Student demonstration against fees and cuts, Aberdeen. Credits: http://anticuts.com/wp-content/uploads / 2015/07/ Aberdeen-student-left-banner.jpg

Anthropologists witnessing and reshaping the neoliberal academy

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Contributions of

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Introduction

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In the summer of 2016, Anuac hosted a forum dedicated to *Anthropologists in/of the neoliberal academy* (Heatherington, Zerilli 2016), featuring short papers by colleagues across Europe, North America, and beyond. Contributions witnessed unfolding transformations in their universities related to changing education policy frameworks, declines in funding, the introduction of audit cultures, and new forms of public-private partnership. As Sandra Grey has recently described the case of New Zealand universities subjected to rigorous managerial systems, «the picture is one of institutions and their academics being robbed of the space to be engaged in projects which are not countable, auditable, measurable or commercializable» (2017: 275). This suggests profound impacts on the mission of higher education and possibilities for critical research. Shore and Wright have explained, with particular reference to studies of institutions in Europe and New Zealand, «under pressure to produce "excellence", quality research and innovative teaching, improve world rankings, forge business links and attract elite, fee-paying students, many universities struggle to maintain their traditional mandate to be "inclusive", foster social cohesion, improve social mobility and challenge received wisdom – let alone improve the poor records of gender, diversity and equality» (2017: 1-2). These same pressures have been recognized by the American Association of University Professors, which recently marked serious threats to systems of shared governance, organized labour, principles of social diversity, and the fundamental role of colleges and universities in the U.S. (Barlow 2017).

Anthropologists continue to witness – as students, researchers, practitioners, teachers, community advocates and administrators – how the structural changes impacting higher education and research are affecting the future of our discipline, our institutions and our society writ large. Our second forum proceeds with this important work of participant observation in the

evolution of the neoliberal academy, from the perspective of diverse subject positions and national contexts. We are interested not only in the outcome of research and scholarship in the anthropology of higher education, but also in documenting the changing conditions of our everyday work in the academy, as well as the movements taking shape to resist and channel neoliberal initiatives that affect us. Snapshots of current academic contexts across the U.S. are provided by contributions from Virginia R. Dominguez, Sam Beck, Carl Maida, Alexis M. Jordan & Shaheen M. Christie, and Boone W. Shear. In addition, Martin A. Mills offers a perspective from Scotland, Berardino Palumbo discusses developments in Italy, Alan Smart provides insight from Canada, and Ger Duijzings reflects on an institution in Britain, while Alexander Koensler & Cristina Papa discuss comparative examples from Northern Ireland and Italy. Taken together, these grounded commentaries represent more than the sum of the parts. Like the essays contained in our 2016 forum, they are also evidence of the collective spirit of our discipline, which is fundamentally self-reflective and engaged. We are also pleased to reprint the 2016 Manifesto from the University of Aberdeen, *Reclaiming Our University*, which seeks out a new model for the public university in the twenty-first century.

Documenting the erosion of the tenure system in the U.S., Dominguez explores the pivotal principle of academic freedom. Although protected by European constitutional law (COE 2006), and written into the statutes of some state systems, the right to freedom of academic research and teaching is increasingly jeopardized by emerging procedures of administrative control and sanctions, as well as obligations and limitations associated with privately sponsored projects. Koensler & Papa (this forum) argue that the unspoken purpose of transformations in academic administration is the making of a new, docile subject: the "flexible academic person". This recalls Jon Mitchell's crucial point that «the transformation of subjectivity is not a "soft" project, but the hard edge of neoliberalism» (2016: 90). Yet academics are anything but docile, and diverse scholarly projects address challenges to the core values of the university. In the Auckland Declaration on the Purpose of the University in the 21st Century, for example, an international collaboration of students and academics from China, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, USA and European countries affirm the principle of higher education as a public good, and the necessity for institutions, researchers and educators to remain autonomous actors in order to fulfil mandates as «critic and conscience of society» (Newfield *et al.* 2016). Identifying a «new social contract for higher education», they insist,

> Universities' responsibilities to societies must always take precedence over their accountability to their funders. Constraints and conditions on funding must not be used to compromise their educational autonomy, academic freedom, or social responsibility (*ivi*).

Drawing on experiences with educational theories and practices in U.S. public universities, both Beck and Maida stress the fundamental value of learning as an engaging engaged, transformative social practice in their contributions to this forum.

However, "learning away from neoliberalism", as Boone poetically suggests in his essay, is a route cobbled with paradoxes and contradictions. Neoliberal restructuring cannot be easily refused or reversed; neither should it be conceived as a monolithic, teleological process. In fact, Palumbo argues that despite evidence of the limits and damages produced by the recently established university audit system in Italy, it is better than relying on the "backward", "tribal" evaluation and recruitment practices that have previously held sway in Italian social anthropology. On the other hand, neoliberal processes do not necessarily transform all universities into institutions that operate according to the logic of profit seeking: as Smart contends in his commentary, the Canadian academy works rather as an economy of prestige that nonetheless serves the production of private profit, like the State itself. The contradictions and opacity of the university business model and discourse is also at the core of Mills' contribution, according to which: «the economic dynamics at work in these changes are far more unclear, and the rhetoric of neoliberalism and "business" hides considerable confusion, suggesting that it is something of a red herring» (Mills, this forum). And if the business model is far from being as efficient and worthwhile as it pretends to be, on the other hand «the movement for engagement is both part of this integration [into the market economy] and a movement of resistance against the neoliberal political economy» (Beck, this forum). Duijzings adopts a different kind of voice in his "ethnographic dispatches" that offer a perspective on the transformation process at a well-known institution in UK. His vivid account suggests that university teachers and professors, students, administrative staff and blue collar service personnel are all atomized categories of persons in the university who are rigidly classified, hierarchically organized, and most importantly kept separate one from the other, as though they were living in different, often conflicting professional worlds. It is this implicit social division that undermines their capacity to resist structural violence, whereas a coordinated coalition might assert an alternative to the prevailing university model.

This year's forum is concerned to explore how anthropologists are in fact actively re-envisioning and reshaping the institutions within which we work. As Shore and Wright (2017: 18-21) discuss, the corporate university is not the only model available to us; some academics are now participating in trust universities, cooperative universities and free universities. These authors conclude that such alternative projects of higher education may not be viable substitutes for the public university, «however they do illustrate the advantages of an educational system freed from commercial imperatives... [and they highlight] a commitment to, and confidence in, higher education as a vehicle for promoting a better future for all» (*ibidem*: 21). Such creative determination and collaboration is required to find new paths forward for public education. In this forum, we have sought out contributions that look toward a vision for reshaping the neoliberal academy in positive ways. While all of the essays here contribute understandings that support our scope for agency, a provocative contribution from Shear on the role of the "solidarity economy" movement on and off campus in Massachusetts is particularly apropos in this respect. Similarly, Jordan and Christie document the efforts of students, academic staff and faculty working together to advocate for academic freedom in Wisconsin. Each of these pieces supports the argument that only a genuine collaborative effort of students and teachers can help us move towards a new academic community envisioning the university «as a location of possibility from which to locate and advance lines of connection to egalitarian worlds» (Shear, this forum). This is perhaps best exemplified by the Reclaiming Our University movement originating at the University of Aberdeen, with its Manifesto providing an anchor to our forum:

> We, scholars, students, staff and alumni of the University of Aberdeen, call for fundamental reform of the principles, ethos and organisation of our university, in order (1) that it should be restored to the community to which it belongs and (2) that it can fulfil its civic purpose in a manner appropriate to our times, in the defence of democracy, peaceful coexistence and human flourishing.

We invite our colleagues around the world to respond and contribute to this continuing exchange of ideas about the future of the academy. As Aaron Barlow avers, «We have work to do... We cannot allow decisions about our institutions to be made without our participation» (2017: 2).

Like the rest of this *Anuac* issue, our forum is dedicated to the memory of anthropologist Ugo Fabietti, whose progressive vision for the future of the discipline continues to provoke novel intellectual explorations.

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The erosion of academic tenure in the U.S.

And its ties to public neoliberal anti-intellectualism

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Abstract: This essay examines the erosion of tenure in the U.S. academy and its connections to the spread of neoliberal capitalist ideology in U.S. colleges and universities. It also explores how this affects anthropology departments since only a small part of anthropology is ever considered part of the STEM fields.

I write as someone with experience at several U.S. universities but also as past president of the American Anthropological Association (AAA). And I write as someone who has held visiting positions of different kinds at universities in Israel, Hungary, England, France, Italy, South Africa, and Japan. My concerns here are primarily, but not exclusively, about what is happening to higher education in the U.S.

Change is not necessarily bad, of course. There were only four tenured women on the Yale faculty when I began there as an undergraduate, and there are many more now (though still not parity with men). And witness that Yale was for years a bastion of elite families who sent their children to exclusive private schools before they went on to Yale. It was only in the mid-sixties that starting Yale Freshmen classes consisted of more students from public high schools than private high schools. Change can be good. It can be fast or slow, but it can still be good.

The question, of course, is what kind of change we want, what kind of change we are seeing, and what kind of impact that change is having. For years I was probably too focused on my own career to notice, even when I got involved in university administration and politics, as I quickly did at Duke. I worried then about whether I would ever get tenure and whether my whole academic generation would. I envied earlier U.S. generations that had seemingly gotten professorial jobs and promotions with less scholarly

accomplishments than were apparently required of my academic generation. I thought and said that tenure should be abolished, even though I knew why it had been instituted in the first place (to avoid political appointments and firings on political, rather than intellectual, grounds). But, as years have passed and I have experienced tenured faculty positions at Duke, the University of California-Santa Cruz, the University of Iowa, and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and had deep exposure to a wide variety of institutions in the U.S. through my AAA presidency, I have reevaluated tenure, worried about its erosion, noticed the rise of STEM fields in the academy (science, technology, engineering, and math) and its connections to increasing privatization, and experienced what I can only describe as growing anti-intellectualism in the public at large. In sum, I now worry deeply about higher education and perhaps especially about the research university.

Tenure and its erosion

The importance of tenure at U.S. universities is that it was designed to protect scholars from interventions – and frankly witch hunts – that had nothing to do with developments in their disciplines. Tenure still depends on other members of one's profession considering someone's teaching and research work valuable and substantial, and it can also depend on academics outside one's field passing judgment, as is the case with Promotion and Tenure Committees, Associate Provosts and Provosts, Chancellors and Presidents of U.S. universities. So people still make decisions and those decisions are not always by people knowledgeable enough to make those decisions, but for a number of decades institutions insisted on keeping politics out of university appointments and promotions. At times people have forgotten the value of tenure and the usefulness of tenure, and at times (such as during the McCarthy Era in the U.S. in the 1950s) people have valued it and cherished it.

But we are now undoubtedly witnessing the erosion of the tenure system at U.S. institutions of higher education. There was a time when faculty retirements and departures meant that a department would keep the line and search for a replacement. That has been less and less the case since my years at Duke in the 1980s. Increasingly, though not suddenly, faculty lines revert to central administration (sometimes to deans and sometimes to committees at that level or higher). And again increasingly, though not suddenly, allocation of those lines depends on enrollment in a department's

courses, some formula that takes into account how much external money a department brings to the campus, or some mix of reputational or statistical rankings of a whole department, its faculty members, and even its (post)graduate students. And when a department shrinks in size, like my current department, administration responds by "allowing" the department to hire people to teach but not in tenurable positions.

I first saw this at Duke, but thought it was particular to the performing arts or the clinical medical sciences. People in those fields were given non-tenurable positions, in effect, making them "less valued" faculty members. At some point in the 1980s Duke instituted and regularized faculty lines for those faculty members, something I saw developed further in the early 1990s at the University of California-Santa Cruz. The UCSC system specified the number of courses those colleagues were required to teach (always more than the rest of us) and the duties (such as research and student advising) they were not allowed to do or, if they did them, the system would not allow them to be counted in any evaluation or possible promotion.

These were the days before the expansion of post-doctoral positions, something I have seen increasingly in Europe and the U.S. over the past two decades. Now we have more and more "postdocs" and more of them require some teaching. As I look at my own department here at UIUC, I see more people offering courses in different kinds of contingent faculty positions and the balance of those faculty members and those of us in tenured or tenure-line positions shifting. There are indeed so many non-tenurable people on our campus that central administration has had to operationalize the various existing titles, define their duties, and spread this information to departments when they have such people teaching regular courses. At the moment, for example, my own department has 6 such colleagues teaching – all women – 6 others listed in various capacities (but not really teaching), and 25 tenured or tenureable faculty. When I first came 10 years ago, the department had 30 or 31 FTEs (tenured or tenurable faculty lines) and only 1 or 2 were in non-tenurable positions.

Money, privatization, and its rhetoric

There is, not surprisingly, much talk about cuts and how to handle them. For years all universities I have known well, especially the large U.S. research universities belonging to the "Big Ten," have been delighted when colleagues have gotten grants from outside their university. Indeed there has been pressure to get those grants, and not every central administrator has fully understood how that privileges people in STEM disciplines. David Skorton,

now Secretary of the Smithsonian but 15-20 years ago first Vice President for Research and then President of the University of Iowa, did understand this despite being a Professor of Medicine before becoming a high-level administrator there. He used money from patents and big-time grants in the natural, biological, and physical sciences to help underwrite Iowa programs in the Humanities and softer Social Sciences and Area Studies programs. But I have seen little of that here at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign at least in the past 10 years.

The pressure to bring in outside money is great, the rhetoric shows up in hiring promotion, tenure, and marketing practices of this university, and the parts of the university (or even of anthropology departments) that do get those external funds are the parts that are being allowed to grow. This is especially the case now that the governor of this State (Governor Rauner) has de facto downsized state support for public Illinois universities, including UIUC, its long-standing flagship institution. We are now very close to the end of a second year without any regular state funding because the governor and his opposition in the state legislature remain locked in a seemingly endless battle over the state's allocation to higher education and service organizations. As a result, there is more talk than ever before of a financial crisis and of needed cuts, even more than when we had to take unpaid furlough days during one of my two years as AAA President. Our salaries are being paid out of university reserves, so it is no surprise that the university is constantly looking for new money to bring in. The problem is that it simultaneously then favors fields seen by the federal government, private corporations, and big-time donors as useful and valuable enough to serve the country's economy and labor needs, and it makes it harder to say no to them when they come calling – demanding things from research on topics they care about, admission of particular students to programs and schools, and a say in who the university hires and fires.

