. It was followed by many a complicated and costly item in the furtherance of research in medicine and the natural sciences. (Fyens Stiftstidende 22 January 1967).*

given that research is a creative process generating new insights at the very edge of our current knowledge, and how can such things be reduced to fixed measurements?

Nonetheless it is of course possible to point to some indications of the extent of research carried out, and then rest satisfied with the appreciation that the first precondition for good research is that any research at all is being done. The indications deployed in what follows to determine research activity at Odense University are simple in the extreme: the training of researchers and that part of research activity which is documented in the form of doctoral theses, submitted for formal assessment by fellow researchers. This involves ignoring completely all the many contributions made by the academic staff over the years in the form of books and articles published outside this system. However these are carefully set out each year in the university's annual report, where anyone can look them up and be convinced of the industry and energy displayed over the years by the vast majority of the university's academic staff.

#### **Training for Research**

Although the age-profile of the academic staff at Odense University – like that of most of the country's institutions of higher learning – leaves little room for recruiting new researchers and university teachers over the next couple of decades it is nonetheless an important duty incumbent upon a university to educate new researchers, who in the course of time will carry on the work at a responsible scholarly level. A comprehensive multifaceted system of research training is a

necessity of life for an institution wishing to live up to its reputation for representing the highest levels of learning.

These days research training proceeds almost exclusively within the framework of the licentiate or Ph.D. syllabus, formalized by the Ministry of Education's ordinance of 18 February 1981. Things were different in the 1970's. In those days graduates intent on an academic career opted just as frequently for the somewhat scholastic master's degree programme (mag.art.) by way of preparation. So this category is also part of the picture of the university's research training in this period.

From 1970 to 1979 27 master's degrees were completed, plus 16 Ph.D.'s (10 in science, 4 in medicine, 2 in the humanities). In other words in the course of this decade the university had educated 43 young people to a level qualifying them for a career in research and as university teachers. Regrettably most of them were prevented from fulfilling this potential by the lack of vacant appointments, and were obliged to shelve their hopes of academic careers in favour of other means of making a living.

These depressing prospects are reflected in the following decade's relatively low figures for the completion of Ph.D.'s, which now became virtually the sole avenue of recruitment into research. The now fully developed university could in the period 1980-89 boast only 49 completed Ph.D.'s: 29 in science, 10 in the humanities, 7 in medicine and 3 in the social sciences.

The very modest increase in relation to the preceding decade is not a symptom of the university's declining capacity, but simply reflects the circumstance that many otherwise suitable young people hesitated to invest in a long and costly research training programme in the light of the unpromising employment prospects. With isolated exceptions this was the picture all over the country – and thereby one of the most urgent of the unsolved structural problems of the Danish research world.

#### **Prize Theses.**

The same slightly depressing picture emerges on consideration of developments in another field relevant to research recruitment, entries for thesis prizes: that is submitting an undergraduate thesis on a set topic in competition for a gold medal. The purpose of the ancient tradition of prize theses was to offer young talents the opportunity of

*So What did  
We Get for  
the Money?*

*So What did  
We Get for  
the Money?*

taking on a larger scholarly exercise in relation to a usually important subject. The whole business therefore had something of a talent-spotting function, and authors of theses awarded the coveted gold medal could be pretty confident of an academic career. This function was however gradually taken over by the formalized Ph.D. programme, so that the prize theses correspondingly lost their original recruitment function, and quite a number of departments have now given up setting topics for them.

But in the 1970's the prize theses still played a role in relation to recruitment, and it is therefore reasonable to include them here as an indicator of the extent of research training. The first five medal-winning theses at Odense University appeared as early as 1969, four of them in the humanities, one in science. Over the whole of the period 1969-79 medals – gold or silver – were awarded to in all 40 theses on set topics, 25 in the humanities, 11 in medicine, and four in science. In the following period, 1980-89 only 30 theses were awarded medals, 19 in the humanities, and 11 in medicine.

The reduction in medal-winning theses can of course be explained in part by the failure of the social and natural sciences to set any topics, but again part of the explanation is unfortunately to be found in the poor prospects of careers in research. There is little to recommend devoting a year of a young life to hard swotting which in the event can lead nowhere.

So although Odense made a strong start to research training even while the university was in the process of development it cannot be denied that the 1980's displayed some depressing symptoms of decline. They can be explained by the poor employment prospects in this field, but this doesn't make the problem less painful, either for the young researchers who see their employment prospects decline, or indeed for the university itself. A university lacking a dynamic and comprehensive research training facility will not in the long run be able to sustain the conduct of research and teaching at the highest level. It is in this connection little comfort – indeed rather the opposite – that the problem is by no means restricted to Odense University.

#### **Doctoral Theses as Yardstick**

Greater comfort is to be obtained in considering the figures for doctoral dissertations: that is to say the substantial monographs submitted for thorough adjudication, published by the University Press or

elsewhere if accepted, and defended by the author against two official opponents and then all comers in a public seance lasting up to six hours – leading on successful completion to the award of the degree of dr.phil., and not to be confused with the more systematic three-year Ph.D. already discussed. In contrast to the Ph.D.'s and the prize theses dissertations do not say a great deal about the strength of research training, but on the other hand are an indication of the general level of activity within the university's established research environment. It is hardly necessary to add that they offer only a highly partial method of taking the temperature of a research environment, for while some fields, such as the humanities and medicine, have always had strong traditions in the writing of dissertations, the natural and social sciences have never assigned them the same weight as an expression of scholarly abilities. Researchers in the latter fields often prefer more rapid and more itemized publication procedures, and the publication of research results in one of the big, internationally recognized scholarly journals carries in these fields a status comparable to that assigned to the doctoral dissertation in the humanities and medicine.

Counting doctoral dissertations which get to the stage of the public defence is therefore not a yardstick with any claim to be comprehensive: at most it reflects a level of activity and the strength of ambition to achieve high-level research. With these necessary qualifications the number of defended doctoral dissertations can be taken as an approximate indication of the vigour of the research environment which was eventually established in Odense.

#### **Odense Dissertations**

Even in the development phase of the years 1969-79 Odense University could confer no fewer than 48 doctorates at its annual commemorations. 24 of these fell in the field of medicine, 20 in the humanities and four in science. The great year of dissertations in the 1970's was 1977, when no fewer than nine doctoral dissertations – seven in the humanities and two in medicine – got to the stage of the public defence. It was not by chance that a provisional climax was reached just here in the mid-1970's: by this time many of the younger staff appointed at the beginning of the decade had reached the point where they could submit the fruits of their endeavours in this rather demanding form.

*So What did  
We Get for  
the Money?*



*On their way to the university's first public defence of a doctoral dissertation: in front on the left the candidate, Finn Løkkegaard of Danmarks Lærerhøjskole and beside him Professor Søren Skovgaard Jensen, the Dean of the Humanities Faculty. Behind them are the two official respondents, Professor Troels Fink (left) and Professor Erling Ladewig Petersen. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

It was in itself quite striking that a newly established university could so quickly make its mark as an attractive environment for the production of dissertations. This says quite a lot about the strength and quality of the research tradition that was being developed. Equally striking however is the way Odense University has managed to maintain and develop this position in the far less favourable climate of the 1980's. Thus in the period 1980-89 94 dissertations in all were defended at the university, almost a doubling of the figure for the development phase. Of these 57 were in medicine, 29 in the humanities, seven in the natural sciences and one in the social sciences.

In national terms too the university gave a good account of itself: roughly speaking about 12% of all the doctorates conferred in the years 1980-89 were awarded by Odense University, while the large University of Copenhagen contributed 60%, Aarhus University 20%, the other institutions of higher education and the two university cen-

tres together the remaining 8%. These figures acquire their significance in the light of others to the effect that Odense University's financial grant amounted to only 5-6% of the total annual expenditure on higher education, and that its academic staff of 3-400 was – and is – only a tiny fraction of the total number of people in posts carrying the right – and the obligation – to undertake research. By any conceivable yardstick Odense University had right from the start cut an impressive figure in the field of dissertations. The doctoral dissertation is a formal expression of the highest level of academic qualification, and the large number at Odense University is therefore a clear indication of the strength of the research environment successfully established there.

*So What did  
We Get for  
the Money?*

### **Honorary Doctorates**

While the university's regular doctorates were always achieved through the composition, submission and public defence of a dissertation in accordance with the ministerial directives in force at the time, the university also had the option of conferring honorary doctorates on its own initiative on persons who were deemed to be especially deserving of this prestigious form of academic recognition and honour. During the time the university has existed the senate has several times availed itself of this possibility, thereby associating a number of scholarly personalities with its name.

The university's first honorary doctor was also in terms of rank the most senior of the entire series, being no less than a head of state, more specifically the then president of Iceland, Dr. Kristján Eldjárn, honoured at the commemoration of 1974. In addition to being his

*Professor Hans Bekker-Nielsen, Department of Nordic Studies, motivating at the commemoration celebrations of 1974 the award of the university's first honorary doctorate to the President of Iceland, historian and archaeologist Dr. Kristján Eldjárn. (Nyt).*



*So What did  
We Get for  
the Money?*

country's head of state the president was also a highly respected archaeologist and historian, and it was upon these qualities in particular that the award of an honorary doctorate was based. The award also strengthened the relationships between Odense University and the Icelandic university in Reykjavik, to the advantage of both sides.

At the commemoration two years later the university awarded the same honour to one of its own pioneers and a loyal supporter through all the intervening years, Jørgen Hæstrup, the historian of the German occupation. With this gesture the university expressed not only its recognition of Dr. Hæstrup's outstanding research but also its gratitude for an organizational contribution which was an important precondition for the university's getting started in 1966 – a handsome and well-deserved gesture. In the same way the university has in the course of the years associated quite a wide circle of important personalities with its work, one of the more colourful from the last decade being the world famous Italian author and semiotician Umberto Eco, awarded an honorary doctorate at the commemoration of 1986.

The temptation to dish out honorary doctorates to important and influential people in all directions is a constant temptation often fallen for in many parts of the world but which Odense University has fortunately resisted. On the contrary it is a characteristic of the university's entire corps of honorary doctors that in what they do they have demonstrated a scholarly quality completely up to the level required for the award of a doctorate in the regular fashion – many indeed had one already. By maintaining a restrictive policy in this field the university has managed to preserve its honorary doctorate as a prestigious honour, expressing genuine acknowledgement of a distinctive individual contribution to research.

#### **Odense University Press**

In the course of the years a far from small proportion of the research results achieved at Odense University have been communicated to the world at large through the good offices of Odense University Press, which as mentioned earlier was founded almost at the same time as the university in 1966. The beginning was modest in the extreme, almost a spare-time hobby for Chief Librarian Torkil Olsen, and in the first few years only a few titles were published annually. Later under his leadership it gradually expanded and eventually acquired its own offices above an engineering workshop in the inner city not far from the



*So What did  
We Get for  
the Money?*

*Odense University Press at work. The Press employs nine staff in all and in 1991 will publish more than 50 titles. (Photograph: Vibeke Sylvest Frederiksen).*

University Library. Thence after a few years it was able to move into more suitably located offices in the campus building.

Under the management of his successors as publications director, Jørgen Thomsen and most recently Stefan Birkebjerg Andersen, the business increased rapidly to become one of the country's most enterprising small publishers of academic material of almost every kind – mostly however works produced by the university's own staff, or students, if their undergraduate theses were deemed to have a character and quality meriting publication. Such works could in many instances receive financial support from the university's publications fund, which over the years had acted midwife to many dissertations whose scholarly content qualified them for publication even though it could be calculated in advance that they would never get onto the best-seller lists. With the help of the University Press they now stand on the shelves of scholarly libraries world wide, alongside other specialist publications, and thus part of the international exchange of knowledge which is the alpha and omega of every science.

#### **A Well-Functioning Environment**

This chapter has sought with few and primitive means to make a rough sketch of the scholarly environment at Odense University during the 25 years of its existence. The point of departure was the

*So What did  
We Get for  
the Money?*

question of just what society received in return for the many millions spent on the institution. The answer is that society received, and still receives, a great deal. Each year a steadily growing stream of well-qualified students graduates from the full range of the university's degree programmes. And despite threatening clouds over research training the scholarly environment of the place evinced a robust vitality. Despite its small size the university can be proud of its achievements and need not fear comparison with the research performance of Copenhagen and Aarhus.

What was hoped for in 1966 has in other words been achieved. The first generation of the university's staff has succeeded through determined efforts to place the university on a level of excellence by no means inferior to that of its sister universities. In the course of a few years Odense University has been transformed from being a burden to the two older universities into a genuine support. It has also opened up new educational opportunities for a large group of young people, particularly from Funen and southern Jutland, who would otherwise have had greater difficulty in gaining such access. The university has thereby contributed to somewhat correcting the balance of the educationally imbalanced Denmark – and that, after all, is something.

## 10. The 1980's: When the Going Gets Tough ...

### **All Quiet as the Decade Starts**

At the beginning of the 1980's there was general satisfaction with the results achieved so far, and since Odense had the status of a developing university growth could be expected to continue. The previous years' stringency with regard to expenditure on research and higher education had primarily affected the two older universities at Copenhagen and Århus, while Odense had benefited from the circumstance that decentralization was a major plank in national education policy.

The Senate was not however entirely confident about the future. The buildings grant would expire in 1981, which might give rise to difficulties with regard to the relocation of the administration to the campus area, the procurement of apparatus and the maintenance of apparatus already acquired. There might be insufficient means to run the computers and to maintain the level of library services. And with regard to staff it was pointed out that a halt to new appointments would lead to an unfortunate imbalance in the age profile. The Senate was also anxious to maintain the principle that the individual scholar should devote 50% of his time to teaching (including preparation and examinations), 40% to research, and 10% to administration. It was clearly anticipated that the good times were about to come to an end, and developments in the 1980's were to prove that this was only too true.

### **A Shortage of Resources**

Vice-Chancellor Aage Trommer's speech at the May 1980 commemoration reflects the growing anxiety about the future. He noted that the university, warned by the story of the boy who cried »wolf« too often, had refrained from complaining about its financial situation at every opportunity, but the time had now come when it was legitimate to report that the wolf was at the door, as a consequence of three factors:

*The 1980's:  
When The Going  
Gets Tough...* general financial retrenchment, the reform of budgetary procedures, and long-term planning.

The vice-chancellor's concern for the university's future economic situation was prompted by the general efforts of the mid-1970's to arrest the growth of the public sector, reinforced by the intensified retrenchment policy introduced by the social democratic government of Anker Jørgensen in the wake of the second oil crisis in the winter of 1979-80.

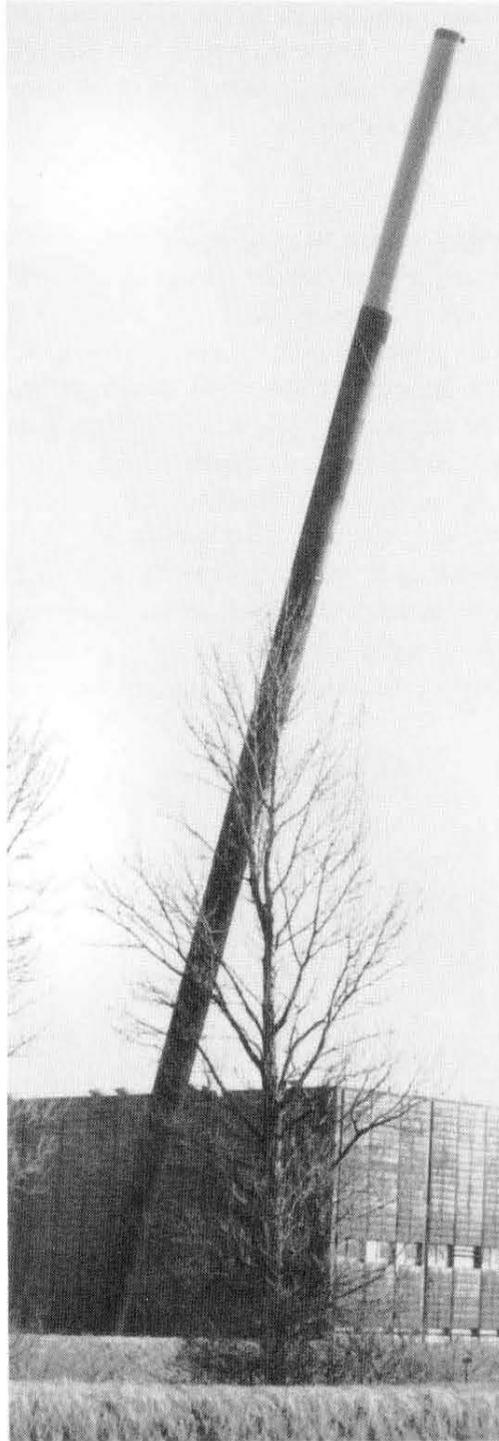
If the university was, in Vice-Chancellor Trommer's words, »somewhat shocked« by a reduction in supplementary grants early in 1980, this was perhaps salutary in bracing it for the blows to come. For in the course of 1980 a continuous flow of directives on cut-backs for 1980 and 1981, together with the reform of budgetary procedures discussed later, gave the university its most severe financial shake-up since its foundation in 1966. In January 1981 the Director, Bent E. Fich, worked out that the reduction amounted altogether to some 10 million crowns; in percentage terms the medical faculty would suffer the smallest reductions, the other three major fields, humanities, social sciences and natural sciences, considerably more.

With regard to the longer term the ministry presented its ideas on the likely budgetary situation in 1988 at a seminar held on 16 December 1980, predicting a reduction in academic staffing levels by 16%, and an increase in the administrative staffing level of 5%. The universities in Copenhagen and Århus were liable for even larger reductions, whereas the university centres in Roskilde and Aalborg were expected to expand rapidly until 1988: indeed according to these projections Aalborg would by then be enjoying a larger total grant than Odense. The decentralizing tendency was maintained, but Odense was no longer a university under development.

