

The marketisation of universities and some cultural contradictions of academic capitalism

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To all the decent, upright academics I have known

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*There is also a print version of the journal. Alternatively, you can to Google, type “**marketisation of the universities**”, and lo and behold, a link to this version of the paper will appear on your screen instantly.*

What could be easier? Bon appétit!

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PORTUGAL

“Sorry: your soul has just died”

Tom Wolfe

“News from the rat race: the rats have won!”

Car bumper sticker

The current commitment of the Blair Labour Cabinet to a substantial increase in university tuition fees in the UK does not spring solely from the need to address the financial crisis in higher education. It is driven also by the sense that British universities or at least some of them must move towards a US exemplar/myth/utopia of the “world-class research university”, or some version of it, though no clear specification of the goal-state or even of a spectrum of scenarios, appears to have been published as yet. I am not sure whether many, or indeed any, of the distinguished academic backers and co-instigators of this drive share the brutal judgment expressed recently by a former Labour Minister of Education, resident in recent years in Cambridge, Mass.¹, that Britain does not currently possess a single “world-class” university or multiversity, Britain having presumably slipped down into this outer darkness at some oddly undisclosed point in the recent or perhaps not-so-recent past. In fact, the recently published ranking of 500 world universities and 100 European universities, prepared by a team at the Shiao Jong University of Shanghai, shows that Britain, as of 2003, was doing very well indeed in the number of universities in fairly high places in the list, in having two universities in the top ten (so part of the *la crème de la crème*), and four in the top twenty. No matter the merits or demerits of the Higher Education Bill, no matter what happens to it, now or in the next Parliament², the questions I am addressing will remain, possibly in an even more acute form. My concern here is not with the question of the comprehensiveness and equity of access to universities supposedly ensured by the new financial arrangements, important as it is, or with the “output” so unengagingly described by The Financial Times in commending editorially these proposals, as nothing more than improved “intellectual skills of the workforce”^{3/4}. For which purpose, surely, you dont

¹ The former Labour Minister of Education referred to is Mrs. Shirley Williams.

² The Bill was carried, though only by five votes, an astonishingly small margin, given the substantial majority enjoyed by the Government party (to be sure, many MPs voted as much against the Prime Minister’s leadership style and concentration of power, as against the proposed legislation, but then again a number of MPs were persuaded to vote for the Bill against their avowed beliefs and convictions, in exchange for constituency favours). It is not clear whether substantial amendments will eventually be carried at later stages of the passage of the Bill through Parliament. As late as June 2004 the House of Lords voted to limit variable fees to the first three years of undergraduate courses, which could save students doing medical, architectural, veterinary and law degrees thousands of pounds. Another amendment carried in the House was that gap-year students applying in 2005 to attend university in 2006 should be allowed to pay fees under the current system (£1,025 in fees, paid “up-front”). They also voted to insert a guarantee into the Bill that extra money raised by variable fees would not be used to erode state funding. The Government appeared unyielding on these matters (The Times June 9, 2004), though later graciously made concessions on the relatively minor issue of gap-year students (“a crumb for the middle classes”, perhaps). If only the truckers were to make another show of force on these matters, and all the suggested amendments by the House of Lords might well have been agreed by the Government instantly!

³ The Financial Times: leading article in the 15 January 2004 issue.

Given the well-known, widely endorsed projection that today’s graduates will have to pursue several (about “five” is a widely quoted figure) consecutive careers in their occupational life-times (quite apart from periods of unemployment) in a world of “flexible” labour markets and volatile capital markets, and experience ceaseless technological and organisational dislocations, constantly threatening their jobs, positions, incomes and prospects (“rents”), it would seem necessary to specify that these “skills” will have to be widely applicable, for otherwise they will be shortly obsolescent in the prevalent conditions of rapid techno-organisational change, and that the key

really need universities at all, let alone “elite universities”, as it calls them, and it is worth noting that this proverbial “mouthpiece of capitalism” eschews any additional reference to such desiderata, if not sheer requisites, of a healthy democracy as a well-educated citizenry –indeed the FT does not at all refer to the “citizenry”, or to the “nation”, or to the “people” of Britain, but only to the “workforce” (it seems to imply that the sole matter of concern is the transformation of the studentry into suitable labour market material or the vector studentry→workforce). It altogether fails to invoke the word “education” at all. Indeed, this “world-class” paper failed utterly to mention even any cognate terms such as “culture”, “cultivation”, “civilisation”, “citizenship” (national, European or ecumenic), “formation”, “competences”, “qualities of mind”, “intellectual qualities”, “breadth of understanding”, or even, unbelievably, “knowledge”, all keywords belonging for the last two centuries to the discourse of and about the university, about the higher learning, everywhere in the West (how can we account for the omission of these terms in the FT or the UK government’s statements about the role or the “mission” of the universities or of the expectations they entertain about students?⁵). “The City’s house journal” did not mention, either, “democratic citizenship”, or some democracy-related facet of education, which would almost certainly have been mentioned, most likely even stressed, on a comparable occasion, by, say, The Wall Street Journal. But in any case, my focus is, rather, on the character of the institutions students are going to have access to, what kind of “form of life”, what kind of form of academic life, they will be participating in, as well as their teachers.

Now the academic advocates of the course referred to are undoubtedly extraordinarily busy people at any time, and the exertion of political pressure, not least on our rulers, is, I am sure, particularly draining (though 10 Downing Street is surely both more accessible and more amenable than the George W. Bush White House in either its first or its second version). So it is not clear whether they have had the opportunity to read, or re-read, anything of an analytical rather than merely encomiastic kind on American universities (it is American universities –and largely a subset of these, in effect- they unceasingly refer to,

emphasis should therefore be on the *capacity* to rapidly change or update whatever specific skills they may have acquired at any particular juncture, at university, or at the workplace, rather than “skills” as such. One can no longer expect “guaranteed jobs” in any sector or sub-sector of the economy (though this expectation is still entertained as a kind of “cultural lag” by some regarding the IT or ITC sector, which, surely, like all others will not escape the general presumption) but at best hope and strive to secure the *capacities* for the likelihood of “lifetime employability” (which given the disarray in social security systems owing to the demographic profile of Western societies, may turn out to be the other face of compulsory “lifetime employment”, as retirement thresholds keep being put back). But the simple monosyllable “skill” has become a contemporary magic word, a substitute for thought.

⁴ “Workforce” itself is an interesting lexeme in this context. The historical semantics of this expression does not appear to have been investigated. Formerly, indeed until quite recently, “labour force” was more usual, in descriptive, or even in analytical, economics, whilst in Victorian Britain the metonym “hands” was quite enough for the same kind of population.

⁵ And how far is this attenuation of the governmental view of the universities representative of recent international trends?

choosing to ignore other forms of excellence in American higher education, for instance the liberal arts colleges or even the great state universities). I have in mind a couple of works in particular. In the first instance, a classic analysis of the American research university in the 1960s, set forth in the book by the sociologists Talcott Parsons and Gerald Platt *THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY*⁶ (the theoretical apparatus being due to Parsons), in part indeed something of a celebration, in many ways a perfectly justified celebration, of the American university at its best, at a time when it already had a major world impact (it was the prime stimulus to the constitution of an academic world, or at least a transatlantic, or North Atlantic, market in the postwar era, not just in terms of students, for such may be said to exist since the late 19th c. in EuroAmerica, but in terms also of researchers of all kinds and faculty members, at any rate in vastly greater numbers than earlier transatlantic or transpacific flows), but which did not fail to portray a good deal of the reality which more recent advocates of the “research university” in Britain sweep under the rug, or at least don’t care to dwell upon. Whatever the misgivings about the theoretical framework deployed, today regarded as outmoded (though not superseded as a general orientation), the general thrust of the argument was by no means controversial at the time, and it has been influential.

More accessible and more widely influential, though not embedded in a systematic analysis of the American university, and with a more skeletal theoretical apparatus, was the promotion by another Harvard sociologist, Daniel Bell, of the concept of the post-industrial society, in his particular version of essentially the knowledge-economy, in which the university, understood as a site of production of basic *theoretical* knowledge vital to the progress of high-technology, as well as of more directly relevant or applied knowledge and technologies, comes to occupy an unprecedentedly central place as a key institution of economy, defence, culture and society in the West⁷. This vision was supported by the independent contemporary development of the concepts, and statistical documentation thereof, such as the works on the “knowledge industry” (by the economist F. Machlup) and the “knowledgeable society” (by the sociologist Robert Lane) published in the 1960s, or on the “information economy” (by the cyberscientist M. Porat) in the 1970s⁸, reflecting the rise, spread, acceleration and interlinking or cyberlinking via digital interfaces of the new technologies of information, computation, communication, control, and automation. This has implicated the spread of, or rather, the saturation of the world, with ever more numerous (even superabundant), versatile, powerful, ever-faster (on nano-scales and beyond), ever more interconnected, intertranslateable and “intelligent” machines⁹, networks and systems, spanning the

⁶ With the assistance of Neil Smelser, Cambridge MA 1970.

⁷ Daniel Bell *The coming of the post-industrial society-a venture in social forecasting* NY 1973.

⁸ Respectively an economist, a sociologist and a technologist.

⁹ Some are truly useful, as it takes a machine to beat a machine: “les téléviseurs américains et bientôt européens s’équipent, de plus en plus, de magnétoscopes intelligents, permettant d’éliminer la publicité en temps réel des programmes télévisés” (*Le Figaro économie* 29 Juillet 2004, p.VIII). An earlier Japanese attempt to provide this sort of service was I believe blocked by the vested interests. Of course, advertisers are resorting to other tactics,

globe, with microchips embedded in all new artifacts, big and small, industrial or domestic (microchips with everything), so that “unintelligent” tools or machines will become, increasingly, endangered species, as well as in natural, organic beings (genes, organs, brains, under the skin) according to the imperative of universal cyborgification. Such machines permeate knowledge-work and the mode of scientific and technological knowledge-production itself (we will note later the emergence of the “robot-scientist” as it was baptised recently by the octet of non-robotic scientists that designed the first effective members of this new taxon), as well as the ever more knowledge-dependent, knowledge-intensive, technology-intensive advance (the three are largely co-implicated in contemporary terms) in every field of production, transport, communications, media, weapons systems, “intelligence”, security, biomedicine, commerce, finance, the professions, etc. (which material advance is often charmingly characterized as “dematerialization”, or moving towards a “light”, or even “weightless”, economy), positive feedback loops unlimited. It should be added, what is sometimes overlooked, that Bell confidently envisaged, indeed he took for granted, an enduring, considerable role for an enlightened State (a benign, social-reforming State)¹⁰ in the promotion of the knowledge university, the knowledge economy, and a more equitable society, far beyond what the marketeers would countenance today: as far as this area is concerned, his vision appears wholly at variance with the current State-backed *market redesign of universities* and the overall ideology informing it.

These two works, to be sure, were written at a time of unprecedented bonanza, a time which is still being called a Golden Age for the universities -and of course above all for the research universities- and for scientific research, the fostering of the latter due above all to Federal Government largesse, in what we can now see as the *epoch of the governmentalisation* (though especially “federalisation”) of science funding, which lasted from the 1940s roughly until the 1980s, and saw the surge of Big Science (the term was popularised, though, not invented, by the first great scientometrician, in the early 1960s; the invention is credited, unsurprisingly perhaps, to a nuclear physicist, and its diffusion to another). The first Reagan administration can be seen as a turning point, inaugurating the *epoch of marketisation* of the sciences and especially the universities, and the increasing privatisation of academic research and scientific research in general (a decade before the end of the Cold War, and through the Star Wars venture, it should be noted). However, and this is a critical point, substantial Federal funding for scientific research has been maintained, if on a much reduced scale, especially in the area of health or health-related sciences, as well as of course in fields of perceived military relevance or national security, and a great deal of private R&D,

technical or legal to preempt this development: the show must go on! At any rate one wonders why these clever devices are not more widely known and available at this date.

¹⁰ In fact Bell seems to have had in mind, like others at the time, the creation of an American Establishment in something like the sense of the term in relation to the UK, but with a much greater weight and saliency for scientists, technologists and academics than was ever the case in Britain. As Bell reports, those who shared this dream “blew it”, partly owing to the Vietnam War.

not least in the pharmaceutical field, is in effect parasitic on public science, and simply does not match the public-funded effort in financial terms, and in the importance and scale of innovation. In addition to the turn in general orientation regarding the funding of science, marked by this two-term Presidency, an extremely important measure in bringing into full effect the marketisation of science was the Bayh-Dole Act, enacted in 1980, which afforded key incentives to the marketisation of academic research and more generally of the universities, coinciding as it did with the surge in genetic research.

Such approaches should be complemented by a work first published in 1918, Thorstein Veblen's *THE HIGHER LEARNING IN AMERICA: A MEMORANDUM ON THE CONDUCT OF UNIVERSITIES BY BUSINESSMEN* (Veblen is of course far better known for his other works¹¹), which might well have been regarded until recently as a dated, eminently forgettable tract for the times, or rather, against the times (President Coolidge's notorious utterance, "America's business is business", came a few years later), much as the novel by the muckraking writer and radical activist Upton Sinclair's *THE GOOSESTEP* (1923), which in a way fictionalized Veblen's vision (perhaps the least remembered of the novelist's books too), attacking the control or attempted control of universities (in terms of curricula, teaching and research priorities, appointments, promotions, etc.) by "captains of industry" (or of finance) via the boards of trustees, though both reserved special venom for the megalomaniac university presidents of the time¹². It was all before the great surge of American universities after WWII, boosted by factors such as the historic G.I. Bill, and later the "Sputnik effect", i.e. the political impact of the USSR's launching of the first space satellite known world-wide as "Sputnik [I]", which triggered the National Defense Education Act of the 1950s, further enhanced by the example of California's Master Plan for Higher Education issued in 1960, to unprecedented heights of student numbers, opulence, prestige, achievement and worldwide influence, unprecedented in America and in the world¹³. It might therefore be

¹¹ There was a reprint in Harper Torchbooks (a great scholarly series) in the 1960s, but it is now out of print, unlike some of his more celebrated books, especially *The theory of the leisure class*. It is, however, available on the Internet.

¹² He drew attention too to the dismissal and blackballing of radical academics in every field, in the universities of the time (which was eventually repeated in the McCarthyite period of compulsory "loyalty oaths" in the 1950s both in Government service and in the universities, most in receipt of major Federal grants, and the general suspicion of political dissenters). The picture he drew of the conservatism, political, religious, cultural, racial, of colleges and collegians, of the time, was not, surely, much exaggerated, if at all. This "muckraking" work apparently was rediscovered, forty years later, by some Berkeley students who played a salient role in the 1968 rebellion against the "multiversity" of the then President of the University of California, Clark Kerr (and many other things also at the same time). Perhaps, this time round, some faculty, at least, will read this once again all too apposite work. Maybe it all goes round in forty-year cycles...

¹³ To be sure, the early post-war expansion of American universities, although starting from a higher level, by various criteria, such as the "participation ratio" in higher education of the most relevant age-cohorts, can be seen as part of a world-wide, world-systemic process, though there was nothing elsewhere quite like the G.I. Bill, though there was a significant access of ex-servicemen into the universities in other ex-belligerent countries (J. W. Meyer et al. "The world educational revolution, 1950-1970" *Sociology of education* 50 (4), pp. 242-258). It has been estimated that about sixty percent of the baby boomers, that is, according to the conventional definition, the

dismissed as merely of historic interest, but the work has re-gained a surprising lease of life, of relevance, of topicality, in the world of the 1980s and subsequently, the world in which “business canons”, the “pecuniary ethos”, and business interests have impinged more and more on university life and even its self-image and public discourse. Veblen’s numerous examples of business involvement, influence, and attempted control in practically every sphere of academic affairs in the US of his time, though American science, by some measures, had already matched if not surpassed both England and France by 1910, in this largely forgotten work (perhaps the least referred to of his entire corpus in the last few decades) have appeared rather dated until recently.¹⁴ Yet many can now be matched by very recent examples, even in Britain, some rather distasteful, to say the least, such as the Murdoch Chair of Communications at Oxford (to name a Chair of Communications after a media magnate! And Murdoch, of all people!), others in some ways even more sinister, as in the role of tobacco firms and other commercial sponsors in all too interested

Americans born between 1945 and 1964 (some 76 million people), received some kind of college education, though their counterparts in Western Europe must have fallen far short of this proportion. Perhaps the current expansion-cum-marketisation of Western universities marks another historic wave, converging towards a similar threshold in participation rates in higher education of about 40-50 per cent of the relevant age-cohorts. Britain does appear now as perhaps the world’s leading marketiser of universities, next to the US, certainly in Europe. However, it should be noted that other European countries have started moving that way, and one can hear the marketising, managerialising, business drums, loud and clear, day in and day out, almost everywhere in and around universities in every European country, from academics as well as ministers, often with what appears to be the zeal and lamentable one-sidedness of recent converts and the tunnel vision of fanatics (but I write from what used to be known, a long time ago, though perhaps no longer, as the “home of lost causes”). A third wave of massification of higher education (or post-secondary education) and a new threshold of market-intensification and technological intensification of academic endeavours will occur if for profit e-universities (or “digital diploma mills”) take off and enlist the many millions envisaged in a new academic Gold Rush, a frontier, and maybe the Final Frontier, of Darwinian academic capitalism.

¹⁴ Some African universities appear to have become virtual branches of multinational corporations to a degree perhaps unmatched in world history. If so, this phenomenon of extreme marketisation of universities in the “periphery” may exemplify the workings of what we could call, paraphrasing a famous Russian Marxist formula, the “*law of combined and uneven marketisation*”, as applied to universities, now a pretty formal part of the “knowledge-economy” or “knowledge-capitalism” (obviously it can be applied to all the types of organisations, industries and institutions to which comprehensive marketising recipes and programmes have been applied throughout the great wave of policy-driven marketisation in the Western world since the 1970s): the “periphery” may provide more startling examples of extreme marketisation in universities and in other areas, than the “center” (I refer again to this “law” later in this paper). But there are now at the “center”, despite the collapse of the dot.com bubble, increasing numbers of for-profit on-line “universities”, or rather “digital diploma mills”, as the sociologist David Noble (who has endured a degree of academic persecution as a result of his critical stance) refers to them in his various studies on the subject, in the US, combining the use of computers, websites and the Internet to provide standardized courses in “distance education”. More insidiously, despite the continuing non-profit commitment, there has been ever-increasing compliance with managerial techniques and business canons throughout the universities, assimilating them to the paragon of economic performance and virtue, the business corporation, as adverted in the body of the paper. A number of recent studies of American universities and colleges such as the collection edited by Benjamin Johnson, Patrick Kavanagh and Kevin Mattison *Steal this university : the rise of the corporate university and the academic labour movement* NY 2003, have provided abundant details of the “reshaping of the university in the image of the corporation” which has been taking place particularly in the last decade or two as well as of the unionisation of the underclass of academia. Of course, not just the (not-for-profit) universities but the entire independent non-profit sector in civil society, as well as the non-profit public sector, has been subjected to very substantial pressures to adopt business management procedures, to professionalise fund-raising, to secure revenues through sales and fees, and to resemble more and more closely and overtly the profit sector thereby.

sponsorship of research and publications (with the tacit possibilities of bias or self-censorship)¹⁵, contribute to a diffuse but far from admirable moral climate, even if direct business control of curricula and appointments, many examples of which Veblen cited, does not appear to be such a prominent feature of the academic landscape as yet, though by no means unknown¹⁶: government promotion of certain kinds of research and development has now gone far beyond defence concerns, in particular, especially in the UK, to foster and protect biotechnology (including the more scientifically and environmentally controversial phases, controversial within the US as well as in the UK) as one of the core concerns of what used to be called the “scientific state” (the science-promoting state, for reasons of power, prestige and international competitiveness), but should now be glossed as the “scientific-merchant state” (the kind of state that promotes science-technology, or “intellectual capital”, as one of its paramount objectives, as big business, though much of it devoted to hi-tech weapons systems, bearing in mind that the world market for arms boomed until recently and has by no means disappeared), now increasingly what might be called the “biotech-merchant-state”, if not the “Frankenfood merchant State” (the UK may even surpass the US in this respect), steadfastly pursuing a course against public opinion (so much for the alleged guidance of “focus groups”), and indeed at least a section of world scientific opinion (in the US itself though

¹⁵ With a notorious record of the suppression or distortion of research findings, even of their own commissioned research, over several decades, which malpractices have been in the public domain for some time, and still continuing, according to recent reports. Recently, Harvard Medical School has increased the amount of money its faculty can earn from companies benefiting from their research (stock in such companies, plus consulting fees and honoraria, in a grand total of \$50,000), yet it has been pointed out, on the basis of studies published in the last few years in the *American Journal of Bioethics*, that even fairly small “gifts” may affect scientists (perhaps the right analogy here, and certainly one well-suited to medics, would be with drinks and driving, where to be on the safe side it is best not to drink any alcohol at all beforehand, or with smoking, where strict abstention is recommended, by the self-same people or the same sort of professionals who in this context claim to be unaffected by heady “gifts”).

¹⁶ The sudden, unexplained decision of the University of Toronto to rescind the senior appointment it had offered to an internationally known British academic, Dr. David Healy, is widely believed to have had something to do with the circumstance that a major sponsor of the university’s center that had approached him was a pharmaceutical company, the academic in question having been on record as a sharp critic of some psychopharmacological testing practices and expressed concern over the widespread medical prescription of Prozac, as can be seen from his book *The anti-depressant era* (a fact which of course was well known long before the appointment, and presumably it was only the administration that had sudden second thoughts over the fact that the manufacturer of Prozac was the company sponsor in question, Eli Lilly, which has also acted promptly to withdraw financial support from centers that have published academic research critical of Prozac, not long before the patent lapsed anyway, in 1991). Yet there is widespread agreement outside the pharmaceutical industry, especially the largest dozen pharmaceutical companies, or “Big Pharma”, that it is due for fundamental reform, not an easy task given its economic power, academic connexions (for many biomedical or biotech academic researchers and academic centers have now a direct financial stake in this kind of business) and political influence, as one would expect from the fact alone that Americans spend 200 thousand million dollars a year on prescription drugs: see Marcia Angell “*The truth about the drug companies*” *New York Review of Books* July 15 2004, and her forthcoming book with the same title, and the sub-title “*How they deceive us and what to do about it*”, NY, (August) 2004. Marcia Angell, a physician, is a former Editor-in-Chief of *The New England Journal of Medicine* and Senior Lecturer in Social Medicine at Harvard Medical School.

sometimes one would not believe it from the assertions of the Government as well as elsewhere¹⁷), whereas it disgracefully yielded almost instantly to the tiny minority of truckers, for example (though it must be said that other European governments have done so too).

In any case, if one conjoins the approaches of the two works, for Veblen's text acquired an unforeseen new topicality, especially from the 1980s onwards, one might begin to work out an analysis of what one might call "the research-business university", a locution which less euphemistic than that of the "research university", which should no longer be used to mislead anyone: if "market-research university" might be confusing, at least for the time being, to designate the emerging form of life in the epochal and too-long delayed transition to full-fledged academic capitalism (or academic "turbo-capitalism"¹⁸) against the remnants of academic feudalism and statism (ecclesiasticism being long gone in the UK, except in quaint vestiges), "research marketing university", if not "*market-driven research university*", or even "*market-driven research-intensive university*" might well do¹⁹. The research university, without the manna of defence contracts (by the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the US Department of Defense)²⁰ or business contracts or the expectations of granting agencies, and the ever closer overlapping and interpenetration of science, technology, industry and market economy, with the "new mode [or Mode II] of scientific

¹⁷ Recently an advisory body that had expressed, if hesitantly, too many misgivings about GMOs (though not so many and not so strong from the standpoint of the outspoken critics outside) was put to pasture by the Minister in the Labour Government (2004). Obviously only enthusiastic approval for this sort of thing will do.

¹⁸ The concept of "turbo-capitalism" was advanced by the Washington-based scholar-consultant Edward Luttwak (not at all a lefty) in *Turbo-capitalism - winners and losers in the global economy* (NY 1996). A similar concept of "fast capitalism" was advanced independently by Ben Agger. In some Latin countries the expression "turbo-profs" is used for academics who teach in a number of universities or other institutions, in various parts of the country, at the same time, and thus spend a considerable amount of time on planes, trains and motorways, every week, if indeed not every day. I have in mind by academic turbo-capitalism or the turbo-capitalist academy something rather more complex.

¹⁹ Cp. the work by the political scientist Colin Leys, entitled *Market-driven politics*, London 2003, which has substantial chapters on the marketisation of the National Health Service and on television broadcasting in the UK. Of course the market-drivenness in question was not simply the outcome of commercial lobbies but imposed in the first instance by the State and often renewed by the State, to keep institutions on course in this fashion, should the spontaneous social processes therein lead to the by-passing of market fixes. It is always selective, of course: to give just one striking example, out of many that could be adduced, consider how governments consistently fail to impose proper market charges on road-users, above all drivers, not by any means a financially or ecologically trivial matter. This insight could perhaps be expanded into something that might be called the *Law of Uneven Marketisation*, a formulation surely instantly recognisable by the ex-Marxist marketisers (in the Lords and elsewhere), of universities, as of other areas of public life, though perhaps they might prefer the more complete formulation of the *Law of Uneven and Combined Marketisation*, though that is perhaps too reminiscent of arguments over social and political breakdown, and presumably they are now at last wholly at peace with the social order in general and expansive all-out marketisation in particular.

²⁰ Which of course also went to think tanks, some of which were set up in the post-war era in direct connection with branches of the armed services, like the Rand Corporation, funded by the Air Force. For a while after 1945, the Office of Naval Research was seen as the saviour of basic science (I recall that even some of Eisenstadt's work was financed by them) though this happy conjuncture did not last long.

knowledge production”²¹, simply does not exist, if indeed it ever did, except for some universities for some of the time, and not since WWII. The Department of Defense itself sponsored the notorious Camelot Project on the sources of insurgency in the Third world, eventually cancelled by President Johnson, which had been envisaged by its academic leader (by no means a classic right-winger) as “the Manhattan Project of the social/behavioural sciences”, just as three decades later the US nonmilitary-financed Human Genome Project was envisaged equally grandly by its champions “the Manhattan Project of the life-sciences”²², and completed in the main, if not entirely gloriously. One may recall President Eisenhower’s Farewell Address (1961), a text full of enduring wisdom, a historic, if neglected, document in the sociology of science, with its surprisingly cogent and still all too pertinent comments not only on the dangers of “the military-industrial complex” but also on the potentially harmful tie up between science and business, academia and industry, the higher learning and commerce²³. It was from this speech, not from rabid left-wing tracts, that the expression “military-industrial complex” entered general currency, though “military-industrial-academic” (coined later by Senator Fulbright) or “military-industrial-scientific”, or “academic-industrial”, or, more inclusively, the so-called “triple helix” of industry-universities-state (though especially the military concerns of the state), better represented the realities then and now. Though Daniel Bell wrote extensively on “the cultural contradictions of (contemporary) capitalism” (which phrase he coined²⁴) as a whole, he did not address systematically, I believe, the cultural

²¹ As a group of sociologists of science called it, perhaps in desperation (M. Gibbons et al.). Later in the text I suggest a slight emendation of this concept in the light of recent developments in the agents of scientific knowledge production and in any case the workings of the **Law of Uneven and Combined Marketisation** as applied to the hard sciences, have proceeded and are proceeding further even than the prescient authorial collective had envisaged. Molecular genetics has notoriously become a kind of vanguard of and for the marketisation of science, well ahead of other branches of the natural sciences, and setting a standard of far-reaching commercialisation and capitalisation that others find difficult to emulate, but it has in any case contributed to a more commercial, industrialised, commodified and capitalistic image of science overall, and has reinforced the political pressures for the marketisation of all science. The “technological a priori” imputed to science by some philosophers of technology is now reinforced by the very stringent “market a posteriori”, as we might call it, of business-orientation to an extent that market anticipation has come increasingly to play a role in the initiation, the selection and the relative staying power of particular lines of scientific research. Perhaps we should speak of a “*techno-market*” a priori of contemporary natural science.

