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University Struggles and the System of Measure

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The Edu-factory Collective

It has become a truism of debates about labor in an economic context that foregrounds the production of knowledge that socially necessary labor time is no longer an adequate measure of value. This proposition has been central to the investigations launched by Edu-factory into the struggles and conflicts surrounding the transformations of the university. In many ways, the university worker is the cognitive laborer par excellence. Self-managed and self-motivated, this figure seems to embody the tendency for life to feed into work, not only in terms of the time devoted to produce knowledge for teaching and research but also with regard to the social relations that sustain the work of knowledge production. This is why Edu-factory has always posed critically the proposition that the university is becoming a factory, holding it up for interrogation rather than affirmation. In the current conjuncture, the university tends to both export its modes of producing knowledge and subjectivity and to import business and management methods forged in the wider economy. Marketing firms, business consultants, media corporations, creative industries outfits, software firms – all have learned from the practices of peer review, collaboration, mentoring, and auditing practiced in the university. Measures and branding mechanisms of each of these sectors have also been borrowed into university management initiatives.

The current issue of Edu-factory Journal continues our efforts to hold these propositions to the razor of political struggle. Specifically it engages with what we call the system of measure – that is the increasingly elaborate techniques that the private and public bodies that manage universities introduce to attempt to quantify the quality, impact and value of the work their employees perform. This system of measure is an affront to the notion that the labor of knowledge production is performed in common and cannot be held to measure. It thus provides not only a point of conflict in the contemporary university but also a means of testing propositions for the immeasurability of labor.

Needless to say these techniques of measure display a wide de-

EDU-FACTORY IS A TRANSNATIONAL COLLECTIVE ENGAGED WITH THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE GLOBAL UNIVERSITY AND CONFLICTS IN KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION. THE WEBSITE OF THE GLOBAL NETWORK (WWW.EDU-FACTORY.ORG/WP) COLLECTS AND CONNECTS THEORETICAL INVESTIGATIONS AND REPORTS FROM UNIVERSITY STRUGGLES. THE NETWORK HAS ORGANISED MEETINGS ALL AROUND THE WORLD, PAYING PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THE INTERTWINING OF STUDENT AND FACULTY STRUGGLES.

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gree of heterogeneity. They at once differ across geographical and institutional boundaries and reproduce themselves rapidly through the cut and paste logic of policy transfer. More properly we might say that the system of measure is an assemblage of techniques for quantifying, standardizing, counting, ranking, benchmarking, and assigning value to academic production and labor. Peer review is an important element of the system of measure as is the construction of university rankings, the calculation of economic impacts, the introduction of workload formulas, the conduct of research audits, the use of performance indicators, and the deployment of metrics. These technologies not only quantify and hierarchize the field of higher education to ever higher degrees but they also seek to homogenize and individualize the production of living knowledge. They are key drivers in processes of institutional restructuring, the drawing of business plans, and the decisions of governments and investors to fund or defund universities. Furthermore, they interface and overlap with technologies of measure that invest other areas of life, the regulation of labor markets, for instance, or immigration control. The system of measure is thus instrumental in joining university governance to wider variations in national and global divisions of labor. This is especially evident in the discrepant and usually more stringent measures to which non-citizen students and academics are subjected in comparison to their citizen coevals.

The wide array of contexts and situations into which the system of measure inserts itself means that it is also a factor in many different types of struggle. Struggles against the axing of academic programs, tuition fee hikes, funding cuts or the conscription of universities to the work of border policing are directly struggles against the system of measure. The articles that populate this issue of Edu-factory Journal display the diversity of these struggles as well as the different idioms, intellectual styles and political strategies they attract and perpetuate. In keeping with the transnational remit of the Edu-factory project, they are also drawn from an array of national contexts and, taken together, offer means for thinking across them.

It is important to acknowledge the preponderance of articles from the United Kingdom that make up this issue. This has resulted from not only from the links that connect the Edu-factory network to this context but also from the intensity of the struggles that have unfolded in the U.K. since the government's announcement of unprecedented higher education budget cuts in 2010, which have unleashed a privatization of higher education. This comes with debt and a deepening of social inequalities, crystallizing a classed system of education. At the same time there is the double speak of 'widening access', built on a charity rather than a mandatory system of welfare and education, personified in the political slogan of the so called 'big

MEMBERS OF THE EDU-FACTORY COLLECTIVE ARE: MORGAN ADAMSON, PEDRO BARBOSA MENDES, AMIT BASOLE, ENDA BROPHY, MIGUEL CARMONA, ANNA CURCIO, ANDREA GHELFI, DUSAN GRLJA, MAX HAIVEN, CAMILLO IMPERORE, GUIO JACINTO, AGNIESZKA KOWALCZYK, MARTINA MARTIGNONI, LIZ MASONDESEE, JASON FRANCIS MC GIMSEY, ALEXANDRE MENDES, MIGUEL MELLINO, BRETT NEILSON, MATTEO PASQUINELLI, ALEXEI PENZIN, ARIANE REVEL, GIGI ROGGERO, NICOLÀS SLACHEVSKY, JON SOLOMON, KRYSITIAN SZADKOWSKI, ELISE THORBURN, OXANA TIMOFEEVA, SEBASTIAN TOUZA.THE COLLECTIVE HAS PUBLISHED *UNIVERISTÀ GLOBALE. IL NUOVO MERCATO DEL SAPERE* (MANIFESTOLIBRI, 2008), *TOWARD A GLOBAL AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY: COGNITIVE LABOR, THE PRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE, AND EXODUS FROM THE EDUCATION FACTORY* (AUTONOMEDIA, 2009), AND *UNIVERSIDAD IN CONFLICTO* (TRAFICANTES DE SUEÑOS, 2010).

society.' The issue's focus on the U.K. needs to be read against Edu-factory's activities in other global contexts - e.g. the seminars held at Shanghai University in November 2009, the participation in the Liberation without Borders initiative in Tunisia, the involvement of collective members in the recent student protests in Santiago, or the forthcoming participation in the Lokavidya Jan Andolan (People's Knowledge Movement) conference in Varanasi, India.

Edu-factory Journal was founded neither as an end in itself nor merely as a means of establishing a channel of communication between university struggles and free education initiatives in different parts of the world. The journal was envisioned as method for expanding the network's activities, and, in so doing, to augment and provide political resources for social antagonism on a transnational scale. Whether it can be successful in this task depends as much, perhaps more, on the readership than on the authors, editors or collective. The open access and freely distributable nature of the writings can facilitate a wide reception. With appropriate efforts of translation, both linguistic and political, as well as necessary negotiations of the untranslatable, the texts can resonate in different contexts. For this to happen, there is a need for readers to copy, post, change and debate these contributions. If it can encourage such practice, Edu-factory is confident of expanding and intensifying struggles within and against the system of measure.

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From Utopian Institution to Global University:
Simon Fraser University and Crisis of Canadian Public Education

Enda Brophy and Myka Tucker-Abramson

It began as a utopian public university, built on a hill. The modernist architectural design of its signature Academic Quadrangle was meant to encourage the free flow of knowledge among the disciplines, and its Convocation Mall featured a large open space for mass meetings of students and professors. Simon Fraser University was built in less than three years and opened in 1965, on Burnaby Mountain. Located just outside of Vancouver, British Columbia, SFU was part of a wave of post-war Canadian mass universities constructed to accommodate the growing demand for public education in Canada during the post-war era. These Fordist institutions were to provide mass education in a markedly different manner than the first Canadian universities (McGill in Montreal, Queen's in Kingston and the University of Toronto), which since the 19th century had formed the Anglophone Canadian elite in a system dominated by the British colonial curriculum. Not surprisingly, it was the second wave of universities that became focal points for the growing student unrest of the late sixties. Of all of these, SFU was the most turbulent, with a powerful student movement, a radical core of faculty in support, and the strong presence of feminist movements emerging in response to male-dominated politics on campus and the patriarchy permeating Canadian society. Indeed the potential of what began as a modernist dream of a public university on a hill was taken far too seriously by its subjects: within the first five years of the university's history, Simon Fraser University earned a reputation as "Berkeley North," as progressive movements on campus brought an end to the unilateral appointment of department chairs by the administration, organized for student participation in academic governance, and had the first head of the university

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THE AUTHORS WOULD LIKE TO THANK ROBERT PREY FOR VALUABLE RESEARCH ASSISTANCE, IVAN DRURY AND KIRSTEN MCALLISTER FOR THOUGHTFUL AND ENGAGED COMMENTS, AND CAELIE FRAMPTON AND MICHAEL BARNDHOLDEN FOR THEIR HELP WITH EARLIER ITERATIONS OF THIS PROJECT.

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fired. The movements that bred in the university spread outward as well, including most prominently the formation of the Vancouver Women's Caucus by SFU students, an organization that began the famous Abortion Caravan which travelled to Ottawa to denounce the restrictive conditions set on accessing abortions in the 1969 Criminal Code reform. Amid the demonstrations and occupations that culminated in the 1968 "summer of revolt," SFU's reputation as the seat of Canadian academic radicalism became entrenched. The utopian mass university was bursting at the seams, barely able to contain the unrest on campus.

Forty years later, Simon Fraser's downtown Vancouver satellite campus, Harbour Centre, has each classroom named after a corporate benefactor. Students can discuss finance in the RBC Dominion Securities Executive Meeting Room, environmental management in the Paperboard Industries Language Lab, West Timber Conference Room, or Canfor Policy Room, and compose a term paper in the Royal Bank Computer Centre. The mass meetings and demonstrations by SFU's students, the university's radical anti-disciplinarity, and its politicized faculty have been safely declawed, relegated to historical texts, and even appropriated by the current administration for the purposes of the institution's brand development. In this article, we contend that SFU's transformation in the intervening years is reflective of a broader shift within post-secondary education in the province of British Columbia, but also within the Canadian system generally.[1] This shift should be seen as the result of a crisis in post-secondary education, one characterized by deep cuts to public education, but also, paradoxically, by its expansion and transformation. The trajectory of SFU during the last decade, its corporatized and branded management logic, its entry into global tuition markets by targeting wealthy Asian Rim students in particular, its expansion across the urban fabric and active role in the gentrification of poor Vancouver neighbourhoods, and its participation in cutting-edge hybrid public/private institutions are all unmistakable signs of response to, and internalization of, the current neoliberal restructuring of the province and country. Within this scenario of mutation and restructuring, the liberal-democratic languages of "corporatization" or "privatization" are insufficient, we maintain, to fully grasp the forces at work. The aforementioned processes are, rather, reflective of our university's eager embrace of a model Andrew Ross has spoken of as the "global university," of which New York University ("a hedge fund in drag as a university," as someone we know once joked), is the ultimate example.[2]

The global university is a response to a transformed and global economy, in which knowledge, language, and culture are increasingly seen as commodities to be produced in accordance to the demands of profit, and public education an unjust monopoly and fetter upon the ruthless pedagogy of the free market. Within this emergent model, as Ross suggests, "the distinction between onshore and offshore education--like that between private and public, or non-profit and for-profit--…become very blurry indeed."[3] Universities aiming at entry into an elite tier of global institutions are eagerly scrambling to capture international tuition dollars, whether through branch campuses abroad or (as we shall see) domestic ventures aimed at international students. While Ross focuses on the former (a model necessitated for American universities by the state's hermetic border security practices), Canadian universities are not only relatively well-poised to take advantage of the latter, but are also targeting internal, domestic markets for tuition dollars through the establishment of (predominantly suburban) branch campuses. Through this process, as we illustrate below, we see the increasingly important role played by the metropolis within broader accumulation strategies, but also the specific role the university plays in harnessing ur-

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ban space by transforming predominantly poor, precarious, or working class neighbourhoods into profitable (and therefore unaffordable) creative economy zones in the service of real estate development and land speculation.

In what follows, we survey the transformation of Simon Fraser University within the context of the crisis and transformation of British Columbian, Canadian, and North American public post-secondary education. This transition, experimentation, and restructuring on the part of the emergent neoliberal university is not, however, proceeding uncontested, and along the way we keep an eye out for pockets of resistance that might disrupt the rapid commodification of higher learning. These pressure points include the severe precarization of the university's labour force, which has provoked strikes and union drives across Canada as an entire generation of scholars is finding the doors of secure employment in the academy barred; the expansion of the university into urban areas deemed worthy of "revitalization" and the branding of those campuses by corporations seeking to whitewash their image, which has produced new coalitions between student groups and urban activists working against the exclusionary effects of gentrification; and the rising and record debt levels of Canadian students forced to borrow against a future that isn't there, a situation which is an unavoidable effect of the crisis, and a powder keg that has already exploded in Europe. The movements that emerge out of this transition will not be like those that exploded the mass public education model in the 1960s and 1970s, forcing the neoliberalization of the university. Rather, as we have seen of late in California, in Italy, in the United Kingdom, in Ireland, and in Greece, they reflect the complex and ongoing recomposition of labour under cognitive capitalism.[4] While we are a long ways from the "summer of revolt" in 1968, the university's creation of an increasingly indebted and precarious class of workers alongside its continued displacement of urban residents is beginning to create new alliances and potential avenues of struggle within the crisis of Canadian post-secondary public education.

SFU WITHIN THE CRISIS OF BRITISH COLUMBIAN AND CANADIAN PUBLIC EDUCATION

Given its oft-celebrated utopian underpinnings, Simon Fraser University is a shining example of the effects wrought by the intentional neglect of Fordist funding models in the new neoliberal regime. Yet the old language of "privatization" and "corporatization" that dominated political discussions of the university in the 1980s and 1990s is, we feel, no longer adequate to describe the processes that are systematically dismantling the public infrastructure in British Columbia and across the nation. The breakdown of the welfare state in Canada is creating increasingly unusual public-private partnerships in traditional social service sectors like healthcare and education, and the debate over the future of post-secondary education is no longer between the mutually exclusive scenarios of a state-run public institution or a privately-run corporate one because privatization itself no longer means that the state simply cedes control of the university to corporations. Instead, it means that the state works to make the university a more effective corporation and thus a more effective part of its own strategies to privatize and submit both urban space and the production of knowledge to the production of profit.

On the surface, the situation in British Columbia can look like the familiar public versus private battle. The narrative goes something like this: plagued by financial crisis, the government is

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systematically defunding public institutions like universities, and the latter are forced to respond by seeking greater external funding in the form of patents, endowments and corporate donations, increased tuition, expanded class sizes, and growing reliance on contingent labour while simultaneously cutting back on tenure-track, full-time faculty. The numbers seem to support this. In the last ten years, tuition has more than doubled in the province. In 2004 the BC grants program, which provided students grants alongside the loans they took out, was eliminated. In 2009 the BC Liberal government cut $70 million from education. In 2010 they cut another $16 million from financial aid.

Yet the funding cutbacks and increased reliance on private moneys tell only part of the story, comprising what Jamie Peck and Adam Tickell would call the "roll back" phase of BC Premier Gordon Campbell's variant of neoliberal governance.[5] The phase is occurring alongside a simultaneous "roll out," or expansion of the neoliberal university, featuring (as it has in public universities across North America) a growing attempt to subject academic administration to systems of measure adapted to marketplace norms. Since the BC Liberal government came into power in 2001, the discourse around public post-secondary education has been framed entirely through market metrics: the university is no longer discussed as a public good, as a right, or as a social institution as it may have been in the days SFU was founded, but is instead required to justify itself through a variety of "performance measures": student enrolment, numbers of patents produced, corporate sponsors, etc. While students, staff, and faculty experience these policies as cutbacks, the state is often not actually cutting funds, but rather restructuring and railroading funding so that it comes with "conditions" bearing an uncanny resemblance to the austerity measures endured by countries indebted to the International Monetary Foundation.

For example, the 2004 B.C. grant program mentioned above was not exactly *cut*, but rather "reallocated" in order "to help increase the ministry's direct grants to post-secondary institutions."[6] This reallocation did not *increase* the ministry's funding, but compensated for direct grants the government was not providing. Such reallocations literally shift the burden of basic university funding onto the poor, freeing up the state to earmark the money it used to provide for basic funding toward a variety of university projects tailored toward the volatile currents of labour market trends or the booming real estate development business in the lower mainland.[7] The rapidly shifting funding climate in British Columbia, as in other Canadian provinces, has also steadily eroded another of the pillars of Fordist mass education in Canada - the relative autonomy of educational institutions. In October 2008 SFU received its "Letter of Expectations"[8] from the Province, which "adjusted" (cut) SFU's budget by almost $5 million without providing any explanation. The letter also called for an expansion of student enrolment numbers and a "redirection of [SFU's] focus to Health Programs" and "programs in high demand to support the labour market."[9]

The government's demand for increased enrolment numbers and more faculties serves two purposes. First, it creates the illusion of some investment in public education while increasing student numbers yet without offering any commitment to stable funding.[10] Second, it feeds the crisis conditions, which have, according to SFU's strategic plan for 2008-11, forced it to take "extraordinary additional measures to balance growing demands and declining real resources."[11] Yet amid the budget cuts and the anguished climate of austerity, SFU has opened three new faculties

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(the Faculty of the Environment, the Faculty of Applied Sciences, and the Faculty of Communication, Art, and Technology), all of which are perhaps not surprisingly aligned with the demands of the government's letters of expectations. In short, the university is in a seemingly paradoxical situation: at the precise moment its existence as such is threatened by the state, it is also being expanded in new and different directions. The rationale for this expansion is explained by Canadian Federation of Students BC chairperson Seamus Reid, who recently pointed that in 2011 the B.C. government will collect $1.11 billion in tuition fee revenue, compared with only $1.04 billion in corporate income taxes.[12] Here we have the true difference between the Fordist conception of the university and the new neoliberal one. Students pay more, and corporations, at least through taxes, pay a great deal less. This simultaneous roll back and roll out is part of the transformation of the university from a public service funded by the state to a service used by the state for its projects of educational market formation, cost recovery, land development, and labour-market transformation.

INTO THE URBAN FABRIC: SFU AND THE CITY

At its inception, by its very design Simon Fraser University was removed from the din of urban life due to its remote location at the top of a mountain. So much has changed in the last 40 years. While our university is undoubtedly projecting itself internationally according to the model of the global university, it is also "rolling out" into the urban fabric of Vancouver and surrounding suburbs in a bid to soak up local pools of potential tuition money.[13] In doing so, its development over the last decade perfectly underscores the emergent relationship between the university as a site for the production of marketable knowledge and the city as a key site for contemporary capital accumulation. As Gigi Roggero has observed in his inquiries into the American and Italian post-secondary education systems, "the university becomes metropolis, and the metropolis becomes university."[14] If, as Hardt and Negri suggest, the city is to the multitude as the factory is to the working class, then the neoliberal university plays an important role in attempts to privatize "the common wealth of the metropolis."[15] In this section, we survey this trend as it is playing out in Canada, zeroing in on the political effects of Simon Fraser University's approach to urban space.

Over the last two decades, Canadian post-secondary education has seen a veritable explosion in the development of satellite or branch-plant campuses. This process has been particularly evident in Ontario, where universities have sought to extend themselves into the suburban expanses around Toronto that have been the scene of significant demographic growth. The University of Toronto, cashing in on its quasi-Ivy League brand recognition, has expanded into the urban hinterlands of Canada's largest city, establishing University of Toronto Mississauga to the west and the University of Toronto Scarborough to the east. Meanwhile, universities from smaller outlying cities have also expanded inward toward Toronto, chasing the very same suburban tuition dollars. Wilfrid Laurier University, located in Canada's famed "Tech Triangle" that is home to RIM and its Blackberry products, has developed a satellite campus in Brantford, an hour outside of Toronto. Trent University, in Peterborough, has a campus in Oshawa, a twenty-minute drive from Toronto. The University of Guelph has partnered with Humber College to deliver a number of programs at a third site, with the former projecting itself toward the city and the latter projecting itself outward, meeting in the metropolitan sprawl. Here in British Columbia, the

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suburbs is also the scene of Simon Fraser University's latest venture, in Surrey (formerly the car theft capital of North America), where by taking over a failing technical university (TechBC), it has been able to extend its reach into the Fraser Valley area outside of Vancouver, which has seen significant demographic growth in the last twenty years.

The rollout of the corporate university has therefore largely taken place through the development of infrastructure projects, of which provincial governments have been big supporters. Such bricks and mortar investments underscore the lack of contradiction between the increasing role of the government in, and the steady privatization of, the university. A closer examination of such development brings into sharp relief the mechanisms by which the state is able to transform educational institutions into convenient, even apparently well-meaning instruments of dispossession, gentrification, and urban renewal.

Historically a major shipping post located on the west coast of Canada, Vancouver is a city that has most recently been built on promises of post-industrial dot com booms, green technologies, and creative classes. It is also home to the (off-reserve) poorest postal code in Canada, the Downtown East Side (DTES), a neighbourhood that has a strong legacy of grassroots resistance, community organizing and advocacy. Much to the misfortune of its low-income residents, it is located in the heart of Vancouver's downtown core and represents a plum location for real estate developers. For the last half century, the central story of Vancouver has been that of developers and politicians seeking to redevelop the myriad industrial and working class neighbourhoods in the city and push out their unprofitable residents.[16] The DTES is the latest example in this ongoing struggle, and one in which SFU has played a central role.