So, it is simply not true that there is no money. There appears to be less money outside the STEM fields, but huge amounts of money are sought and spent on large and potentially income-generating new hires and their specialties and projects. There is clearly a prioritization of people and projects that can bring to a U.S. college or university outside money, especially money from large sources, including (and at times especially targeting) large corporations in science, technology, medicine, and engineering.

Repercussions

Several things are making this possible, and one of them is public anti-intellectualism. Perhaps this is not totally new in the U.S. but I remember how shocked I was when in the mid-late 1990s – and while at the University of Iowa – I had to fill out a form one week about time I spent working, and all because one vocal critic of state universities in Iowa kept complaining that U of Iowa faculty members only worked 6 hours a week (because in each course students and faculty members are in the classroom for 3 hours a week and the unit norm for faculty in the humanities and social sciences was two courses each semester). To counter this bad image, Iowa's central administrators wanted to collect hard data about the time Iowa faculty worked in their triple roles as teachers, researchers, and administrators. As I recall, the university presented the press with data showing that the average number of hours Iowa faculty worked each week was ca. 57. And I wondered who actually worked as little as that, since I knew what I worked and saw my colleagues doing about the same.

But I think I was wrong to be shocked. Increasingly our students and their parents worry about them getting jobs, and many of our undergraduates double-major in order to have one major they and their parents consider practical. Periodically some public figure mocks anthropology as useless. This happened earlier in this decade when Governor Scott of the State of Florida publicly named anthropology as a useless college major, despite U.S. federal government agencies identifying anthropology as one of the professions for which there will be many jobs in the near future. I mentioned this in my 2011 AAA Presidential Address (published in 2012) and Bonnie Urciuoli has been writing about the hidden, creeping manifestation of neoliberal economics in the rhetoric of U.S. colleges and universities for some years (e.g. 2014). At first I thought she was reading something into it that I didn't see, but I was wrong. She is right to identify (and rail against) all the talk about skills in courses, college marketing, and curricula. I see it more and more. Students are supposed to acquire skills in college so they can adapt them, use them, and have them after college when they go to work in government or the private sector. Being curious, developing sharpness as critics and readers, and becoming well-rounded citizens is apparently no longer enough. Simply knowing things is clearly not valued enough.

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Engaged learning

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Abstract: Engaged learning commits itself to community development and an active pedagogy as the state continues to withdraw funding from communities. Community engagement is a teaching, research and change mechanism for students who use ethnographic methods and experiential learning to practice citizenship and rehearse their roles in professional settings. Engaged learning provides the opportunity to explore "alternative moral frames for academic work", for pedagogical innovation and for resistance against neoliberalism.

Cornell University is one of the land-grant universities created in the 1860s that marked the beginnings of university-community engagement. It was a response to the modernization of industry and agriculture with each state in the U. S. developing its own campus. Cornell University is one of a small number of campuses (MIT is another) that incorporates both public professional and private liberal arts colleges. While Cornell's public colleges encouraged off-campus engagement, Cornell's private liberal arts college until recently resisted this sort of engagement.

The Campus Compact, a national coalition of colleges committed to the civic mission of higher education, was formed in 1985 to respond to the criticism higher education received from business and government sectors for being unresponsive to society needs (Beck and Maida 2013: 1-2). The non-academic Cornell Ithaca Volunteers in Training and Service was established in 1988, made up of a small number of activist professors and administrators. Following the establishment of G.H.W. Bush's National Community Service Act of 1990, Cornell established its Public Service Center in 1991 «to champion the conviction that the Cornell University experience confirms service as essential to active citizenship» (http://vivo.cornell- .edu/display/individual26488) using a service-learning methodology. In 2001 Cornell helped found the New York Campus Compact.

University engagement is a double-edged sword, a teaching tool for civic engagement and labor market oriented professional development and the further articulation of higher education with neoliberalism. University engagement incorporates professionals in community non-profit and the private sectors as unofficial non-university instructors and simultaneously provides free labor (Perlin 2012) in exchange. For corporations, internships are an inexpensive recruitment strategy. For the non-profit sector, engagement adds university labor, problem solving and research capacity that replaces government support.

The concept of community engagement is also implemented to reduce inequalities and disparities in our society. According to the Committee on Educating Health Professionals to Address the Social Determinants of Health,

> Community-Engaged learning is an educational process by which people are enabled to become actively and genuinely involved in defining the issues of concern to them; in making decisions about factors that affect their lives; in formulating and implementing policies; in planning, developing and delivering services; and in taking action to active change" (A Framework for Educating Health Professionals 2016: xiii).

Community engagement emphasizes change and agency (Freire 1970), people improving their own lives, while concurrently improving teaching, learning, scholarship, professional practice and the self.

I have directed the Cornell University experiential learning Urban Semester Program in New York City for the last 25 years and shaped it into its engaged form as students involve themselves in internships, community action projects, text analysis and active learning seminars. Engagement here reshapes the students' experiences in knowledge production from siloed out-of-context and abstract learning to lived practice and the multidisciplinary problems of the real world. Coursework that encompasses an interdisciplinary approach is shaped into an integrated curriculum with permeable interdisciplinary boundaries. By providing this kind of knowledge and holistic experiences students in internships rehearse the adjustments they must make to adapt to professional work environments and the civic contributions for which they are being prepared.

Social welfare programs and funding grew between 1965–1981, spanning the presidencies of LBJ, Nixon, Ford and Carter, this growth ended with reductions introduced in the Reagan, Bush and Clinton years. Funding for social welfare was withdrawn, impacting working class urban America as deindustrialization, deregulation, the decline of trade unions, racial discrimination by banks, real estate agents and landlords was occurring. Urban white

flight occurred simultaneously with the repopulation of cities by immigrants and low income people of color.

Government and business sectors reproached institutions of higher learning for not adequately preparing undergraduates for the national and more generally the global labor force as citizens of this nation and the world, potential future leaders, and for being campuses disengaged from real world dilemmas. Universities were criticized for maintaining their Ivy Tower existence, isolating themselves from the real world at a time when the real world was facing problems for which they should take responsibility of resolving.

Community engagement should not be confused with volunteerism or other forms of charity work. The United States has a well-developed history and mythology built around volunteerism and the notion of "charity," a practice of benevolence. It is an ethical and moral stance. Engagement is inherently based on the notions of empowerment, autonomy and self-determination, the principle of autonomy and protecting those who lack autonomy, beneficence by doing no harm, and maximizing benefits while limiting harm and the just distribution of burdens and benefits.

 Universities, of course, were not constructed to engage communities or the world in this manner, but rather to intellectually prepare the young to do so once they left institutions of higher learning. The community engagement movement followed the silencing and punishing McCarthy Era resulting in academic isolationism. Engagement was a response invigorated by the involvement of campus-based anti-Viet Nam war and Civil Rights social movements.

The changes in immigration laws of the 1960s and the 1970s brought about a visible demographic shift as more immigrants of color settled into life in the United States. The social and cultural transformations that took place as a result of the Civil Rights and Human Rights movements reverberated in the education system from pre-school to universities. By the 1970s, institutions of higher learning were challenged by the increasing number of students of color in their classrooms and the race and ethnicity based societal tensions that this demographic shift created. Multiculturalism, the culture wars, and affirmative action all resulted from these population shifts.

Richard Nixon (1969-1974) started the withdrawal of social service funding, the shrinking of entitlements, and dismantling Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty. This helped create the context in which students were harnessed to carry out community service in community based organizations reinforced by JFK's and LBJ's ideology of service (Peace Corp and VISTA).

Community service programs targeted relatively affluent and racially identified "white" students who not only wished to learn about the underprivileged but were also looking to "help" them. Educators sought to bring about critical consciousness (Freire 1970) in their students opening them up to experience the barriers of change, the lives of the working poor and people of color and how these barriers limit life chances.

The other issues in which universities were engaged were related to the withdrawal of government support for underserved and vulnerable communities. Faculty created community service-learning projects and courses to support or help these communities resolve local problems through research in which students generated the data, analyzed these, proposed remedies and provided the labor to implement projects. This is where experiential learning and service-learning courses emerged as an important academic transition, previously perceived as not academically viable or a scholarly endeavor (Stanton, *et al.* 1999, Butin 2010).

Funding incentives, political pressure, and academic associations advocated for greater scholarship relevance that brought universities and disciplines to embrace "community engagement" (Burawoy 2004, Beck and Maida 2015). Efforts to involving students in off-campus activities coincide with a focus on more effective teaching methods rooted in John Dewey's hands-on, experiential and problem-based learning educational philosophy (1938/1997); Lev Vygotsky's view that reasoning grows out of practical activities in social environments (1978); Kurt Lewin's founding action research (1946); and Paolo Freire's concerns with liberatory education that uses daily life as a means for transforming themselves and their world (1970). David Kolb's widely used theory represented by a four stage learning cycle of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation remains influential (2009). Donald Schoen (1983) and Chris Argyris (1974) explored the notion of reflective practice central to organizational learning, the nature of in-context, in-process learning and theorizing-in-practice.

In the past, college student outreach and service programs and activities were administered by untenured and part-time staff and were classified either as forms of volunteerism or co-curricular endeavors. They were not worthy of academic credit. In the 21st century these activities have taken on a greater importance in pre-professional education, increasingly recognized as academic where contingent staff still predominate, but where tenured and tenure line faculty participate due to the increasing administrative encouragement for "active learning." Yet, it is also a time when universities are op-

erated as businesses and part-time and an untenured contingent labor dominates higher education teaching, of which supervisors in private sector internships and non-profit organizations serve as mentors.

The Urban Semester Program's experiential learning and ethnographic approach pushes against the predominant use of pedagogies that emphasize aggregate statistical hegemony, didactic and pacifying ("banking") forms of teaching, out of context learning, MOOCs and what Shore annd Wright (2016: 47) identify as the emerging

> institutional framework that promotes competition, entrepreneurship, commercialization, profit making and "private good" research and the prevalence of a metanarrative about the importance of markets for promoting the virtues of freedom, choice and prosperity.

While university engagement is not an accepted standard in higher education, it is receiving increasing legitimacy. Oddly, as universities are increasingly being integrated into the market economy, restructured to serve the labor market, becoming yet another business form, the movement for engagement is both part of this integration and a movement of resistance against the neoliberal political economy.

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Challenged academy

Engagement after neoliberalism

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Abstract: Market-driven educational policies and advances in information technology may assure greater accountability in public universities; however, the trend toward increased standardization strengthens the "machine's" ability to appropriate the task of teaching. The challenge for college faculty is to sustain student-centered teaching and learning methods in the face of neoliberal reforms.

Neoliberal reforms took hold in North American public universities during the 1980s, through market-driven educational policies and the public-private partnerships; although evidence of this framework appeared at the University of California, Berkeley, the "quintessential Cold War megaversity", according to historian Eric Foner (1998: 290), at the time of the Free Speech Movement (FSM), there, in 1964-1965. The FSM agenda included civil rights, anti-war and academic freedom concerns, and its leader, Mario Savio, was clearly ahead of his times (Cohen 2009). Savio's vision of participatory democracy was forged through experiences in Catholic social action projects in Mexican slums, in labor protests in San Francisco where he was jailed, and during the Freedom Summer in Mississippi. Savio was able to integrate Catholic social justice, civil rights and union-based political rhetoric in his speeches. During this time, more working class youth were admitted to public research universities. Many were raised in union households politicized during the Great Depression and by post-war union movement cultures that endorsed working people's rights, union organizing, and labor actions. These students, often the first in their families to gain access to higher education, voiced a style of political rhetoric heard on public university campuses at this time. Their parents understood that college was their children's way out of the factory, and of serving time in the rice paddies of Southeast Asia. FSM student protesters viewed their university as a "bureaucratic machine," and

characterized their education as a form of mass production, within an impersonal and alienating "knowledge factory," seeing the IBM punch cards adopted by university administrators as part of mass higher education's control revolution as symbolic of the new information technology (IT) that would, over time, regulate higher education. There is much to reflect upon this half-century trajectory of bureaucratization and commodification of public higher education, *and its discontents*.

Henry A. Giroux's (2007) characterization of the contemporary "university in chains" goes beyond Max Weber's "iron cage," indicating the increased rationalization of social life in Western capitalist societies, specifically large scale public and private enterprises that are at once hierarchical, impersonal, specialized and efficient. Military and corporate appropriation of higher education through open and clandestine research, and the production of quasi-private data for government and corporate sponsors, has led to a diminishment of transparency. These trends support graduate and post-doctoral science programs, and move the undergraduate curriculum away from broad, critical thinking and reflection – the hallmark of the liberal arts – toward skill-based approaches that students believe help them to enter competitive graduate and professional degree programs, or gain entry level positions in the corporate world. The military is clearly on a recruitment mission, as the Reserve Officers' Training Program (ROTC) reappears on elite campuses; low-income youth are also recruited during their last years in high school, with promises of college scholarships, and more. Many academics nearing retirement came into their tenure track jobs after military service in the late sixties and early seventies and found ways to reproduce the military's hierarchical arrangements in their work lives. At that time, administrators sought to restore the stability experienced before 1964, when student-led movements created chaos at state-funded public campuses like Berkeley, Wisconsin, and Michigan. The infusion of well-behaved men of "the silent generation" on to the tenure track and into administrative positions assured that the campuses would be "quiet" and under increasing surveillance. Colin Powell's peacetime army during those years provided a safety valve for poor Southern and Southwestern men and women of all ethnic persuasions, but predominately African Americans, white Southern Mountaineers and their kin in Oklahoma, Arkansas and Texas, and recruits from the Plains states.

An agricultural metaphor may have come to supplant the industrial metaphor coined a half-century ago. The public university continues toward becoming a "knowledge plantation" economy – resembling California Cen-

tral Valley agricultural enterprises with their part-time seasonal farmworkers – as long as it hires large numbers of contingent employees and scores of lab techs to keep the "farm" running. Faculty and students become the new class of "technopeasants," or "hyperserfs" (Wiscomb 2017) as universities reinvent themselves as corporate-funded knowledge *Latifundia*. In these worlds, "techies" rock! The farmworkers, themselves, may not necessarily be exploited by IT, which routinely operates in agribusiness enterprises; however, those in the fields work with the byproducts of biotechnology, including the toxic chemicals that are sickening them and their children (Nash 2004). Contingent faculty *work relations* are analogous to those of farmworkers. Patron-client ties operate across social classes and occupations, from farms and factories to corporate offices, as do scientific management practices. *Neo-Taylorism* of human service occupations took place in the post-Fordist decades (Braverman 1974; Crowley et al. 2010); by comparison, *Taylorism* was practiced in California's farming areas since the 1930s (Stoll 1998: 167). There are analogies between the conditions experienced by farmworkers and the pathogens they encounter in the fields, with the pathologies that many experience within university departments. One frequently hears that increasing exploitation and bullying are making academic workers ill, and many die early as a result of stress; others suffer from sick building syndrome (Redlich et al. 1997), resulting from exposure to toxics and pollutants present in older academic buildings.