²² And took shape in the climate of the “War on Cancer” announced by President Nixon (which has turned out to be a permanent war, not something that could be over in ten or twenty years, as was naively expected at the time by some politicians and opera-haas by sections of the populace) though the etiology of cancers in advanced industrial societies with their ever-larger over-60s populations, is only partly genetic or genomic, and environmental carcinogenic factors within our anthropogenically and technogenically transformed milieu have been increasingly diagnosed. But no multibillion-dollar biomedical-ecological-social sciences ten-year “Human Environment Project”, in succession to the now essentially completed Human Genome Project (and what was not completed is being speedily pursued further by private concerns), has been announced within the context of the “war on cancer”, which presumably is still on, though the prospects of total imminent victory through the wonders of “algeny” or “genetic alchemy” or other biomedical high-tech interventions no longer beckon as they did three decades ago, in this context, at any rate. Not even a Decade of the Environment, or a Decade of the Earth, comparable to the Decade of the Brain.

²³ President Eisenhower’s Farewell Address (1961) is available, and easily accessible, on the Internet. A must read.

²⁴ In an article he published in 1970 with that title in *The Public Interest*, no. 21, Fall 1970, pp.16-43, later incorporated into a book with the same title.

contradictions of the capitalist knowledge economy as such, in which the production of knowledge or, more broadly, “information”, as a “public good”, indeed the public cultural good par excellence, as “gifts” to the “global knowledge commons”²⁵, is uneasily associated with the competitive national state and corporation pressures on the already business-steeped and business-oriented university to reshape itself as an organisation, a business organisation servicing other business organisations (as well as, of course, the defence establishment), dealing above all in intellectual property and intellectual capital, knowledge-as-commodity and knowledge-as-capital, as the price of survival (though, surviving thus, it will surely die as a university)²⁶.

It would be wrong to fail to note that the academic advocates referred to are indeed perfectly well aware, as well they might, of at least two kinds of major consequences for the universities of the course of action they are fighting for, and, in the main, they embrace them (I have failed to detect a single note of regret or concern about such matters so far, in public statements, at any rate)²⁷. Both sorts of consequences are in the same direction, towards greater inequality, with a twofold bias towards bimodality, a bias towards a *bimodal distribution of resources and rewards for universities* and a drive for a much more unequal, eventually *bimodal, distribution of resources and rewards for academics*.

(I)

A bias towards a bimodal distribution of resources and rewards for universities

One is greater and more glaring, more brutal inequality in a variety of ways between universities: the cream, and the rest (if the former Labour Minister whom I cited earlier is to be believed, one might say, drawing out some implications of her claim, that there is in the whole wide world of universities, the

²⁵ Partha Dasgupta, Karl-Göran Mäler and A. Vercelli (eds.) *The economics of transnational commons* Oxford 1996.

²⁶ Top university administrators constantly call for more and more “commercialisation of research output.” If the university is a business, or aims at becoming like a business corporation, then it will presumably have to follow business imperatives, and I suppose the appropriate maximand of the research sector could be the highest possible returns from the commercialization of “research output”, regardless of all other non-pecuniary considerations about the academic commons and the public good. University research findings are not envisaged as contributions to the knowledge commons but as “output”, and “output” should be turned into “products”, ie vendible commodities.

²⁷ The zeal of the UK academic marketeers seems rather odd at this time given the fact that several former Presidents of top American universities, such as Clark Kerr, formerly President of the University of California at Berkeley, Derek Bok, a former President of Harvard University, and William Bowen, a former President of Princeton University, have published articles and books in the last few years expressing serious concern over what has been happening to American universities, not least the top ones (and of course they are far from being lone voices in these matters, though presumably they should command special attention from those ill-disposed to listen to such concerns from any but the most unimpeachable sources on ideological or professional-biographical grounds, even though there may be in fact some overlap between their strictures and those of more left-inclined or radical commentators). Do the current UK academic marketeers (or their counterparts elsewhere) genuinely want to learn from America, or are they simply so ideologically or otherwise committed to the marketisation of universities, come what may, that they choose to ignore the warnings and concerns of such people? There is still time to read Derek Bok’s book *The universities and the marketplace – the commercialisation of higher education* NY 2003, which surely cannot be ascribed any kind of anti-market ideological prepossessions or un-American bias (other relevant works include Eric Gould *The university and corporate culture* New Haven 2003).

“American cream”, and the rest). Now the Parsons and Platt classic study of the American university had illuminated the prestige/resource stratification of universities, from the top ones, whether Ivy League or the great State universities, to the intermediate and bottom layers (and the bottom could be far down indeed). Some might regard such a development as retrograde, and certainly running counter to the tradition of British universities since WWII at least, symbolized by the nation-wide system of external examiners drawn from any other university in the country for both first degrees and research degrees (which practice, I believe, never took root in the US), a tradition which many foreign scholars, with direct experience of the system, have long regarded as one of the most attractive features of the British academic scene, and one deserving emulation. But presumably they regard this dissolution of tradition, of the British university model as has been known for decades, this break with such admirable practices and conventions, as a price well worth paying for the greater good, or at any rate to drive up market values of a few universities in world Stock Exchange “quotations” (literally or not), though one may still ask whether, in the terms in which these matters are couched, Britain, on its own, will ever have in the future the capacity to match the first four “world-class universities” (just as it cannot afford a single Nimitz-class aircraft carrier, even though militarily it notoriously punches above its weight), no matter what “top-up” fees are charged²⁸, barring most unlikely eventualities, such as a sudden surge of super-patriotism among the cleverest (and even if it did, such a place would still not be in America, which is a necessary part of the package as far as much of the rest of the world is concerned, though it is also true to say that many people will go on being attracted by British universities for a great variety of reasons, sometimes indeed because it is *not* America). In fact, in the light of the recent ranking of world universities, Britain has been doing exceedingly well.

The drive to secure or increase the places in the ranking via full-scale marketisation, in part neglects the fact that whatever the rankings, Britain can lay claim to scores and scores of “centres of excellence”, in most branches of what used to be called the higher learning, not least in the humanities, acknowledged as such throughout the world, more perhaps than most countries, which there is every reason to believe that it could maintain or foster anew – and wouldn’t such a constellation be more than enough?²⁹. Today the

²⁸ “Top-up fees”, “up-front”, “skills” : so many monosyllables in talking about universities! -and mostly *deictics* too! It seems that in talking about universities only short, sharp monosyllables will do in current political language, perhaps a reversion to a kind of Basic English as a revenge on sophisticates, or a demonstration of debased populism (political populism is always also a matter of language, diction, tone of voice, finger-pointing). I am not sure whether this kind of deflated pop-language à propos of the universities is also being deployed by university marketisers in other countries besides the UK.

²⁹ There is one crucial point about the proposed “top-up fees”, to be paid “up-front” that cannot be stressed too often. It is that they would yield the equivalent of *one half of one percent* of public expenditure !. The political costs incurred by the Government in the parliamentary battle would hardly be warranted in rational political calculation unless issues of far greater importance than this comparatively very modest amount of public expenditure, at a time of healthy public finances, were at stake. What drives the battle, one may hazard (and, perhaps because of sheer ignorance, I know of no better hypothesis), is not the saving of public money and taxes, to the frugal tune of one-half

wisdom of the saying *le mieux est l'ennemi du bien* (if it is not, it certainly can be) seems strangely neglected, if not disparaged, in the drive for maximisation of rank in mono-hierarchies, league tables, and the like, the cult of the numerical superlative. Is the damage inflicted on the British university system and its former virtues (perhaps not wholly extinct here and there), likely to be irreversible, brought about by the drive to secure world-class universities, as distinct from a plethora of world-class research centers and excellent individual scholars- worth the human, social and cultural costs?. Though, I must add, it is not clear to me that they have thought through the psychological, social and cultural implications of the new academic stratification (on which they could draw once more on American experience), or indeed whether, in their frantic zeal to press their case, and have their recommended policies enacted, they would even care to stop and ponder such implications, and the bearing they may have on any kind of academic equality (isn't this a case of "reinforced dogmatism" in the Popperian sense?: not only do they reject categorically opposing views, but they can also explain perfectly well why such wrong views are held, and therefore don't need to be seriously discussed³⁰). But appeals to equality per se, in any sphere of thought and practice, have ceased to carry much weight, except in very specific areas with particularly vocal lobbies, and the Tawney tradition of egalitarianism, once important in Christian social thought and the Labour movement in Britain ("Old Labour"), pretty well forgotten. If the most apparent class divide in Britain was linked to access to, or exclusion from, university education, the class divide in future could be between those who have gone to so-called "elite universities" and the rest ("mass universities"?), to "selective" or to "recruiting" universities, or perhaps one should simply say, to "upmarket" or "downmarket" establishments. Which two sorts of caste-making universities could become mostly self-perpetuating...³¹ There is an English genius for caste-like stratification that may reincarnate itself in this marketised-technocratised fashion...

of one percent of public expenditure, but the project of further drastic marketisation of the universities, the final submission of the universities to the canons of business enterprise. The universities, it seems, must not be allowed to stand apart from the sweeping marketisation, a thoroughgoing societal project that brooks no nonmarket, noncommercialised "islands of separateness", no nonmarket "anomalies" (unless they don't matter at all): that would run counter to the ideology, or indeed the metaphysic, of Market Monism (some supporters of these reforms have apparently claimed that education or at any rate higher education is the "last great nationalised industry" in Britain still to be "tackled", that is, by Government). To be (at least socially speaking), or at least to have a claim to social recognition, is to be part of the Market, preferably a willing, even enthusiastic part of the Market, from this standpoint. If you are (a willing) part of the Market, you are part of the solution, if you are not, you are part of the problem (but the solution is obvious, imperative, urgent: to market! To market!).

³⁰ The locus classicus is *The Open Society and its enemies* London 1945. .

³¹ Last year 50 per cent of all research funds went to five universities in England: Cambridge, Oxford, Imperial College, University College London, and King's College London. As it happens, the first four were the top British universities in the recent ranking of world universities by the Shiao Jong University of Shanghai (Institute of Higher Education), and indeed *all four were amongst the top twenty universities in the world*, respectively no. 5, no. 9., no 17, no. 20. All other universities among the top twenty were American (Harvard at the top), with the single exception of Tokyo University. Kings College London was no. 75 in the ranking. It may not matter at all to the powers that be, but these four universities are *the top four universities in Europe*, according to the same ranking, and Kings Coll London take a respectable no. 22 out of 100 universities listed. Twenty-two British universities appear in the list of

(II)

A bias towards a bimodal distribution of resources and rewards for academics

The other sort of inequalization, rather overlooked or underplayed by some commentators, who do acknowledge the increasing formalization of an “elite group” of universities as an inevitable outcome of the proposals, is perhaps even closer to the bone. It is inequality within universities, among academics, not just between ranks, but within them also. The advocates of reform in university finance seem to have in mind inter alia the system of professorial super-stars in the US (with paler reflections in the UK, though perhaps only due to lack of money), in the humanities and the social sciences at least, as something absolutely required for “excellence” -which in these cases is perhaps a surrogate for fame, citations (“impact”), and the like- in these domains (and even to compete with the US, at least in the sense of preventing, or mitigating, the outflow of high-reputation academics, at least in some areas, to the US, by bribing them with ever-higher salaries and perks, to stay in the UK, as public honours, and other forms of “psychic income”, once perhaps highly valued in a less monetised market-grant economy, are clearly not enough by a long way: we already knew about “academic rents” (though, curiously enough, this concept is not invoked when wide academic wage discrepancies are promoted), but the “academic bribe”³² has not been the focus of much study except, sporadically, and not quite under that rubric, in connexion with the brain drain from Britain to the US and even, in some branches of the natural sciences, some years ago, to Germany³³. Again, they don’t refer to the plight of the academic underclass which seems a natural

100 European universities, the largest national contingent. Cambridge is the second university in the world on the Nobel score, second only to Harvard, and far superior to all the others.

³² I gather the term “bribe” is currently used by some economists in a supposedly value-free sense, and wider than the conventional one. I don’t know how this wide “bribe” category would appear in the appropriate mathematical presentations now mandatory in the mainstream of the discipline, or how it would be operationalised in “transparent” academic accounts or in the GDP of the academic knowledge-capitalist economy.

³³ In some countries this phenomenon is more forcefully called “brain flight”, more in line with “capital flight” (this was also, once upon a time, known on the left as “capital strikes”). There are, according to widely publicized reports, for instance in Time and Newsweek, early in 2004, something like 400,000 European scientists are currently working in the US, the majority in universities or university-type institutions or research centers. This definitely beats, at least in numbers, all previous migrations of scholars in history, which were mostly caused by wars, revolutions, regime changes, ethnic or religious persecutions. Doubtless much reflection and inquiry is called for to account for it, in terms of some conjunction of “pull” and “push” factors (social scientists have generally argued in connection with voluntary migration that “pull” is decisive), and to elicit ways to ensure that Europe benefits more directly from this vast pool of scientific talent, a kind of Grande Armée of European-educated scientific labour or, some might say, the largest, most talented and longest-lived “brain strike” in history, or the largest diaspora of scientific talents from Europe (and indeed from all over the world) into one country. A world-historical *unicum*, given its scale and import. The recent publicity afforded to this large-scale phenomenon, and to the putative reasons for their decisions to emigrate, at least for some years, to the US, may help to induce policy reforms in the exporting countries, and the unheeded complaints of the scientists who emigrated may in this fashion have a significant impact in a roundabout fashion, an instance of what may be called *vicarious voice*, to modify Hirschman’s well-know schema of “exit” and “voice”, wherein “exit” appears as an indication of the failure, contingent or systemic, of “voice”, though it may of course stimulate “voice” under some circumstances (see *Addendum 12*). There are of course

correlate of these arrangements (graduate assistants, teaching assistants, postdocs and especially “adjuncts”), although these are known even to those with only a superficial acquaintance with the American academic world. Note that part-time (in pay if not in work) adjuncts make up *nearly half if not more, of the total higher education faculty in the US*, and this proportion may steadily rise.³⁴

“Excellence”, unfortunately, is already a tarnished word, as some American academic commentators have noted, for its overuse by universities (not least allegedly “third-rate” ones) in their glossy brochures, has already made plain its resemblance to the kind of puffs new car commercials indulge in (the term “excellence”, unfortunately, was incorporated into managerialese some time ago). The “University of Excellence”, as the Canadian academic Bill Readings called it a few years ago in his *THE UNIVERSITY IN RUINS*, which has replaced the Humboldtian University of Culture, has become, in effect, the business-like (in every sense) university, the university as business and for business, the university saturated with market-speak in its privileged (if not the exclusive) mode of self-description and self-presentation. Some advocates of the proposed arrangements in university finance have been perfectly candid about the underlying drive: the universities, they say, are the last great “nationalised industry” (everything these days is an “industry”) in Britain still to be “tackled”, by which I suppose is meant privatised, or something like it (that is, steered into state-defined marketisation, “forced to be free”), even if it is not perhaps implied that universities should be put up for auction like the railways, presumably in glorious fulfilment of some magnificent, unassailable, world-conquering historical project set in motion over two or three decades ago: such are the ways of “mythhistory” to use W. H. McNeil’s expression³⁵. Oddly, one cannot recall when they were ever nationalised, although one can date precisely when the railways, the coal mines, the steel industry were nationalised (or renationalised...could it have been a mere *lapsus calami*, confusing “national” with “nationalised”? What about the Armed Forces, the Monarchy, the swans and the sturgeon in England’s rivers, the Established Church (this one definitely the result of a state take-over centuries back, at a time when the State robbed a large volume of properties from the then-existing Church), the Civil Service, the National Trust, the Inland Revenue, the National

some American scientists, in various branches of the natural and the social sciences, working in Europe (and if the political climate in the US worsens, there may well be more), but the disproportion is enormous.

³⁴ In fact, if one takes into account graduate assistants, postdocs and adjuncts engaged in college teaching only about one-third of all college instructors in the U.S. are now on the tenure track, and the proportion of student credit hours taught by tenure-track faculty may be even lower (B. Johnson et al., op. cit.). One could say, therefore, that, in the best managerial-business style of today, *teaching has been substantially “outsourced” in American academia* (of course this is in some ways a modest form of outsourcing, for there is still human contact: in e-universities, outsourcing will reach new heights, dispensing with human presence altogether, though perhaps not some degree of “telepresence”). Doubtless the UK exponents of marketised elite research universities expect no less in their home ground (in all the senses of “expect”). Though perhaps they should beware of a wave of unionisation of the academic underclass comparable to that in the US, which has scored tiny successes here and there, though as the times are so uncongenial to unionisation perhaps no sleep need be lost by the academic powers-that-be.

³⁵ Generalizing from F. M. Cornford’s *Thucydides mythistoricus*.

Anthem, HMG, the electoral process, even, in a way, the English weather³⁶, or other natural/cultural entities and processes that may be imputed an economic dimension³⁷?. Though it is arguable that it was precisely the pre-eminently denationalising, privatising Thatcher government that did the most to bring the universities into government control, in a sense, to nationalise them (as well as to centralise public administration)- until now.³⁸ It takes astounding historical ignorance and abysmal conceptual illiteracy to

³⁶ I should stress that this is *not* an entirely facetious remark, contrary to what most people would suppose on first hearing this. There have been serious suggestions by technologists regarding the feasibility through hi-tech of partitioning sections of the atmosphere with a view to investing them realistically with property rights, by states or other political entities, and thereby securing the foundations for progress in yet another sphere, as it were. And certainly weather forecasts for the next few days can only be secured from the national meteorological office by advance payments, in France at any rate (though, under public pressure, the director ruled in July 2004 that such forecasts for France as a whole, as distinct from particular regions or areas, will henceforth be free).

³⁷ An interesting English institution, the Trustee Savings Banks, which belonged to no-one, were nationalised (taken over by the State), by then an unusual move, precisely *in order* to be privatised, to be sold off, to belong to some one in the market economy rather than in the public domain: such is the dialectics of contemporary market capitalism!. The provisions to allow demutualisation of building societies in the UK on demand from shareholders were similar in intent, and they have mostly been demutualised under pressure from a minority of shareholders wanting fast cash from the proceeds of the conversion. Even when the pressures for privatisation and commercialisation are less direct and obvious, the non-profit sector (charities, museums, zoos, etc.) outside public education is everywhere undergoing so much commercialisation as to increasingly blur the difference between it and the formally for-profit organisations. This is a development which can only be welcomed by the partisans of Market Totalism, but is it the most appropriate transformation in a *pluralistic* society?. But it is not clear that pluralism in the sense that it was used in political science in recent decades any longer applies to the current state of affairs in the polities of the US or the UK.

³⁸ It is arguable that a kind of nationalisation took place, or a big step was taken forward towards such a condition, under the Thatcher government especially via the 1988 Education Reform Act, and further moves are taking place with state-determined, state-controlled marketisation. Once again nationalisation was the prior step on the way to secure eventual privatisation, or at any rate as much marketisation as possible... The conservative journalist [Sir] Simon Jenkins, who subscribes to this view, describes most British universities today as looking and feeling “like down-at-heel nationalised industries, working part time and facing obsolescence” (The Times 28 Jan 2004). Prof. A. J. Grayling laments in similar terms the sorry state of British universities as “the crowded, peeling, tottering institutions called universities in today’s Britain” (in his column “The reason of things” The Times January 31 2004).

The Government’s very one-sided attitude to the BBC in connexion with the “Kelly affair” (Dr David Kelly was the weapons expert who disagreed, it seems rightly, with the official view over the presence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, in line with which the UK went to war with Iraq, and committed suicide under pressure from the Ministry and the media) may indicate its general outlook on public, independent institutions (independent from the State, independent from corporate interests, endowed with a Royal Charter). Perhaps we are moving a little closer to Orwell’s Ministry of Truth or, at any rate, to a situation where communications, news, reporting will be exclusively a function either of government-controlled organizations (official news management), on the one hand, or of business media corporations on the other (corporate news management) which in some circumstances, even in a democracy, may converge. Whatever the rights and wrongs of the BBC reporting that led to the Government initiating the Hutton inquiry, and the need for reform in some BBC procedures, the most important point here is that, regardless of any such details, the very notion of “public service broadcasting” sits uneasily with the prevalent pan-marketising stance, the presumption of the superiority of market arrangements whatever the field, if indeed it may at appear as wholly alien, incoherent, wholly unintelligible even, to the marketisers’s mind-set. Concern has been expressed over the political independence of the Office for National Statistics under the present Government, as indeed under the Thatcher government, which ensured that certain kinds of socio-economic statistical data were not gathered, or published. In the age of the knowledge explosion, of the knowledge-industrial economy, of the high valuation of intellectual property rights and intellectual capital as the supposedly necessary and inevitable instrumentality for maximizing the rate of technological advance, we witness thereby a kind of power insufficiently noted in a democratic polity: the power to produce ignorance and “unknowledge” (as that exceptionally literate economist, G. S. Shackle, liked to put it) about the economy and society. Perhaps we might call this *nescience power*, not only the

believe, or at least to imply, that whatever is not now private business must have been once nationalised by some mischievous, ruinous, doctrinaire political fiat (the myth of Original Nationalisation serves instead of the myth of Original Sin in these secular times), and, therefore, could (most fittingly), and should, be denationalised by a later, symmetrical, political fiat, this time a good, sound, “nondoctrinaire” one³⁹ (the first an instance of “social engineering”, the second not, though the criteria for such a discrimination have never been clearly and sharply deployed in an authoritative fashion). It has always been one of the hallmarks of political ideology, in “agitation” but even in “propaganda”, to privilege simplistic asymmetrical dichotomies in its preachings (or enforcement of thought constrictions), in this case the *master asymmetrical dichotomy* of State/private or State/market: the simplism immediately arising from the tacit claims that the dichotomy is strict, the terms posited as mutually exclusive and exhaustive (against the lessons of the study of comparative economic systems, which bring out a far less stark, indeed much more multivalent picture of patterns of ownership or management⁴⁰), and the asymmetry hinges above all in locating positive value exclusively or almost exclusively in one side, disvalue on the other (and no *tertium datur*, essentially speaking)⁴¹. The teachings of “scientific

prerogative of governments, particularly in their dealing with the social sciences, and social and economic data, but also exercised, of course, by private corporations not least those involved in technoscientific areas, the pharmaceutical companies affording a vast array of examples of the exercise of such nescience power regarding biomedical matters. Political power may concur in the exercise of this nescience power, or add its own ideological biases as in the case of the Bush Administration, a great friend of oil interests (and high-energy consumption, to which it appears committed to an unprecedented degree, and certainly beyond the levels of recent Administrations) and biotechnology in any case.

³⁹ Even under this Government, the recent ministerial moves concerning the railways privatised by the previous Administration (otherwise, presumably, they would have done it themselves) suggest that something like an unannounced return to some form of public ownership or control of this important sub-sector of the economy (which in any case was always subsidised by public funds, quite apart from being practically given away when privatised by an earlier government) is taking place. But of course one cannot blame the market, only the bungling, if not corrupt, politicians and civil servants (“government failures”, not “market failures”).

⁴⁰ The remarkable study by Peter Wiles in *The political economy of communism*, even though published three decades ago, delineating ten or twelve patterns of ownership of enterprises and a variety of patterns of management is particularly instructive (the *combinatoire* of logically possible combinations of ownership models and management models would be quite impressive). Some recent presumed Marxists or at least Marxologists, such as the LSE economist Lord Desai (a Labour Peer), have argued that there is no alternative to full market capitalism of the sort that now prevails in the US, but full socialism (not social democracy or democratic socialism), but that is impossible, at least for the foreseeable future. That, they say, is Marx’s real lesson (“Marx’s revenge”) which had not been heeded by social reformers under capitalism: give up all social democratic illusions! (which in the present conjuncture entails nothing less than: embrace full market capitalism!). With this kind of bourgeois Marxism, capitalism needs no more friends. This kind of marxism-without-hope (that is the very definition of bourgeois marxism) could well become a serviceable creed for the actually existing state of affairs, or indeed for universal marketisation. Of course there has always been a strand of marxism, as of anarchism and other forms of social radicalism subscribing to the *politique du pire*, which virulently opposed bourgeois, keynesian-style economic and social reforms on the grounds that by mitigating present pain and collective misery, it detracted from revolutionary fervour or the raising of class-consciousness.

⁴¹ On the role of asymmetrical dichotomies as foci of social thought and orientation, specifically in the constitution of political ideology and indeed of social theory in general the writings of Stanislaw Ossowski on class theory and W. Baldamus on social science methodology (both sociologists coming from marxist traditions) are particularly relevant. There is of course much on binary oppositions in structuralist literature, and subsequently in feminism,

liberalism”⁴² may enjoy more free and open criticism than those of “scientific socialism”, but are nevertheless relentlessly enforced in public policy practically everywhere.

The trends in the business styles, the entertainment and media industries in America and Western societies at large, particularly accentuated in the last fifteen years or so, towards winner-takes-all arrangements, where quite small, even vanishingly small, or indeed non-existent differences in talent or performance, between contestants for “excellence” (top prizes), or even thanks to sheer flukes, secure wholly or at any rate hugely disproportionate, and indeed possibly quite fabulous in absolute terms - “rewards” in fame, or at least media exposure, reputation, money and perks, have already been the subject of substantial studies, even books such as the recent, well-documented and referenced one by the American economists Robert H. Frank and Philip J. Cook *THE WINNER-TAKES-ALL SOCIETY: WHY THE FEW AT THE TOP GET SO MUCH MORE THAN THE REST OF US*⁴³ (which does not primarily focus on academia), which again one fears the advocates of similar trends in academia ignore (or perhaps knowingly applaud, and perhaps expect to benefit, and may even feel entitled to sole benefit from such cornucopias, and can barely wait for such a state of affairs to come about). If they succeed, the academic world, at least in the humanities and the social sciences, always the “softest” region of the academic world as far as external ideological or political pressures on the one hand, and internal bids for power of doctrinal or methodological (or “paradigm”) zealots and academic mafiosi, on the other, are concerned, is going to become another subsector of the “winner-takes-all society” (in some areas it perhaps already is), already in being in the world entertainment industry (including of course under this rubric an increasing number of sports), as the neologisms “edutainment” and “infotainment” indicate. It will tend to exemplify a kind of *super-Matthew effect*, (not just what one might call the simple Matthew effect, i.e., “to him [or her] that hath, more shall be given”, known to Merton, on either of his accounts, though one should never forget that the “Gospel according to St Matthew” also reads “to those that have not even, that which he has shall be taken away”), a more up to date, post-Mertonian, turbo version “to him [or her] that hath, much, much

though another important tradition in which asymmetrical dichotomies play a fundamental role at a much higher level of analytical abstraction is that of Durkheim (the *Ur*-dichotomy here being that of the sacred and profane) and Louis Dumont in the key argument of *Homo hierarchicus*. I should add that, contrary to what is often implied in the orthodox (constructivist) sociology of science, asymmetry as such does not seem to me to be necessarily and universally a bad thing, or a mandatory term of pejoration in epistemology or ontology, in the field of the social sciences or elsewhere, and indeed the overwhelming cognitive (or other) merits of symmetry are not really argued for by such writers (the matter needs much further discussion and is noted in my forthcoming book, *Experimentum mundi*). Perhaps there is some underlying confusion or at any rate an insidious identification in the minds of the symmetry-intoxicated sociologists of science between symmetry and impartiality, symmetry and objectivity, symmetry and rationality, symmetry and equity.