The symbolic centre of this conflict has been the Woodwards building, one of the first all-purpose department stores in Vancouver dating back to 1903. When the business went bankrupt ninety years later the building remained in bureaucratic stasis as governmental and private groups sought to develop mixed social housing and commercial storefront projects.[17] The stalemate broke on September 14th, 2002, when the Woodwards building was occupied by the homeless, DTES activists, students, and supporters, demanding that it be developed "as social housing immediately" and that the government "reverse the cuts to social housing and all social services."[18] After the squatters' violent eviction, the building was sold to the city and lay unused until 2004, when the municipality selected the Peterson Investment Group to develop the structure.

As the Woodwards developers were desperately seeking investors willing to take the risk and set up shop on the Downtown Eastside, universities were becoming increasingly starved for public funds. The first non-housing groups that agreed to participate in the redevelopment were London Drugs, a local chain of pharmacies and consumer goods, and Simon Fraser University, which had housed its Contemporary Arts program in temporary buildings in Burnaby for two decades and desperately needed new space for the program. The university's decision may have seemed surprising when its projected budget deficit of $15.5 million[19] was considered next to the $80 million price tag attached to the Woodwards redevelopment, but an explanation arrived late in 2007, when the provincial government announced it would hand the university a $50.3 million grant for the project. SFU's Chancellor at the time was Brandt Louie, who in addition to being the CEO of London Drugs (which has made significant contributions to the ruling BC Lib-

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erals), had personally donated to the party since 2005.[20] By investing in education through such infrastructure projects, the government is able to further the illusion of public funding, funnel money toward developers, and turn the university into a machine for gentrification at one stroke. Infrastructure funding for universities is never public funding: just as it is at NYU, Columbia and Yale[21] it is about cashing in on real estate and development while using the language of the creative class and the knowledge economy, and in the process further marginalizing those who are unable or unwilling to contribute to such accumulation strategies.

More recently the politics of the Woodwards space became global in its implications, when shortly after the building re-opened SFU announced that the new Contemporary Arts space housed within it would, as a token of thanks for the company's $10 million donation to the university, be named the Goldcorp Centre for Contemporary Arts. Goldcorp is a Canadian mining company whose labour and environmental practices across Latin America, but especially those in Guatemala and Honduras, have produced accusations of labour atrocities and environmental devastation,[22] and its sights appear to be firmly set on the Downtown Eastside. Soon after the SFU sponsorship was made public, "Streettohome," a social housing project run by the notorious Downtown Eastside developer Bob Rennie, announced that they had received a $5 million donation from the mining giant.[23]

The manner by which Simon Fraser University has funded its expansion into the city signals the troubling move from a system where corporations are taxed in order to fund public services to a system where corporations are not taxed and instead give highly selective "donations" to those services, getting charity washed images and even tax write offs in return. Much to Goldcorp's chagrin, the relationship between its global mining practices, local gentrification processes, and the restructuring of the university has not gone unchallenged however, but has rather presented an opportunity for groups doing human rights and indigenous solidarity work, public education activists, and anti-gentrification activists to come together. In the fall of 2010 they formed SFU Against Goldcorp and Gentrification, the demands of which are fourfold: that Goldcorp's name be taken off the Centre, that an ethical donations policy be developed at Simon Fraser University, that DTES residents be given control over the portion of the donation earmarked for the "development" of their neighbourhood, and a fully funded education system. As we write this, the struggles to achieve these demands are ongoing.

THE GLOBAL UNIVERSITY AND NEW HYBRIDS: FRASER INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE

Vancouver, with its longstanding Asian-Canadian communities, character and connections, its natural beauty, pleasant diversions, and still-reputable public universities, has been a desirable location for foreign students, particularly ones from the Asian Rim, to gain valuable accreditation. Yet as Simon Fraser's international popularity has grown, the readjustment of its public funding has forced it, like other institutions in Canada and abroad, to get creative when it comes to financing its activities. Beyond taking money from corporations eager to rebrand themselves, higher education institutions are increasingly targeting international tuition markets by bringing foreign students into the country, where they are charged much higher tuition than Canadian students.

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At SFU, where international tuition fees are over three times those paid by domestic students, this increasing reliance on international tuition fees has created a problem however. Many students have little command of English, and due to increased austerity measures SFU has no money to invest in support structures such as ESL tutoring. The university's solution to this problem has been to enter into an agreement with Navitas (formerly IBT Education Ltd.), a publicly listed corporation headquartered near Perth, Australia, in order to establish the Fraser International College (FIC). The pattern should be familiar by now: beset by economic difficulties, the public institution cannot provide the services necessary, creating room for a private institution to step in and fill the void. FIC is entirely owned by Navitas, which leases buildings and infrastructure on campus, but the college is managed locally. The venture caters to an international (mostly Asian) clientele, and students attending FIC are told that if they pass one year at the college with a B average they will receive a guaranteed spot into second year at Simon Fraser. SFU lends its brand, its curriculum and its precariously employed labour force to Navitas, and in return it receives 30% of FIC's gross revenue and, theoretically, increased numbers of proficient international students and international student fees. The Australian corporation has similar arrangements with universities at home and in the United Kingdom, Kenya, Singapore, and Sri Lanka, but also in Canada with the University of Manitoba, which has created the "International College of Manitoba" to capture some of those same international tuition dollars.[24] Partnership with the private sector in setting up projects that can become magnets for tuition is becoming popular, even among universities in Canada's elite tier: Queen's University just announced an agreement to offer courses internationally through Blythe Educational Travel, which will take care of travel, accommodations and field-trip arrangements.

For university administrators, this emergent public/private hybrid institution is the end result of a rather straightforward process of the commodification of education, one in which rational student subjects plunk down hard cash for a shot at investing in their human capital and picking up some door-opening credentials. SFU executive director of student affairs Nancy Johnston suggests the university is "in business [with FIC], because they have a good quality product. It's a win, win, win, and along the way we make some money."[25] Along the way, these practices by Canadian universities have created an international headhunting industry in Asia that generates serious profits. Colleges such as FIC work closely with Asian student recruitment agencies, which take a cut of the tuition dollars (as much as 10%) in addition to charging students directly. The marketing of Canadian education abroad occasionally verges on the surreal: at an education fair in Beijing in March 2010, the Jin Ji Lie Group recruitment company reportedly featured models striding a lit catwalk waving scarves covered in maple leaves and emblazoned with the word "Canada." One such agency, Aoji, is doing so well that it will move out of its current headquarters (located in a converted former Communist Party retreat on the outskirts of Beijing) and into a new $100-million campus.[26]

A closer look at the underbelly of such hybrid institutions reveals a cynical reality however, one which is rather different from the "win, win, win" relationship trumpeted above. The burden for public education in Canada is being transferred from the state to international students, who often do not receive the ESL training they require. As one ex-employee of FIC told us:

'Shortly after being hired, I met with my SFU course supervisor. He was very candid

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> with me about the conditions I would be facing. He told me straight away that I should expect to fail about half of my students. He noted that FIC positioned itself as a university transfer institution for international students whose language skills and grades were not adequate for entry into SFU [...]. He said there were a few that managed to get the grades necessary to transfer to SFU but they were rarities.'[27]

Yet the development of Fraser International College has an even deeper significance for the academic workforce. For instructors employed there it means not being covered by either of SFU's collective agreements with academic workers and thus being subject to a privatized and union-free approach to labour management. According to the same ex-FIC employee:

> 'Like other post-secondary institutions, FIC relies on precarious, just-in-time-labour. But from what I could tell, all instructors were on temporary, semester-long contracts with no guarantee of renewal. Several of the instructors I spoke to said they weren't told which courses they would teach, if any, and how many units they'd be teaching, until a week before classes started. One woman told me that in one instance, she was offered a class she had not taught before one week before classes started leaving her scrambling the entire semester with prep work. The workers are not unionized and have no benefits. Remuneration, however, was slightly higher at FIC [than SFU] perhaps $7500 compared to about 7000 per course.'[28]

The flexible exploitation of a precarious workforce at FIC has been engineered into the institution. The contract between Navitas and SFU has an anti-union clause stipulating that the university may terminate the agreement if any of the college's employees provoke a labour dispute and if "the College does not obtain and implement a lawful order or direction requiring that all persons cease and desist from picketing, or from conducting disruptive labour action, on the Campus, the University may, in its sole discretion terminate this Agreement forthwith" (8.4(b)). The emergence of hybrid educational ventures and their privatized labour management techniques are therefore of profound significance to workers, setting new standards for "public" universities to aspire to, where annoying impediments such as teaching assistant unions and faculty associations no longer stand in the way of the global university.

CONCLUSION

As students from the 2009 University of California occupation pointed out in their *Communique From An Absent Future*, "The university has no history of its own; its history is the history of capital."[29] Seen from this perspective, the skyrocketing tuition fees, the arrival of private colleges on our campuses, the cutbacks, the layoffs, the labour precarization and the new systems of measure being applied to academic labour can no longer be explained simply as the effects of decreased public funding, but rather as absolutely consistent with consolidated trends within the economy at large. Nor, as we hope to have shown, should university administrations be seen as the innocent victims of such transformations, of which they are frequently the very willing accomplices. Underscoring this interplay between academy and economy, Andrew Ross has argued that "[t]he migration of our own academic customs and work mentalities onto corporate campuses and into knowledge-industry workplaces is just as important a part of the story of the

rise of knowledge capitalism as the importation of business rationality into the academy."[30] The relationship may be entering a new phase, but it remains tighter than ever.

If the emergence of hybrid institutions such as the FIC offer us a window into capital's fantasy of how a university should be run--as a sort of battery farm which squeezes students dry of tuition and employs a perfectly flexible and disposable workforce of teachers[31]--it is precisely within the sphere of labour that the greatest struggles have emerged within this transition, and we conclude this article by pointing to some of the growing moments of labour organization and conflict to emerge out of post-secondary education within British Columbia and across Canada.

Labour takes up the greatest part of any university's budget, and the last couple of decades have seen some serious transformations in the composition of university workers. Union drives by unorganized groups of academic labourers (including ones who haven't traditionally been considered workers by either university administrations or trade unions on campus) have broken out in numerous Canadian universities in the last decade. The growth of postdoctoral researchers in universities across the country (there are roughly 6,000 of them according to the Canadian Association of University Teachers)[32] is symptomatic of the way patterns within the broader labour market are being reproduced within the transforming patterns of labour in the academy. A postdoctoral fellowship once represented a short period in which recently graduated PhDs could work closely with an expert in their field before moving into a secure, tenure track job. For a lucky few this remains the case, but as the tenure track jobs have shrunk, postdocs have increasingly become wage labour for the knowledge factory, experiencing wildly diverse labour conditions and standards, utter job insecurity, life at the mercy of a supervisor for whose career one must produce knowledge on command, and intense competition for the few remaining decent jobs. Many postdocs now move from contract to contract, toiling as a dispersed and nomadic labour force. Since the dawn of the 21st century however, postdoctoral researchers have begun to organize associations, unionize, and even bargain collectively in Canada. Unions, realizing that the composition of labour in the country's universities is shifting under their feet, have rushed in to get a piece of the action. In August of 2009, postdoctoral fellows at McMaster University in Hamilton ratified the first contract for such workers in Canada, capping a union drive that began in 2008 and achieving severance pay, 3-4 weeks of paid vacation per year, paid sick leave and bereavement leave, and access to newly-created professional support funds. Graduate research assistants at York University organized with the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) in 2006. In 2010, postdoctoral researchers at Queen's University organized through the Public Service Alliance of Canada, which had just certified teaching assistants and teaching fellows at the university in 2009. Indeed the organizing of postdoctoral researchers is a pattern that is repeating itself across Canada, with drives occurring at the University of Toronto and associations formed at the University of Western Ontario and elsewhere.

In addition to organizing drives for emergent groups of workers, already-established unions of teaching assistants, faculty and contract faculty have been involved in tough negotiations with university administrations, leading to numerous strikes in recent years. In February of 2003 teaching assistants at the University of British Columbia, backed by CUPE, struck and won raises worth 11.5% over three years. In 2006 over 9,100 instructors, librarians and counsellors represented by the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) at Ontario's 24 community and

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technical colleges struck for three weeks to demand increased job security and a reduction in workload and class sizes. In 2007, faculty at Acadia University in Nova Scotia in Atlantic Canada struck over pay and benefits and winning significant gains for contract faculty and librarians, and autonomy for tenure and renewal procedures for full time faculty. In the spring of 2008 contract academic staff struck at Wilfrid Laurier University as an effect of the institution's heavy usage of precariously employed sessional instructors, many of whom commute from Toronto. The same year saw the longest strike in Canadian academic history, one that lasted into 2009 as teaching assistants and sessional's at York University braved freezing temperatures before being eventually legislated back to work in an unprecedented and highly controversial move by the Ontario provincial government.

The most effective resistance to the rollout of the neoliberal university has thus far come from the labour force which fuels it, although, as we have seen, new and potentially powerful combinations are being produced between labour, student, and community activists within this epochal transformation of the institution. While we need to demand better government funding on the one hand and greater academic autonomy on the other, we can no longer frame our struggles as a battle between the downtrodden but good university and a bad corporatizing state. Rather, it is a struggle between those whose lives are shaped by the university--and we mean this in the broadest sense as students, teachers, staff, city residents affected by university infrastructure projects, and those who live in a society shaped by university policies--and administrative, state, and corporate structures who seek to speak for our universities and who see the academy as a tool for neoliberal social transformation. Between those of us who want to see an open, democratic, and common university run by the communities it is supposed to serve and those who see the university as a private luxury which remakes the city in its market-centred image and produces exclusion and hierarchy wherever it goes. In our public and political responses to this transformed university we cannot afford to adopt either a guild or a fortress mentality because the university, as we have seen, is too intimately enmeshed within the urban, provincial, national, and international political fabrics for us to limit ourselves to university politics. There can be no retreat or return to the utopian university on the hill, or to the movements which forced its transformation. The global university is in formation, and we must work within, against, and beyond it.

NOTES

[1] We are not suggesting that the Fordist system of mass public education in Canada was free of inequities, nor much less advocating a return to it. While some of its features were doubtless better than the system we are moving toward (relatively inexpensive education, more secure

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employment for university workers, an entrenched sense of academic freedom and the formation of academic disciplines that was largely free of market dictates), it was also riddled with inequities, be they relating to gender, to the exclusion of racialized groups, or the intense hierarchies which permeated the system, which after all remained the province of Canadian middle and upper classes. It was these inequities, after all, that the student movements of the late sixties and seventies revolted against so successfully.

[2] Ross, *The Rise*.

[3] Ross, *The Rise*, 21.

[4] Vercellone, *From Formal*; Fumagalli, *Bioeconomia.*

[5] Jamie Peck and Adam Tickell, *Neoliberalizing*. Peck and Tickell classify "roll-back neoliberalism" as the initial phase of the "deregulation and dismantlement" of the Keynesian state (382). Once portions of the Keynesian state are dismantled, this is followed by "roll-out" or "ascendant" neoliberalism, which is marked by "active-state building and regulatory reform" (384).

[6] Bond, *Hansard*.

[7] Real estate, fuelled by local investment and governmental policies that have encouraged the influx of Asian capital and the organization of global spectacles such as Expo '86 or the recent Olympics, has been a key motor of urban development and has made Vancouver the most expensive city in Canada to live in. For a comprehensive discussion of Vancouver's role within the Pacific Rim, see Kris Olds, *Globalization*.

[8] On June 9th, the BC government publicly announced that no longer would funds be given to the university to spend as its partially-democratic bodies saw fit; instead, the funding would come with "government letters of expectations," which give "detailed instructions" for how post-secondary institutions should allocate government funds. This process immediately set off alarm bells for student, staff and faculty groups. Rob Clift of Confederation of University Faculty Associations (CUFA) BC explained that these letters "intrude on the legal and traditional autonomy of public universities in British Columbia. CUFA BC views the GLEs as dangerous and unprecedented intrusions into the governance of public universities" (June 16, 2008).

[9] http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/budget/08_09/SFU.pdf

[10] The same year, as happened in Ontario, the BC government converted five colleges into universities, as if this semiotic intervention were a meaningful infrastructure project.

[11] http://www.sfu.ca/pres/files/IAP-08-09_to_10-11.pdf

[12] Canadian Federation of Students, *Membership.*

[13] And just as Simon Fraser has expanded into the city, the city has stretched into Burnaby Mountain campus. "Univercity," is the name of the development project that has brought condos, shops, and even a new child-care centre to the campus in the last decade.

[14] Roggero, 2011.

[15] Hardt and Negri, *Commonwealth*, 154

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[16] An important tactic for Vancouver politicians and developers has been the harnessing of spectacle capitalism. In much the same way that Naomi Klein (2007) has meticulously described governments and corporations using natural disasters to administer economic "shock therapy" to crush local opposition and create neoliberal free market economies, subsequent municipal and provincial governments have used global spectacles to push through the most controversial urban transformations. The Social Credit government of the day used Expo '86 to push through a series of anti-union laws, get more Asian money into Vancouver, and 'clean up' the old industrial area of False Creek. More recently, the current Liberal government used the 2010 Olympics to push through a new series of public-private infrastructure projects and 'clean up' the Downtown East Side. While the official cost of the Olympics was $1.884-billion, this number did not take into account the cost of infrastructure projects pushed through to fulfil Vancouver's Olympic bid—including a $1 billion highway expansion, $2 billion skytrain expansion, the $1 billion trade and convention centre (CCAP, 2010) and the $1.15 billion on security (Groves, 2010) - much of which was incurred provincially. Not only did the Olympics lead to the destruction of 1400 low-income rental units in the Downtown East Side and produce increased policing in Vancouver in general and the Downtown Eastside in particular (see: http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/13session/A-HRC-13-20.pdf), but the massive cost of the Olympics also allowed the government to cry poverty when it came to demands for increased funding for public education, healthcare, and especially for housing and social services in the communities being most impacted by Olympic development. For more information on the history of development projects, see Ley and Olds, *Landscape*.

[17] Pell, *Making*.

[18] Krebs, *Demands*, 42-3. For more information on the Woodwards squat, please see the special *West Coast Line* issue entitled "Woodsquat."

[19] http://www.peak.sfu.ca/the-peak/2007-3/issue13/ne-cuts.html

[20] MacLeod, *Liberal*.

[21] Duncombe and Nash, *ICE*.

[22] The Goldcorp donation to the Woodwards Building brought into relief the knotted relationship between local events and larger global processes. Shortly after, SFU announced the donation, Bill C300, an act which attempted to ensure that Canadian mining companies follow Canadian standards off shore, failed to pass by six votes, and according to Steve Rennie, "records filed with Canada's lobbying watchdog show nine of the 24 MPs who skipped the vote last month were lobbied by the mining industry" (November 11, 2010 *Globe and Mail*). Goldcorp was one of the companies "that registered one or more lobbyists" (November 15, 2010 miningwatch.ca).

[23] *Working Together.*

[24] Day, 2006.

[25] Johnston cited in Mackinnon and Mickleburgh, *Chinese*.

[26] Mackinnon and Mickleburgh, *Chinese*.

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[27] Anonymous, *Interview*.

[28] Anonymous, *Interview*.

[29] Anonymous, *Communique*.

[30] Ross, *The Rise*, 204.

[31] The products of this battery farm, students, are of course perfectly suited to the economy. Skilled in cynical approaches to knowledge ("you pretend to teach us and we pretend to learn"), astute "entrepreneurs of themselves" as Foucault might have said, and even in the best possible scenario highly indebted and precariously employed, thus not in a position to be much other than subservient in the workplace.

[32] CAUT. Postdoctoral program priorities "misplaced". http://www.caut.ca/pages.asp?page=907

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Fortified Knowledge: From Supranational Governance to Translocal Resistance*

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EDUARD FREUDMANN RESEARCHES AND INTERVENES IN THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN ART AND POLITICS, POWER RELATIONS AND SOCIAL CONTEXTS, CONTEMPORARY THEIRSTORY/OURSTORY AND MEDIA MECHANISMS, STRATEGIES OF EXCLUSION AND THE COMMODIFICATION OF KNOWLEDGE. HE LIVES AND WORKS IN VIENNA AND TEACHES IN THE DEPARTMENT FOR POST-CONCEPTUAL ART PRACTICES AT THE ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS VIENNA.

International economic crisis has been remedied with the development of a knowledge economy, at the cost of those constituting knowledge production. One of the consequences of the expanse of education has been the geopolitical restructuring of spaces of education, not only as another sphere of life appropriated by capital, but in terms of national narratives on a supranational level, echoing the corporate agendas in and around education. That expansion builds "areas" and "zones," in which a greater marketability and exchange of "education units" can take place on behalf of supranational market agendas.