As Odense's representative at the seminar, Bent Fich, could report, the picture drawn for 1988 was a hypothetical one, rather than the actual planning objective, but it was nonetheless real enough for the ministry to determine the university's grant for 1982 on the basis of a gradual readjustment from the situation in 1981 to the hypothesis for 1988.

Only a year earlier the Senate had been quite satisfied with the conditions for research in Odense. There had admittedly been some concern that the good times for the university would not last forever, but few could have predicted the abrupt turnaround in expectations for the

*The 1980's:  
When The Going  
Gets Tough...*

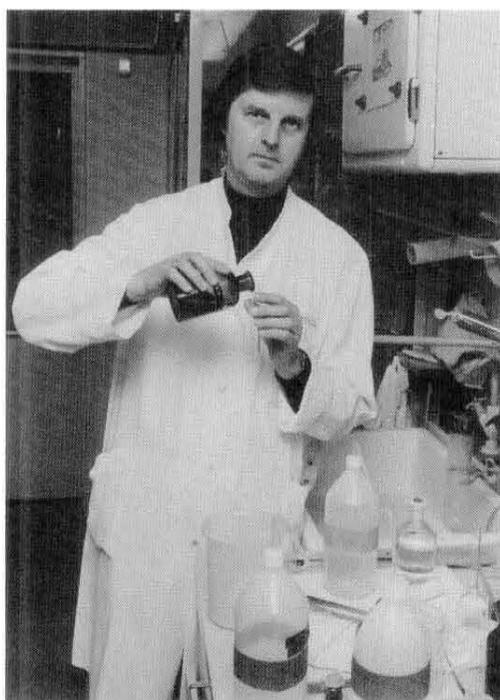


*Not (alas) the university's secret weapon for warding off attacks from the Ministry of Education, just the chimney of the university boilerhouse under demolition in 1988. The university joined Odense's system of district heating (using the surplus heat from a local powerstation) when the rise in oil prices rendered its own heating unit uneconomical in the 1970's. The boilerhouse itself will be converted into several large lecture halls. (Nyt).*

*The 1980's:  
When The Going  
Gets Tough...* economic future, which the Director in January 1981 characterized as gloomy. It is not surprising that the university witnessed an increasingly animated debate on the criteria for selecting those to be made redundant.

#### **Under Permanent Threat of Retrenchment**

At the 1982 commemoration Vice-Chancellor Aage Trommer predicted that redundancies were unlikely to occur in the immediate future, however, evidently with the intention of reassuring staff who had been disquieted by the ministry's budgetary prognostications. The humanities in particular and to a degree medicine were now as later in the 1980's decidedly fearful of selective cutbacks, even more so given the declared policies of the new minister of education Bertel Haarder, who took office later in 1982. He saw it as one of his primary objectives to take resources away from studies qualifying for employment in the public sector, where employment prospects were limited, and to re-allocate them to technical and commercial studies directed towards employment in the private sector, which the new non-



*Double toil and trouble. Dr. Carl Th. Pedersen has been vice-chancellor since first elected to the office in 1983, having been dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences from 1976 to 1982. He became a lecturer in chemistry at Odense University in 1972 having previously worked at the University of Copenhagen since 1960, with a year as visiting professor at the University of Caen. He was awarded a doctoral degree in 1976 for a dissertation on Dithiole derivatives. He was on the governing board of the Chemistry Association 1983-87, and since 1985 has been a member of the Academy of Technical Sciences. (Nyt).*

socialist government wished to expand to correct the long-standing deficit in the Danish balance of payments. This policy, which also involved favouring short and medium-length vocational education at the expense of higher education at the universities, was clearly reflected in the university's budget figures.

On 1 February 1983 Aage Trommer was succeeded as vice-chancellor by Lecturer Dr. Carl Th. Pedersen. The latter also wished to take an optimistic view of the situation and made the point that it was futile for the university to be ever complaining about its financial situation. In his first commemoration speech in the autumn of 1983 he expressed the view that the university »had every chance of getting through the 1980's both unharmed and renewed«, provided it was not the victim of selective cut-backs. But in his commemoration speech only two years later he was obliged to admit that he had, regrettably, been wrong.

And in succeeding years, at commemorations attended by representatives of the civil service and the worlds of politics and business, the vice-chancellor felt obliged to comment on the persistent demands

*The 1980's:  
When The Going  
Gets Tough...*



*The sustained threats of cut-backs during the 1980's brought the students back onto the barricades, this time with a good deal of sympathy from the staff. Another change was the conciseness and clarity of message, as here at the commemoration in 1988: »Support Denmark – Support the University«. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

*The 1980's:  
When The Going  
Gets Tough...* for retrenchment. Reductions in standards, like increases in the student-teacher ratio, might now be renamed »enhanced productivity« in the finance bill, but they meant the same: fewer resources for a given educational activity. And while outright reductions in the financial limits for the coming financial year were no longer announced, as had been the case in 1985, reductions were given in the estimates for each and every one of the following years. At the end of the 1980's there was a further deterioration in that not merely were the reductions larger, they had to be achieved earlier in the period covered by the plan. At this same time the ministry also made specific suggestions for retrenchment, including the closure of the university's medical school and a substantial reduction in the spread of subjects covered in the humanities.

Regrettably the gloomy prospects for the university's economic future have not brightened as the 1990's begin. 1991 saw the first redundancies on economic grounds. As we reach the 25th anniversary of the university's foundation those responsible for its finances are aware that in the longer term further redundancies are unavoidable, unless, as in the 1980's, the university still manages to alter the preconditions for the financial estimates undertaken by the ministry.

#### **The Reform of Budgetary Procedures**

The reform of budgetary procedures was a significant element in the increasingly close ministerial control of Odense University and other institutions of higher education.

It had been a long time coming, some of the major goals having been discussed as early as the end of the 1960's, well before the oil crises of the 1970's emphasized the need to restrain the growth in public expenditure, and the central principles had been set out in 1974. The latter involved earmarking the grants to institutions of higher education for use in specific subject areas (i.e., by and large, individual faculties), and distinguishing between that part of the grant financing teaching and that financing research. The calculation of teaching requirements was to be based on a specific numerical relationship between students and teachers, i.e. the student-teacher ratio, but by »students« was meant not so much heads as the number of (parts of) degrees achieved, calculated in turn from the number of examinations passed adjusted by a standard correction to allow for failures and drop-outs. It was planned to introduce the new system in the financial



*The 1980's:  
When The Going  
Gets Tough...*

*With the introduction of the new budgetary system in 1980 the number of students reading at the university became decisive for the size of its funding from the state. At the start of term a group of students offered this suggestion for how the ministry should keep tabs on how many students were attending classes. Its major drawback was that staff had to crawl under or jump over the turnstile to avoid Odense benefitting from improperly large grants.*

*(Photograph: Th. Møller Kristensen).*

year 1978-79, but it was delayed until 1980 because of the substantial preparatory work required, including the hearing of representatives from the institutions involved; like most of the latter Odense University was very much against the proposal.

The ostensible purpose of the reform was however not altogether unreasonable. Separating teaching and research in budgetary terms would mean that research funding would not necessarily decrease as student numbers fell. And educational activities other than the teaching of undergraduates would likewise benefit from separate funding: propaedeutical and clinical instruction for example, post-graduate supervision, and the employment of external examiners. The reform was also intended to provide both the institutions themselves and the authorities with the means of making clearer assessments of levels of activity, and hence of comparing one faculty, or one institution, with another. Decentralizing budgets, that is making grants to specific subject-groups (faculties) rather than to institutions as a whole, would offer those actually using the grants the means of making their case or explaining themselves directly to the authorities providing them.

The reform, in other words, came gift-wrapped in a manner designed to appeal to the university's self-interest. Generally however

*The 1980's:  
When The Going  
Gets Tough...* the university remained suspicious of the stronger centralized control the new system would facilitate.

The budgetary separation of teaching and research was particularly disturbing. In his report to the commemoration in June 1981 Vice-Chancellor Aage Trommer reiterated the view that a university teacher is a researcher who also teaches, and emphasized that the university considered it of cardinal importance that teaching continued to be conducted by researchers. The budgetary reform made it easier for the faculties to direct research resources towards special research programmes which were considered to be central features of their research profile, with the danger that university teachers whose research lay outside these fields would have their research-time reduced. The vice-chancellor's reservations were in accordance with the wish expressed earlier by the senate that the norm governing the ratio of time devoted to research, teaching and other duties by the individual scholar should be upheld. But as one of the preconditions for effectuating the budgetary reforms the Ministry of Education had announced in December 1980 that it was not feasible to maintain the norm giving the individual scholar the right and the duty to devote 40% of his time to research.

Aage Trommer also feared that the separation of research and teaching facilitated centrally-made decisions realigning the current distribution of research resources. There might occur a centrally determined reallocation between institutions, or between faculties within an institution, or to the advantage of research programmes to the detriment of the individual scholar's right to choose his own research topic.

The tendency of the budgetary reform to centralize decision-making also produced a centrifugal effect within the university itself. As the university was no longer assigned a single overall estimate, but each faculty was accorded its own, they perceived the actual grants as their own as well. This was naturally enhanced in times of financial dearth, and the vice-chancellor consequently discerned the emergence »of four small universities in mutual isolation«. He regretted this development, which the ministry had reinforced by instituting regular meetings with the deans of faculties.

It might be claimed that these reservations on the reform of budgetary procedures were based solely on general considerations of research and education policy, but little more was possible at the time,

since a detailed assessment of the reform's implications for the university had to await its implementation in practice over a period of time. Developments in the 1980's have however emphatically confirmed that the fears were justified. Taking the 1980's as a whole the new budgetary model was used to exert pressure on the university, in that special grants were given increased prominence in relation to the university's regular funding. And the university was to pay a high price for the so-called advantage of separating the budgets for research and teaching.

*The 1980's:  
When The Going  
Gets Tough...*

#### **Long-Term Planning**

The budgetary model was a significant ministerial device in the handling of scarce resources, and moreover by the means of central directives calling on Odense University, along with the other institutions of higher education, to undertake long-term planning, the Ministry of Education managed to establish a basis for deciding on priorities in the deployment of the universities' research and educational resources. In this task the ministry was aided by advisory councils, the National Academic Councils with regard to education, the Research Councils with regard to research. Odense University was not always happy about this configuration, as a degree of metropolitanism could not be entirely ruled out among some civil servants and members of the advisory bodies. Centralization became increasingly the goal of planning, in place of the decentralization characterizing the 1970's.

Central planning for higher education was developed as early as the end of the 1970's, but in the course of the 1980's the demand for planning was significantly increased, and came to encompass the faculties' research activities as well. And this planning became particularly decisive when it was demanded that across the board savings should be replaced by selective retrenchment. With regard to the individual institution this meant that cut-backs were to be distributed in line with an established set of priorities so that favoured research fields and studies with good employment prospects were spared retrenchment or even assigned additional resources, despite the overall reduction in financial limits. It was not least the Liberal Minister of Education, Bertel Haarder, who urged the application of the latter method to ensure adequate resources for a relatively speedy redirection of effort towards vocational studies. This could involve the closing of a number of degree programmes and departments at the individual institutions.

*The 1980's:  
When The Going  
Gets Tough...*

**Central »Dracula Gangs« to Promote Decentralized Planning**

On the basis of previous experience the Ministry of Education had little confidence in the ability of the institutions to make such selective cut-backs themselves. On the other hand it was realized that ministry intervention overriding the faculties' own planning would provoke political unrest, and might lose the minister his majority support in parliament. It was an astute move, therefore, when in the spring of 1983 as a new initiative the ministry decided to undertake a series of visitations of the institutions, in the first instance focusing on the faculties of humanities and natural sciences.

The visitation committees, dubbed »Dracula gangs« by their victims, undertook two circuits of the universities, in the June and September of 1983. After the first encounter the deans of the humanities and science faculties expressed their satisfaction with the way the meetings had gone; the Dracula gang did not seem particularly bloodthirsty. On the contrary, according to the dean of the humanities faculty, Professor Jørn Moestrup, there were hopes of additional posts to



*Limousine service is not a regular feature of university life, but a group of students – who received the vehicle in appropriate dress – had saved up to put on this ride for a ministerial commission which visited the university in the spring of 1989 with a view to discussing financial stringency in the forward planning of the humanities faculty; this against the background of ministry plots to concentrate a range of disciplines at fewer universities. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

facilitate the realignment of its goals, and the dean of the faculty of natural sciences, Lecturer Christian Lohse, was greatly pleased and impressed with the officials' very detailed knowledge of its activities. Such statements had their diplomatic function in relation to the ministry, but also contained clear signals to the faculties themselves.

The faculties retained the initiative in planning after the visitations, but in their aftermath the ministry demanded that long-term plans be submitted, and in this way obtained insights into the faculties' development and choice of priorities, which also improved the possibility of directing future developments.

But Dracula did not restrict his attention to the humanities and natural sciences. In 1984 it was the turn of the medical sciences, which were facing considerable reductions in the light of reduced student admissions, these in turn a result of incipient employment-problems for graduates in medicine. The social sciences were subjected to scrutiny in 1985, and the humanities and natural sciences suffered for a second time in 1989: visitations by civil servants with members of the advisory bodies in their train became a regular feature of the increasingly close ministerial supervision of the university in the 1980's.

#### **Long-Term Planning under Unstable Conditions**

Submitting long-term or strategic plans to the ministry and its advisory bodies became a correspondingly regular feature of the work of the university's governing bodies in the 1980's. The ministry's aim was not merely to gain control and to learn of how the faculties anticipated handling projected cut-backs, for the plans also featured in the work of the central authorities to distribute augmentations in resources, not least for research.

It was in the faculties' own interests to submit good long-term plans, and a good deal of effort was put into them, not least the seven-year plans called for from each faculty in 1986. The process was however inordinately complicated by uncertainties about future financial limits, so that the faculties were instructed to submit alternative plans to meet different sets of financial contingencies. In principle the plans, including projections of future staffing levels at – usually – departmental level, were in the first instance to be drawn up on the basis of the budget-model's minimum financial limits, then with the inclusion of applications for additional positions and fellowships, and thirdly including expectations of externally funded resources.

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*The 1980's:  
When The Going  
Gets Tough...*

The faculties were also to make plans for a worst case scenario, which merely contributed further to the extraordinary expenditure of time and energy by the university and the members of its governing bodies to the planning process. Yet many of the discussions could have been concluded much sooner had those involved been aware that the pessimistic expectations generated at the beginning of the 1980's and kept alive over the next ten years in the budgetary projections of the annual finance bill were to be disavowed by events. With the exception of the medical faculty, which alone suffered a decline in student numbers in the 1980's, admissions grew so drastically that the university's financial limits developed much more positively than the central planning authorities had forecast at the beginning of the decade. The demand for graduates of higher education and Odense University's ability to make the necessary changes to meet this demand resulted in a continuous upward adjustment of the planning framework.

# 11. Growth Through Adjustment

## **Mass-Producing Students in the Indigent Eighties**

The threat of cut-backs was something that had to be lived with in the Danish universities in the 1980's, and to this Odense University was no exception. Yet by 1990 the university's budget, even in real terms, was greater than it had been ten years earlier, as was the number of staff. Growth was moderate in this decade however compared to the period up to the end of the 1970's, and several years were marked by economic stagnation.

None of this corresponded exactly to the expectations of the politicians and the central planning authorities. In 1980 it was anticipated that student numbers – of the kind determining grant levels – would increase by about 10% by 1988: i.e. with an unaltered pass-rate there would be only a modest increase in the number of students and the number of examinations taken. Yet at Odense the 1980's saw almost a doubling in the number of students and a doubling of the number of examinations taken – representing an increase in efficiency in the units measured by the budgetary model.

In relation to the increase in student numbers the growth in Odense University's budget was very modest: there was simply a drastic fall in the financial resources available per student. Once upon a time the responsible authorities would have classed this as a reduction in standards: in the late eighties it comes under the heading of increased productivity. And for both staff and students, whose daily lives increasingly involved lectures to classes of several hundred, the university seemed more and more like a factory for the mass production of graduates.

## **Efficient Educational Planning**

This rapid growth in student numbers was the result of some fairly efficient educational planning. Admissions to the existing vocational

*Growth Through  
Adjustment*

programmes were increased, new programmes were introduced, and those conventionally qualifying for employment in the public sector were renewed in structure and content. The university's educational capacity was rejigged to meet society's need and the politicians' demand for more graduates with vocational qualifications. In several of the individual projects making up this transformation the university itself took the initiative, but the process as a whole was seen as a grim necessity designed to ward off threatened cut-backs. And aided and abetted by its advisory bodies the ministry was extremely active in this period enforcing educational »reforms«.

Despite serious disagreement with many aspects of the Ministry of Education's policies the university managed to find a basis for constructive cooperation. The university had an interest in the reforms, but at the same time was anxious to consolidate its position as the regional centre of learning for a number of more traditional educational fields. This was in accordance with the ministry's own policy of educational decentralization which had led to the foundation and development of this university, and which also manifested itself in the administration of the restrictions on university entrance which were introduced in 1977.



*Attentive potential students in 1988. The university arranges so-called »degree-programme days« to attract students in competition with other institutions of higher education. Those about to finish their entrance exams are here given a chance to learn personally about what the university has to offer. (Photograph: Birte Palle Jørgensen).*

Thus in the allocation of places by the central authorities Odense University was somewhat favoured, and as a result admission requirements were relatively modest compared to those obtaining in Copenhagen and Århus: until 1980 medicine was the only faculty without unoccupied places. At the beginning of the 1980's entrance requirements to medicine rose significantly, while the number of fields with vacant places was reduced, although it was not until 1987 that the university could report it was full up in all the fields to which the ministry had not decreed unrestricted admission.