⁴² I did not invent this expression: it comes from an unimpeachable source, the French neo-liberal economist Henri Lepage did, in his widely translated book *Demain le capitalisme*.

⁴³ The work of Frank and Cook on the “winner-takes-all economy” draws on the “superstar hypothesis” advanced by a mainstream Chicago economist, the late Sherwin Rosen, in his classic paper “The economics of super-stars”, *American Economic Review*, 71: 5 (December 1981), 845-58.

more shall be given”) as indeed to some extent was already occurring in certain phases of academic life, where, in any case, careerist ferocity has never been absent, to be sure⁴⁴. Though perhaps we should also bear in mind the reference to Genghis Khan that Bill Gates/Microsoft’s greatest rival (and actually somewhat richer than Gates) likes to make: “the point is not only to succeed, but to make sure that the others fail”. Now the “*Genghis Khan effect*”, if you like, not yet properly recognized in sociology, unlike the simple Matthew effect: still, it was formulated by a leading businessman, one of the wealthiest in the world today, and given the prevalence of the business model for universities, it must have some bearing on the business university (not just the business or management school within the university), the university as business, the university for business, the B2B university, or business to business.⁴⁵

A perfectly legitimate question to ask in this context is surely this: *What is all this going to do to the university as an institution?* It is astonishing to find that some of the most vociferous advocates of these changes are heads of ancient Oxbridge colleges, institutions if anything can be called such, institutions nonpareil in the world. It is as if their anti-egalitarianism and radical academic individualism (even by theoretical epistemic holists and keen partisans of the “social construction of reality”) made them forget, or renounce, or at least discount, the institutional(ist) tradition they have been entrusted with. Under such circumstances, in due course, the institution will not count at all, so why bother with the preservation of such colleges⁴⁶? Indeed why not go all the way into the already much advertised scenario of the virtual

⁴⁴ A version of the “Matthew effect” operated with the richer American universities in recent years when their endowments, through a mixture of successful investments and “pull” for more donations, became not only absolutely richer, but relatively even richer compared with the less well endowed or unendowed ones, something which seems to have completely bewitched UK university marketeers (the widening of the gap was compounded by the cuts in Federal and State grants to public universities). Of course the same mechanism applies also to the ingress of faculty or students, reputation, etc. where success breeds success.

⁴⁵ The principle of performance-related pay (it used to be called in the economics of wages “payment by results”) or “merit pay” in effect goes together with other market criteria, and may be overridden by them, within one and the same university. Thus a full Professor of English may be paid only as much as a new Assistant Professor of Accounting in the same American university, independently of the number or measured reputation of publications, or any of the other performance criteria which, supposedly, rationally determine pay in the University of Excellence. Of course, *between* universities in the same country, wide disparities in pay for holders of the same academic rank, in similar departments, and of similar accomplishments or “merit”, have long been known in the US even before the post-war expansion of universities (see eg the sociological study by Logan Wilson *The academic man* NY 1942).

⁴⁶ I recall a British philosopher saying many years ago, in defence of Oxbridge colleges, then as now under attack for elitism, snobbery, class bias, and so on, that they represented “the last stand of syndicalism against bureaucracy” in contemporary society, though this was not by any means the first time an academic had characterized them as “syndicalist” (he was, or had recently been, a Trotskyite, in one of his many intellectual/political/religious/national metamorphoses, though more recently he has become widely known as a transatlantic exponent of Thomistic-Aristotelian thought, enjoying considerable international fame as a leading exponent of “communitarianism” in moral and political philosophy). Whether they can now survive, in substance, the inroads of marketisation, so zealously and relentlessly promoted by the State bureaucracy, or rather by the PM and his econocratic, pan-marketising, e-(u)topian and generally techno-utopian (being extremely partial not only to IT, but to biotech and GMOs, and now, it seems, to nanotech as well), advisers, not to mention vocal leading Oxford academics from within, remains to be seen. Everywhere else, “the market” (unleashed by the State, backed by the State) has been mightier than syndicalism, mightier than bureaucracy, though still “under God” according to some claims... At any rate the dream, or project, of a Princeton-by-the-Cherwell seems a potent one, at least in one Oxford College.

university⁴⁷, and all-inclusive if not yet sole and exclusive regime of “e-learning”, and indeed “e-science” (already making some progress), with virtual researchers and teachers (as has been envisaged with relish for over forty years by e-utopians, futurists of various descriptions, not least Marshall McLuhan, though perhaps now it will start happening)?⁴⁸ Already universities, at least as far as the humanities and the social sciences are concerned, tend to embody a kind of hybrid of the knowledge-as-commodity/knowledge-as-capital industry and the celebrity industry: at the limit they will become mere collocations of a few academic superstars shining ever-so-brightly in the world-firmament, and their legions of teaching or research minions, part-timers or “adjuncts” (as they are called in the US), who may eventually be relegated to something approaching zero-contracts, or what one might call *academic Mcjobs*, bringing the academic labour market into line with other labour or service markets of post-industrialism, entitled at most to (short) lives of (hopefully) blameless obscurity. Such places serve as collocations undergoing constant reshuffling, assembling and dis-assembling, according to the latest poll of rankings, patent

Perhaps they have not heard of the fears of “Princetonisation” voiced by faculty in the University of Chicago some years ago, or of “Princeton-on-the Hudson” in a New York university a while back (I take these examples from David L. Kirp’s recent book).

⁴⁷ The UK’s “E-University”, designed as a kind of electronic, on-line Open University for the whole world, announced by the Secretary of State for Education in 2000, which was expected to attract millions of students, has been closed down, with just 900 students in its books !. Students in these e-university business arrangements were not only “customers” but also “end-users” (is there no end to the infliction of commercial terminology on matters of education ?). One may compare this grotesque failure of New Labour’s E-University with the success of Old Labour’s Open University, Government-founded and Government-funded, which it was trying to emulate and surpass but which it may never succeed in doing. It is true that less money was wasted than in the much-quoted, edifying statist horror story of the Groundnuts Scheme, but will it ever make it to neo-liberal textbooks as a comparable lesson and cautionary tale, of disastrous state-driven marketisation? The lure of profit from the setting-up of what David Noble has called “digital diploma mills” or more prestigious but still for-profit versions thereof, is perhaps too strong to preclude further attempts on similar lines being made again before too long. And the e-(u)topian vision animating so many of the Government’s advisers (what one might call “cyber-chic”, instead of the old-fashioned “radical chic”) will reinforce this disposition (of course in the 1960s and 1970s, an epoch of radical anticapitalist computopias, there was a current of thought which hoped to enlist cyber-technology in the service of a nonmarket socialism, but that was a different matter altogether). The more far-reaching e-(u)topian vision put forth with great gusto for the last three decades in the US that on-line education would finish off the universities in the free market, like the vision of the need for schoolteachers and schools being eliminated by PCs and videos, has not yet come to pass and is not even within sight (though if it had come about already, it might have solved the UK university marketeers’ problems at a stroke).

⁴⁸ Some British universities already advertise academic vacancies in print media giving only e-mail addresses, and no postal address (or even a telephone no. or a fax no.) at all, as if they only existed in cyberspace, and could not be contacted or did not want to be contacted off-line in the real world, as it were (or at least implying that they do not wish for any such thing, giving no physical location, whilst still resorting to print media, perhaps only owing to statutory requirements, for the time being). I wonder if they ever receive, or send, “snail mail” (perhaps they dispense with it to save money and trees), though at least they did advertise vacancies off-line, though perhaps reluctantly. Some academic diaries, too, list only web sites for all UK universities. Perhaps they are already proleptically pretending to be wholly Virtual Universities, a higher form of academic being altogether. Unfortunately, I fear that a lot of driving to and from the campuses by faculty, administration and students still takes place regularly, at a significant ecological cost, so the virtuality is still pretty limited by hard physical and material/energetic technological reality, despite all the vaunted “etherialisation” and “ephemeralisation” that sophisticated technologies increasingly involve, with its techno-metabolism with the environment, with the wastes and varied nefarious environmental impacts accruing therefrom.

indices, grants, publications lists in “peer-reviewed” journals (measured by number and physical weight, the weight example not being facetious or utterly hypothetical, but drawn from real cases referred to in T. Caplow’s *THE ACADEMIC MARKETPLACE*⁴⁹, if not wordage directly), all presumably in Anglophonia, for nothing anywhere else will count, of course. Indeed, the ratings and scales may perhaps issued every week, if not every single day (Edinburgh University already claims ten peer-reviewed research papers produced by its staff every day, and some other universities in the UK would doubtless claim even more⁵⁰), if not every hour (Edinburgh’s rating would then be less than 0.5 papers per hour), like shares in Stock Exchanges, and indeed one may well expect universities to be literally “floated” (if only there were someone around today like that supreme savage satirist of ideas, Jonathan Swift, to pursue this imagery) as Inc., PLCs or corporations, or even as assemblies of such firms, perhaps even down to one-person firms, the oxymoronic “university of me” (and every single academic person a “micro-firm”, if not a PLC, or whatever⁵¹), quoted eventually in such places or their equivalent, if indeed this has not already occurred, at least in some fashion, and certainly needing no physical abode locatable by GPS (except perhaps with a logo “somewhere in or over America”, for the sake of prestige) or any kind of collective sentiment, collective affection or rose-tinted collective memory?. To be sure the decay of the university as an object of loyalty on the part of faculty was partly due originally to the growing, indeed overriding, importance of disciplinary and departmental attachments⁵², but under present circumstances matters have gone much further.

⁴⁹ Theodore Caplow and Reece J. McGee *The academic marketplace*, NY 1958 (the date of this publication shows how far back some of the more farcical present practices, or alleged practices –and indeed we could truly say *si non è vero, è ben trovato* - of academic evaluation go).

⁵⁰ Edinburgh University was ranked 53 in the list of world universities previously referred to.

⁵¹ The sociologist A. Gehlen characterized the person in modern society as an “institution in one case” (*Man in an age of technology*): today, the individual academic is becoming (induced to become by multitudinous pressures not least from the university powers-that-be, as well as by virtue of their belonging to the winner-takes-all market society) not just a shareholder in a firm, but a firm in one person, and this seems to be a general trend in contemporary society. This may signify, in due course, perhaps another shift in the long-lived “category of the person” (Mauss), more particularly from the autonomous citizen under the Moral Law to the person-as-firm, or the market-in-one-person-case. There are now learned neo-liberal works on the “economics of mind” (this was before the emergence of experimental “neuro-economics”, linking neurons in the brain-market to purchases in the outer market), on the human mind or the human brain as market-like or economorphic (so to some extent human psychology could be seen as a branch of micro-economics, or at least as structurally isomorphic to it), which could be glossed too as addressing the economics of the person, the market within the brain/mind, acting in the market or markets without (commodity markets, political markets, knowledge markets, religious salvation markets, genetic (soon gene chip)/genomic/proteonomic services and capital markets... - to refer only to markets on which there is a considerable, influential academic literature, social scientific or philosophical).

Is there room in the conceptual map of the marketising elites for an essentially nonmarket core of a person, as for an essentially nonmarket domain of the wider society? In the vision of Downing Street advisers, as for some ultra-liberals, perhaps not.

⁵² This phenomenon was extensively discussed in the important study by David Riesman and Charles Jencks (two Harvard academics) *The academic revolution* NY 1968. There is of course much else relevant to a comprehensive study of the American research university at the end of the Golden Age, in this work.

Yet science faculties in the U.K. are already contemplating low or nil fees for new science entrants, given the persistent decline in applications for science places (especially in physics and chemistry) and for mathematics at universities, a trend common, with variations, to most of the Western world (gender skewed, inasmuch as few women go into physics, but match or surpass men in the intake into the biological sciences)... Yet the thrust of university expansion and revamped finance is supposedly designed to enhance the technoscientific capabilities of the nation, or rather, of the “workforce” ... At this point one can see very clearly the emergence of the contradictions of academic capitalism, for the “effective demand” from students is not necessarily for the skills and competences that are vital for the preservation of the wider turbo-capitalism, which on the other hand is the *raison d’être* of the marketised university. For, as so often, the profile of the “effective demand” of the supposedly market-wise “customers” of higher education does not match the functional requisites of the system, certainly as perceived by politicians...math-phobia and fear of or aversion to science are too strong, but then where do these “pathologies” or “dysfunctions” stem from? No matter how students become ever more economically rational or market-disciplined, or so it was expected, given the exigencies of fees and loans, they still don’t seem to pursue the “right” subjects (from the current industry’s or the current government’s point of view) in anything like sufficient numbers, strangely enough. Even economics, as distinct from business studies, is significantly less favoured in the US at undergraduate level than was the case, say, ten years ago, and some American universities have stopped teaching graduate economics in the last decade (the ever-growing mathematicisation of the discipline, especially in the case of the most prestigious schools, widely regarded even within the profession, as exorbitant, even byzantine, is undoubtedly a factor). In the UK, presumably, modern language faculties would not be permitted to do imitate the science faculties, even though they are also suffering from an adverse trend in applications (as in other EU countries, even between neighbours like France and Germany, increasingly disinclined to learn each others’ languages, at least at school and university) and foreign language skills (or knowledge of, fluency in) could also be rated as important for business...So what is doing well at undergraduate level? In the US, at least, business courses, enrolments in which as of 2000 already made up almost *one-third* of the total undergraduate population. In the UK, a top-rated university department according to the state-imposed (though implemented by willing academics) Research Assessment Exercise, and therefore a jewel in the University of Excellence, may be closed down if numbers of applications from prospective students are deemed insufficient by the academic managers, having no place in the University of Excellence-as-business. There seems to be a cultural contradiction in academic capitalism when the requirements of excellence and the requirements of solvency clash, and the only academic-managerial solution is to sacrifice research excellence, and cut costs by firing quality academic staff and closing top-notch departments or centers. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Prime Minister-in-waiting,

has been reported in the Press as aiming at a “nation of entrepreneurs”⁵³ (perhaps coextensive with the total “workforce”, or at least the “skilled workforce”, though largely consisting of managers and the managed), the new version of the “nation of shopkeepers”, where the new Order of British Entrepreneurs(hip) will finally match or surpass the Order of the British Empire (will there be also an Order of British Managership?)⁵⁴, but surely today mathematical, natural-scientific and technological

⁵³ [Gordon Brown]. Prof. B. Charlton, in a recent essay on the condition of British universities, has argued that, in effect, the universities have been redesigned to supply *middle managers* to the nation, or rather to the “workforce”, which of course sounds much less attractive than the Chancellor’s vision, but is surely closer to the truth (I am grateful to Prof. Grahame Lock, of Nijmegen University in the Netherlands, for drawing my attention to this essay). The increase of the studentry to 40-50 per cent of the relevant age-cohorts would roughly match the proportion of the workforce that may be characterized as performing managerial functions of one sort or another in the “real” economy, at this time or at any rate in the next decade or so. There was a time when promotional brochures of UK universities spoke of the training for “leadership” students would receive there (the assumption being that there were sufficient leadership positions to be filled in the wider society): the term “leadership” has fallen into comparative disuse in general parlance, but today, clearly, students are being trained for what one might call in parallel fashion, “*managership*”, to meet the needs of an increasingly managerialised economy, though this is not official, and “*entrepreneurship*”, the avowed ideal, sounds better than “*managership*” (to be sure as “flexibility” increases, the greater the numbers of the downsized, the more people have to try for entrepreneurship). And clearly the universities are expected to help produce or reproduce the “*cybertariat*” (the word was coined, though not really defined explicitly, by Ursula Huws in a paper substantially reproduced in her book *The making of the cybertariat – real work in a virtual world* London 2003), though special incentives or pressures for their production are hardly needed in this technological epoch – sufficient numbers of cybertarians may well spring up, without official bidding, almost from infancy if not from the womb, as some would have it, in an almost literally cyber-reared, indeed soon to be cyber-gestated world (through electronically mediated training of the fetus and eventually the emergence of the full-fledged “cyborg child”): in fact when 40 per cent of more of the workforce fulfil managerial roles, clearly a good proportion of them could be classed as a kind of *manageriat(e)*, rather than a “cyberbourgeoisie”. But in addition the universities must provide a stratum of research scientists, doctoral students and post-doctoral research fellows (these will have to be far more strenuously nurtured). The latter, as in America, in the hard sciences at least, may come increasingly from abroad (outsourced inwards, so to speak), rather than from native “human resources”, until such a time as these foreign sources of trained talent dry up in turn, though ever more sophisticated Roboscientists or Science Robots, as they have been called in a lengthy article in *Nature* by a team of scientists describing the cognitive successes of the first effective members of this new taxon in sociocultural, in epistemic, ontology (*see Addendum 10*) may be increasingly be drawn upon to stave off that day, replacing the work done by vanishing graduate students and postdocs, brainware by software, manual labour by robotic arms and feet, and their combinations (and even in virtual reality, humans will soon be able to feel or at least feel that they feel, touch and grasp real-world objects in a 3-D world). Whatever may be said about the idea of a nation of entrepreneurs, it could also be said that in every Western country there are emerging naions of proletarians, in the sense of the term enunciated by the German Catholic sociologist Goetz Briefs decades ago, when he defined the proletariat as the body of persons wholly or largely dependent for their livelihoods on shifting and insecure labour markets. For one sure thing about labour markets (as well as other types of markets) under turbo-capitalism, or techno-capitalism, is their shifting and insecure character, glossed very nicely as “flexibility”, “innovation”, “creativity”, “creative destruction”, “accelerated change”, and the like, to be embraced with enthusiasm, with the end of job security and careers for life, the shrinking of the public sector, and other concurrent transformations (the instability of financial markets is another matter).

⁵⁴ “Entrepreneur” has become, in the last decade or two, perhaps the supreme honorific term of the age, and all too widely applied as a “hurrah word”, not only in general parlance, but even within social science discourse. Schumpeter’s famous eulogy of the entrepreneur (first published in 1912) was partly inspired by the Carlylean vision of “heroes” as shapers of history, and something of this Carlylean heroisation persists in the current valuations, though the “heroes of consumption” (pop stars, the top range of entertainers of all kinds, celebrities, the famous for being famous) also enjoy high status and wealth, though they may be regarded as entrepreneurs of sorts. Leo Lowenthal’s famous succession model of cultural change, involving a major shift from the predominance of “heroes of production” to the predominance of “heroes of consumption”, has thus been partially invalidated by the course of social transformation under the last three governments or so. To be sure the phrase “heroes of production” should be

taken in a wide sense, for many of them could perhaps be seen more as “heroes of business”, “heroes of management”, “heroes of finance”, “heroes of asset-stripping”, “heroes of organization reengineering”, “heroes of creative accounting”, “heroes of “paper entrepreneurialism”” (to borrow the American economist Robert Reich’s expression), “heroes of crony capitalism”, or “heroes of predatory capitalism” than “heroes of production” in any strict sense, though of course in the e-economy there are a number of outstanding inventor-entrepreneurs, and the three-in-one scientist-engineer-entrepreneur compositum is a salient feature of the New Economy and bio-economy landscape of our time (one should bear in mind that the Schumpeterian entrepreneur was not exclusively or even primarily associated with the deployment of new technology: both in his first formulation of the concept of entrepreneur and in his late work, entrepreneurship could also involve other domains such as the discovery of new resources, the exploitation of new markets or the advantages of new organisational forms). Of course the celebrity academic super-star is both a hero of knowledge-production and a hero of consumption in the entertainment field.

Even doing good in the public realm outside the State is not characterized any longer as doing good, or altruism, or philanthropy, charitable work, or the exercise of benevolence, or Christian action, or the exercise of Christian charity or *agape*, or the exercise of beneficence, or saintly conduct, or paying a debt to others, or the practice of fraternity, or as demonstrating solidarity with the less fortunate, or as the love of humanity in the Enlightenment and Positivist tradition, but just as “social entrepreneurship” !. The good are not any longer to be seen as “creative altruists”, as Sorokin called them in his sociological studies of ordinary American philanthropists in the 1950s (not surprisingly, they were unfashionable then, totally unfashionable now in every ideological quadrant, within or without sociology, let alone economics, it surely being the case that neither discipline barely deigns to recognise their existence, to put it mildly). No, “altruism” is definitely suspect, conceptually and lexically, throughout the social and human sciences, in this way a true mirror of the operational code of the market. More than suspect, to be exorcised, as in the formulation “reciprocal altruism” in ultra-Darwinian socio-biology, which is not at all what was meant by altruism before, so that putative altruists turn out to be, reassuringly, just another species, another sub-set, of entrepreneurs, specifically “social entrepreneurs”, like it or not! This astonishing and imperious stretching of the category “entrepreneur”, where not so long ago we had an ample and resonant vocabulary of religious and moral praise with Christian or Enlightenment roots, at our disposal to refer to good voluntary action towards the unfortunate or deprived, which moral vocabulary had served us for a long time, indeed for centuries, demonstrates how the enforcement of market discipline operates even in our hallowed moral idioms, which must yield to the usurpation of prepotent market categories, which thus appear increasingly if not as the sole legitimate ones, at any rate as enjoying certain power of privileged illumination and ratification (why is it that no-one refers to “anti-social entrepreneurs”, entrepreneurs of evil, entrepreneurs of media malice or “feeding frenzy”, entrepreneurs of organized crime, media entrepreneurs of xenophobia, and the like?). There was a time when a saying such as “*on n’aime rien tant que ceux qu’on a vu humiliés*” could be understood without any reference to the categories of the market (Durkheim characterized socialism, as movement or doctrine as stemming from a “*cri de douleur*”).

Perhaps it would be better to go along with the tide and call the Welfare State the “*social entrepreneurial State*” in partnership with “social entrepreneurs” at large, in “civil society”. With luck, more money might be forthcoming, the sense of unease that seems associated with it, mitigated. Anyway this proposal for rebaptizing the Welfare State, this little piece of “linguistic entrepreneurship”, is offered on “open access”, with some trepidation, for it would be better if we at least tried to halt if not reverse the trend towards the marketisation of language. Difficult, to be sure, for market orthodoxy, like all other orthodoxies, is accompanied, and partly enforced by, a kind of orthoglossia. But maybe I am complaining too much, for a cyber-executive and cyber-millionaire recently proclaimed that money “is the root of all good”, explicitly subscribing to the Ayn Rand ethical doctrine of Absolute Selfishness (a doctrine that informs more than a philosophical school, a kind of American cult, among some professionals and entrepreneurs, furnishing a most satisfying “theodicy of good fortune”, to add to the more classical versions). Of course, quite a number of digerati incline towards a Nozickian minimal state, or a version of anarcho-capitalism, or cyber-libertarianism, or “crypto-anarchy” (which some say is inevitable, given the nature of the technologies involved, though the US is most concerned to prevent this as well as being the home of those most committed to fostering it), so the State will have to be shrunk much further, to a degree not yet reached anywhere in an industrial society, even in the Information Age (as yet few have seriously argued in the media for the privatisation of the armed forces and the entirety of the police, as the anarcho-capitalist economist-ideologue David Friedman, son of Milton Friedman, did so forcefully).

Against this background, as a beneficiary of “rents of ability” (as the early Fabians liked to say), as a “rent-seeker” (all exiles are, I suppose, in a way, *ceteris paribus*), as a “rentier”, in the denigratory parlance of the times (though Pareto had already sharply contrasted “entrepreneurs” and “rentiers”), I take some comfort from the staunchly held view of Ludwig von Mises, one of the greatest of “Austrians”, still a major influence in an important strand of

knowledge and understanding are required as well, not to mention the ability to speak and read modern languages, amongst other things. Perhaps foreign students taking such courses are expected to keep teachers of those subjects in employment, though the teachers themselves may have to be imported as well...nevertheless there may still be money to be made (“value added”) from the entrepreneurship... Though even cleverer, even more entrepreneurial entrepreneurs may in due course simply outsource more and more and, at the limit, everything, abroad, and finally “delocalise” the whole business from the UK to China, where some British university campuses have already opened (more due soon), perhaps the vanguard of a wide trend, in the wake of the TNCs (now there’s “offshore academic capitalism” for you, following the car industry and sundry others)...This is an example of the cultural contradictions of national academic capitalism, of the marketisation of the university in the world knowledge/education economy, though doubtless some marketeers, libertarians (not least cyber-libertarians), anarcho-capitalists, cosmopolitans and globalists would not see anything wrong at all with such a trend.

The call for higher, even discretionary, university tuition fees, is being accompanied in a number of countries (for it is a worldwide trend, not confined to the UK or even to Europe), as a kind of quid pro quo, by demands that the residual Civil Service-type protections of university teachers be scrapped completely (perhaps as part of a drastic denigration and drive towards the liquidation of Weberian-style rational-legal bureaucracies, as well as of other kinds, everywhere), just as general labour codes have been and continue to be under attack in European welfare states, and one-year or otherwise time- and security-limited contracts substituted for the classical ones, if not worse: as nonacademic labour has been encompassed more and more by “contingent” forms of employment, why should academic labour, however intellectual, professional, high-grade, “creative” or what have you, not follow suit?⁵⁵. This might

contemporary economic-liberal thought, that everyone, absolutely everyone, is, willy-nilly, an entrepreneur, a risk-taking, or, better, uncertainty-facing agent (uncertainty being the primary category in this perspective), necessarily and universally so, by virtue of the mere fact of being an acting person in the world .

⁵⁵ In a way the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), carried out yearly for quite a number of years in the UK, could be seen as, de facto, enforcing in everything but the name, a partial, sectoral, *labour code for academics*, treating academia, without prior warning, precedent or warrant, as an instance of a *continuous process industry*, as it were, where maturing reflection, time to learn, time to master new languages, for example, or even taking care to avoid adding to the existing load of intellectual pollution, to contribute to the conversation of academic and intellectual life, and the like, were disqualified and tacitly negatively valued (as they should be, perhaps, in industries that are effectively continuous process industries, though not all industries could be properly so called as yet, though undoubtedly the trend is going that way, with the assistance of genetic engineering and biotechnology in general, and directly or indirectly with the computationalization of all operations). The redefining of contractual conditions has added further downgrading to the informal Academic Labour Code in still physically existing university-factories (even outside the domain of the “digital diploma mills” proper), that came into being particularly via the RAE, the code of university-based knowledge-industry labour, on closely parallel lines to the recent market-friendly, labour-unfriendly, flexibility-maximizing, labour codes of ‘real’ industry in general (although for some analysts an ever greater proportion of industries deserve to fall under the rubric of “knowledge-industry” too, universities, certainly research universities, being a still somewhat peculiar species of the knowledge industry, but whose peculiarities may have outlived their usefulness, until they become wholly and exclusively market-driven research universities). State conscription into the industrial, postindustrial or hyperindustrial world’s ever more inclusive, pervasive and

well mean, at the asymptotic limit, that absolutely everyone in a university (except perhaps the super-stars, and a privileged few in the administration) would have something like one-year, or, at any rate, short-term contracts, everyone, whether academic or other staff, students, etc. would be at short notice, everyone in such a place de facto and de jure a transient, expecting to stay for only a short while (as has been the case in some ebullient university departments for quite some time, even in England), like football teams recruited from all over the world, whatever the country they supposedly represent, with the players always on the move through “push” and “pull” effects, in the language of economics. The upshot would be

inescapable “treadmill of production” (a concept originally formulated by the sociologist Allan Schnaiberg in 1980), in short, from which one no academic inmate must be allowed to get off (Allan Schnaiberg’s book *The environment: from surplus to scarcity*, where the concept was advanced, was reprinted in 2003, NY). To be sure, no-one is forcing them to be academics: if they don’t like the treadmill of academic knowledge production, they can relocate and redeploy whatever saleable “skills”, if any, they may possess to other branches of the society-wide or world-wide technological treadmill of production, of the World Technomarket, if they want to survive, so there’s a “choice”!