Contemporary educational structures are a basis for the reproduction of capital, and a laboratory for the creation of branded epistemologies, which are the center and the starting point of their reproduction both inside and beyond the walls that fortify it. The consequences of this process are manifold and as interlinked as capital and nation, exposing the two as joint partners in the enterprise of the knowledge economy. A shifting foundation ebbs and flows in relation to the needs or crises of the center.

The consequences of this structure have echoed worldwide, ranging from lack of access to education, to the loss of homes to student debt, to an increase in police forces on university campuses, regulating and preventing discord, worldwide. However, such conditions are not being tolerated and the antagonism which has erupted, despite and due to the forces of regulation, has expanded as far as the problems being contested. Individuals in Europe have been protesting against the current Bologna Process reforms, in the US against high tuition fees and cutbacks, Indians in Australia against structural racism and abuse, and in the "developing world" against the ever-

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changing institutions following Structural Adjustment Policies implemented decades ago, to name a few. In the US, protestors have referred to the "war on our universities," in which public funds are invested in financing the war effort and prisons, rather than invested in improving the school system. All the while, education, militias and prisons become increasingly privatized, placing public moneys into private pockets. The common elements in these worldwide issues are part of a complex system, building a knowledge economy, as a purported solution to a failing global capitalist order.

This analysis will, therefore, approach how supranationality substantiates a regulated spatial organization of movement and its restriction, based on a center, semi-peripheries, peripheries and zones of suspension, accumulating profit from education and using education as a tool for reproducing that very logic. The concept of transnational struggle against supranational structures will thus be questioned in terms of the entanglement of state and capital, proposing alternatives for a struggle against both capitalism and nationalism in their variegated and obfuscated forms.

SPATIAL REGULATION

The "dependency theory"[1] claims that a center and a periphery must exist in which the periphery provides the resources and cheap labor, stabilizing and supporting the development and wealth of the center in a traditional colonial format. The "World Systems Theory," extended that notion into analyzing a globalized context, in order to display a more complex and shifting relationship between the colonizer and colonized, with the semi-periphery playing an increasingly significant role as the balancer of the system and the disguise of the wealth gap between the "developed" and the "developing" in global capitalism.[2] The following analysis of competitive higher education areas draws from those economic models in order to better understand effective methods of protest.

The commodification and homogenization of knowledge and education are grounded in a long history of international structural "development" policy that was conceived and installed by the US in order to ensure its position as the center, dominating and exploiting its peripheries. The Bretton Woods system, which was implemented during WWII, established the US as the economic superpower in order to provide short-term development aid for a devastated Europe. This would allow Europe to return as a competent competitor in the capitalist market in the aftermath of WWII, remaining indebted to the US in the process. Structural Adjustment Policies would be the extension of Bretton Woods, imposed onto the "developing" world, primarily in the Global South. They would provide criteria for opening and privatizing markets, including complete educational and medical reform packages, and a corporatization of resources and goods, such as crops, water, energy, etc. What was and still is referred to with these policies as the "liberation" of territories and a salvation mission of bringing "democracy" and "development" to the oppressed world, merely echoes colonial salvation missions, fashioned for the expropriation of wealth and resources from outlying territories and the appropriation of everything that produces it.

After the economic boom following WWII, Europe would begin a process of emancipation from the economic dominance of the US, in which education would take on an increasingly significant position. This strategy would allow Europe to ultimately elevate its global economic

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status from a semi-periphery to a center of power, through the processes of enlargement and integration of the European Union, supplementing other political interests such as economic, legal and military intentions with educational restructuring, producing its own peripheries and semi-peripheries in the process.

KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY AREAS

Europe would invest in a growing engagement in Research and Technological Development (RTD). In order to increase its competitiveness with the US, it would enhance intra-European academic mobility and promote Europe's profile as a study and research destination for non-European students. This intra-European academic mobility would be structured through the establishment of the European Higher Education Area, which was supported by the launch of the Bologna Process in 1999, whose joint primary focus is the development of a European Research Area (ERA) supporting the aforementioned aims of Research and Technological Development (RTD).

This flexible, yet regulated mobility arrangement of the EHEA and ERA has introduced the same terminology and logic of "areas" into education as used in economic trade. In these "areas," maximal mobility of goods, services and capital allow an unlimited production of profit.[3] It is also significant to maintain the difference here between mobility, which is protected by law, and migration, which is punishable by law.

ZONES OF SUSPENSION

The outlying regions of Europe, in which movement can be sanctioned, are defined by Étienne Balibar as *zones*.[4] They function to replace traditional national borders and are regulated through a permanent state of suspension or exception.[5] Those zones can never be integrated into the EHEA or EU, such as the entire region of sub-Saharan Africa, which is not considered to be "civilized" enough to enter bilateral or multilateral trade, but should instead support the "developed world" as resource-rich bargain bins.[6]

A system of detention camps and *zones* of suspension fortify the borders of what has been criticized by some "No Border" activists as "Fortress Europe," a term originally coined in reference to the Nazi occupation of Europe. However, applying the Nazi propaganda term to current conditions becomes problematic as it likens the methods of the German Wehrmacht to those of the contemporary EU border and migration regimes. Therefore, we propose the use of the term "fortified Europe" instead.

The establishment of the EHEA not only closely relates to the fortification of Europe by utilizing the same center and buffer zones, but its function depends on the disfranchisement of excluded and included individuals. So it is necessary to not only refer to "fortified Europe" in terms of its migration politics and border regime, but to understand the fortification as a transgressive logic being gradually applied to every sphere of life regulated by EU policy. The center-periphery model must be viewed as a territorial strategy of dominance, based on the control and regulation of mobility and migration. We therefore, use the term "fortified knowledge centers" to refer to

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how this relates to the fortification around the knowledge economy areas, as the EHEA and EU are congruent with the EU border and migration regime supporting the necropolitical[7] border defense projects of Frontex, not only accepting the consequences of drowning boat refugees, but enforcing it.[8]

THE FORTIFIED KNOWLEDGE CENTER

When examining the development of the Bologna Process leading to the EHEA, the creation of the center and its peripheries becomes clear. The signatories of the Bologna Declaration are congruent with the Member States of today's EU[9] and form the core of the EHEA or its center. Being inside the borders of the Schengen area, the countries' citizens purportedly increase the intra-European academic mobility as they enjoy the freedom of movement and are therefore enabled to study, research and teach in any location within the Schengen area. As EU citizens, they are additionally protected from discrimination based on their national origin and cannot, for example, be charged higher tuition fees than residents; scholarships are available to them; and they have the right to work and make a living--principles that are guaranteed by the EU judiciary.

ITS SEMI-PERIPHERY

The part of the EHEA outside of the EU forms its semi-periphery. This includes the Western Balkans, Turkey, Russia, the Ukraine, Moldova, the Caucasus Republics, thereby all non-EU countries on the Eurasian landmass west of the Caspian Sea[10] and (since March 2010) Kazakhstan. The semi-periphery is defined through all signatories of the European Cultural Convention[11] and the Member States of the Council of Europe (the only exception is Belarus who signed the previous, but not the latter). Its citizens benefit from the comparability of the national education systems, therefore, they can transfer credits and easily continue their studies in the center in case they are selected and permitted to enter the Schengen area where they are subjected to a number of (nationally-varying) discriminations such as the obstruction to work for money and the simultaneous obligation to prove the possession of an amount of money, which exceeds the maximal allowed annual income.[12]

ITS PERIPHERY

The periphery of the EHEA is comprised of the countries of Northern Africa,[13] the Middle East[14] and Central Asia,[15] all of them participating in Tempus, "a vehicle for the promotion and exchange of Bologna ideas to countries surrounding the EU."[16] According to the Bologna Process Conference Berlin 2003, there is no perspective to integrate these countries into the EHEA, because they are not signatories of the European Cultural Convention, therefore, they are not considered to share the "common cultural heritage of Europe" and "safeguard and encourage the development of European culture."

EMERGING FORTIFIED KNOWLEDGE CENTERS

The elevation of Europe from a semi-periphery to a center, influenced by the successful knowledge economic model, has caused the export of epistemology and "braindrain" of the pe-

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ripheries. Australia followed Europe's example and entered the race by initiating the Brisbane Communiqué in 2006, targeting an *Asia Pacific Higher Education Area* for competition with the US and aspiring EU models. Australia has subsequently gained significant economic success, based on incoming students, seen as *guest consumers*[17] statistically considered an "educational export," representing the third highest export industry after coal and iron ore in Australia, according to 2006–2007 statistics.[18]

The area comprised of the Brisbane Communiqué signatories includes the 52 countries, which compose Australia's periphery. Interestingly, there is no country which is part of both the EHEA or its periphery and the Australia-dominated Asia Pacific Higher Education Area, with the exception of Turkey. This precise apportionment of the territories can be seen as a continuation of the territorial demarcation processes that the colonial empires carried out with their colonial conferences until the 20th century.

So what is at stake is that the center of the First Capitalist World (USA) dominating its peripheries (Western Europe and the "developing" world) was ruptured within the last two decades into three centers--with the emerging EU and Australia--who established structures for education and research areas in order to compete with the US and create their own profitable peripheries. The model has allowed Europe and Australia to rise from (semi-)peripheries to centers and shows that other territories of rapid economic growth can potentially do so as well, such as India and China for example.[19] In times of crisis, education reforms and the corresponding spatial regulations have supplied a major territory for increased profit production, exploitation and consequent oppression.

TRANSGRESSIVE RESISTANCE

In October 2009, the Academy of Fine Arts was occupied, snowballing to the rest of Austria, linking to and sparking other protests worldwide.[20] Over the following months, the protests advanced and continued to expand, taking on different forms and mobilizing large quantities of people. Many of them were seen as an extreme threat and were reacted to with police violence and oppression. Varying levels of brutality have depended on geopolitical locations, economic status, class and segregation. Several universities in Germany were immediately evacuated by police with teargas and beatings.[21] Assault and arrests have taken place in Vienna. A student was severely beaten and 11 were arrested at the University of Zimbabwe, following arrests in Harare and Bulawayo the week before.[22] In Melbourne, Australia a demonstration of 4,000 Indian students, protesting against racist assault, was violently broken up by police.[23] Water cannons were used to disperse protesting university students in Johannesburg demanding free tertiary education for the poor.[24] Six students were arrested for distributing flyers against neoliberal education at Hosei University in Korea.[25] 17 activists were arrested for anti-racist demonstrations at the University of California Irvine,[26] the "Open University," established by protestors at UC Berkeley was raided by police, with 65 activists detained;[27] and a Ghanese immigrant, PhD student, and teaching assistant was brutally shot in the face in his own home by on-campus security at the University of Florida.[28]

In March 2010, a transnational Bologna Counter-Summit resulted from the linked interna-

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tional struggles. It was conceived as a protest against the meeting of the European Ministers of higher education in Vienna for the "inception" of the European Higher Education Area. The Counter-Summit lasted for several days with presentations, protest actions and a blockade intended to complicate the arrival of the Ministers to the Hofburg Palace in Vienna, where the Summit was to be held. Protestors from several countries affected by the Bologna Process reforms announced their statements and demands there, increasingly taking the form of declarations, sabotage and seizure, rather than previous clearly articulated demands.[29]

The examples of blockade in Europe, international uprising, transnational meetings and solidarity show a significant realignment of protest methodology. They show a struggle that transgresses national borders, expanding to question all of the spheres of life appropriated by capitalization and privatization. By including "demands, criticism and claims that go beyond the immediate context of education and universities, expanding to the identification of how the neoliberal capitalist market logic has infiltrated all parts of life,"[30] the global education protests proved to be transgressive--a crucial characteristic considering the transgressive character of the opposed system. However, this must include the protest movement itself. Therefore it is essential to be vigilant about all exclusionist strategies that are reproduced within the protests. Sexism and racism were not sufficiently attacked and led to some of the affected individuals breaking away from the protests.

Within the protests in Europe, it was alarming, for example, to see anti-Semitic stereotypes reproduced by a group of students from Weimar's Bauhaus University without being called out and contested by other protestors. Thousands of flyers of fake dollar bills were distributed, displaying a photo of Milton Friedman and a claim criticizing Bologna on the back, identifying a Jewish economist as the root of all evil, reproducing one of the most dangerous anti-Semitic myths about Jews and their economic dominance. As the only personified supplement for all possible claims against the commodification of knowledge, the banknote can be downloaded as a template to fill in *ANY* claim,[31] therefore *ANY* claim criticizing the commodification of knowledge is supplemented with "the Jew" as the universal scapegoat. It is also remarkable that this action came from a university just 10km away from the Buchenwald concentration camp. It is the same university, which received public attention for censoring an art project dealing with the Shoah,[32] while concealing its own cruel history of anti-Semitism.[33]

TRANSLOCAL STRUGGLE AGAINST THE PERPETUATION OF THE NATION-STATE

No matter what the protestors intended, the reproduction of sexist, racist, anti-Semitic and other exclusionist elements must be critically confronted with uncompromising rejection regardless of any wrongly intended restrictive thoughts, supposedly done "for the sake of the protests." As increasing levels of oppression are the response to resistance, protestors cannot accept a reproduction of such ideologies within their articulated demands and actions. In a fight against the commodification of education, its subservience to capital and colonial strategies, and education's role as reproductive machinery, the link between capitalization and nationalization--supranational or transnational--must be observed and fought against as well. Transnationality has the danger of accepting, perpetuating and reproducing the logic of the nation-state. The expansion to trans-

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national struggle and transnational networking of protests is key, but perhaps this is the moment to envision a *new vocabulary* of worldwide resistance.

This broader interlinkage of local implications of oppression and struggle describes what Subhabrata Bobby Banerjee terms "translocality" as "[…] local communities living in democratic societies that are engaged in conflicts with both the state and the market, and sometimes even with 'civil society,' while also making connections with other resistance movements in different parts of the world," continuing with: "The ultimate challenge of a theory of translocal resistance is to conceive the inconceivable: an extension of the democratic that transcends nation-state sovereignty, perhaps even transcends citizenship," because

> the nation-state then is a fundamental building block of globalization, in the working of transnational corporations, in the setting-up of a global financial system, in the institution of policies that determine the mobility of labor, and in the creation of the multi-state institutions such as the UN, IMF, World Bank, NAFTA and WTO. […] So the translocal emerges at the intersection of political society and civil society where groups of people comprising the political society in different parts of the globe are fighting similar battles over resources against market and state actors.[34]

Struggle and solidarity must not only take place within and across the centers, uniting the nations of Europe or states of the USA. The conditions of the center are both connected to and complicit in the conditions of oppression worldwide, therefore, solidarity and struggle must extend to, for example, the struggles in non-Christian nations, the manifold protests taking place throughout the Global South, and zones subjugated to erasure. The protest cannot legitimize that erasure! Such zones receive brutal sanctions against the movement of people, the very movement necessary for transnational union.

This is where translocality comes into play. It is an international mode of struggle which simultaneously resists the links between capital and nation-state, which does not acknowledge the privilege of those within the center, and does not reproduce the colonial ideology of salvation through education or the complex structures composing the knowledge economy. It takes the understanding of one's own involvement in global processes into actions of resistance. This model must be considered in future summits and meetings, in order to expand future protests beyond the center, to establish exchange and collaboration on a translocal level with resistant forces across all regions, extending and challenging the regime of fortified knowledge.

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NOTES

[1] The idea originates from the Singer-Prebisch thesis, introduced in 1949. Hans Singer and Raúl Prebisch, in two separate papers, claimed that a center and a periphery must exist in which the periphery provides the resources and cheap labor, stabilizing and supporting the development and wealth of the center in a traditional colonial format.

[2] Immanuel Wallerstein introduced the semi-periphery in his "World Systems Theory," claiming that a far more complex and shifting relationship between colonizer and colonized exists, with the semi-periphery playing an increasingly significant role as the balancer of the system and the disguise of the wealth gap between the "developed" and the "developing" in globalism.

[3] There are "4 freedoms" protected by the EU, consisting of the free (or deregulated) mobility of goods, services, citizens and capital (which the first 3 elements constitute). The Lisbon Agreement of 2000 proposed including education, or knowledge, as the 5th freedom of the EU; see for example, Hudson, A 5th.

[4] See Gržinić, *Analysis*.

[5] According to Giorgio Agamben, the "state of exception" describes increased state power in purported times of crisis with indefinite suspension of the law characterizing the "state of exception."

[6] This term is expanded by Sharife, DRC's.

[7] Achille Mbembe defines "necropolitics" as "the subjugation of life to the power of death" in Mbembe, *Necropolitics*.

[8] See, for example: http://www.proasyl.de/fileadmin/proasyl/fm_redakteure/Flyer_PDF/FRONTEX.pdf; http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kOuFo5egBqE; http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zAAPNkBKrzo

[9] Except for Cyprus, which entered the Bologna Process two years later in 2001.

[10] Except Belarus, Monaco and San Marino.

[11] The European Cultural Convention was signed by the members of the Council of Europe in 1954 to "achieve a greater unity between its members for the purpose […] of safeguarding and realizing the ideals and principles which are their common heritage." http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/018.htm

[12] To have a student visa prolonged in Austria, for example, the applicant must prove possession of 7,055 euro (as of March 30th 2010, with the quantity constantly being increased). At the same time, the monthly income for the respective students is limited to approximately 300 euro per month, thereby being less than the aforementioned quantity and less than a woman's lower-level annual income in Austria after taxes which was, according to statistics, 6,491 euro (in 2008, see: http://www.statistik.at/web_de/static/nettojahreseinkommen_der_unselbstaendig_erwerbstaetigen_1997_bis_2008_020055.pdf).

[13] Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia.

[14] Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria.

[15] Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan.

[16] See *The World Education Services*.

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[17] Rosenzweig, *International*.

[18] See Australian Bureau of Statistics.

[19] China and India are members of the BRIC nations--Brazil, Russia, India and China--the most rapidly developing economies in the world and those with the greatest investment in Africa (their periphery). Goldman Sachs argues that by 2050, the combined economies of the BRICs could eclipse the combined economies of the current richest countries of the world; http://www2.goldmansachs.com/ideas/brics/index.html

[20] See, for example Dokuzović and Freudmann, *Squatting*.

[21] Among others in Frankfurt, Jena, Heidelberg and Stuttgart.

[22] http://wozazimbabwe.org/?p=626

[23] http://www.wsws.org/articles/2009/jun2009/stud-j02.shtml

[24] http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSLDE6230F4

[25] http://www.edu-factory.org/edu15/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=284:six-students-were-arrested-on-hosei-university&catid=34:struggles&Itemid=53

[26] http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/02/24/uc-irvine-protest-17-arre_n_475903.html

[27] http://www.edu-factory.org/edu15/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=258:uc-berkeley-open-university-raided-by-police-65-arrested&catid=34:struggles&Itemid=53

[28] Stanfill, *UF Student*.

[29] Dokuzović, *Lessons*.

[30] Dokuzović and Freudmann, *Squatting*.

[31] http://m18.uni-weimar.de/protest/uploads/BildungsgutscheinA4.pdf

[32] See Eidelman, *The Neues*.

[33] See the "history" section of the university's website: http://www.uni-weimar.de/cms/index.php?id=3886&L=1

[34] Banerjee, *Histories*.

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University Education, Democracy and Markets

Victor Jeleniewski Seidler

DREAMING OF LEARNING

On Thursday 9th December 2010 as students from universities and schools made their way in their thousands in marches and demonstrations towards the Houses of Parliament where the fate of the legislation that would treble university fees to £9,000 was going to be decided, the Evening Standard headlined 'Lib-Dem Leader sparks anger as protesters besiege Parliament--Clegg: Students in Dream World':

> As hundreds of riot police prepared for the biggest mass demonstration by students so far, he denied betraying his pledge to oppose any rise. He said: "I would feel ashamed if I didn't deal with the way that the world is, not simply dream of the way the world I would like it to be.[1]

The arrogance of power was a familiar tone from the last years of Blair's New Labour government. Blair had also been convinced that he was 'right' and that it was his 'duty' to take the country into war against Iraq even though over a million people had marched in the streets of London against the war. This was an effect of the doctrine of 'humanitarian intervention' that was eventually, after much bloodshed and ethnic cleansing, to justify interventions in Bosnia, Kosovo and Sierra Leone. But when it came to Iraq the political elite in Westminster was not *listening* to what people had to say even though this was a democracy. Blair was determined to join Bush in making war and they were not prepared to wait for a second United Nations resolution for they already knew that they had 'truth', if not God on their side. There was an increasingly authoritarian streak in New Labour that meant that because they already knew what was best they did not have to listen and that history would vindicate them and eventually people would accept that they had been right all along. There was something tragic in Blair's fall from grace that calls us to rethink

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democracy. After it became evident that the Iraq War was turning into a disaster, people ceased to listen to what he had to say. They were just waiting for him to go.[2]

So often the powerful political elites within democracies 'know' that they are right even while they speak the language of democratic consent and they assume across the boundaries of traditional political parties that 'the people' will eventually come to recognise it. As the war in Iraq proceeded and as WMD--weapons of mass destruction that had provided the legitimacy for the war were not found--people stopped listening to Blair and distrusted his language.[3] Those who continued to rehearse their familiar legitimations for war were heard but not listened too. People were angry that they had *not been listened too* and the expenses scandal in the British Parliament in 2009 only confirmed the corruption of the political elite. This was a dangerous moment for representative democracy for it confirmed a level of corruption that many working people had long suspected--their elected leaders were 'out for themselves' and they felt betrayed.

