

Homo academicus novus? The life strategies to cope with global challenges

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Questions

- *Every new generation has specific problems to solve to go forward* (brochure of this conference).
- So what are the challenges that:
 - a) are important for *this* generation of researchers?
and
 - b) are *global*, i.e. independent from space factor?
and
 - c) are acute for *all* areas of science?
- Counter question: Do exist such challenges?

Framework

- Notions that you cannot skip in such discussion:
 - a) Information Age;
 - b) Global competition;
 - c) Academic capitalism;
 - d) ...

Information Age

- The idea that everyone would be able to transfer and get information freely.
- The Internet and Digital revolution (crosswords' case)

Impact:

- a) Changes in job structure: increase of mind workers and job loss in other areas.
- b) Growing inequality, and opportunities for developing countries.
- c) Impact on mentality: we can no longer view technology as something separate from our body and mind (McLuhan *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*)

Global competition

- The idea that “Winning isn’t everything; it’s the only thing” or of sport everywhere.
- Project of economic globalization: free movement of goods, services, people and capital.

Impact:

- a) Reduction of trade barriers, increase of international trade, global migration, convergence (?) of developed and developing countries;
- b) Financial capitalism;
- c) Challenges for state and for organizations of welfare state;
- d) Ethical implications.

Academic capitalism

- The projection of ideas of Information Age and Global competition on the academic life.
- Image of universities and research institutes as competitors at global knowledge market.
- Impact:
 - a) Marketisation of universities;
 - b) Erosion of public funding; pressure to pursue external funding that takes a lot of time (especially for untenured faculty members);
 - c) Less curiosity-driven research, and more specialized and applied research;
 - d) Tuition increases, and viewpoint of knowledge as commodity;
 - e) Decline in collegiality and campus community.

Statements I: Do you really think that?

- ST1: Universities are especially geared towards education rather than on the quality of research and innovation
- ST2: Scientists are assessed according to the number of their publications
- ST3: Articles on non-traditional research with non-traditional results tend to be rejected
- ST4: Science is not be treated so valuably anymore
- ST5: Plagiarism, fake co-authoring, exaggeration of the significance of the obtained results for the innovation are increasingly used as a mean of academic competition.
- ST6: Research results are required as quick as possible.
- ST7: Researchers increasingly choose to organise the research, but not to make science.

Statements II: Do you really think that?

- ST8: The community of scientists rate its members according the number of publications: the more – the better.
- ST9: If earlier the ideas and their implementation were treated as a value and gained acknowledgment, then now everything is about the money.
- ST10: While large business makes science inside itself, it also sharpens competition between business and science, who has the right to posses the knowledge.
- ST11: Young researchers are seen as “perpetual students”, relatively cheap, hard-working, easy to dispense workforce not worth investing in.
- ST12: Much fewer women than men get to a full professor position, even if they stay in the academic career.
- ST13: Younger generations of researchers are particularly vulnerable, as often they do not have possibility to get proper training or instructions, and are exposed to very high publishing demands.

Frog Ignorance vs Mimosa Touchy



Life strategies

- “Academic monk” (ascetic, bookish, and isolated from external “material” world – melancholic way)
- “Networker” (socializer, contact-based achievements, active participation in various academic networks – sanguine way)
- “Science Warrior” (ambitious and competitive, active “marketing” and “projecting” – choleric way)
- ?.. (phlegmatic way)

P. Bourdieu “Homo academicus”:

- University as field, habitus and illusio:
 - a) Field - structured social space with its own rules, schemes of domination, and legitimate opinions;
 - b) *Habitus* – system of dispositions – lasting, acquired schemes of perception, thought and action;
 - c) *Illusio* - the interest that compels each agent to continually take up a position within the cultural field.
- The academic *illusio* (or curiosity?) is the most individual element of *homo academicus*, and therefore the most important premise to strive for academic career at our times.