Political control of the allocation of places also meant that through the 1980's the development of student admissions varied greatly between the different fields of study at Odense University. For it was a political aim to further the technical and commercial studies directed towards the private sector. The student intake in the natural sciences also increased greatly – it more or less tripled – as access was mostly unrestricted in the years 1985-88, while admissions to social sciences were about doubled.

It is somewhat more surprising, given the uncertain employment prospects and the machinations of politicians, that the humanities faculty also increased its intake; the increase occurred however, as explained elsewhere here, in programmes specifically directed towards the private sector.

In contrast to the others the medical faculty experienced a distinct drop in student admissions. A contributory factor was the deteriorating employment prospects for graduates in medicine at the beginning of the 1980's, coupled with the fact that graduates were still trained for careers in the public sector with no obvious alternative employment. And an overproduction of graduates in medicine was extremely demanding of resources, for medical students are the university's most expensive, costing twice as much as those in the natural sciences, three times the cost of humanities graduates and four times that of graduates in the social sciences – in round numbers per year of active studies, quite apart from the fact that the medical programme is the longest. The intake of new students within the faculty of medicine included those studying for a degree in physical education, but the same downward trend applied to them as for medical students in general. Against this background it is hardly surprising that the most serious threats of closure have been directed precisely at the faculty of medicine.

*Growth Through  
Adjustment*

**Adjusting to Changing Times**

The growth and revision of their educational activities demanded considerable flexibility on the part of the individual faculties, both in cooperation between them on the establishing of new joint degree programmes and within the single faculty in bringing about new patterns of cooperation in connection with the reform of existing programmes. In addition, for both the humanities and the social sciences, the amalgamation with the School of Business Studies of Tietgen College meant that staff with backgrounds in highly diverse organizational frameworks had to learn to work together within the democratic collegiate system laid down by the legislation on university government.

The following chapters offer a more detailed account of the reforms of the degree programmes and the structural adaptations that were found necessary in each of the major fields of university education. It is symptomatic that in three of the four areas the departmental structure was altered at the end of the 1980's, the exception proving the rule being the natural sciences, which from the start had a flexible structure made up of a small number of large departments. These structural changes should be regarded as part of an endeavour to strengthen the university's research environments, not least with re-



*Her Majesty Queen Ingrid, the learned doctors with their newly conferred degrees and a section of the specially invited guests listen attentively to Roald Andersen addressing the audience as the representative of the students in 1982. Among other things Roald Andersen described the living conditions for students, which were – then as now – characterized by housing problems and a grant system which the students considered insufficient. Regular jobs were part of student life, in consequence of which it took longer for the students to obtain their degrees. (Photograph: John Fredy).*



*The employment of university graduates in the private sector increased significantly during the 1980's. One of the ways to establish contact was the so-called »Career Day«, a kind of exhibition arranged by the Funen division of the international organisation for students of commerce and economics, AISEC, at which private firms may exchange practical information with interested students. (Photograph: Birte Palle Jørgensen).*

gard to the training of young researchers, as discussed in chapter 16, but they involved renouncing the link – particularly strong in the humanities – between the individual department and a particular degree programme. As a result of growing demands for educational flexibility on the part of the faculties staff at the individual departments increasingly found themselves called upon to teach under the auspices of several different degree programmes.

It was not only internally that the reorientation of education towards the requirements of the private sector necessitated new forms of cooperation: there was also a need to develop further the university's relationships with society at large. The notion was familiar enough for those sections of the university that had traditionally trained students for employment in the private sector, but for others, not least the humanities, the process was something of an ordeal. One of a university's prime functions is to ask awkward questions, but relations with the community around it were severely strained in the 1970's when it seemed that many of the university's projects were designed to prove

*Growth Through  
Adjustment*

the century-old theses of Karl Marx on the capitalist system and its exploitation of the working classes. If a substantial number of the university's graduates were to find employment within this despicable system then evidently quite a number of prejudices would have to be worked at. The necessity to do so was clear, since unemployment among humanities graduates was high, as also, within the natural sciences, for biologists, and the public sector was not expected to be able to absorb the currently unemployed graduates, let alone all the new ones who would be qualifying in the years ahead.

Ever since its foundation there had been a dialogue between the university and private business; the new feature was the number of parties now interested in participating in it. And the provisional result of that dialogue can be read in a report issued in 1989 by the National Advisory Council on Education in the Humanities, concluding that humanities graduates functioned well in the world of business; in the period 1984-88 alone their number had rocketed from 228 to 1,124. And an analysis of the employment pattern of science graduates from Odense reveals that the proportion of them working in the private sector rose significantly from the beginning of the 1980's. These are the manifestations of a minor cultural revolution; the educational reorganization of the 1980's was a success.

## 12. The Natural Sciences

### **Growth and Reorganization within a Stable Framework**

The natural sciences experienced the greatest relative increase in student admissions in the 1980's, but the original structure of six large departments remained viable both in managing this increase and in developing new degree programmes.

The vast majority of admissions were to the two-year basic degree in science unique to Odense University. Basic training courses also exist at Roskilde and Aalborg University Centres, but with emphasis on participation in specific projects; at Odense students acquire interdisciplinary knowledge of both biology and the exact sciences – mathematics, physics, chemistry, and computer science – and thereafter can choose to specialize either in one of the biological disciplines or in a combination of two disciplines.

It had long been traditional for a substantial proportion of science graduates to obtain employment in high schools: in 1981 this was the case with over half of the initial 56 graduates. But although only science graduates from the biological disciplines were to any appreciable degree affected by unemployment at the beginning of the 1980's the prospect of a moratorium on new high-school appointments was instrumental in the decision of the Faculty of Science to restructure its degree programmes and to introduce degrees aimed at employment elsewhere than in the educational sector. In consequence the faculty now at the beginning of the 1990's provides teaching for more degree programmes than it did at the beginning of the 1980's.

For example Computer Science was introduced as a subsidiary degree in 1982, and 40 places were made available in a course functioning as a preliminary to chiropractic studies (to be pursued abroad). In the same year chemistry students were given the opportunity of combining their subject with business economics, studied within the Faculty of Social Sciences. And in cooperation with the latter in 1984 the first students were admitted to a joint degree in mathematics and eco-

*The Natural  
Sciences:  
Growth and  
Reorganization  
within a Stable  
Framework*

nomics, which has attracted about 20 new students each year, in line with the faculty's long-term projections. A degree programme in human nutrition, also started, on an experimental basis, in 1984, has in contrast not proved viable, although largely due to the reluctance of the Ministry of Education to provide the necessary resources, preferring to concentrate efforts in this field at the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural College in Copenhagen. The programme was consequently discontinued in 1988.

**Cooperation with Odense Technical College – Despite External Obstruction**

Students have been considerably attracted to two programmes established in cooperation with Odense Technical College, in chemicotechnical engineering and computer technology, both initiated in 1986. For the former, students are registered at the Technical College, with the University's science faculty providing instruction in the basic and theoretical disciplines in chemistry. For the study of computer technology, students are registered with the Faculty of Science. At just over 50 a year the number of admissions is in line with initial projections. Teaching is divided more or less equally between the two contributing institutions.



*»Bottle-neck courses« are not to be taken literally, having nothing especially to do with liquids. In 1986 they were an offer from Minister of Education Bertel Haarder to attend courses during the usually teaching-free summer vacation. The offer, which included a special student grant of Dkr 6,200 per month, applied to programmes in the high-demand areas of computer science, biotechnics and engineering. The photo shows two students, Anders Christensen and Birgit Michelsen, being instructed by Hans Degn, lecturer at the Department of Biochemistry. (Fyens Stiftstidende 10 July 1986).*

This cooperation between the Faculty of Science and Odense Technical College has the backing of local industry, largely through the good offices of the Council for the Coordination of Further Education on Funen (SVUF), and there are also plans to introduce a degree programme as an extension to a three-year course in chemical engineering. The cooperation has indeed been commended in a Ministry of Education report from 1990 as a model worthy of emulation by other institutions in the country. The praise is understandable in as much as the purpose of the cooperation, in accordance with the declared aims of national educational policy, is to increase the supply of graduates with technical qualifications suitable first and foremost for private industry. It is against this background that Vice-Chancellor Carl Th. Pedersen, in his 1985 Commemoration speech, permitted himself to wonder why the chemico-technical degree programme had not yet come into operation: a complete draft curriculum, on which the appropriate committees had started work in 1983, had long ago been submitted to the Ministry.

This delay may have been due to the general inertia of the administrative system of the Ministry of Education and its affiliated advisory bodies, but it is noteworthy that in the same speech the vice-chancellor, with regard to another, very similar matter, was able to express his appreciation of the cooperativeness of the officials of the Ministry of Education. This concerned the plans for establishing an academic degree in engineering, again in cooperation with Odense Technical College. That these too were apparently getting bogged down, the vice-chancellor reckoned, must then be due to factors outside the ministry. He could not be sure, but was beginning to suspect that »a politically influential opposition has succeeded in convincing the decision-making authorities that it would not be a good idea for Odense University and Odense Technical College to get together in making an academic degree in engineering«.

And this opposition the vice-chancellor identified as an unholy alliance of the other technical colleges, who begrudged Odense an education they did not have themselves, and interests within the professional organizations who wished to restrict technical colleges to intermediate-level programmes, leaving academic degrees in the technical field as the preserve of the Technical University of Denmark and the two Academies of Engineering in Copenhagen and Aalborg. Such »institutional imperialism, the purpose of which is to maintain certain

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Sciences:  
Growth and  
Reorganization  
within a Stable  
Framework*

well-established privileges,« had manifested itself during the preparatory work of the committee chaired by the vice-chancellor himself. Appointed to evaluate the proposal, this committee had divided on strictly geographical lines, with members from elsewhere opposing the cooperative aspirations of the representatives from Funen. As already noted cooperative ventures have been implemented in connection with the technical programmes in chemistry and computer science, but the plans for an academic degree in engineering have had to be abandoned for the time being.

**Bachelor Degrees: An Early Start**

Despite the rapid growth of admissions to the basic degree in science and the supplementary intake caused by the new programmes developed in the early 1980's, the end of the decade saw the faculty pursuing its policy of reform and renewal. Committees have explored the feasibility of establishing programmes with a more particular field in view, for example abattoir technology, and which might facilitate ex-



*The Friday Bar is very much a reality, and a matter of beverages and social contact. The bar was opened officially in 1985, when the administration had provided space for it in pleasant surroundings near the Students' Bookshop. The initiative from natural-science and medical-school students to get together on Friday afternoons was in this way officially endorsed, at the same time indicating that the bar was open to all university students – and employees. (Nyt).*



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Sciences:  
Growth and  
Reorganization  
within a Stable  
Framework*

*Curiosity is an essential motivation for all good research. It also characterizes the good student, of which there are fortunately a great many at Odense University. On Friday afternoons many gather strength for the week-end's studies after a week of hard work at the university. (Photograph: Birte Palle Jørgensen).*

tending cooperation with Odense Technical College and other institutions.

As at the nation's other science faculties, students were admitted in 1990 to a three-year bachelor degree programme, rather than, as previously, to courses of typically 5 ½ years duration leading to the degree of candidatus/candidata. The crucial matter of the extent to which students completing a bachelor degree were to be guaranteed admission to these further academic studies caused a dispute between the faculties and Minister of Education Bertel Haarder, who with the backing, among others, of the Danish Employers' Association, was in favour of limiting access. But following the general election of December 1990 the demands of the parliamentary opposition that graduates from the bachelor programme should have the right to continue to a further degree became more insistent, and in the current balance of political forces access to further studies is likely to be quite liberal.

In fact the idea of a 3 or 3½ year programme leading to a bachelor degree had been launched by the faculty itself in its long-term plan of 1986, and had moreover been put into practice on local initiative a couple of years ahead of the national reform, without however provo-

*The Natural  
Sciences:  
Growth and  
Reorganization  
within a Stable  
Framework*

king much of a stir outside the walls of Odense University. This change was designed partly to ensure that students who – for economic or other reasons – were unable to complete the full candidatus degree could round off the more fundamental part of their studies and acquire documentation for the scientific knowledge and techniques they had acquired. But furthermore society needed such graduates, since there was previously no qualification in science at an intermediate level between the school leaving certificate and the various higher degrees. It is part of the picture that drop-out levels in science were traditionally high; with this reform students who managed to complete only a part of the existing more comprehensive degree programmes now had the chance of leaving the university with a degree certificate.

When, towards the end of the 1980's, the Minister of Education advocated the introduction of the bachelor degree on a national scale his arguments were also along these lines. But for him it will doubtless also have been a consideration that bachelor degrees – provided the students did not stay on for further studies – meant more university places at lower cost: the long queues of qualified applicants at the country's universities were a recurrent political and economic problem for the minister as each summer came round. And with the introduction of bachelor degrees, moreover, the Minister of Education would come closer to achieving his long-term objective of directing students into courses of shorter or medium duration so that they would enter the labour market at a relatively young age and not, as many graduates of the existing, longer degrees, at about 30. That such shorter programmes were also to be offered by the university could hardly be objected to, as along with the other educational reforms it simply confirmed that the university was capable of displaying the flexibility required in the face of a dynamically evolving labour-market.

### 13. The Humanities: A Metamorphosis

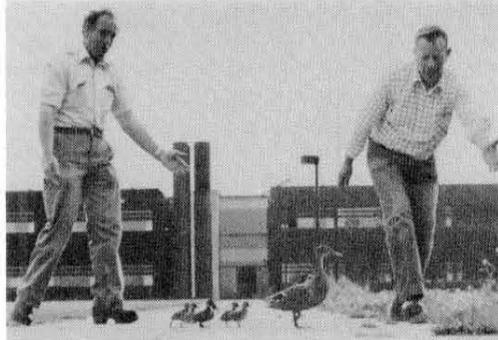
The reorientation of higher education towards employment in the private sector characterizing the 1980's also encompassed the humanities. This was a radical break with the earlier tradition of preparing graduates for careers in the public sector in general and high schools in particular, and as such naturally provoked a good deal of violent controversy within the faculty.

There could be no doubt about the reasons for the change: as early as the middle of the 1970's employment prospects for arts graduates deteriorated rapidly, and by 1980 some 20% were affected by some degree of unemployment, equivalent to an unemployment rate of about 10%. The figures were rising rapidly, and broken down in terms of year of graduation displayed almost hopeless prospects for the most recent graduates: of those graduating in 1979 just under 40% were affected by unemployment, while for those from both 1980 and 1981 the figure had risen to over 50%. Unemployment figures continued to rise until the mid-1980's.

Although levels fell off somewhat thereafter unemployment among arts graduates was still high at the beginning of the 1990's. In conjunction with the fact that levels of recruitment to the high schools were low throughout the 1980's and were likely to remain so in the 1990's this meant that the training of high school teachers could no longer provide the faculty's primary teaching task. At the beginning of the 1980's it was calculated that the Danish humanities faculties were capable of turning out 400 to 500 graduates a year in the five major subjects, even though the schools' annual requirement for new staff was not expected to reach 100-150 before the end of the century.

The need for radical solutions was recognized by many, and a frantic pursuit of reform, emerging towards the end of the 1970's, was maintained throughout the 1980's. Its watchwords were the vocational orientation of degrees in the humanities, and the service functions of the humanities in relation to society at large. Vocational orien-

*The Humanities:  
A Metamorphosis*



*Just to prove that the university is in Hans Christian Andersen's home town. There has been general agreement that the university's history so far has been something of a fairy-tale, but which fairy-tale remains to be seen. (Nyt).*

tation meant primarily training for employment in the private sector, but could also encompass programmes designed to prepare for activities in the public sector which had not formerly been undertaken by arts graduates, or perhaps not existed. Degrees were to be made flexible to meet the challenges of an ever changing labour market.

Before 1977, when the commercial language courses were transferred from Tietgen College, the humanities faculty produced graduates only within twelve arts subjects, typically with the degree cand. mag. encompassing a major and a minor subject. In the course of the 1980's student admissions to – and hence graduations from – this so-called traditional sector of the humanities declined, while concurrently admissions to courses in commercial language and to the joint degree in modern languages and business economics rose, producing a marked shift in the faculty's composition.

These shifts in the relative distribution of students among various types of degree are however to a very large extent determined by the admission levels set by the Ministry of Education. Powerful political interests favoured the expansion of the commercial language programmes and the joint degree in modern languages and business economics, which aim very much at private-sector employment. Consequently there was usually unrestricted admission to commercial language courses, and most years the Ministry of Education urged the admission of more students to the joint language and economics degree than the humanities faculty felt could be coped with if acceptable academic standards were to be maintained. Conversely throughout most of the decade the ministry steadily reduced the scope of admissions to the traditional sector of the humanities – although before the middle of the eighties, when, as noted, unemployment was extremely high,

applications did not exceed the limit on student admissions obtaining at the time.

### **The Traditional Humanities Programmes**

Even within the so-called traditional sector of the humanities there were extremely many reforms in the 1980's, largely by way of offering courses designed to provide students with vocationally useful skills. In addition there were new degree programmes, and new educational structures in line with circulars issued from the Ministry of Education.

Until the spring of 1980 the goal of the humanities faculty was to achieve a spread of degree subjects corresponding to the full range of high-school disciplines – permitting a range of subject combinations that would allow Odense, as a regional university, to function as a viable alternative to Copenhagen and Aarhus, as envisaged in current national planning for higher education. So when a programme in Classical Culture (as a minor subject) was established in 1980 it was justified by reference to the shortage of high school teachers in this particular field.