People learn from an education in life and they do not forget. They knew that the 'old lot' had to be cleared out and that it was only with an election that the voice of Parliament could be restored. Many people wanted to believe that it had been the individuals who had been corrupt but that somehow the system could be reformed and they could again believe in democracy. As people were looking for someone knew they could believe in they responded to Nick Clegg's call in the first televised debate that was itself a new initiative in British politics. A younger generation of students, many of who had not voted before, listened to an appeal to create a 'new politics' in which promises would not be broken and democratic politics could possibly begin anew. There were still warm memories of Obama's presidential election in the United States and the call 'yes you can'--your vote can make a difference and yes you can change the world. This was an appeal to a younger generation who could make their own revolution that would shape new visions of equality. This was a generation that had learnt to value gender, racial and sexual equality and had learnt a new tolerance towards difference. They knew that what mattered was not your background and where you came from but what you wanted to make of your future.[4]

Obama represented a new hope that had been able to excite a new generation that had been sceptical about politics and had sought to control their lives as individuals. They sought freedom and choice as individuals and they believed in the freedoms that neo-liberalism seemed to promise them in the opportunities opened up in a globalised world. They identified with new technologies and had their own forms of communication as they listened to tracks they had downloaded for themselves on I-players. Somehow Obama was able, at least initially, to recognise and engage with the new technological worlds they were living in. As a generation they responded to his new forms of organising and they felt they could trust a politician, possibly for the first time in their lives. As they mobilised for Obama across the United States people were shaping their own education through a life politics.[5] They would not forget the experience even if many were to be disappointed by his continuing involvements in Iraq and Afghanistan. This was not why they had voted for him and they were concerned that he was also too focussed upon fixing Wall Street and not caring enough about the sufferings on Main Street.

The global crisis had been the responsibility of irresponsible bankers but it seemed that they were to be rescued when ordinary people were to suffer the consequences. This did not seem

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fair. Something similar was happening in Britain and for awhile people listened to Vince Cable in the Liberal-Democrats who talked about the need to break-up the large banks so that investment banking and the risks it involved could no longer put capitalism into crisis in the same way. Somehow *fairness* involved the bankers being held responsible for a crisis that they had largely created by their greed and irresponsible lending policies. People had listened to politicians before the election talking about fairness and if this was not justice, it seemed to be on the right path. Somehow it was through a discourse of fairness that different political parties were to challenge each other.

I listened to Channel 4 News the day before the vote on increasing fees was to take place. They replayed a crucial add that the Lib-Dems had run just before the election showing Nick Clegg walking next to Parliament with sheets of people scatted on the ground, each supposedly representing a broken promise. Clegg assured viewers that with the 'new politics' he was offering there would be no more broken policies and you would be able to trust the commitments they were making. The final shot was of a piece of paper stuck to the camera saying 'cut student fees'. This was a pledge that each Lib-Dem candidate was to sign before the election and it was a policy that allowed them to win many seats in the country with universities and large student constituencies. As it turns out now it seems as if both Clegg and Cable had serious doubts about the wisdom of the policy before the election but that they were committed to it as 'party policy'. It seemed as if they were telling people what they wanted to hear, rather than what they believed in themselves. They had not spoken truthfully and this mattered.

Both have been embarrassed as they have been asked directly about whether they really believed and supported the policy. These are politicians who believe one thing but seemed prepared to say another. Are we to learn that 'this is what all politicians do, especially before elections'. But then who are young people to believe and who are they to trust? Who is to speak truth to power? When can those in power ever be believed if politics is defined as being 'economical with the truth'? A younger generation felt betrayed for their innocence had been exploited and what lessons are they supposed to learn from this and what responsibility do the Lib-Democrats carry for breaking their individual pledges? What is the value of a pledge--a promise if it can be put aside once 'circumstances change' and you find yourself in a governing coalition where 'compromises have to be made'?

When should young people be told that the pledge that had individually made to them could no longer be honoured because of the coalition agreement? How should the news have been communicated and with what humility? Those Lib-Dems in government soon accepted the Conservative narrative that the financial crisis was deeper than they imagined so that actions would have to be taken to lower the levels of debt at a much faster rate. This meant that cuts would have to be made faster and deeper than either Labour or the Lib-Dems had planned. The threat of 'another Greece' was to be waved in people's faces, though the economies are quite different and the risks of moving too quickly were to be downplayed.

Rather than the politicians it was Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was to use his guest editorship of the New Statesman to raise questions about the Coalition agreements and the lack of democratic accountability. As Williams writes in his editorial talking about

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> the bafflement and indignation that the present government is facing over its proposals for reform in health and education. With remarkable speed, we are being committed to radical, long-term policies for which no one has voted. At the very least, there is an understandable anxiety about what democracy means in such a context.[6]

Williams discerns that 'the tectonic plates' of politics are shifting and that 'Managerial politics, attempting with shrinking success to negotiate life in the shadow of big finance, is not an attractive rallying point, whether it labels itself (New) Labour or Conservative'. He recognises "an increasingly audible plea for some basic rethinking about democracy itself- and the urgency of this is underlined by what is happening in the Middle East and North Africa'.[7]

DEMOCRACY AND 'NEW POLITICS'

But somehow in relation to the State withdrawing funds from the humanities and social sciences, the tripling of university fees to finance this shift so that financial responsibility is shifted towards students themselves at the very moment that international students are being restricted, there was to be no expression of humility or even regret because the fees policy was to be presented as 'progressive' and somehow 'fair' and better for poorer students than the current provision. It seemed as if Clegg and Cable has never really been honest in the pledges they had made--they were just following 'party policy'--was this the 'new politics' that was promised? University of London Union President Claire Solomon said 'Nick Clegg has already told me that we are naïve and living in a bubble. If he thinks we'll take this lying down. We will rise up on the streets and protest that till we defeat this'. (p.4)

Mark Bergfield, from the Education Activist Network, added 'Nick Clegg is a dreamer. He is trying to destroy education for everyone and his little charm offensive will not work.'(p.4).[8] Both Clegg and Cameron were insisting, in a patronising way, that people had not yet understood their proposals and that once they had taken the time to reflect on the package they would see that it was a 'better deal' than what was presently on offer. Even if it was regrettable that Clegg had to break the pledge that he had personally made he was living in the 'real world' and these things happen. But what about the honesty that was going to characterise the 'new politics' he promised--other parties had broken policies for years but he was going to be different. This was critical to their appeal as the party political broadcast video makes visible.

As Patrick Wintour is aware, 'A Lib Dem party political broadcast, showing Clegg walking outside Westminster bemoaning the way the broken promises of other parties litter the pavements and history, will be played over and over to howls of derision'.[9] But he also acknowledges that the party 'chose to make the abolition of tuition fees the cornerstone of personal and partly programme in May 2010, even though the party leadership no longer believed the policy'.[10] It seems as if Clegg and Cable did not even believe it when they were making their promises. As Wintour notes, 'Just as it became an article of faith for some Tony Blair took the nation to war in Iraq on a lie, so Clegg will be charged with grubbing for votes in 2010 on a deception'.[11]

Greg Mulholland, the Leeds North West MP, has been one of the few Lib Dem MPS willing

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to be honest about the political impact. As he said in the debate:

Let me tell you, being asked to vote to increase fees up to £9,000 is not a compromise. It is not something that Liberal Democrat backbenchers or even Conservative backbenchers should have been asked to consider. Sometimes governments are wrong and sometimes you need the courage to say so and I am doing that today. I am voting against the government today because I simply cannot accept that fees of up to £9,000 are the fairest and most sustainable way of funding higher education.[12]

As he had said before, this was not in any sense of the word a 'compromise' that they should have been asked to consider as part of the coalition. 'Being asked to support a policy of trebling tuition fees from the position that we used to have is something that should have been asked to do', he said.[13] It was significant that in the debate, as Wintour reports it, 'not a single Lib Dem felt able to speak in favour of trebling tuition fees, apart from the business secretary, Vince Cable. It was equally telling that the parliamentary party split right down the middle'.[14] As Simon Hoggart's sketch recalls 'Cable ploughed on, never rising to any bait, never losing an almost narcotic calm. In the end he said he was "proud" to put forward the plan. '"Shame on you!" someone yelled".[15] Cable insists that by asking students to pay more he had prevented 200,000 higher education being lost:

I don't pretend, none of us pretend, that this is an easy subject. Of course it isn't, We have had to make very difficult choices. We could have made a decision to drastically cut the number of university students, we could have cut student maintenance, we could have cut the funding to universities without replacing it. But instead we have opted for a set of policies that provide a strong base for university funding, which makes a major contribution to reducing the deficit and introducing a significantly more progressive system of graduate payment than we inherited.[16]

It all seems to fit together and it gives you some sense of the dream world that Cable is living in. He has provided a solution to a problem that he has framed without having had to listen to what students, parents and academics might have had to say. It is the logic of a closed world. But it exposes that the coalition has cut the funding of universities by 80% in terms of the support for students and replaced this almost exactly with the tripling of student fees. It is the students who are being made to make 'a major contribution to reducing the deficit'. If the bankers are being asked to do their bit this is only 'fair' given that they have created the crisis in the first place but this is not at the level and with the consequence of splitting up the banks that was suggested by Cable. Rather the financial sector is still largely being protected and it the students who are going to have to pay with their futures. As many have said, they are being deprived of the freedom of a life without debt and they are being obliged to live with a fear of debt.

DEMOCRACY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The system of graduate payment might be more 'progressive' in that the threshold has risen substantially and some scholarships put in place as a last minute compromise, but this is to abuse language for it can hardly be 'progressive' to make students pay for a threefold increase in fees. Even if inflation over time means they pay less back, their assumption, as John Leech recognises,

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will always be that they will have to pay off the whole of their student debts, even though, for a large proportion, that will never be the case'.[17] As students pointed out to David Willetts, the minister responsible for universities, on BBC2's Newsnight on 9th December after it has been announced that the increases had been past in Parliament with the coalition majority cut to a third, many students feel it is quite unfair that they be left with debts to solve a financial crisis that was not of their own making. They were not being asked to make a cut, as in other sectors, but to assume responsibility for the costs of their own education. Students were taking action, not just for themselves for many of them will escape these increases, but for their brothers and sisters who they know will decide not to go to universities because they cannot handle living with those levels of debt--the prospect scares them as it does many of their families.

This is to transform the contract on which higher education is based. It is no response for ministers in the cabinet who benefited from a free education so say that there was a much smaller proportion of people going to university in their times. It was the state that fostered the notion that higher education was an aspiration towards which students should work. It was understood that an educated a skilled workforce was essential to be able to compete in a globalised world so that education was not simply, as the present government is presenting it, a private good that individuals should be ready to pay for because they individually benefit, but a common-good that should be encouraged for as many people who could benefit.[18] It is through the commodification of education that new technologies of exclusion are being shaped. Working-class people and young people from minority backgrounds will be discriminated against while the *unfairness* as injustice of the new arrangements will he concealed as young people are assured that it is their free choice whether to accept the loans or not. Middle-class parents will often support their children financially in the ways working-class families who have learnt to be averse to debt, will be unable to.

This recognises that it is not a one-size fits all university education but that students will need different educational experiences depending on their particular skills and abilities. Questioning the binary divisions between polytechnic 'technical' and university 'academic' education was a way of giving equal status as 'degrees' to students following different paths. This did not make degrees of equal value and students are well aware that it is harder to get into some universities than others, but it was vital that this depended upon individual abilities and not on parent's wealth and so on class and ethnic backgrounds. But British education has still tended to denigrate practical and craft learning and so fails to understand the complex interrelations between practical and theoretical learning.

As John Leech, a Liberal Democrat MP for Manchester Withington said, though he welcomed increasing the threshold from £15,000 to £21,000 before repayments begin he was going to vote against

> because I think an increase in the cap with discourage some young people from going to university in the future […] I benefited from a free education […] So I am not about to vote to leave future graduates with tens of thousands of pounds of debt. I stick by the old fashioned principle that university education benefits the country and the economy as well as the individual. Graduates who are successful earn high wages, pay more

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taxes and repay the costs of their education that way.[19]

According to Simon Hoggart who watched the debate, in contrast to Cable, John Denham for Labour was 'passionate and furious'. As a former cabinet minister who had resigned over the Iraq War he could call on the Liberal Democrat to make a similar stand. He said they had forfeited the right to be called progressive if they broke the pledges they had personally made to the National Union of Students, recalling his own resignation on a position of principle in 2003, 'I do know what you are going through. The self-respect you gain far outweighs any temporary loss of position or income'.(p.6) Denham said that English students will face the highest fees of any university system anywhere: 'The children of these graduates will have started university before they've paid off their own fees'.[20] Later Tory rebel, Julian Lewis, compared the tuition fees increase to the poll tax that his own party believed in but could not prove to people was fair. He said:

> I can hear people talk about percentages until they are blue in the face, or yellow in the face. But they will not convince me that young people from poor backgrounds will not be deterred. If they were not to be deterred, then why is it necessary to introduce the special measures for those having the free meals. I would have been deterred. I don't want other's to be.(p.6)

This is in line with other Lib Dem thinking as becomes evident on the blog posted by Gareth Epps, a member of the party's policy committee:

> The arguments in favour of this increase are spurious. To university staff being consulted on the loss of their jobs, the promise of more funding – give the size of the cuts to the sector – ring hollow. And to the coalition, the idea that it is a confidence issue is risible. [21]

Possibly this is also behind Simon Hughes question as to what guarantees could be given that the £9000 fee would be 'exceptional' rather than a norm that universities would be obliged to reach for because of the savage attacks on their funding, especially if like Goldsmiths, they are largely dependent on the social sciences, humanities and arts. He had told the conference in September 'Liberal Democrats plan to end tuition fees and replace them with a fairer system'. (p.7) He eventually abstained though people in his local party asked him to consider voting against. As Deputy-leader of the party who refused to vote with Clegg his position could have been threatened. As it is weeks after the vote he took on a position designed to persuade people of the wisdom of the coalition case for students and it soon became clear that nearly all the universities seemed to feel obliged to charge the full £9,000.

As the votes came in it became clear that over half of the Lib Dem backbenchers voted against the government. They were part of the party's largest revolt in history as it managed to split in at least four ways. As Martin Kettle reported:

> The party sank to a new low of 8% in a pole yesterday. The brand is particularly toxic in college downs […] Clegg, in particular is a dented figure. His own ratings have tanked since the Cleggmania of the spring and he has become a lightning-hate rode figure for many. It is difficult for a politician to shake off that status one it has stuck to him.[22]

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Having voted almost unanimously for the coalition in May, the Lib Dems, according to Kettle,

> have now shown they remain conflicted between the pro-coalition head and anti-coalition heart. Polls show more than 70% of Lib Dems think of themselves as on the left. The real Lib Dem party stood up and was counted yesterday. Clegg does not speak easily for them.[23]

Kettle also recalls:

> When it was formed, the coalition had wide public appeal as a restorative opportunity. In the wake of the expenses crisis, the attacks on civil liberties and, above all, the perception that the country could no longer pay its way--all strongly associated with Labour--the coalition offered a rebalancing moment, symbolised by the Cameron-Clegg press conference. That new equilibrium is now dissipating, mainly because of the fear that the spending cuts are excessive.[24]

But there is also a growing recognition that the cuts are being used to also reframe the relationship between state and civil society and in the field of education to undo some of the promises to widen and broaden the opportunities for higher education for those in families who might never have achieved it before. There is a sense that the state is withdrawing from vital social responsibilities and that it is thinking of 'freedom' and 'democracy' more exclusively in market terms. This shows a neo-liberal vision of individual agency that imagines that it is only as consumers who are purchasing services, so framing education as a commodity to be purchased, that citizens can supposedly express their freedom. This is to frame universities as corporations who are selling services to clients who express their approval through showing a willingness to purchase the goods at the price being asked for. So it is that the egalitarian principles that underpinned early educational reforms are being undermined and replaced by market criteria.[25]

'FAIRNESS', LEARNING AND MARKETS

In a media blitz on the day before the vote to increase student fees was going to take place in Parliament Clegg accepted that, before the election, he had pledged to get rid of tuition fees over two parliaments but insisted 'to govern is to choose, especially in coalitions'. (The Guardian Thursday 9th December 2010 p.2) He said that he was not 'going to apologise for a second for choosing to put money' toward poor children in school. (p.2) But this was not necessarily the issue though it is important to reflect upon the commitment that the coalition is making to early years learning when it is cutting back on the Sure Start programme.

Asked on Radio 5 Live why he had been unable to explain why the new system would be fairer, he said: Partly because the figure which has, in a sense, been caught in the headlights is the £9,000 figure. In fact that £9,000 figure is only going to happen on an exceptional basis. Because that is such a simple, big, scary figure, no one perhaps is looking beyond that headline and asking what does it mean in terms of how you repay.[26] But possibly Peter Bone, the Conservative MP for Wellingborough who was thinking of rebelling says something a little closer to a related truth 'This isn't (just) about tuition fees. It is about politicians saying one thing to get elected and a dif-

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ferent thing when they are in government'.[27] This is also why so many people are also so angry because they feel betrayed by the promise of a 'new politics' that has been reduced to a vision of coalition politics. One poster at the demo asked: 'Why did Nick Clegg cross the road? Because he promised not to'.

