Globalism, then and now: The rise of international neoliberalism and the academic novel

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Neoliberalism. Managerialism. Privatization. Academic novel. Faculty status.

This article uses a longitudinal comparison to trace the development in higher education from an era of the "global campus" to a more fraught and harsher academic climate and relates it to the rise, beginning in the 1970s, of neoliberalism as a governing philosophy in the West. Examples from mostly Anglophone novels illustrate this change into a worldwide neoliberalism that is the new globalism and its effects in academia; the presence of neoliberalism in societies beyond the US and UK leads to speculation on its likely appearance in future academic novels.

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In one of the best-known campus novels, David Lodge's *Small World* (1984), the professor Morris Zapp (based on the real-life literary theorist Stanley Fish) chortles: "The world is a global campus, Hilary, you'd better believe it. The American Express card has replaced the library pass" (64). As the subtitle of the novel, "An Academic Romance", suggests, a more useful term for this genre is the academic novel, since Zapp's point here is the abolition of the traditional campus, as he insists elsewhere: "the day of the individual campus has passed. It belongs to an obsolete technology – railways and the printing press" (43). Technology has allowed for academic globalization, for which Zapp is a notable spokesperson: "As long as you have access to a telephone, a Xerox machine, and a conference grant fund, you're OK, you're plugged into the only university that really matters – the global campus" (44).[1] However, this development is part of a long period of university expansion and support that lasted in the US and the UK from shortly after the World War II until around 1980, so Zapp is actually celebrating a world which, though he has not noticed it yet, is vanishing around him.

Earl Rovit's memoir-essay in the *Sewanee Review* shows how agreeable that world was for its participants:

> This [i.e. the 1960s] was truly a golden age for anyone who would "gladly teche and gladly lerne". Sputnik led to the National Defense Act which, as a by-product, channeled rivers of money and resources into higher education. Our salaries rose gradually; our options for publication and more prestigious jobs proliferated; and – for a short time – pursuit of excellence in the humanities seemed to be compatible with the larger American materialistic enterprise. (2009, 88)

These good times, Rovit states, were not just for domestic consumption:

> As academic resources burgeoned and discretionary funds grew, there was a proliferation of grants, conferences, short-term workshops, summer guest lectureships, and opportunities to teach abroad, practicing what I suppose would now be contemptuously called cultural imperialism, but which concomitantly allowed us to meet – and generally like – the colleagues whom we knew only from their publications. (89)

Global experience – traveling the world, with travel costs provided courtesy of the university, or the government – is an important perquisite of higher education teaching for Rovit as well as Zapp (and the many other professors criss-crossing the globe in *Small World*).

It is important to note two points about Zapp's enthusiasm for academic globalism. One is its belatedness, not just because of the quaint idea that a Xerox machine is the cutting edge technology to shrink the globe, but more importantly because the era of widespread enthusiasm for higher education, particularly in the humanities, and the healthy funding that accompanied it, had already, by 1984, started to curdle in the United States and the United Kingdom. The other is the unacknowledged inequality and privilege of the globalism he celebrates. Zapp is, or aspires to be, the highest-paid university professor in the world, and he is on faculty at a wealthy research university. He considers the possession of an apparently limitless travel fund something like having access to a telephone. But even in his heyday – and even in the prosperous West (no African or Latin American professors seem to intersect

on the global campus in *Small World*), there were haves and have-nots. A recent denunciation of academic conferences identified them as one of the "things winners like so much they insist everybody must like them. […] [W]inners are people with academic jobs that pay a living wage, people with tenure, people with power over academic decision-making, people who sit on hiring committees and on promotion & tenure committees, people with travel budgets" (Cheney 2017, n.p.). The privileged – academic figures like Siegfried von Turpitz and Fulvia Morgana, or Morris Zapp and Philip Swallow's real-life counterparts Stanley Fish and David Lodge – oversaw a global system that was enjoyed mostly by a small, privileged class. Another fictional example of this academic globalism is David Damrosch's oddly semi-fictional 2000 novel *Meetings of the Mind*, which consists largely of conference papers written by real people who are credited as co-authors. Four friendly colleagues who enjoy getting together and debating various points of literary and philosophical theory do so by arranging to travel the world, from Tokyo to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, and appear on arranged panels at academic conferences where they carry on their conversation for the benefit, it seems, mostly of themselves but presumably at the expense of their home universities.