Symptomatically, later initiatives within the humanities are no longer justified with reference to the high schools. Admittedly such arguments were deployed in 1982 when Comparative Religion was introduced as a (minor) degree subject on an experimental basis, but by describing the curriculum as cultural studies it was also argued that in combination with various subjects outside the humanities the degree would enhance employment opportunities in the field of international cooperation under the auspices of both public and private organizations.

### **The 1985 Directive on the Humanities**

The connection between arts degrees and the high schools was definitively broken by the Ministry of Education in its new directive on degrees in the humanities, which came into effect in the autumn of 1985, concurrently with the abolition of the automatic right of graduates to six months' salaried teacher training. The full degree (cand.mag.) was no longer to comprise four years study of the major subject and two of the minor, although four- and six-year degrees in

*The Humanities:  
A Metamorphosis*

a single subject (cand.phil. and mag.art., respectively) were retained, as having vocational relevance outside secondary education.

Under the new directive studies for the degree of cand.mag. were reduced to five years, comprising a basic degree of two years (in the major subject) which could be supplemented by further studies of three years. The latter would comprise partly more advanced study of the major subject, partly a separate module in some other subject. The idea was to offer students more options with regard to the studies following the basic degree so that they could better qualify for the so-called non-traditional careers.

As a rider to this national directive on arts degrees the spectrum of subjects offered for basic degrees at Odense was reduced to 10, in that linguistics, which had never attracted many students, and Italian, hitherto a minor degree option, were not included. There remained Danish, English, Philosophy, French, History, Classics, Comparative Literature, Russian, Spanish and German. In contrast the number of second-subject modules, or supplementary programmes, as they came to be called, was increased. So towards the end of the 1980's these were available not only in the ten subjects also available as basic degrees but in applied visual communication, computational linguistics, foreign language teaching, communicational research in the humanities, gender and cultural studies, North American culture, comparative religion, Dutch (studied at the University of Groningen) and economics (studied at the University of East Anglia). Several of these originated in projects started in the early 1980's, later institutionalized as so-called centres, technically committees under the faculty board.

In addition in 1987 »cultural work in local communities« was introduced as a further (i.e. post-basic degree) option in cooperation with the Department of Physical Education under the Faculty of Medicine. It is anticipated that graduates from this programme, which combines theoretical disciplines with practical accomplishments, will be qualified to function in local bodies responsible for the administration of culture and in major sports organizations.

**The Bachelor Degree Structure of 1990**

But before sufficient experience could be gained with the structure imposed by the directive of 1985 the framework for higher education in the humanities was transformed yet again at the behest of the



*Open-air breakfast at the beginning of term in September 1990 for first-year student Flemming Larsen. The demand for accommodation in halls of residence was always greater than the supply, and as the supply of private lodgings was not adequate either, tent camps near the university were set up at the beginning of autumn term for several years running. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

Minister of Education, this time responding to the zeal of Knud Larsen, who since his appointment as under-secretary at the Ministry of Education in 1986 had made his objective the introduction of a bachelor degree.

So the (since 1985) prevailing structure of 2 + 3 years for the two-subject cand.mag. degree was replaced by a new 3 + 2 years structure, with the added difference that whereas the earlier two years of »basic« studies did not constitute a formal degree, the initial three years under the new structure now comprised a bachelor degree, with which the student, if he or she wished, could leave the university, in the same manner as discussed earlier in connection with the natural sciences.

A structure involving a bachelor programme had long been debated within the faculty, and as early as 1983 the then Dean, Professor Jørn Moestrup, had spoken in its favour. He drew a comparison with the degree structure of the social sciences, where after the completion of three years' studies only a minority of students went on to the further degree of two years' duration. And in his opinion there was little point in providing graduates with teaching competence at high school level in two subjects when in reality few of them were destined for careers as high school teachers. For the majority of students it would be an ad-

*The Humanities:  
A Metamorphosis* vantage to acquire a solid academic grounding at university and then at a relatively young age to obtain employment in some less conventional field and continue their development in that context.

It was precisely prospects of employment in the private sector that determined the fleshing out of the bachelor-structure, which came into force in the autumn of 1990. The supplementary – second subject – module instituted under the earlier dispensation could now be taken as part of the bachelor programme, and students were also given the opportunity of supplementing their basic degree with a number of theoretical and practical courses. The structure was however formed so as not to exclude the option of qualifying for employment at high schools. The faculty preserved the link with the traditional career structure for arts graduates, but while, at the end of the 1970's, the majority of students in the humanities entered the university in the expectation of being trained as teachers, this applied to only a minority by the end of the 1980's.

#### **Commercial Language Studies and the New Joint Degrees**

The commercial language programmes, offering among other things qualification as bi- or multilingual commercial secretaries, did not suffer such radical structural changes in the 1980's as the humanities programmes: they were already, after all, geared to the requirements of the private sector. But while the length of time required to qualify for degrees in the humanities was reduced the duration of the programme for qualifying as a tri-lingual commercial secretary (i.e. in Danish and two foreign languages) was extended from 2 to 2½ years in 1984. And since the end of the 1980's moves have been afoot to establish an increasing level of integration between the commercial languages programmes and the faculty's degrees in modern languages.

Towards the end of the 1970s, the long-term programme of the national educational planning agencies pointed to the humanistic elements in joint degrees and to its service functions as important areas for the future of the humanities. Odense University has been extremely active under both headings, and although some of the other institutions of higher education chose to regard these initiatives from the perspective of inter-institutional competition and were not particularly helpful in their furtherance, considerable results have been

achieved, not least with the founding in 1981 of the aforementioned joint »cand.negot.« degree in business economics and modern languages.

*The Humanities:  
A Metamorphosis*

**»Candidatae Negotiandi«: A Joint Venture between  
the Humanities and Social Sciences.**

The story whose end is the many – particularly women – joint degree students of 1991 begins back in 1978 with an initiative from the Ministry, but its plot concerns how a smallish university with only short distances between its departments and their staffs was able in a short time to create a whole new degree programme. A contributory factor to this rapid development was doubtless the fact that much of the groundwork was done outside the auspices of the governing bodies in a committee appointed by the vice-chancellor.

At the beginning of 1978, on the initiative of one of its consultants, Berrit Hansen, the Ministry of Education prepared a draft proposal for a joint degree in commerce and modern languages. The idea reflected the increasing demand for foreign language competence in the private sector consequent to the growing internationalization of business following Denmark's entry into the Common Market in 1973. It may also have reflected a desire to procure the – predominantly female – students of foreign languages better opportunities for more responsible positions in private industry and commerce.

The programme was originally intended for the commercial colleges, but when the idea was rejected in Aarhus and when Copenhagen proved slow to produce a concrete proposal despite an acute desire to prevent joint degrees from first materializing in the provinces, Odense University got the chance to take over.

The plan developed in Odense comprised to a considerable extent elements from existing degree programmes, a circumstance which evidently facilitated its passage through the faculty board, for whose members the new programme's relatively inexpensive start-up cost was a significant factor. The result was not so much a commercial college course as originally envisaged as a fully-fledged academic degree of a new kind.

At first the degree was available in two variants, with German and French, respectively, as the major languages, supplemented in both cases with English at a lower level. Expectations with regard to stu-

*The Humanities:  
A Metamorphosis*



*Ten students, five with French and five with German as their main language, graduated in the summer of 1985 as the first to qualify for the joint »cand. negot« degree in modern languages and business economics. Here are nine of the happy ten, the picture revealing that the fair sex were better at sticking to the time schedule than the men: the latter were in the majority when the programme started back in 1981.*

dent numbers were at first modest: a member of the planning committee expressed the view that although it was an excellent idea a joint degree of this kind was unlikely to be a major attraction. Ten to twenty students were expected, but the very first year there were almost 50, and admissions continued to increase, not least after English became available as a first language option in 1984; a fourth language option, Spanish, was available from 1990. Consequently by the late 1980's the examination marks required to gain admission were as high as those for medicine, long regarded as having the most demanding entrance requirements.

With the exception of the very first intake, the joint degree in business economics and modern languages has predominantly attracted female students, and the high admission requirements may explain why a number of their teachers regard the students following this programme as particularly competent and purposeful. The ability of the new programme to attract substantial numbers of well-qualified students goes some of the way to explain why its graduates have managed

fairly well in a wide segment of the private sector, with import and export business naturally figuring with some prominence. More than 10% of those entering the programme in its first five years are working abroad. Their rate of unemployment is not high in relation to the general picture for graduates in the humanities or commerce, even though in 1990 large parts of the commercial sector were still unaware of the qualifications acquired by joint-degree graduates.

And the market for their skills has not acquired the breadth originally hoped for. While graduates were to acquire a theoretical education which would give them »a substantial foundation for further theoretical and practical training in businesses, in organizations, and in the public sector«, the last two by 1990 employed only 10% of the available graduates, for example as export clerks on postings abroad with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

### **The North Africa Project**

The joint degree in business economics and modern languages saw the light of day as a cooperative effort by the humanities and social sciences, and this doubtless explains to a large extent why it succeeded so quickly. It combined well-known educational modules, many of whose viability in relation to the private sector was already proven. On a quite different level of ambition was the North Africa Project, intended as the arts faculty's own venture into combining an area studies programme and a humanities service function – both key concepts in the debate on the future of the humanities in education at the end of the 1970's.

The project was presented as an experiment in area studies, its point of departure being not a subject or a discipline like economics, literature or religion, but a geographical area, to be considered in its cultural totality. Geographically the project was limited to the area known as Maghreb, that is the part of North Africa now comprising Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco, although as those behind the initiative also noted the concept could be extended to include both Libya and Mauritania. There were analogous plans for area studies of Africa and of East Asia at Copenhagen University and Aarhus University respectively.

The viability of the area studies concept was to be tested directly in cooperation with business and commerce. First of all a documentation and advisory centre was to be set up with the job of helping companies

*The Humanities:  
A Metamorphosis*



*Open-house arrangements were not planned in order to recruit new students, but as a way of showing the range of university activities. The historical dimension is here in 1985 made very concrete. Perhaps the tasters of the old home-brew would have preferred the lighter type of modern beer from the local Albani Breweries, which, through the Albani Foundation have given generous support to the university, as have other private foundations.*

*(Photograph: Birte Palle Jørgensen).*

and organizations to solve specific problems in relation to conditions in North Africa. Secondly the aim was to offer courses and seminars for industry and commerce as need arose, and finally there was the projected regular programme of North African area studies.

The project got under way in 1981 in cooperation with SVUF and with much good will from industry, embodied first and foremost in Kaj Holbraad, chief of training at United Breweries. It was accordingly organized as an independent experimental unit under its own management board, which included representatives from business, and the project received quite substantial financial support from private foundations. Its inception was therefore not prevented by the fact that the representatives of the University of Copenhagen and Aarhus University in the ministry's national advisory committee for education in the humanities kept the representative from Odense University off the relevant preliminary working party.

The first step is always the hardest, and so it was for the North  
158 Africa Project. The area studies programme did not get going until

1983 rather than 1982 as planned, and the documentation centre had some difficulty documenting the anticipated demand for its services. And in its construction phase furthermore the project came in for a good deal of flak from substantial sections of the press, where it was suggested that contacts with President Gadaffi's Libya were a trifle intimate. These could be explained by the circumstance that the project's first full-time head was doing research on Libya's economic development, but it was nevertheless not astute politically in directing the project's resources to give such emphatic priority to the most radical and anti-Western part of North Africa, on the periphery, moreover, of the Maghreb area, or to have provided incomplete information on this circumstance in the first instance. Nor was the project's reputation enhanced by its being represented, all expenses paid, at a politically motivated conference in Venezuela, at the invitation of the Libyan People's Bureau. It seemed, ironically, that the 1970's legacy of academic antipathy to capitalism was being carried over into a project whose aim was precisely to justify its existence to Danish industry.

These teething problems prevented the project from settling down until the middle of the 1980's. After a complete reconstruction and change in personnel the project, now with the status of a centre, seems to have consolidated itself around the original aims of providing information and documentation, for example by publication of a news magazine and by offering courses. It has however shifted its geographical centre of gravity eastwards to the Middle East. The area studies programme, meanwhile, which started as a two-year course in 1983, has found it difficult to find a footing in the new structures for degrees in the humanities established in 1985 and 1990. In consequence active consideration is being given to adapt the programme to a structure analogous to the existing joint degrees in economics and modern languages.

#### **The Open University**

Ideally, the activities which go under the name of »Open University« should be seen as the universities' response to society's growing demand for the supplementary training of its adult population. The phenomenon already existed elsewhere, and not least in the United Kingdom had attracted many students. But more realistically it must also be regarded as part of the endeavour of the humanities faculties to de-

*The Humanities:  
A Metamorphosis*

velop new activities to absorb excess teaching capacity. This was the case in Odense, as with the sister faculties of Copenhagen, Aarhus and Aalborg, when capacity was released on the introduction of the new degree structure. But even before this, in the autumn of 1984, the arts faculty in Odense offered its first series of open degrees, typically two-year courses spread part-time over four years, a necessary consequence of the condition that they be available to persons in full-time employment.

The first programmes offered were identical to existing two-year degrees, in Classical Culture, Danish, English and German. Applications for admission were numerous – almost double the number of places available, which were therefore allocated by lot. Applicants were required to be at least 25 years old, and were reminded that much of the course material would be in one or other of the major foreign languages. They were a variegated group with regard to gender and age, but were not otherwise a representative cross-section of the population. More than half were technically qualified for university entrance, against about 15% for the population as a whole. A large group had some kind of further education, and were currently in white-collar jobs. Skilled and unskilled workers made up just over 10%.

In the autumn of 1985 an open degree programme in history was offered, but this time, in cooperation with the National Organization for University Extension Courses, teaching took place in Southern Jutland – the first time Odense University had undertaken teaching outside Funen and so fulfilled its role in the national plan for education as a regional university for the southern parts of Jutland. In the second half of the 1980's the arts faculty continued to offer Open University courses, both regular two-(four-)year basic degrees and ad hoc courses not paralleled in the faculty's academic programme. The experience has generally speaking been welcomed. Many teachers were happy to encounter this new group of students who had unexpectedly been given the opportunity to pursue in a scholarly fashion subjects which had been a personal interest for perhaps many years. This did not however prevent a significant drop-out rate of the kind familiar from the full-time degrees: reading for a degree in the humanities, not least on a part-time basis, involves on the one hand relatively few classes and requires on the other a correspondingly high degree of independent study – a situation with which not all students are able to come to terms.



*All age-groups have been represented in the open-university programmes offered by the arts faculty since 1984. Here is one of the four classes starting the degree in history in Åbenrå in the spring of 1985. (Photograph: Th. Møller Kristensen).*

As the 1990's begin the faculty proposes to continue with its Open University activities, despite the significant alterations in their economic framework imposed by the ministry. In accordance with the general policy of increasing the extent to which public services are financed by those who use them it is now required that Open University students should themselves contribute to the cost of teaching them. Although some of the specifics of the new financial procedures remain ambiguous, initial experiences with tuition fees suggest it will be possible to continue Open University activities, if perhaps at a different level to that possible and expected under the original conditions. The same applies to some of the teaching in commercial languages, and to the diploma in business economics under the social sciences faculty, where tuition fees were also introduced.

#### **The Humanities Divided and a New Departmental Structure**

In the spring of 1980 the humanities faculty board decided to change the faculty's academic profile – that is the spread of subjects in which teaching was offered – within the limits of current resources: a quite startling decision in a university where hitherto the initiating of new

*The Humanities:  
A Metamorphosis*

activities had been contingent upon the infusion of new resources, but realistic enough in the light of the employment prospects for arts graduates and the political demands for public-sector retrenchment.

During the following years the faculty was profoundly divided over a number of essential issues relating to this reform and the recruitment policy it entailed, with highly divergent interests represented on the faculty board. The principal divisions were not between the representatives of the faculty's various estates – teachers, part-time teachers, technical-administrative personnel and students – but between members representing the expanding programmes such as commercial languages and the joint degree in economics and modern languages, and those who spoke for the older, traditional arts subjects, whose students numbers were being reduced. But within the latter group too there was usually divergence between those subjects with few students in relation to the number of staff and those with a high student/teacher ratio. These last in particular, which in the terminology of the budgeting system were highly productive in examination-passes – thanks partly to high admission levels just prior to the imposition of restricted entry – were not at all happy to see their resources reduced at a greater speed than the fall in student numbers warranted. They were naturally apprehensive of being pushed into a self-reinforcing downward spiral. In addition there were academic and ideological disagreements with regard to the reform policy. In particular students reading for degrees in traditional arts subjects were critical of its explicit trend towards vocational studies, and like many of their teachers they feared that hitherto well-functioning scholarly environments would be damaged.



*Voting in the 1982 elections for the various governing bodies in accordance with the Statute on University Government. Elections are supervised by officials from among employees and students. (Nyt).*

The same students were also highly critical of the ministry's demands for new degree structures in 1985 and 1990. But although their criticism included features shared by many staff, faculty policy from the mid-1980's no longer provoked outbursts of major conflicts of interest.

Conflicting interests nonetheless continued to exist, and the faculty remained quite heterogeneous. But it was gradually appreciated that the traditional arts disciplines, the commercial language studies and the joint programme in economics and modern languages could be reciprocally beneficial. And from 1 January 1991 a new departmental structure was introduced which was intended to put the various types of degree within the faculty on an equal footing: the eleven old departments were resolved into four new research institutes, each responsible for specific disciplines in the faculty's many educational programmes.

*The Humanities:  
A Metamorphosis*



## 14. The Social Sciences Become an Independent Faculty

In terms of both studies and students, the social sciences were favoured by fortune in the 1980's. This was true particularly of studies in business economics, whose graduates had good employment prospects in the early and mid-1980's, at a time when graduate unemployment in many other fields was growing rapidly. It was the declared aim of policy-makers to induce more and more young people to seek admission to commercial studies leading to employment within the private sector in manufacturing, trade and the service industry.