As John Denham, Shadow Business Secretary points out in a letter to The Guardian,

> The introduction of the highest public university fees in the industrialised world is simply to replace the 80% in the funding of higher education teaching that the government has cut. By contrast, Labour introduced graduate fees on top of record high levels of public investment to allow universities to improve quality and expand further.[28]

As he frames Labour' position, 'graduates should make a fair contribution; it is a wrong, ideological decision to make them pay the full cost of most university degrees'.[29] He also insists that Labour has been clear

> that it is not just high fees, but the combined effect of high fees, the ending of educational maintenance awards and the scrapping of Aiming Higher, which has encouraged so many young people to apply for university. Even the coalition has finally admitted--with its scrambled-together scholarship scheme--that low-income students might be put off. But the scheme only helps 18,000 of the two million students and offers nothing to most low-income families who would like their children to go to university.[30]

In a letter directly following Professor Mandy Merck, Royal Holloway, University of London questions the assumption that 'higher education should continue to be a private good' insisting:

> No advanced society can afford not to educate all its citizens to tertiary level. Our builders, electricians and central heating engineers need advanced instruction in the principles of their work as much as our journalists, teachers and marketing managers. Higher education for all should be a public good, paid for by progressive taxation.[31]

John Green from London also reminds in his letter that with the coalition insisting that 'a real rate of interest will be charged o' load repayments' students are going to be saddled with enormous debts at a time of life 'when you are looking for a mortgage to buy a home and perhaps start a family' and that this is 'to continue with a policy of acceptance of high levels of personal debt that has been largely responsible for bringing about the present economic crisis'.[32]

But it can also be helpful to listen to a letter by Andrew Green from South Croydon, Surrey who wants to remind people that, from his political tradition

> Education is a privilege, not an automatic right, and we are fortunate to live in a democracy where, despite its many failings, education in modern Britain has come to be considered as a right, provided at a world-class level and, for the large part, free. It is something that we must value and protect.[33]

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But if he is right that 'this issue has sharply brought into focus attitudes towards education itself' more problematically he also wants to insist

> the misguided education maintenance allowance was a key illustration of how education is undervalued by citizens; to be "incentivised"--pupils and students paid--by the taxpayer to attend school or college seems quite wrong when the incentive of (free) education should be enough.[34]

Of course it is important for people to value learning for its own sake but we have also to be aware of how people within an unequal and class divided society grow up with very different opportunities and chances for learning and that we also have to careful, as Ian Jack reminds us, not to automatically privilege 'formal qualifications over the more personal routes that knowledge can be got'.[35] As he recalls it was not until the middle 1980s that it occurred to him that among middle-class professionals--journalism in his case--that people who hadn't been to university were dwindling to a small minority. As he shares,

> Still, for a time I regretted that I hadn't gone to university, and sometimes till do. Universities, as Professor John Sutherland reminded us […] exist in their deal state to teach disciplines […] he posed the question of who would want to pay £27,000 for a degree in English literature, his own discipline, when the payback for the student would be so hard to quantify and the benefits to society so far in the future and so diffuse. He warned that those who did fork out the money for arts courses wouldn't be seeking a good education so much as a good degree. And the customer would be king. There would be few failures, grade inflation ("Think Weimar") and lawsuits, "The cash nexus will, over time, rot the system--the delicate balance of authority and intellectual submission that makes education, at any level, work".[36]

STRUGGLING FOR A LIVING EDUCATION

Polly Toynbee can help us make connections across different struggles to do with education while understanding the contemporary relevance of class, gender, 'race' and ethnicities. She recalls that when she was invited to speak to University College, London's campaign for a living wage for college cleaners, she was not expecting many students to turn up. But things turned out differently because on Thursday, the day of the meeting, the students had occupied the Jeremy Bentham room that was packed to bursting. As she recalls,

> A living wage, with outsourced cleaners brought back in-house, had become one of the key demands. Here, as elsewhere, what started as protests about tuition fees accelerated into a political movement against cuts of all kinds. Inequality, poverty, the shredding of public services, unemployment, bankers and boardroom bonuses had become part of the protest. One fight, one struggle, they said, as if 40 years had suddenly fallen away. Not exactly Paris 1968, but in their sit-in meetings they were beginning to see themselves as the vanguard for a wider campaign. Thatcher's children, selfish, materialist, apathetic? Not at all.[37]

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Chicago community organiser Arnie Graff who trained the young Obama in some of his skills of community organising as director of the Chicago Industrial Areas Foundation, founded by Saul Alinsky to train and build grassroots organisations visited Britain in May 2011 to meet Ed Milliband. He usefully argues that there is a difference between electoral knowledge and social knowledge and that Miliband, like other politicians who have been shaped through policy research act as though the two are the same. As Allegra Stratton reports, in one of the meetings he had with Miliband, he was asked who came up with the idea of the living wage:

> In the early 90s, Graf said, he and friends noticed that the soup-kitchen queues were growing longer, but no one would say why. By boarding the buses that carried cleaners away from their nightshift or be attending church--safe spaces-- Graf and co got workers to explain their new, worse contracts. All of them asked: "What good is a minimum wage if it is "minimal"? We need money to live on". So a living wage was invented by them, not policy wonks; and it would be wrung by them from their employers.[38]

Toynbee helps us realise something similar--that the scandalous abolition of the education maintenance allowance (EMA) which gives £30 a week to sixth-formers from the poorest families is as central to the student protest as their tripled fees. She read out a heartbreaking email she had just received from a Hackney sixth-former:

> she and her twin brother lived with their disabled mother. Together they will lose £60 a week in allowance and wonder if they can stay on. She went on her first march on Wednesday, peacefully, for from any violence, and was horrified at being kettled by the police for five hours. Are police and government conspiring to turn peaceful young people into outraged militants?[39]

Suzanne Moore also visited the students in occupation at UCL going on to a pre-Christmas do of movers and shakers. As she recognises, 'sometimes you move quickly between worlds too quickly for comfort […] One group of people were complacent, self-indulgent and had a huge sense of entitlement. And guess what, it wasn't the students!'[40] She was led to wonder why her generation 'had got just so bloody complacent' and is it 'the unwritten law says protest is something you grow out of. We drift rightwards. Activism is simply a rite of passage that gives way to a life full of passive grumbling'.[41] As she says, 'this is the only way I can comprehend how a generation that had free education, access to jobs and housing feels at ease denying these things to the young. This is truly mystifying. Is the word "deficit" enough to make us lose our political marbles?'[42] As she says,

> No one should be surprised that after six months of limbo the students should be at the forefront of resistance to this government […] They are not naïve about party politics but clearly feel let down by it. Demos, flashmobs, occupations and the spectacle of direct action are the only ways they can register their disgust […] Caught up in the immediacy of protest, everything is happening in the present. This is the excitement of such a movement.[43]

As Moore shares,

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> I felt this energy walking past the homemade shrine "RIP education" into the Jeremy Bentham room at UCL […] Some of what was happening was immediately recognisable to me and some new. What is most impressive is how far these students have come in a couple of weeks […] Call me old-fashioned but I hardly see them as hardcore anarchists, as their main contention is wanting access to state institutions. They do not want to drop out of the system but to drop in. They are also way too efficient to be proper anarchists. (p.43)

Echoing Polly Toynbee, Moore says:

> It is fantastic that these young people, who we have been told are blinded by celebrity culture and are mainly Facebook narcissists, soon made contact with other causes. Students at UCL also campaigned for a living wage for their cleaning staff. When I was there union leaders were talking solidarity with them. These kids, unlike their elders, are not scared of the word 'class'. (p.43)

She also recognises that

> Little has been said about EMA, a means tested benefit, possibly because those who live on less that £20,000 a year are not in the middle-class publish. To remove this in effect prohibits a whole sector of society ever getting the qualifications they need to get to university. (p.43)

But these issues of class are central because both Cameron and Clegg live in a world with very little contact with working people so they assume that students, as graduates will not be put off by the levels of debt they incur. But their families were able to pay for them to go to private school and no doubt would have done their best to ensure that their children were not burdened with debt. I heard on BBC Radio 4's 'Question Time' the anger of a father who wanted to be able to provide for his children but felt he would be unable too. Jonathan Dimbleby responded that he would not have to provide because it was his children who would be paying back their fees. But when he was asked whether he had provided for his children, Dimbleby refused to reply saying it was a 'personal question'-- but it touches a significant shift that has taken place with the introduction of tuition fees when parents saw it as their responsibility because they would want to help their children if they could. They would turn up on interview days. This reflected a shift since in earlier generations when student education was state funded students were free to chose their own courses on the basis of their interests. This freedom will be greatly curbed as parents argue about individual choices and the 'irrationality' of taking courses when you are not promised a career that will allow you to pay back or if you expect your parents to help out. In this way it is not only education but family relations that come under the pressure of marketisation.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE FUTURE

Moore frames a question that about the responsibilities that we have to future generations to have the freedoms that we took for granted to shape our own lives within the conditions of a

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different kind of capitalism: 'Do we think it is acceptable to make one generation pay for the sins of another?' It was older generations that helped to create a financial crisis but it is not the bankers but the students who are being asked to pay the consequences, not just in the short term, but with debts that will stretch across their whole lives. As Moore recognises,

> Some don't like the word mandate. I don't particularly, but it is clear we did not vote for this exactly […] The sons and daughters of Middle England are indeed revolting. What is more, everything is documented and recorded. We have seen the police who hit people in the face, the "pre-emptive" kettling, the Benny Hill-style chases. (The Guardian Saturday 4th December 2010 p.43)

She also knows that

> The police are puzzled by these "leaderless" protests. These kids are able to quickly organise new kinds of creative chaos. They are wired. Always one tweet away from the next happening [...] These people have discovered the politics of self-organisation quickly. Some of what was goig on was the painfully slow but necessary business of process […] Somehow this iPhone coalition is working.[44]

Possibly recalling her own lived experience Moore recognises that 'it is providing a brilliant political education. It is a great thing to work with others for the public good, to feel your own power and know its limitations. Collective action is shot through with adrenalin. It is the province of the young'. (p.43) She shares:

> A young physicist asked me how to get through to his flatmates who didn't care as they were not affected by the cuts. We agreed you have to ask the big questions about what kind of society you want to live in. And we live in one in which we are told there is no more money while we seeing it washing around the upper echelons. (p.43)

As she sees the situation developing and we can learn from this 'a line is being drawn. Romatically, it may be a coalition of resistance. Even if it's not, I do not understand why we don't support young people. Have we all been psychically kettled?'[45]

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NOTES

[1] Evening Standard, 'Lib-Dem Leader sparks anger as protesters besiege Parliament – Clegg: Students in a Dream World.' (Thursday 9th December 2010 p.1)

[2] For some reflections upon different forms of democratic rule see, for instance, Held, *Models*; Phillips, *Engendering*; Phillips, *Democracy*. With the decline of the Soviet Union and the Revolutions in Eastern Europe in 1989 discourses of democracy became vital in new ways in providing the terms of critique of authoritarian rule. There was a tension between revitalised discourses of democracy and forms of capitalist neo-liberalism that sought to identify market freedoms with democratic rule.

[3] For some illuminating discussion that shows the lack of planning and political arrogance, as well as American idealism and voyeurism and the deadly results of American hubris that accompanied the early years of the Iraq invasion see, for instance, Chandrasekaran, *Imperial*.

[4] For some reflections on postmodern identities and ways they are shaped through neo-liberal forms of governance around ideas of 'freedom' and 'choice' as if identities can be constantly re-invented and the legacies and inheritances of the past somehow left behind see the different approaches in McRobbie, *The Aftermath*; Rose, *Powers*; Skeggs, *Class*; Seidler, *Embodying*.

[5] Somehow Obama was able to able to mobilise a younger generation that had been brought up with new social network technologies. They wanted to believe that a new politics was possibly and that Obama's background in community politics would somehow shift the ways that politics was conducted in Washington so that it was not to be more of the same. They were to be disappointed though they were still inspired by his writings about the possibilities of a post-race politics. See, for instance, Obama, *Dreams*.

[6] Williams, 'The government needs to know how afraid people are' Leader New Statesman 13th June 2011 p. 4.

[7] Williams, ibid p.4.

[8] Bergfield, 'Clegg: Students in a Dream World' London Evening Standard 9th December 2010, 4.

[9] Wintour, The Guardian Friday 10th December p.7.

[10] Wintour, ibid, 7.

[11] Wintour, ibid, 7.

[12] Mulholland, The Guardian Saturday 10th December, p.6.

[13] Mulholland, London Evening Standard 9 December 2010 p. 4.

[14] Mulholland, The Guardian Saturday 10th December p.7.

[15] Hoggart, ibid, 7.

[16] Cable, ibid, 6.

[17] Leech, ibid, 6.

[18] See the discussions on the commodification of education and the ways this is tied in with neo-liberal forms of governance and the reproduction of forms of competitive individualisms in *Towards a Global*

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Autonomous University.

[19] Leech, The Guardian Saturday 10th December 2010 p.6.

[20] Denham, ibid, p.6.

[21] Epps, The Guardian Friday 10th December p.7.

[22] Kettle, The Guardian, Friday 10th December p.47.

[23] Kettle, ibid, p.47.

[24] Kettle, ibid, p.47.

[25] For some helpful reflections upon the nature of neo-liberalism and the ways it is tied up with market thinking see, for instance, Harvey, *Neo-liberalism*.

[26] Clegg, The Guardian Thursday 9th December 2010 p.2.

[27] Bone, ibid, 2.

[28] Denham, The Guardian Thursday 9th December 2010 p.41.

[29] Denham, ibid, 41.

[30] Denham, ibid, 41.

[31] Merck, letters page The Guardian Thursday 9th December 2010, 41.

[32] John Green, letters page ibid, 41.

[33] Andrew Green, The Guardian Saturday 11th December p.47.

[34] Andrew Green, ibid, 47.

[35] Jack, The Guardian Saturday 4th December 2010 p.45.

[36] Jack, ibid, 45.

[37] Toynbee, The Guardian Saturday 27th November p.43.

[38] Stratton, The Guardian Wednesday June 28th p.18.

[39] Toynbee, The Guardian Saturday 27th November p.43.

[40] Moore, The Guardian Saturday 4th December p.43.

[41] Moore, ibid, p.43.

[42] Moore, ibid, p.43.

[43] Moore, ibid, p.43.

[44] Moore, ibid, p.43.

[45] Moore, ibid, p.43.

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The University of Barclays Bank

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1.

The current crisis in higher education in England has provoked both action on the streets and--as this paper further demonstrates--action on paper. In order to illustrate all those words and concepts that we teach to our first year students in Sociology (democratisation, proletarianisation, de-skilling, imiseration, pauperisation and so on) we need turn no further than to our own institutions--those institutions once described as ivory towers--the universities. What was heralded as the 'democratisation' of mass higher education is becoming , for both staff and many students, a democracy of insecurity, increasing levels of debt and a declining quality of the education offered. Democracy, we might note, is not always a state in which we gain--it is also, as the present situation demonstrates all too clearly--a situation in which we share loss.

So the question arises of exactly what that 'loss' is, and, as in all cases of loss and possible bereavement, how we should deal with the loss that we are experiencing. We should also remember that the dramatic words used above about the present situation in English higher education describe universities, which are, for the most part, places that continue to perform effectively the transfer of knowledge from one generation to the next. The considerable evidence of this more than reputable record might ask us why the present government seems so set on upsetting and diminishing those many institutions of which it should be more than proud. Here I shall argue that current policies do endanger much that is important and valuable in universities; to speak of 'loss' is not mere hyperbole. On the contrary, an aspect of that process outlined by Marx in Volume 1 of *Capital* seems to be at work, a process in which it is the instruments of labour that come to employ the workman.[1] Put in terms of English universities in the second decade of the twenty first century, what is taking place is the loss of an education that was a 'tool for labour' and its replacement by an education that is becoming the basis for the employment of labour. The process that is arguably taking place is one in which the previous value of higher education (in terms of both the intrinsic

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value of education and the specific skills of a specific subject) is being replaced by a complex relationship in which the receiver of higher education becomes effectively indentured to the labour market through the debts acquired in the process of acquiring that education. Or to put it another way, higher education (with some highly selective exclusions) is becoming an instrument of the market, not just in the obvious sense of the subjects and skills that are valorised, but in terms of the full integration of both provider and user into the market. This integration takes place not just in the translation of academic disciplines into sites of the learning of labour market skills but in the creation of a process of economic 'bonding' between the student and the labour market.

2.

To begin with the question of what is being lost. I would argue that what is being lost at the moment has two aspects and one of those aspects has a considerable history. Aspect number one is a likely revival of the restriction of access to universities to those from materially privileged backgrounds. Aspect number two (which also has a history, although not such a long one) is the more elusive, and complex, loss of academic independence within the universities. Both these aspects have to be seen against the relative success of English universities in giving to many young people (and young people who, in the past twenty years, have been drawn from a wider social range) a relatively (but not perfectly) uniform higher education. At the same time as saying this, it is also important to record some of the exclusions of this process. Those who do not get anywhere near universities remain those from low income families, living, in many cases, in those areas of the country where there is no visible (social or otherwise) experience of higher education. Nobody could argue that the new 'democratic' access to higher education has benefitted everyone nor is there any chance whatsoever of arguing that the most privileged universities have become more socially accessible. The whole university sector remains dominated by Oxbridge, which is, as it has always been, a bastion of those either (or in many cases both) rich in literal or social capital. More than that, Oxbridge remains committed to the idea that it can detect 'promise' in eighteen year olds in a way that is fair and without social bias towards the reproduction of its own. This magic fairy dust of 'promise' remains a hugely effective way of refusing any further investigation of the procedures of Oxbridge entry.

But aside from this instance of the replication of class privilege, the past twenty years have seen, a certainly not perfect, yet still valuable shift towards the greater normalisation of the experience of high education as an aspect of the transition to adult life. 'Going to uni' as it has become known in television soaps and general parlance has become an ordinary part of the lives of many young people. Very important questions remain about whether or not this education has the same market value across the sector (the difference in 'value' between a degree from the University of Oxford and the University of Luton for example) and whether or not the possession of a degree (any degree) will open the doors to that lifetime of prosperity which is often promised. Yet aside from these realities, there is more education, available to more people for a longer length of time, than would have been imagined at the time of the Robbins Report in 1963.[2] It is this trajectory towards more education for more people that is likely to be the first casualty of shifts in government policy.

The first reason for this lies in the re-organisation of funding for universities, of which the

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most visible, and most publicly attacked aspect, is the increase in undergraduate fees. As everyone now knows these fees will go up from the autumn of 2012 and they will go up in a range from £6,000 to £9,000. These fees are the amount that universities will have to charge in order to make good the present funding that currently supports teaching in the Social Sciences and the Humanities. The STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) will continue to receive government funding. The thinking behind this shift is a particularly harsh version of neo-liberalism: let the market decide who is willing to pay higher fees for a degree in, let us say, English Literature or Sociology and if no-one is, then those academics and those departments will become redundant. Redundancy, as we know, is one way in which universities can rid themselves of academic staff whose contracts are otherwise difficult to end.

3.

The social awareness behind this thinking is of the most brutal kind, as are some of the possible consequences. The refusal to acknowledge either the intellectual or the social value of the subjects reduced to market seller penury suggests that this government has no wish either to consider, let alone support, the possibility that it might be valuable to understand the social world before legislating about it, let alone allowing that the study of subjects, and subject matter, outside the everyday might produce a more informed citizen. The brute fact is that this government knows that elite universities will continue to attract students to all subjects who will pay more or less anything for a degree in more or less anything because that degree--from that institution--has market value. So let those who teach--and wish to study--non-STEM subjects at less prestigious universities go to the wall. The inherent validation of privilege and social exclusion that lies behind this thinking could be described as breath-taking. But that would be to allow this government to take away the breath that might oppose.

Those universities that are most likely to be threatened by the new regime of financing for the universities are those most usually described as the 'post 1992' universities, universities born out of the re-naming as universities of various kinds of institutions of higher education that was brought about by John Major's Conservative government. Many, although not all, of these universities do little teaching in the STEM subjects, for the very good reasons that these subjects are in the main extremely expensive to support and that relatively few students wish to study some of these subjects. Indeed, across the higher education sector, undergraduate admission for STEM subjects (with the exception of medicine and veterinary science) is generally less competitive than for many arts and social science subjects. It would seem that if the government was enthusiastic about encouraging admission for STEM subjects it might offer various forms of financial encouragement--and then leave everything else alone. Sadly, this is not to happen. What might happen is two things: first, that students will continue to sign up for social science and humanities subjects in the same numbers and so no university will suffer unduly or second, that potential students will review the value of a degree in one of the non-funded subjects from a non-prestigious university and decide that the cost is simply unjustifiable.

Which brings us to the issue of fees or, as we might also describe it, the great big new gift to the banks. At present (and until the academic year 2012) any undergraduate can turn up at a university at the beginning of the academic year and hand over the cheque for the fees. Indeed, this

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is obligatory and many universities expect all students, especially those from overseas, to provide evidence that they can pay these fees. But after 2012, there will be no point in turning up with the cheque (albeit a much larger one) because the new form of university funding will assume that all undergraduates will contract a debt with the state (that is, the banks) for the amount of the annual fees for three years. What this then ensures is a ready made supply of creditors, of people who are going to be paying back the banks for as long as it takes to pay back the amount owing.

4.

The implications of the arithmetic of the new form of educational indenture should not be lost. For those with the sparkling degrees from the well known university there is a more than reasonable chance that life after university will be materially well rewarded and progress in that orderly and secure way that Conservative politicians seem to assume is the 'normal' path of any Englishman. The gender of that description is deliberate, not just because many Conservatives might forget that we are talking about women and men here, but because all assumptions about paying back debt and earning loads-of-money after graduation tend to be based on male, middle class patterns of employment. These patterns of employment are unbroken by child bearing/rearing/care of the sick and the elderly. In reality as well as in the various fantasies of our present policy makers, the people paying back the increasing debts involved in higher education are, as Kathleen Lynch has described it so vividly, 'care-less'.[3] We might also note another meaning of that adjective: the people who earn the highest salaries after graduation are often those who go to work in what is becoming the increasingly glorified private sector. Working in the public sector, on the other hand, does not offer, except exceptionally, high material rewards and yet it is the sector (for example, in teaching and in professions related to medicine and social care) where large numbers of women work. It would probably be too much to expect members of the government to consider the complex implications of student debt, gender and the labour market, but those implications are surely there. At the worst what could happen as a result of the increased cost of high education is that there is a return to those not-so-distant days when higher education for women was regarded as a waste of money, 'because she will only get married'. Whether or not 'she' will marry , in 2011, is less likely than it once was , but what 'she' will be very likely to do is to have children, a life event that still effectively separates the career paths of women and men.

The public, who have to add up rather more often and rather more carefully than cabinet members of the present government will no doubt regard the latest rise in fees as something that is closely tied to decisions about higher education. So here we see the prospect of what had been 'normalised' becoming 'de-normalised', that what becomes a more common occurrence is not going to university but vindicating the decision to opt out because of an assessment of the cost involved. A cost, we might note, that is not simply about fees but is also about maintenance. Arguments might be made about students living at home to cut the cost of university education (arguments that have been made since the time of Robbins) but again there is a hidden pattern of inequality. If a student lives in, let us say, London or any of the big English urban conurbations (Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham for example) then study at a well- regarded university is possible. Live in the eastern counties of England or parts of the north east of England, and no such opportunities exist. The geography of deprivation, and educational deprivation in particular here, is an important part of the English social map and once that does impact--and might well

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increasingly do so--on opportunities for high education.

5.