What led to the decline of this system? Governments changed, not only the persons and parties who led them, but the assumptions that drove them. Countries in the West moved away from the philosophies under which they had operated through most of the 20th century and adopted what Rosa Toliou names "a new management model of the capitalist economy" (2007, 51). She identifies its "main characteristics" as "less state control and domination of the market, while at an ideological level are expressed through the ideas of monetarism and neoliberalism. The most distinctive examples of the new model were introduced in the USA and the UK during the Reagan and Thatcher governance accordingly" (51). Margaret Thatcher became Prime Minister in the UK in 1979; Ronald Reagan was elected US president in the following year and inaugurated in 1981. Toliou's term "neoliberalism" is the key to the new global campus; such a dramatic change in social and economic policy must be reflected in the university sector and, as we shall see, in the academic novel.

Neoliberalism has been variously defined, but Beth Mintz offers a succinct summary: "It includes a belief in the following: the efficiency of the free market and the deregulation and privatization of the public sector that markets require; tax reduction; abandoning the welfare state; and replacing the notion of the public good with a personal responsibility for one's own welfare" (2021, n.p.). That applies to governments generally. It is obvious how tax reduction, for instance, will impact, i.e. financially starve, publicly funded institutions of higher education. But depriving colleges and universities of public support is a corollary, as well, of a new idea of the student: "Neoliberal thought considers higher education a financial investment for students, and it assumes that colleges and universities should compete for customers, just like any other sector" (2023, n.p.). The student as customer, shopping at the diploma supermarket and spending her or his own money, very often borrowed, is the key symbolic figure in this new dispensation. Other key features of the neoliberal regime in higher education, as summed up by Jeffrey Williams, are

> the push for research to bring in corporate funds or to lead directly to commercial patents, the morphing of administration to a CEO class detached rather than arising from faculty, the casualization of a majority of faculty in part-time, adjunct, or term positions, and the pressure on students, working long hours as well as taking loans to pay tuition. (2013, n.p.)

If one ponders the neoliberal emphases on commercially viable research and on higher education as workforce preparation, the marginalization, and sometimes elimination, of the humanities and liberal education generally are predictable.

The following article will take two approaches to exploring neoliberalism as the new globalism – a globalism that, unlike the older one, does not unite academics but divides them as fierce competitors for market goods. One is an attempt to treat its features in more detail, citing their presence in academic novels, mostly but not exclusively Anglo-American (which is probably inevitable, since as Rose Toliou suggests, these two cultures were the breeding grounds for global neoliberalism). The other is to show the spread of this ideology into other countries and other universities and, one might predict, the academic fiction of other national literatures.

NEOLIBERAL FEATURES

Marketization

As Stefan Collini, one of the most astute (and melancholy) observers of trends in higher education, writes: "'Marketisation' isn't just a swear-word used by critics of the changes: it is official doctrine that students are to be treated as consumers and universities as businesses competing for their custom" (2018).[2] Sheila Slaughter and Gary Rhoades agree:

> Students are primarily seen as revenue producers, as tuition monies account for increasing shares of public college and university expenditures. […] Although academic managers (administrators above the level of department heads) refer to students as customers, the real customers are the corporations that employ the institutions' "products". (2000, 74)

