

Designing the merged institution: the multi-campus model

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Multi-Campus Systems (MCs)

- Def.: HEIs with more than one campus, **geographically separated** (Nicolson 2004)
- **Distinct communities** under **shared governance** (Lee & Bowen 1971; Creswell et al. 1985)
- 'Campus' implies **internal coordination**: functions, activities, strategies, etc. (Bianchi 1999)
- 80% enrollments in US-HE (late 90s) (Szutz 1999); also in S.Africa, Australia, UK & Nordics (DK, FI, NO)

Rationale behind MCs

- ❑ Enhance degree of:
 - ❑ **specialization**
 - ❑ **coordination**
 - ❑ **diversity**
- ❑ Latter goal linked to ***equity***, others to ***efficiency***
(Clark 1983)

Autonomy as a key feature of MCs

- **Substantive autonomy**

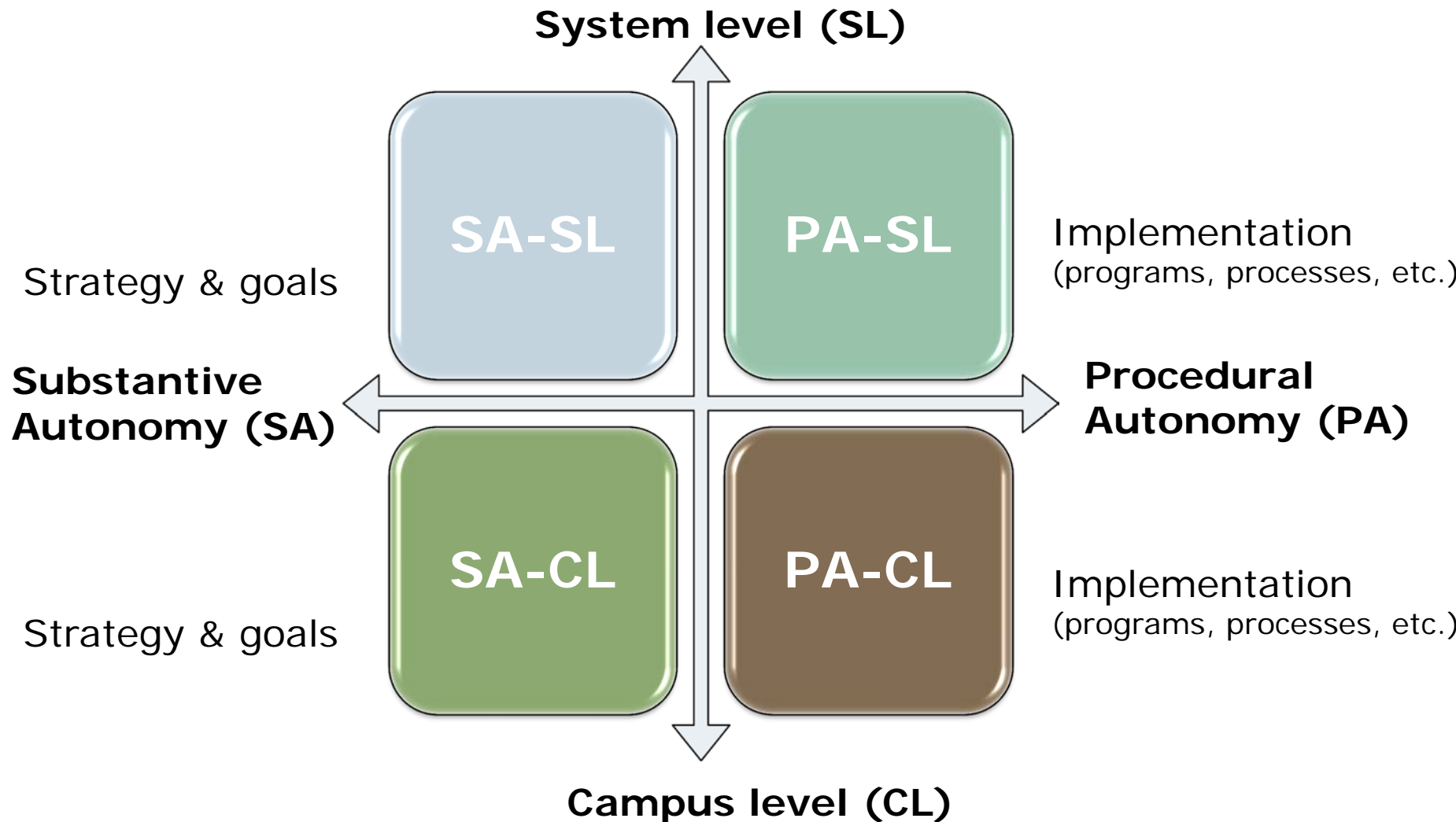
- Freedom to define own goals & functions (*what*)

- **Procedural autonomy**

- Leeway to select the means to reach goals (*how*)

(Schmidtlein & Berdahl 2005)