Given the dire consequences of the operation, which must have been the whole point of it, it seems absurd, indeed, perverse, that it was called, is still called, an “exercise”: live ammunition, as it were, or at least real, substantial, financial sanctions, were deployed (though words alone *can* kill and most certainly wound), departments were injured, individuals distressed, morale undermined, opportunities denied, intellectual life further degraded. More a scientific Grand Guignol performance, a technocratic version of the Visitations of the Inquisition, an academic enactment of a kind of *Modern Times*, than something fitting for the House of Intellect. But then academia is seen from Whitehall more in factory and business terms than anything else: from the Academia of Scholars (in its ideals at least) to the Turbo-capitalist Academia of Entrepreneurs (capitalise on your knowledge!) in one generation!. Another imperative of universities today is of course the internalisation of the entrepreneurial ethic, with knowledge as the commodity/ subject by the faculty: after all, in a nation of entrepreneurs, the academics must enlist too. In this climate, it is not surprising that some academics, taking their lesson to heart, turn into many-sided entrepreneurs, not infrequently often at the expense of the universities themselves, though generally universities appear quite indulgent towards them (certainly compared to the sanctions inflicted on harmless, “unproductive” addicts of the music of ideas, or “unproductive”, devoted and effective teachers).

Now more than half of the university departments of chemistry (not sociology, or media studies, or cultural studies) in the UK are threatened with closure because they did not get the top grades in the last RAE “exercise”. It seems that if you don’t get the top grades in this kind of operation, you have failed, and departmental closure may be not far off, in line with the rapid “elimination of the unfit” in Darwinian academic capitalism: why not just award two grades, Pass (top grades), and Fail (anything below a “5”, starred or unstarred)? This turns academia essentially into a game of winning or losing, like a competitive sport, nothing else, most being losers through a kind of *Law of Almost Universal Failure* of university departments. Here as in the winner-takes-all economy as a whole, but through political agency ultimately, *le mieux est l’ennemi du bien*. Of course, as far as students are concerned, precisely the reverse is true, for the tendency is to give everybody prizes: in most universities, even in the “best” universities, as the President of Harvard University, where presumably most or all departments would rate the equivalent of the RAE’s 5 or 5*, complained not so long ago, something like a Law of Grade Inflation or Law of Prizes for Almost Everyone, applies to students, whereby an ever greater proportion of graduands get awarded the upper grades (maybe there is an objective basis for this, such as the “Flynn effect”, named after the psychologist James Flynn, who first reported on the convergence of independent findings over two or three decades of rising IQ levels in young age-cohorts in advanced Western societies, which has generated further research to test these results, which does appear to have further confirmed the overall appraisal).

Perhaps some sectors of the universities, at least, could apply to an appropriate regulatory body for reclassification as branches of some *slow process industry* or other (there may well be still some left under something like that description) instead of the continuous process industry model. And, better still, even join the Slow movements that have sprung up in the last decade or so, starting in Italy - “slow food”, “slow cities”, but also now elsewhere “slow art”... “idle curiosity” (Veblen)... Instead of the unhappy “culture wars”, or the “science wars” of recent years, join the “time wars” (more latent than the book of Jeremy Rifkin with the same title would have led one to expect), the Contemporary Simplicity Movement (in the USA), or, better, the Society for the Deceleration of Time.

something like a post-modernity or supermodernity market **University of Transiency**, precariousness, indeterminacy (bluntly, with everyone in contingent forms of employment, as has been increasingly the condition of most forms of non-university labour, as well as concepts, as it were, as the deconstructionists have taught us at interminable length), if indeed the extant universities themselves as corporate entities do not disappear through merger and bankruptcy, partaking to some degree of the transiency of all their components, and mimicking even further the paragonic corporate world. The University of Excellence approaches ever more closely to the norms of the *University of Transiency* or, in the economorphic language more suited to the times, the *University of Maximum Throughput*, in “personnel” as well in other ways, such as ever longer publications, grants and patents lists, per day, in ever higher per capita rates (all part of the great “treadmill of production”). The transiency attaches to the publications output too, as something like eighty per cent of natural-scientific publications are never or rarely cited, and also to the graduand “output”, as engineers (of every description), doctors and others will have their specific knowledge base out of date within a decade or so, at current rates of “knowledge increase”, for there is no way to obviate the continual re-production of “trained incapacities” of the “workforce” (if one may mix Veblen’s with the FT’s idioms) in an epoch of informational-technological acceleration to exponential and indeed faster-than-exponential (“hyperbolic”, in the mathematical sense) heights. The ongoing “knowledge explosion” is of course accompanied by an “ignorance explosion”, the obsolescence of university-educated professionals in fields of rapid technological or technoscience or technomarket-generated advance, such as practically all branches of engineering (and more and more fields, professional, as well as semi- or para-professional, are or will be affected by such changes and rates of change, biomedicine being perhaps just as striking a case as engineering subject even more perhaps than engineering to pressures from marketing new products and apparatus), as documented by the engineer J. Lukasiewicz, not to mention the uncertainties provoked by the unprecedented scale and cumulative, even accelerating adverse anthropogenic and technogenic impacts on the biosphere and the atmosphere⁵⁶, the

⁵⁶ (I have written on these matters elsewhere.) Note that, at the local level, universities, or university managements, have often been, and continue to be, despoilers of their environment, urban or rural, from the ecological, aesthetic and social points of view, against the protests of citizens, students and faculty. To be sure, many European cities seem as eager for universities as for international airports, regardless of the known manifold environmental detriments of both. I am not sure whether marketised universities also clamour for airports, the more so as they become more corporatised, and like corporations everywhere ever more delocalised, but in any case, increasingly wedded, like corporations (almost) everywhere, and governments (supposedly in response to consumer demand), to hyperproductivity and hypermobility, they are coming to look and feel like airports, with ever more transient populations of students and faculty (turbo-profs, stellar faculty always on the move, casualised academic labour, holders of insecure academic Mcjobs, worried about their next equally insecure academic or para-academic job), increasingly fittingly describable as “*non-lieux*”, as “non-places”, in the well-known terminology of the French social anthropologist Marc Augé. To be sure, if it were true that in the information society social space becomes overwhelmingly a “space of flows” (Castells), presumably every former “place” within it tends to become a kind of “was-once-a-place”, now a “non-place”, in this sense, no more than a conduit of flows, bereft of intrinsic, non-fluxional, binding qualities. On the concept of “hypermobility” see the text by the geographer John Adams “The social

very serious, even scientific-eschatological, human and ecological implications of which are never addressed by the university “reformers”⁵⁷. I have not yet seen - though it would surely be in perfect harmony with the whole spirit of non-stop competition for everything sweeping the academic world - demands for variable rates of pay over time, so that the professorial super-stars of one year could (like everyone else) have their salaries significantly cut the next year, and perhaps, in year 3, be reduced to the rank and pay of research assistants, or deemed surplus to requirements and downsized, unless they “downshift” themselves in anticipation (something like this was envisaged in Michael Young’s meritocratic dystopia, though chiefly as a function of age and concomitantly declining IQ, since this was written long before the seductive promises of regenerative medicine, “enhancement technologies” of the body, and the like, had begun to reconfigure our image of the ageing process): I believe this upwardly and downwardly variable payment-by-results, year by year, if not more frequently, to be proper academic-capitalist or academic knowledge-industrialist “fairness”, which may emerge any day. Moreover, the corporate-like university must behave like corporations, multi-divisional companies where “product-lines” (in the case of universities departments, subjects, even perhaps faculties, though in some cases also more straightforward invention-“products”)) may have to be discontinued according to current market results at any time.

The “socially unattached, free-floating intelligentsia” of Alfred Weber and Karl Mannheim today floats, or will float, in the market, and indeed in a variety of markets, not in class society at large, in the Stock Exchange, not in civil society. Basically, the thrust of this kind of “research university” (in effect, this organisational type would be more accurately characterized in the light of present trends and advocacies as “research-business university”, the “market-driven research university”, the “research marketplace academe”, or “campus-sited knowledge industry firms”) propaganda is that we don’t need institutions, or

implications of hypermobility”, an OECD report (www.oed.org/env/online-trans.htm) briefly summarised in an article “Hypermobility” in the U.K. magazine *Prospect* March 2000, pp. 27-31.

⁵⁷ Coincidence or not, some of the leading marketisers of universities are also on record as enthusiastic advocates of GMO agribusiness, lashing out at Greens and their “dupes”, i.e. people who worry about the biological and social consequences of these things (no need!), instead of rushing out to buy every GMO product in sight, whilst demanding that GMO products *not* be labelled such, “for the sake of choice”, and perhaps buy Monsanto shares to boot, to demonstrate our allegiance to Reason, Science, Progress, the Market and Democracy. They know all about science, as they know the solutions of the universities’ problems, and certainly don’t betray much toleration for reasonable dissent, or much appreciation of controversy among scientists. Perhaps there is after all an elective affinity between advocacy of the beehive university and total support for the Frankenfood State. Some of these have also been campaigning against faith-schools, or the alleged teaching of creationism in them, apparently disregarding the very disturbing, increasing commercialisation of schools in the public sector (the schools where the great majority of the country’s children still go), something which has concerned American commentators for some time (one would think that they would take notice of American commentators, but obviously their attention concerning educational matters is very selective). It seems that, for this body of opinion, the marketisation of universities, the commercialisation of redesigned, bioengineered life and the commercialisation of schools are all sound matters. It does not seem only a single-issue option for the marketisation of universities alone on the grounds of sheer pragmatic necessity under a very adverse politico-economic conjuncture, but a broader marketising outlook, a passion for markets and the marketisation of life in general, and of the life of the mind in particular.

at any rate any institutions other than those concerning property, including, of course, “intellectual property”, without which, more than ever, technoscience, and indeed more and more, science of any kind, cannot proceed, markets, business organisations and, residually, the state (though perhaps only some degree of “stateness” somewhere, or a Nozickian “minimal state”), in a self-proclaimed world of “Sovereign Individuals” or “Sovereign Knowers” or “Imperial Autonomous Selves” (as usual, “we” means of course the right people, the strong and confident of “election”, in every sense of the term, not those foredoomed to inhabit the *academic Mcjobland* in Anglophonia or anywhere in the world academic labour market). Who needs social and cultural institutions when we have got markets, or universities as social and cultural institutions, with a sense of civilisation, when we have got winner-takes-all academic labour markets, the university-as-firm, the university-as-PLC, the corporate, or increasingly corporatised, university as a hectic market-place buzzing, indeed hopefully awash, with grants, research contracts, patents, copyrights, commercialised research output of all sorts, consultancies, etc. and self-conscious as a quasi-market through and through?

In this New Moral World, or New Knowledge World, the persons once known as “students”, “undergraduates” or “pupils”, educands of all sorts, are redefined increasingly, in keeping with the times, and the prevalent role-models, just as “passengers”, “travellers”, “patients”, “clients”, “theatre-goers”, “music lovers”, “(library) readers”, etc., etc., are all uniformly labelled instead, and exclusively, “customers”⁵⁸, or even just “consumers”, in this case of academic “products” (“my “students”? you mean,

⁵⁸ I should not be at all surprised, in the light of current trends in state-induced, policy-driven marketisation of practice and thought in every sphere of life, if eventually voluntary unpaid blood donations by the populace, as has been the remarkable, heart-warming tradition in England, in contrast to both the former Soviet Union and the USA (in both cases, until the 1970s, fifty per cent or more of all blood required by the medical services was paid for), will be legislated out of existence, to mandate that blood donations should always be paid, either by the NHS or by commercial sponsors, frowning upon or even banning the acceptance of free, voluntary blood donations altogether (except perhaps in emergencies), so that the clarity and universality of the “cash nexus” may prevail. This may seem far-fetched, though it is well within the logic of marketisation (what has happened to water supply is a classic case of the extension of the market to public goods), what I have called elsewhere in the text “the fundamental marketisation” of society, and clearly free voluntary blood donations must seem an anomaly to marketeers (as one can recall from the irritated responses of some economists to the work published in 1970, *The Gift relationship: from human blood to social policy* by Richard Titmuss, on this very subject), so that all blood is commerce (whose processing, or purification, like that of all other medicalised human bodily substances, fluids, organs, zygotes, in any case is ever more industrialised, with ever greater technoscientific sophistication: “techno-blood”, as in “techno-sperm”). Even where the “economy of moral incentives” has worked so fantastically well, as in the case of blood donations in England (admittedly one of very few cases), it must be not just supplemented, but supplanted, by the market economy: not the “gift relationship”, but the cash-nexus, and only the cash-nexus, must be allowed to hold in public transactions, for the populace must be thoroughly market-disciplined, and learn never to give or to accept gifts (even gifts of life), without a clear price tag at least, from strangers (“market-blood”, blood paid for, “up-front”, is surely OK). And this is, ever more so, and, of course, for the sake of the greatest happiness of the greatest number, a Society of Strangers. It seems that the impact of Titmuss’ book was one of the factors that dissuaded the Thatcher Government from proceeding, as could well have expected them to proceed, and indeed the Prime Minister did so suggest, to the marketisation of blood for transfusions for the National Health Service (according to the introduction to the reprint of the book, with new chapters, London 1997), but with time... Preposterous? Time will tell.

my *customers!*”), academics themselves, educators of all sorts, are driven to redefine themselves as “(knowledge) entrepreneurs” (“I am no “don”, “university teacher” or whatever, I am an “academic entrepreneur”!” or, in answer to the question “what do you do? I am in the knowledge business [or the “knowledge industry”]”, as others might say “I am in insurance”). They are to be seen merely as producers, recyclers, distributors, advertisers, repackagers, assemblers and disassemblers, merchants, sellers, touts, D.J.s of “knowledge products”⁵⁹.

⁵⁹ One of the more interesting works published in the wake of the student rebellions of 1968-9 was a tract entitled *Academia in anarchy- an economic diagnosis* by two economists, James M. Buchanan (more recently awarded a Nobel Prize in economics) and Nicos Develotoglou (NY 1970), which amounted to an Economic [Market]Theory of the University, presenting an analytical micro-economic model of the university as, in essence, a set of market arrangements, and consequent prescriptions for eliminating the deep structural causes of student discontent, mass rebellion and radical politicisation, viz. the nonmarket pretences (bureaucratic or nonbureaucratic) that prevailed especially in the public or State universities, under the guise of free or accessible education, free (consumer) choice and the like. The most striking single thing that I recall from reading that book in the 1970s was the proposal, which followed logically from the theory, that students should be treated strictly as *customers* as in the normal transactions of the marketplace, and perhaps so named formally, to obviate any of the prevalent cultural mystifications (and, incidentally, to ensure that something like the 1968 student upheavals would never happen again, as indeed it hasn't). The idea of students as “customers” of their universities, and nothing but “customers”, seemed bizarre to me (and, I imagine, to many other university teachers, at least in the UK), at that juncture, certainly as the chief organising concept of university life, but the work turned out to be much more prophetic than I realised, and thirty-odd years later, its time has manifestly come, its analysis now increasingly institutionalised. Soon the very notion of university students *not* being customers, essentially customers, will itself appear quaint, if not unintelligible.

Increasingly, perhaps, the Good University will be a Good Buy, or a collection of good and not-so-good buys, a shopping mall amongst other shopping malls, a perfectly normal, familiar experience today, as everyone moves and expects to move, and keep moving, in social space and time through one after another, from the increasingly commercialised childhood and schools onwards: nothing very challenging therefore, or exceptional in any significant way, to put it mildly, in the course of anyone's social biography. Incidentally, this analogy of the contemporary university as an intellectual “shopping mall” is by no means new, and is perhaps becoming a commonplace everywhere in the West, and perhaps beyond: for a brief study of its implications in the US scene see the article by the psychologist Barry Schwartz “The tyranny of choice” Chronicle of Higher Education January 23, 2004. The positive analogy seems to be widening all the time... And this closeness of higher education to a version of shopping malls obtains not just in lesser colleges, but also in “top” universities. An irresistible tide, some might say. Marketised beings seek only marketised places, or, rather, those who have internalised the Customer Stance as the logically and ontologically prior stance towards everything that comes within the horizon of human life, will keep it for life, in academia or anywhere else...

Something like the Economic Theory of the University outlined in that work of thirty years ago seems tacitly presupposed as gospel truth in current academic policy, not to be challenged by the *plebs infima* of the universities, though, curiously, it has never received the formal development and extensive journal commentaries that the Economic Theory of Democracy has received since Downs, in the last three decades or so, in political science journals and elsewhere. The Economic Theory of Academia (put forward in 1970), the Economic Theory of Democracy, the Economic Theory of Politics, the Economic Theory of Nationalism, the Economic Theory of Ideology, the Economic Theory of Public Administration (the Public Choice movement), the Economic Theory of Crime and Punishment, the Economic Theory of Fertility, the Economic Theory of the Family or households, the Economic Theory of Marriage and Babies (there are markets for both, analytically speaking, and not just real, sometimes unlawful ones) the Economic Theory of social institutions, Rational Choice theory-families, like the Rational Choice Theory of Religion (whereby the essential relation between humans and deities at all times everywhere becomes one of *do ut des*), among other such economorphic, market-centred, theories or programmes, have all been more influential in policy-making than their rivals, especially sociological ones. Similarly, the more recently formulated Economic Theory of Science, Micro-economics of knowledge, or Rational Choice theory of scientific knowledge-production, promises equally to supersede sociological accounts of the sociology of science, of *whatever* kind (functionalist, constructivist, neo-marxist, or whatever), by economorphic, specifically micro-

This ongoing reclassification of social categories, of the markers of key social relationships, under the universal template of “customer” or “consumer”, definers of social facticity, shapers of social ontology, carries with it the implications of a wholesale market metaphysic. Karl Mannheim wrote over five decades ago of the ongoing master processes of the “fundamental democratisation of society”. By this he meant the myriad of cumulative transformations, over varied time-scales, inspired by or appealing to democratic values, sweeping beyond the formal political sphere, with the construction of the liberal democratic State,

economic like, market-centred ones (most systematically set forth in the book by the philosopher of science Philip Kitcher *Science, truth and democracy* Oxford 2002, though elements of it have been around for a long time). It arrives at a time when there is no longer any science in non-market economies, as these have, in effect, disappeared (it may be recalled that there was a time, not so long ago, under state socialism, when Russian was a major scientific language, and the USSR had the largest body of scientific personnel in the world, including the largest number of mathematicians), the effective marketisation of science has proceeded quite far, and the pressures for further privatisation and commercialisation of research stronger perhaps than ever before, though the claims of the theory go well beyond the explanation, or the vindication, of the present pressures. “Micro-economic epistemology” in general is also on offer, as one would expect, given the rise of the Economic Theory of Science. Whatever one may say about micro-economic epistemology, normative micro-economic methodology of the social sciences has prevailed to such an extent that it does not seem at all extravagant to claim that neo-classical micro-economics furnishes the *canonical theory form* par excellence in the social sciences today (and making inroads in the human or cultural sciences), whatever the subject-matter (politics, demography, religion, family, languages, etc.), and whatever the historical or proto-historical period under consideration (saints in the Middle Ages, for instance) is micro-economics: the demand for micro-foundations as an essential, indispensable pre-requisite, a commitment to methodological individualism, and a bias for micro-determinism (no matter the statistical sophistication of causal modelling in macroeconomics) follow naturally. Indeed a number of influential economists have voiced their wish for the “euthanasia” of macro-economics, and one might well imagine that this wish will be echoed in the other micro-economised, rational-choice shaped disciplines in the social sciences, such as political science and sociology (and perhaps the “euthanasia” of “society” as a category of thought, as a referent of the social sciences, or at any rate of sociology or macro-sociology, as a discipline supposedly dealing with “society”, if not indeed the discipline par excellence concerned with “society”, as well).

The Economic Theory of Crime and Punishment, which basically accounts for the supply of criminal activity, and especially of murderous activity, as a function of the severity and enforcement of penal sanctions (revamping Bentham, but putting even more emphasis on severity, rather than simply the certainty, of sanctions), eschewing long-winded sociological causal explanations and etiologies in terms of social class, neighbourhood, ethnic disadvantage, subcultures, opportunity structures and the like, has certainly had a bearing on policy-making in the US, and probably elsewhere, to a lesser degree. Its exponents have claimed significant successes in the reduction of violent urban crime, above all homicide, at least in certain kinds of neighbourhoods, even without increased street policing, as a result of their recipes: violent criminals are either dead, in jail, or paralysed with fear (some economists claim further, with impressive econometric work, whilst emphatically disclaiming any sympathies for eugenics or racism, that the “supply” of potential murderers has been significantly decreased, or, in other words, the supply curve lowered, by the extension of access to abortions to the most at-risk-to-become-criminals segments of the population, starting twenty or thirty years ago, so that the results have now become apparent). I am not aware of the existence of a formal (Micro-) Economic Theory of Terrorism, or of the New Terrorism, though obviously recent terrorist modes are clearly “businesses” with a certain kind of “product” to deliver, at least under that description, but surely someone like the egregious Gary Becker (Nobel Laureate in Economics) who has already provided economic theories of marriage markets, markets for babies and the propensity to prayer, amongst many other topics (though at times they appear as their own spoofs), can come up with one without serious difficulty, with a few equations or even theorems, should one not be available already. As to the religious dimension of contemporary terrorism, we already have a Rational Choice Theory of Religion, though, being strictly committed to the hoary axiom of psychological egoism, or psychological egoistic hedonism, it is hard to see how it can accommodate suicide bombers and other martyrs, and indeed putative altruists of any kind, short of utter trivialisation of the axiom, as has been understood for a long time. An Economic Theory of Torture might also be formulated soon, if it hasn’t already: surely it would not exact too much from the legion of prolific economorphic model builders.

central and local, more representative than direct, in general, spreading into civil society through political and non-political agency through institutional change and sub-institutional processes, impinging on social relationships and authority-structures of all kinds (universities, schools, labs, firms, plants, families, households, churches, orchestras, science, social movements of all kinds, etc.), in all the social and cultural realms (of course religious and civil associations of a democratic character preceded as well as supported the constitution of liberal democratic states in the 19th and 20th centuries, above all in the U.K.). The thrust of democratisation affected too (one may add) scientific and para-scientific models of mind and personality, the self-understanding, as well as the political values, of modern persons, with “democratic” as a master metaphor, supreme normative presumption and a universal laudatory predicate (“democratic character”, “democratic family”, “democratic manners”, “democratic neighbourhoods”, “democratic associations”, “democratic planning”, etc.)⁶⁰.

A world-historic transformation of similar scope and pervasiveness going on today is something that I propose to call, by analogy with Mannheim’s phrase, the *fundamental marketisation of economy, society and culture* (for the sake of brevity, by analogy with Mannheim’s phrase on democratisation, “the fundamental marketisation of society”). This is because the processes of marketisation have been going well beyond the classical frontiers of the formal economic sphere, the “market economy” as classically understood, where “corporatist” practices have been swept away (or at least their remaining defenders are on the defensive, sensing impending defeat, shamed by a presumption of illegitimacy as “rent-seekers”), leaving The Market triumphant. Market forces, market recipes, market fixes, State-enforced (or IMF-enforced) marketisations press relentlessly against all nonmarket social institutions, conventions, norms and practices in all the social and cultural realms, knowledge and science, the old professions⁶¹ (the

⁶⁰ Karl Mannheim *Essays in the sociology of culture*, London, 1956 (the long democratisation paper, written in 1933, was only published posthumously). Curiously, Mannheim, in the long paper in which he advanced the concept of the “fundamental democratisation of society”, did not cite Tocqueville once, though the analyst of modern democracy par excellence, had much to say on democracy as much more than a political regime, an overall societal form, writing on democratic manners, and democratic “habits of the heart”, on how the spirit of democracy affected science, religion, the media and so on. This is an omission which in the last twenty years or so has become quite unthinkable. Though it is also true that commentators on democracy may gloss Tocqueville without end, but rarely refer to Mannheim’s analyses of democratisation and its perils, in that paper and elsewhere.

⁶¹ It is sobering to reflect that lawyers have only been able to advertise their services legally in the US, the home of markets par excellence, where market and virtue have long been so tightly associated, and a paradise for lawyers, since 1977. Afterwards, those that did not want to do so, believing in the dignity of the profession, the old ethos of honour, stressing above all fiduciary responsibility, either felt eventually, reluctantly, compelled to do so in order to survive, or did not do so, and of course failed to survive (eventually, no “market niche” for their kind, even if a few old clients still went to them out of habit). This provides yet another example of how, in a market economy, being newly enabled or “empowered” to do x, in a market sense, seemingly widening the range of “choice” (a magic word for the propaganda of consumer choice, of customerization, as an overriding exigency) for everyone, as well as increasing efficiency, brings about, within a fairly short time, in a few years or decades, a state of affairs in which those thus enabled will in fact be *compelled* to do x (on pain of economic survival in the context of general empowerment). Thus, as so often in the processes of free-marketisation (as analogously in the case of technological innovation), a new and much-vaunted legal permission or facilitation, extending the range of choice, legitimated on

“person-professions” of law, medicine and university teaching⁶²), in the most varied kinds of dealings with all kinds of goods and values in nature, environment, arts, traditions, and so on, reshaping our privileged models, analogies and metaphors for the mind, the personality, life itself, in all the social, behavioural and the life sciences, for a thoroughgoing revisionism of history and palaeo-anthropology, with a new orthoglossia pervading public discourse (market-speak rules O.K.)⁶³. “The Market” (at once One and Many, solving a hoary metaphysical Gordian knot at a stroke) enjoys a strong, standing, antecedent

the ground that choice will be expanded, turns eventually into a de facto practical necessity, a “can” or “may” into a “must” (an all too frequent, logically illicit, but pragmatically effective modal shift in late market-technological societies): perhaps this constant diachronic shift from “may” to “must” could be called the “Law” of Choice-into-Necessity, for though not a strict law it is a sufficiently widespread empirical succession in recent history of advancing marketisation in Western societies as to warrant singling out in some way... Overall there appears to be no net increase in freedom of choice, in the range of real, live options for professionals at any rate. Choice first appears to expand, and then eventually contracts and indeed, amongst other critics of techno-market societies, and philosophers of technology, Illich had long ago addressed these phenomena under the rubric of “counter-productivity”. And a whole profession may be transformed thereby into an overt branch of commerce. Doubtless the public may be better served in some ways, and undoubtedly GNP goes up as a result of the increased volume of expensive litigation (though this rise in litigation is a very mixed blessing), but the overall reconfiguration of a major profession cannot easily be pronounced in every case and in every respect “all to the good”, and especially when coinciding and converging with many other analogous processes going on relentlessly in the same period in every sphere of society and culture (“fundamental marketisation”, and the thrust of the Technomarket).

Just a few years later after the Supreme Court decision indicated, lawyers’ estimated comparative earnings started being publicized in trade journals, as if that was what really mattered, and all that anyone would want to know or should know, at a time of considerable and increasing skewing of lawyer as well practically all other professional incomes (Michael Lewis *The future just happened* London 2001, pp. 9-12, 103). How quickly a whole profession can be thoroughly and irreversibly marketised, at least in some countries! Thus a musty profession of gentlemen-lawyers or lady-lawyers turns within a decade or two into a standard, “normal” competitive business dealing in commodities like all others (as well as being under significant threat from the Internet at the lower ends). This latter practice of publishing estimates of incomes of lawyers might yet happen with academics (even those who are not either lawyers or medics) and indeed some degree of informal knowledge of your “worth” already obtains in some fields at any rate (in addition to the Citation Indexes, which tell you more directly what your “worth” for the powers that be is likely to rate). Maybe the Times Higher Education Supplement and its counterparts elsewhere will eventually publish regular pages with every academic’s current money “worth”, rank in numbers of citations in international peer-reviewed journals (your scientometric “worth”), and “transfer fee”, if any: or perhaps, to save pain and money, just the top layers of academics, which would serve as another circus for the academic plebs....