The programmes in business economics under the social sciences faculty can be divided into three groups. There is first of all the programme in business economics leading to the degree of *cand.merc.*, a five-year course which it is however possible to leave after three years' study as bachelor of commerce (H.A.). It is designed for full-time students. Secondly there is the Diploma in Business Economics, a four-year programme arranged so that it can be taken by people in full-time employment. Bachelors of commerce can however enter the second part of this programme directly, as can graduates of the joint degree in business economics and modern languages, although technically requiring special permission to do so.

The third group comprises degrees established in the 1980's which are not in business economics as such but – in accordance with national planning priorities of the late 1970's – joint degrees combining business economics with another subject: with chemistry and with modern languages (described above) from 1981; with commercial law and mathematics (the latter in cooperation with the faculty of natural sciences) from 1984.

The three-year degree in commercial law was a typical child of the centralized educational planning of the period. Applications for admission to institutions of higher education far exceeded the number of available places approved by the politicians. On a national basis there was to be sure unused educational capacity, particularly within the

*The Social  
Sciences Become a  
Separate Faculty*



*The appointment of the university's first consultant professor in 1986. Vice-Chancellor Carl Th. Pedersen (left) presents the certificate to Managing Director, dr. oecón Niels Chr. Knudsen. From 1972 to 1983 Niels Chr. Knudsen was professor of business economics at Odense University, where he contributed significantly to the development of programmes in this field and to the establishment of contact with the local world of business and industry. 1983-89 he was director of Danmarks Sparekasseforening (Association of Danish Trustee Banks) in Copenhagen, and in 1989 returned to Funen as director of Amtssparekassen for Fyns Amt (the Trustee Savings Bank for the County of Funen). (Photograph: Niels Nyholm).*

humanities, but on no account would the minister of education permit increased admissions to the humanities, wishing rather as noted to induce students to seek admission to scientific and commercial studies. But in these fields student numbers had increased so greatly even at the beginning of the 1980's that institutions were beginning to report a lack of capacity. In consequence ministry officials had some difficulty in finding the requisite number of places in the fields accorded a high political priority, and the pressure to do so was great due to the insistence of the parliamentary opposition that the Liberal minister meet the politically agreed admissions capacity: if this could not be done in the fields which the minister accorded highest priority, it must be done in others where there was better capacity.

The degree in commercial law did not therefore emerge from a local initiative: it was quite simply the result of a plea to Odense University from the central educational planners that such a degree be

established, a plea which was to be answered at once. And the affirmative response that was forthcoming was precisely one of the prerequisites for the minister, in the midst of his parliamentary negotiations, being able to announce that the necessary number of places, in the required distribution, would be available on a national basis for the autumn of 1984.

Relevant to an assessment of this highly improvisational form of educational planning is the circumstance that the faculty of social sciences ceased admitting students to this new programme in 1988. This was not due to a lack of students, as about forty started each year, and thanks to an extensive use of joint instruction with other degrees the programme was relatively inexpensive to run. It was rather that the faculty of social sciences felt that the ministry was failing to honour the commitments that had made initiating the programme a worthwhile proposition. This was in turn primarily a matter of the resources needed to offer a further degree as an extension to the qualification in commercial law. The Ministry of Education sought to get round this by according the latter the status of a bachelor of commerce degree (H.A.), from which it was possible to proceed to the existing cand.merc. further degree.

Precisely the extension of the existing programmes in commercial law was a major objective for at least certain sections of the social sciences. It manifested itself in this demand for an extension to the degree in commercial law, and it found emphatic expression in local initiatives prior to the establishment of a cand.merc. variant specializing in auditing in 1984. Similarly in 1988 the Diploma in Business Economics acquired financing and credit business as a fourth line of specialization in addition to the existing lines in marketing, organization and accounting.

The rapid advance of business economics within the social sciences was symbolized, finally, by the winding up and the reorganization, respectively, of the first two programmes in the social sciences at the university, started in 1970, or a year before the first students were admitted to study for the bachelor degree in business economics. These two degrees were both designed to qualify graduates for employment in the public sector: the four-year degree (cand.phil.) in social science largely oriented towards high-school teaching, and the degree in political science, cand.rer.soc., qualifying for employment in various sectors of public planning such as health, education and transport. Ad-

*The Social  
Sciences Become a  
Separate Faculty*

missions to social science ceased definitively in 1986, having anyway been temporarily suspended in 1979 when employment prospects at the high schools were sharply worsening. The reorganization of political science took effect from 1987, and quite in the spirit of the times took the form largely of incorporating a number of business economics disciplines into the curriculum, and the degree rechristened *cand. oecon.* to reflect the greater emphasis on economics.

**The Emancipation of the Social Sciences**

The growth in degree programmes and student numbers and the dislocations associated with them profoundly disturbed this area through the 1980's. A contributory factor was also undoubtedly the organizational structure, which was in turn determined by the previous history of this budgetary unit.

For the faculty of social sciences is in fact an outgrowth of the department of history, and indeed was not separated from it until 1978 with the incorporation of Tietgen College's School of Business Studies, which involved the setting up of separate departments of social sciences and business economics. Both departments remained however within the humanities faculty, which thereby acquired a somewhat eccentric structure compared to its analogues in Copenhagen and Aarhus.

In the manner of all fusions the incorporation of Tietgen College's School of Business Studies produced a number of conflicts of interest. The teachers from the latter institution had their own interests to protect, as they were still mainly involved in the courses in commercial languages and the Diploma in Business Economics. These were attracting increased student admissions, but did not have a tradition of research-based teaching. These were therefore full-time teachers, i.e. with neither the right nor the obligation to conduct scholarly research as part of their regular work. On the humanities side, integration was limited in particular by the reserved attitude of the existing language departments towards commercial language, and teachers of the latter were consequently transferred in a body to form a separate department of their own. And for the next ten years almost it was one of this new department's primary preconditions for supporting the incumbent dean of the faculty that it should retain its independence. On the social sciences side, in contrast, integration was actively sought: busi-

ness economists, with or without the right to do research, were assembled in one department, while the other teachers – in political economics, political science and sociology – similarly came together to form the other. So in the first instance integration was not achieved. Conflicting traditions provide part of the explanation, but things were not made easier by the lengthy time needed to determine satisfactorily the salary levels of the new teachers from Tietgen College, or by the official line of the university right from the outset that full-time non-researching teachers had no place in it.

#### **The First Reorganization**

At the social sciences there was a higher turnover of staff, and a faster rate of growth in staff numbers, than in the other budgetary areas. This contributed to the difficulties the two departments experienced in cooperating with each other, for example in the form of profound disagreements over recruitment policy. In consequence, in the autumn of 1982, it was decided to divide the budgetary area into four departments. The new divisions were in part along the lines of degree curricula, in that for example the former Tietgen College teachers were reassembled in a department with particular responsibility for the Diploma in Business Economics. But personal relationships were also a factor, witness the distribution of the political economists between two separate departments not reflecting association with different degree programmes.

As of 1 February 1983 the emancipation of the social sciences from the humanities came a step closer with the formation of a separate governing council for the former. At the same time the Humanities Faculty changed its name to Humanities and Social Sciences to reflect this greater independence, but many matters – for example approval of budgets and appointments – remained under the control of the faculty board.

#### **The Second Reorganization**

From the mid-1980's on a majority in the social sciences budgetary area were of the opinion that its organizational structure and the internal distribution of the rapidly increasing educational activities were untenable. The many conflicts of recent years (for example with re-

*The Social  
Sciences Become a  
Separate Faculty*



*Since 1972 the local daily newspaper Fyens Stiftstidende has supported research at Odense University by a special research prize, awarded not only for outstanding results already achieved but also in the expectation that recipients will remain productive in their chosen fields of research. In the spring of 1983 the recipients were Lecturer, dr. oec. Børge Obel, Department of Business Management (right) and Research Fellow Jesper Lützen, Department of Mathematics. Since 1984 Børge Obel has been a professor at the Department of Business Management, while Jesper Lützen is a senior lecturer at Copenhagen University. Far left is the chairman of Fyens Stiftstidende, barrister Niels Andersen. (Fyens Pressefoto).*

gard to new appointments) had obstructed large-scale planning. But now with this area's inclusion, since 1985, in the ministry's inspections, and with the necessity, shared with all other areas, of submitting a long-term plan, a large-scale assessment was undertaken of research and education strategy.

This led to the formulation of some clear goals. It was found that »in relation to the number of permanently employed academic staff a wider variety of teaching in the social sciences is provided than anywhere else in the country«. But inherent in the breadth of the educational profile was the danger that individual research units became too attenuated, and conditions for the individual scholar deteriorated. It is this that explains why no new degree programmes were developed in this field towards the end of the 1980's: efforts were concentrated on extending the existing degrees, as already described. The review's

conclusions on the area's current adversity also prompted aspirations for a new departmental structure, which came into force in 1987.

The declared aim of this restructuring was to strengthen the research profile by bringing together colleagues working in the same field. According to the review the existing structure, in which business economists were distributed between two departments in the manner of the political economists and jurists, involved a number of disadvantages. There was a risk of scholarly isolation, of inadequate coordination of research and teaching activities, of an inequitable distribution of responsibilities, of an unequal ability to attract qualified staff, and of conflicts over recruitment strategy. The report was evidently drawing on the experience of the last few years.

The new structure comprised four departments, which were identical with the budgetary area's planning units, which in turn were the basis of the distribution of the teaching required to service the various degree programmes, as well as of projections for future staffing levels. The correlation of departments and individual degree programmes was thus definitively abandoned. The growing prominence of business economics was registered in its comprising two departments, now more systematically divided according to disciplines, the Department of Management Studies covering planning and organization theory, accountancy and financing, and the Department of Marketing Management. The political economists were gathered in a new Department of Economics, while the profile of the fourth department, the Department of Commercial Law and Political Science was less distinct. Here were to be found teachers active in a number of non-economic disciplines which continued to be offered within the budgetary area, even though with the discontinuation of the programmes in social science and commercial law in 1987 they no longer featured as central elements in their own degrees.

The restructuring proposals were dealt with expeditiously by the governing bodies. Agreed to by the social sciences' own council on Tuesday 2 September 1986 by a majority of seven to four votes – members having had at most the preceding weekend to familiarize themselves with the final draft – the proposals went before the humanities faculty board who passed them on without recommendation one way or the other to the university senate, although registering a degree of anxiety about the implications of the proposals for teaching in the Diploma in Business Economics and the joint degree in economics

*The Social  
Sciences Become a  
Separate Faculty*

and modern languages. The senate accepted the proposals by eight votes to four, two abstaining and seven members absent: this was on September 4.

**A Faculty of their Own**

On the establishment of an academic governing council for the social sciences in 1983 the words »and social sciences« were duly added to the faculty's name, but this faculty of humanities and social sciences remained dominated by humanities scholars, who supplied all its deans. The distribution of competence between the faculty and the academic council meant that some decisions in the latter could be reversed by the former, and this appeal option was sometimes used by minority groups within the social sciences. That they were occasionally successful was not conducive to kind feelings about the humanities among the thwarted majority. There were in consequence



*Presentation of exam certificates by Lecturer Mogens Nielsen, Department of Business Management (left) to new graduates from the Faculty of Social Sciences in the summer of 1989. In contrast to the Medical School, which has had a graduation ceremony since its inception, the Faculty of Social Sciences founded its tradition only in 1988. According to the dean, Professor Mogens N. Pedersen, the initiative reflected a reinvigoration of old traditions, with almond cake, beer, sherry and brass music at the end of university studies; it can also be interpreted as a means of marking independence from the combined arts-social sciences faculty, which became a reality in 1989. (Photograph: Birte Palle Jørgensen).*

persistent efforts to have the academic council promoted to a fully-fledged and independent faculty invested with its own powers.

That representatives of the humanities did not immediately support such a complete severance is probably to be explained in the first instance by reference to the joint degree in business economics and modern languages. The decisive factor was not, as some asserted at the time, that organizational unity was an essential prerequisite for effective cooperation on this programme, but more that the humanities were anxious to retain their dominant voice in decision-making procedures in the event of disputes arising in connection with this degree. Such might well involve for example the problem of financing the teaching provided by the social sciences, which had given rise to a good deal of dissatisfaction there during the early years.

But from the mid-1980's however circumstances changed decisively. A new agreement reached at the end of 1984 on assessing the financial transfer from the humanities contributed to reducing the conflict of interest between the two budgetary areas. And in the middle of 1986 – in the wake of the changed composition of the faculty council produced by the election of December 1985 – a division of the faculty became the declared policy of the humanities, falling into line with the wishes of the majority on the social sciences side. Some opposition remained on that side however, and until the departmental reorganization of 1987 opponents could argue that there was probably a majority against separation at two of the four social sciences departments.

The rapid expansion of the social sciences made a division a natural development, but it was not until the annual report for 1989 that the first dean of the social sciences, Professor Mogens N. Pedersen, could write: »At long last – and far too late – from the beginning of 1989 the university authorities permitted an independent social sciences faculty to provide the framework for this expanding segment of the university, not seldom, but one would like to feel affectionately, referred to as the local cuckoo in the nest«.

*The Social  
Sciences Become a  
Separate Faculty*

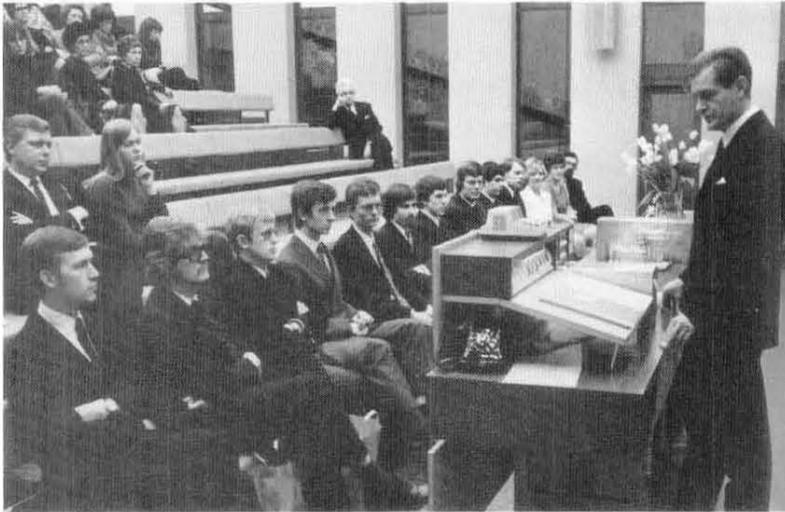


## 15. The Faculty of Medicine Fights for its Life

### Planning Reform in the Good Times

In 1976 the medical faculty was urged by the Minister of Education to prepare a proposal for the reform of the curriculum. This was to include among other features an earlier start to teaching on patient contact, a strengthening of the disciplines in social and behavioural sciences, and greater emphasis on preventive medicine. There should also be an enhanced integration between the theoretical courses early in the programme and the clinical subjects in its second part, as well as a greater correlation between the undergraduate and postgraduate elements.

The request was received in a positive spirit and a committee chaired by Professor Bent Harvald produced a set of proposals in line



*The second class of medical graduates ready to take the Hippocratic oath in January 1973. The size of the class was modest compared to later years, as was the proportion of female graduates. On the rostrum is the dean, Professor, dr. med. Bent Harvald, while Professor, dr. phil. Søren Skovgaard supervises the event from the second row in his capacity as pro vice-chancellor. (Photograph: Arne Bloch).*

with the Minister's recommendations at the end of 1980. Both teachers and students were happy with the proposals, but what had not been allowed for was the drastic deterioration in the university's economic situation which set in at the beginning of 1980. The new conditions were far from compatible with the proposals, which called for the deployment of additional resources, partly to provide independent classes for medical students, most of whose instruction, in a manner unique to Odense University, was received jointly with students of the natural sciences, partly to extend the first segment of the programme with an additional half year.

The proposal probably came a couple of years too late: although it was favourably received by the National Advisory Committee on Health Science Education nothing decisive happened to the proposals after they were submitted to the Ministry of Education. A contributory factor was the rapid decline in the employment prospects for graduates in medicine in the opening years of the 1980's, bringing in its wake the prospect of a sharp reduction in the capacity for producing such graduates. And it was this factor in turn which doubtless prompted the idea of closing the medical faculty in Odense and concentrating teaching in Copenhagen and Aarhus.

#### **Pursuing Reform in the Bad Times**

That the urge for reform persisted despite the transformed economic conditions is partly to be explained by the unusual degree structure in Odense with a basic degree in natural sciences as the common beginning for students of both science and medicine irrespective of which subject they later chose to read. This structure had a certain amount of academic and economic efficiency to its credit, permitting quite a number of degree subjects to be offered while using relatively limited teaching capacity. At the same time the purpose of the basic degree was to create a broad and interdisciplinary coverage by integrating disciplines – a so-called horizontal integration.

This was increasingly achieved however at the expense of vertical integration, that is between the first and second parts of the degree studies. This was the view at least of many staff and students on the medical side, but it was also widespread in the sciences, among staff and particularly among students of the so-called hard sciences, mathematics, physics, and chemistry, who felt that the biological disciplines were accorded far too much prominence in the basic degree – and this

*Students have not always been content with the significance assigned to teaching skills in higher education, even if there is no necessary contradiction between the view of university staff that they are researchers who also teach, and the expectations of students that teaching is the primary task of a university. To stress the importance of the pedagogical aspect of teaching, the students from the Medical School decided to award a pink panther as their recognition of outstanding teaching for the first time in 1982. The recipient of the new award was Professor, dr. med. Franz Bierring, the vice-chancellor of Odense University 1971-74. To older graduates the choice was not a surprise, as Franz Bierring was also known as an excellent teacher at Copenhagen University before being appointed professor at Odense University in 1966. (Nyt).*



*The Faculty of  
Medicine Fights  
for its Life*

at a time when biology graduates had a significantly higher rate of unemployment than those from the exact sciences. The numbers of the discontented were further swelled in 1982 with the introduction of a degree in computer science, since this subject did not feature at all in the two years of the basic programme.