As the Vice Chancellor declares in Christopher James Rhodes's *University Shambles*: "'We don't have students; we have customers!' Stirling George's fist smacked the table, and the oak murmured back affirmatively. […] 'Our role is teaching: customer supply, I prefer to call it!'" (2009, 4) Having defined students as customers renders the university a retail establishment. In Frank Parkin's *The Mind and Body Shop*, the vice chancellor, worried about the bottom line of the philosophy department – for all elements of the university are supposed to show a profit or at least break even – finally suggests that the department open a retail shop. Acknowledging that it is in the middle of the town's red-light district, he goes on:

> "Yes, it's a prime site. You need to be in the thick of things, obviously. It's no good being stuck out in the suburbs, is it?" […] That little shop was a first-class commercial proposition; or would have been if it weren't such a fire hazard. "This really is your last chance, Hambro," he called out as he clambered up a mound of building rubble and slithered down the other side on all fours. "You've had every opportunity. If you bungle this one it'll be curtains for Philosophy." (1987, 67)

That Philosophy ends up running a brothel – profitably, which is what counts in the new system – is a triumph for the new marketization. As Stefan Collini laments: "Marketisation hollows out institutions from the inside so that they become unable to conceptualize their own activities in terms other than those of the dominant economic dogma" (2018).

Privatization

A corollary or prime condition for marketization is privatization. Rose Toliou cites "the principles of neoliberalism, where everything is seen as a possible source for profit" (2007, 55). Malcolm Bradbury's *Cuts* expatiates on the new goal: the Vice-Chancellor

> was himself an enthusiastic privatiser or privateer, and that summer of 1986 "privatization" was, along with "buzz-word", the great buzz-word. For a year or more he had been thriving on all sorts of novel ideas of this kind, encouraging, for example, sponsored tutorials, so that lecturers now discussed the poems of Catullus or mathematical equations wearing teeshirts and little caps that said on them "Boots" or "Babycham". In all the corridors now, there were big notices saying, "The faculty in this university all wear Marks and Spencers underwear". (1987, 59–60)

Not surprisingly, the university in *The Mind and Body Shop* has made similar improvements: "Hambro's eyes closed in despondency. Something, somewhere, had gone badly wrong with his grip upon the world. It had never been part of his life's plan to sell philosophy from door to door, or to serve behind the counter of a basement shop, or to wear the brand name of a pet food across the back of his MA gown" (Parkin 1987, 85). In Lars Iyer's *Exodus*, two despairing philosophers worry about what will become of the university, arguing (fruitlessly) against "capitalism in the university, against the private partners of the university" (2012, 250). They agonize over what to them is the apocalyptic state of university education: "They're simply going to *marketise education*, W. says. They're simply going to turn the university over to the free market, just as they are turning all sectors of the public services over to the free market. They're going to submit philosophy to the *forces of capitalism*" (15). And what will this mean for the philosophers? "What will happen to us, in the *new university*? Will we become *learning facilitators*, taking our students through the Microsoft philosophy package? Will we become *virtual guides* in the *Philosophy-World*™ learning environment?" (61)

Another aspect of that marketization, in addition to homologizing the university and the retail store, is what Jeffrey Williams noted: "the push for research to bring in corporate funds". *University Shambles* demonstrates the effect of this demand:

> Staff were expected to apply for more grants, and for bigger grants, even though success in winning them was accordingly less likely; it was a gamble, but there was no other way. Sir Malcolm had to balance the books; that was the job he'd been hired for. He then unsheathed the sword of Damocles. All departments that scored below a grade 4 in the RAE[3] would be closed forthwith, especially those running expensive science subjects. (Rhodes 2009, 152)

Parkin supplies a satirical account of sponsored research:

> "I've just completed a project designed to test the limits of human psychological endurance."
> "Ah. Good, good. Who funded it, the Marine Commando?"
> "The Post Office. They wanted an economy job, so I had to use hens." (1987, 37)