⁶² The sociologist W. J. Goode considered as “person-professions” law, medicine, university teaching and the ministry, but we will not be discussing the ministry in this text (as he himself did not either). Note that engineering was not so classed, though in much of the West, certainly in Latin Europe and in Latin America, from the early twentieth century onwards, the Faculties of Law, Medicine and Engineering (the first two of course the oldest of the triad) were the great bastions of the universities. Other professions include the military profession on which the sociologist Morris Janowitz and the political scientist Samuel Huntington have written classical texts, and the British-style professional civil service which another American sociologist C. Wright Mills commended and viewed as a necessity in the democratic reform of the American power structure (today, alas, the UK civils service has been so politicised, so subordinated to non-civil service political advisers, especially around the Prime Minister, that it is not easy to see how its functionality can be restored).

⁶³ It would be interesting to trace how “democratic”, and, more generally, socio-political and specifically democracy-biased models, analogies and metaphors have been displaced by economic and specifically market ones, in the study of personality, the mind, the brain, information, cybernetics in general, ecology, organisations, religion, science, and in practically every field of study from the life-sciences to the human and social studies, in the last fifty or sixty years. The analogy between types of polity and types of personality, and specifically the image of the democratic personality as mirroring the democratic governance of the city-state, and, in general terms, the long tradition of sociomorphic models of the mind and personality, goes back to Plato, of course.

*presumption of adequacy*⁶⁴, even the warrant of an Axiom of Adequacy, or perhaps better, the *presumption of the superiority* of market arrangements, as well as their automaticity, sustainability, and sufficiency (or the syndrome of “market individualism” as G. M. Hodgson has called it). “The market” has emerged, and is being enthusiastically and continuously defended, not only as an economic solution to specific micro- and macro-economic problems, but as virtually the Universal Social Problem-Solver, as the sole, or optimal, mechanism for ensuring the delivery of efficient processes anywhere any time, or at least of the most efficient, or “dynamically efficient”, and in any case the only affordable one under the prevalent fiscal regime of , in terms of the experience of the last six decades, low rates of *direct* taxation (inflexible upwards, though not necessarily downwards⁶⁵), and efficiency, speed, profit (at least cash flow) or “value added”, are demanded everywhere, in all social affairs and human dealings. Specifically, the Market today is prevalently what one might call a *Technomarket*, as capitalism today is a “technocapitalism”⁶⁶ more than ever, inasmuch as it thrives on permanent and exponentially accelerated

⁶⁴ I borrow this phrase from S. F. Nadel’s critique of the functionalist programme in the social sciences, with special reference to social anthropology (S.F. Nadel *The foundations of social anthropology* London 1951).

⁶⁵ Though a former chairman of the Confederation of British Industries has argued that although in present circumstances of the world market the national tax burden cannot be raised above something like 40 per cent of GNP, whereat it has been hovering for the last two decades, it probably cannot (in a different sense of “cannot”) be decreased either, in a decent welfare society: so upward inflexibility is combined with downward inflexibility, a rigidity quite at odds with the spirit of the market economy and the professional ethos of economists (Aidan Turner *Just Capital* London 2001). It would seem likely that there will be a strong tendency for a nominal if not effective decrease in the rates of direct taxation on incomes at least, easier to accomplish in the US than almost anywhere else. The first law of fiscal sociology, A. Wagner’s “law of rising public expenditure” financed by tax revenue increases, formulated at a time when industrial states were increasing provision for health and social insurance in general, as well as public education (indeed it was directly inspired by the Bismarckian version of the welfare state), has been checked for the last two or three decades (at any rate as far as direct taxation on income and wealth is concerned).

⁶⁶ Luis Suarez-Villa *Invention and the rise of technocapitalism* Lanham MD 2000. For this author, in the argument developed in this book and in a number of articles preceding and following the publication of this book, “technocapitalism” is the current form of capitalism in which “intangibles” such as creativity and knowledge play the part that raw materials, factory labour and capital played in earlier forms of capitalism. A good deal of emphasis is placed on the explosion of invention and innovation in the second half of the twentieth century and the rise of “innovative capacity” as the motor of this capitalist era. The “e-economy” comes into the picture at least in a broad sense for the boom in information-technology related enterprises such as biotech, bioinformatics and genomics make up the current vanguard of technocapitalism, likely to expand even further in the next two or three decades to reach supremacy in the economy as a whole especially if combined with the emergence of nanotech to make up a kind of biotech-nanotech world, or a biotech-nanotech epoch of technocapitalism (robotics should have been mentioned as a technoscience branch with a great future, especially in combination with Artificial Intelligence and software research: see *Addendum 10*). The term “technocapitalism” was originally devised, in terms of a perspective owing much to the Frankfurt School, by Douglas Kellner in 1989. The definition was as follows: “the configuration of capitalist society in which technology, scientific knowledge, automation, computers and advanced technology play a role in the process of production parallel to the role that human labour, mechanization and machines played in earlier eras of capitalism, whilst producing new models of societal organization, forms of culture and everyday life” (Douglas Kellner *Cultural theory, Marxism and modernity* Cambridge, 1989, p. 178). Neither approach places sufficient emphasis on the great surge of corporate and State enforcement of intellectual property rights, i. e. of monopolies, particularly in the last two decades or so, a major instrumentality in fostering academic knowledge capitalism, together with the concurrent defunding of public science, specifically in privatising and monopolising the academic knowledge commons, even when the academic research was financed from public funds, by the tax-payer, much invoked in other contexts but not in this one (M. Perlman). In fact, there is nothing that some huge and

technological innovation, technoscientifically fuelled (with increasing privatisation of scientific research), with information/knowledge as the most intensive or “value-adding” of inputs into commodities, to an unprecedented extent, and is even in some sense constituted by (computer-mediated) communication and control technologies in a world whose economic, trade and financial globalisation they fostered. Whether the macro-processes of the “fundamental democratisation of society” and the more recent strains towards the “fundamental marketisation of economy and society”, now in the age of the Technomarket dynamic, indeed the World Technomarket, where non-technological comparative advantages are supposedly diminishing rapidly, can thrive together in perfect harmony, even in continuous synergic unity, mutually reinforcing in every facet, at all times, once “collectivist” ideologies have been disposed of (the “property-owning democracy”, “share-holding democracy” have been cherished slogans, though not “stake-holder democracy”), seems very unlikely to those unblessed by Panglossian dispositions, but such an expectation does seem to be one of the most widely shared illusions of the epoch. It certainly was not so in the past, for long periods, since the mid-eighteenth century, or “collectivist”⁶⁷ ideologies and prejudices would not have flourished for so long (though some blame it all on mischievous intellectuals, surely exaggerating

extremely profitable industries, among the most profitable industries in the contemporary capitalist world, such as the pharmaceutical industry, like better than to be able to live off, or free ride on, fundamental academic research, financed from public funds, with only a comparatively small but extraordinarily vaunted amount of expenditure in R&D, sustained by patents and exclusive marketing rights by State-granted and State-enforced monopoly power, with constant above-inflation price rises for their market-protected products. It is exceedingly doubtful that basic (scientific) research could be very largely if not wholly privatised, or left solely to the free-market, as the more extreme libertarians or anarcho-capitalists profess, and clearly the “minimal State” they long for could not and would not, though the case has been vigorously argued in a recent book by a scholar who subsequently became the Vice-Chancellor of a British University (calls for the “disestablishment of science”, such as those of the scientist and science writer J. Bronowski, were heard at a time when the autonomy of basic science seemed likely to be most in danger from the prepotency of state funds and state-interests, but they were not understood to mean the merger of science with the market: on the contrary, the separation or the distantiating of science from the market was also taken for granted as vital for the flourishing and indeed the survival of basic science). In any case the present reality is of an unprecedentedly wide and consequential dominion of industry-secured, science- and technology-related “intellectual property rights” (a major source of profits for leading economic sectors, the pharmaceutical industry being the most profitable of all industries in the USA for two decades), of the proprietary binding of knowledge in an economy where information is supposedly the key good, and yet information by its nature is a public good or quasi-public good (non-rivalrous and non-excludable, in the classical formulation of Paul Samuelson, latterly much criticised by those neo-liberal economists who feel that even this licenses “collectivism”). It is odd to live in the paradoxical era of “monopoly information capitalism”, as we might put it, when both the production of, in principle, non-excludable information, and monopolisation of information by holders of patents, licenses and copyrights are maximised, though a key point made by the defenders of these arrangements is that they are all transitory.

⁶⁷ Strangely, no systematic book-length discussion of the historical semantics and conceptual typology of “collectivism” and related terms (holism, organicism) in the philosophy of society and of the social sciences, or of anti-individualism, broadly speaking, is available in the literature, as far as I know, in contrast to “individualism” (cf Steven Lukes *Individualism* London) or “methodological individualism”, certainly not in a reasonably inclusive fashion and from a reasonably sympathetic point of view, though much can be learned from the debate in methodological individualism from the 1950s to the 1970s, much of the best literature from which was collected in a most useful volume, *Modes of individualism and collectivism*, edited by the Canadian philosopher John O’Neill. The more recent debate on methodological and especially ontological individualism and collectivism (the question of the metaphysics of the social world, a matter much discussed, rather belatedly one must add, by philosophers in the analytical tradition) on the ontological status of social or cultural wholes, awaits its anthology.

their capacity to shape great social movements and especially their capacity *qua* intellectuals to secure their historic and political success).

Constantly aping business corporations, universities have become subjected or have subjected themselves to successive management fads. One of these has been “Total Quality Management” (TQM), the most recent avatar of Taylorisation, which of course entails measuring everything required by the management dogmas of the day, but only those attributes encompassed thereby. Everything except, of course the opportunity cost of the time spent by academics in filling or collecting the innumerable forms required by TQM and the like (in other contexts, economics and “management theory” would call these “transaction costs”, as it has done since Coase, and take them very seriously), work-satisfaction, pleasantness of the work milieu, the opportunities for fruitful intellectual interactions, a climate of trust, and other things not deemed proper *mensuranda*, qualities or attributes worth noting and taking into account (curiously, given that time is the scarcest resource for academics), “lexicographically” (that which is not to be subjected to trade-offs) or metrically, according to managerial or business canons and other such business school, or business guru, fads and devastating practices (such as CI and Reengineering). Not surprisingly, heads of colleges and other academic bodies have become increasingly known or referred to even *intra muros*, quite unsmilingly, as a matter of course, as Chief Executive Officers (CEOs)⁶⁸, who just like the paradigmatic CEOs of the primal corporate world, feel bound to issue portentous “mission statements”, in an idiom just like that of any kind of business corporation anywhere dealing with commodities of any sort. And soon they will demand, as some appear already to feel entitled to, similar rates of pay to those of their “counterparts” in other branches of the “real” or the financial economy (Enro⁶⁹?), and, by the same token, “golden hellos” and “golden handshakes”: a CEO is a CEO, whether the “firm” deals in soap, derivatives, plastic arts, mortuary science, Nietzschean studies, the sociology of science, or whatever... perhaps soon they will all be *officially* named CEOs... welcome to the society-wide stratum of CEOs! (and duly receive, as well, some grade or other of the new kind of OBE, the Order of British Entrepreneurship).

⁶⁸ I was startled, not so long ago, to hear the Director of the London School of Economics in the University of London (an academic of distinction and world-fame) referred to, approvingly, in all seriousness, yes, without a touch of irony or sarcasm, by one of the resident professorial sociologists, no friend of capitalism to boot, as “a very good CEO”. His successors, too, I am sure. Not surprisingly, given the present climate of advancing academic capitalism, he has been replaced by a banker (perhaps a trend-setting choice for academic institutions everywhere, which may also covet being governed by financiers).

⁶⁹ The Enron scandal reminds one of the scandal that afflicted Stanford University, a top research university and a private university to boot, some years ago, damaged its reputation, and brought about the resignation of its then President, who had been in post for ten years. The issue was the alleged improper accounting of federal government grants to reimburse the university for the indirect costs of its research, a practice severely criticised by a member of the House of Representatives. The University asked Arthur Andersen, the accounting firm later implicated in the Enron débâcle (and in other dubious cases), to conduct an audit of the university’s overhead accounts from 1983 to that time, which were in dispute between the University and the Federal government. This now notorious firm recommended amongst other things that the university establish a code of ethics and write a series of comprehensive manuals to educate its employees (*Science*, vol. 253, p. 504). The issue of how far private research can be seen as parasitic directly or indirectly on public funds is however a matter that cannot be resolved by accounting practices.

The very language in which universities are unceasingly talked about (by government and civil servants, amongst others, as we saw from the FT), or, what is far, far worse, talk to others and to themselves about themselves, and not only in public, is one thoroughly saturated with business idioms, business/management guru locutions, managerialese or industrialese, with perhaps occasional, but only occasional, embarrassed lapses into the idioms of historic piety, of high culture and liberal civilization (mais où sont les neiges d'antan?). Can anyone involved in university policy today ever talk, at least in public, or even think, or perhaps even simply dream, in any but the idioms of managerialese? It seems not. Though inspirational or textbook business talk now embraces without demur or shame such startling locutions as “the soul of the corporation” (and some have even invoked in all seriousness “the soul of capitalism”, and others in new information technology the “soul of new machines”), at a time when no academic, certainly no academic administrator, would dare to utter some such phrase about the “soul” of the university, in public, at any rate (or even in private in talking to politicians), save in the Latin disguise of the locution “alma mater” (perhaps itself archaic, and perhaps people no longer recall the meaning of “alma”), at least until such a time as the idioms of the business corporation may be safely imported, and thus the university re-ensouled at second-hand, so to speak, no “mystical body”, no “clerisy”, no “spiritual power”⁷⁰, the contemporary business corporation being now the only “soul model” for all except residual areas of society (at least the only allowable and avowed one) as well as a practical exemplar or template, for the university, as for everything else. Regarding hospitals, schools, prisons, and soon the “specialists of legitimate violence” such as the police and the armed forces, and so on, the programmes and briefings for such privatisations, or at least marketisations and managerialist reconstructions, already available from able and enthusiastic exponents of neo-liberal, libertarian if not anarcho-libertarian or cyber-libertarian capitalism, with their rejection of anything but the most minimal State/government, in all their variants, in and out of universities, their civil service sympathizers, sundry consultants to governments and international agencies, advisers to rising politicians, prolific contributors to innumerable, well-funded and often influential think-tanks, etc., just as able, just as fanatical, just as frantic as those disastrous “terrible simplifiers” so feared by Burckhardt, or the “pedantocrats” denounced by Mill and Comte (the “expertocrats”, “technocrats”, “biocrats” and “econocrats”⁷¹ of today)⁷². If and when the university

⁷⁰ H. B. Acton *The idea of a spiritual power* London 1974.

⁷¹ A term invented by the British political scientist Peter Self, a specialist in public administration, in 1975, in his book, *The econocrats: the philosophy and politics of cost-benefit analysis*. Many of those who were called “technocrats” in Latin America, like the “Chicago boys”, were in fact econocrats, strictly speaking, with Ph. Ds in economics from leading American universities (though they often encouraged or supported highly capital-intensive, energy-intensive projects of geographical and other forms of engineering and industries). “Biocrat” was coined by a British science writer, Gerald Leach earlier, in a discussion of the promises and threats of control over life-processes and germ-lines that then recent advances in genetics, assisted reproduction and then-incipient genetic engineering, which demonstrates how the issues that have elicited so much controversy in the biogenetic and biomedical fields in recent years were already under critical scrutiny three or four decades ago (Gerald Leach *The biocrats- implications*

becomes no more than a sort of business corporation (or close enough to it), just another variety of market entity -and it is certainly drifting, if not indeed speeding, towards that glorious end-state- who will now speak the truth to power? Who will speak the truth to, instead of for, and with, Mammon?⁷³ Indeed, to ask a logically prior and more fundamental question: in the end, who will even be able to *conceive* of the very idea, the very presumption of any such things? If they did, it might not occur to them that these questions might have anything to do with the ideals of intellectual life once associated with universities, indeed with any of the old ideals of intellectual life even if conducted outside the universities (where of course a significant portion has always taken place whenever spaces could be retrieved for it, even under adverse conditions, though in a “fundamentally marketised” society perhaps diminishingly so).

of medical progress Harmondsworth, Middlesex, UK, 1970). Instead of “biocrat”, the author could well have used “biotechnocrat”, which might have made the point of the coinage clearer, for it was introduced by explicit analogy with “technocrat”, and not with “bureaucrat”, contrary to what is implied by much recent usage, in which the targets are bureaucracy and not technocracy, regulatory agencies of biotech and not the engineering and the marketisation of life by biogenetic engineers and biotech business. I fear, on present showing, that bioethicists may become a sort of “ethocrats”, predominantly sworn casuists for or public defenders of the biocrats, that is, the technocrats of life, through their basically positive pronouncements or endorsements (with minor vapid qualifications) on bioengineering, cloning, GMOs and the like, and indeed, cumulatively and in overall terms, at least by implication, for the biotechnological-biomarket enterprise as a whole, and the comprehensive, planetary industrialisation of life which will ensue from current developments and research projects if unchecked. It is odd to find abrasive attacks by some bioethicists on church pronouncements on these matters, demanding the *separation of bioethics from the churches* (which have a long-standing engagement with moral issues, and a long tradition of moral reflection, moral theology and moral casuistry), when in any case they provide a wide range of moral-theological opinion (some of it in fact as friendly to the unlimited development of every conceivable biotechnology as is possible to imagine, though sometimes drawing boundaries and demanding prohibitions, of certain specified practices, something which is anathema for those who would not countenance any such under any circumstances), without also demanding, by parity of reasoning, the *separation of bioethics from militant atheism* à la Dawkins (some of these complaints stem from the role of Leon Kass, the chairman of the Presidential Commission on Bioethics, though Judaism is not strictly speaking a church, and a rabbi is not quite a priest or a minister in the Christian sense). But most important, one should also, and first of all, demand the *separation of bioethics from the market*, as of every sort of ethics from the market, its allurements and corruptions. Surely the need for the separation of bioethics from the market is needed, for the market is indisputably amoral, and as we know can be corrosive of every kind of morality, and such a separation would seem at least as important, in fact, it is arguable that it is far more important, given the strength and scope, the ramifications, not to mention the insidiousness, of the material interests at stake in the expanding markets for bioengineered products of varied sorts. One has to bear in mind in this context not only the existing economic interests, and current market stakes, but also the projections of a global bioeconomy, the prospects of a global “Life Industry”, or perhaps better “Engineered-Life Industry” which may surpass in revenues the conventional information economy within a couple of decades: a *tremendum* which calls for the exercise of every moral competence we may draw on. As is well known, a very significant, indeed crucial, proportion of biotech originates in, from or near the research universities, reinforcing their involvement in and promotion of the processes of fundamental marketisation or technomarketisation. Indeed in the last decade or two such work has played the role of spearhead for such processes a matter of world-historic importance for science and society, and of course for the universities.

⁷² They corresponded on this matter.

⁷³ Dr Johnson, according to Boswell, speaking with great emotion, once said “I love the University of Salamanca; for when the Spaniards were in doubt as to the lawfulness of their conquering America, the University of Salamanca gave it as their opinion that it was not lawful” (*Life of Johnson*, 28 July 1763, Oxford ed. 1980, p. 321 ; I have modernised the spelling of the place name). Two hundred and forty years later, there is no “Salamanca” in sight. And surely the corporatised university will never dare to speak like that, even if it could entertain the very thought: market-speak is all it rises to.

This is of course a general trend in Western market societies affecting all the professions (*professions libérales*), which were once believed to be a social form distinct from both (free) markets, owing to its master norm of “fiduciary responsibility”, and (rational-legal) bureaucracies⁷⁴, and perhaps we were deluded in supposing that the sui generis “moral economy” of the universities (unlike other instances of pre-capitalist or even pre-turbo-capitalist “moral economy” so far, so we had been warned) would somehow survive the inroads of marketisation. It is proceeding, sometimes in a creeping fashion, sometimes tsunami-like, and any case there are bids from within to bind the university ever more closely to the market economy, and more specifically into its latest form, the winner-takes-all economy, in turbo-capitalism for all, in the “*fundamentally technomarketised*” world, and remaking it in their image.

One might say that every epoch brings forth its own variant of the *trahison des clercs* (famously attacked by the French philosopher and cultural critic Julien Benda in his classic work of 1927), though it is not at all clear, under the storm, to what university, intellectual or transcendent ideals the bulk of incumbents of academe today, or their spokespersons in the demand for discretionary fees, profess, in public or in private, and therefore one could ask what exactly they are betraying: but are they still, in any of the received senses, *clercs* (they would not practice *sacerdoce littéraire*⁷⁵, the stance of those who felt the munus of intellectual values and responsibilities, being more likely to wear the grey suits of middle management, or the paraphernalia of the aging hippies amongst computer wizards)? True, the key difference is that whilst Benda’s main target was the corruption of intellectuals by their “political passions”, not least nationalist ones, or “political religions”, the divinisation of the political, the subservience of truth to political utility⁷⁶, the gearing of knowledge, inquiry, intellectual pursuits to practical relevance (cash or capital), which, as another form of the attack on disinterestedness of free inquiry (the “idle curiosity” commended by Veblen as essential to the higher learning, as to the cultured life in general) he did not overlook, or market fever, the market mystique, the thrust towards marketisation as the universal panacea, the prescribed universal, exclusive and mandatory problem-solver, now plays the role of the political passions of his time.

Three decades ago, some French cultural critics poured scorn on *Socrate fonctionnaire*, the academic philosopher as a tenured civil servant (Husserl spoke, in the 1930s, of philosophers like himself as “functionaries of Reason”, though today philosophers would rather be, not functionaries of any sort and

⁷⁴ For a classic exposition of this point of view, which now appears, regrettably, indeed most unfortunately, quite obsolete, see the article on “Professions” by Talcott Parsons in the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* NY 1968.

⁷⁵ Paul Bénichou *Le sacre de l'écrivain 1750-1830- Essai sur l'avènement d'un pouvoir spirituel laïque dans la France* Paris 1973.

⁷⁶ Which is not to say that these political passions are entirely absent, especially in the humanities and the social sciences where political ideologies or mere political prejudices of the left or the right have always been most significant. Critics of cultural radicalism have argued on these lines in recent years. Of course ideological issues can also play a role in the hard sciences, though most of the time not in such a clear-cut fashion.

not of anything as grandiose as Reason, but instead some kind of *engineers*, *engineers* of conceptual machineries perhaps, and concomitantly academic or other super-stars, owning yachts, private jets and Ferraris, as market rewards), now we have the no less oxymoronic *Socrate entrepreneur*⁷⁷ or the philosopher (or indeed any quondam cultured person) as professorial super-star (though perhaps in a while to be subject to the full rigours of the market, from stardom to low-rank, low-pay as well as the other way, some more like George Best than David Beckham, and even he is doomed to fall, sooner rather than later). But really, though Socrates was an assiduous visitor to the agora, he never bought and sold knowledge or wisdom, lived simply, never sought fame, and never left Athens. In contrast, the Sophists of his time sold their knowledge, or rather their “intellectual skills” (*technai*), essentially rhetoric, of course, the art of persuasive discourse (now there’s a skill that could surely be widely marketed again), as individuals, in a highly competitive Hellas-wide skills market. Our sophists today crave top transatlantic jobs, and in any case suffer from being nominally attached to institutions (still quaintly called “universities”, trading on an ancient cachet, satisfactorily from their point of view, what I have called “universities of transiency”), pending a proper atomistic competitive market (one imagines they would identify only with the top layer of the classical Greek sophists, for most sophists were not at all well-off, and their livelihood was quite insecure). Though our crypto-sophists, or even the few outstanding avowed rhetors today⁷⁸ hardly match a Gorgias or a Protagoras, in the depth and brilliance of their utterances, or in the quality of their rivals and critics, for they are more like the sophisters Edmund Burke (no enemy of the market economy) referred to in his amazingly apposite phrase: “the age of sophisters, economists and calculators”, which age is certainly upon us (in this age of hybridization, not surprisingly, they need not be three different sorts of people, for every conceivable mix, every combination and permutation, is on offer in the free, cornucopian markets of the “republics of choice”, even, as a sociological commentator has recently argued, of “hyper-choice”, in which freedom of consumer choice exercised in a field of ever-proliferating, ever new, products becomes increasingly the psychocultural matrix of all freedoms⁷⁹).

⁷⁷ Given the saliency of historians amongst celebrities and stellar faculty today, receiving top-notch fees, it may be apposite to recall that Herodotus read his narratives in the Athenian *agora* for free (no fee!).

⁷⁸ Stanley Fish, Richard Rorty most assuredly. Though even very successful Sophists had to flee Athens, not so today’s versions.

⁷⁹ Lawrence Friedman *The republic of choice* Cambridge MA 1990; Barry Schwartz has written on “hyper-choice”, the stressful, sometimes depression-inducing consequences of apparent excess choice in contemporary markets and marketised societies, at least for what he called the “maximisers” who want top prizes and get the most of everything that is on offer, as against the “satisficers”, who settle for less, and don’t search endlessly for the Best Buy, in *The paradox of choice - why more is less*, NY 2004 (and see also his article “The tyranny of choice” [The chronicle of higher education](#) Jan 23, 2004). Other psychologists had already written about the “saturated self” (Kenneth Gergen), seemingly exposed to too many world-views, too many cultural alternatives, too many TV channels (perhaps they were brought up on too much zapping), too many “enhancement technologies”, too many ways to perfection, too many life-styles, too many cuisines.