The negative possibilities outlined above may not, of course, occur. It may be that the English population, having become convinced that higher education will provide access to well paid, secure employment, will continue to take on the commitment that involves what will be, post 2012, approximate debts of about £40,000 (that is, fees of £24,000 and living costs of about £5,000 a year. Both figures do not allow for longer degree courses or for greater living costs). Government sources may well speak blithely of re-payment once the ex-student reaches a certain level of income, but again here we can hear at work an assumptive world that takes for granted both post-graduation employment and employment that is well paid. All the time, we should also note, interest on this debt is mounting and the banks are sitting happily on a new source of income.

Selling your soul to the company store used to be a vision of a world that was foreign to many people. Arguably, that vision is becoming more vivid as individuals are now given no choice about contracting debt in order to pay for higher education and at the same time have to face what may well be a version of higher education that uses the curriculum as a means of communicating the values and the assumptions of the company store. This possibility is the second, tentative, result of current policies towards the universities. It is likely (although not everywhere and not immediately) that many departments in the subjects about to lose HEFC funding will be under pressure to tailor their degrees and the content of those degrees to the market place. At this point we should pause and remember that it is not the market place that is paying for this education, it is the student. So a double loss occurs: financial support disappears and instead of this producing that perfect market in which consumers dictate what they buy (a market which, we might note, that seldom actually exists), the very institutions that profit by creating the debt now dictate what is learned. What should be learned, if we listen to self-appointed captains of finance and industry is how to sell services and commodities. In the scramble to please and court industry (for buildings, endowed appointments and all the rest) universities are encouraged to become parodies of the worst excesses of the television show *The Apprentice*: grading and assessing students on their marketable skills and transferable knowledge. In this, of course, it is likely that the curriculum will still exist but that it will become the means through which marketable skills are learned. Anyone who has sat through presentations by university managers will know that immaculate presentation is no guarantee of interesting or illuminating information. Indeed, the expectations of the wit and the literacy of the audience at many of these occasions seems to be so low that we are often given paper copies of power book presentations that are then read out to us.

After attending one (or many) of these kind of events it is tempting to begin to assume that public debate and discussion in England is beginning to bear an inverse relationship to the number of people with degrees. The direction of this assumption is familiar to many people who have read about 'dumbing down' and the general lowering of the standards of mass culture. These debates, or more accurately the conclusions that various authors come to, may or may not be true. It is extremely difficult to judge the quality of pubic debate in the past and educational standards one hundred years ago (when the majority of the population left school at fourteen) were

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radically different from those of today. But what it is possible to suppose might occur, as a result of current policies, is that the aspiration of providing significant numbers in age cohort with a higher education of a demonstrably similar standard and quality will be further undermined.

6.

That this aspiration has already been undermined should be no surprise to anyone who works in an English university and has seen the ways in which 'mass' higher education has been organised in the past twenty years. Most significantly of all, the higher numbers of students has not been matched by a proportionately similar higher number of academic standard. Emblazoned across the doorway of every university in the country there should be a sign that says: 'You are very welcome and we have made your education here possible by the use of armies of part-time teachers'. For example, in one pre-1992 university in the south of England the School of English (and English is a popular and well regarded subject at this university) there are twenty full time members of the academic staff, and forty-six part-time teachers. All the full time teachers will have spent years teaching and researching their subject; they would not have been appointed without either a PhD or secure publications or, more likely, both. But almost the same is true of many of the part-time teachers: many young people with PhDs for whom there are no permanent posts or, as if often the case, students completing advanced degrees. Nor is this example an isolated case: all universities (elite and otherwise) rely on part-time, often hourly paid, teachers both to take seminar classes and to perform work (such as research) that facilitates the publications (and the careers) of full time staff.

Now it is perfectly possible that these young and willing people (who are paid what looks like, compared to the minimum wage, an enviable hourly rate) will be excellent teachers. But at the same time it is also true that they are unlikely to have either the range or the expertise of many of the full time staff. What all universities have calculated is that full time staff are very expensive and, in terms of hours of teaching performed, do not pay their way. At another university in the south of England the Finance Officer once calculated that full time staff only 'earned' (in terms of the numbers of hours worked for which they received direct funding) about a third of the average salary. When this information was publicly presented (about ten years ago) it presented some outrage amongst the academic staff, who rightly pointed out that teaching hours in no way constituted the sum total of an academic's responsibilities.

But then, of course, the times became harder and these once abruptly dismissed calculations started to look rather different. In short, the magical and mysterious formulation of surplus value began to hold sway on universities. The tyranny of Research Assessment Exercises began to give an economic form to the calculation of academic prestige and significance. If enough of your colleagues could rate your research at a high level, then you could be seen to have achieved a viable financial worth through work performed in all those hours of the week when not teaching students. As this measurement of academic worth began to take an ever-greater stranglehold on the academy, so the demands to not teach became stronger. In many universities those demands were met, and the resulting void in a teaching workforce was met by those legendary battalions of insecure, hourly paid workers. From many of the consumers of education there has so far been little organised public complaint: a few voices have pointed out that many students, in return for

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their existing fees, are only taught for about half the year and then for approximately six to eight hours in every week. So far, the dam has held about what might be a justifiable avalanche of complaint. But one of the many curiosities of higher education in England is that the consumers show little willingness to question the 'services' they are receiving.

7.

There might be various reasons for this (aside from genuine satisfaction), not least the prestige with which higher education is regarded and the absence, on the part of the consumers, of any adequate means of comparison. Yet a certain amount of evidence suggests that many consumers of higher education have already realised that what they are receiving is less education in any meaningful sense and rather more the learning of the means of compliance. As students (and before that designation, undergraduates) became translated into consumers (or even, in some institutions, our 'clients') so the regimes of measurement around those 'consumers' have become more stringent. As consumers, students are generally regulated with an energy that would be rejected in most other service industries. Imagine a restaurant in which you are told to eat up all your dinner. This is not too far from the ways in which 'consumers' are regarded in many sectors of higher education. Attendance at lectures and seminars is carefully monitored, deadlines for the submission of work are ruthlessly kept and penalties are brought to bear on those who do not comply. But at the same time as it would appear that some of the more draconian regulatory regimes of English universities are inconsistent with ideas about student 'choice', so it would appear that other forms of regulation--the regulation of academics--are also known. This does not refer to the explicit regulation of various forms of research assessment but to the more subtle forms of the consumer based assessment of teaching. Web sites in the United States already publish information about teachers; comments that are not related to institutional strategies for improvement but can be used in judgements about employment contracts. Being a 'good' teacher in this kind of audience based assessment has obvious dangers in the possible shift towards 'pleasing' the audience or, more dramatically, using teaching and the classroom as a place in which existing ideas (and expectations and aspirations about grades) can be confirmed.

On both sides of the relationship of teaching there exists, therefore, increasing regulation and observation. It is a pattern of regulation of students, however, that fits well with the forms that academic staff are often requited to complete about their students. These forms demand information about whether or not the student was a good time-keeper, had an acceptable standard of personal appearance, had experienced any health problems and so on. We are asked to tick boxes about these various qualities, even though we may have, given the large numbers of students that many academics now teach, little idea who the individual is. It is in this way that universities have unleashed onto the wider world thousands of paragons of tidiness, gleaming good health and punctuality. But it is not that the universities only demand of their staff the completion of forms about students, the whole sector is replete with forms about teaching assessment, assessment of one's peers, submissions of annual plans, evaluation of recent work and, most absurdly, time allocation forms.

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These forms have been the joy of many academic malcontents for some years, since they provide an opportunity to try out those Good Soldier Schweik inclinations that otherwise have to be repressed. The lunatic composition of the forms, which demand detailed information about how academic time is spent can be completed with nonsense as long as all the sections are completed. Here bureaucratic expectations fulfil their full Protestant promise: it does not matter what you are working at as long as you appear to be working. In a famous essay the historian E.P. Thompson once addressed the question of the re-ordering of ideas about time during the Industrial Revolution, a re-ordering of work in which the appearance of disciplined work became paramount.[4] Sitting about, chatting, resting were all written as a 'waste' of time. Since then, of course we have seen the way in which time, like water or forests, can be thoroughly privatised by the demands and logic of capitalism. Thus when academics are asked to complete their 'time allocation' forms these forms suggest possibilities possibilities about academic work (such as 'inter-action with community entrepreneurs'/ 'furthering the skills agenda') which are deeply mysterious to many.

It has not gone unnoticed by many that the current British cabinet includes a large number of white men who were educated at public school and Oxbridge. 'Going posh' is a theme that appears to have reached the media and the general public. In terms of universities this suggests what that quality of academic detachment might regard as an 'interesting' development, whilst others would see it in more negative terms. Yet this newly *visible* conflation of privileged background and political power does suggest that it might be timely to return to those discussions, at the time of the British Robbins Report on the plans for the expansion of the university sector, about the importance of universities in the socialisation of the less socially competent. In various comments about the proposed expansion of the universities it was thought important to bring together social and academic education.v In doing this a graduate would be recognisable not just by their academic skills, but by their acceptable social presence. Mass higher education has put paid to this process and has introduced, to take its place, a form of socialisation into compliance with the demands of the labour market, rather than the social skills apparently necessary to run the labour market. But since national politics and national elites still exists individuals are still needed to fill those positions--positions that depend not just upon basic skills of performance but more complex sets of assumptions and 'knowledge' about the various social and political ways in which power works. Access to elite institutions does not always guarantee that competence but it does provide access to the accumulation of social and political capital that can be translated into power and access to privilege.

The world of many, although not all, universities has become a world distant from the lofty heights of elite groups in British society. To be a graduate no longer carries any considerable social value, unless accompanied by that precious stamp of the ancient and/or prestigious university. These universities distort aspects of secondary education through the frenzy that accompanies admission to their lofty portals at the same time as admission rates to these institutions defines schools that can demand fees or stringent initial admissions. That 'knowledge' economy that is so much a favourite of Vice Chancellors at graduation days surely demands some critical attention by those involved in its practice, not least a dissection of how that knowledge is differentially accessed in an increasingly segmented society.

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NOTES

[1] Marx, *Capital*, 71-83.

[2] Committee on Higher Education, *Higher*.

[3] Lynch, *The Gendered*.

[4] Thompson, *Time*.

[5] Morgan and McDowell, *Patterns*, 12.

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The Threat to Academic Autonomy: The Social Role of the Sociological and Literary Canons

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Hannah Arendt once wrote a book about memorable thinkers in the interwar period, when fifteen European governments were fascist: she called it *Men In Dark Times*. I think that we are approaching similar 'dark times' now. We are moving to an unprecedented period since World War II, in which the very possibility of critical thought is increasingly under threat. This is one implication of the Browne report's recommended removal of 100% of the teaching grant in arts and social sciences to the English Universities. Browne uses the progressive vocabulary of the Greens -*Securing a Sustainable Future for Higher Education*- to dress up in 'dynamic' clothes its highly retrogressive policies, curiously denuded of evidence-based backing.[1] He claims for example, that his changes are being pushed by universities' failure to improve the students' experience - but then shows that student satisfaction is in fact going up (from 80% to 82%).[2] He also claims that postgraduate education is 'successful' and needs no changes to it: yet academics are all too aware that in the arts and social sciences there are neither scholarships nor loans for the vast majority of Masters' courses, and thus progression to a PhD scholarship for the bright, poor student is blocked.[3]

Under the Browne recommendations, subjects in the humanities will have to depend on student fees. But how many students will pay £9000 to study subjects like Painting, Philosophy, Media Studies, English Literature, Art History, or Sociology? Many of these departments will shrink and close. As a consequence, there will be fewer academic positions where unorthodox thought is possible. Whatever Scotland and Wales do, they will be profoundly affected by this change in England.

Raymond Williams pointed out in 1961 that British higher education was caught between the transmission of a mandarin minority

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culture and Industrial Training.[4] But the Browne Report is not just about increased Industrial Training as we have experienced it before. The Browne Report is about changing the structure of the University to fit a neoliberal or finance capitalist economy. Following Eagleton's early work, where he distinguishes between the general mode of production and the literary mode of production, it could be argued that this represents a transformation in the academic mode of production.[5] It is aimed at reducing the present relative autonomy of the universities and replacing this with much closer links between the neoliberal university and 'what employers need'.[6] This does not necessarily involve the privatisation of significant numbers of universities - although Browne himself suggests that this is indeed likely.[7] It involves much closer links with companies, as indeed has been the pattern in engineering departments (BAE Systems etc) since the Second World War.

The consequences are likely to be a massive shift away from the public university, with its commitment to undergraduate teaching for all academic staff and obligations via extramural education to the local region. The structure of the university modeled on the Robbins Report is on the brink of being swept away, not least Lord Robbins' commitment to a humanist education. Robbins envisaged a university in which the teaching of transposable and practical skills for employment was necessary, but in which other aims were just as important: the education not of restricted specialists but cultivated men and women, the concern with 'not merely good producers but good men and women', the 'search for truth' and the advancement of learning, and the provision of a common culture and - not least - common standards of citizenship to offset the inequalities of home backgrounds.[8]

What would the post-Browne English university look like? Browne has given us certain clues, but the impending changes undoubtedly relate to a global phenomenon. The US has already advanced down this path to a much greater degree than Britain. Amongst the plethora of reports on this new academic regime, Slaughter and Rhoades present the most detailed and scholarly survey.[9] Academic capitalism, they argue, is characterised by four main features: (1) intensified commitment to research over teaching, and to the *commodification of the knowledge* produced. Thus prior to 1980 about 250 patents per annum went to universities; in 1998 there were 3,151.[10] Universities are extensively restructured to support 'excellence'. In particular, investment is strongest in those areas where the greatest amounts of corporate money is available, as well as public funding in the form of research grants. Business companies have now even begun to shape the research agenda, including - surprisingly - reviewing grant proposals.[11] (2) A new c*ommodification of teaching* at the level of individual universities, through sales of their academics' lectures, as well as the more familiar textbooks. (3) An extended *dual labour market* for academic staff. A primary market caters for research stars, such as highly-paid professors, in well-founded laboratories and institutes; the secondary market is the resort of part-time workers who teach without even offices - a newly-swollen academic 'contingent labour-force', one sector of the wider 'precariat'. Part-time teaching has doubled in the last 20 years.[12] Finally, (4) a *decline of interest in local communities* and especially ethnic minorities, a characteristic of the older public university regime:

'As colleges and universities shift towards revenue generation through academic capitalism, they invest less in historic, democratic missions of providing increased access and upward social mobility to less advantaged populations of students'.[13]

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Appearances to the contrary, this changed mode of academic production in the States has not in fact led to a reduction of public subsidy but rather to its transfer. Further, although claimed to benefit the society in general, the neoliberal university is correlated with increased inequalities--with especial benefits for large corporations, the wealthy (not least vice-chancellors) and the upper-middle class.

The transformations listed above are an intensification of the trends already noted in British universities, in which S/HEFC money was allocated to universities in proportion to their RAE/REF results. This has already contributed, alongside other factors, to an increased marketisation of universities: a game in which the 'winner takes all', as Martins' coruscating survey reveals.[14] Browne advertises, unashamedly, that his recommendations would lead to an increased competition between and within universities - a survival of the [reputably] fittest--in which department is pitted against department.

The 1885 Scottish Universities' Act guaranteed security of tenure to academic staff. Only 'moral turpitude' was a reasonable ground for dismissal. Throughout Britain, academic staff were recognised -in the wake of Darwin- to be potentially the authors of heterodox works who needed protection against dismissal from more orthodox heads of departments. Yet this principle is widely endangered at present. Indeed, one such home of heterodoxy, the internationally renowned Centre for European Philosophy at Middlesex University, has already been closed, despite an RAE rating that ranked it higher than Warwick, Sussex and many other universities. In other words a new game with market logic at its centre is being substituted for an academic game.

As I write, anthropologists, adult educators, archaeologists and Russian and Czech linguists are under threat of forced redundancy at Glasgow University: in a few months there will doubtless be swathes of sociology, philosophy and history of art departments closing down throughout Britain. Along with them, the future in Britain of critical thought - indeed academic thought itself in many areas--is jeopardised. Charles Dickens' *Hard Times* (1854) has a witty indictment of a narrowly utilitarian education restricted to practical facts alone ('You can only form the minds of reasoning animals upon Facts' says his satirised schoolteacher, Thomas Gradgrind (n.d.:11). We need a *Hard Times* for our time. Indeed, teaching of the main canonised works of sociology and the arts is being threatened with being swept aside, to be replaced by Browne's 'high priority courses'--the natural sciences, professional vocational training and applied studies.[15]

I want to begin, however, by making a point about David Cameron's big society. Edward Thompson, the historian, once reviewed Raymond Williams' book *The Long Revolution*, which had a chapter on the literature of the 1840s. 'I have spent a good deal of time in the 1840s' he said, 'and his 1840s are not mine'. Williams sees working-class culture as a *'whole way of life'*--Thompson sums it up rather differently, as also a *"whole way of conflict"*.[16] This is a memorable difference of emphasis, although I suspect that Williams would not have been averse to Thompson's formulation. It is worth recalling this reservation when we speak today about official discourses and the hegemonic power of the dominant class. For subaltern classes retain vigorously their own common sense in which conflict is a vital part of their armoury.[17]

Taking Thompson's critique forward, I would argue, similarly to him: 'I have spent a lot of

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time with the idea of a "big society" and my "big society" is not David Cameron's idea'. Granted, Cameron spoke at Davos of 'social fragmentation'. But his simplistic remedy for this seems to be more philanthropy and the further multiplication of voluntary associations. He has little to say about whether the neoliberal agenda he has championed might actually be provoking the fragmentation and loss of trust to which he refers. Neoliberal structures, with their unregulated markets and short-termist banking priorities do intensify fragmentation by weakening collectivities, such as families, trade unions and universities, whilst simultaneously creating precarious jobs.

To master the concept of the 'big society', it is essential to understand historically the nature of capitalist modernity. Let me sketch briefly the reasons why a rigorous, undiluted sociology might be one of the disciplines under attack. Its founding fathers - all dead by 1920 - argued that a society that is based purely on the individualistic struggle of homo economicus for competitive advantage could not survive, or at best, could not command respect.

Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) - the mildest of the sociological giants - was nevertheless a man who argued that beneath the complex modern division of labour and the law of contracts there had to be some moral base - a commitment to keep promises. Moreover that, in turn, was founded on both a collective consciousness and on regulation. Americans tend to skip over the fact that he wrote a book entitled - and advocating - *Socialism*. Yet for Durkheim, the revolts and crises of modern capitalism emerged where there was either a *'forced division of labour'* (1969: 374-388) - as a consequence of entire groups or classes being restricted to inferior positions[18], or an *'anomic division of labour'*.[19] Here workers failed to see how their individual productive work contributed to the whole and - lacking any understanding of their fellow-workers or consumers - felt diminished by the monotonous regularity of their labour and reduced to purely private activities.[20] .

Max Weber (1864-1920)--as is well known--referred to the Puritans, and especially the Protestant Ethic, as having gently rocked the cradle when the frail new infant, rational capitalism, was born, in the 17th Century. However, *now* (1905), he argued - despite the achievements of a formal rationality - capitalism and bureaucracy has forged only an 'iron cage'. He concludes his *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* with a rare value-judgement: 'Since asceticism undertook to remodel the world and to work out its ideals in the world, material goods have gained an increasing and finally an inexorable power over the lives of men as at no previous period in history [...] For of the last stage of this cultural development, it might well be truly said: 'Specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart; this nullity imagines that it has attained a level of civilization never before achieved'.[21]

But we shouldn't forget Marx (1818-83), surely the most misunderstood of the three celebrated founders of sociology. Now behind all Marx's historical analyses was an idea of a *big society* - or the *good society* - but it was, of course, one without alienation and without the detail division of labour - the degradation of labour. His benchmark for the good society was one in which humans lived and worked in accordance with their distinctively human capacities. And yet everything that the neoliberals are doing is dedicated to reconstituting mass unemployment - Marx's reserve army of labour - the lever propelling men and women into degraded work, with the maximum productivity.[22] In these social relations, as Marx said, people can only feel themselves to be truly human in their leisure time. Somewhat surprisingly, Max Weber agreed with Marx about the long-term trend of capitalism. He noted that the greater the power of the man-

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agement, the greater the loss of autonomy of workers [...] In this 'nullity of a civilisation' he saw only religious brotherliness, art and love as providing resources to combat the narrow calculative rationality of economic life.

As Charles Turner has recently pointed out, contemporary physicists have canonical works, such as Newton's *Principia Mathematica*, yet they don't need to read them! Sociologists, in contrast, gain a better understanding of how they can develop their own, contemporary theory if they read the works of the canonised founders.[23] In particular, a critical stance in relation to the basic paradigms of economics, first formulated in the classical canon, is still an important aspect of current social theory.