So concurrently with the ministry's consideration of the proposals of the Harvald-committee a 14-man committee of the faculty of natural sciences was working on a revision of the curriculum for the basic degree. Its deliberations progressed no more rapidly than those of the ministry, and indeed in the autumn of 1982 the work ground to a halt as members started to leave the committee in despair or anger; representatives of the hard sciences demanded changes more radical than those from biology could accept.

Minds were soon to be wonderfully concentrated however by the demands for a reduction in student admissions to medical degrees and

a ministerial visitation of natural science faculties threatened for the spring of 1983, and the work of reform was resumed in a more select committee comprising representatives of both natural and medical sciences. This time the efforts were pursued to a successful conclusion and new curricula for the first part of degree studies under the two faculties were introduced in the autumn of 1984.

A considerable degree of joint instruction for students of both science and medicine was retained, and in the case of the latter a number of the aims of the 1980 reform package were realized. Critics, not least students, recognized that the reform was a step in the right direction and that it would be unrealistic to expect further additional resources under the conditions currently obtaining.

It has already been noted how the university's other main areas from about 1980 embarked on a series of educational initiatives, not least in the form of joint degree programmes. There was a genuine faith in the viability of these degrees, and they represented simultaneously a conscious strategy for countering the risk of declining resources. The medical faculty also adopted this strategy at the beginning of the 1980's, and in cooperation with the the faculties of natural sciences and social sciences took initiatives towards establishing degrees in, respectively, health sector economy and human nutrition. In addition the Department of Physical Education, formally a part of the medical faculty, in collaboration with the humanities faculty developed a programme in the field of Cultural Mediation.

#### **Health Sector Economy**

Much was expected of the programme in health sector economy in the mid-1980's. As the only place in Denmark the social sciences faculty had at its disposal economists who had specialized in the analysis of the health sector's economy. The field naturally attracted a good deal of interest given the high priority accorded to controlling health expenditure as part of the general restraints on public sector finances. A workshop on health sector economy and preventive medicine had been established on an experimental basis back in 1980, and in 1984 these activities were transferred to a newly established department. The professor who was to head the planned degree programme was appointed, and other positions were attached to the department. This institutional framework was constructed with financial resources from the faculties of social sciences and medicine supplemented with

grants from the pharmaceutical industry. But nothing came of this alternative qualification in health sector economy – this time round at least – for after only one year the new professor, Kjeld Møller Pedersen, resigned his chair.

*The Faculty of  
Medicine Fights  
for its Life*

New initiatives are a delicate business, and examples have been given already of developments hindered by external intervention. In this case, however, the lack of results must be attributed to the interaction of several »unfortunate circumstances« within the university itself.

#### **The Medical School Threatened with Closure**

The existence of the medical school in Odense was repeatedly seen as a thorn in the flesh of the medical faculties in Copenhagen and Aarhus. The latest instance was the 1984 visitation of the universities by



*A demo at the commemoration in 1988 against the threats to close the Medical School. Apparently the patient is in great pain; but in due course he was cured and lived happily. In addition to Her Majesty Queen Ingrid, witnesses of the incident were County Lieutenant Louis Anker Heegaard and Minister of Education Bertel Haarder as numbers one and two from the right in the first row. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

*The Faculty of  
Medicine Fights  
for its Life*

the ministry's »Dracula gang«, coupled with the demand for savings through a reduction in the number of medical students. The National Advisory Committee on Health Science Education had aired the possibility that the requisite reduction could be achieved by closing the medical school in Odense, and the deans of the medical faculties in Aarhus and Copenhagen were not the least zealous in supporting this cause. They were not successful in this endeavour, but Odense had of course to suffer its share of the subsequent general reduction, student admissions falling from 140 in 1983, the figure they had been at for several years previously, to 90 in 1987.

It was not long however before the clouds started to gather again, and towards the end of May 1988 a memorandum prepared by an anonymous committee under the permanent secretary of the Ministry of Education was leaked to the press. It comprised a catalogue of possible cut-backs, including proposals to close down the dental college in Aarhus and the medical faculty in Odense.

These were not stray thoughts. There was a political requirement for an annual reduction of 25 million crowns in expenditure on Danish health sciences education from 1993 onwards, and closing the medical school in Odense would achieve this, assuring Aarhus and Copenhagen peace in their time. It seemed therefore appropriate enough – seen from Copenhagen and Aarhus – that when the Minister of Education in August 1988 appointed a 12-man committee to consider retrenchment policy it should include only one representative from Odense University. According to that representative, Professor Philippe Grandjean, the committee, under the chairmanship of chief physician René Vejlsgaard, saw its remit as »deciding whether to close the medical studies in Odense, or whether to close the medical studies in Odense«.

Thanks to frantic efforts Odense University managed to get a further representative, the former dean, Chief Physician Torben Haghfelt, accepted on the Vejlsgaard committee with observer status, and to gain the concession that alternative economies would also be considered.

The faculty set up departmental working parties and a coordinating group to brief the dean and the university's representative on the committee: »Anyone with convincing or new arguments for preserving the medical studies or ideas on improving communication with the world outside« were urged to contribute.

Highly effective analytical work was undertaken locally, alongside the holding of large meetings to provide briefings on the situation. The analytical work strengthened significantly the hand of Odense's representative, who was able to document convincingly the medical school's efficiency in teaching and productivity in research compared to the country's other medical faculties. It was also possible to point to the adverse effects the closure of the medical school would have on Odense hospital and the university's science faculty. But although the committee's deadline was postponed from 1 November to 15 November and three additional meetings were called the majority were not to be shifted from the original demand that Odense bear the brunt of the cut-backs. This would involve either abolishing the first part of the degree programme in medicine, or closing the entire faculty with the exception of three departments. These three – Environmental Medicine, Medical Microbiology and Clinical Pharmacology – were not surprisingly precisely the fields accorded a high priority by the faculty itself in its own long-term planning in 1986.

There was no chance of a compromise: witness the action of the committee chairman in faxing the final text of the majority's recom-

*The activities to preserve the Medical School were many in the autumn of 1988. Among them was a large meeting, at which employees and students received information from, among others, Professor, dr. med. Philippe Grandjean. Grandjean, who to begin with was the only representative of Odense University in a twelve-man committee set up to decide on possibilities for costcutting in the Danish health education programmes, made a significant contribution by presenting documentation for the high efficiency of Odense's medical school as compared to the medical schools in Copenhagen and Århus. (Photograph: Birte Palle Jørgensen).*



mendations to Odense University at 3.20 p.m. on 15 November 1988 with the request that endorsement or otherwise be decided on by 4 p.m. at the latest.

But the Copenhagen-Aarhus axis making up the committee's majority did not achieve the support of politicians for their designs on the Odense faculty. A well-documented minority report from Odense played a role in its own right, while also contributory was the direct lobbying of politicians. A delegation from Odense University led by the vice-chancellor met with the parliamentary standing committee on education to express an opinion on the way the Vejlsgaard committee had gone about its task, and politicians and members of parliament were also briefed locally immediately after the committee had finished its work. Odense University's regional significance was also emphasized, and the medical faculty was supported politically not just by Funen but also by the county councils of southern Jutland. But such political pressure was presumably effective only because the medical school was able to invoke its good deeds in the past.

Rather than acting on the recommendations of the Vejlsgaard committee the Ministry of Education instructed all the institutions involved to offer proposals, before 1 March 1989, on how teaching and research could be maintained at academically acceptable levels within the reduced financial limits.

In continuance of the policy established by the minority report the newly elected faculty board which took over on 1 January 1989 had by the end of February worked out a radical plan for the strategy to apply and the action to be taken in the period 1989-1993. These proposals were not immediately agreed to by the Ministry of Education, but after the dean, Professor Mogens Hørder, had taken the initiative of discussing things directly with Minister of Education Bertel Haarder, a press statement was released on 2 June 1989 in which the minister called upon the faculty to initiate changes and developments in accordance with the strategic programme submitted.

#### **The Medical Sciences Prepare for the 1990's**

This new plan in a number of ways reflected the ideas current during the reforming efforts at the end of the 1970's. This was the case with regard to the content of medical studies, the order of priority among research-fields, and plans for new educational initiatives. This conti-

nuity was not surprising, but what was startling was the fundamental change in concept on which the faculty's strategy was to be based. No longer was there talk of equivalence with the country's other two medical faculties: the whole point was that Odense should acquire its own distinct profile, which would reflect new trends discernible abroad. This meant first and foremost Norway and Sweden, but institutions in several other countries were pointed to as potential models. The medical faculty in Odense aspired to function as an alternative to the other two Danish medical faculties, for example by offering a context for experimenting with new initiatives. It was planning in other words to transform itself over the period 1989-93 from a medical school into a genuine school of health sciences. And as a novel feature the faculty was willing to attempt this within the anticipated shrinking financial parameters.

An essential prerequisite for achieving this new profile was a change in the departmental structure – and this too had been discussed in the middle of the 1980's. Previously the faculty had been characterized by

*The Faculty of  
Medicine Fights  
for its Life*



*The increasing internationalization of university education from the end of the 1980's shows itself in a number of ways. At the end of 1990 the Medical School entered into an agreement with Botswana's representatives in Denmark on a medical-studies programme. The first five students are here seen with Vice-Chancellor Carl Th. Pedersen and Botswana Embassy Secretary D.C.M Nkgorwe (second from right). (Fyns Pressefoto).*

*The Faculty of  
Medicine Fights  
for its Life*

a very large number of very small departments, not least those supplying teaching for the specialized later phases of the degree programme. The faculty now aimed at a structure reducing the number of departments from 25 to only four, one of them a continuation of the existing Department of Physical Education. Specialist clinical disciplines were assembled in a Department of Clinical Medicine, and it was also decided to establish a Department of Medical Biology and another for Preventive Medicine and Health Service Research. This triad was directly inspired by the medical faculty at Tromsø University in Norway.

The staffing of the new institutes was not to be based on the existing patterns of competence but on decisions concerning which research fields to accord priority and on the teaching requirements that would emerge from the planned revision of the faculty's educational profile. In contrast to earlier faculty policy at the university the plan operated with quite radical staffing changes over the period 1990-93, including the identification of areas which would be cut back at a rate faster than could be achieved by regular retirements. For the first time in the university's history a faculty itself prepared the way for redundancies as the concomitant of adjusted priorities within shrinking financial limits. So in the winter of 1990-91 the faculty decided on the first redundancies, at the same time as planning to expand other areas in line with the agreed strategy. This painful process of changes in personnel can be appreciated only in the light of the struggle of the whole faculty for its existence.

The structuring was formed in such a way as to preserve and expand the three biomedical research fields which had already been assigned a high priority. In addition it was necessary to preserve clinical research, and another main objective was to extend cooperation with the region's health authority in health services research. This might take the form of joint projects on the incidence of disease, environmental medicine, and health services economy. To enhance competence in these fields it was decided in the spring of 1991 in cooperation with the faculty of social sciences to set up a centre to which researchers from the latter faculty working in the fields of health services economy and social policies could be seconded.

With regard to education the faculty stated in the plan submitted in February 1989 that it was proposed at the beginning of the 1990's to revise the degree in medicine, whose second part had in fact just been

revised. The aim would be to strengthen the students' individual contributions and to develop their analytical skills and their ability to generate new knowledge on their own initiative. Rote learning, traditionally accorded great emphasis, was now to be downgraded, since much of what was learnt quickly became obsolete. It was intended to give student teamwork, with teachers functioning as consultants and advisers, a greater prominence. The number of teaching hours could thereby be reduced, without the efforts of the students being reduced accordingly. The notion of reducing the period of study by six months was also mooted.

At the time of writing it is possible to conclude that to a large degree the faculty has succeeded in living up to the declarations of intent included in the strategic plan of February 1989. The departmental restructuring has taken place, the difficult business of altering staff levels has been carried through, and there is a conscious effort to let society's priorities within the health sector determine more closely the direction in which the faculty's cooperative arrangements both within the university and with institutions of the regional health authorities are developed.

The medical school took up the gauntlet thrown down by the sister faculties of Copenhagen and Aarhus in 1988 when on the basis of ministerial reflections they saw a chance of meeting the demands for cut-backs in medical education by closing the faculty in Odense. Although the odds apparently started at two to one, the Odense medical faculty displayed such strength that the mood changed. In the light of its response the Minister of Health declared in January 1990 that the medical school »when the temperature in the greenhouse fell was able to meet the challenge, indeed with great enthusiasm and a positive outcome. Here they think laterally and explore new avenues. This is a small, manageable place, better able to try something new, and medical studies in Odense can become a model for the future. Odense's way of dealing with things is more constructive than just smashing the neighbour's windows«.



## 16. Research: Environments and Achievements

Research and teaching – not merely separately but as interrelated activities – are essential features of the university's sense of identity; this is a basic characteristic of the corporate culture of Odense University as of any other university.

An investigation undertaken in 1986 at several institutions of higher education revealed that university teachers value highly the interaction of teaching and research: while not equally pronounced in all fields university teachers are aware of positive impulses flowing both from research to teaching and vice versa. It was equally clear however that while almost two thirds of the sample investigated were extremely satisfied with their work, they felt they needed more time for research: understandably so given that by the terms of their employment university staff are researchers who also teach. They perceive themselves as university researchers, and the prospect of doing research will usually have been the main reason they sought a university post.

The nature of the research process as an independent, unprogrammable activity requiring extended periods of uninterrupted effort means that the typical university researcher never has enough time, although it is not always easy to convince the world at large that this is so. This may be because university researchers rarely follow the conventional work-rhythms and do much of their work at home. More decisive may be the circumstance that – for good reason – it is impossible to establish an unequivocal yardstick for measuring the individual's research effort. Attempts to do so have generated several intense debates at the university, particularly towards the end of the 1970's when it seemed the wolf would soon be at the door.

### **Is Research Measurable?**

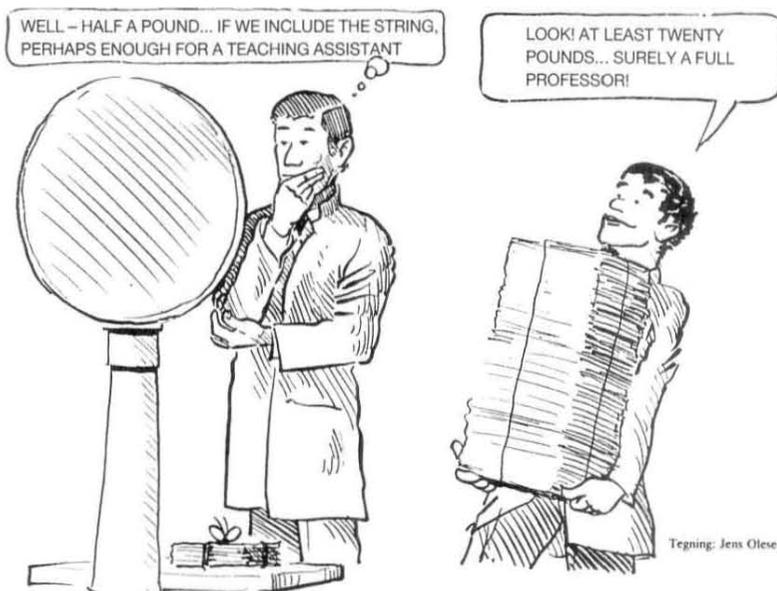
In the winter of 1978-79 the Danish ombudsman adjudicated on a complaint from students at the Commercial College in Aarhus that a

*Research:  
Environments  
and Achievements*

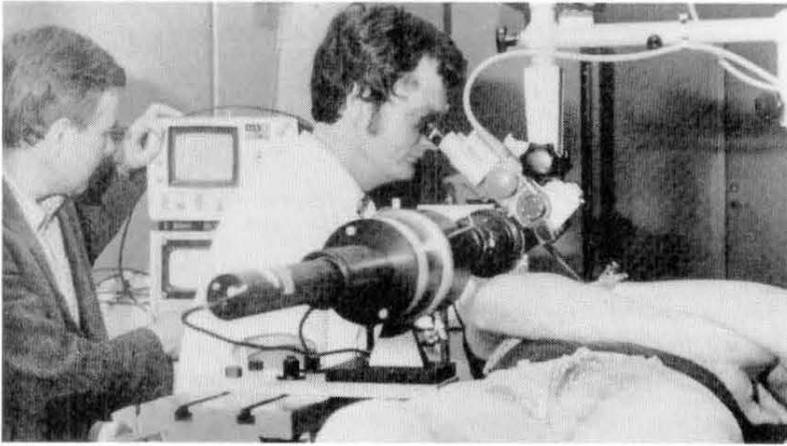
member of the academic staff was not living up to his research obligations. Somewhat to the surprise of the general public the ombudsman concluded he could not complain of any negligence on the part of the teacher concerned since finding time to do research was no more an obligation for the individual researcher than it was a right. On the other hand an institution had the duty to ensure that the aggregate research obligations incumbent on its academic staff as a group were fulfilled, and that seemed not to have happened here. In other words the research effort as a whole had been insufficient, and the ombudsman urged the Minister of Education to keep a closer eye than hitherto on the research institutions.

