



Marc Bousquet's "How the University Works" is one of the most interesting books about the university published in recent years. Without doubt the book is born from struggles and addresses the struggles that surround the university. Bousquet presents a clear analysis of how this institution, as well as the health system, is the new center and paradigm for the workings of contemporary capital. We can define the system of production at stake "anthropogenetic" since it involves the production of the human from the human itself. After reading Bousquet's book, it is difficult not to view the university as a new mechanism for the accumulation of capital. In fact, the role and target of university management is not only classical education. More and more it is characterized by an accumulation of capital that also invests in property speculation as well as high finance. Universities make large investments not only in financial markets (just to have an idea we can remember how one of the agents immediately hit by the subprime crisis in summer 2007 was Harvard University) but also in new sporting facilities and student accommodation.

Another field of investment is e-learning. Bousquet argues that the aim of e-learning is not to "virtualize" students (who pay high fees for tuition and accommodation) but to "virtualize" the figure of teacher. He asks if this process of the commoditization of knowledge (which he analyzes in a clear way) is something more than the commodization of education. At stake in this process, he suggests, is nothing other than a new model for the exploitation of living labor. The key question is about the struggles that can open within this new device of exploitation. These would be struggles for both students and teachers in the modern mechanism of accumulation of value. The processes of exploitation at work are twofold.

On the one hand, the casualization of the university workforce is nothing other than a mechanism of reduction of wages and guarantees. The increasing casualization of teaching replaces the workforce with lowly paid graduate students. The Total Quality movement in university management here finds a new meaning. For administration quality means not to employ a good teacher but one who can be paid cheaply.

On the other hand, there is the exploitation of undergraduate students, who are used by the university not only as cheap workforce but one that is also disciplined, docile, and prepared to work in low skilled jobs for ever lower wages. These kinds of jobs are especially evident in the

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service sector: in catering services for the campus as well as in the service of circulation of goods. The university supplies giant companies, such as UPS among others, with a blackmailed workforce (who are forced to work to pay high fees), which is also ultra-flexible and disposable. According to Bousquet, students are already workers.

Effectively using blog content generated by students recounting their experiences, Bousquet surveys the emergence of what might be called the "metropolitan student." Here metropolitan refers to a spatial location but rather a productive determination that involves the overlapping of high skills with low skill exploitation strategies. The progressive "intellectualization" of workforce doesn't mean an increase in wages but, to the contrary, the reduction of minimal guarantees as well as the blackmailing of workers. This is the scenario where the promise of a better future is in reality a present characterized by exploitation and debt.

Although this book mainly analyzes the reality of U.S. universities, we can also see the evolution of this reality in the rest of the world. In other words, if this book recounts the transformations of the university from the standpoint of one the most interesting struggles today (that of graduate students in U.S. universities over the last decade), it is also an important tool for wider struggles of living labour. How the University Works approaches such struggles as means for organizing, within the new tendencies of global edu-factory, the resistance of living knowledge.

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