The challenge, then, is to sustain the student-centered teaching and learning methods of John Dewey (2016) and Paulo Freire (1970) in the face of IT domination, which is clearly administratively controlled and sanctioned. Many have seen their classes and seminars double in recent years, and still find ways to engage students and let their voices be heard in the classroom. Beyond *PowerPoint* slides and "clickers" (classroom response system devices) that promise to hold the attention of the *millennials*, deeper learning methods such as collaborative work, self-directed and project-based learning help develop critical learning and reflective processes, even in larger classrooms. However, textbook publishers have found ways to seduce the novice, and even the experienced teacher, with a box of "instructor resources," including slides, manuals, test item files, software, even course design materials so that a syllabus follows closely to the text. Pressure comes *from above* as well to uphold the primacy of both the text and the corporate-influenced professional voice. There are even multiple levels of review to assure that "student learning objectives" in the university catalog are not only stated on the syllabus but also embedded within it.

Moving forward, the IT "revolution" may assure greater accountability; however, the trend toward standardization also increases the "machine's" ability to appropriate the task of teaching, as standardized texts and syllabi can be readily put online, with TA support, and minimal professorial oversight. IT is a disruptive innovation in every occupation, and college teaching is no exception. Administrators, whose work lives are governed by computer-generated models, manage new model university routines, through computerized learning platforms in retooled college classrooms, especially on blue-collar campuses. It's "pay to play" for students at elite campuses; otherwise one learns via "machine." As Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are pushed forward, the response to skeptical academic laborers is "deal with it." The question remains how to push back, when large numbers of contingent faculty, and those on the tenure track, tow the administrative line by accommodating to the ongoing *Taylorism* of their occupational lives on behalf of keeping their jobs.

As Giroux indicates, neoliberalism in higher education devalues the teachers as workers and the students as objects of "schooling." College life is thereby transformed, with students and contingent labor *passing through*, and regarded as objects to which any unfortunate turn, sent down *from above* by administrators, from reduced salary and benefits to the acceptance of rank bullying is to be borne without so much as a word. So, while the institution is valued, upward, as a capitalist profit center, the life worlds of those within are devalued, with students viewed as the source of tuition-based funding or residence hall fees, and with teachers as labor that provides increased value. All of this is controlled *from above*, serving to diminish the value of students and faculty as persons involved in learning encounters, relative to the increased value of the institution and its administrators, whose salaries are skyrocketing. Universities are conduits for: hundreds of millions in federal student loans; textbook publishers and computer software manufacturers; food and linen service suppliers; residence hall beds at capacity throughout the calendar year. The worth of these neoliberal universities is staggering; consider the billion-dollar capital funding campaigns these systems initiate to remain competitive.

Amid this largesse, many students struggle not only to pay increasing tuition and living costs, but, after graduation, to land jobs that will help pay off student loan debt while providing a living wage. Faculty members witnessed this sea change for more than a generation, and some have attempted to resist through struggles for unionization and on behalf of benefits for teaching

assistants and contingent faculty (Entin 2005). To the broader question about solutions, the progressive professorate appears not to have found a satisfactory answer. Nonetheless, accessible mass higher education remains one of best ways to cultivate the critical consciousness necessary for an informed citizenry to sustain a reasonable quality of life—one that includes an inner life relatively free of economic and political anxieties.

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"A strange modernity"

On the contradictions of the neoliberal university

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Abstract: While many commentators see neoliberalism as a monolithic force changing universities into businesses, in reality its shared veneer of rhetorical vocabulary obscures profound and irresolvable practical contradictions – contradictions that make university life impossible, even in "business" terms.

In his short revisionist essay, "The Fourth World War has begun", subcomandante Marcos, the anonymous but charismatic spokesman of the Zapatista liberation movement in Chiapas, contemplated the wars that have raged on earth over the last century: not between empires or nation-states or religions, which were mere ciphers, but between the impersonal engines of global finance and the very populations they were originally meant to serve. The First, Second and Third (Cold) World Wars were merely means to pull recalcitrant populations out of their traditionally autonomous domains, and into the shadow of global administrative finance. Globalisation, he argued, «is merely the totalitarian extension of the logic of the finance markets to all aspects of life. Where they were once in command of their economies, the nation states (and their governments) are commanded - or rather telecommanded - by the same basic logic of financial power, commercial free trade. And in addition, this logic has profited from a new permeability created by the development of telecommunications to appropriate all aspects of social activity» (Marcos 2001). Marcos' observations on "war" are most unsettling because of the conceptual range he deploys to understand the term. Because war is violence, we often mistake it for the merely physical transformation of bodies, but in truth violence – as we understand it both legally, politically and socially – is in essence the forced transformation, not just of bodies, but of persons.

What we see in universities today is exactly that: a new battleground for the nature of who we truly are as scholars, academics and students, as the

logic of scholarship is transformed, apparently, into the remorseless logic of business. As we stand in our seminar rooms and lecture halls, the world seems to shift around us. When once academics and students were united, at least in principle, in the shared pursuit of scholarship and understanding, we are now divided from one another in the very quality of our personhood within a larger economic game. What were once students intent on learning and truth have become customers folded around the ambitions of hoop-jumping and career-building; while we ourselves have shifted subtly within our academic skins to become cost centres and service providers, similarly engaged in burgeoning games of administrative hoop jumping just to put food on the family table. Inasmuch as we go along with it (and thankfully, not all of us do), this game changes us in ourselves, and changes our rela-tionship with what we hold most dear, and to which we once committed our lives. We try to resist, but in this new global war, it often seems that the odds are stacked against us.

However, as with physical conflict, the fog of war looms over the battle-field, and it is often far from clear what is actually happening, and who is on what side. Much of the academic literature that critiques "the neoliberal academy" assumes that what is at hand is a straightforward battle of wills between two distinct world-views: on the one side an ancient ideal of the university as a «space where speculative thought can be freely pursued with-out regard to its financial value» (Thomas 2011); while on the other is the neoliberal vision that universities «should provide education and research on the model of corporations delivering "goods" in a market» (Rustin 2016: 159). The test of who has "won" here is the degree to which universities have been turned into "businesses". But is this really true, and if it is, why is it that those universities that have gone down this path seem so unsuccessful in business terms, so increasingly burdened with costs that they end up losing the very engine of their own productivity – their academics?

In my own experience, the economic dynamics at work in these changes are far more unclear, and the rhetoric of neoliberalism and 'business' hides considerable confusion, suggesting that it is something of a red herring. Of course, as many have commented, the capitalist logic of customer, service provider and product is something of a chimera. As I (and many others) have argued before (Mills 2007: 15), there is some disagreement over who is who in this increasingly destructive drama, as new capitalism is squeezed into the old world of academia.

In the UK, whilst the idea of the student as customer has increasingly dominated public discussion of tertiary education, my own experience of or-

ganisations such as the UK's Quality Assurance Agency was that policymakers regarded the taxpayer, business and indeed government itself as the primary customers when considering the distribution of national financial resources. This view rendered students not as customers, but as products for consumption by the external economic marketplace. To a large extent this is explicit within the logic of the 1997 Dearing Report on higher education, despite its headline message of students as customers (Dearing 1997).

The problem here is that these two visions do not cohere; indeed, in many respects they are contradictory. The student qua customer is looking, in return for their fees, for the requisite qualifications that will procure them a lucrative job on graduation, and may be prepared to go to considerable lengths (including complaints, litigation, and even plagiarism) to achieve that goal. At the same time, universities – lacking the legal or financial resources to hold off litigious students or police a growing pattern of plagiarism – are increasingly forced to compromise their academic standards in the face of such pressure. By contrast, the requirement – exemplified in the recent thinking, speeches and policies of both New Labour and Conservative governments – produce a workforce for the future knowledge economy that is characterised by excellence, critical thinking, innovation, transferable skills, research-led expertise (and so on), imply a year-on-year *increase* in standards at UK universities.

The tension between these countervailing flows of expectation is experienced most practically on the floor of university senate chambers or behind the closed door of the exam board. The resolution of the dialectic is duplicitous, but disturbingly simple: to treat students as customers when they apply, but as products when they leave. Thus, in the UK many universities place pressure on staff to recruit as many PhD students as possible (even when they are interested in projects outside a supervisor's academic expertise) in order to boost fees income, while at the other end of the spectrum trying to get those self-same students to submit their doctoral theses within the overall deadlines set by national funding bodies, with any over-run to do so being seen as a failure of supervision. Academics, in other words, are set up to fail, one way or another.

Such blatant contradictions bedevil modern university life at all levels, while attended by a rhetoric that presents such changes as "obvious", "practical" and "realistic" in the face of obscurantist academic resistance and special pleading. Some years ago, I participated in a research investigators workshop, the opening morning of which was designed to introduce us to the "new economic context" of our research work. In the first speech, a noted

vice-principal of an ancient university explained about the straitened times we now live in, and how vital it was that we provided "value for money" in our research, by which he meant that we engage competitively in getting large research grants, preferably of the kind that included substantial overheads for our host institutions. We got the message. He was then followed by the head of a national funding body, who explained again what straitened times we now live in, and how vital it was that researchers provide "value for money" for their national economies, by which he meant that research projects should produce their results for as little as possible, because there wasn't much research money to go around. In other words, while presented under the veil of identical rhetoric, the practical messages they were supplying contradicted one another completely, but both nodded enthusiastically as the other spoke. At the end of the morning, several of my colleagues expressed the view that the two speeches, which were clearly intended to motivate us, had actually caused them to seriously contemplate a different career.

But how do those academics amongst us, those that continue to believe in the fundamental value of what we do and wish to continue in our commitment to it, survive in such an increasingly erratic and no-win environment? When I wrote on this question back in 2000 (Mills 2000), I rather facetiously quoted Scott Adams (author of the Dilbert cartoons), when he noted that, when faced with such a dilemma, «the rational employee will divert all available resources away from accomplishing things and towards the more highly compensated process of lying about accomplishments» (Adams 1996: 269). To be honest, Adams remains bang on target. Caroline Humphrey observed similar tendencies when studying reindeer herding collectives in Siberia during the Soviet period: when asked to do two contradictory things at the same time, reality forces one to develop more and more elaborate narratives to cover up the inevitable and growing discrepancies (Humphrey 1983). In bureaucratic terms, this is called "reporting", and involves the lengthy and time consuming process of manufacturing metrics, targets, financial statements and attendant narratives that fit with the appropriate rhetoric. When dealing with large collectives like universities, it involves a growing number of administrative personnel, and growing obfuscation of actual reality. As David Graeber has observed in his recent Utopia of Rules: «History reveals that political policies that favor "the market" have always meant even more people in offices to administer things» (Graeber 2015: 32).

The requirement to respond bureaucratically to governmental requirements to "promote quality" within universities clashes hard against the pos-

sibility of expanding those institutions financially. Precisely because such quality requirements are so expensive in terms of time and energy, they generate a burgeoning administrative segment, and internal reporting structures that use up increasing quantities of academics' time, often precisely at the mid-point of their careers, when they would otherwise be most productive in research terms and effective in teaching terms. University populations thus end up being dragged in two different directions, vastly increasingly their internal workloads and costs. At the same time, the comparative size of university administrations is growing apace, precisely given over to plug the gap between growing expectations and reducing resources with a powerful flurry of carefully crafted words, numbers and flagship "initiatives" designed to mollify senior management teams, university courts, national REF panels, national student survey and international quality league tables, government ministers and ombudsmen and indeed potential 'banks of mum and dad', while simultaneously telling university staff how terrible things are.

Precisely in the name of accountability and transparency, in other words, looming walls of increasingly meaningless words are being built between depleting resources and "world-beating" rhetorics. It has become the new real, not only toppling universities over with the weight of their administrative workloads, but also generating divisive "rhetoric gaps" between those that must persuade and those that need to be persuaded. The result, therefore, is a veneer of rhetorical production that has become the central task of university existence, which serves to solve everything and nothing at the same time.

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Confessioni di un EV (esperto valutatore)

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ABSTRACT: If audit is a socio-political system, any analysis or evaluation of its effects should consider also the specific contexts and the peculiar historical contingencies in which practices associated with it apply. In this comment I try to grasp some consequences these practices can have on the specific academic field of the Italian anthropological sciences.

Leggendo il nome di chi firma e scrive questo testo (il mio) il popolo degli attenti lettori di ROARS (www.roars.it) e di altri importanti spazi di discussione pubblica intorno all'accademia italiana e ai suoi enormi problemi si starà probabilmente chiedendo cosa ci faccia (io) qui. Che siano o meno praticanti della mia area disciplinare (antropologia sociale), alcuni ricorderanno infatti che ho svolto il ruolo di E(sperto) V(alutatore) – solo rappresentante del mio settore – nel GEV ANVUR per la VQR 2006-2010[1]. Ho quindi fatto parte della prima Commissione per l'Abilitazione Scientifica Nazionale (d'ora in avanti ASN) e continuo a svolgere un ruolo, all'interno dell'ANVUR, nel gruppo di lavoro sulle riviste. Un "collaborazionista", dunque, in quell'ottica di polarizzazioni ideologiche che – a mio parere – troppo spesso in Italia ha caratterizzato, se non connotato, i dibattiti intorno al rapporto tra accademia, *audit culture* e neoliberismo. Tranquilli, però, non sono un "pentito", e non dovete aspettarvi né ammissioni di colpevolezza, né, d'altro canto, non richieste difese d'ufficio. Nello stesso tempo, infatti, i lettori più familiari con la ricerca antropologica immagino potranno riconoscere in chi scrive lo studioso critico dei processi di espansione del neoliberismo, in particolare nel campo della patrimonializzazione, oltre che nell'analisi del campo politico e, addirittura, di quello accademico. Nelle pagine che seguono vorrei chiedervi

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1. L'acronimo GEV indica il Gruppo di esperti della Valutazione dell'ANVUR (l'Agenzia Nazionale di Valutazione del Sistema Universitario e della Ricerca istituita nel 2006). L'acronimo VQR si riferisce invece all'esercizio periodico di Valutazione della Qualità della Ricerca prodotta dalle università e dagli enti di ricerca italiani (ndr).

allora di accompagnarmi in un personale tentativo di risoluzione di questo (che spero di dimostrare essere un) mio apparente bipolarismo.