How odd that such arguments should be labelled “conservative”, or indeed “liberal” for they would not have found favour with staunch defenders of the market economy, such as the physician-physical chemist-philosopher Michael Polanyi or even the far more famous Friedrich Hayek (certainly, for Michael Polanyi, the university should never be subsumed under the market economy, nor could the relationship between the university and students glossed as one of service-suppliers and “customers”, the nexus between university and the wider culture as one of product-suppliers and “consumers”⁸⁰). The least one can say is that the advocates referred to don’t appear to think of universities as having, or needing, an institutional life beyond cash values and cash flows and indeed requiring protection from them, other than that of business-like entities selling an ever better “product” (in its sense in market-speak). What kind of universities-as-institutions as distinct from universities-as-market-places of intellectual property values (what happened to the universities-as-market-places-of-ideas or even to paying lip-service to such a notion?: gone with the wind...), knowledge-as-capital, reputations, celebrities and the like, do we want? Do they even want to consider seriously the exigencies of the flourishing of universities-as-institutions? Yet some of them have been educated, have taught, or currently teach, in places with some resemblance to them, as traditionally conceived in the UK, and there is no reason to suppose that they don’t cherish them. But what “price” institutions? What kind of hollowed-out universities, mere purveyors of “knowledge-services” to “customers” of various sorts (some previously known as “undergraduates”, “students”, or even “pupils”), and “conspicuous display” thereof in the shape of super-star profs, will emerge in the end? The English genius for institutions, so much admired by intellectual refugees from the former lands of the Dual Monarchy and elsewhere, as witness their comments from the 1930s to the 1950s at least, is perhaps suspect now amongst the natives, at least those concerned with academic policy-making. One wonders if it might not be the case that, to paraphrase the poet, “what do they know of England who only England and America know [academically speaking]?”. But really, can one imagine John Stuart Mill, or Bertrand Russell, or even John Dewey, supreme exponents of liberal civilization, endorsing enthusiastically and unqualifiedly the actual or imminent condition of the university today: market-immersed, market-shaped, non-stop market-speak multiversity, the winner-takes-all academia-as-fast-knowledge-capitalism...or indeed eulogizing anything like the winner-takes-all macro/global economy, which they might well have seen as the haven of a market-oriented “*pedantocracy*” (or “*expertocracy*”)? In any case,

⁸⁰ If he did envisage a new model for the University, it was one which would be, in effect, largely a University of Science, it would not only be independent from the State, but also from the market, as can be seen from his more widely known concept of the “republic of science”, part of a “Society of Explorers” (not, mercifully, of “entrepreneurs”, though some Austrians would doubtless argue “what’s the difference?”). He was a staunch defender of the market economy, which he argued for in his in terms of his own reflections, not borrowed from academic economics (see especially *The logic of liberty* London 1946). As can be seen from this outstanding case, the defence of the market economy does not, or at any rate did not in the past, necessarily imply support for the marketisation of science, or for the marketisation of the universities, or for the reshaping of science into a kind of propaedeutics of engineering. On the contrary.

one need not indulge in an elegy for the virtues of Academic England, such as it was (far, far from perfect, to be sure), not to feel entitled to at least a degree of disquiet, and indeed quite a bit more. At least market-speak, or industry-speak, or managerialese, was not the near-monopoly language, the public face, the near-hegemonic vocabulary of self-description, and self-presentation, of academia! As Hayek stressed, nothing is easier to destroy than institutions, not least from within, by the incumbents who cannot comprehend the wisdom of what they have inherited. Alas, to this insight, too little associated with his name, we should add that the undermining of public institutions in England has been carried out in no small part by those claiming to be his followers, and in general by those who have taken to market-speak with a vengeance, “cynics” in Oscar Wilde’s sense, if not in the classical one, knowing the price of everything (to which should be added, the price of everyone, or at least the going price of every top academic) and the value of nothing (and we might now add, too, the value of no-one, though they believe that everyone has got a price). Greed *is* good. And it works, too! For consider: knowledge explodes!

The monopoly language of markets and management, with its load of canons, concepts and criteria, reverently embraced by universities, is both self-fulfilling and suicidal in the university milieu: self-fulfilling in as much as construing everything in market terms everything does tend to so become, according to the performative use of language as defined in speech-act theory⁸¹, undergoing consequently constant pressure to become effectively evermore like other businesses (in cost-cutting, for example, the drive to reduce labour costs particularly, downsizing, externalisation, outsourcing), self-destroying in as much as if they are just like any other business they will lose whatever aura they may still possess and will be unable in the end to compete for big names, who see themselves as merely acting within businesses and markets, especially if they have opportunities elsewhere, as has been happening, in the case of medicine, with the serious crisis of academic medicine in the US, the UK and elsewhere (*vide Addendum 7*). This is an example of the cultural contradictions of academic capitalism, in the era of cyber-acceleration and the technomarketisation of professions and services of all kinds (the distribution of income within the professions, above all the person-professions, as within academia, university teachers or “faculty” being a kind of (person-)professional, tends to approach that of the winner-takes-all economy, and indeed as far as medicine in the US is concerned, has gone very far, not to mention law) .

Despite the overwhelming importance ostensibly accorded by the State, or in the anglophone idiom, government, and such peculiar political entities as the EU, to science (often equivocating as to the degree of their commitment to basic science) and technology, at least for the sake of international competitiveness, it is not the Science Faculty, or even the Engineering or the Technology Faculty or Faculties (for the sciences, following the lead and fabulous technomarket success of molecular

⁸¹ John Austin *How to do things with words* Cambridge, MA, the founding text of speech-act theory.

biology/biological engineering, reshape themselves more and more as branches of engineering⁸²), that lies at the center of the University, where all must converge and pay their respects. It is, in a way, the Business School, or rather the canons, the language, the styles and techniques of business organisations as formulated by management gurus⁸³ and management academics, from the Harvard Business School

⁸² An American sociologist of science, writing in 1966, envisaged the future of the scientific community or rather, given its huge expansion, the “scientific metropolis” in the next 25 or 35 years (about now, therefore) as coming “to resemble more and more the engineering profession of today, with a large number of unconnected specialities constituting its major components, the pre-eminence of applied work taken for granted, and the symbols of professional success being allocated more commonly on the basis of practical achievement than in return for basic contributions to a generalized and integrated body of knowledge” (Norman W. Storer *The social system of science*, NY 1966, p. 164). The latter statement shows that he failed to foresee the phenomenon of the academic celebrity... He added that there would remain groups of basic scientists located largely in universities, but, as we know, they are today under unrelenting pressure to define their work not just as “practical” but as eminently saleable, patentable, income-generating, as the universities subject themselves to marketisation without pre-defined limits and boundaries. Today the figure of the scientist-engineer-entrepreneur, a triple hybrid, is quite prominent within or near universities, as in such areas as Silicon Valley, or the Austin Triangle, and their lesser counterparts in the UK, reversing a tradition of structural differentiation of the three roles and of the affirmation of the ideals of the autonomy of pure science or the “Republic of Science”. The engineering-marketing model of scientific work has become increasingly favoured.

⁸³ One may recall the famous Keynesian dictum that pernicious economic policies were often the delayed distillate of the ideas of “defunct academic scribblers”: now the inverse is true, academic policies, certainly political views of good governance for universities, stem from the tracts, not so much of academic scribblers (at least outside the Business Schools), though these have been more prolific than ever before, as of (still alive) management gurus some years back (certainly not from economists and social thinkers like Keynes, though someone like Peter Drucker has generated as many insights over his exceptionally long career as any “normal” academic social scientist, at least, and it is curious that no sociologist has deigned to examine his body of work seriously). And in any case the apparent “power of ideas” (Popper’s phrase), and the historic role of intellectuals, so emphasised by an entire galaxy of great figures like Keynes, Ludwig von Mises, Hayek, Schumpeter, Popper (besides these four Austrians, one could mention other liberal thinkers writing in a similar fashion in the 1930s and 40s, like the French academic Louis Rougier), the last four to account for the astonishing rise of collectivism, socialism, statism, *dirigisme*, totalitarianism and the like, from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century in particular, is now evidenced by major public policy shifts in the West in the last three decades and the overthrow of the post-war social-democratic or Keynesian consensus, (“the implicit post-war social contract” as is sometimes termed), which owe as much, if not more, to extra-university groupings of outstanding scholars (like the Mont Pèlerin Society, founded after WWII) or “think-tanks”, than to academics, university intellectuals, or indeed café intellectuals (perhaps an extinct species in the West even with the sporadic revival of *cafés philosophiques*), or the lumpen intelligentsia, for that matter.

Of course think tanks have been extremely influential in the US in other areas than economic policy, such as defence, nuclear strategy and international arms negotiations (particularly over nuclear weapons), as in the case of the Rand Corporation (founded in 1948, financed by the US Air Force) and the Hudson Institute, which came into prominence in the 1950s and 60s. This was a new species altogether of think tanks, compared with the pre-war ones, though in the inter-war period the critical role of the Rockefeller Foundation in the fostering of molecular biology (amongst other initiatives), promoting the transfer of nuclear physicists into biological research (from the thanatocracy of nuclear weapons to biocracy, the government and administration of life, though the *bios* becomes pretty ambiguous), and the Cowles Commission in the turn to axiomatization in economic theory which they promoted in the 1940s and later, after the perils of their promotion of empirical research in economics (cynics might say a progress from barrenness to barrenness) were in their way almost as important. In war and peace, in economic and social policies, in the reshaping of democratic polities, the think tanks have counted for more, much more, than the universities. Presumably this will go on, and it is expected to go on (Diana Stone and Andrew Denham eds. *Think tank traditions: policy research and the politics of ideas* Manchester 2004, one of a belated number of academic works on the phenomenon, a case of academic cultural lag if ever there was one despite all the claims of interest in the sociology of knowledge, perhaps because the bulk of sociologists don’t believe in the power of ideas, which in fact does *not* make them the greatest of realists, as they would like to believe). It may be that those academics who get regularly

downwards, for science's business is business, directly or indirectly, not least in the life-sciences with their strong ties to biotechnology, and medicine, as ever more scientised/industrialised biomedicine, too has been incorporated in the research-business mode (in fact the Business School does not need to be much esteemed, or even to be physically present, for the effects of or the pressures towards a business orientation, towards an increasing endorsement of business performance criteria, to pervade the university⁸⁴). It is arguable that the counterpart of the Faculty of Theology of the medieval university as the peak and overarching branch of the university is today the Business School, if not de facto or formally, but at least de jure, in its spirit and orientation, its faith and gospel, its idioms and methodology, its fads and panaceas (surely not in the way real sciences advance). And even more substantively, there may be a case for drawing the parallel between medieval theology and the modern business creed, for the Harvard Business School, a master invention of our time as the Faculties of Theology were in their time, was moved by "a kind of religion", at least in its heyday (though theology was in many ways a much more rational and exacting intellectual pursuit).⁸⁵

The beehive university

The emerging *winner-takes-all academia* through the transition to full-fledged academic turbo-capitalism from the palaeo-capitalist forms of academia, sharply condemned by our academic modernizers, which their reforms mean to sweep away for good, is somewhat reminiscent of the metaphor of the beehives that have figured so much in social thought, even in the nineteenth century ("The beehive" was a frequent image and even a frequent title of radical magazines, as Hayek pointed out), although this metaphor is

invited to social science or humanities think tanks, with every facility for the writing of their books and master papers, may feel thereby less inclined to notice, care about or feel moved to protest against the overall degradation of academic life, the unrelenting press of marketisation, from which, after all, they have secured a kind of privileged immunity. Stellar they may be, but only human after all.

⁸⁴ Oxford, with all the troubles of its Business School, is perhaps a case in point.

⁸⁵ It is worth evoking some very interesting, and, in a way, prophetic, remarks by the French sociologist Michel Crozier on the Harvard Business School, an early and continuing world leader in the field of business schools: "la [HBS] [se] place au nombre des plus grandes institutions jamais édifiées par le génie humain, aux côtés de l'Ordre des Jésuites et du Grand État-Major prussien" (admittedly, one of these has vanished for good). As if that appraisal, ranking the twentieth century HBS with two world-historical institutions of the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries (curiously without mentioning a French institution like the École Polytechnique, also a template for engineering and technological establishments all over the world), were not enough, he adds, a little further on, that the Harvard Business School has developed an "esprit de corps et *un ensemble cohérent de valeurs qu'il est impossible de ne pas comparer à une sorte de religion*" (italics added) (M. Crozier *Le mal américain* Paris 1980, p. 78). The Business School Militant, its proselytizers always at work in the 24 hour society, has now spanned the globe, and is on the way to becoming a kind of World Established Ecumenic Church of a kind, in a multifaith world (a sociological work of the 60s was entitled *The American Business Creed*, by F. X. Sutton, but unfortunately it does not appear to have been followed up, either in America or elsewhere).

somewhat simplistic to be sure, in detail, but not substantially alien in the spirit that informs it⁸⁶. The queen-bees (“the stellar [or super-stellar] faculty”), and they alone, have the great rewards, and are able to reign, rule and reproduce (the academic counterparts to these abilities are quite easy to figure out). The bulk of the hive are plain worker-bees, who must slave away unceasingly, assiduously gathering all the morsels everyone, and most of all of course, the queen-bee, need, doomed to barrenness for the sake of the community, which in neo-Darwinian terms is, I suppose, engaged in some kind of unrelenting market competition or zero-sum games of strategy with other hives, and indeed the rest of the biological world (and “Darwinian fitness” need not coincide with “merit”, the “survival of the mediocre”, as the social anthropologist C. H. Hallpike has put it in his theoretical account of social evolution, being a more adequate locution than the “survival of the fittest”⁸⁷), as scientific popularization and textbooks teach us, ignoring the serious scientific dissent from such oversimplified, endlessly propagated views (“and all the world is America”, to paraphrase John Locke’s dictum, changing the tense). But I suppose those who do well or expect to do well under these conditions, still need a “theodicy of good fortune”, curiously enough for some, predictably enough for a student of Max Weber⁸⁸.

Some of them already feel destined, like the Calvinist “elect” (perhaps even without any occasional tinges, let alone agonies, of self-doubt, unlike many if not most of the historic Calvinists) for they all seem to remember Max Weber in this context, even if they have curiously forgotten, ignored or eschewed, Rawls (well, he is dead and buried!⁸⁹) and indeed the egalitarian tradition en bloc, which some of them were defending not so long ago, which obviously has become a massive hindrance to the further expansion of the “Knowledge (knowledge-as-commodity, knowledge-as-capital) industry” as a whole and locally (a tradition to which, like academic fair play in the reviewing of scholarly works, not even faint lip-service needs to be paid any longer, it seems), to become something like queen-bees, or perhaps better “Sovereign Individuals” in some academic bee-hive or other (you can name your candidates: some are, or could be, sitting next door, perhaps, male or female academic queen-bees *in petto* already), or super-stars in the winner-takes-all academia, and to get the super-rewards of ever more low-taxed income, rank, perquisites,

⁸⁶ Centuries earlier Francis Bacon had contrasted the bees, with their productive transformation of raw material, favourably, with ants (gathering facts mindlessly) and spiders (weaving groundless theories), but I don’t think he pursued the sociobiological implications of queenbeedom. Moreover, I believe he certainly underestimated the tremendous aerodynamic achievements and robustness of spiders’ webs (from which scientists are still learning), and the value of the industry and indefatigableness of ants, not to mention their “prudence” (Psalms 6: 6-8).

⁸⁷ C.H. Hallpike *The principles of social evolution* Oxford 1986. In the case of mass extinctions in the history of life on earth, some scientists speak of the “survival of the fortunate” rather than the “survival of the fittest”. In epochs and areas of mass calamities in human history, such as, most emphatically the 20th c. was, perhaps this applies too.

⁸⁸ We have already referred to Ayn Rand’s doctrine of Absolute Selfishness (no disguises as “enlightened self-interest”!) as an example of this though from the Catholic side there are moves to endorse current market capitalism, as in Michael Novak’s “theology of creation”.

⁸⁹ As some IMF wit put it, a propos of the Keynes dictum “in the long run we are all dead”, “Keynes is dead and we are in the long run”..

fat grants, low to near-zero teaching loads, “genius Fellowships”, awards, and academic or non-academic fame, and what not, due to them (they are so much better than the rest!). The rest may still have their place, of sorts (at the limit, zero-contracts, or little better, in “bog colleges” or “bog-standard” educational establishments, as they are sometimes called in the UK, or “cow colleges”, as they are called in the US, or a tiny step or two above this level). Clearly, concern for the “collective goods” of academia and the overall quality of academic life, the public culture of trust and respect, of willing cooperation, of participation in the civilities of academic conversation (in a broad sense, as part of the “conversation of humankind”), the ambiance of academic *philia*, is no longer uppermost in their minds, or even seriously considered as worthwhile, displaced by the appetite for differential individual rewards (over and above whatever rank categories may still obtain) in an institutional milieu they care less and less about, doomed to a vestigial status (though they still take for granted ample facilities, respect, deference, safeguards). The bee-hive university or corporation, the academic subdomain of the inclusive winner-takes-all society, any rate on the planetary scale, has not arrived yet, not in full, but anyday soon... Some may still expect to become highly paid queen-bees in a small academic hive, but before too long the World Knowledge Industry may all be just One Huge Hive world-wide, or perhaps a Great Hive of Hives (in succession to things like the “Great Society” of Graham Wallas), and their chances of emerging as professorial super-stars even for a few minutes, or indeed for a few nano-seconds, of world-time, considerably diminished... Academics must be told: “to hive” (for the word may be used as a verb as well as a noun) is our destiny...⁹⁰ But super-rewards, only to the very few at any given time, the Stellar or Super-stellar Faculty...

Academic queen-bees *in potentia*, craving super-rewards as their due, and openly and strenuously calling for as wide a gap as possible in remuneration and other goodies between them and their supposedly less, much less, worthy colleagues, if such a term can still be used, for it is losing any point (such people already feel aggrieved at being “surrounded” –and this feels like the right verb- by what they perceive as, and undisguisedly call, a sea of “mediocrity”⁹¹, and just don’t see themselves as perchance part of it, under some description or another: “la médiocrité, c’est [toujours] les autres!”, to paraphrase Sartre). You have nothing to lose - but the unwelcome, stifling restraints of collegiality, traditions of academic equality,

⁹⁰ Intense collaborative work via electronic systems, as in composition of texts, has been characterized as “hiving”, and some advanced modes as the “hive mind” (Don Byrd and Deek Owens “Writing in the hive mind” in Todd Taylor and Irene Ward (eds.) *Literacy theory in the age of the internet* NY 1998). If this were to spread even further, how can we go on hiring and rewarding Big Names and Superstars at universities ? The hive itself, not just the queen bees, should take the credit. But it seems not, the queen-bee mind, not the “hive mind”, gets the rewards. We have here another cultural contradiction of academic capitalism, between the increasing, e-technologically stimulated and e-enabled collectivisation of certain kinds of intellectual work and the prominence of the winner-takes-all effect in rewards to individuals as super-stars.

⁹¹ For the academic super-stellars or aspirants thereto, this image appears to have replaced the humbling one (epistemically and personally) of the “ocean of truth”.

convivium, the cultivation of academic *philia*, shared passion for ideas, the concern with disinterested public service, and the like, the better to reap the rewards of the winner-takes-all society (euphemistically called, if not equated, with *the* natural and inevitable condition of “meritocracy” by many), the culmination perhaps of Western civilisation, as you may see it. They confidently expect to climb up the greasy pole inside what will remain of academia, transmogrified perhaps into an array, or, shall we say, a “network” of local “knowledge industry / celebrity industry corporations” or, more simply “knowledge corporations” (a.k.a., once upon a time, as “universities”), themselves collocations of one-person *knowledge / celebrity* firms, to which ever-shifting aggregations they may be transiently, nominally and impatiently attached, whilst seeking an even better offer, and so on (*ubi bene ibi patria*), before virtual academic corporations (one-person or multi-person sized) take over, so to speak. The over-all cyber-economy will incorporate the knowledge-commodity, knowledge-as-capital/academic-as-celebrity industry as a whole, and finally take over, and the very denomination of “university” may appear archaic, if not faintly comic, if it still has a “brand”, “image” or “logo” appeal for physical or cyber-tourists (like the Beefeaters, or the Changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace, or the Queen’s picture on postage stamps). They confidently assume that, even without old-style tenure, they will enjoy some kind of immunity from the ravages of market fluctuations, their salaries and other financial compensations in real terms always going up and up, or at worst staying put, and never down and down, or wavering erratically (in real terms, of course), as is the wont of the free market! Loathing the classical civil service or *fonctionnaire* occupational framework (this stance seems today a world-wide echolalic phenomenon), as if it had only ever been universally and unredeemably dysfunctional, embracing the widening and deepening of the academic market(s), the full marketisation of the universities, they somehow take for granted a lot of security for themselves, as their due (but what about others?)⁹². Where is the interpersonal consistency or equity in this scenario? And are they not mixing “rent-seeking” (protection, a degree of security, tenure, a quiet life, indeed “a lucid tranquillity”), a Very Bad Thing, as economists have agreed since Anne Krueger, late of the IMF, coined the expression, with “profit-seeking” (individual top prizes, the sky is the limit, but no safeguards, subject to the permanent radical uncertainty of the Hobbesian-Misesian world) in the free market economy, a Very Good Thing and if not the Only Good Thing, the necessary, if perhaps not sufficient, condition for All Other Good Things (but as close to the *unum necessarium* as we can get in this God-forsaken world)? One is supposed to exclude the other in the Manichean scheme of mainstream economics as a policy science!

⁹² Notoriously, whilst everyone has to be told the price of their shares/equity/assets may go down as well up, CEO’s pay never goes down (and may even keep going up significantly), though the value of their company’s stocks may well have dropped sharply, even catastrophically.

Envoi

The Age of Universities (late 11th c.- early 21st c.) in the West may be drawing to a close anyway: it had its great peaks in the 12th-13th and the 19th-20th centuries, as well as its stagnant centuries, but finally the market, or rather The Market (both One and Many, as we noted, with due reverence) and *technai* may take over completely, and not solely owing to brute, overwhelming, outside political pressures, or irresistible “market forces”, or “globalisation”⁹³. Eventually, there may still be “academics” of sorts (or “knowledge entrepreneurs”, or high-grade, or not so high-grade, purveyors of “knowledge services”, some of whom still claiming, perhaps, one wonders, without even a tinge of embarrassment, lineal descent from the academics/scholars of yesteryear), but no longer academics-in-universities (certainly not scholars-in-universities, in contradistinction to academic managers, or skills-managers), no longer universities at all, except, for a bit longer, in name. Except, to put it another way, hollowed-out ones, or, if you like, demystified universities, stripped of their mystical-cultural shell, the rational-market or business kernel finally plain to see, as some will say, both on the right and on the left, and sufficient unto itself. Eventually, there may be no-one able (even if they were so inclined) to write an elegy for Academic England, or even just to entertain the bare possibility of such a thing, for no-one will have any clear and distinct memories of how things were, no-one will know any better, or any different, or, in the Heideggerian terminology of Readings, no-one will knowingly remain “to dwell in the ruins” of the University.



ADDENDA

I/ “Skills”, not “education”

Psychometrics and other metrics triumphant

The Department of Education and Science has been renamed the Department for Education and Skills, but if the Financial Times is right, and higher education is just about (intellectual) skills, it seems redundant to keep the word “education” in the title of the Ministry. Forget about “education”, yet another archaism, let’s modernise (and save money too!) and just have a Ministry of Skills! In any case, for the

⁹³ Despite the considerable body of work on “long cycles” in politics and economics, ranging over millennia, published in the last two decades, including, but not confined to, “world-system” approaches, nothing seems to have been done on the universities from this secular patterns of change standpoint.

last hundred years there have always been vocal businessmen in England who have advocated apprenticeship schemes instead of university expansion (indeed they barely countenanced the existence of universities), in order to secure the “practical skills” needed for the “workforce” and thus be able to compete in the world market (for a very recent, unabashed example of this so-often reiterated claim in the UK over the last 150 years or so, in some ways a great British tradition, which amply deserves to be anthologised, see the letter by a successful, knighted, long-term businessman/entrepreneur, Sir Terence Conran, in The Times 28 Jan 2004). Some might argue that the New Economy needs universities to train the much-needed new incumbents to the *cybertariat*, or the accompanying *manageriat*, though this point is disputable. In any case, “skill” is obviously a term whose time and high-potency value has arrived, a monosyllable with lots of “cash-value”, not only in William James’ sense in his philosophical, pragmatist account of meaning and truth, but quite literally... Schools too are supposed, not to educate, but to impart skills, specifically “life skills”: two monosyllables –how the language of education has become so monosyllabic!- sum it all up. And to teach “life skills” they are subject to a strict regime of the three Ts - tests, (league) tables, targets (“command economies” were rather like this, so this kind of school regimentation does appear rather familiar to those well acquainted with such economic regimes, though some might see this as just an example of Taylorisation of school work). Here, as elsewhere it can be true, all too true, that *le mieux est l’ennemi du bien*.

”Education”, on the other hand, like the “University of Culture”, or the Western pedagogic or civilizational ideals of the last two centuries, is perhaps on the way out. The word is too diffuse, too holistic, too redolent of a genteel world, irredeemably qualitative perhaps, unsuited to the harsh realism of market-speak, wherein only the commensurable, fungible, tradeable in principle, whatever is “testable”, as directly and instantly as possible, amenable to quantophobia, preferably assessed by impersonal instruments, preferably within electronic readings (these have replaced what Eddington called, in a widely cited phrase, “pointer-readings” almost everywhere) in minutes or seconds, in terms of numerical or scaleable results, finds a home. The rest, many would say or imply, when doubts and misgivings are expressed over the psychometricisation of education at all levels, is just “waffle”. In every field of social evaluation “thick” concepts, many-stranded, historically specific and culturally subtle, whose explication would require time and finesse for a native and a degree of patient empathy for an outsider (though “thickness” in this sense is a matter of degree) have been central not only in traditional but also in modern societies. In the technomarketised world they are being, if not wholly displaced from the serious business of life, at best “bracketed” and increasingly replaced for hard-headed, practical purposes by serviceable, instrument-tractable “thin” concepts, in fact purportedly value-free and culture-free, far more hospitable to metricization and automatic determinations (the terminology of “thick” and “thin” concepts was introduced in moral philosophy by Bernard Williams, not coincidentally a severe critic of utilitarianism, in

Ethics and the limits of philosophy London 1985, though it may be traced to the notion of “thick descriptions” advanced by Clifford Geertz in “Thick description: towards an interpretive theory of culture” in *The interpretation of cultures*, NY 1973, itself indebted to the philosopher Gilbert Ryle). Of course the time-demarcation is not sharp, because the pressure for arithmomorphic determinations goes back a long way, but was never so pervasive and self-consciously scientific (despite a long history of scientific disasters in the field of psycho- and socio-metrics)) as today.

Now *skills*, like IQ, fall within the domain of psychometrics, matters which has been or can be made the subject of measures, scales, tests, formal rankings, despite the fact that the history of psychometrics and other allied metrics of human attributes, capacities and dispositions, and metrics for the direction of human and social administration in the West, subjecting the population to endless “objective” tests, is by no means an edifying tale, in fact it is a very depressing story of political abuse, social discrimination and arrogant pseudo-science, as we would see it now (for a review of this history see S.J. Gould *The mismeasure of man* NY 1981). Matters pertaining to the higher learning which are not subsumable without remainder under psychometric conceptions and measurements are obviously suspect: unscientific, untechnocratic, obscurantist, annoying. “Education”, in this conceptual climate, will have to go, in any substantial sense of the term (or “thick concept”). Thus the University may well increasingly play not even in the “education” business, but merely in the *skills* business: they could be renamed Further Skills Centers, or Advanced Psychometric Establishments, for continuous psychometric evaluation of all within, and in the course of their technoscientific and computational investigations, supplying psychometric or other metric instruments for the evaluation of all and everything worth dealing with in a serious fashion, within and without, in nature, personality, mind, cognition, emotions, attitudes, culture and society (“everything worth measuring” according to the prevalent political and market criteria).

A kind of *Metricizeability Principle* appears to hold in the current version of market capitalism: even the matters which have not been directly commodified have to be subject to metric determinations of one kind or another (psychometric, biometric, anthropometric, etc.) if they are to “count” (pun!) in policy and administration. Forget the Verifiability Principle, so much debated for decades within the realms of philosophy and theology, according to which those statements or theses which could not be put to the test of empirical observation, lacked cognitive meaning (although it might have emotive or expressive meaning). That debate was largely “academic”, and we now know that the Principle would rule out too much and in effect, taken strictly, would undermine science itself, as well as putting metaphysics, religion, ideology and common sense out of business. Now something like a Metricizeability Principle is actually enforced or is tending to be enforced in public policy and general governance in Western societies, a presupposition according to which those attributes or properties which are not amenable to metric determinations, measurements, scales, and the like, preferably as strong as possible, according to standard

procedures with statistical validation, lack sense (talk about them is, so to speak, devoid of cognitive or operational meaning), and can play no role in serious business in the real world.