One strand of argument that has gone through the works of both Marx and Weber is the claim that different *social positions* engender different *perspectives*. Indeed we might straightaway apply this to the present House of Commons with their high levels of expensive school education. The *Telegraph* reported in January that there are 20 Old Etonians in the Commons, eight of them in the Government. Of the 119 ministers in the Coalition, two thirds were privately educated.[24] Indeed, within Cameron's and Clegg's expectations of educational expenditure the universities' mere £9000 fees p.a. would appear as a reduced outlay (Eton (2009-10) charges £28, 851)! However well-meaning their intentions, their distinctive social location, with its own perspective, will prevent them from properly grasping this change. They act in relation to an élite 'historical unconscious' of which they are largely unaware. It is the role of sociology and anthropology to supply an understanding of these forgotten elements. We might say, the discipline of sociology provides an invaluable socioanalysis.

CULTURE, EDUCATION AND LEGITIMATION

In the 1960s, the canonised high cultural works were still seen as the divinely-inspired creations of solitary geniuses, providing a spiritual supplement to mundane existence. I want to turn now to the critical work on the role of the cultural canon by writers like Terry Eagleton and Pierre Bourdieu. I shall argue that this set of symbolic values is now under attack and that while criticising the form that consecration has taken, teaching the canon itself is still fundamental in today's universities.

Eagleton took up Althusser's idea of education as an 'ideological state apparatus', in which education is the equivalent today of what religion had once been. Eagleton initially applied this to the social role of the literary canon: Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, Jane Austen, George Eliot etc. In *Literary Theory* (1983) he writes ironically, punning blithely to create an analogy between the literary canon and the military cannon. The teaching of Literature is linked to the repressive job of keeping social order: 'If the masses are not thrown a few novels, they may react by throwing up a few barricades'.[25] If you go so far as to reject the canon of accepted, consecrated authors, he remarks, you are lost […] 'The canon is trundled out to blast offenders out of the literary arena'.[26] At the very end of the book, Eagleton *does* assert that the texts now regarded as literature might be returned to their context and then *recycled*, 'put to different uses' - political uses.[27] But he never elaborates on this point, so this brilliant book invites the conclusion that literature's role in the social order has *become purely that of social control*. 'Literature' is given to the brightest working-class

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to teach them the civilised conduct that would turn them away from revolutionary social change.

Eagleton's *Literary Theory* has no analysis of how tutors or students *negotiate* with the ideas that they are taught so as to cast them within their own frame of reference or experience. The main theme of *Literary Theory* is also very remote from the conclusions Jonathan Rose has formed about the literary canon in his *The Intellectual Life of the British Working-Classes* (2002). Here he draws on autobiographies of self-taught readers (19th and 20th Centuries) to reveal their practices with literature. Rose remarks that although these working-class readers had read a great variety of books, not everything that they read in their 'promiscuous mix of high and low' was meaningful.[28] He sums up: 'Only canonical literature could produce epiphanies in common readers, and, specifically, only great books could inspire them to write'.[29]

Moreover, the social reality of teaching adult learners the cultural canon has always been much more complex than Eagleton suggests. Tom Steele's studies of teaching literature to the mature working-class students in the Workers' Education Authority (WEA) and other extramural classes show that we cannot see the literary canon as simply ideological, part of the armoury of soft social incorporation.[30] Instead, the students *appropriated* these literary texts by actively interrogating them through the ethics and worldview they themselves brought to extramural classes: nonconformity, a certain working-class puritanism, trade union collectivism, and Romanticism.

I want now to turn to an idea linked to that of Eagleton's thesis--of the cultural game as the peculiar fetishism or spiritualism of our time, as Pierre Bourdieu puts it. Bourdieu makes several points in *Distinction* (1978) about canonised culture, which he calls 'consecrated culture': (1) First, he shows empirically that different classes have different cultures and tastes: different ways of eating and preferred foods, different responses to Bach, abstract expressionism and pop music. These derive from their divergent habitus in the field of power - the habitus being marked by their varying levels of education, of course, but also by their family's specific experience of material conditions. (2) Second, that there is a front-stage and a back-stage to the sphere of culture. Front-stage, there is an expressed democratic concern with improved access so that high culture might be *for everyone*; back-stage - where it really counts - the mastery of consecrated culture (high culture) is viewed as a rare distinction. The aristocracy of culture, he remarks, ignore the social conditions, which make possible a pleasure in canonised culture, treating a feel for colour or artistic talents as though they were natural:

> In short by making a fact of nature everything which defines their 'worth' [....] their distinction - the privileged classes of bourgeois society replace the difference between two cultures, products of history reproduced by education, with the basic *difference between two natures*, one nature naturally cultivated, and the other nature naturally natural. Thus the sanctification of culture and art, this 'currency of the absolute' *which is worshipped by a society enslaved to the absolute of currency*, fulfils a vital function by contributing to the consecration of the social order.[31]

(3) Moreover, this love of art or secular culture has now become the spiritual soul of the bourgeoisie, and thus their claim to social acceptance. It legitimates them.

Distinction was a radical disenchantment of the world and of the uses to which culture is put.

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It emphasises that even modernism -that art of dissidents- had become a badge of honour for the dominant class, whilst its role tended to intimidate workers' representatives, since it underlined their ignorance. Bourdieu says in an interview that this book cost him emotionally a great deal. Later, in his 1996 classic, *The Rules of Art*, Pierre Bourdieu reveals the social conditions which have freed modernist cultural producers for the long experimental period that powerful works of art require - amongst them, high levels of formal education and sufficient money. But here he makes it absolutely clear that this exposure of the underlying *social* conditions for entry into the restricted field of modern art is not intended to deny the value of the canonised cultural works. On the contrary: he suggests that a sociological understanding of the collective determinisms underlying the area of cultural creation can only but be illuminating, because it breaks with the idea of the poet/ writers as having divine gifts. It reveals the cooperative artworld or artistic field behind these works. It reminds us - lest we forget - how the first modernists in the 1850s had to struggle against being jailed and censored to conquer a sphere of literary autonomy and long-term literary values. Within this restricted field, literature did not have to be judged in terms of its market sales, nor did it have to pass State or religious loyalty tests. Far from wanting to reduce authorship to insignificance, he now writes, with Mallarmé, about the *fragile* fetish of the literary device.[32]

Bourdieu wrote an impassioned PS to this book, *The Rules of Art*. Here he suggests that certain fundamental changes are happening in 1990s' Europe. These changes are once again challenging and eroding that autonomous space where people can be critical. They can be summoned up as the 'increasing interpenetration of the world of art and the world of money':

- The media: is a key here because cultural producers are lured in, as celebrities, but are then ruled by the logic of the media. This makes them succumb to the 'fast writing' and 'fast reading' that underpin the occupational requirements of journalists.
- The publishing industry: Bourdieu referred especially to the erosion of the well-established boundary between books in the artistic field - which therefore did not have to make a profit in the short run - and the general run of books that do have to be published on this basis: 'the boundary has never been so blurred between the experimental work and the best-seller'.[33] (Numerous other studies, eg. André Schiffrin's *The Business of Books* (1990), come to the same conclusion.)
- Sponsorship has increased: this provokes self-censorship, often incompatible with being really autonomous.

Bourdieu called for a Realpolitik of Reason or an Estates General of Artists and Intellectuals. His later polemic, *Acts of Resistance* (1998) demystifies the bankers' ideology -neoliberalism- as a new 'technocratic' paternalism 'which knows what will make the people happy'.[34] Bourdieu died in 2002 but he would have regarded the threats to British arts and humanities' departments as part of this same 'economic fatalist' ideology.

Finally, what of the academics who are threatened by unemployment? Some might comfort themselves that they would have fewer bureaucratic rituals and more time for uninterrupted thinking. However, the lived experience of those bereft of academia has historically been harsh. I will end with a highly unsystematic sample of three such individuals:

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(1) *Gi Baldamus*, a German married to a Jew, was forced out of academia in Germany in the 1930s. He did, at last, get another academic job in WWII, eventually becoming a Professor of Sociology at Birmingham University. But he had to spend several years working on the assembly-line in a factory first.

(2) *CLR James*, the Afro-Caribbean writer who wrote, amongst other things, the extraordinary *The Black Jacobins*, never got an academic job. He was sponsored in Britain by friends from home, like the cricketer and politician Learie Constantine. After periods witnessing decolonisation in Trinidad, he ended up lived in Brixton, where *Race Today*, the collective, had to pay the rent for his flat. Poor throughout his life and over-reliant on his friends, in political meetings he was often taken for a tramp.[35]

(3) Finally, many Jewish holders of a doctorate in interwar Germany could not get jobs. *Walter Benjamin*, now so admired as the Marxist who best understood metropolitan, consumer society, was one such, exiled to Paris. His parents, well into his 40s, had to send him an allowance so that he could go on reading in the Bibliothèque Nationale. When Hitler came to power, this stopped. Benjamin was dependent on tiny intermittent payments for writing, such as the fee for his Radio Biographies of Famous Germans. It was perhaps these years of worry about material survival which led him to take so quickly the decision to commit suicide when the Gestapo visited the guesthouse where he was sleeping as he tried to cross the French- Spanish border in 1940 to get away from the Nazis.

CONCLUSION

These few examples reveal graphically the huge stakes in our fighting to retain the university as a centre for the critical intellect. Despite the capacity of the powerful to recuperate the cultural canon for their own status purposes, the independence of the canonised tradition in the Republic of Letters has to be preserved at all costs. Critical education within universities allows intellectuals to support such a 'Republic of Letters' as well as to engage in heterodox studies of social reality, studies unpalatable to established élites.

NOTES

[1] Browne, *Securing*, 49.

[2] Browne, *Securing*, 25.

[3] To gain a Distinction at Masters' level, which is the de facto precondition of eligibility for a PhD scholarship it is essential for paid work to be restricted to part-time only. Yet many academically-outstanding students--especially working-class in origin--are forced to finance their Masters with fulltime jobs.

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[4] Williams, *The Common*, 226-9.
[5] Eagleton, *Criticism*, 44.

[6] Browne, *Securing*, 31.

[7] Browne, *Securing*, 49.

[8] Robbins, *Report*, 6-8. Bourdieu's and Passeron's *Reproduction* and *The Inheritors* critiqued this older mode of academic education; nor would we want to deny that many of its attributes went hand-in-hand *in practice* with the social reproduction of class inequalities. But the new threat is of a different order, as I shall show.

[9] Slaughter and Rhoades, *Academic*.

[10] Slaughter and Rhoades, *Academic*, 312.

[11] Slaughter and Rhoades, *Academic*, 311.

[12] Slaughter and Rhoades, *Academic*, 320.

[13] Slaughter and Rhoades, *Academic*, 308.

[14] Martins, *The Marketisation*, 18.

[15] Browne, *Securing*, ch. 6.

[16] Thompson, *The Long*, 28, 33.

[17] Thomas, *The Gramscian*.

[18] Here 'external' social inequalities meant that the contracting parties were in very different situations, thus destroying any solidarity between them: 'All superiority has its effect on the manner in which contracts are made. If, then, it does not derive from the persons [merits] of the individuals [...] it falsifies the moral conditions of exchange. In other words, there *cannot be rich and poor at birth without there being unjust contracts*'. Durkheim, *The Division*, 384. My italics.

[19] Durkheim, *The Division*, 353-73.

[20] A further, 'abnormal' type of the division of labour was the *malintegrated form* where specialised labour is poorly-coordinated; this leads workers to 'incoherence' in the performance of their functions, that is, to irregular performance or even the total ceasing of work, due to inadequacy or poor timing of supplies. Durkheim, *The Division*, 389-395.

[21] Weber, The Protestant, 181-2.

[22] Marx, *Capital*.

[23] Turner, *Investigating*.

[24] *Daily Telegraph*, February 23, 2011.

[25] Eagleton, *Literary*, 25.

[26] Eagleton, *Literary*, 214.

[27] Eagleton, *Literary*, 213.

[28] Rose, *The Intellectual*, 371.

[29] Rose, *The Intellectual*, 371.

[30] Steele, *The Emergence*.

[31] Bourdieu, *The Love*, 111. My emphasis.

[32] Bourdieu, *The Rules*, 276-7.

[33] Bourdieu, *The Rules*, 347.

[34] Bourdieu, *Acts*, 31.

[35] I am grateful to Andrew Smith for this information. See his *C.L.R. James and the Study of Culture*, Basingstoke: Palgrave

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Against Audited Education: The Emergence of an Activist Pedagogy

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This study will analyse the restructuring of British higher education systems after the neoliberal reforms of the 1980's and 1990's and their impact on the experience of labour at university. It illustrates the gradual abandonment of a public education ideal in favour of a model that conceives of education as a commercial service and of universities as paid service providers in the context of New Labour's huge investment into the 'knowledge economy'. Today, British higher education institutions widely operate according to a market logic and have developed elaborate means to generate wealth in order to cater to various creative and intellectual industries. The liberal faith in education for the sake of intellectual nourishment was increasingly replaced by the neoliberal creed that academic excellence is best expressed through success on the market. Universities thus became small 'control societies', geared towards utilisable, packaged output in the form of docile graduates and productive staff.[1]

I will show how this transformation was achieved through a twofold process that externally marketised universities and internally changed the ethics of teaching and learning through the implementation of several performance audits. My study will evaluate the subjective consequences of working in higher education under neoliberalism while paying particular attention to the effects of the emerging 'audit culture'. I aim to show that with the complete subsumption of learning and teaching under capital, education loses its quality of in-depth immersion as it becomes tightly-measured and utilitarian. I further argue that the introduction of a profit-logic into the university has to be interpreted as the 'generalisation of the enterprise form to all forms of conduct'[2] or as an increasing colonisation of independent life-domains by capital that makes it difficult to occupy spaces that are free from instrumental calculation. I traced the changes in educa-

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tion with the help of depth interviews conducted with four members of staff at Goldsmiths College, University of London.

INTRODUCING THE PROBLEM

There is a substantial body of work analysing recent neoliberal reforms at university. Many writers suggest that the application of a market model to education significantly changes the ethics of learning and creates an increase in competition, individualism and the standardised output that has become characteristic of the 'postmodern university'.[3] Most accounts of the neoliberal university criticise the growing inequality and competition between institutions, the lack of democratic decision-making and the demise of in-depth learning due to the introduction of market mechanisms into higher education. These critiques are usually couched in a general attack on neoliberal politics in general.[4] However, while accurately framing the external policy changes that affect education, they rarely analyse the subjective experience of working in newly marketised institutions.

In the spirit of Antonio Negri, David Harvey and Franco Berardi, I will argue that the commodification of education has to be interpreted as part of the increasing subsumption of heterogeneous, non-commercial aspects of life under the homogenising logic of capital. All three writers claim that the increasing colonisation of the state, the media, educational and cultural institutions by the market significantly affects our experience of space and time, making it difficult to occupy spaces that are outside of capital.[5] This has significant consequences on individual subjectivities, both private and public. My research confirmed that the phasing of heterogeneous life-possibilities is felt strongly at university, whose formerly semi-autonomous space of education becomes fully integrated into the profit-logic. The experience of timeless intellectual immersion is thus turned into a form of tightly-measured cognitive labour, foreclosing the universities' potential to instigate and foster critical thought.

Crucially, the classical, liberal academy drew its value precisely from operating at a clear distance to the measured time of capital as a kind of 'temporary autonomous zone'[6] where 'a college-educated middle class worked within market relations but did not exactly follow them'.[7] Since the introduction of a disciplinary regime of audits in the 1980's, the university was increasingly subsumed by the market, which made it difficult for a critical mind to survive. The following depth-interviews are a case in point, illustrating the changes imposed by the marketisation of the university. Their message is simultaneously depressing and encouraging as they shed light on the disciplinary apparatus that directs teaching and research through extensive audits and promote an academic struggle to resist the pressures of audited education.

GATHERING THE DATA

As I seek to shed light on the subjective experiences of labour at universities rather than quantitatively analyse the effects of certain reforms, my data gathering took the form of depth-interviews conducted with four senior lecturers and professors from the Sociology and Media Studies departments at Goldsmiths College, University of London. The interviewing process followed a phenomenological approach that acknowledges the importance of a subject's direct experience

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in the constitution of their personal life world. I thus used depth-interviews as a form of oral history, interpreted by Alessandro Portelli as a 'verbal art generated by the cultural and personal encounter in the context of fieldwork'.[8] In this function, they can provide multi-dimensional, qualitative narratives of experience that connect the personal to the social in an engaging way, 'making politics and social conditions come alive through their impact on individual lives'.[9] In the interviews, my subjects thus framed their concrete experience of labour at university in relation to wider political trends and changes in a narrative format. My questions provided a rough thematic thread that granted the interviewees space for individual reflection. All interviewees were presented with the same guiding questions to ensure coherence.

I want to emphasise that my study doesn't claim to provide an objective or positivist account of the nature of labour at universities today. It merely illustrates an experience of a particular from which one might reach out to the general without the guarantee of obtaining any accurate truth. The knowledge that emerged in my interviews was produced in the 'inter-view', as Kvale and Brinkmann characterise the instant between the interviewer and the interviewee.[10] It remains immanent to this situation and can make no transcendental claims beyond this setting. The following accounts therefore illustrate a set of disparate and localised experiences at a university that has been subject to the same considerable policy changes as many other institutions in the U.K. Without any ambition towards comprehensiveness, they stand as experiential narratives that turn the analytical lens on the ethics of learning and teaching under today's pressures of time and money. My analysis provides an interpretative hermeneutics of the interviews that were carefully recorded and subsequently transcribed. It will effectively cover the four areas of research, teaching, staff-student relationship and intellectual community although there is significant overlap between these fields. Finally, I should remark that all my interviews critically evaluate the university reforms. It should be clear that there undoubtedly exist more enthusiastic voices, in support of the recent changes in higher education.

RESEARCHING UNDER THE AUDIT

Without idealising the relatively free and unregulated research-environments of the 1960's and 70's, all interviewees described the strong shift in research that occurred with the introduction of the Teaching Quality Assessment (TQA) and the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), recently re-named Research Excellence Framework (REF) that established standardised benchmarks of achievement for teaching and research. The Higher Education Funding Council carried out the first Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) in 1986. It invited universities in the UK to submit documented proof of staff research in 67 subjects and evaluated the research in relation to the number of researching staff, published output and general research environment. Since its inception, the RAE has taken place every four years and has significantly restructured not only the public image but also the internal administration of universities. Measuring research and teaching according to standardised benchmarks rendered intellectual labour commensurable and allowed for a hierarchical ranking of schools and colleges. Furthermore, the numerical index thus obtained served as an indicator of the academic 'performance' of a university and became the basis for state and third-party funding of the university sector. Marylin Strathern remarks how the 19th century biopolitical devices of testing and statistics were introduced in late 20th and 21st century universities to constitute a tight system of measurement:

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> With measurement there came a new morality of attainment. If human performance could be measured, then targets could be set and aimed for…this new morality was epitomised in the concept of improvement. Improvement is wonderfully open-ended for it at once describes effort and results.[11]

In a fundamental re-structuring of university budgets, the funding of a department became intimately tied to the research of its staff, which made research the central and most important activity of an academic department, significantly marginalising teaching. All interviewees confirmed that in the 1980's many members of staff who had thought of themselves primarily as teachers, had to re-think their activities in terms of research. Interviewee 1 outlines the way he experienced the reforms, instigated by the RAE.

> **I1:** Well it both came slowly and sharply. There was a lot of pressure then to value yourself as a researcher and not as a teacher. There was a moment when I woke up to the realisation that I was going to be judged exclusively on my research…and it felt bad in the department. A lot of people were pushed out. There were mental strains and nervous breakdowns. It was a horrible period when there was a restructuring of sociology. The RAE gradually took hold and your research became central and your teaching was paid lip service. The commitments that my generation had to teaching changed and a younger generation came in that knew that the name of the game was research and they knew that they were not going to be valued in relation to their teaching. In terms of the neoliberal rationality that emerged that wasn't surprising.

Apart from elevating the status of research, the way that research was conducted also changed dramatically through the RAE. Staff-research was assessed in relation to publications in the prestigious journals of a discipline, which meant that departments began directing research towards certain outlets. When asked about the influence of the RAE, Interviewee 2 explains how in his department, pressure is exercised in a more subtle way, which he describes as akin to a Foucauldian disciplinary process. Rather than directly commanding members of staff to publish in certain high-ranking journals and contractually binding them to this achievement, there is a mechanism that makes the research of all members of staff transparent. Colleagues will then positively encourage each other to produce certain kinds of research that are in demand. These conditions of permanent monitoring, increased research visibility and subtle coercion on behalf of staff, creates an environment that is likely to produce the academic output, appreciated by the RAE.

> **I2:** There are no departmental discussions where they straightforwardly say, look we need to publish in journal X or we need to publish on topic Y, so that doesn't happen quite in that brutal and overt way. At the same time in these personal development reviews that are part of the whole process now, you do get told often in very non-authoritarian ways: Have you thought of publishing in other types of journals? So there is a broader and more generic departmental discussion where people look at where other people in the department publish […] I think it's the nature of a system that works in a kind of governmental, Foucauldian way that it's not about telling you what you should do. It's setting out the conditions whereby you will engage in some

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> proper form of self-monitoring. They say, look, unless the department does well in the next REF, money will go down, you will have to do more teaching, you know, the financial climate will be such that the financial benefits that you may have may be lost etc. So there is an enticement rather than a command.