La scissione, nella sua forma più acuta, si è manifestata nei primi giorni del 2014. Terminato il mio ruolo di Commissario sorteggiato nell'ASN 2012-2013 e messe da parte le tensioni prodotte dalla resa pubblica degli esiti della VQR 2006-2010, sulla scia della relazione che dovetti redigere per quest'ultima esperienza, ho pubblicato un saggio nel quale provavo a rendere esplicite le divisioni e i fazionalismi che, dal mio punto di vista, hanno connotato il campo accademico dell'antropologia (socio/culturale) italiana e che, nello stesso tempo, sono fluite in maniera semi-clandestina intorno alle diverse fasi e alle differenti modalità del processo di valutazione (Palumbo 2013). In un simile campo si è costruita, del resto, la mia soggettività accademica e di studioso e su di esso si sono prodotti gli effetti delle diverse forme della valutazione che in qualche modo mi è toccato praticare. In uno dei momenti di forse massima esplosione delle contestazioni contro l'attacco neoliberista all'università perpetrato anche attraverso gli strumenti dell'*audit* – pensavo nell'impostare quello scritto – un'attenzione paraetnografica e auto etnografica ai concreti modi di funzionare dell'accademia (o meglio di quella porzione molto ridotta della quale potevo parlare con qualche cognizione), ai modi in cui i rapporti di potere si squadernavano nel campo, precipitandosi sui *corpimente* di chi in esso occupa posizioni di dipendenza, venendo appunto incorporati e a volte, sempre più spesso, *escorporati* e resi oggetto di resistenza/contestazione, potesse costituire uno stimolo ad una discussione anche politicamente critica. Il saggio, messo su *Academia* e in qualche altro blog prima di essere pubblicato, a giudicare dalle visualizzazioni, ha circolato, ma relegato in spazi nicodemici, producendo nei colleghi più anziani o in quelli miei coetanei allusioni, battutine da corridoio, o velenose dislocazioni riflesse (Timbergen 1969) e un silenzio assordante in quelli più giovani.

L'assenza di reazioni e di prese di posizioni pubbliche, soprattutto di quella parte del campo accademico cui principalmente, con una consapevolmente ingenua speranza di offrire una sponda di espressione, se non ancora di libertà – devo confessarlo – non mi sorprese affatto, era in qualche modo preventivata. Mi ha fatto però riflettere non tanto sull'efficacia *molecolare* del potere accademico (appunto ciò che consentiva la previsione) quanto piuttosto, anche qui, su una sorta di scissione, forse rifrazione della mia, che mi è parso di poter cogliere nella platea dei miei immaginari lettori: insomma coloro che ad uno sguardo sociologico certo superficiale mi sembravano rappresentare una parte non irrilevante del *roaruggente* mondo italiano anti *au-*

dit - donne e uomini, studiose spesso sottoposte a non più accettabili condizioni di precariato e sfruttamento che con argomentazioni spesso condivisibili si schieravano contro quelle agenzie e quelle procedure che ritenevano in prima battuta espressione di interessi di cricche e lobby fortemente interconnesse con il potere accademico e in ultima istanza segnali operanti di un controllo neoliberista sul "libero" mondo della ricerca – posti di fronte ad una sia pur minima e certo irrilevante possibilità di apertura di un concreto varco di discussione intorno a quelle cricche, a quei rapporti e alcuni di quei modi di controllo, si tiravano indietro, preferendo evidentemente posizionarsi al di qua della linea d'ombra che separa una presa di posizione ideologica da una personale e riconoscibile esposizione.

Insomma, alla mia (spero apparente) bipolarità di etnografo critico del neoliberismo, da un lato, e accademico coinvolto nei processi di valutazione, dall'altro, mi è parso di poter sovrapporre una speculare (e certo apparente) forma di bipolarità in una ristretta porzione dell'ideale e immaginario pubblico di oppositori alla via italiana all'*audit* accademica. Proverò a "risolvere" un simile doppia configurazione bipolare, con i suoi quadrupli vincoli, proponendo di portare l'analisi su un piano molto concreto e attento ad alcune specificità del campo accademico italiano[2]. Specificità che, appunto, da un lato, potrebbero render conto della possibilità di praticare un minimo gradiente di *audit* e di poterlo immaginare, se non proprio, adoperare come uno strumento di lotta ai potentati accademici; e dall'altro consentirci di comprendere come possano tenersi insieme una critica ideale delle logiche del controllo neoliberista sulla pratica della ricerca e dell'insegnamento scientifici e una qualche difficoltà a prendere concretamente e in specifici contesti le distanze da quelle configurazioni di potere che si immaginano parte del progetto di mercificazione tardo capitalista della forza lavoro cognitiva (Vercellone 2006). Volendo esprimere in maniera schematica, quasi brutale, una simile specificità – pensando soprattutto all'area delle scienze umane e sociali – si potrebbe dire che il campo accademico-intellettuale nel nostro paese si caratterizza nella lunga durata per una peculiare configurazione fazionale – fatta di contrapposizioni tra piccoli gruppi, "scuole", capi-scuola ("big men", li chiamavo nel mio scritto, con una consapevole marcatura di genere), con i loro apparati di riproduzione del sapere e di controllo delle carriere, in cui l'efficacia effettiva di criteri minimi comuni e condivisi di valutazione e di giudizio è quasi nulla, e comunque fortemente legata alle diverse contingenze. Ad una simile configurazione sembrerebbe poi corrispondere, quando se

2. Di un doppio vincolo legato all'audit culture nel contesto accademico rumeno parla Mihăilescu (2016).

ne vogliano prendere le distanze e in qualche modo oggettivarla, soprattutto in relazione ad *audiences* esterne al campo stesso, una precisa tendenza a valutare il proprio, come molti altri, sistemi sociali in termini giuridico-normativi, formali e ideali, che scarsi rapporti finiscono per avere con le concrete pratiche e che anzi a volte svolgono di fatto un ruolo di protezione delle valenze interne, intime, di pratiche e abitudini sedimentate (Herzfeld 1997). Ulteriore conseguenza di un tale scenario è la tendenza a passare, senza eccessive mediazioni contestuali o analitiche, da singoli (non di raro personali) casi a valutazioni appunto normative, ideali e astratte.

Se dunque ci posizioniamo in quello spazio teoretico intermedio insieme critico, empirico e militante che secondo Herzfeld (2001) connota uno sguardo antropologico, non si può non segnalare come gli scenari politico-culturali sui quali si esercitano le sempre più dure politiche di controllo neoliberista della vita accademica e della ricerca scientifica e, insieme, le sempre più nette critiche dei colleghi che lavorano in aree anglofone siano molto diversi da quelli italiani. Questo non tanto perché le tecniche di controllo e di *governamentalità* messe in atto da almeno un decennio anche da noi non possano rivelarsi, sulla media o lunga durata, in linea con quelle tendenze – sviluppo di ideologie manageriali e di forme di competizione per l'acquisizione di risorse economiche, taglio delle risorse pubbliche destinate all'università pubblica, implementazione di conseguenti pratiche di sorveglianza e forme di privatizzazione – che i critici anglofoni, giustamente, individuano all'opera nei propri contesti (Heatherington, Zerilli 2016). Piuttosto credo sia importante non perdere di vista che queste tecnologie di controllo e questi tentativi di rimodulazione delle soggettività accademiche (Shore, Wright 2016) vanno ad applicarsi su contesti accademici che continuano a rispondere a forme di organizzazione del campo, della ricerca, a rapporti di forza e a processi di soggettivazione molto diversi da quelli stabilizzatisi nel corso del secolo scorso negli spazi universitari, pubblici e privati, anglofoni e, in generale, nord europei. Senza voler ingenuamente immaginare che *quelli* siano campi idealmente (weberianamente) razionali ed etici, nei quali non operino anche contrapposizioni tra gruppi di potere o prospettive teoriche, insieme a forme di cooptazione basate su elementi eminentemente contestuali (reti, provenienza da alcune università, adesione a modelli o temi analitici di moda), mi pare si possa affermare che meccanismi considerati ovvi come, ad esempio, quello della *peer review*, o la conseguente presenza di riviste e collane editoriali consolidate e più o meno prestigiose, abbiano da tempo stabilizzato spazi condivisi di regole e procedure di valutazione della ricerca all'interno dei

quali il peso di arbitrii e personalismi, sempre possibili, appare però quanto-
meno sotto controllo. Questo non significa certo la scomparsa di scarti strut-
turali di potere all'interno di ogni specifico settore di un certo campo accade-
mico (scarti di lingua, in primo luogo, o legati alla maggiore o minore vici-
nanza ai luoghi centrali della ricerca, scarti di risorse), e non vuol dire nem-
meno accettare come un dato (e non piuttosto come un costrutto socio-poli-
tico) la gerarchia oramai globale dei luoghi di pubblicazione. Voglio sempli-
cemente sottolineare come, diversamente da quanto mi pare accada ancora
oggi in numerosi ambiti disciplinari, specie quelli a me più familiari di area
umana e sociale, nei contesti esteri che oggi sentono più la pressione di for-
me di controllo di carattere neoliberista, tali azioni operano su scenari am-
piamente sottoposti a un processo che non riesco a definire in altri termini
che quello di modernizzazione. L'azione della pressione neoliberista
sull'accademia si rivolge ad un'accademia che nel corso del secolo scorso si
era data delle regole formali, autonome e condivise di controllo e valutazione
della produzione scientifica. Nel caso italiano, invece, mi pare che l'adozione
di sistemi di *audit* abbia finito per provare ad applicarsi su un contesto acca-
demico invischiato in dinamiche di carattere particolaristico, fazionale e so-
stanzialmente clientelare. È possibile che – come segnalato per altri contesti
comparabili a quello italiano (Mihăilescu 2016) – ambiti ristretti ed elitari di
un simile campo fazionale si siano appropriati dei meccanismi dell'*audit*,
adoperandoli a vantaggio di interessi particolari. Vorrei però concludere que-
sto mio intervento provando a chiedere ai colleghi (più e meno giovani) che,
anche legittimamente, hanno voluto inscrivere le proprie critiche ai mecca-
nismi e alle istituzioni dell'*audit italian style* nella più generale tendenza cri-
tica che attraversa il mondo dell'accademia globale – specie nelle scienze so-
ciali e umane meno istituzionali e ortodosse – se preferiscono veramente
uno scenario nel quale non solo l'accesso a riviste e collane, ma anche la più
intima strutturazione dei rapporti tra studiosi di diverse generazioni, la pro-
gressione delle carriere e la valutazione della qualità della ricerca siano sta-
biliti in relazione a campi di forze fondati sul potere di questa o quella "big
woman" (o "big man"), o se invece – conservando certamente la capacità
prospettica di una critica generale dell'espansione dei sistemi neoliberisti –
non ritengano utile provare ad utilizzare strumenti formali minimi di aset-
tizzazione di abituali, sedimentati e spesso incorporati campi di potere per
provare a garantire non certamente un ideale e asettico sistema di valutazio-
ne, ma quantomeno elementari livelli di decenza.

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Profit, prestige and the liberal arts in the "neoliberal" academy

Observations from Canada

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Abstract: I argue that the Canadian academy, at least, is not neoliberal in the sense of acting as a profit-seeking corporation. Rather it serves the agenda of the corporate sector while operating under what is better seen as a symbolic economy of prestige and status.

In the first set of essays on the neoliberal academy, Cris Shore and Sue Wright stressed that in current academic conditions, «what "counts" are those things that can be "counted", quantified and translated as financial returns to the institution» (2016: 48), while also noting that reforms are contradictory, producing chaos and corruption rather than efficiency. In my comments, I will suggest, at least in Canada where my professional experience has been concentrated, that these divergent observations can be partly reconciled by recognition that post-secondary institutions are being pressured to provide service to profit-making corporations but have not been operating as one would expect profit-oriented capitalist enterprises to. In particular, I want to stress that in the absence of generous research overhead payments, the STEM fields (Science,Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) are rarely profitable for Canadian universities, while many liberal art disciplines are profit centres but are systematically starved of resources. This is the result of senior administrators operating in an economy of prestige and fast policy (Peck 2002) rather than one that rewards profits.

In 2008, I wrote an entry, perhaps more of a rant than a scholarly essay, for the GlobalHigherEd blog (Smart 2008). Little appears to have changed since that time, so I will draw in part on my arguments there. The administration at the University of Calgary where I have taught for 28 years has adopted a strategic vision based on moving up the ranks of research intensive universities. The main benefits have gone to the STEM disciplines, particularly Medicine and Engineering. This could be seen as a sign of the corporatiza-

tion of the university. I would agree, but only in the sense that the university concentrates on things that the dominant business community would like to see done, not in the sense that the university is acting like a profit-seeking enterprise. James Turk (2016) provides a detailed account of a scandal around a Centre funded by the pipeline company Enbridge, which led to a Board of Governors inquiry into conflict of interest by University of Calgary President Elizabeth Cannon, who had been a Director at Enbridge.

At a university that acted like a corporation, rather than for a corporate agenda, we might expect to see investment in profit centres at the expense of other units, but it tends to operate the other way around. In 2008, the Faculty of Social Sciences, with the most students, had a budget basically equal to the tuitions paid by its students, even though Alberta policy is that tuitions should not be higher than 25% of the operating budget. Social Sciences (and the other core arts and sciences to a somewhat lesser extent) are a cash cow for Faculties that cannot cover their own costs. The situation has changed in 2017 only to the extent that Social Sciences has been merged with Humanities and Fine Arts in a much larger Faculty of Arts.

One could point to the substantial research funds brought in by Medicine in particular, but this has little positive effect on the university's financial situation since grant overhead payments are very low in Canada, unlike the United States. In any case, the usual pattern when a medical researcher has a breakthrough or receives a major grant is that they get offers from other institutions and turn to the administration to say that they couldn't justify staying without a new lab, additional colleagues, postdocs, graduate students, etc. This doesn't produce any real advantage to the administration's budget, unlike the large number of bums on seats in the arts and sciences faculties. Especially when those bums on seats are being taught by sessionals. A sessional being paid $5,250 for a one-semester course with 400 students paying $500 each for that course generates a profit of $194,750, or a return on investment of 37 times. What profit-oriented business would turn down returns like that? Yet, because tuition goes to the central administration without any direct return to the department or faculty offering the course, such courses provide no benefit to the unit offering the course, despite intense student demand. The current response to budget problems in 2017 has focused on cutting sessional teaching (for cost saving reasons, not social justice ones, I must stress).