Managerialism

Novelists have been quick to note the shift toward a "managerial" approach to academic administration. One dispirited faculty member in Rhodes's *University Shambles*, faced with the university's "new corporate structure" sums it up as "top-heavy management, run by managers, not academics. People who have no idea and no subject knowledge. Anyone could do their job and do it better, too; but none of them could do ours! And yet they treat us like shit!" (2009, 165) The supervisor of Philosophy in *Exodus* is a "manager". Jeffrey J. Williams identifies this important change: "In short, professors no longer constitute the core of the university, as the classic image typically has it: they are more commonly service providers for hire, with the central figures being the managers of the academic multiplex who assure the experience of the student consumer" (2013, n.p). Likewise Sheila Slaughter and Gary Rhoades explain the new terminology, referring to "academic managers (administrators above the level of department heads)" (2000, 74). Beth Mintz links managerialism with the image of the university as a business – not a manufacturing company, much less a nonprofit enterprise, but a store selling degrees – competing with other businesses to attract student customers. The consequences of universities competing for students include expanded spending on student services and the growth in numbers of administrators.

> This contributes to the decline in instructional spending as a percentage of total expenses in both the public and private (non-profit) sectors which, in 2017–2018, accounted for 27% and 31% of four-year school budgets, respectively. Add to this nearly a half a billion dollars spent on advertising each year, and the role of competition and marketing in tuition escalation becomes clearer. (2021, n.p.)

Undoubtedly those advertising dollars are directed by managers, often in what is now proudly called the marketing department.

Audit culture

"The entirely legitimate demand that universities be accountable to society," writes Stefan Collini, "has, in conjunction with certain other features of the contemporary political climate, resulted in the growth of a particular kind of audit culture that is having very damaging unintended consequences" (2017, 36). One sort of audit is the UK's Research Assessment Exercise, fear of which drives most of the university's activities in *University Shambles*. Assigning a number to a university's research success permits a ranking system which, as Collini sadly declares, "has come to dominate academic life, from appointments, promotions, choice of research topics and so on to university strategies, marketing and publicity" (149). Chris Lorenz explains the use of another audit scheme, European Credit Transfer System points (strict-

ly speaking, simply a measure of contact hours required in a course): the difficulty in defining educational outputs and assessing their quality is met "by defining the product of education as qualification – expressed in terms of ECTS points and their accumulation into diplomas. The quality of the education is then defined as the quantitative efficiency with which these qualifications are produced" (2012, 621).

Unable to define quality, either of research or teaching, managers seek to count proxies, in order to reach some number. In the UK, Collini explains almost incredulously, numerical grades are assigned on teaching quality: "But the metrics by which teaching quality is measured are – I am not making this up – the employment record of graduates, scores on the widely derided National Student Survey, and 'retention rates' (i.e. how few students drop out)" (2018, n.p.). The obsession with metrics both deforms what education means and degrades faculty; as Christopher G. Robbins explains, "Seeing faculty as the problem functions as a staple of the politics of humiliation and symbolic shaming that occurs in neoliberal corporate education reform" (2021, 36). This shaming and misdirected passion for quantification appears, as we might expect, in the academic novels concerned with neoliberalism's effects. One example appears in Bradbury's *Cuts*: "You probably also saw they chose to give ratings to the various departments and universities in the country. Rather as if they were running some Michelin Guide to thought. They gave the best departments stars, and so on" (1987, 65). Rhodes explores some of the gimmicks to which universities resort, such as head-hunting active researchers to join the university and improve its numbers or submitting only selected department members for assessment, somehow hiding the deadwood.