To this the ministry of course had to make some response, and did so by requesting from the institutions an account of how they proposed to ensure a reasonably efficient quantitative assessment of research activities. Odense University replied that such assessment already occurred under the auspices of the departmental councils, but

## The Weightwatchers



*At the end of the 1970's and the beginning of the 1980's there was a vigorous debate about the advisability of evaluating researchers on a quantitative basis. A cartoonist contributed to the discussion in 1979, ignoring, however, that the supporters of quantitative evaluation did not wish to renounce qualitative assessment altogether. (Nyt).*



*Measuring ear-drum frequencies by means of laser equipment in 1984. The experiments are carried out by Senior Consultant Viggo Svane-Knudsen and Professor, dr. phil. Axel Michelsen (left). In the debate about research evaluation on an individual basis, Axel Michelsen warned against purely quantitative methods, rightly drawing attention to a number of methodological problems, not least with regard to comparisons between different areas of research. (Nyt).*

in addition, at the suggestion of Vice-Chancellor Aage Trommer, the senate ruled that henceforth each individual member of staff was to file a report on his or her research. Publications had already been registered in this way for use in the university's own annual reports, but from now on a member of staff with no publications to his credit was invited to offer an explanation.

The introduction of quantitative research assessment was seen as a politically necessary reaction at a time when public opinion was largely hostile to institutions of higher education. There was a general feeling that the taxpayers' money was being used to finance research that was subversive of the society supporting it, and now the case taken to the ombudsman had revealed that academic staff could even get away with doing no research at all.

A concurrent debate within the university revealed that opinions were divided on the feasibility of meaningful quantitative assessments of research. The debate was sparked by the Aarhus case, but should furthermore be seen as a continuation of the international concern with research assessment back in the 1960's: it also encompassed a hidden agenda with more or less concealed items such as the distribution of scarce research resources and the management structures of institutions of higher education.

*Research:  
Environments  
and Achievements*

**New Blood**

A survey of the age-distribution of tenured academic staff of the arts faculties at Copenhagen, Aarhus and Odense in 1979 revealed a decided imbalance, with the age-group born in the years 1935-1944 greatly over-represented at all three. In the Odense arts faculty they constituted half the staff, compared to only 20% for those born after 1944 (although better than Copenhagen's under 10%). Things were very similar in the faculties of medicine and natural sciences – although the latter had a somewhat larger percentage of younger staff while medicine, thanks to a relatively large group of professors emanating from Odense Hospital, had a larger proportion of staff born before 1935.

This picture was the aftermath of the vigorous expansion in recruitment at the end of the 1960's and beginning of the 1970's, and which now, with the current financial stringency and its concomitant lack of mobility, would effectively prevent the recruitment of talent born in the 1950's.

On a national basis a similar age profile had been identified back in 1975 by the Research Planning Council in connection with its recommendations on »career structure for academic staff at institutions of higher education«. Combined with current low growth or stagnation the appointments bulge of the late 1960's and early 1970's would have implications for the future, first by excluding well qualified young people from careers in research over the next 20-30 years, then by causing a substantial need for recruitment as the age-group reached retirement age, thus creating a new appointments bulge. It should be a strategic aim to ensure a more even age distribution, so that young research talents could continue to be recruited. The Council was also of the opinion that the career structure should be adjusted to effect a larger degree of mobility through increasing competition and providing better opportunities for promotion. This could be achieved by severing the link between assistant lectureships and full (i.e. tenured) lectureships so that rather than seeking promotion from the one to the other an assistant lecturer would have to apply for a tenured position in competition with others who had achieved their research qualifications by another route, for example a research fellowship. The numerical proportion of professors to other staff should also be improved, and an intermediate category between lecturer and professor introduced.



*Measuring human metabolism. The box shown is a so-called calorimeter, the largest and most advanced of its kind in the world when the photo was taken in 1983. It is possible to compute the use of energy by an individual in different states of activity while in the box. In the box Lecturer Ole Lammert, Department of Physical Education (front), and Professor Lars Garby, Department of Physiology. In the discussion about research evaluation around 1980 Lars Garby expressed the opinion that quantitative computations of research effort combined with qualitative assessment could be helpful for the distribution of the scarce research resources. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

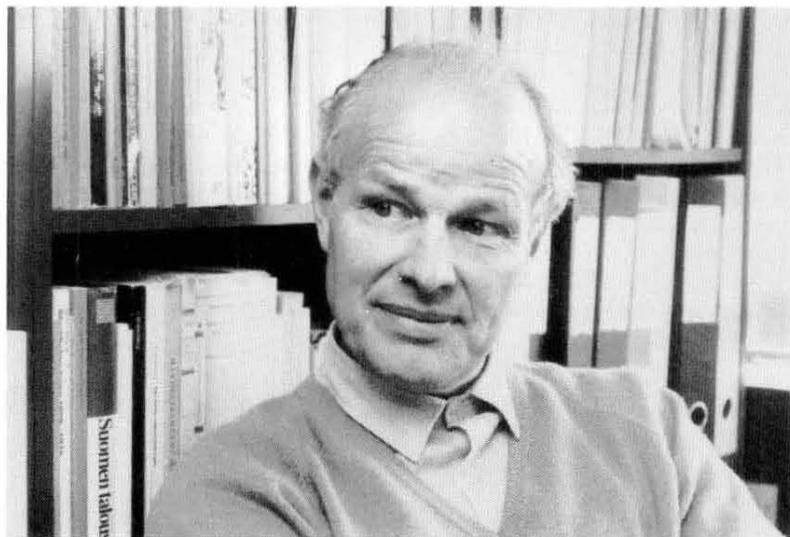
demic staff were forthcoming from the central organs of policy-making in research, the time was evidently not ripe for political decisions in a matter whose resolution required either the provision of new financial resources to recruit new researchers or the firing of old ones to make room for them. And as positions taken in the local debate implied, the academic world was reluctant to get involved in a discussion that drew attention to the differing qualifications of academics: it did not accord with the ideology of equality and security prevailing at the universities.

It required the arrival of a new non-socialist government with a minister of education armed with powerful new mechanisms of budgetary control for the situation to change. So in 1983, following

*Research:  
Environments  
and Achievements*

further analytical work by the Planning Council for Research and negotiations with the institutions and professional bodies involved, minister Bertel Haarder was able to present to the parliamentary select committee on education and research a proposal for new recruitment procedures and a new career structure at institutions of higher education.

The proposal followed by and large the ideas put forward eight years earlier, and as its preamble explained it was designed to solve the same problems caused by the bulge in the age-profile. It was proposed to create 1,100 new academic positions (whose incumbents would on average devote the standard 50% of their working time to research) over the decade 1984-93, equivalent to an almost 35% increase in the total research capacity of the institutions of higher education. In addition, towards the end of the period, around 200 new research fellowships would be established to further the training of young scholars. The 1,100 new lectureships were to comprise 800 assistant lecture-



*The rapid increase in the number of university staff towards the end of the 1960's and in the early 1970's combined with a stagnation from the late 1970's resulted in an age concentration at Odense University as at the other Danish universities. Also locally there were discussions about the unfortunate consequences of the lack of career opportunities for a whole generation of researchers born after about 1950. Professor, dr. oec., Hans Chr. Johansen, Department of History, and 1970-72 temporary director of the Social Services College, in 1981 presented evidence for the lack of recruitment of junior research staff at the universities of Copenhagen, Aarhus and Odense. Only with the general plan for research-staff recruitment from 1984 did the Ministry of Education attempt to compensate for the unequal age distribution.*

ships and 300 full lectureships with tenure, in distinct budgetary categories. In the proposed new career structure an assistant lecturer would no longer need merely to be assessed for promotion to lecturer but would have to apply for any publicly advertised lectureships on a par with anyone else. The budgetary arrangements anticipated that there would be full lectureships for about 70-80% of the assistant lecturers. At the same time the requirements for appointment to an assistant lectureship were stiffened, applicants required to have the degree of licentiate (subsequently deemed equivalent to an American Ph.D.), or be assessed as having reached that level by other means, to be qualified. Recruitment to assistant lectureships, which remained temporary appointments, could therefore no longer occur directly after graduation, but would typically be from among those who had completed a Ph.D. project in the course of a three-year research fellowship – only some ten years earlier it had been possible to walk into a non-temporary appointment directly from the examination room.

Attitudes to the plan at Odense University varied from opposition, through tentative acceptance, to definite enthusiasm, largely depending on which faculty one came from. The plan, which was also accompanied by an extra grant for the renewal of apparatus required to enhance research efforts, was most kindly received in the faculty of science, where there had long been complaints that inadequate grants for apparatus were holding research back, and where staff replacement had been very limited.

At the other extreme were the social sciences, which – having characteristically read the small print – pointed out the uncertainty as to how much the university was expected to finance the plan from existing resources («new» money being granted only for that part of each new position which would be devoted to research). It was also noted that any new positions generated by the plan would have to be surrendered again as existing staff retired from the mid-1990's, a balance being achieved by about the year 2000. And from a professional standpoint the new career structure could be criticized for reducing job-security. The chairman of the social sciences academic council, Lars Nørby Johansen, noted that this would exacerbate the problem – unique to the social sciences, where jobs were plentiful elsewhere – of recruitment difficulties and rapid staff turnover; proving the point by himself leaving the university shortly afterwards. And in terms of university politics it was disturbing that the plan pointed in the direction

*Research:  
Environments  
and Achievements*

*Research:  
Environments  
and Achievements*



*There is a long way from graduation to tenure. After the introduction of a new career structure in 1984 a tenured position will not be possible until after three years as a research fellow and four years as a junior lecturer. Yet more years will pass before the heights of an academic career may be reached. There is visible satisfaction at the recognition of a distinguished research effort in the faces of the university's two honorary doctors from 1986, Professor, dr. Umberto Eco (left), and Professor, dr. phil. Troels Fink. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

of the centralization of research policy, with the distribution of new resources linked to the ministry of education's »inflexible and centralized planning apparatus«. Lars Nørby Johansen was therefore highly critical when Vice-Chancellor Carl Th. Pedersen, himself a former dean of the science faculty, published a newspaper article expressing satisfaction with the plan when it was still at a formative stage. In his annual report of September 1984 the vice-chancellor did however express his sympathy for the reservations some had towards the final plans.

The demand for joint ministry and university financing meant that the plan was not to have the anticipated invigorating effect at Odense University: in effect the university met the bill for strengthening research by reducing standards on the teaching side. Not surprisingly the two faculties most hard pressed in budgetary terms, medicine and the humanities, agreed in doubting the wisdom of such terms.

**Controlling Research**

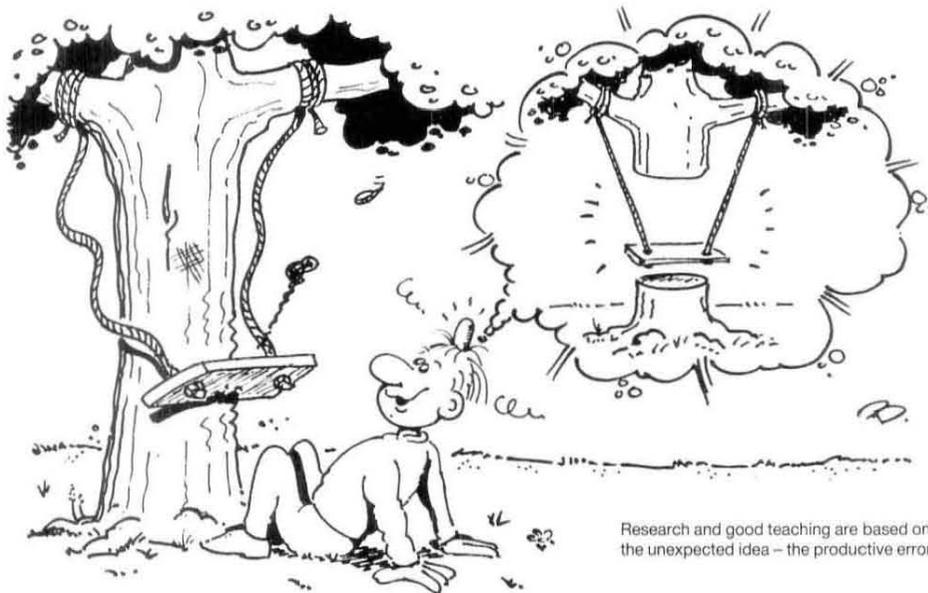
In the meantime, as many had warned, the plan for research recruitment was ushering in a centralisation of control over research policy.

194 In the minister of education's suggestions of 6 December 1983 on re-

cruitment it was noted that the minister was working on the introduction of separate budgeting for research. And on 19 December the same year he invited Odense University, along with the other institutions of higher education, to submit suggestions for new research initiatives that might justify adjusting their grant for the financial year 1986. The intention was to stimulate initiation or development of the research planning called for during the visitation by the »Dracula gang« earlier that year. The research initiatives need involve no more than »marginal but deliberate adjustments to research activities«, but would indicate whether research policy priorities were being set by the individual academic fields.

*Research:  
Environments  
and Achievements*

What the ministry wanted were new research initiatives, particularly of the kind that would be of direct, short-term benefit to the economy. But while previously on the educational side the stick had been used to beat things in that direction, now with regard to research it was increasingly the carrot that was used to direct research where it was meant to go. Special grants were not unknown previously, but from the middle of the 1980's they flourished in connection with the introduction of the long-term research strategy supplementing the educational planning instituted earlier.



Research and good teaching are based on the unexpected idea – the productive error...

*Central planning and control of education and research increased markedly in the 1980's. Among university researchers it was the general view that politicians and civil servants showed less and less appreciation of the value of free basic research. Often research break-throughs come about when least expected. (Nyt).*

*Research:  
Environments  
and Achievements*

But if the plan for research recruitment constituted an admittedly large source of funds for research initiatives it was nonetheless only one among a number of sources or, as they came to be known, »cigar-boxes«, from which funds could be applied for, and for which Odense University was soon to compete. There was for example a special youth fund, a humanities research programme for information technology and the like, the aforementioned apparatus grant, some »special funds« for building up computer-technological environments, for research in biomolecular techniques and for »basic research« to back up the technological developments, a fund for redirecting research and a start-up fund. These funds, some of which were designed to provide additional funds for educational activities, were an effective device for controlling the institutions.

**Flourishing Research Environments**

In his annual report of September 1986 the vice-chancellor warned against pre-programmed research and against the belief that research can be planned from above. In his view the government's utilitarian attitude towards research ran the risk of promoting research fields which were no longer, from the perspective of basic research, the most promising. By staking too much on applied research to the neglect of basic research the government was behaving like a gardener who tries »to get a tree to give more fruit by forcing the growth of the crown without ensuring corresponding growth of the roots. It will end badly: one day the top will wither because the root can no longer supply it with enough water«.

In participating in the process of choosing research priorities the Odense faculties were doubtless displaying the kind of pragmatism also discernible at the other institutions: it was a precondition for getting a share of the resources society made available. But it also reflected an acknowledgement that Odense would remain a relatively small university, which accordingly had to choose which research fields it would contribute to at an international level.

Although it has been documented that the quality of a research environment is not dependent on its size, it is of course not possible to speak of an environment if only a single researcher cultivates a particular field, and a certain concentration of the research effort within the faculties has therefore been evident at the end of the 1980's.

### **The Future Basis for Research.**

The world of research should be characterized by considerable mobility, since inspiration and scholarly development are promoted by experience of diverse scientific environments. Mobility also means that new and fertile research units can be established over a relatively short time-span, as has happened at Odense University. While research environments could theoretically be kept going by an infusion of new blood from outside there is no doubt that researchers would regard their workplaces as decidedly insufficient if they were not regularly confronted with younger graduates who through supervised research and independent studies were in the process of educating themselves as researchers. The training of researchers has indeed been the subject of increased attention from all the faculties at the end of the 1980's.

The reorganization of the departmental structures in social sciences, medicine and the humanities in the period 1987-90 was undertaken partly to strengthen the research environment at the depart-

*Research:  
Environments  
and Achievements*



*The Ph.D. programme has received increasing attention from the individual faculties since the end of the 1980's. Even though there is general agreement that the writing of a Ph.D. dissertation must be the core of such a programme, the faculties have arranged brief courses, with support from, among others, the Research Academy. Here students and staff from a course arranged by the arts faculty in the spring of 1991. (Photograph: Birte Palle Jørgensen).*

ments and to improve the training of researchers. This more active training policy was common to all the institutions of higher learning in response to initiatives from the centre. Training of researchers was thus a feature of the plan for recruitment, and in 1986 considerable resources were made available in a central fund to support post-graduate students studying for the Ph.D. The administration of the fund was delegated to a newly founded Research Academy, which was to adjudicate on individual applications in the light of expert recommendations.

One of the Research Academy's objectives has been to establish more formalized training for researchers. Ideas were still being discussed in the spring of 1991, but in fact the faculties at Odense had on their own initiative enacted reforms to improve the Ph.D. (licentiate) programme at the end of the 1980's. New regulations were devised with unequivocal demands with regard to the time-schedule, and in the case of the social sciences requiring a year's study abroad, and special research training seminars were held with support from the Research Academy. To the same end the medical sciences opted for courses in cooperation with Aarhus University, while the natural sciences established a studies programme comprising unified extensions to the three-year bachelor programme, with the options of graduation after two years (with a candidatus degree) or after 4 to 5 years (Ph.D.). Researcher training within the faculty of natural sciences is conducted to facilitate the participation of foreign students. It is therefore hoped that researcher training at the university will increase in the beginning of the 1990's following a period of stagnation in the 1980's. This will fulfill one of the conditions for the persistence of challenging conditions in the existing research environments in the 1990's.