If this is a corporate model, it would seem a very dysfunctional example of one. But I think it is corporate only in the sense that it provides research and

training subsidies which are captured by private firms, and that it follows corporate administrative styles, but not corporate goals of achieving profits. Within the University of Calgary, and apparently in other Canadian universities at least, the pattern of distributing resources follows a different logic, one that I believe is based on status and prestige, not maximizing financial returns to the institution based on what can be counted. Presidents like to brag about their neurosciences or cancer treatment or energy research centres. Transferring resources into sexy high profile fields makes it easier for them to swagger when they get together with other Presidents or potential donors, and hopefully step up to a better job before their house of cards, looking impressive and lofty but without stable foundations that will allow them to withstand even a light adverse breeze, collapses around them. Or to use another analogy, their fiscal operations are like a bicycle, stable only while it continues to move forward.

The desire by University Presidents to invest in shiny research toys and programs is prompted in part by the utility of having such projects to showcase to potential corporate, governmental and private funders. But there also seems to be a growing frequency of national and international events at which university administrators get together to discuss new trends and priorities. This results in less "cutting edge" administrators returning with "new" ideas about "best practices" to try out on their institutions. Similar dynamics have been identified in urban and national governance institutions, leading to increasingly "fast" policy transfer (Clarke *et al.* 2015; Peck 2002; Peck, Theodore 2015)

I believe that it would be an insightful endeavour to examine the competition for prestigious programs, indicators, and research centres in terms of the ideas of economic anthropologists about status economies and conspicuous consumption. Ideas from scholars like Thorstein Veblen, Franz Boas, Bronislaw Malinowski, Marcel Mauss, Karl Polanyi, Pierre Bourdieu, and Georges Bataille might shed a rather different light on the contemporary governance of universities than do the neo-marxist and neoclassical economic perspectives that are usually deployed. Bracketing our usual assumptions about the formally rational character of capitalist institutions might allow anthropology to bring to light very different accounts of what is going on in the governance potlatches of our administrative leaders.

To my mind, the remarkable thing is that really being corporate and pursuing profits, rather than serving as a handmaiden to corporations or government agencies, would encourage the things that universities (at least those without massive endowments) should be doing, providing a well-

rounded education in the liberal arts and sciences, with a smaller set of appendages in the professions doing the far more expensive but "sexier" things. Instead of being seen as essential, the core of the University of Calgary is being gutted to support a host of showcase programs and projects much larger than the modest financial reality can support. How widely this destructive prestige economy and its white elephants and misallocated resources is found in other parts of the world, I cannot say, but it seems likely to me to be far too common.

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Ethnographic dispatches from the neoliberal academy

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Abstract: This text consist of four brief ethnographic vignettes, offering personal observations and poignant recollections of the consequences of «neoliberalisation» at University College London, where I was employed for eighteen years until I took up a new position at a German university in September 2014.

I have written four brief observational pieces, responding in the representational mode that is core to our discipline: ethnography. For me this is the most precise and appropriate response to *Anuac*'s call to present neoliberal academia «in concrete, empirical, ideally ethnographic terms», and on the basis of «personal observations». Hence what I am presenting here is a few personal observations and poignant recollections of the consequences of «neoliberalisation» (Shore, Wright 2016) in a London-based university where I was employed for eighteen years, until I took up a new position at a German university in 2014. These short vignettes describe real situations of which I was part, all (but one) anonymized to protect the anonymity of the individuals figuring in the text. I developed this ethnographic reporting format as part of the *Nightlaboratory*, a fieldwork blog which I created together with my student Iulius-Cezar Macarie in 2012, where we have posted ethnographic pieces no longer than two-hundred words depicting the nocturnal city (particularly London) and migrants working nightshifts (https://nightlaboratory.wordpress.com/). The purpose of this blog is to offer composed yet evocative portraits of night workers and descriptions of situations we encounter during our nocturnal fieldwork. For this *Anuac* Forum, I have written longer pieces of three to four hundred words. The last one, "Zombies" is based on fieldwork carried out as part of the *Nightlaboratory*, when I interviewed and shadowed a night security guard at University College London in my last months at UCL, before I moved to Germany. The four vignettes are dry and matter-of-fact, and I purposefully refrain from suggesting how the situations that I describe can be reshaped and transformed, as I believe that they speak

for themselves. One can glean from them what alternative futures can and ought to be envisaged, which is what ethnography and ethnographic critique can offer.

Fish tank (2009)

Since the move into a prizewinning and state-of-the-art new building, the school's language teachers are accommodated into open plan offices, with glass panes, not walls, separating them from the rest of the building. They are exposed to the frequent gazes of others, such as the management on the top floor, which looks down on the "fish tank" as its residents soon call it. Although these offices are meant to be "transparent", teachers protect their privacy by patching language and country-related posters on the glass, as well as putting up "quiet zone" warning notes addressed to staff and students passing through the corridor talking loudly. In no other part of UCL – London's self-proclaimed "Global University" that boasts Jeremy Bentham as its spiritual father— is the spatial setup more panoptical and self-censuring than here. Teachers feel watched and try to avoid eye-contact with those looking at them from a distance. «If I want to use a deodorant, I feel people observe me, so I go to the toilet. When we congregate, I tend to think that *they* [the management] think we may be plotting». The offices have no sound isolation as the glass panels are not sealed to the floor, allowing air to pass through a gap at the bottom into the office and from there into the air and light well around which the offices and library are built. To control the flow of air, the windows open automatically, so the climate is cold and drafty especially during winter. Most teachers now tend to avoid the place. They do not socialize as they used to do before, and only use their office to hang their coats when teaching. Neither do the academics assemble, hidden away in small individual offices across the corridor. The language teachers' situation has become more precarious over the years, as the number of students taking languages is continuously dropping. They are paid hourly rates with just a few guaranteed hours on their temporary nine-month contracts. One floor up, another open plan office accommodates the postdocs and visiting fellows: «the unwashed» as a manager once told me quizzically. That was, of course, a joke, but, as I come to think of it, not a very apt one for fish tank residents.

Security alert (2010)

Students occupy the Jeremy Bentham Room in response to cuts to higher education and the rise in tuition fees, also demanding the full living wage for

cleaning, catering and security staff. In front of the school's premises students gather, many of them unable to enter the building as they are stopped by security guards who ask for IDs (which the students do not tend to have with them). Staff is treated more leniently and allowed in. Doing their best to look intimidating the guards seem rather confused and helpless, not ready to challenge any staff unwilling to show an ID. An administrator sends around an all-staff email: «Because of a college security alert, at the time of writing (11am) the door is locking when closed, allowing access only to staff via the ID card reader. Some students may not be able to enter the building, so this may be the reason for some absences this morning». After entering the building (without showing my ID) I respond to that email: «Thanks for sending this message around, it seems we are living in interesting times, barring students from the university premises. Can I ask what this is all about? Do we have a right to know what the security threats are? Is it the students?» One academic backs up my query by asking why students, who don't normally show IDs, are now being asked to do so, and yet another one writes in an email: «we have not been informed of a genuine threat to security and can only suspect that this is intimidation directed toward our students. This creates a hostile environment for work. I am headed home and will not return until the "security" presence is withdrawn». Some colleagues knock on my office door to say «well done», but without expressing their support publicly, while the majority keeps silent. Later that day the school's front doors are reopened without any further explanation. One colleague informs us at the end of the working day: «I think you should all know, if you don't already, that the UCL authorities have threatened the student occupiers with legal action if they do not vacate the Jeremy Bentham room».

Rocking the boat (2012)

In a court room not far from Heathrow Airport, Australian citizen Trenton Oldfield, and a dozen or so sympathizers listen to the sentence read out in front of him by a judge. Trenton is convicted to six months' prison for disrupting the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race in protest against government cuts and a culture of elitism in the UK. On 7 April 2012, perceiving the boat race as a symbol of upper-class privilege that deprives the less well-to-do of educational opportunities, he jumped into the Thames, disrupting the race for 25 minutes. Police pulled him out of the water, nobody got hurt, he only put his own life at risk. After he served his sentence, his application for a spousal visa is rejected, his presence in the UK being declared «not conducive to the public good». After twelve years of residence,

married to a British citizen with a small daughter, Trenton receives a ruling by the Home Secretary (and Oxford alumni) Theresa May that he is to be deported back to Australia. He appeals against this decision, and several academics, artists and activists rally to his support. In a character reference for the court I wrote: «Trenton's protest gave voice to his concerns through direct action, meant to energize the public debate around these issues. He did this out of a sense of moral duty, without causing physical harm to anybody, which elsewhere in Europe would not lead to such a draconian punishment followed by the threat of eviction. He may have crossed a boundary, but he has served his sentence, and he should be allowed to continue asking these critical questions through which he makes a larger contribution to British public life than most of us».

Zombies (2014)

A private security guard sits at the entrance of the School's library six nights a week, after the university introduced 24-hour opening times during exam term, serving its rapidly growing cohort of Chinese students many of whom work through the night. There are no librarians present whatsoever, security guards take care of students' safety and well-being. Most of the guards are on zero-hour contracts and when doing nightshifts they often work from 4pm until 9am. «We are the left-over of society», says one security guard whom I accompany during his nocturnal round through UCL premises, passing through tunnels and corridors and listening to the noises of machines that operate during the night. He tells me that it is important to listen, because anything can go wrong, such as explosions, breaking in, and water dripping. Noises are the warning signals as you can't see much because of the dark. The older buildings make sounds by themselves: they have «character», as he explains. But that's creepy when you get tired: then your mind starts playing tricks. Many guards drop the "graveyard shift" as it is sometimes called, as «it is too spooky» at night, they hear strange noises and see all sorts of things. They tell that there are ghosts around, as the UCL Main Quad was built on an old cemetery. The Rockefeller Building, an old structure across Gower Street, makes squeaky sounds and has a morgue so it scares the shit out of them. The Cruciform Building's name makes them think that there must be something wrong with that building too. It also doesn't help that Jeremy Bentham's Auto-Icon, a wooden cabinet with his embalmed body and wax head, is located in one of the corridors near the Provost's office, and that quite a few zombie films such as *The Mummy Returns* (2001) were shot at

UCL, bringing in extra revenue for the university. Because of that there is a high turnover of night-shift security personnel. The guard with whom I talk also tells me that he only gets a few hours of sleep as he commutes large distances and needs to be back at work on time for another 16-hour shift. He takes pills as it is hard to get a proper rest.

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The graduate student experience in the neoliberal academy

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ABSTRACT: This commentary discusses graduate student perspectives on the disjuncture between the neoliberal framing of value as pursuit of economic profit and the academic community's pursuit of knowledge. Declining opportunities and the devaluing of different frames of knowledge and practice in the academy suppress graduate students' ability to contribute to their chosen fields of study and to create value in novel ways. Our participation as graduate students in the academic community, including organizations such as American Association of University Professors, has been instrumental in articulating the interconnectedness of the systemic consequences that the neoliberal constitution of value has on the campus and community.

Introduction

The 2015-2017 state budget instituted drastic cuts to higher education in Wisconsin. While the threats to tenure, academic freedom, and shared governance have been well documented (Buff 2015b; Hertzog 2016b; Savidge 2016; Strauss 2015), the circumstances of graduate students are often overlooked in broader discussions of the challenges faced by the University of Wisconsin (UW) System[1]. As current anthropology PhD students at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM), in this commentary we highlight impacts of declining state investment in higher education on our ability to carry out research and outline how our involvement in the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) links graduate student experiences with university- and community-wide efforts to promote the values associ-

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ated with Wisconsin higher education. In the context of coalition building, we advance the broader aim of protecting the university community as a space for intellectual innovation and freedom.

A consequence of the budget cuts is the decline in funding opportunities for graduate students, such as teaching assistantships, departmental scholarships, and work study positions in the College of Letters and Sciences. The increasing scarcity and contingency of such resources make it difficult to use the funds that are available for their intended purpose—a sustained focus on coursework, research, or dissertation writing. For example, while university fellowships are designed to reduce teaching loads in order to facilitate progress through the degree program, the uncertain fiscal climate prompts students to conserve stipends for future academic years rather than reduce their work hours in currently held positions. Fellowship guidelines require students to limit the number of work hours per week for on or off campus positions, which may result in a loss of earnings or position if the student accepts the fellowship. It may not be possible to risk losing employment that might disappear after the fellowship period is over, which may lead the student to decline a fellowship offer. This issue is especially acute for students from impoverished backgrounds, who have economic dependents, or whose research requires additional funding to carry out fieldwork and/or laboratory tests. Minority students in particular may be disproportionately affected by financial instability in higher education, which may result in fewer completed degrees in many academic fields (Aud 2010; Jaschik 2014; Nealy 2009; Sowell et al. 2016). For anthropology, this loss is particularly galling as our discipline is meant to explore the variety of humanity and include diverse perspectives.

Furthermore, funding opportunities are more than sources of income. Cuts to work study programs or research assistantships, for example, negatively impact the ability for graduate students to work with university faculty to hone the kinds of skills needed to pursue careers in or outside of the academy. Moreover, in some instances within the UW System, faculty have chosen to relocate to universities outside of Wisconsin in pursuit of stable economic environments and opportunities for their graduate students (Beckman 2016; Magnus 2016; Rocha 2016; Schneider 2016). These compounded issues result in less original research conducted as well as the loss of potential advisors, committee members, and mentors. As such, graduate students may find themselves unable to effectively assemble a committee to support their projects, or worry that they will have to face this outcome were they to enroll in a university system in crisis.

Of further concern to graduate students is the potential loss of UWM's Carnegie Classification as an R1 (top tier) research institution, a consequence that would be directly linked to the diminished ability for innovative original research to be conducted and completed, including work by graduate students. The administration has proudly touted the R1 mantle (Herzog 2016a; Swanson 2016; Walz-Chojnacki 2016), and completed research dissertations were an integral component to UWM being awarded this prestigious status. However, the reduction in funding and available research and teaching assistantships in the College of Letters and Science hinders the effectiveness of departments, the working conditions for graduate students conducting research, and the ability for students and faculty to engage across the university and surrounding communities in Milwaukee. The prioritization of perceived economic worth and efficiency over UWM mission of research and access (UW-Milwaukee 2017), devalues higher education experiences for graduate students in the UW System. It also undermines the goals of the Wisconsin Idea, a cornerstone of education in our state (Heatherington 2016), which holds that the university is for the benefit of all Wisconsin citizens (McCarthy 1912) and aims «to extend the boundaries of the university to the boundaries of the state» (Fleisher 2015).