Metric determinations-evaluations in this sense are demanded everywhere not just in the hard sciences, or in those strenuous fields that ape the hard sciences, but in the dominant policy style of contemporary government concerning all phases of education, school work, health care work, hospitals, clinics, welfare, public administration, even to some extent science or knowledge production itself. True, the philosophy of science has long abandoned any pretensions to the promulgation of a master criterion of epistemic worth, an algorithm according which science and nonscience could be demarcated sharply and reliably, and none of the proposed - shall we say, *ratiometric* measures- commands wide assent. Regardless of such developments, the enforcement of the Metricizeability Principle, even though it lacks proper epistemic warrant, proceeds relentlessly, even though decades of debate on these issues have brought out how precarious, how ideologically fraught, how essentially contestable, many quantophrenic enterprises and their “arithmomorphic” (a term coined by the mathematical and ecological economist Georgescu-Roegen) presuppositions are, and the history of psychometry, of biometry, of anthropometry, of craniometry, and the like, in the recent history of the West, are not very inspiring, indeed positively scary, as they get embedded in social practice, provide “objective” validation for invidious distinctions, and shape life-chances, not to mention the more directly political uses, misuses and abuses, in Western societies, whether in liberal or totalitarian systems. So the faith in the necessity and blessings of algorithmicity in human affairs, a variant of the trust in “technological fixes”, taking over where social reforms or “social engineering” promoted by governments constantly failed, enforcing allegedly scientific scales, tests, metrics for every human attribute that needs to be objectified for the proceedings of the exuberant market economy, flourishes as never before. In every field a “__metric” (the place-holder being filled by innumerable variants such as *bio-*, *psycho*, *anthropo-*, *econo-*, *socio-*, *doxo-*, *sciento-*, *biblio-*, *clio-*, *stylo-*, etc.). In project evaluation, “utils”, or, in aggregate fashion, the net sum of pleasures over pains (but then all this can be subjected, as we know since Bentham himself, to the measuring rod of money, “utils” into dollars, in the absence of a metric for interpersonal determinations of cardinal utility, though some recent researchers in neuro-economics have been working to supply biochemical grounds for “utils”). In science, frequencies in citation indexes. In the WWW, the number of “hits” (but according to a recent study in “econophysics”, we should be able to measure merit in the “hard” sciences by fame, that is, by the number of “hits” in Google, something which might save time for the next version of the RAE or its successor). In war, “body counts”.

To be sure, there is some way to go to a full-fledged *Panmetric Society*, accompanying or not the better-known “panopticism” of practically all social commentators in recent years, most ly however simply mechanically echoing Foucault (and there is a long-standing connection between the emphasis on visibility

and the stress on mensuration, and generally on scientificity, a particular theme of French thought as the historian of ideas Martin Jay brought out in a study of considerable range, entitled *Downcast eyes*). But the drift and the pressures towards such a completion of universal, ever more far-reaching and ever more automated metricization within society and whatever comes within the purview of social transactions of every description (the credit card, by itself, being in recent years a key motor of biometricization, together with national security concerns), particularly if organisations are involved, are unmistakeable. Immense and ever growing, exponentially or super-exponentially advancing, indeed self-infinetizing capabilities of data storage, data retrieval and information processing are now available or coming on stream and on line, as it were, in exponential or super-exponential (infinity) mode. Made possible in ever smaller, lighter, faster, “smarter”, cheaper devices, sensing, scanning, monitoring and “reading” everything human (with the advance of neuroscience come neuro-economics, neuro-politics, neuro-theology, neuro-sociology, so we will be able to read current cathexes in the brain about commodities, gods and politicians, and with the advent of gene chips we will tell in advance a great deal about future biographies), locatable anywhere and everywhere, above and under the skin, within and outside the body, prosthetically or orthotetically, in “intelligent” buildings, “intelligent” walls and floors, “intelligent” cars and shoes, approaching microcybernetic ubiquity (a condition sometimes called *ubicom*) and universal connectivity/intertranslateability, all-digital, ever-ready (or ever-constraining, depending on the mood and circumstances), to be deployed for an ever-wider, indeed unlimited, variety of purposes.

2/ “Meritocracy”: eutopia or dystopia?

One of the Prime Minister’s “hurrah words” has long been “meritocracy” (cf. T. D. Weldon THE VOCABULARY OF POLITICS for the notion of “hurrah words”; Weldon, an Oxford don, was a Labour supporter ⁹⁴). It seems to be forgotten, by the PM and others, that the inventor of the word, and first analyst of the scenario, an independent intellectual (not a career academic), a nonpareil social inventor, or, in the mandatory parlance of the day, a “social entrepreneur”, who originally conceived the idea of the Open University and lived to see it realized by a Labour Government (amongst other valuable projects, some of which, like the Open University itself, have lasted to the present day). This was Michael Young (1915-2002), who in THE RISE OF THE MERITOCRACY, 1870-2030 - AN ESSAY ON EDUCATION AND EQUITY (London, 1958), envisaged this scenario as a *dystopia*, as a minatory fantasy. That is, as an awful societal state of affairs which could arise if then-current trends towards ever more exacting

⁹⁴ I do not mean to subscribe to an emotivist or expressivist theory of political language (Weldon did have strong leanings in this direction, following the lead of the “emotivist” or expressive theory of moral and aesthetic language associated with logical empiricism, according to which evaluative judgments of all kinds basically convey feeling-states rather than any arguable propositional content), though some locutions in political speech do seem to almost replace semantic-cognitive meaning by emotive meaning, perhaps because of the fear of actually meaning something determinate and thus contestable, or perhaps owing to the pressures to produce sound-bytes in a minimalist universe of political discourse.

evaluation by merit or psychometrically measured intelligence-plus-performance, justified as ensuring equality of opportunity and impartial, class-free, gender-neutral, etc. recognition of talent+performance, or “IQ+effort”, were to swamp other criteria of social evaluation, as a true egalitarian such as he was, in the Tawney tradition (how obsolescent, if not how remote it appears now!), would have to. He regarded “meritocracy” as an insidious and especially pernicious idea, because it legitimated and entrenched inequalities of wealth and power as never before, since everyone in such a system, in principle, would get their “just deserts” as measured by such criteria. It is apposite to recall that Michael Young drafted the Labour Party manifesto for the election of 1945, the greatest electoral victory of the Party

It is not clear to me whether one of the PM’s other major “hurrah words”, to wit, “fairness”, simply coincides, or at least overlaps substantially, with “meritocracy”. In any case, the pressure to enforce measured intelligence (IQs), according to the current psychometric tests, as a criterion of selection, of admission to elite schools, colleges or universities, or a major instrument of evaluation in education, a particular concern of that work, continues, today’s psychometricians despite the ambiguous legacy of their trade, feeling doubtless rehabilitated even on the left, like the exponents of the “new eugenics” (hyperactive engineers and reengineers of the human, who in the past, before 1939, often had left-wing connexions), and the “new geopolitics”, who have shaken off their unpleasant historic, even fascist, associations, and have brazenly reassumed those enterprises. There are influential voices in Britain promoting a greater role for psychometrics in higher, or post-secondary, education, and calling for the introduction of the SATs (Scholastic Aptitude Tests), long de rigueur in the US, as the criterion for university admission, disregarding the repeated serious criticisms that have been advanced of the system in the US, which by itself has failed to improve the ethnic profile of the studentry, above all the intake of Black Americans and Latinos, especially at “elite universities”, and the misgivings by some leading educationists in the US and elsewhere over the trend towards psychometricization of education, and thus the conversion of education into training, as of ever wider areas of the economy and society. It will be noted that 2030, the terminal date in Michael Young’s title, is not that far away. However, no rebellion of the low IQs (or low SAT scorers), such as that envisaged in the book, which overthrows the existing meritocratic society in his dystopia, is in sight, or for that matter no rebellion of the cybertariat, which is not to say that the structural tension between meritocracy and equality, psychometrics and humane concerns, will go away. Though something has been done to address ageism in the ageing societies of the West and in Japan (on which topic Michael Young was especially interested, as can be seen from his best-known book, where it is one of the main threads, but also from various publications in later life on the sociology of old age), there is a very great deal more to be done, especially in employment issues, not least if “lifetime employability” instead of the old vanished life-careers, is going to become a major desideratum, and indeed if with the collapse of social security systems involuntary “lifetime employment”

may well become another curse. Indeed it has been noted that the demographic shift of Western societies is taking place in a culture which increasingly loathes every facet of ageing, certainly in the US with its 35 million of persons over the age of sixty-five, seeking immortality yet fearing perhaps like never before the signs of senescence (C. Ben Mitchell and Susan Salladay eds., *Ageing, death and the quest for immortality* Center for Bioethics and Human Dignity 2004).

3/ Ranking of universities: mono-hierarchy rampant

The ranking of world universities, or at least of 500 of them, as well as 100 European, and 100 Asian, universities, in terms chiefly of science-productivity (science Nobels, publications in Science and Nature, lists in science and social science citation indexes), published recently by the Shiao Jong University of Shanghai (Institute of Higher Education), has provoked strong reactions in Germany and France. Neither country did very well in world terms, or even in European terms (amongst the fifty best European universities by those criteria, the top-ranked German university is number 10 on the list, in the case of France number 16). The German Chancellor has spoken of the need to have at least one German university on a par with Oxford or Cambridge (the second and first-ranked European universities respectively). In the case of France whose top-ranked university on a world scale is only 65th, the current financial plight of universities, and the sharp budgetary cuts of 2003/4, in addition to chronic underfunding, have triggered an even wider range of protests than usual (the French configuration is somewhat anomalous, as research is less university-focussed than elsewhere, given the CNRS and the *chercheur* status), and as in Germany, though to a lesser extent, the need to upgrade current university models emphasised to keep up with world technoscientific competition. Obviously the ranking is biased towards the hard sciences, with only some account taken of the social sciences and less of the humanities, and towards publications in English.

The UK scooped the first four places in the European list (Cambridge, Oxford, Imperial College London, University College London). On the world list, the placings of all four, but especially Cambridge and Oxford are very honourable, respectively 5 and 9. No country outside the US can of course afford not to be very concerned about the future ranking of the very few of their universities that make it to top 100 or perhaps even the top 50 of the world list (the “Red Queen effect” of evolutionary theory). Perhaps the drop in student applications to US universities from the Middle East, China and Russia, and the difficulties of science researchers from those areas in even coming for conferences in the US, under the new passport procedures in the US, in the wake of 9/11, may turn the tide...

However, the absence of great humanistic institutions like the London School of Oriental and African Studies (and its counterparts in various other European countries), with its vast range of studies of “exotic” languages, cultures and histories, indispensable to liberal civilisation, is, in my view, sufficient by itself to bring out some crucial limitations of this kind of ranking. If the West is to be seriously

concerned with civilisation, and not just with profits, or productivity, this kind of scientific, One Culture mono-hierarchy cannot be taken too seriously.

4/ Pilgrims, political and academic

The notable work by the sociologist Paul Hollander *POLITICAL PILGRIMS- WESTERN INTELLECTUALS IN SEARCH OF THE GOOD SOCIETY* (NY 1981), published when the Cold War was still going strong, reviewed in a comprehensive fashion the vast corpus of ecstatic declarations of visitors, mostly intellectuals of one sort or another, Europeans and Americans, including some social and natural scientists, to the USSR and other Soviet-type countries (though similarly befuddled reports also were made by visitors to fascist and right-authoritarian regimes), reporting paradise on earth or utopia in the making, whom he compared to the pilgrims of old. A lesser work, as yet apparently unwritten, might address (*toutes proportions gardées*) the concept and survey the exemplary tales of the *academic pilgrims*, in an analogous sense to the “political pilgrims”, an eminently prolific species in the twentieth century, with their ecstatic reports on academia elsewhere, since WWII mostly regarding the American case (as European conceits of grotesquely unwarranted condescension were thoroughly shaken), though not only, political pilgrims, at any rate on travels to most places, having become quite unfashionable. Such one-sided -if not downright hyperbolic- reports of The One Best Way, as always with such reports, fail to portray the full reality, the dark sides, the problematical features which necessarily attend even the best of the best in actual states of affairs. In any case materials for such a corpus would not be hard to find in any European country. (At times these gushing informal accounts are simply bathetic: one visitor to a top-notch social-scientific -or perhaps one should say behavioural-scientific- power-house, albeit one with a reputedly panoptic directorate, in the West Coast, enthused also about the ocean, the beaches, the mountains ... My goodness!. I would like to say that we have all these in Lisbon, the westernmost port in the Eurasian landmass... True, the libraries are not nearly as good, to put it mildly, in the social sciences, for example...). The most important point perhaps is that it does not seem at all implausible that the beneficiaries of these (mostly transatlantic) experiences will be thereby more inclined to disregard the general degradation, physical and cultural, of the universities, for, in a way, they have been granted a kind of immunity, or sufficient compensation (after all, they are only human). Besides, they are likely to be “stellar faculty”, at least potentially, in any case.

5/ Diversity

One important feature of the American university system, for example, that the academic pilgrims never refer to (as far as I know), and they never emphasise diversity and how to achieve or sustain it, is the presence of Catholic, Calvinist, Baptist, Jewish (religious and non-religious) universities of some distinction, yet the diversity –in this case the religious diversity, which also enhances the variety of ideals universities are informed by- is an impressive feature not replicated in the UK. If diversity is a good thing

(not just religious diversity of course), and generally it is supposed to be, surely it ought to be taken into account as well as inclusiveness, equity, “excellence” and so on, in appraising the university system of a particular country: why is it never considered? Perhaps a ranking of national university systems should take diversity –religious and non-religious- into account, through doubtless the indicators may be less easily metricized than those say for publications in a few top international peer-reviewed journals, the number of science Nobels, patents, etc. The obsession with a *mono-hierarchical* view of educational institutions, underlying the framing of university policies, seems odd in a liberal society with its official posture of liberal neutrality towards diverse conceptions of the good and its proclaimed tolerance, if not active encouragement, of many forms of diversity as a source of vitality and creativity.

6/ Inequalities

Veblen’s book, *THE HIGHER LEARNING IN AMERICA*, though published in 1918 (and much of it written by 1916), was already of and about the Gilded Age. But, as the mainstream American economist Paul Krugman, who has often written for the *New York Times*, pointed out recently, America is undergoing a second Gilded Age, with the levels of income inequality matching those of the earlier one, and indeed exceeding them (the *bons mots* about historical repetition don’t seem appropriate), the absolute levels of private wealth being much higher than at any time in history (with limitations arising from “positional goods” of various sorts, good locations in a finite earth being an example) and with far more billionaires than ever before. This development has surprised those economists and sociologists who had theorized that personal income inequality would decline, and even undergo steady if slow decline, in industrial capitalist economies over the long run, through structural reasons, as absolute wealth per capita increased (as in the famous long-term inverted-U “Kuznets Hypothesis”, backed by a most copious range of cross-national historical-statistical data), something which appeared to be increasingly confirmed in Western societies from 1945 until the 1980s. After the “Golden Age” of the capitalist welfare state from the 1940s to the 1970s (so termed by Eric Hobsbawm), or what the French called the *trente glorieuses* or the second *belle époque* of capitalism, a second Gilded Age. Is the turn to increasing income and wealth inequality in advanced capitalist countries, the striking now two decades-long reversal of the expectations of the Kuznets hypothesis, here to stay? In academia it is gathering momentum, seems irresistible and still proceeding to greater and greater income differentials: after all, it might be argued, academic capitalism has to keep pace with the economy at large, the university as corporation with other corporations...

7/ Business, academic and medical

If universities are just businesses, with their top people in general less well paid than in other businesses, it is not surprising that, for example, there is an acute shortage of top physicians and biomedics willing to teach in universities, thereby creating anxieties about the future of medical education and the National Health Service in the UK. If there is nothing distinctive about universities any more, being businesses like

any others, in terms of their organisation, operation and aims, self-image and public image, only paying less well than others in most cases, if the cultural prestige of the academy no longer beckons as a compensation, why indeed should top-earners in the non-university market teach at less remunerative, poor-market businesses a.k.a universities? The marketisation of the NHS does not appear to have made the lot of nurses more or sufficiently satisfactory, to arrest the continued emigration of qualified nurses from the U.K., or departure from the NHS, compensated only by the entry of foreign nurses.

A recent account of American biomedicine, the acknowledged world-leader in the field, by a medical practitioner (a pediatrician) and bioethicist, points to a similar disinclination to teach academic medicine, given the greater rewards of researchers. It also notes the disintegration of multispecialty group practices where salary equality was the norm, owing to the wide and ever widening differentials expected by specialists, with the result that “[d]octors were no longer all colleagues, all in it together, (...) no longer had a sense of shared goals or ideals or of professional solidarity” and “productivity figures became the name of the game” (John D. Lantos *Do we still need doctors? A physician’s personal account of practising medicine today* NY 1997, p. 25). He goes on to say that the prevailing American health care “nonsystem” “encourages physicians to look after their own interests. Self-interest is fashionable. Greed is good. We are all supposed to trust the invisible hand of the market to organize these competing selfishnesses into lower prices, higher quality, and responsiveness to the preferences of consumers...(..)[f]aith in the market allows us to avoid asking questions about what a health care system should look like or the role that doctors ought to play in it “ (do., p.26: my italics). To take up the last sentence, a most arresting one in my view, which we should ponder at length: one could also say, by parity of reasoning, that “faith in the market”, as Dr Lantos put it, just as much as the seemingly irresistible pressures towards sweeping marketisation, stops otherwise questioning people (whose commitment to the critical life is paramount) in the UK, and elsewhere, from asking more probing questions about the aims and values of the universities (as of other institutions, service or non-profit organisations) at the most fundamental level.

8/ The “Paragon Complex”

The case of citations, especially in books, reveals, at least in British sociology, a condition of astonishing drab conformity, where a maximum of five or six names –well, not more than ten or so- scoop a very substantial, hugely disproportionate oceans of references, across the entire spectrum of publications, about every subject on earth, yielding an overall impression of a vastly repetitive, monotonous intellectual or sub-intellectual panorama or a kind of huge interminable echolalia, as if self-doomed to inhabit a never-ending aural Platonic cave, as if only comfortable in a monoglottic monoculture of the mind. Of course, it is part of a general cultural trend, nicely diagnosed as long ago as 1959 by the American historian of ideas, the Nestor of the field today, Jacques Barzun, in a still very relevant work of cultural criticism and

exposure of the sorry condition of intellectual life in our time, as seen in part in some facets of the American universities and high culture circles of the time as the “Paragon Complex” (*The House of Intellect*, deservedly reprinted in 2002). This is the disposition to believe that there must be a single, uniquely determined best thinker or “the authority” or the Supreme Guru, in each and every field and subfield of learning, and once discovered (or once one is told by one’s teacher, or faction capo, or local campus cheerleader, etc.), that’s that. This was also once very marked in Soviet countries, but it has spread most successfully to capitalist countries, where it has been flourishing unabated for some time in the humanities and social sciences.

The immense ravages of the “paragon complex” can be seen also in various branches of the humanities, not least philosophy (though this has scientific pretensions from time to time), except that in these areas there are perhaps more such obsessional cultic references to recent DWAMs or Dead White American males (Rawls, Nozick, Quine, Davidson: how exiguous, how conveniently and economically exiguous, the canon is!) than to DWEMs, Dead White European Males, though also one or two live ones, such as Derrida (in life, he is already an honorary DWEM, as it were, though some believe, wrongly, that he is a DWAM, certainly, but wrongly too, a WAM, though not a WASP). On the strategies that helped secure extraterritorial rights as it were for “French theory” in the US, a label which will survive the displaced one of “French fries”, see the lengthy paper by the sociologist Michèle Lamont is instructive (“How to become a dominant French philosopher: the case of Jacques Derrida” *American Journal of Sociology* 93 1997, no. 3 (Nov.): 584-622, but see also the very much shorter, and more anecdotal paper by Rebecca Mead on a more recent case “The Marx brother: How a philosopher from Slovenia became an international star” *The New Yorker*, <http://www.lacan.com/ziny.htm>, 20 October 2003).

It seems all too likely that all the negative features I pointed to will be intensified as the marketisation of the universities, of their structure and their spirit (not that they would necessarily claim to have one, indeed they would rather not make such a claim, for the word is listed in the unofficial, but no less binding, *Index Verborum Prohibitorum* of the PCs or the panmetricians), proceeds.

9/ Schools

Regarding primary schools, the scenario has already been advanced in the UK of schools whose teaching staff would consist solely of (very well-paid) headmasters and low-qualified, low-paid classroom assistants (a renewed move towards a kind of Benthamite panopticon?), pending robotisation, for these tasks would not require a particularly high-grade version of robo sapiens, but of the sort that may be flooding the market within a decade or two, since there will be robots available for every management requirement. One can well imagine this scenario being extrapolated, *mutatis mutandis*, to secondary schools (next in line, surely) and even to “higher education” (to use the old terminology), indeed to all “educational businesses”, or perhaps, the word “education” being on the way out, “learning businesses”,

or “skill-enhancing facilities”, private or public, though whether the “skills” in question are very “intellectual” is moot.

10/ The automation of scientific research, the emergence of Artificial Science and the coming of the Robot Scientist

Since the first version of this text (including the foregoing paragraph) was written and conveyed to a few persons at the end of 2003 (listed in the Acknowledgements), things robotic have moved on even faster than I had anticipated. The “world-class” science periodical Nature (15 January 2004) has published a paper on the “robot scientist”, or what others have called their SciBot (short for “Scientist Robot”), the issue of a combination of work on Artificial Intelligence in discovery software, or “machine learning” and on robotics, which can perform genetic analyses, more specifically, the function of specific yeast genes, as accurately and effectively as a human, and indeed more cost-effectively than human scientists. The automated system, once fed data (as a human reading articles on a given topic), originates hypotheses, devises experiments to test the hypotheses, runs the experiments on its associated lab robot, interprets the results as rebutting or corroborating the hypotheses, and restarts the cycle in the former case (Ross D. King and seven other authors, all biologists at the University of Wales “Functional genomic hypothesis generation and experimentation by a robot scientist” in the cited number of Nature, pp. 247-252). This may be a significant step towards the automation of some phases of scientific labour, perhaps enabling at least many tasks of research assistants and varied sorts of time-consuming, mind-numbing, academic Mcwork to be foregone, in the never ending pursuit of downsizing by market-driven academic/university “corporations”. The Times Higher Education Supplement 16 January 2004 reported this development, as described in the just-mentioned article in Nature, under the auspicious heading “robo-don’s debut”. Will there be a conference soon, perhaps financed by the likes of Disney, Coca Cola, McDonald’s or Microsoft, on the automation (robotization) of scientific labour, of research labour, above all perhaps of laboratory work and life (of the “production-line” lab, the lab-as-factory), and eventually the automation (robotization) of a substantial chunk of the research university (affording yet another gloss to the expressions “degree factories” or “knowledge factories”)? The “robot scientist” has already been baptized by scientists in Nature itself, an identity bestowed by the eight person collective officiating at its birth, though the current model, capable as it already is, is only a start in what may emerge in due course, and perhaps sooner rather than later, as the new mode of production of science (a “model III of scientific knowledge production”? Or perhaps just a variant of the current mode, what one might call the “mode II.A of scientific knowledge-production”, uncontaminated, at least in a direct fashion, by the live human intellect as well as by live human hands: meatware and brainware replaced by hardware and software (augmented by robotics).

An editorial in Nature, in the same issue, commenting on the article in question (p. 181) draws an analogy with the history of clerical labour in the service sector, with the mechanization of routine lab tasks, freeing graduate students, apprentice scientists or younger scientists generally, for more creative tasks, allowing more time to make the “high-level creative leaps at which they excel”: a not terribly inspiring analogy, for the historical record on the trials of clerical labour is very mixed indeed, though they may be right that postgrads and postdocs may be freed from the more mind-numbing tasks, since they have certainly been used, not infrequently, as a cheap, even wage-less, source of menial manual and intellectual labour by their scientific betters and their universities, not least in the epoch of the University of Excellence. Clearly, a new subfield of Labour Process Theory –what one might call the *Theory of the Scientific Labour Process*- perhaps not previously imagined as a new specialism within sociology, or as a branch of the sociology of science which has kept strenuously away from this kind of issue, though I suppose it very nearly got started in the 1930s, awaits development: the “technological unemployment” of scientific-technological labour, as robot-deploying scientific intelligence programs reach higher and wider in terms of cognitive capacities and greater than human cost-effectiveness, may recapitulate a familiar story... Where will the process of mechanization of the scientific labour process, “the freeing of brainpower”, end? Cost-effectiveness might provide sufficient impetus for it to be pursued for a very long time. After all, the SciBot “can work all day and all night without labour costs” (yes, this is a quote from the article by the octet of scientists). Besides, SciBot could also save time and money in drug development...

We await the development of SocSciBots or Social Science Robots (doing a lot of the boring work in econometrics and modelling perhaps), and perhaps also HumBots, or Human Sciences Robots (with further progress in machine translation of printed texts, for example, or in stylometrics, bibliometrics, and the like, and better software for producing research articles in innumerable specialized fields, though sometimes one feels that many, many articles have already been thus produced, though perhaps it was just humans imitating machines rather than the other way round). After all, the soft sciences have to keep up with the harder, more expensive ones... “To free your brainpower for more creative work”... “Creative”, “creation”: yet more words which are drifting towards economic-market-entrepreneurial appropriation if not monopolization. After the theological, metaphysical and aesthetic phases of the word in the history of Western civilization, the market-sense comes into being and perhaps takes over: it may be reasonable to expect that in a market-defined, market-centred world, market-semantics will prevail... There is now available a “theology of creation” (articulated by M. Novak, a catholic theologian) which is not about the divine creation, but about creation, or rather wealth-creation by entrepreneurs in the contemporary market economy, with all its negative impacts on the biosphere and biodiversity, which would seem to call for a “theology of destruction” too, or at least a complementary “theology of creative destruction”, of many kinds of destruction...). The figure of the Entrepreneur as Creator may relegate God the Creator, and the

artist-creator par excellence in the human world (prominent at least since the Renaissance), to museum-like cultural-historical niches..

The Robotic, Augmented Intelligence or Cyborg research university (not the research into robots or cyborgs as such, but the carrying out of research by intelligent and ever more intelligent computerized robots and other sophisticated AI and cyborgic machines), the Robo-University, or the Cyborg University, might well solve some problems of public or private finance, though in the future full-fledged cyborg world perhaps all bets are off, bearing in mind the threats or promises of post-humanity. Especially if professorial superstars could be “downloaded” or eventually “uploaded” onto intelligent-spiritual machines (recently theorized in such apocalyptic terms by the remarkable inventor, computer scientist and speculator Ray Kurzweil, rising philosophers like N. Bostrom, and the international, indeed multicontinental Transhumanist movement, in which the Artificial Intelligentsia is well represented), once they have reached their peak (pending further advances in regenerative medicine, or high-quality life extension, which on their salaries they might well be able to afford, as *aristoi* of the Brave New World), or got too greedy, insofar as one can ever think of “too greedy” as a fault, which is problematical (but all universities, after all, work under a budget constraint, and not only just for those with academic Mcjobs!)...

Anyway, the Science Robot, the Robot Scientist, has arrived, a new species of intelligent being on earth, a new, as yet para-human, variety of research scientist, an incipient little *Dominum Experimentorum* for the new digital-robotic age. The fond designers of the first instance of the new epistemic taxon expect it to grow in intellectual stature, be fruitful and multiply (though robot self-reproduction may still be some way off). The times are propitious, the *conjuncture* timely. Maybe the realm of knowledge (perhaps more) is there for the taking. Automated Science completes the Automated University. No more need perhaps for an externally imposed Academic Labour Code, or demands for entrepreneurship, Asimov’s Laws of Robotics, the Moral Code for robots, being perhaps sufficient. No need for some time for a Robot Labour Process Theory.