Change in faculty status

One of the most striking features of the neoliberal regime is the way faculty members have been denigrated. Chris Lorenz writes that "in the risky neoliberal world, jobs and social security for faculty are definitely passé" (2012, 600), Luke Winslow comments generally on neoliberal approaches to higher education with a particular focus on the recommendations of the Texas Public Policy Foundation, an influential right-wing think tank: "By constructing an image of what I call the Undeserving Professor, the TPPF critic reconciles the educational funding paradox by advocating for a reinvented version of higher education where faculty initially become cheaper, flexible, and contingent, and then more easily surveilled, disciplined, and disposable" (2015, 203). The happy, perhaps complacent, reflections of professors enjoying life before the dominance of neoliberalism like Earl Rovit and Morris Zapp look almost unbelievable compared with the lives of their counterparts today; for instance, "Over two-thirds (68 percent) of faculty members in US colleges and universities held contingent appointments in fall 2021, compared with about 47 percent in fall 1987" and "[n]early half (48 percent) of faculty members in US colleges and universities were employed part time in fall 2021, compared with about 33 percent in 1987" (Colby 2023, n.p.). The trend toward forcing applicants for university careers into underpaid and precarious teaching positions reached its nadir in 2022, when the prestigious University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA)

advertised a position as "adjunct assistant professor" in Chemistry with no salary and no benefits (Hartocollis 2022, A11).

One of the most vivid treatments in academic fiction of this new world is Alex Kudera's 2010 novel *Fight for Your Long Day*, which covers a day in the life of Cyrus Duffleman, whose Master of Fine Arts (MFA) degree in creative writing has made him eligible to teach for insultingly low pay and no benefits, not even respect, for three different colleges in Philadelphia, one of them a for-profit school. On his "long day" (actually his 40th birthday), he struggles to prepare for his teaching as he travels the city on public transit, and at the end of the day he changes into a uniform and works as a security guard at one of the colleges. The decline of a centuries-old learned profession has seldom been rendered more poignantly.

Destruction of the humanities

A final outcome of neoliberalism is a change in the status and role of the humanities, which are seen as underperforming in the new market scheme. "Part of moving to the market," Sheila Slaughter and Gary Rhoades explain, "has meant at the margins turning away from the liberal arts toward professional and vocational curricula" (2000, 74). A variety of neoliberal features militate against the study of such fields as philosophy, English, or the traditional "hard" sciences. One is the use of post-graduation employment and compensation as a gauge of academic quality; another is the demand that faculty research must be justified by its usefulness to "society" (i.e. business). Many academic novels are written by faculty members in English or another of the traditional humanities fields, and it is not surprising to see their alarm. Julie Schumacher's *Dear Committee Members* (2014) focuses on a beleaguered chair of English whose department is continuously and cruelly downgraded, particularly to the benefit of the favored Economics department. The Vice Chancellor in *Cuts*, under "pressure from the government to bring in more relevant subjects, […] was trying to disestablish ancient departments like Classics and English altogether, and replace them with more modern ones, such as a Department of Snooker Studies" (Bradbury 1987, 60). Some novelists imagine outlandish combinations to which undesirable departments might be driven, including not only a combination of philosophy and prostitution in *The Mind and Body Shop*, but physics and leisurewear in *University Shambles*. In Iyer's *Exodus*, one philosopher teaches only sports sciences students; his erstwhile philosophy colleagues now teach in track suits, with whistles around their necks. He has been reprimanded for his teaching: his students in badminton ethics don't want to hear any more continental philosophy (2012, 180).

Much of this – that is, the consequences for higher education of the neoliberal theory and its adoption by governments – is well-known, certainly within the university community. The question is whether it is just an Anglo-American problem, as the articles and especially novels I have cited so far might suggest. Collini, somewhat surprisingly, notes the fear he has detected among Continental counterparts that "the changes that have been imposed on universities in Britain may soon be coming their way" (2017, 19), to other advanced industrialized countries. Elsewhere he writes that "European commentators also realize that extreme market-fundamen-

talist elements in their own political cultures are keeping a close eye on the British experiments, encouraged to imagine why they may be able to get away with when their turn in power comes" (2018, n.p.). But developments are much further advanced than Collini was afraid they might be in 2017 and 2018.