All interviewees confirm that their research thus becomes implicitly directed to certain outlets, and that this process is difficult to escape. However, the audits not only affect the content but also the temporal structure of research. Because the RAE is carried out every four years, long-term research becomes hampered and the time for a proper in-depth engagement with a topic becomes scarce. This works against the development of a solid research trajectory and turns researchers into writing-machines that are flexible and able to change direction according to every change of fashion in an academic environment. Interviewee 1 describes this increase in time-pressure and the loss of the time, necessary to think critically. Being educated in the 1960's in a less production-driven environment, he felt very strongly about the changes.

> **I1:** I was lucky because I emerged out of a generation where I had time to develop an intellectual project and I always had a strong sense of my own intellectual work. When I had to shift into research there was an agenda that I had and I had time. The generation that followed me had to basically transform their PhDs into research projects and that made it very difficult once the research project was published as a book to then know what your research trajectory might mean. So in terms of the quality of research the time that I had in the 70's to ground my intellectual concerns and the depth of the philosophical background that I had, I think, made a real difference to my research. So I felt enormously under pressure. I needed to be able to be productive and publish and so I changed my strategy. It was pressured and you had to think in terms of short-term productivity as opposed to a project that might take you four or five years to do.

Many experience this emphasis on quickly published, short-term research as not only putting academics under superfluous mental strains but also as creating an overabundance of writing that simply floods the academic scene. Interviewee 3 comments on the effects of the RAE on his own writing:

> **I3:** Now, I have always thought that the RAE has a profoundly corrosive effect on the life of the mind. And I wrote an article about this in the guardian and the by-line of the piece was that I think the RAE is making us write to fast and think to quickly. Not spending enough time to let the ideas we're working through reach some point of maturation. And because we have to meet these audits, we're constantly firing out things. I look at my own CV and I think, that one should have taken longer, that one I was proud of, that one was too early.

The interviews all illustrate how the market subsumes formerly free research and turns it into a profit-generating activity. While research became market-directed and output-oriented, teaching experienced an even more radical change as the core occupation in the university that had to suffer most extremely under the introduction of the audit culture.

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TEACHING UNDER THE AUDIT

When asked about the academic task of teaching, many interviewees fondly remembered their own days at university. They confirmed that before the 1980's, UK universities saw themselves mainly as teaching institutions, dedicated the cultivation of open debate and the fostering of student interests. Tuition fees didn't exist and most students were successful in obtaining a grant. In many places, an Oxbridge-style tutoring system allowed for an intimate teacher-student contact and provided in-depth student supervision. There was the belief that a proper education could only be obtained by immersing oneself in an exchange of ideas that was not time-limited and not constrained by fees. However many interviewees point out that one has to resist the temptation to nostalgically idealise the universities of the 1960' and 70's that had significant class, sex and race reservations with the majority of students being middle-class, male and white. Interviewee 3 nonetheless remains enthusiastic about the past freedoms of teaching.

> **I3:** It was a completely different kind of environment of very small groups, very intense, small sessions. I developed very strong relationships with my teachers. It felt like there was more time for engagement and thought. And I was really lucky because I encountered many wonderful people who were committed to the life of the mind but also committed to the practices and crafts of teaching. So when I think about it, there were like 10 people on my course, really. And if you were interested in ideas and interested in reading and thinking, you got an awful lot of contact with staff.

Then in the mid-1980's, the performance audits were introduced and under the RAE, university staff had to re-think their activities in terms of research. Because of this immense mobilisation of research capacities, teaching became secondary. The aim was to allow top-academics in the department as much time for research as possible. Thus, the tutorial system was abolished and replaced with classes and office hours, significantly limiting the time that teachers took to supervise students. As research became the primary academic activity, teaching became an instrumental chore that was increasingly relayed to contracted part-time staff and PhD students, working in precarious non-tenured positions. When asked about the impact of the RAE on teaching, Interviewee 3 describes the neglect of pedagogy as one of the major flaws of contemporary universities.

> **I3:** There was this profound shift in priorities partly because the way the auditing of the universities took place. The priority was what you wrote. The assessment was on research and on variety and I think without being too crude about it that this meant people had to put all their energies into the process of writing for publications and anything that detracted from that task was secondary, including students, including teaching. And I think there's a fundamental and profound tension between the commitments to writing and researching and a kind of ethic or a commitment of teaching and learning. I think that's still the thing that's breaking the back of the university.

The new paradigm of academic knowledge-production thus came as a shock for people who were committed to pedagogy. Many academics could not balance both tasks and put all their

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energies into research.

However it would be erroneous to think that because it was marginalised, teaching was simply forgotten by the audit culture. To the contrary, it underwent a re-structuring quite similar to the changes affecting research; teaching outcomes too became measurable through programme reviews, standardised course outlines, and student surveys. Simultaneously, student 'employability' became one of the key factors in the yearly university rankings, making university akin to a professional training school. This caused a strong instrumentalisation of courses that became skill-based and lost much of their intrinsic value. Interviewee 4 describes the new, heavy auditing of teaching.

> **I4:** The audit culture has saturated the teaching […] You know the kind of documents we have to create, evaluation documents, performance reviews, the way that you write your course outlines is standardised. Some of us don't even understand what aims and objectives and outcomes are, you know. Normally you would say I teach these texts so that the students can understand these thinkers and these issues and we can't say that anymore. It's another managerial language, audit language that you have to take on. That's so big in teaching that it's hard to escape it.

Because it proved difficult to measure something as abstract as knowledge conveyed through open lectures and engaged debate, the entire nature of taught courses had to be changed. Loose curricula, that allowed the teacher creative freedom in shaping its content were therefore remodelled and modularised in order to convey packaged information, whose absorption by students could be measured more easily. Teaching gradually shifted from a relatively free environment for debate and the shaping of knowledge to a standardised transmittance of information directed at exams. Interviewee 2 illustrates how the direction of teaching towards output foreclosed alternative models of pedagogy that follow a non-utilitarian logic.

> **I2:** "I mean the courses are very short the hours are very few […] If you have to teach 12 hours a week on two courses where you can patiently go through a book, that might be more relaxing or more conducive to one's general intellect than teaching 8 hours but on 8 different things. So I think there is a way where in order to fulfil these assessments and targets, you're pushed away from other pedagogical practices that would be both more empowering and more knowledge-generating than others. So what if, instead of spending 10 weeks doing these astronomical surveys on every theory from contemporary power theory to historical sociology or whatever you just said, ok, how about we all actually get a deep and rich and multi-dimensional grasp of just feudalism […] Much of what is emancipatory about education is to give people access to capacities they otherwise wouldn't be able to exercise. This is often mediated by the experience of immersing yourself in an intellectual universe that you are not previously familiar with. And that possibility is something, which is curtailed or limited very much by modularised, pre-targeted, therefore prejudiced ways of thinking education in terms of outcomes.

Teaching thus looses its mission of opening minds and fostering intellectual curiosity and be-

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comes replaced by a purely instrumental form of skill training. This instrumentalisation of teaching emerged within a complex process that sought to commodify the teacher-student relationship.

THE EMPLOYABILITY PARADIGM

One of the characteristic new figures of today's universities seems to be the apathetic student with no interest or commitment to neither the course content nor his fellow students. Many interviewees expressed shock and dismay at the significant levels of de-motivation, pervading their classes. They see this newfound boredom as a result of the hyper-instrumentalisation of the university space. In order to understand this, it is again important to go back to the academic spirit of the 1960's and 70's. Interviewee 1 has been a teacher since the early 1970's and confirms, "he has seen things change a lot". When probing deeper, he recounts that students formerly saw a fundamental connection between what they learnt at university and their own lives. They followed courses with the twofold aim of firstly, critiquing established knowledge and framing positions of political and existential counter-knowledge and secondly, critiquing their university as an institution of capitalist society and proposing a new ethics for education. There was a strong spirit of solidarity among the student body and students organised to collectively voice grievances. Today, Interviewee 1 discerns a widespread loss of student commitment to both the course and their peers.

> **I1:** The students were very committed to their learning and very interested in framing what their own ideas were so the university was a space for exploration […] There was a lot more reflection on teaching and learning within the university. So there were still the echoes of the student movement and critiques of the university's relationship to knowledge and the importance of knowledge to be relevant and relevant to the kinds of lives that people wanted to live but also about the transformation of institutions in capitalist society. So students tended to be much more politicised, committed and engaged then with positions that they might have.

This attitude was possible in a university that operated as a semi-autonomous space, less determined by the pressures of time and money. Interviewee 1 explains that this meant immense freedom concerning the format of a taught course, which could take the form of a reading group, a seminar or a workshop focusing on open discussion or in-depth reading. From the 1980's onwards, these learning environments increasingly vanished as the conservative government made universities cater increasingly to the market. The cuts in university funding and the audit culture produced what Interviewee 2 refers to as a consumer-client relationship where, under the new financial pressures, students began to see the primary aim of a university education in form of a quickly achieved degree and not in the immersive experience of education. Furthermore New Labour's plan to significantly increase the number of university graduates in Britain led to a situation where many secondary school graduates without a pronounced academic interest felt under pressure to continue into higher education. This caused not only high levels of anxiety but also significant debt due to the rising costs of education. The development of this 'banking concept of education', as Paolo Freire puts it had significant consequences inside the classroom.[12] Today, debate in seminars is rare and many students only mechanically fulfil the course demands. Many see no real relation between their university degree and their lives or future job environments.

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However, Interviewee 2 points out that in an expensive, hyper-competitive environment where a university degree is seen as the pre-requisite for any well-paying job, students cannot help but adopt a consumer-attitude towards education.

> **I2:** I think a lot of it is lost in part because of a broader institutional framework in which students themselves are led to, by the way the institutional framework is organised, by the pressures of time and of money on them to actually have a much more instrumental relationship to the teaching itself. So you have a lot of students that are anxious and therefore are interested in their output. And understandably so, I mean, if you give someone a third, you know you've screwed their job chances for a number of things. So the moment that a student is put at least partly into a client-consumer position, then the pedagogical relationship is obviously inflected by that to a considerable extent. Now when you see league tables of universities the employability is a key criterion but as a pedagogue, especially when you're teaching critical social theory, is your aim really to create good, employable workers? On the other hand, students might demand that you further their employability. And this can lead to a kind of hyper-instrumentalisation. That's why I find things like the National Student Survey deeply depressing because it does vitiate the pedagogical and political relationship between students and lecturers into a kind of market research. Like are you happy with your product? So once you have these kinds of metrics, then they generate very different power dynamics between students and teachers.

This shows how difficult it is to de-instrumentalise education once a client-consumer relationship is in place that is legitimised by the statistical measurement of various utilitarian elements. The logic of this statistical system is diabolic since once students are made to pay for their education, it seems only natural that there should be ways to measure the quality of the educational service provided. Under these circumstances, other types of teaching indeed seem increasingly difficult to imagine. However, when asked about a possible better future of higher education, many interviewees offered a compelling vision of learning, completely freed from measurable outcome and points towards attempts to resist the drudgery of spoon-fed lecturing through a kind of activist pedagogy.

RESISTING THE AUDIT

All academics interviewed foresaw a bleak future for the university system. Adding to the redirection of research and teaching towards utilitarian aims, the financial crisis was seen to produce strong cuts in funding and a consequent rise in tuition fees. The neoliberal restructuring of the education sector widely replaced many tenured jobs with precarious short-term and part-time positions. My interviewees all had experience with working on part-time, fixed-term contracts until they eventually won tenure sometimes years later. Furthermore, under the cuts in funding, universities were urged to save money by restructuring their weaker and less popular departments through budget cuts and redundancies. (The recent closure of the philosophy department at Middlesex being just the most striking example of this trend). Interviewee 4 gives a detailed account of the real pressures within 'marketised' universities.

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I4: Well, it's a problem. They are evacuating the public space, basically. I think the future could be what is in the States now. The horrible perforation of the intellectual mind by the audit culture and we are very fearful of the reductions in funding. We've seen some of the consequences in Sussex, sudden sackings. King's College, certain disciplines that do not recruit, that don't have an exchange-value in terms of use-value are being shrunk. This happens with philosophy. There are very few philosophy departments left. So thinking about impact in a wider sense, thinking about social impact, political impact, that's not the impact they want us to talk about, really. So I hate to think what we're going to become in 10 years time.

All interviewees univocally agreed that the university system was in crisis. However, many saw the worsening of the conditions ahead as harbouring the possibility for a re-thinking of the tasks of education and a re-evaluation of their role within it. This re-thinking usually took the form of a search for a way to negotiate the audit culture in a liberating and emancipatory way and opened up two different lines of conduct among the academics. One works within the university and seeks to occupy the spaces within that remain relatively free from the intrusion of the market. The other extends its reach beyond the university and begins to look for external spaces to work in. Between these poles of re-appropriation and withdrawal, Interviewee 3 has adopted a pragmatic attitude towards the audits. He saw it as irresponsible to abandon the university altogether even if pragmatism ultimately means to subscribe to the rules of the audit game.

I3: I have developed a pragmatic strategy with regard to the audit culture. So there's part of me that thinks, ok, I'm trying to read the ways in which the ways of the audit culture are shifting because I know that this college has been very successful. It's really important to sustain this success in these audits for an intellectual project in the broadest sense. So I will make all my investments this year to make sure that I have 4 journal articles that fit for the RAE in 2012. At the same time, I'm planning this little other project that I've been working on for 5 years that is this online book that no one in the audit culture will be interested in. And I think we need to dwell on more of the possibilities of that space […] I think it's important to be in those spaces and to change those spaces. There's an irresponsible high-mindedness that comes with refusing that thing altogether because who are you responsible to? I genuinely believe in the idea of a community of scholars. If the university is not that, then what is it? And to just abandon that and say, the forces of audit have become too powerful, that is a kind of abdication of any responsibility to act. And I see lots of fantastic people having to operate within this change situation but refusing to be made in its image and I think that's the only way I can think about positioning myself in that context.

Interviewee 3 points to the existence of other spaces of writing and teaching that are less subsumed by the measurement of the audit culture. It seems true that once the demands of the RAE and the formulation of aims and outcomes for a course is achieved, there still remains the possibility for innovative teaching and productive teacher-student contact that is neither measured nor assessed. The interviews show that many academics are committed to a kind of activist pedagogy that fulfils the demands of the RAE pragmatically but actively develops other areas to work with each other and with students.

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However, not all academics remained optimistic about the potentialities of the university and some adopted a more depressed tone. They tended to see the future of education outside the institution and actively sought out other spaces. Interviewee 4 explained how she partook in the creation of such autonomous spaces that seek to escape the measured time of assessed education.

> **I4:** We also have a life that is beyond the single institution and most of us have networks and political contacts that run throughout the world and we will do talks in places to people who are not on the RAE radar. These places are the ones that keep me going. They're my life force really. It's that kind of energy connection where you can do some things outside of the strict formal domain of the academy that actually makes it worthwhile. You can be part of an academic environment that is outside the institution […] If it gets impossible, then we have to get out and go back to other ways. So in Europe they have what is called the Nomadic University, the Autonomous University, and it's run by people connected to, but outside the academy. And people have been developing alternative ways because there is still a need to come together and share and inspire and challenge each other so wherever that space is, I'm into fostering it in whatever capacity I can.

There was agreement on the current crisis of the university without a clear recipe on how to safely re-emerge from it. Most of my interviewees had hopes to establish locations that counter the spirit of the audit culture and have opened up spaces both within and outside the university for enriching forms of scholarship that become shaped through a commitment to the intellectual community and a certain activist approach to a radical pedagogy. However, maintaining certain past commitments to non-instrumental learning was seen to become increasingly difficult. Interviewee 4 thus ends with a bleak illustration of the current fetters to education.

> **I4:** I think there are a lot of people that are going to get lost in the machine as well. Everything is becoming individualised around promotion, recruitment, how you illustrate that you're good and worthy of promotion. And in the old time version we did it out of vocation. But even if people start out like that, the subjectivities that they are going to be part of in order to maintain their jobs will make that 'vocation' side of it much harder. And so we are all part of the same processes of neoliberalism and the rule of the entrepreneurial self."

THE UNIVERSITY IN RUINS?

In their accounts of everyday life in academia, all interviewees described a profound shift from a relatively free environment of engaging debate and in-depth research to a highly competitive and marketised university that replaces a commitment to the independent mind with utilitarian and commodified knowledge-production. All academics agreed that the two basic tasks of research and teaching changed significantly over the past 30 years in a process that was ascribed to the educational reforms under Thatcherism and New Labour. The clearly stated goal of these new university policies was to make the intellectual labour of academics that had remained undocumented for so long, measurable and accountable.

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If the interviews gave an experiential account of the recent changes in higher education; they also represent a search for the political causes that underlie these changes. In this regard, there are two discernable tendencies that turn the university into a tool for the market, one external and one internal. The external neoliberal restructuring of the university sector aimed to make universities enterprising through drastic cuts in funding, high tuition fees and the creation of a precarious labour market for part-time tutors and PhD students. In order to become financially viable, many schools had to downsize unpopular departments and make staff redundant. The internal 'marketisation' of the university operated in a subtler way through the introduction of an audit culture that significantly changed research, teaching, academic relationships and the wider intellectual community. In analysing the conducted interviews, it became possible to interpret the performance audits as Foucauldian 'technologies of the self' that install an intricate 'enterprise dispositif' at the heart of the university through a proliferation of discourses around profit and accountability.[13] The audit culture therefore sets out a framework that positively nourishes and fosters academic activities that are output-directed and marginalises non-market driven engagements.

In this context, universities create a research environment that values top-ranking publications and re-invents teaching as a measurable skill-training for jobs. No university is contractually bound to change its ethics in this way but it is clear that the negative consequences of not doing so would be considerable. Through tuition fees and the rising pressures of the job market, students are 'responsibilised' and enticed to see their education purely in career terms. Teachers are meanwhile made to neglect their key task and turn all their attention to lucrative research. All intellectual engagements that are not directly output-oriented become increasingly phased out because they become practically disadvantageous. In summary, the audits entice academics to become entrepreneurs, thereby framing education and knowledge in terms of investment and profit and subsuming them under the excessive logic of capital. The fruitful relationship between teachers and students consequently degenerates into a service provider-client contract that forecloses alternative kinds of pedagogy as the 'enterprise self' becomes the dominant subject at university.

For the 'enterprise self', profitable activity is the only sensible activity and therefore labour-time becomes the only imaginable timeframe. The profit-logic thus becomes totalising and begins to pervade all areas of life, forming a kind of metanarrative of the post-industrial West, as Michael Peters argues:

> The notion of enterprise culture, designed for a postindustrial, information economy of the 1990's can be seen in poststructuralist terms as the creation of a new metanarrative, a totalising and unifying story about the prospect of economic growth and development, based on the triumvirate of science, technology and education.[14]

In the face of this, the question becomes how to resist? How to deconstruct this narrative of unbounded capital? In answering this question, academics have increasingly started to develop tactics of resistance and counter-conducts that try to make time for alternative ways of teaching and learning in spaces that are less assessed and audited. This can happen both within the university and in novel spaces and requires a strong pedagogy combined with a pronounced will of

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students. In my interviews, this activist pedagogy took the form of Negrian 'Negative Labour', as an activity that forces open independent spaces and opens temporalities that operate under a different logic to that of capital:

> Negative labour, that is the capacity to produce on the basis of co-operation and freed from command, begins to come about: mobility is constitutive, it is the constitutive condition of the free use of time.[15]

Negative Labour emphasises that the subsumption of all human activities by capital is never quite complete and can therefore be effectively subverted from the inside. In the midst of an instrumental university, there might be the possibility to re-assess and break the ideology of profit-driven education. If the critical spirit that has informed the academy since its inception is to be maintained, this seems to be the most important future task that academics and students in the U.K and worldwide have to engage in.

NOTES

[1] Deleuze, *Negotiations*.

[2] Burchell, *Technologies*, 275.

[3] Smith and Webster, *The Postmodern*; Evans, *Killing*; Waters, *Enemies*; Newfield, *Unmaking*.

[4] Evans, *Killing*; Waters, *Enemies*; Newfield, *Unmaking*.

[5] Negri, *Time*; Harvey, *The Condition*; Berardi, *The Soul*.

[6] Bey, *T.A.Z*.

[7] Newfield, *Unmaking*, 144.

[8] Portelli, *Oral History*, 24.

[9] Portelli, *Oral History*, 31.

[10] Kvale and Brinkmann (2009).

[11] Strathern, *Improving Ratings*, 307.

[12] Freire, *Pedagogy*.

[13] Foucault, *Technologies*.

[14] Peters, *Enterprise Culture*, 65.

[15] Negri, *Revolution*, 93.

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