

Sessione 16: The marketization of university

An increasing literature has brought to light the effects of New Public Management (NPM) and neoliberal policies on academia, which are reshaping the academic world on the blueprint of a market. This literature has emphasized that managerialist practices (which include funding pressures, performance accountability measures, etc.) do not only foster hyper-competition and increase the workload of academics compromising the quality of working life and the capability to balance work and life, but also at once exert control by enjoining individuals into self-definitions, identities and social relations aligned with the neoliberal norms. Indeed, in this normative framework individualized efficiency and performativity, accountability towards multiple audiences, academic entrepreneurship, and flexibility, whether welcomed or opposed, generally appear to be necessary to follow for one's institutional survival. At the same time, also student subjectivities have been affected, as shown by some studies on the increasing consumer orientation to academic study. Tertiary education is increasingly understood as a commodity to access a consumer life by obtaining a well-paid job in a changing, insecure and competitive labour market. Moreover, as students' educational performance and experiences (including numbers, duration to completion, scholarships, etc.) are themselves used as key measures of university performance, students have themselves increasingly become a means to access resources. Finally, this re-configuration of academics and university students' subjectivity in turn contributes to changing the way knowledge is assumed to function in universities risking to pervert its original meanings and values. Neoliberalism contributes to legitimize a certain form of academic knowledge, which for being effective, tangibly useful for society, calculable, and compliant with market's needs, is recognized to be worthy and valid by public authorities and institutions, stakeholder associations, companies, and quality assurance agencies.

Possible works – both in Italian and in English – might focus on the following issues, though not exclusively:

- How NPM is transforming academics' working practices;
- How new managerialist and neoliberal practices are transforming university students' approach to studying;
- Consequences on work-life balance and gender differences;
- Consequences on early-career researchers, also considering gender differences;
- Consequences on what is recognizable, and what is not, as an acceptable form of academic subjectivity;
- Processes of academics and/or students' subjectification within neoliberal cultural framework;
- Whether and how neoliberal norms come to undermine collegiality and collective resistance;
- Evaluation practices of research products, of people within the university (both academics

and students) and of relationships (the international ones but also those within the local territory);

- Consequences on status, nature and function of university knowledge.

Coordinatori: Anna Carreri (anna.carreri@univr.it), Università di Verona e Università di Hasselt, Giorgio Gosetti (giorgio.gosetti@univr.it), Università di Verona, e Barbara Poggio (barbara.poggio@unitn.it), Università di Trento.