Our growing awareness of the negative impacts the neoliberal model is having on our graduate student experiences led us to seek out a means by which to gain better insight into the inner workings of this approach at UWM and identify methods by which these impacts can be combatted. This aim ultimately led us to become members of UWM's recently reconstituted chapter (2015) of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). Comprised of academic staff, faculty, and graduate students, the AAUP is a professional academic organization standing for «academic freedom, shared governance, institutional independence, and economic security for all those employed in teaching, research, and academic support» (UWM AAUP 2017a). The UWM AAUP promotes and defends «higher education as a fundamental human right to which freedom of inquiry and expression are integral», and in particular, the defense of the «mission of UWM to provide democratic access to a first-class, Research 1 university to all of Wisconsin» (Buff 2016a).

In striving towards these values and engaging with the UWM and broader UW System administrations as well as the state legislature, UWM AAUP has become adept at recognizing the interconnected manner in which attacks on public education appear across various arenas of the UWM as well as across the university system. This awareness has aided the UWM AAUP chapter in identifying, documenting, and disseminating knowledge of the specific qual-

itative ways this damage has unfolded and how fiscal austerity continues to exacerbate these effects (Buff 2015b). Our participation in AAUP has allowed us to bring graduate student concerns to the forefront of conversations within the organization and better gauge the long-term impacts of further endeavors the university administrations and the state legislature seek to implement. Over the past two years the UWM AAUP has also identified other organizations and populations, both within the university and the larger Milwaukee community, that share in the commitment to protecting public education and the problem of doing so in a state that continues to devalue it. Accordingly, the UWM AAUP has worked to build solidarity amongst these bodies on a number of issues, most frequently in the development of strategies that aim to protect and promote public education from «K-PhD» (kindergarten through the doctoral degree) (UWM AAUP 2017b; Buff 2016b). UWM AAUP stands against the recurring propositions of tuitions hikes for students, which would make higher education impossible for more and more students in Wisconsin, particularly some of the urban population of Milwaukee with school districts containing high rates of poverty (Anderson 2016; Buff 2015a). The organization collaborated with Milwaukee Teachers Education Association (MTEA) to protest the state legislature's law (Opportunity Schools Partnership Program) which privatized Milwaukee Public Schools, making underperforming institutions answerable to private corporations contracted to manage them rather than local Milwaukee residents (Buff 2015b). As UWM AAUP moves into its third year since its reformulation, the organization's efforts continue to expand and build new coalitions that create inter-group awareness and support. This ongoing mission to engage with more potential allies allows us to amplify our voices and raise public awareness of the state of education in Wisconsin (UWM AAUP 2017b). We, as individual graduate students and as UWM AAUP members, hope that our collective efforts will result in long-term strategies that promote the survival and flourishing of our university and the communities with which we share a bond and purpose.

Ultimately, our experiences as graduate students, anthropologists, and AAUP members at UWM have made it clear to us that the continuing erosion of public education in Wisconsin has the potential to demolish the essential funding, skills, and academic support necessary for successful graduate education programs. Accordingly, this increases the odds that Wisconsin will lose current and potential future graduate students unable or unwilling to attempt or complete degrees in an increasingly unstable environment. Such

an outcome is especially likely for disciplines like anthropology, whose goals do not easily fit models of economic profit, and consequently are more likely to be targeted by state cuts. Consequently, we have come to view our continued cognizance of and active engagement with the political and social forces seeking to shape public education as vital components of what it means to be professional scholars and anthropologists. Only through the normalization of these undertakings within academia can we hope to ensure the survival of higher education as a force for intellectual inquiry and public good.

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Learning away from neoliberalism

Lines of connection towards other worlds

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Abstract: In this essay, I envision the university, not simply as a discreet institution with formal boundaries to attend to and defend from neoliberal and conservative assaults, but as a location of possibility from which to locate and advance projects that connect students and ourselves to the possibility of other economic worlds.

At a Town Hall meeting this past February, a 20-year-old college student asked House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi if the Democratic Party might consider moving a bit more to the left on "economic issues". Pelosi's response was, in some respects, unsurprising.

«I have to say, we're capitalist, and that's just the way it is».

Pelosi's assertion of capitalism as our natural condition was then followed by a confession, «we do think that capitalism is not necessarily meeting the needs with the income inequality that we have». Pelosi then lamented the imagined loss of a more moral, "stakeholder" economy that has been replaced by a less equitable "shareholder" economy.

On the one hand, Pelosi's response resonates with what Badiou, Mouffe, Swyngedouw and others have described as "post-political", a condition rising concomitant with neoliberalism in which social action is delimited by a preexisting set of possibilities. Politics can then be reduced to discussing, or merely managing and administering, what is already possible. In this case, capitalism is claimed as a natural, invariant, encompassing condition. *We can admit that capitalism is not perfect. It might need some adjusting or even resisting. But, capitalism is simply the reality that we all live in.*

It's useful to understand Pelosi's response as a post-political strategy that polices discursive boundaries. But it would be a mistake to presume that it is indicative of a continued, broader post-political condition in the United

States that forecloses on a politics aimed at increasing the "possibility of other possibilities" (Badiou 2010). What might have been read a decade or two ago as a re-inscription of capitalist hegemony, today feels more like desperation; the very need to make public proclamations that we live in a capitalist world is symptomatic of the ruptures in the common-sense, naturalness of capitalism. Indeed, in the process of posing his question, the student at the town hall cited a 2016 poll showing that the majority of young people aged 19-29 now reject capitalism.

Neoliberalism and possibility at the university

The student's comment squares with my changing experience teaching undergraduate students at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. As part of the U.S. higher education terrain, UMass has profoundly restructured in relation to and through public disinvestment, privatization, and market logics – what some characterize as "neoliberalism". Labor conditions, university governance, campus space, teaching and learning, and institutional objectives all bear the marks of these restructurings while new affects, beliefs, and desires that steer the university towards the interests of capital circulate among administrators, faculty, and students (Hyatt, Shear, Wright 2017; Shear, Zontine 2017).

However, even as the university is more intricately woven into market imperatives – and as white supremacy and patriarchy structure inequalities and violence across and through identities – new threads of possibility for social and ecological well-being are laid bare. A decade ago, undergraduate students in my gen-ed classes displayed considerable emotional and affective resistance to critical investigations of capitalism and interrelated forms of oppression. Invested in the imagined rewards of hard work and individual achievement, their beliefs, hopes, and desires were woven tightly into the fabric of neoliberal fantasies. Today, many of my students have no such faith in the American Dream. They are well aware of their precarious economic and ecological futures. Like most of us, they are anxious and insecure, dissatisfied with the world we live in and wary of what is to come.

Of course, experiencing overwhelming precarity does not necessarily lead to a true desire for other ways of being. As Lyon-Callo (2017) discusses, it's not enough for students to know and feel that capitalism is "bad". Without other possibilities at the ready, a reasonable solution appears to be to reinvest in ourselves as individuals or, at best, to resist *the impacts* of exploitation and oppression. What then might be the role of anthropologists and other academics in creating and supporting projects for students that reveal

the "possibility of other possibilities" and that show and connect them to other ways of being in the world?

In the rest of this essay I envision the university, not simply as a discreet institution with formal boundaries to attend to and defend from neoliberal and conservative assaults, but as a location of possibility from which to locate and advance lines of connection to egalitarian worlds. I briefly describe the emergence of a solidarity economy (SE) framing of social justice in Massachusetts. I argue that the enabling conditions of SE are opening new possibilities for communities, activists, and students. I suggest some modest and practical ways that anthropologists and other academics might participate in further connecting students and ourselves to the enabling conditions of other worlds.

Solidarity economy

Emerging as responses to capital accumulation and neoliberal ideology, SE is a movement and a framing of economy that has its roots in Latin America and Europe. Formulated and discussed in different ways – SE can be understood as an effort to organize economic relationships, practices, and institutions that reveal and encourage, rather than conceal and discourage, our sociality and interdependence. For example, *community land trusts* transform land from a commodity to a landscape in which the needs of individuals, neighborhoods, and ecology can be fully considered. Instead of alienation and exploitation structured in capitalist enterprises, *worker cooperatives* entail collective control and deliberation over world-making surplus. Following Tsing, if precarity is the human «condition of being vulnerable to others» (2015: 20), SE helps us to see, embrace, and organize around our humanity.

In Massachusetts, efforts have exploded around SE activity over the past 10 years, with explicit formulations in our three most populous cities of Worcester, Boston, and Springfield (Loh, Shear 2015; Loh, Jimenez 2017). Of particular interest, these efforts foreground a social justice frame that seeks to address exploitation and oppression by transforming the conditions that, in part, create inequalities and violence in the first place.

> A *solidarity economy movement* is emerging from lower-income communities of color in Massachusetts. This movement aspires to transform capitalism – as we know it – into a world rooted in values of democracy, justice, and sustainability. These dreams arise from those making Black Lives Matter, from immigrant workers making poverty wages, from ex-prisoners locked out of the mainstream economy, from tenants barely able to make rent, and from communities being displaced to make way for the 1% (Loh, Jimenez 2017: 3).

Loh and Jimenez describe eight different SE networks in Massachusetts that are organizing through *consciousness shifting, building power,* and *alternative economies* in order to «transform and go beyond capitalism» (*ibidem* 7). SE makes claim to worlds that embrace our shared vulnerability, «at the base of these big dreams is collective care for each other – solidarity» (*ibidem* 4). SE enables people who are dissatisfied with or actively rejecting the set of existing possibilities delimited to capitalist ideology, to truly imagine, organize around, and enact other economic worlds. To illustrate further, I turn to a remarkable student activist group, Divest UMass.

Enabling conditions and the edges of other worlds

In 2016 Divest made national news. After years of organizing, culminating in the occupation of the UMass administration building, Divest forced a public commitment from the Board of Trustees to divest the university's endowment from the fossil fuel industry. Shortly after this fantastic win, thoughts turned to a project of reinvestment. Rooted in an intersectional, climate justice analysis, Divest wanted to ensure that the divested funds were reinvested in a socially-just way. As ideas were formulated and discussed, Divest members encountered a solidarity economy frame, which has begun to reshape their imaginings and politics.

In the summer of 2016, some Divest leaders attended a meeting with the Boston centered Ujima Project. The Ujima Project aims to help cultivate solidarity economy through a community-controlled capital account; community members envision and then democratically decide how to invest in local SE enterprises and initiatives. It was during one of these visioning meetings that the Divest members began to reframe what was politically possible. One Divest leader describes how the stance towards possibility presented new affects to embrace.

> It was the first time, that, well, it felt like a purely hopeful space. It was like, we have everything we need in this community… we need to connect the dots and use our own creativity and solutions. That was really, really, really cool.

For another prominent Divest leader SE is a way to help move beyond a politics of opposition and redistribution *within* our dominant economic ontology.

> [Divest] was always [intended to be] about taking down the bad, and building the new. I was getting not very energized because I couldn't see a direction to go in after taking down the bad. Even when we talked about reinvestment it didn't make sense. I knew that capitalism was bad but, I didn't know how to get

out of that...then we went to Boston to talk to [SE activists]...we talked about the solidarity economy network that they were envisioning and thinking about that combined the theory and the values and practical things that were already happening. We don't have to wait for this thing that would come it was already happening.

Divest leaders have subsequently spread these new imaginings, affects, and desires – activated through the enabling conditions of SE – to membership and the broader public. This past winter, Divest held a well-attended teach-in at UMass featuring a panel of SE activists from across the state. The teach-in was intended as both general education and as the beginning stages of a potential campaign to reinvest in the SE movement. In addition to the potential campaign, members of Divest are now working with SE activists in a variety of ways through existing university structures. One has developed a collaborative research project involving video documentation that is a part of their senior thesis. Another has taken an internship with the Data Commons Project that is mapping and connecting SE. Still another has joined the communications committee of a growing worker cooperative organization in Springfield whose staff director is also the director of the U.S. Solidarity Economy Network.

Lines towards other worlds

SE invites a politics from which to envision and organize around "new" and suppressed ways of being. It's but one example of a project that shows us the possibility of, and begins to connect us to, other worlds. Worlds in which our precarity – our vulnerability to others – can be collectively embraced and social and ecological well-being can be more fully realized. I suggest that anthropologists concerned about the multi-faceted dimensions of what some describe as neoliberal restructuring of the university can pay careful attention to the opening of multiple political fronts as capitalist ideology loses its coherence. As we struggle against the impacts of capitalism and related systems of oppression in, through and beyond the university, we can mobilize our existing resources and practices – our teaching, writing, and research, and even "neoliberal" practices like internships and volunteer opportunities – to help create and support lines of connection towards other worlds.

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L'uomo accademico flessibile

Due casi a confronto

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Abstract: With the acceleration of the neoliberal management of academic institutions, the rules of evaluation change continuously in unpredicatable ways. In this contribution, we analyze the changes in evaluation criteria in two cases, one Italian and one in the UK. Despite the diversity of contexts, both are characterized by technologies of self designed to create a new human type: the "flexible academic person".

«Una costante insicurezza sul lavoro, un costante ridimensionamento, una costante ristrutturazione, un costante bisogno di aggiornamento per avere un insieme di competenze adattabili ed essere flessibili. In un certo senso la sicurezza sul lavoro e la stabilità sono state liquidate» (Ho in Kiviat 2009). Con queste parole l'antropologa Karen Ho spiega il senso del titolo del suo libro *Liquidated* sulla finanza di Wall Street (Ho 2009). Questo modo di vivere il lavoro che fino ad alcuni anni fa pareva applicarsi soltanto alla finanza e al settore produttivo privato, sembra oggi estendersi sempre di più ad altre sfere professionali, inclusa quella accademica.