Autonomy vs. Control



Programmatic profile

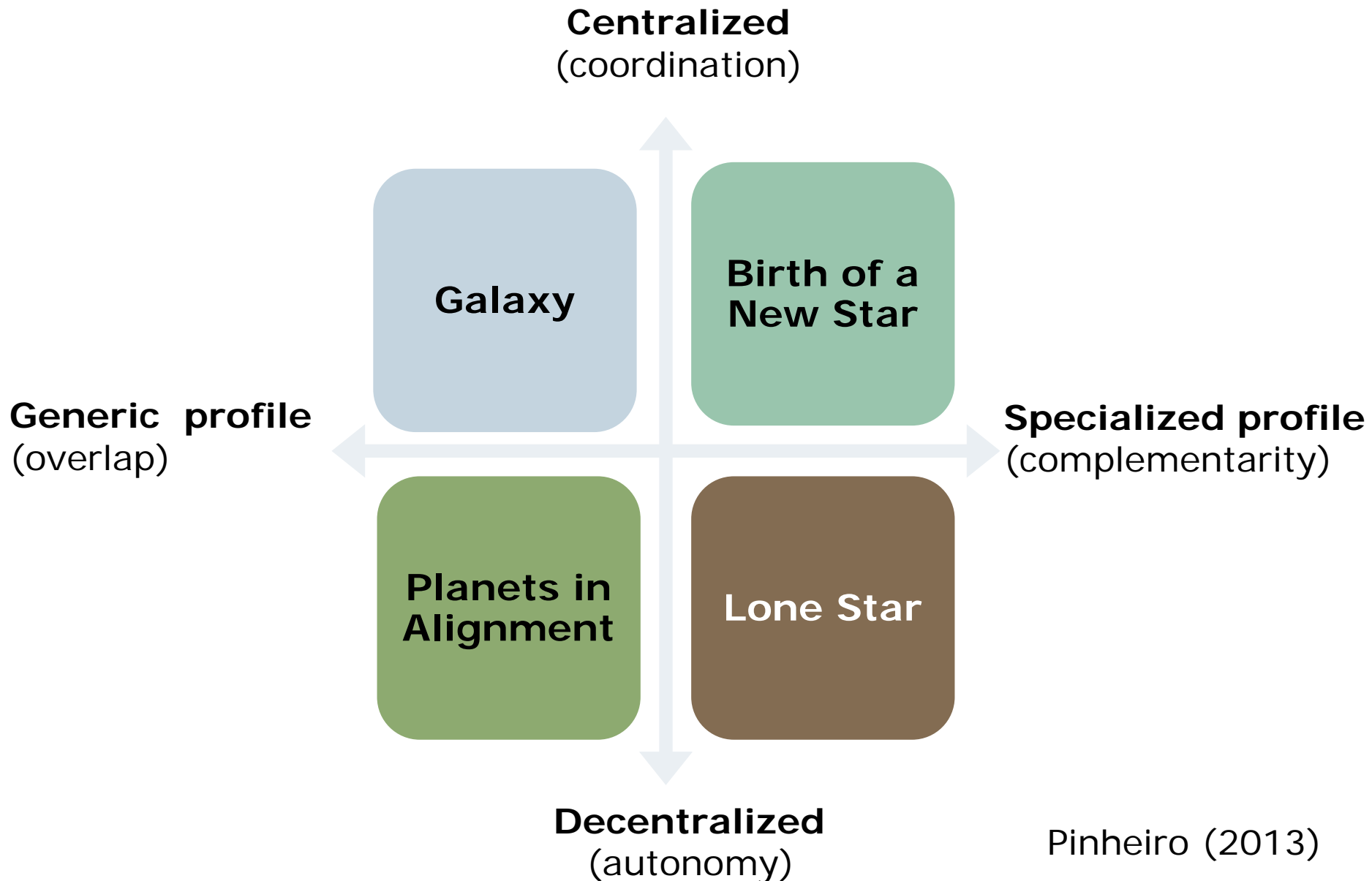
- **Heterogeneity**

- Different study programs offered @ different campuses
- Goal is complementarity

- **Homogeneity**

- Similar programs offered across various locations
- Goal is overlap

c.f. Stensaker et al. (2005)



Galaxy

- All programs offered across all campuses
- Coordination under one common regulative framework
- **Advantages:**
 - Low coordination costs (economies of scale)
 - Enhanced programmatic offers for local students
- **Disadvantages:**
 - Spread of academic resources (access best teachers)
 - Fragmented academic (disciplinary) cultures

Planets in Alignment

- All major programs offered @ all campuses, plus selected specialized programs @ specific locations
- Decentralized system (campus autonomy)
- **Advantages:**
 - Low coordination costs
 - Flexibility (local context & conditions)
- **Disadvantages:**
 - System requires a sophisticated strategic framework
 - Senior leaders spread across various locations

Birth of a New Star

- All programs associated w/ a given faculty/institute offered @ selected campuses (e.g. Grimstad campus, UIA)
- Centralized system (low autonomy for campuses)
- **Advantages:**
 - Distinct campus/student identity
 - Strong joint disciplinary/unit culture & learning environment
 - Low coordination costs @ unit level (geographic centralization)
- **Disadvantages:**
 - Commuting: local students interested in other programs
 - Life of its own – «institutionalised campus» (quasi-university)

Lone Star

- Specific programs offered only @ specific locations
- Administrative coordination delegated to campus
- **Advantages:**
 - Flexible and experimental; locally responsive
 - Economies of scope or specialization
- **Disadvantages:**
 - Campus profile & culture decoupled from system as a whole
 - Risk of isolation and marginalisation

Conclusions and Implications

- Each model has its pros & cons – «no silver bullet!»
- MCs need to **select the best «mix»** according to:
 - Historical **trajectories** or path-dependencies
 - Institutional **aspirations** and unit-level ambitions (strategy)
 - Degree of **engagement** with surrounding locality/region
 - Dominant **values, norms & postures** (culture)
 - Core **strengths**: teaching & research
 - **Geographic reach** to be covered
 - Size & characteristics of local **student population**
 - Internal **resource allocations** & **external resource dependencies**