One case in point is Australia. Ben Kunkler relates that "Neoliberal budget cuts and deregulation dating back to the 1980s forced Australia's universities to reorganize along market lines. This process was often spearheaded by managers recruited directly from the finance sector. […] Today, the marketization of Australian universities is all but complete. Among university executives, neoliberalism is hegemonic" (2021, n.p.). Another Australian observer points to the scheme by which "scholarship, education, students, academic staff, and practices are subordinated to managerial imperatives", including a dramatic accountability system, part of what has already been called the audit culture (Morley 2024, 571).

Michael Wilding's novel *Academia Nuts* (2002) reveals a fictional university entirely in thrall to the neoliberal ethos. In managerialism, this is reflected in the proliferation of administrative titles: "the Vice-Chancellor. The Pro-Vice Chancellor. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor. The Chair of the Professorial Board. The Dean. The Sub-dean […] 'Senior Management we call them now,' said Dr. Bee" (17). In audit culture, this is shown through the endless lists required: "It was list time. It was always list time, these times. Activities report. Research report. Publications report. University report. Faculty review. Departmental review. […] Every other week there was another list to complete" (69). In faculty status, this is displayed through the lack of permanent positions: "the new churn, the short-term, non-tenurable, fixed contract level A appointment, here today, gone tomorrow, ave atque ale, never seen again" (19). In anti-humanities animus, this is exhibited through a focus on more profitable fields:

> The immediate agenda was to run the humanities down, the unspoken agenda that was euphemism for the even more unspeakable agenda of running them off campus altogether, along with the pure sciences. Replace them with the applied. Applied money-making and Advanced Money-lending; Language Training for Business; Business Administration; Commerce; Tourism. (53–54)

Australia, in Wilding's text, is not a country nervously considering whether it might be possible to get away with some of the neoliberal experiments already tried in the UK and the US: it is in full-blown crisis. As one of the older English professors insists, "This is the apocalypse. These are the last days. The days of rapture" (115). Both educational observers and academic novelists are dramatizing this ongoing crisis.

But what of other countries, outside the UK, the US, and the English-language Commonwealth? Chris Lorenz writes about "neoliberal policies in the public sector – known as New Public Management (NPM)" (2012, 600), and demonstrates that they are far more widespread, and have been operating far longer, than Stefan Collini seems to recognize:

> NPM was developed in the US in the 1980s and was soon adopted by the UK, Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands, and Sweden. In the meantime varieties of NPM have

> literally spread worldwide and continue to do so. Since 1999 NPM is being advertised in Europe as the Bologna Process and is also being exported by the EU outside Europe, especially to Latin America. Because in the EU educational policies are channeled through the national states Bologna-NPM exists in many national varieties. (Lorenz 2012, 603)

Lionel Pilkington writes about Ireland's plunge into neoliberalism, characterized by "the introduction of a wide range of calculative auditing and 'performance management' practices, and a market-based ideology of cost efficiency" – i.e. Lorenz's New Public Management – combined with a "public that is universally hostile to all non-utilitarian concepts of university education" (2013, 36). As many analysts and novelists note, the criterion of utilitarian or non-utilitarian often is used to disparage, or reduce support for, humanities disciplines like philosophy and literary studies.

NEOLIBERALISM AND HIGHER EDUCATION OUTSIDE THE ANGLOPHONE WORLD

Reports from diverse countries demonstrate that neoliberal approaches to higher education have been almost universally adopted in the northern hemisphere (and more spottily in the southern hemisphere). Rosa Toliou writes about Greece and its new framework that "puts the blame on education and tries to scorn the 'effectiveness' and 'quality' of public higher education until public opinion believes that privatisation (in the sense of tuition fees, private interests in research private universities, etc.) is the answer to it" (2007, 55). Toliou specifically traces these changes to the US and the UK, and their governments' policies of monetarism and neoliberalism. As shown in the title of an article by Yangson Kim, "The Institutionalization of Neoliberal Ideas in the Management and Evaluation of Higher Education in Korea and Japan", these concepts have reached East Asia as well (2021, 47).