Nel dibattito sull'audit culture in particolare in Italia ci si sofferma prevalentemente sulla valutazione dei prodotti della ricerca effettuata da pari nei processi della ASN (Abilitazione Scientifica Nazionale) e VQR (Valutazione Qualitativa della Ricerca), che potrebbero certamente essere migliorati ma che nella sostanza rinviano a pratiche scientifiche qualitative per molti aspetti efficaci. Un aspetto poco considerato invece è quello relativo agli effetti dei continui aggiornamenti, cambiamenti e rielaborazioni, a cui sono sottoposti gli standard di valutazione delle persone e della didattica in coerenza con l'accelerazione della gestione neoliberale delle istituzioni pubbliche. La flessibilità sembra diventare l'unica costante, con conseguenze sulle forme dell'esperienza individuale e collettiva del lavoro accademico (Sennett 2000; Armitage, Graham 2001; Bauman 2002). È lecito chiedersi quindi se la

richiesta al personale universitario di flessibilità e di disponibilità a cambiare pratiche e atteggiamenti derivi soltanto dalla necessità di ridurre sprechi e rendite di posizione introducendo criteri di razionalizzazione, oppure se non vi siano anche sottostanti convinzioni culturali ed etiche, habitus corporei, e se non si intendano esercitare specifiche forme di governamentalità definibi- li come tecnologie del sé (Foucault 1978). In questo contributo ci soffermia- mo su due tipologie diverse di schede, il «modulo di accreditamento delle sedi e dei corsi del dottorato» del MIUR (Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Uni- versità e della Ricerca) e la «scheda di valutazione del personale» dell'Uni- versità di Belfast che, nonostante la diversità dei contesti, si caratterizzano per una struttura "sorprendentemente" simile.

Trasparenza e "visioni"

A settembre del 2014 il "senior management" dell'università di Belfast, in- sieme al neoeletto rettore, si ritirava nel castello della città per riemergerne con la «visione 2020», un ambizioso progetto di trasformazione dell'universi- tà. La "visione" viene sintetizzata in un'unica frase ad effetto:

> Un'università **internazionale** di livello mondiale che supporta **studenti e per- sonale accademico eccezionali** che lavorano in infrastrutture di livello mon- diale, conducono formazione e ricerca all'avanguardia, **focalizzate sui bisogni della società** (grassetto in originale).

In successive comunicazioni pubbliche, la "nuova visione" venne illustrata anche attraverso un Powerpoint che si soffermava sull'importanza di alcuni fattori per raggiungere quegli scopi: per esempio, quello di coltivare una «cultura di leadership al fine di elevare le ambizioni». L'enfasi sulla "leader- ship" tende a legittimare l'elaborazione e il monitoraggio di piani «strategi- ci» da parte della direzione dell'Ateneo. In particolare, la "visione 2020" mo- tiva il lancio di un nuovo piano che mira al raddoppio delle entrate finanzia- re attraverso l'aumento del numero e dell'entità dei progetti di ricerca finan- ziati dall'esterno («entrate di ricerca»).

Uno degli strumenti di monitoraggio è il cosiddetto «modulo di valutazio- ne del personale» che ogni membro dell'università deve compilare semestral- mente. Il modulo di circa venti pagine comprende una definizione degli «obiettivi» per l'anno a venire e degli «standard accademico professionali» differenziati per livello gerarchico e ambito disciplinare, una verifica degli «obiettivi raggiunti» nell'anno precedente e la rendicontazione dei «succes- si» ottenuti. Vari spazi richiedono commenti. Una volta compilato e inviato il modulo all'amministrazione, il dipendente è obbligato a discutere i «risultati raggiunti» con un valutatore di livello gerarchico superiore che deve espri- mere un giudizio in fondo al modulo.

L'attuazione della «visione 2020» ha cambiato non soltanto molti assetti nell'università, potenziando ad esempio le facoltà che qualche anno prima erano state ridotte a una mera presenza simbolica. Il cambiamento, che ha creato inizialmente un maggiore scompiglio nell'università ha riguardato l'«allineamento» degli standard accademici alla "visione", attraverso l'obbligo da parte del dipendente di dichiarare nel modulo di valutazione semestrale in che modo intenda contribuire, procurando fondi esterni, alle entrate dell'Ateneo secondo il proprio ruolo nella gerarchia accademica e l'appartenenza disciplinare. Ad esempio un Lecturer in Antropologia deve acquisire almeno una somma di £77,276 in tre anni. Anche chi è stato assunto per un periodo di prova, all'improvviso si è visto cambiare le regole del gioco in corsa, ed è stato costretto a cofinanziare il proprio stipendio. Inoltre, l'80% delle valutazioni ricevute dal docente da parte degli studenti devono essere positive. Dopo un iniziale periodo caratterizzato da toni diplomatici da parte sindacale, nell'Università di Belfast si è formato un nuovo gruppo sindacale intenzionato a resistere a quello che veniva considerato un cambiamento illegittimo e non negoziato dei contratti in corso. Una «visione alternativa» elaborata in opposizione alla visione ufficiale, ha trovato un sostegno inaspettato tra i giovani ricercatori precari, inasprendo il conflitto con il management, che si è arrestato solo con la improvvisa e recente morte del rettore. Questi sviluppi indicano i limiti della malleabilità dei soggetti di fronte ai tentativi manageriali di promuovere "tecnologie del sé" che creano al contempo nuovi spazi di condivisione e solidarietà.

Un altro cambiamento, più micro-politico, riguarda l'introduzione nel «modulo di valutazione del personale» di una sezione colorata e incorniciata con il motto dell'università «Noi siamo eccezionali». Corredate da piccoli disegni, sono elencate «11 regole che l'Ateneo si aspetta siano seguite da tutto il personale». Una regola recita: «Sii ricettivo alle nuove idee e vedi il cambiamento come necessità per mantenere e migliorare l'efficacia». Un'altra richiede di «avere una costante spinta interiore per fare meglio le cose, soddisfare e superare le aspettative nonostante gli ostacoli». In queste regole si svela apertamente il paradosso prodotto dagli intenti di modellare le attitudini. Agli autori dell'elenco, ispirati da una visione comportamentista e tecnocratica, sembra sfuggire che le disposizioni interiori non si possono produrre in modo automatico, neanche attraverso quelle "tecnologie del sé" foucaultiane che comprendono non solo l'acquisizione di specifiche capacità ma anche «lo sviluppo di determinati atteggiamenti [...] di tecniche adottate dall'individuo per agire su se stesso» (Foucault 1992: 14).

Le nuove linee di accreditamento dei dottorati: messa alla prova delle tecnologie del sé

Riflessioni analoghe si possono sviluppare a partire da un caso italiano. Le recenti linee guida 2017 per l'attivazione dei corsi di dottorato in Italia hanno sollecitato alcune critiche formalizzate nel campo accademico: dai rilievi del CUN (Consiglio Universitario Nazionale) a un documento dei dottorati di area umanistica dell'università di Roma La Sapienza, a più diffuse inquietudini, preoccupazioni, malumori soprattutto relativi ai nuovi standard dell'"indicatore quantitativo di attività scientifica". Il legame esclusivo istituito in questo indicatore tra attività scientifica e numero di pubblicazioni in fascia A mettendo in dubbio la qualità scientifica di chi non lo raggiungeva poneva in discussione anche l'utilità di un controllo che ne riduceva la complessità. Tutto ciò ha prodotto solo alcuni effetti circoscritti come lo spostamento di una settimana della scadenza delle proposte degli atenei e una tardiva attenuazione dei criteri per il raggiungimento del suddetto indicatore. Questa sostanziale acquiescenza potrebbe lasciare immaginare che ci si trovi di fronte a un provvedimento di normale amministrazione, ma in realtà il cambiamento introdotto con le linee guida del 2017, che andavano a sostituire quelle emanate nel 2014, ha messo duramente alla prova l'efficacia delle tecniche di adattamento individuali e istituzionali. Il 14 aprile sul sito del MIUR appaiono le nuove linee e una settimana più tardi (il 21 aprile) con una nota inviata ai rettori, il MIUR fa conoscere le scadenze per la presentazione di «documentate proposte di accreditamento» entro e non oltre il 31 maggio. Ma la banca dati del MIUR non sarà disponibile prima dell'8 maggio e di fatto sarà accessibile solo il giorno seguente. Un tempo molto breve considerato che la proposta prima di essere inviata al MIUR deve essere approvata localmente dai seguenti organi di ateneo: consiglio di dipartimento, presidio di qualità, nucleo di valutazione, senato accademico, consiglio di amministrazione; di fatto meno di una settimana per preparare una nuova proposta di dottorato o per verificare la permanenza dei requisiti di accreditamento, nel caso di un dottorato già attivato. Un tempo brevissimo era così concesso per verificare se il collegio dei docenti e il coordinatore rispondessero ai nuovi requisiti e, nel caso in cui questo non fosse accaduto, per adeguare la composizione del collegio ed eventualmente sostituire il coordinatore o per sollecitare i suoi membri ad aggiornare le pubblicazioni sul sito del MIUR, e infine soprattutto per confrontarsi con angosce, senso di rabbia, di frustrazione e inadeguatezza, minacce di abbandono del collegio. La sostanziale acquiescenza a cui si accennava si sarebbe già potuta prevedere in anticipo.

Almeno dall'inizio dell'anno le linee guida erano state attese per settimane invano. Tuttavia, in questa attesa vi era anche un elemento di sfida con se stessi, nella consapevolezza che si sarebbero dovuti fare i salti mortali per stare nei tempi e rientrare comunque nei criteri, che veniva espresso nelle battute tra colleghi anche di diverse sedi universitarie. Più il tempo passava e più era chiaro che la sfida sarebbe stata ardua: solo l'abilità degli uffici, degli organi dell'ateneo, dei coordinatori e il senso di responsabilità dei membri del collegio alla fine avrebbero avuto la meglio e avrebbero permesso di vincere la sfida. Con quali strumenti? Con il disciplinamento dei corpi forgiati per lavorare docilmente e con compiacimento nell'incertezza dei tempi e delle regole, con la capacità di adottare misure opportunistiche e strategie (individuali e collettive) per rientrare nei criteri e con la disponibilità ad accettare acriticamente standard di qualità incomprensibili.

Era noto che le regole dell'accreditamento sarebbero state cambiate e altrettanto inevitabile pareva che i soggetti coinvolti dovessero dimostrare flessibilità e prontezza nell'adeguamento di fronte al cambiamento. Tuttavia, non conoscendo le regole, era impossibile prevedere in anticipo quali strategie adottare per adeguarsi, inoltre la necessità di un adattamento flessibile era aumentata dal fatto che uno dei parametri, quello dei risultati della VQR non può per legge essere richiesto ai membri del collegio, così come solo un'attenta attività investigativa può condurre a conoscere il valore dell'indicatore I, calcolato sul numero medio di soglie raggiunto dal collegio. L'ANVUR era quindi disponibile a produrre simulazioni degli indicatori R e X1 che riguardano la VQR per l'insieme del collegio, ma non per ogni suo membro, così come dell'indicatore I complessivo. Tuttavia venne spiegato che la simulazione di quest'ultimo valore era possibile ma inattendibile perché l'ANVUR non sarebbe stata in possesso dei dati necessari al calcolo se non in data successiva a quella di presentazione delle proposte agli organi accademici. Ma il massimo di incertezza si è raggiunto con l'"indicatore quantitativo di attività scientifica", relativo al numero di pubblicazioni su riviste di fascia A per i settori non bibliometrici che solo dopo la chiusura delle proposte venne esplicitato potevano riguardare tutti i settori e non uno solo come supposto alla lettura delle linee guida.

In conclusione, entrambi gli esempi dimostrano che una medesima logica è al lavoro sia pure in modo più esplicito nell'Università di Belfast, che ha una più antica cultura dell'audit e in forme più indirette e contraddittorie nel caso italiano. In entrambi i casi si esercita una specifica forma di governamentalità che mira a produrre nel corpo accademico comportamenti e atteggiamenti coerenti con un imperativo tecnocratico ed efficientistico, di "cul-

tura della leadership" attraverso istituzioni, procedure, moniti, premi e castighi. Calcoli opportunistici e tattiche di sopravvivenza rappresentano forme di resistenza, ma è anche utile riflettere su nuove forme di condivisione che potrebbero sfociare nell'elaborazione di un'alternativa.

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Reclaiming Our University
The University of Aberdeen Manifesto

Abstract: Originating at the University of Aberdeen, Reclaiming Our University is a movement that is running a campaign to reclaim the academic world and reshape it in a more communal sense. The Reclaiming Our University Manifesto sets out the key principles of freedom, trust, education and community on which the University is founded. Further details about the movement and its campaign are available at https://reclaimingouruniversity.wordpress.com/.

§1 We, scholars, students, staff and alumni of the University of Aberdeen, call for fundamental reform of the principles, ethos and organisation of our university, in order (1) that it should be restored to the community to which it belongs and (2) that it can fulfil its civic purpose in a manner appropriate to our times, in the defence of democracy, peaceful coexistence and human flourishing.

§2 We stand at a pivotal moment in the long history of our university, a fork in the path that offers two ways forward. One is to follow the business model of higher education to its logical conclusion, in a competition for students, research funding and ratings that values constant change as an end in itself. The other is to rediscover the civic purpose of the university as a necessary component of the constitution of a democratic society, with the responsibility for educating its citizens and furnishing them with the wisdom and understanding that will enable them to fashion a world fit for future generations to live in.

§3 Under its current regime, this university has committed itself to the business route. Not only does this contravene the university's duty, as a charitable institution, to disseminate knowledge for the public benefit; it also overlooks its primary responsibility for education and scholarship. To take the civic route will require a complete alteration of course. It will mean rebuilding the university from its very foundations. Whether we participate in the community as students, as researchers and teachers, or as administrative or support staff, we are here to promote truth, justice, virtue and liberty.

The kind of university we want is one in which these principles are both thought and taught.

§4 In our university we will:

- Create an environment for free, open-minded and unprejudiced debate, which stands out as a beacon of wisdom, tolerance and humanity.
- Defend our freedom to undertake research and teaching in the pursuit of truth, against the constraints, both internal and external to the institution, which threaten to curtail it.
- Restore the trust that underpins both professionalism and collegiality, by removing the conditions of line and performance management, and of surveillance, which lead to its erosion.
- Bring together research and teaching as complementary aspects of an education that carries a responsibility of care.
- Abstain from the egregious language of business that would divide the university between 'employers', 'employees' and 'customers'.
- Restore the governance of the university, and control over its affairs, to the community of scholars, students, staff and alumni to which it rightfully belongs.

The university and its purpose

§5 The primary civic purpose of the university, in a democratic society, is to educate future generations of citizens and to forge the knowledge needed to sustain a just and prosperous world. The university is a place where people of integrity, from all nations, gather in order to learn to think, and think deeply, about the nature of things, about the ways we live, about truth and justice, peace and conflict, freedom and responsibility, the distribution of wealth, health and sustainability, beauty and virtue. They learn to weigh these thoughts against the evidence of experience, and to translate them into policy and practice, systems of law and governance, as well as great works of science, literature and art. These things are the foundations of civilised life. Our university will be a place in which they can be incubated and nurtured.