[I have written on some of these matters concerning the dreams and projects of the ascent of intelligent-spiritual machines elsewhere, e.g. in “Aceleração, tecnogénese e experimentum humanum” (“Acceleration, technogenesis and the experimentum humanum”) in Hermínio Martins and José Luís Garcia (orgs.) *Dilemas da civilização tecnológica* [Dilemmas of technological civilization], Lisboa, Imprensa das Ciências Sociais, 2003, pp. 19-77. On the cyber-science world see also my chapter “Tecnociência e arte” (“Technoscience and art”) in Carlos Leone (org.) *Rumo ao cibernundo?* [Towards the cyberworld?] Oeiras, 2000].

The distinction between private and public universities is becoming so blurred, that Britain, for example, with only one self-proclaimed small private university, may come to have nothing but universities that aim to be as “private” as possible with Government goading and sanctions, universities private in the substance, if not the form, all encompassed by pervasive market-speak and managerialese, putative CEOs and “mission statements”. In Japan, as from April 2004, the national universities will become “corporations” in fact and in law, able to charge what they will for their “services”: the UK is going down this path, even if in the absence of further legislation, some universities may be willing to declare “independence”, as several have threatened to do (formerly, only the locations of pop music radio stations declared “independence” in the UK, now it is Vice-Chancellors, though perhaps not yet from the UK). In the US, of course, the distinction has been partly eroded by the increasing proportion of total research funds accruing to top private universities from Federal sources, which makes them live off the Federal Government, as well as from endowments and a continual stream of specific donations (as well as additions to the endowments), whilst state universities generally lack endowments of any significance, and State governments can often be ungenerous, or unable to provide sufficient funds to obviate the cuts in academic salaries in real terms and the deterioration of facilities. Pay freezes and redundancies have made a greater impact on state than on private universities.

12/ Of super-stars, and Chairs, and Empire

A case of professorial super-star elevation that made it to the New York Times (October 27, 2003, op-ed piece by an American academic, David L. Kirp, who has written extensively on university affairs, entitled “How much for that professor?”) was the hiring of an Oxford Fellow, the historian Niall Ferguson, by New York University, with a top-notch salary and facilities (plus a lighter teaching load, etc.), who then accepted another appointment within six months, to Harvard, for an even better salary and facilities (where he may still be as I write, having peaked in the world academic market, or there being no further academic-financial heights to aspire to therein). Something of a latter-day Polybius (perhaps self-consciously so), he is the author of a long, enthusiastic study of the British Empire (savaging along the way a number of its classic critics: poor J. A. Hobson!), which also enjoins America to fulfil its own, even more arduous, more far-reaching, imperial vocation, but then Harvard University Press also brought out the no less notorious work co-authored by the philosopher-activist of the “ultra-left”, Antonio Negri (charged, rightly or wrongly, with complicity in political terrorism in Italy, imprisoned for a number of years, and still under house arrest: cf. *Negri on Negri*, N.Y., 2003) and an American scholar of comparative literature at Duke University, Michael Hardt, with the same title, but with a quite different outlook on matters imperial, to put it mildly, now available in paperback from the same Press (obviously selling very well, which is what matters in the world of “One market under God” (to borrow the title of T.

Frank's book), or shall we say the One Big Hive of world-academia and world-knowledge, the latter-day avatar of Wells's "World Brain").

Whether "postmodernists of the Chair" (postmodernism, at least in some versions, is perhaps the most professorialized of all the intellectual modes of recent decades), "Marxists of the Chair", "Empire Vindicators of the Chair" (to paraphrase the famous case of the late nineteenth century *Kathedersozialisten*), it is not really ideology or "loyalty" in the "clash of civilizations", or "Americanism" which is at issue (at least within pretty broad limits). Be that as it may, it is surprising that, in the light of recent events alone, and the doctrinal florescence of neo-conservatism (though it must not be forgotten that a number of neoconservative thinkers with military experience and of military rank, have taken a principled stand against the recent military incursions of empire), that the academic field of Imperial Studies, or American Imperial Studies, has not been opened up, with a proliferation of Masters programmes and Chairs, eventually full-fledged departments, newsletters, journals, yearbooks, websites, awards, nominations, prizes, conferences, workshops, colloquia, learned societies, discussion groups, blogs galore, etc., to join the programmes (or "programs") of Post-colonial Studies, Subaltern Studies, Dependency Theory, and what not... perhaps only a question of time. One can just picture the immediate contributions of rhetoricians, tropologists, political semioticians, postmodernists, "new geopolitics" experts, deconstructionists, social constructivists of many hues, Derrideans, Heideggerians, Deleuzeans, Bruno Latour, etc., as well as of course neo-liberal economists of many, many sub-schools, psychometricians, psychohistorians, straight historians, historiosophers, science apostles, old conservatives, neo-conservatives, or post-neo-conservatives, *politicologues*, Stanley Hoffman, possibly new eugenicists, etc., to such an eventually booming field... After all, they would be addressing a military empire, an "empire of ideals" (President Reagan), an "empire of capital", an "empire of the media", an "empire of dreams" (cultural commentators have long written of the Californization, or Hollywoodisation, or Texanisation, of the dreams of the world), an "empire of science", "an empire of the mind and the imagination", an empire of "no-place" (Negri & Hardt), an "empire of disorder" (Alain Joxe), a "*hyperpuissance*" (Hubert Védrine), an empire of hard power and "soft power" (Joseph Nye), an "inadvertent empire" (William E. Odom), a "rogue state" (T. D. Allman), a novel "inverted totalitarianism" (Sheldon Wolin *Politics and vision* 2nd ed 2004), etc. etc. It is just as easy to imagine the tables of contents of the first issues of the future Quarterly Journal of Imperial Studies (with supplements), or Quarterly journal of Hegemon Studies (with supplements), with such a cast, in English, of course,... to be published by Routledge, Blackwells or Sage... available on-line also for subscribers... And it should reprint forgotten studies like the analytical model of imperial overstretch which William H. Riker, one of the pioneers of the economic theory of politics put forward over forty years ago, in his consideration of scenarios for America (in the last chapter, "Reflections on empires: an epilogue on the United States in

world affairs” in his *The theory of political coalitions* New Haven 1962, pp. 211-243). Now which multibillionaire or great corporation will endow the first Chair in such a manifestly deserving field, likely to enjoy a bright future, surely, and which university will first seek or receive such a benefaction? It is sheer, incomprehensible, cultural inertia in an age of speed-ups, acceleration, and acceleration of acceleration, that no such things appear to have come to pass as yet. Though if you really want to think big (Soros, I fear, might not be willing or able to give nearly enough for a project of this scale, perhaps the European Union), why not launch a “Project Empire” (or, in a milder version, “Project Hegemon”), or, better, World Peace, as the Manhattan Project of the social or behavioural sciences of the 21st century? Doesn’t the Reality Principle count any more in the social/human/behavioural sciences?

Of course, none of this is completely new. I remember meeting a distinguished academic many years ago who, without prompting from me, or anyone else, described himself to me as the best-paid professor of political science in the US at the time (alas, I never meet such people any more, nor would I know how to find out who the current counterpart is). Though the game “I-am-better-paid-than-you-lot” may become the academic game par excellence, together with ever-bigger-grantsmanship and “my-publications-weigh-x grams or x kilos more-than-yours”, and my “transfer fee” therefore will be bigger than yours...and in the case of professorial stars, as against football stars, paid to the recruit in full. A much cited example, which made it to the New York Times business pages, is that of an economist who was promised a salary of 300,000 dollars “upfront”, plus carte blanche to hire six bright young academics of his choice in his new department, plus a job for his then unemployed wife at a salary of 50,000 dollars, plus a really large and posh apartment in Manhattan at a special university-subsidised rent, plus spacious offices, to secure his move from Harvard to Columbia (to no avail, as in the end he decided to stay on at Harvard, presumably having gained some bargaining power). Perhaps the “truce” in the “star wars” of academia – the competitive bidding for academic celebrities, in the manner of top football players (a paradigm-case in economic analysis of “winner-takes-all” effects), which of course is but a zero-sum game which deprives universities of resources with a high opportunity cost- called for by some American academic commentators, like Prof. David Kirp, together with a renewed emphasis on the importance of teaching, might bring about a better atmosphere, especially if the truce were to hold not only within the US, but in transatlantic connexions as well, but, however desirable, it seems unlikely to come about in the foreseeable future (a mainstream economist of distinction has written of the importance of the “economics of atmosphere” in organizations, but, alas, he didn’t expand on the topic). Calls for “loyalty” to institutions or pseudo-institutions are equally unworthy, and likely to go unheard (unless one means by “loyalty” just “brand loyalty”, as befits a marketised place), if the institutions themselves have become thoroughly marketized anyway, or are unwilling (or too fearful, or too lacking in conviction, or too blasé) to assert the critical importance of nonmarket values and ideals for their very being, both in practice and in

discourse, by explicit and emphatically rejecting market-speak as the monopoly language of the times as far as the universities, all kinds of universities, are concerned. In order for there to be loyalty, there must be *loyalty to loyalty*, as the American philosopher Josiah Royce (who of all philosophers may have been the one who wrote the most on the topic of loyalty, though latterly “trust” or “commitment” have been more fashionable) put it. Otherwise, the University of Transiency, as I have called it (or the University of Maximum Throughput), with the emphasis on the speedy, everyone here today, gone tomorrow, the faster the better, for everyone, for all performance targets, approaching the condition of “non-places”, will become increasingly the “normal” mode of “university” life.

Under such circumstances, to borrow from the economist and general social scientist A. O. Hirschman (*Exit, voice and loyalty*), in situations or regimes where “voice” is powerless, “exit” (under which we may subsume of course phenomena like the “inner emigration” in totalitarian regimes, the withdrawal into the self, not just physical or spatial movement) is the only option, to other places, other academic systems, or indeed out of academia, though not necessarily out of intellectual life as such, by any means (there appears to be no social science or even journalistic study anywhere of those who left academia recently or in different periods, at any rate in democratic countries: in itself an interesting lacuna in a world of superabundant research). Of course “exit” under certain conditions can trigger what one might call *vicarious voice*, as Hirschman himself recognized (though he did not, as far as I recall, use this phrase), two decades after the publication of his book, in connexion with the abrupt migration of significant numbers of East Germans to the West via Czechoslovakia which precipitated the mass demonstrations which eventuated in the fall of the German Democratic Republic (I have given another historical example in my paper on Regime change in twentieth century Portugal, to be published in book form in 2005). An example of “vicarious voice” might well be the widely expressed (I was going to say “voiced”) concerns and the eventually induced policy responses to the historic phenomenon referred to above, in the main text, in the note at pp. 15-16, of the mass emigration of European scientists to the US, the stock now comprising some 400,000 persons, according to recent estimates, which are probably correct regarding the rough order of magnitude.

13/ The strange death of the philosophy and theology of the university in the late twentieth century

There appears to be (in English at any rate) an astonishing dearth if not a total absence of works on the philosophy and/or the theology of the contemporary university, despite a distinguished tradition of such writing at least until the 1950s (such philosophers as write on university questions, oddly enough, appear to write solely on university finance, admissions, etc., and other important matters but not the ideals of the university and in any case not at all in a distinctly philosophical vein). Yet the rise of professional academic philosophy was accompanied by a galaxy of inspired, eloquent, even exalted writings on the philosophy, metaphysics, theology of the university by a number of the greatest philosophers of the time

in the German lands of the early nineteenth-century (many of these texts, by Fichte, Schelling, Schleiermacher and others, were brought together in the very useful French collection *Philosophies de l'université*) in the epoch of the neo-Humanist model of the Humboldtian University, or what Bill Readings called “Humboldt’s University of Culture”, which was the single most influential model of the university in the last two centuries in Europe and the Americas, until the American university model of the University of Excellence supplanted it. Note, however, that some features of German universities, such as the *Lehrfreiheit/Lernfreiheit* principles, the “freedom to learn” coupled with the “freedom to teach”, enabling students to move from university to university with considerable ease, thus making possible for many students, such as the young Leo Strauss, to desert their teachers, and abandon the project of going to sit at the feet of Max Weber (who died prematurely in any case), having heard rumours of the genius of Heidegger, as the Young Prince of Thought, have only been replicated sporadically and partially, even in America.

From that time till the 1940s, such writings by academic philosophers on the character, ethos, ideals, mission (before this ancient word, as used in Ortega’s classic *THE MISSION OF THE UNIVERSITY*, was stolen by managerialese of the sixties) of the University appeared from time to time in Germany, not least in the Weimar period of “mandarin” exaltation, reported at length by Fritz Ringer, and earlier summarized by Frederic Lilge. Max Weber’s famous lecture to university students on “Science as a vocation”, elicited within a short time a number of replies and critiques by eminent philosophers and cultural critics which provide a sense how the ideals of the university were viewed in the 1920s in Weimar Germany (the major texts of this controversy were collected for the first time in any language, and translated into English for the first time in Irving Velody, Peter Lassman, Herminio Martins (eds.) *Max Weber’s “science as a vocation”* London 1996, a volume which in some ways complements for the early twentieth century the previously cited collection of *Philosophies de l’Université* of German philosophical texts from the early nineteenth-century). After contributions from the likes of Scheler and Spranger, the nadir was reached with the notorious Rectoral Address by Heidegger, which was concerned solely with the “tasks” of the *German* university of the time, though the main thrust since the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century in the contributions of very many of the leading philosophers of the time, had been to defend the Humboldtian University against multiple threats, scientific and demotic, technocratic and populist, capitalist and socialist, as they saw them. Karl Jaspers’s early post-war volume on the idea of the University presents the thoughts of a friend of Max Weber’s, perfectly familiar with the controversy over “*Wissenschaft als Beruf*”, in the light of the German catastrophe (to which the German University certainly contributed).

In the last few decades I cannot recall any such work in Anglophonia by “professional” academic philosophers (if they do write about academic questions, and university policy, it is not as philosophers)

even though there was a time when lots of academic philosophers became Vice-Chancellors (A. Quinton *Absolute Idealism* London 1971; the work by a philosopher, W. B. Gallie, on another philosopher, the founding Vice-Chancellor of the University of Keele, A. D. Lindsay, is essentially an account of that particular –very interesting- academic experiment, rather than a general philosophical reflection on universities). Still, there is at least one work of a distinctly philosophical cast *The university in ruins*, a notable study by a postmodernist scholar in the humanities, to my mind the most outstanding of the literature, a posthumous book by the Anglo-Canadian academic Bill Readings (who died in an aeroplane accident in 1994), published by Harvard University Press in 1996, which most certainly deserves to be read, and whose memory should remain in our minds: the message that we have “to dwell in the ruins of the university” or at least the Humboldtian University of Culture, may not answer all our questions, and the echoes of the late Heidegger not to everyone’s taste, but it certainly an improvement on the enthusiastic immersion in the current business tide that is our lot. The university appears to have virtually faded out as a topic for philosophical inquiry or even exhortation, at least as professional academic philosophers are concerned, if not philosophy as a wider pursuit. Whether this reveals the futility, or perhaps the timorousness, the awful careerism, the polytheism of values, or indeed the atheism of ideals, of academic philosophy in Anglophonia, or, conversely, the seeming irrelevance of the university to philosophical inquiry any more, now that market-speak rules O.K., together with the understandable feeling that it is not for the ablest to question the market in which they thrive, now that the current styles of analytical philosophy –for there have been several historically and geographically situated- are so buoyant in the world academic market, is a topic for another day (the philosopher Russell Keat’s well-argued book on the question of market and non-market provision of cultural goods is very relevant, however: *Cultural goods and the limits of the market* London 2000).

Since the demise of Universities Quarterly two decades ago, there has been no serious reflective scholarly medium for the consideration of the non-financial, non-business issues pertaining to the contemporary University in the UK (and this may be true in all of Anglophonia). Perhaps any day there will appear its residuary legatee, a periodical that may well be called The Review of the Knowledge Industry - Academic Division, elite universities, UK ... to be published by Blackwells, Routledge, Kluwer or Sage, available also on-line for subscribers... though perhaps only on-line, for daily, if not hourly, updating, given the ever-rising tide of “knowledge”, to which I cannot put a precise scientometric or bibliometric figure, but worldwide it may run into tens of thousands of peer-reviewed papers per day ...

Curiously, though there has been a great boom in business ethics, and the university is business, nothing much of recent provenance seems available on the ethics of academia, or the ethics of scholarship, let alone the ethics of academic reviewing (now there’s a virgin field, at any rate with a lot of scope for reflection, not to mention intervention in the interests of virtually moribund fair play, in this area: we

badly need a good manual, at least, in this distressing area). Even if the field were to blossom, one cannot equate philosophy with ethics, let alone with the applied or practical, casuistized version of ethics which is the typical version in business schools, management studies, medical schools, and the like. It is true that (academic) philosophy has recently been rebaptized as a mode of “engineering” (*sophia* as *techne* ?), yes, literally so, and maybe something will be published soon by one of the practitioners of philosophy-as-engineering on something like (re)engineering the “soul” of the corporate university, though with downsizing, and as few faculty bodies as possible. Except the electromechanical bodies of inexpensive, non-salaried, uncomplaining, nonunionised, ungreedy, “robo-dons”, Robot Scientists loaded with ever smarter software, capable of ever more versatile information-processing, reading, sensing, scanning, hypothesis-formation, calculation and experimentation, of which kind, or passable imitations thereof, there could well be plenty before too long –for all I know, given the pace of academic change, they may be already working next door, and perhaps, given the casualness and evanescence of academic contacts in academic places (non-places), or the brittleness of relations among academics, no-one would ever notice the Brave New Academic World.

14/ God and the Market

Anyday now (if it has not already occurred, which is not unlikely) God will be referred to as the Wealth-Creator of wealth-creators, the Enforcer of all Markets, the Supreme Entrepreneur, or as the Sovereign CEO of CEOs: there are of course precedents for this sort of business- theological discourse, not least in the US, dating back to the nineteenth century and to some extent even further back. The author of a “theology of creation”, Michael Novak, has already recommended that we love our corporations as we love (or should love) our churches [see also the next paragraph]. In fact, recently an academic economist spoke (not in jest, the person being a practicing Christian) of Jesus Christ as the world’s greatest entrepreneur.

15/ On the recent death of “society”

An engineer who became a sociologist of science in the constructivist interest, came to write a little book disputing the existence of “society” and finally became a Professor of Marketing at Oxford University’s Said Business School. After all if “nature” goes or is dying... and “Man” is dead, according to the obituary notice produced by Foucault and the anti-humanists of structuralism and post-structuralism, preceded not long before by the “death of God”, which has been repeatedly announced for the last one hundred and fifty years, what attributes could be claimed for “society”, in order to survive similar onslaughts, that Nature, Man and God, whose successive deaths have been so portentously announced and celebrated, did not have?. There is then no “society”, to be sure, to that extent the great phrase “there

is no such thing as “society”, only individuals and families” held true, or rather the negative clause only, because (a) “families” are in a bad way, with the ongoing processes of the desinstitutionalisation of the family in western societies (though it is true that there have long been multiple coexisting types of families in Western societies, “serial monogamy” or “serial polygamy” is taking an increasing toll of the familial presumptions of the conventional wisdom), and (b) “individuals”, alas, are not rock-solid ontological lumps any more, if they ever were, being as deconstructible as anything else (if, to cite Gehlen again, persons were institutions in one case today, with the sweeping processes of desinstitutionalisation, not least of the family, and indeed the corrosion of institutions of all kind, the institution of personhood itself is in jeopardy). At the most we can only count on individuals-in-or-of-networks, or nodes-of-networks, but most certainly there *are* markets, with or without individuals, so long as *something* plays the role, or shall we say, takes up the “position”, of “customers”. Some theorists would go as far as to argue, from widely shared premisses, to the somewhat disturbing conclusion, in some ways, that from the standpoint of social theory, not only there is no “society”, not even a “network society” in a conventional sense, at best a kind of “network sociality”, for *there are no individuals either*, just networks, networks of networks, and so on, all the way down, in a recursive and reflexive fashion, without ever touching bottom (Stephen Fuchs *Against Essentialism* Cambridge MA 2003 draws out the implications of much systems or network theorizing in the social sciences). So instead of “methodological individualism” (for individuals are individuals, or nodes of networks) of the old market economy, we should speak instead of a “*methodological reticularism*”, a neologism for which the originator (the present author) claims priority (poachers will be prosecuted), all the more so in societies or modes of sociality themselves ever more technologically reticularised in the WWW/Grid/Internet/digitalised telecommunications age, even at a planetary level. Under these circumstances, some networks or *reticula* may still be called, for convenience, [human] “individuals”, to take u/p the positions imputed to “economic agents”, or to be given passports (proper names curiously, remain) , though they should not be reified or rather, the opposite, treated as persons when they are in fact no-persons (can one get *persons* out of *relations*? Renouvier’s philosophical system, constructed in the second half of the nineteenth century, endeavoured to accomplish just that, but such a degree of sophistication or even awareness of the depth of the problematic is not apparent in current cyber-thought) . We may recall that Pareto famously said over a hundred years ago in his *Manuel d’économie politique*, that for the purposes of economic analysis, the “individual can disappear, provided he [or she] leaves us a photograph of his [or her] tastes” (today, one might say, instead of a “photograph”, a print-out, or a biometric or psychometric notation, with a credit card, or the full electronic equivalent, attached).

Markets –even if only ensembles of psychometric notations buying and selling in real time- to be conquered and to be taught about, and to have well-remunerated Chairs on (not Mickey Mouse ones, if

you please !), in universities with a certain cachet and historic patina - not that easy to make up by the market, especially if you are not yet entirely sold on Virtual Reality. If not sociology as a whole, at any rate some influential sociologists have moved from (1) the thesis or master research programme of the “social construction of reality” (an almost all-conquering slogan) to (2) the deconstruction or exposure of the conceptual incoherence of “society” to, finally, (3) the vindication of the market, or shall we say, The Market, which we know today more as the Technomarket, as potentially conducive to the end of history: the Three Ages of Sociology, perhaps, or the three Hegelian “moments” of social theory, as one must destroy Society, or at any rate “Society”, in order to make room for the Market.

The sociologist Peter Berger famously co-authored a very influential book, *The social construction of reality* (which some philosophers viewed as “The social destruction of reality”), which, together with his brief *Invitation to Sociology*, became a kind of bible of several generations of undergraduates and postgraduate students in sociology and allied subjects, at a time of great expansion, so exerting maximum effect on what was the largest-ever student population to read social science subjects (a bibliolatric reading it was too, so uncritical, fundamentalist, rather than Dissenting). The phrase “the social construction of reality” launched, in the event, perhaps unintentionally, a flood of thousands and thousands of articles and books with similar titles or subtitles in every academic language on earth, not to mention innumerable student essays (“the social construction of ...”, where the place-holder can be replaced by practically *anything*, human, conceptual, real or unreal, empirical or non-empirical, animal, vegetable or mineral, whatever its putative ontological status, becoming one of the most monotonously repeated formulae or perhaps one should say one of the most virulent, pandemic memes in secular discourse in this age). As a Lutheran, perhaps he wanted to generalize Luther’s dictum “the priesthood of every believer”, a weapon against the *ecclesia*, into the “priesthood of every knower”, and every social actor is a knower, thus the “priesthood of every *socius*” (or every “consociate” in the idiom of Alfred Schutz, a philosophical sociologist greatly admired by Berger). According to some recent reports, he meant no more than “interpretation” when he wrote “social construction”, but that was not how he was understood by many, perhaps most, of his young readers, and the phrase, coopted by the spirit of the age, took on a life of its own, beyond mere “interpretation”, at least in its weaker, rather than deconstructionist glosses.

He subsequently became an indefatigable advocate of what he called the “capitalist revolution” (the title of one of his books) everywhere, a staunch enemy of the enemies of the market, or of the market pervasion of social and indeed nonsocial reality (though these enemies of the market have virtually disappeared from at least the ranks of the powers-that-be, or CEOs, of or over academia, in government, state officialdom, university administration, who only sing market tunes): One Market under (One) God....(though, as we noted, the Market is, through a wondrous metaphysical gift, both One and Many).

With or without “societies”, or even “individuals” around (except nominally)... The turn to market zealotry in sociology, as in other branches of the social studies, is definitely a topic for investigation, though the conceptual dissolution of “society” runs beyond this stream of opinion to include ex-Marxists and sundry others.

16/ Public dissent

A recent opinion survey in France published in Le Figaro Magazine, shows that while receptivity to market forms in the public domain has increased, there is still a substantial majority in favour of security of tenure for civil servants, and therefore for at least a subset of academics, insofar as they still enjoy a civil service status (the over-all majority on this particular issue was not particularly left-biased).

17/ Market-speak rules OK

At various points in the main text I noted the recent shifts in the sense or prominence of a number of terms in wide use in the discourse of public life in Western societies, such as “*creative*”, “*entrepreneur*”, “*social entrepreneur*” (see esp. note 26 above), “*CEO*”, “*industry*”, “*mission statement*”, “*customer*”, “*consumer*”, “*choice*”, “*capital*” (social, human, physiological, spiritual, cognitive, etc.), “*preferences*”, “*product*”, “*output*”, “*bottom line*”, etc., not to mention “*flexibility*” (one of the master euphemisms of the age), displacing consecrated terms and templates of social relationships with other associations, owing to the current market orientation and the ongoing processes of what I called “the fundamental marketisation” or “fundamental technomarketisation” of economy, society and culture, be they mitigated or compounded by the workings of the “law of combined and uneven (techno)marketisation” to which we have alluded. A kind of *market-speak* has become salient, and pervades mainstream public discourse, and, not least, and perhaps most surprisingly, academic as well as non-academic discourse about academia, and educational matters in general, like never before. If “knowledge rules OK”, in the (technoscientific) “knowledge economy”, and (digital) “information society”, it can also be said, with even greater validity, that “market-speak rules OK” as one would expect in an ever-more marketised society. As we are, we speak, as we speak, we are. We dwell in the market, and increasingly the market dwells in us. More, according to some computational-neurological theses, “parallel and distributed information processing”, which is the very stuff of our highly privileged brains, is an analogate of the dominant market analogon... Curiously the brain, a kind of market-like entity, was already in being long before there were markets properly so-called, presumably brought about by a kind of truly astonishing, spontaneous cosmic prescience which can match the portents of any revealed religion.

Unfortunately, no-one like Kenneth Burke, or George Orwell, or F. R. Leavis, all, it may be noted, authors from the humanities and literature, not from the social sciences (though all, but more formally the first two, made important contributions to social thought, even if they are not as widely acknowledged in the manuals, or duly referenced, or sufficiently recalled in the appropriate contexts of discussion regarding the interrelationships of language, memory and politics, as they should be), appears to have come forward in recent years to subject today's ascendant market-speak to the same kind of memorable, magnificent critique that the political language of the 1930s was subjected by Kenneth Burke, with the scalpel of his "logology", and that of the 1940s and 1950s, with its terrible implications, the "Newspeak", by Orwell, and the "technologico-Benthamite" language of C.P. Snow famously castigated by Leavis in response to the lecture on *The two cultures and the scientific revolution* (actually in some ways rather similar to much current discourse). The language of the Cold War with its sophisms and tropes of moral evasiveness, was also subjected to would-be Orwellian analyses as "nukespeak", but we remain bereft of full-fledged semantic, rhetorical and critical studies studies of an Orwellian or Burkean quality, of the prevalent marketspeak, which has invaded the forums of public life and the discourse of practically all social institutions in the last two or three decades (literary criticism played an important part in ethical appraisal and even the political critique of the national cultures in a variety of countries from the mid nineteenth century to the 1960s, in Russia, Italy, France and England, for example, with the Leavis critique of Snow as a kind of swansong, in a way that current literary theory with all its sophistication does not, at any rate in quite the same direct fashion).

Our loss.

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THE END