One of the most thorough explorations of the invasiveness of neoliberalism is about Central Europe, focusing on Slovenia: "The tendencies of the current neoliberalization of higher education are visible in decreasing government funding and the competitiveness it fuels, the increase of short-term contracts for academic staff, and scientific production governed by funding structures" (Hofman and Samalavičius 2016, 1). Slovenia is also witnessing a "'new managerialism' with a gradual yet visible shift toward a corporate model of administrative structure" (1–2). As for shifts in disciplinary validation: "In recent decades, programs in humanities (or what we call liberal education) have become fewer because they are viewed either as relics of some sort of suspicious 'tradition' or as providing no useful and applied knowledge" (4). All of this should sound familiar from our survey of recent practice in the UK and the US. The authors, or interviewer and interviewee, touch on the quantification of research success – and the funding it ensures – by both "the amount of external funding each staff member brought to the institution", and "points amassed by publishing" (2). The latter practice is in widespread use in other countries, particularly Romania and Poland. In a clear illustration of neoliberalism's determination to replace judgments of quality with metrics of quantity, on the grounds that only that which can be counted is real, academics are expected to earn a stated num-

ber of "points" by their scholarly publishing in order to retain their positions. Those points vary according to someone's determination (perhaps at the Ministry of Education) of how much journals and book publishers are worth, and the values are changed often.

In 2020, a Polish academic who published a book with Duke University Press earned 100 points; the same book published with the University of Toronto Press would earn 80 points. As for an article, one published in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* would earn 100 points; in *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, 40 points (Ministerstwo Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego 2020). A Romanian lecturer during the same period needed to know that publications indexed in International Databases earned 540 points, while an article in a volume of conference proceedings was not worth any points at all. In a strangely anti-Romanian approach, a monograph or book chapter published with a publisher on the list of "prestigious international publishers" earned 681.50 points; a monograph or book chapter published with a national (i.e. Romanian) publisher had no value at all (Selejan 2021).[4] If one is going to assign imaginary numerical values to substitute for judgments of quality in academic publication, it helps to make them extremely (if spuriously) precise, as in the 681.50 points above.

The fact, promise, or threat (depending on one's viewpoint) of neoliberalism in higher education has escaped its originating confines and spread widely in Europe and Asia. It *is* the new globalism. The question is, are academic novelists in Korea, Slovenia, or Greece alert to these developments, and are they writing novels dramatizing and satirizing them, as American, British, and indeed Australian novelists have been doing for some forty years? I do not have the answer. Perhaps there is a brilliant Slovenian academic novel lifting the lid on neoliberalism which has yet to be translated into English. But it seems likely that the subject will appear in campus novels wherever neoliberalism has begun to make itself known. The academic novel is the canary in the coal mine of higher education (Moseley 2019, 20); that canary is sick unto death in the neoliberal mineshafts of the US and the UK and it must be feeling dizzy and short of breath in Korea and New Zealand, Slovenia and Romania. I expect and predict a new wave of campus fictions from those cultures, academic novels that hold the mirror up to managers and arithmetical audits, privatization and student customers, marginalization of the humanities and business sponsorships, and everything else that constitutes the global neoliberal paradigm.

NOTES

[1] This now seems quaint, as Zapp was speaking shortly before the widespread availability of the Internet transformed higher education and reduced the necessity for travel for the international sharing of academic work.

[2] Collini makes the amusing point that in the UK universities are always being hectored to become more like business, when in fact UK businesses have a poor record and are hardly ideal models for emulation (2017, 154).

[3] RAE, which means "research assessment exercise", is one of the numerical schemes threatening universities in the UK in the name of "accountability".

[4] This obviously disadvantages researchers in fields like Romanian linguistics, which must be much more difficult to place in English or American journals.

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