§6 The university is a centre of academic life. The days when the academy was an ivory tower, wherein intellectual pursuits could be enjoyed in isolation from the practical conduct of life, have long gone. In today's world, not only are people and ideas moving and meeting on an unprecedented scale, but the colonial hierarchies of knowledge that propped up the academy in

former times have largely imploded. The rise, in their place, of competing economic, political and religious fundamentalisms poses a grave threat to democracy and coexistence. In this increasingly dangerous situation, the academy has a new and pivotal role to play. It is to create and sustain a safe, ecumenical environment of freedom of expression, in which ideas matter, and in which there is room for experiment and dissent, and for open-minded, unprejudiced debate. In our university we will create such an environment.

§7 Our university is not a business. Its goals are academic, not commercial. It is here to foster inquiry, not to extract profit. We are motivated in our scholarship not by incentives of financial gain but by the pride we take in our educational and scholarly work. We are driven by a quest for truth and a passion for learning. Our ambition for the university is not that it should be ranked above others in terms of quantitative indices of performance or productivity, but that it should stand out as a beacon of wisdom, tolerance and humanity.

These are our core values. They are moral and ethical, not instrumental, and cannot be measured on any scale. They rest on four pillars. These are freedom, trust, education and community. Below, we spell out what they mean.

Freedom

§8 Though we speak of academic freedom, this is not a freedom reserved exclusively for academics. It is not the privilege of a scholarly elite, absolving them of any burden of care. It is neither a form of immunity, nor a refuge. It offers no protection, nor can we hide behind it. On the contrary, academic freedom is a form of exposure. It rests upon a willingness to relinquish the comfort of established positions, to take the risk of pushing out into the unknown, where outcomes are uncertain and destinations yet to be mapped.

§9 Academic freedom is exemplary. In everything they do, academics in our university seek to live to the fullest extent a freedom that, in a democratic society, is available to every citizen. Thus academic freedom is not distinct from the freedom of the citizen; it is an intensification of that freedom. No more than the freedom of the citizen, is academic freedom handed to us on a plate. It is a task that falls to us, not an unqualified right to which we are entitled, and we have continually to work at it, whether in our teaching, in our research or in our scholarship. We perform freedom, and thereby exemplify it, in our relations with students, with colleagues and with society at large. It is always work in progress; we can never give up on it and assume that it has been achieved. Academic freedom can never be taken for granted.

§10 The freedom we seek in our university, and wish to defend, is one that confers upon the imagination the right to roam, without fear or favour, unhindered by predetermined aims and objectives. But this right also carries personal, moral and professional responsibilities. We are responsible to our students and to the university community as a whole, and we are responsible for the wider societal and environmental consequences of what we do. We have to trust that members of our academic community, whatever their rank or status, will exercise their freedom wisely. There can be no freedom without trust. Loss of trust is the greatest enemy of academic freedom since it leads to the replacement of autonomy and self-determination with surveillance and control.

§11 Academic freedom is the life-blood of our university. It has to be sustained against multiple threats. Unaccountable regimes of management, monitoring and assessment are currently placing severe constraints on what can be researched or taught, on how work should be presented or published, and on intellectual priorities. These constraints are particularly acute for younger scholars, for whom employment and promotion prospects depend upon compliance. Some constraints come from outside the institution, from government or funding councils over which we have little or no control. In using these external parameters as levers of internal management, the institution is not only exacerbating their effects, but actively undermining the efforts of the scholarly community to defend the freedom on which the proper conduct of academic life depends. In our university, we will restore the freedom of the academic community to govern itself, above all through the re-empowerment of the University Senate.

Trust

§12 Academics are professionals. They have joined the university on the strength of their professional accreditation and competence. This professionalism carries with it an expectation of trust. In our university we will trust academic staff to perform their duties responsibly, with personal and ethical integrity, and in a spirit of service to the community and to the public good. But trust also implies collegiality. Not only do we depend on colleagues to play their part, we also grant them the autonomy to do so. Trust rests on this combination of autonomy and dependency. It is fundamental to scholarship.

§13 As a university we aspire to the highest professional and scholarly standards. We will promote and encourage in one another the attainment of these standards, under the authority of the University Senate. We acknowl-

edge the risk that individuals will not always live up to the standards expected of them. In our university we will put transparent protocols in place to deal with mistakes and failures if they occur. We will not however assume that errors are bound to occur unless such protocols are applied, or that their application is a necessary condition for success. We trust that for the most part, they will not be needed. We are confident that in flourishing communities of scholarship, colleagues will look after one another, and that by maintaining collegial commitment, high professional standards will be upheld without the need to have them continually inspected and monitored.

§14 Trust does not arise of its own accord. It has to be nurtured. It is nurtured by openness and honesty, by matching stated intentions with actions, by striving for fairness and consistency, and by learning from mistakes. Trust calls for personal investment, and sometimes entails setting aside immediate advantage for the sake of the community. The individual costs of doing so are more than offset by collective benefits that trust brings to the day-to-day conduct of academic life. Nevertheless, trust that has taken time to build up can quickly be broken down. It is broken down, above all, by the impositions of what is increasingly known as 'management'.

§15 Many kinds of management have the potential to erode trust, including 'line management' and 'performance management'. Line management undermines both professionalism and collegiality when it redirects the responsibility and loyalty of every member of staff from the community of colleagues who share a love of their subject and work together in teaching it, to an organisational superior who neither knows the subject nor is accountable to the community. Performance management undermines professionalism in assuming that scholars are not motivated by a desire to advance knowledge in their fields but are responsive only to threats and incentives issued by managers. It undermines collegiality in attaching these threats and incentives to targets that bear no relation to the contribution that individuals make to the communities of scholarship to which they belong. Behind both line management and performance management lies the premise that staff cannot be trusted to perform of their own accord, to the best of their ability. Both are instruments not of support but of control.

§16 The principle of trust applies not only to academic staff. It also applies to students. Students come to the university because they are eager to join with us in our scholarly endeavours and because we hope they will carry the torch of learning to future generations. We trust that they will do their best, according to their abilities. We are convinced that the legitimate aspirations of students are optimally served by demonstrating, in principle and

practice, that learning and scholarship are rewarding in themselves, rather than by defining their education as a regime of testing, geared only to the achievement of measurable results, and implemented through procedures of assessment and verification based on the pretext that students are less than conscientious.

Education

§17 The university is, by definition, an institute of higher education. By education we mean an open-ended process of intellectual growth and discovery. In our university, education covers the activities of both research and teaching. These are inseparable; there cannot be one without the other.

§18 Research is the pursuit of truth. Though the meaning of truth may vary, depending upon a scholar's discipline or philosophy, the call of truth is the same for all. Truth is an aspiration: it is about trying to get things right, whether empirically, conceptually, ethically or aesthetically. Research suspends prejudice, and turns all certainty into questioning. It means to search and search again. Thus research converts every closure into an opening, and every apparent end-point into a new beginning. It is the guarantor that scholarship can carry on. This is why research is a primary responsibility of the academy.

§19 Under the current framework of evaluation, the meaning of research has been corrupted beyond recognition. It has become a game, in which universities and their academic personnel are players. It no longer has to do with critical scholarship and is instead defined by its products, the values of which are measured by conformity to uniform standards of assessment rather than by any appeal to truth. It entails the collection of 'data' and their processing into 'outputs' which, in their application, could have measurable 'impact'. Such a production-line conception of research may have its place in corporate industry where, in an ever more intense competition for dwindling returns, only innovation sells. In our university, however, research will be driven neither by market demand nor by the expectation of novelty. It will be driven rather by curiosity – by the burning desire to find things out. We are curious because we care deeply about the things we study. Care, not impact, is the hallmark of the ethically responsible search for truth. And in our university, care and curiosity will be recognised as two sides of the same coin.

§20 This will be equally true of our teaching. Since research turns all answers into questions, it cannot be taught as if the questions were already answered. Truth is never given in advance; it is rather a horizon of attainment

that ever exceeds our reach. It is not therefore available for transmission, as is implied by models that measure teaching and learning by the achievement of predetermined outcomes. There can be no such outcomes, beyond training in skills of so superficial a nature that their transfer can be achieved and assessed through the completion of tick-box exercises. Teaching is not about the transmission of pre-existent knowledge; it is about guiding students in journeys of growth and self-discovery that they necessarily undertake together.

§21 These are often difficult journeys without fixed end-points, in which both teachers and learners participate. It is the job of a teacher to help and inspire students, to stretch their imaginations, not to make things easy for them. A good teacher is exemplary in the conduct of scholarship, a generous guide and companion for students, and a tireless critic of their work. It is in this sense that teaching, in our university, will be research-led. This does not mean that students receive their knowledge at first rather than second hand. It means, rather, that students will be immersed from the start in an educational environment that is dedicated to the search for truth.

§22 Generosity, open-endedness and criticality are fundamental to all education, whether in teaching or research. But this is not how education is understood by the current regime of university management. In succumbing to the market-driven rhetoric of teaching and learning with its calculus of milestones and measurable outcomes, and in divorcing research as the production of new knowledge from teaching as its dissemination, the university has abandoned its educational mission. Learning has been reduced to the smooth and painless acquisition of information, so that students can obtain good grades with minimal effort and leave as satisfied customers. Teachers, then, become little more than facilitators, tasked with assembling the information to be acquired and delivering it in userfriendly form.

§23 In our university, we will refuse to regard the provision of higher education as a service industry. We will treat our students neither as customers nor as consumers of the 'experiences' we provide. Marketing courses, selling experience and inducing satisfaction are not, in themselves, educational objectives. We aim to recruit and retain students with ambitions to study and to learn, whatever their means and background. We will respect these ambitions, and will support students in their fulfilment. Our task is to give students the intellectual tools and the critical confidence to address the challenges of the contemporary world, not simply to provide them with a passport for future employment and debt relief. In our university, policies of

teaching and learning will be geared to the proper objectives of education: the search for truth, the promotion of tolerance and the pursuit of justice.

Community

§24 Our university is its people: its scholars, its students, its staff and its alumni, coming together in the service of higher education. The university is a community. We are that community.

§25 The university is not just one great community; it is also a collection of smaller communities, made up of scholars, students and staff working in different academic disciplines as well as in associated areas of activity. Many of these are called departments. In our university we will strengthen departments by formally recognising their role in the working of the organisation as a whole. We will acknowledge that they may conduct their affairs in different ways, depending on what is appropriate and practicable for their respective fields, and we will respect and nurture this diversity. We will ensure that departments or their equivalents are adequately represented in the constitution of the university, at all levels of inclusion, with elected representatives at every level. At the most inclusive level, the university will be represented and led by its Senate.

§26 We do not pretend that the university community is a harmonious place, free from conflict and argument. On the contrary, it is a sign of its vitality that disagreements are openly discussed and debated, rather than hidden behind a veneer of consensus that often serves as a disguise for managerial imposition. In our university we will encourage open debate in preference to 'consultations' which, in soliciting opinions, admit no space for critical dialogue. However, we will also seek to replenish the reservoir of goodwill that makes it possible for differences to be resolved.

§27 Management harbours an inherent tendency towards verticality and centralisation. In our university we will counteract both tendencies by instituting a decentralised organisation in which departments or equivalent units are granted, as far as is practicably feasible, the autonomy to run their own affairs, as trusted professionals and informed colleagues. Time and money saved from supporting and responding to managerial functions will be reinvested in teaching and research.

§28 Communities depend on regular face-to-face interaction. We will ensure that scholars, students and staff in our university have the time, opportunities and congenial physical spaces, including common rooms, to meet and interact. We will accordingly seek to reduce the proportion of the work-

ing day that is spent in front of computer screens. IT systems have their uses, and in much of what we do they are indispensable. But overdependence on these systems has pronounced negative effects, inducing isolation, depersonalisation, alienation and even ill-health. It does much to erode the sense of belonging among both staff and students.

§29 More insidiously, corporate IT systems have become instruments of managerial control. In our university we will not allow the requirements of these systems, or the assumptions that underpin their design, to govern the way we conduct our affairs, to restrict what or how we teach, or to limit the practice of our research. They should work for us, not we for them.

§30 Our university will need leaders. They will have a genuine vision for the university as a beacon of scholarship, and will be committed to its core values of wisdom, tolerance and humanity. Our leaders will be part of, and will identify with, the greater community. They will be chosen by the community, not by shadowy committees whose members may have little experience of higher education, nor by firms of head-hunters which have their own business interests at heart. They will be accountable to the constitutional organs of the University, and will be transparently remunerated, like everyone else, at a level commensurate with their experience and responsibility, to be determined by these organs.

§31 As a large and complex organisation committed to the support of academic life, our university will also need administrators. They include registry officers responsible for the recruitment, admission and support of students, finance officers responsible for budgetary oversight, research officers responsible for the administration of grants and awards, and personnel officers with responsibility for staff recruitment, contractual arrangements and welfare, and for ensuring compliance with employment law. We will embed these administrative functions at appropriate levels of organisation, so that those who perform them can play a full part in the communities they support.

§32 We will additionally ensure that the boundary between scholarly and administrative roles remains permeable. We will expect the majority of scholars to undertake some administrative duties, as they do at present, but we will also encourage those whose primary role is administrative to participate, to some degree, in teaching and/or research. Through this sharing of experience, scholars and administrators will be better able to work together.

§33 Equally important to the effective operation of the university are its librarians and curators, IT specialists, secretarial and office staff, estates officers, porters, cleaners, and a host of others. In our university, everyone will be positively valued and respected for the work they do, and for their com-

mitment to the community as a whole. We will not, for that reason, classify as 'non-academic' those whose contributions lie primarily beyond the fields of scholarship.

§34 Our university will need leaders, and it will need administrators. It will not need managers. The current regime of management, having seized executive powers over the institution, is acting as if the university were in its exclusive possession. Having arrogated to itself the role of sole employer, management treats those who work for the university as employees or 'human resources', to be used for the regime's own purposes and subjected to its increasingly arbitrary and authoritarian command. At the same time, the sense of community that scholars, staff and students of the university have forged over the years has been reduced to a market brand, designed to attract potential 'customers'. But the university community is not for hire, nor does it rightfully belong to the regime. It belongs to us. It is our university, and we mean to have it back.

We have the opportunity to rebuild our university. We must seize it now.