In the 1980's the research recruitment strategy was the single most important event influencing the steady supply of new blood necessary for a university which was receiving fewer resources per student and which was still devoting much energy to educational reform with no guarantee of corresponding compensation on the research side. With the new strategy the university had the opportunity of rejuvenating its age-profile, and moderated the rising average age of its staff. In the six years following the plan's coming into effect the average age of staff rose by two years, whereas an unaltered rate of increase from the time before the change would have meant a rise of five years.

The social sciences, which had pointed out that the plan exacerbated their recruitment problems rather than solving them, managed in the period 1984-90 to fill only three new positions, all with younger scholars born in the 1950's. It was then attempted to convert new-blood positions to research fellowships in the hope of producing qualified applicants in due course, the shortage of them being due to the availability of attractive alternative employment. So the faculty must now hope that it can retain a sufficient number in the straight and narrow path of a research career in the 1990's to relieve its recruitment crisis.

Over the same period the other three faculties, science, medicine and humanities, filled respectively 13, 18 and 16 positions. Only 20% of the staff in the first two were born before 1950, while this was the case with 40% of the new recruits to the humanities. These figures include full lectureships. Yet no less than 30% of the assistant lecturers in the humanities were born before 1950. In the humanities faculty therefore the recruitment strategy only partly succeeded in its original primary aim of spreading out the age profile of the staff. This is partly due to the extremely difficult employment situation in the arts, which produced a large number of well-qualified older applicants not in full-time positions, and partly that intentions with regard to the age profile had to take second place to planning considerations, which soon took precedence in the ministry's effectuating of the strategy.

It would be a misconception to see the accession of younger researchers exclusively as a precondition for maintaining the vitality of research at Odense University. Breadth of view, the ability to make accurate assessments of new research possibilities, and high research intensity are characteristic of many experienced researchers. In the 1990's the university's objective will therefore not be exclusively to secure a more balanced age profile, but also to protect the research conditions of senior researchers, as indeed asserted in connection with the structural changes at the end of the 1980's.



## 17. Changing Style at Twenty Five

### **International Perspectives in Research and Education**

For Odense as for any other university international contacts on a personal level are decisive in many fields for staying at the leading edge of research. Many of the academic staff have accordingly spent periods of shorter or longer duration working at research institutions abroad, and have similarly played host to foreign colleagues working here, often under the auspices of a cooperative research programme. International contacts are also established and maintained through numerous shorter trips abroad and visits by others here in connection with guest lectures, conferences, or more narrowly focussed symposia. The university was not caught off guard therefore when in the middle of the 1980's the promotion of international contacts was made a priority for national research and education policy. The surprise, and a nice one at that, for the institutions of higher education was that this also led to the granting of additional funds – in the first instance to facilitate periods of study abroad by those reading for Ph.D.'s, and later also student exchanges at the undergraduate level. The foundation of the Research Academy in 1986 had already made it possible to increase the number of Ph.D.-students, and now a greater proportion of them were able to acquire the international experience on whose significance many departments had long been insisting.

As early as the end of the 1970's the European Economic Community, through its Joint Study Programmes, attempted to further cooperation between groups of universities in member countries, for example by means of student and teacher exchanges, but it was only with the approval of the ERASMUS-project in the summer of 1987 that sufficient funds were made available for students to study abroad in any large numbers, and for staff to undertake visits to foreign universities.

Odense University made a fairly rapid start to the business of establishing formal cooperation agreements with foreign universities, since

*Changing Style  
at Twenty Five*



*The first group of students in the autumn of 1989 following the special programme Scandinavian Area Studies (SAS), for foreign students from faculties of arts and social sciences. The programme is now a regular institution and from 1991 it has been planned in such a way as to be an option for students from other faculties as well. Book in hand Lecturer Uwe Helm Petersen, who as chairman of the International Committee of the Faculty of Arts was responsible for establishing the programme. To the left of Uwe Helm Petersen some of the teaching staff, and to the right SAS students from England, France, Holland and Germany. (Photograph: Birte Palle Jørgensen).*

such arrangements, between two or more institutions, greatly enhance the students' chances of obtaining financial support for a period of undergraduate study at one of the other universities party to the agreement. A particular problem here however is that such agreements entail a degree of reciprocity with regard to the numbers of students involved, and Denmark, disadvantaged by not being the homeland of a major international language, whatever excellence it otherwise has to offer, has not found it easy to attract foreign students. British universities in particular were initially extremely wary of committing themselves to formal agreements, fearing a flood of Danish ERASMUS students who would not be balanced by similar numbers of British students eager to study in Denmark. To correct this imbalance the faculties of humanities and social sciences together established an ad hoc programme specifically designed to attract foreign students: Scandinavian Area Studies.

This programme, astutely sharing its acronym SAS with the one Scandinavian company most Europeans have heard of, started in the autumn semester of 1989: it is built up of a series of modules which the

first time around comprised Scandinavian culture, politics, society and marketing, together with an intensive course in the Danish language. Applications have risen rapidly in its first years, and the programme has contributed to Odense's attracting a sufficient number of foreign students to be able to send a goodly number of its own to universities elsewhere in Europe. From 1991 the SAS programme became available to foreign students affiliated to all four Odense faculties, a variant of it substituting the module on marketing with one relevant to the study of science and medicine.

The number of Odense students wishing to conduct part of their studies abroad is expected to increase further, however, and the university will continue into the 1990's to extend its cooperative arrangements – bilateral agreements with single foreign universities, or, increasingly, network agreements with several. These arrangements will be made not merely under the auspices of the EEC's ERASMUS programme, but also under two others more or less directly inspired by it: NORDPLUS from 1987 encompassing the Nordic countries, TEMPUS from 1990 encompassing the EEC and Eastern Europe, initially only Hungary and Poland, but later to extend to others. The latter was designed particularly to further the export of know-how to the countries of Eastern Europe to benefit their economic development, and so did not specify there should be parity in the numbers involved in the exchanges in each direction. Odense is also working on setting up network agreements which couple together the ERASMUS, NORDPLUS and TEMPUS systems. In view of what was remarked earlier on the linguistic situation it is not surprising that all these developments have prompted serious consideration being given to the possibility of offering more of the university's regular teaching through the medium of English.

Odense University participated early and actively in the large-scale exchange programmes that came on stream towards the end of the 1980's, and an increased internationalization was already apparent as the 1990's began. This was the case not least for students, who did not have the same tradition of study abroad familiar to the academic staff; for instance the number of ERASMUS students in the humanities faculty – the early bird in this connection – doubled between 1989 and 1990. But it should be noted that such exchanges did not occur exclusively under the auspices of the major multinational programmes: there were and are still a number of organizations, some private, sup-

ported in some cases by individual foreign governments, which help finance periods of study abroad, just as one of the Ministry of Education's multifarious funds made grants available to the same end.

#### **Basic Research and Research for the Community**

The call in the 1970's, not least from a large proportion of the students, was for research for the people: the selection of research topics was to be determined by the degree to which they contributed to the class struggle and furthered the fall of capitalist society. Solidarity with the working class was symbolized by the fashion for boilersuits and clogs cultivated by students and a few staff. Then came the day at the end of the 1970's when the Social Democrat Minister of Education, Ritt Bjerregaard, pointed out that it was society that paid for the universities, and was therefore entitled to get something in return. A politically-formulated utilitarian attitude came to the fore, although lacking the lopsidedness of the latter-day Marxists. The obligation to communicate research results was also insisted on; rightly so, al-



*In 1976 Odense University entered a cooperation agreement with the City of Odense. A conspicuous result was the ten-volume history of the city of Odense, of which the first volume appeared in 1979, with the remaining volumes published annually, so that the publication of the concluding tenth volume coincided with the city's one thousand year anniversary celebrations. At the presentation of volume two in 1980 the author, Lecturer, dr. phil. Aage Fasmer Blomberg, is standing between Verner Dalskov, the mayor of Odense (left) and the general editor, Professor, dr. phil. Tage Kaarsted. (Nyt).*

though researchers at Odense University did not feel they were in particular need of the reminder.

It has always been the general view among researchers at the university that their research should have social significance, and there are those who are happiest with their work if that significance is immediately discernible. Others appreciated however that social utility is a more complex concept than the public debate allowed for – or sometimes indeed the debate within the university itself. Such was the case at the beginning of the 1980's, when many still insisted that the interest of the working classes should be the guiding principle, and again at the end of the decade, when the needs of the business community were claimed to merit precedence. Sartorial symbolism has followed suit, many corridors of the university now dominated by the sharp, smart style of the young upwardly-mobile professional.

Although, as succeeding vice-chancellors have been at pains to point out in their annual reports, the university must safeguard that basic research whose results are not immediately usable but which are a prerequisite for all those that are, the university has nonetheless found it increasingly politic to supplement this with programmed research in cooperation with extramural partners. The agreement on cooperation with Odense City Council in 1976 is a case in point, but in the course of the 1980's external cooperation agreements have multiplied, although because of highly varied organizational arrangements their number is not easy to specify.

Fully self-financing research received a considerable boost in 1984 when state institutions, including the universities, were accorded the possibility of retaining the income generated by such external activities rather than being obliged, as previously, to pay it into the Exchequer. In addition the university's researchers have increasingly been seconded to research projects of fixed duration financed from external sources, and conducted outside the university's regular research framework. Most recently for example in 1990 a team of researchers from the humanities and social sciences, financed by local industry and local (county and district) government, has issued a series of reports on the development prospects for Funen's industry and commerce in the light of the EEC's plans for introducing the single market in 1992, and the completion of the bridge and tunnel across the Great Belt (providing Funen's first direct link to Copenhagen) in 1993-94.

*Changing Style  
at Twenty Five*



*ISPO – International Science Park Odense – is the way Odense University plans to ensure a platform for the cooperation between the private sector and the university. In 1991 ISPO was still in the planning phase, but it can be safely assumed that this drawing will not reflect reality. (Kristof Bian in Nyt).*

**The Science Park**

A more permanent framework for cooperation between the university and local industry has been ensured by the decision to establish a fully-fledged science park, which although located amidst the rural delights of the Funen landscape will nonetheless be within two kilometres of Odense University, the School of Engineering (Odense Technical College), Dalum Agricultural College, and the prefabricated buildings which once housed the university. These last, since the university moved on, have become the home of a number of educational institutions, but will also have the capacity to accommodate the start-up phase of projects which may eventually move out to the science park proper.

The first Danish science park was established at Aarhus University in 1985 on the model of its foreign predecessors. Such institutions have been geared particularly towards advanced research and development, the natural sciences and technological fields accordingly particularly active in connection with their foundation. The same

applies in Odense, where International Science Park Odense (ISPO) was founded in the spring of 1990 following several years' preparatory work in a joint committee set up by the university and local industry. These two parties are now represented on the board of ISPO, together with the mayor of Odense and the chairman of the Funen County Council; the university vice-chancellor was elected as the board's first chairman.

Although the necessary means for establishing the science park as a physical entity have been in place since 1990, delays in the formal approval of the project by the central authorities postponed the commencement of construction beyond the spring of 1991. It is therefore too early to predict precisely what activities will characterize the science park. The plans involve the renting out of floor-space, and the Energy Laboratory and the Institute of Applied Computer Technology (IFAD), founded in 1985 with the support of local industry, were reckoned as potential tenants from an early stage. Both organizations have extensive experience of research contracts, with the EEC among others. Projects in the fields of surface physics and biomedical research were similarly considered appropriate for the Science Park: both are fields in which Odense University has achieved a distinguished reputation, both nationally and internationally, and would contribute actively to the development of a dynamic research and development environment. The applied research fields are expected to be considerably broader than this, however, so that the Science Park will also need to make use of expertise in the social sciences and the humanities.

### **Structural Adjustments**

During the 1980's Odense University carried through a number of innovations in both research and education, abandoning its role as a smaller copy of the two traditional universities in Copenhagen and Aarhus in favour of an identity of its own characterized by a fertile symbiosis of tradition and change. This new identity demanded however quite radical structural changes. Changes in the departmental structure of the faculties have been discussed elsewhere, but the organization of the university's administration was also adjusted at the end of the 1980's – more precisely in 1988, a year after Helge Muhle Larsen had succeeded B.E. Fich as university director.

The changes stemmed from the desire to make more efficient use of the available administrative resources, and to provide a better service to the faculties. During the 1980's the administrative resources had not kept pace with the growth in the number of tasks to be carried out, with the inevitable result that not all tasks could be performed equally well. The load had been particularly augmented by the university's outwardly oriented activities, with regard both to attracting new students and furthering cooperation in research and development with outside partners.

Before the close of the 1970's there had been no centrally-organized student counselling at the university. Potential and new students were obliged largely to rely on the counselling available at their high schools and the advice of older students at the university, plus whatever they could gather from the university calendar and its timetable. The first counsellor was appointed in 1978, and in 1979 a studies guide with general information on studying at Odense was issued for the first time. It was a modest pamphlet of only nine pages, presenting in a few lines the university's in all 25 degree programmes, together with information on admission requirements, available grants, and the accommodation situation. It was quite unembellished, and a far cry from the later studies guides with their substantial information on each degree programme, career prospects, and a wealth of other information students need to be apprised of. Thus the handbook for 1991 was a glossy affair of 240 pages including introductions to almost 50 degree programmes plus a number of specialized variants within particular subjects. The guide is published by the university's students' information office which among other tasks attends to central counselling at the university and cultivates contacts with the high schools from which the majority of new students are recruited: it is therefore in part a measure of their success that from the late 1980's the university suffered a shortage of space and overcrowded lecture-halls.

In 1988 the university's Counselling and Information Section was extended to include a so-called contacts-office, a «knowledge shop» established with support from the Ministry of Education to strengthen the marketing of the university's research and teaching in particular to institutions and companies in the public and private sectors. It was also to inform potential partners of the university's abilities to participate in development projects. This information office has not as yet existed long enough under the new structure to permit

assessment of whether it will have any decisive effect in strengthening from the centre the external relationships which have hitherto been largely directed decentrally, at the faculty and departmental levels. In 1989 a separate international office was established to coordinate the university's steadily increasing number of international involvements.

*Changing Style  
at Twenty Five*



## 18. Conclusion: Staying on Top

It is an indisputable objective for the university and the vast majority of its staff to achieve research and teaching at the highest international level through the optimal utilization of the available resources. It is no secret however that in the course of the 1980's the staff have sometimes wondered how they were supposed to do so. The reform of the educational profile and the many conflicts this entailed took a heavy toll of time and energy, but it was more worrying that the increase in student numbers was not matched by a sufficient increase in research resources. Together with the reductions in standards imposed on the educational side this has sometimes made it difficult at Odense University to follow the logic of the Minister of Education's frequent declarations of how much the government is doing for the advancement of research. It is generally reckoned that such increases in research resources as Odense University did receive were more than thoroughly deserved, considering the students' right to research-based teaching and the quality of the research undertaken.

The university is still dedicated to maintaining standards in both teaching and research; this has after all been achieved to date, not least because most staff – without being paid overtime – put in working hours way above the current norms of the labour market. And in the first nation-wide evaluations of achievements within particular disciplines Odense came out with very good marks. But after the turbulent decade of the 1980's it is time for a period of consolidation.

In the 1980's the framework within which the university operated was largely determined by the detailed planning of the central authorities, even though the point of departure as often as not was a local initiative. Simultaneously there was developed an administrative system which facilitated close monitoring of results on the educational side and, to a degree, on the research side too, without much concern for the methodological problems involved in using purely quantitative yardsticks in the assessment of teaching and research. This system, 211

*Conclusion:*  
*Staying on Top*

which accords well with theories of decentralized management, seems to promise increased autonomy for the university in the 1990's. The university welcomes this freedom, but doubts the wisdom of persisting with the highly short-sighted monitoring of results.

Quantitative monitoring of results does not demand specialist knowledge of the field concerned, and can consequently be administered both by ministerial officials and by the governing bodies representing broad sections of the university. But qualitative assessments, which are of vital importance at a university, cannot be fitted easily into such an administrative system. Admittedly the national authorities in education and research have since the middle of the 1980's accorded increasing significance to external scholarly evaluation as a supplement to the quantitative measuring of results, but unless quite considerable financial resources are devoted to building up an alternative bureaucracy of scholarly assessors such external evaluations will not be able to contribute to decision-making, for example on educational and research priorities, by the regular management of the institutions.

On the threshold of the 1990's, therefore, Odense University, like other institutions of higher education, faces a management problem. If an extension of the rather short-sighted management techniques of the 1980's based on the quantitative monitoring of results is accepted, then the statute on university government, with its group representation and its rejection of the significance of specialist expertise in decision-making on educational planning and research priorities, can remain operative. But if on the contrary it is desired that specialist expertise be assigned a more direct role in decision-making, then the statute will have to be revised: a slumbering giant of a problem that may slowly be emerging into consciousness. It is in this connection interesting to note that suggestions on the reform of management structure no longer provoke the same degree of bitter opposition of representatives of the various groups on the governing bodies as they did in the early and middle 1980's. Thus at Odense University there has since 1988 been a fairly quiet debate under way on possible new management structures; here in the spring of 1991 it is too early to discern the direction it is taking, but that it will continue can be predicted with some confidence.

The university must develop and renew itself in continued interaction with society. Odense University has demonstrated its ability

and its willingness to do so, but it is equally certain that every university must remain loyal to some ideals which may not always accord with the current spirit of the times. Odense University shows every sign of having the resilience to maintain this ambivalence beyond the first quarter-century, so that it will continue at the highest level of excellence: twenty five years is after all not the end, but just the first chapter in the long history of the university.

*Conclusion:  
Staying on Top*



*The class of 1966 was limited in number. At the beginning of the 1990's, after twenty-five years of unbroken increase in the intake of students, the situation was quite different. The more than seven thousand students cannot be gathered together for the photographer, but here is a tiny section of our future graduates. (Fyns Pressefoto).*

