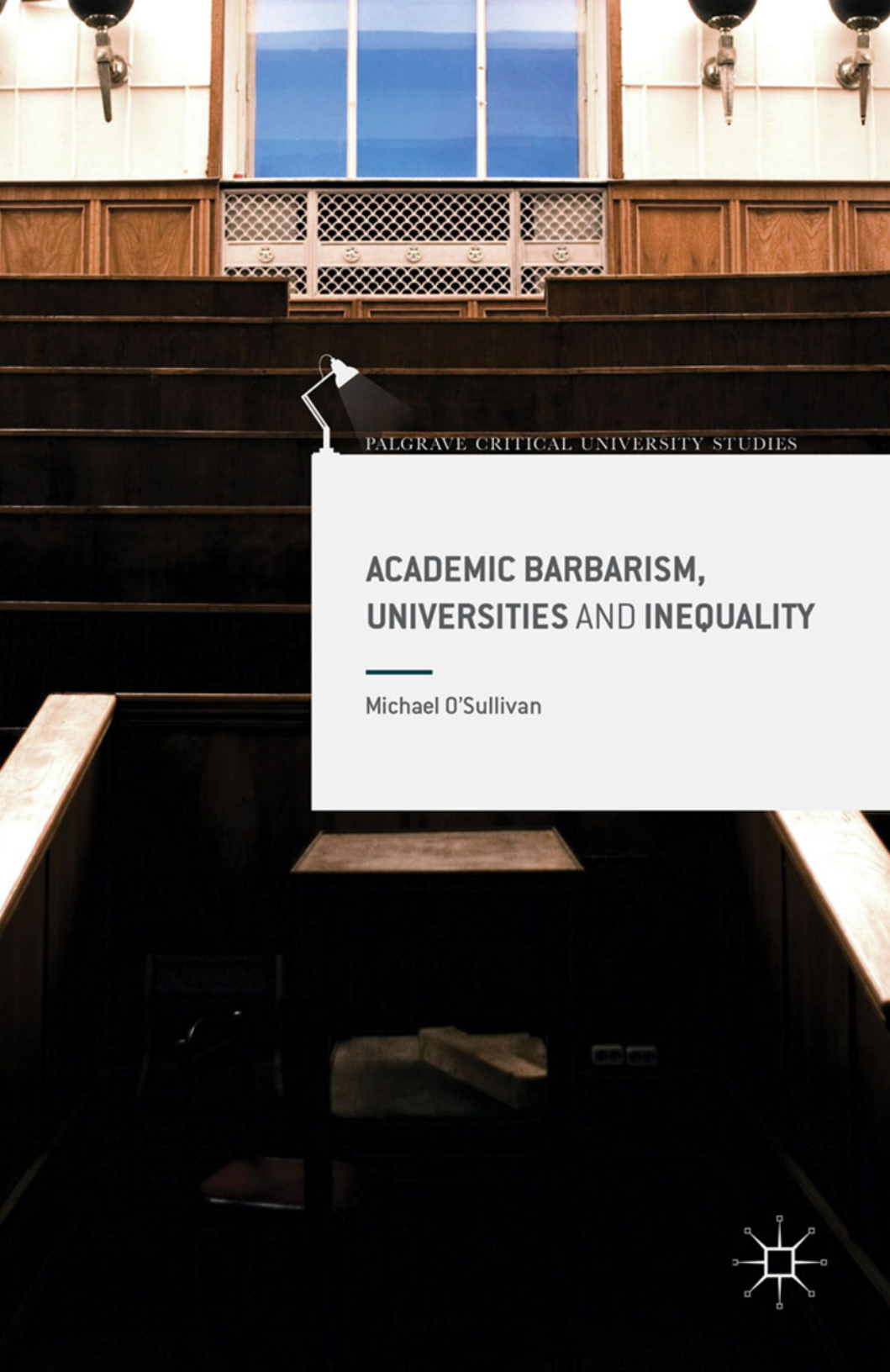

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Michael O'Sullivan

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Academic Barbarism, Universities and Inequality

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Series Editor's Preface

Naming this as a *Critical University Studies Series* gives it a very distinct and clear agenda. The over-arching intent is to foster, encourage, and publish scholarship relating to universities that is troubled by the direction of reforms occurring around the world.

It is a no-brainer that universities everywhere are experiencing unprecedented changes. What is much less clear, and there are reasons for the lack of transparency, are the effects of these changes within and across a number of domains, including:

- the nature of academic work
- students' experiences of learning
- leadership and institutional politics
- research and the process of knowledge production, and
- the social and public good.

Most of the changes being inflicted upon universities globally are being imposed by political and policy elites without any debate or discussion, and little understanding of what is being lost, jettisoned, damaged, or destroyed. Benefits, where they are articulated at all, are framed exclusively in terms of short-term political gains. This is not a recipe for a robust and vibrant university system.

What this series seeks to do is provide a much-needed forum for the intensive and extensive discussion of the consequences of ill-conceived and inappropriate university reforms. It does this with particular emphasis on those perspectives and groups whose views have hitherto been ignored, disparaged, or silenced.

The defining hallmark of the series, and what makes it markedly different from any other series with a focus on universities and higher education, is its "criticalist agenda." By that we mean, the books raise questions like:

- Whose interests are being served?
- How is power being exercised and upon whom?
- What means are being promulgated to ensure subjugation?

- What might a more transformational approach look like?
- What are the impediments to this happening?
- What, then, needs be done about it?

The series intends to foster the following kind of contributions:

- Critical studies of university contexts that, while they might be local in nature, are shown to be global in their reach;
- Insightful and authoritative accounts that are courageous and that "speak back" to dominant reforms being inflicted on universities;
- Critical accounts of research relating to universities that use innovative methodologies;
- Looking at what is happening to universities across disciplinary fields, and internationally;
- Examining trends, patterns, and themes, and presenting them in a way that re-theorizes and re-invigorates knowledge around the status and purposes of universities; and
- Above all, advancing the publication of accounts that re-position the study of universities in a way that makes clear what alternative robust policy directions for universities might look like.

The series aims to encourage discussion of issues like academic work, academic freedom, and marketization in universities. One of the shortcomings of many extant texts in the field of university studies is that they attempt too much, and as a consequence their focus becomes diluted. There is an urgent need for studies in a number of aspects with quite a sharp focus, for example:

1. There is a conspicuous absence of studies that give existential accounts of what life is like for *students* in the contemporary university. We need to know more about the nature of the stresses and strains, and the consequences these market-driven distortions have for the learning experiences of students, their lives, and futures.
2. We know very little about the nature and form of how *institutional politics* are engineered and played out, by whom, in what ways, and with what consequences in the neoliberal university. We need "insider" studies that unmask the forces that sustain and maintain and enable current reform trajectories in universities.

3. The *actions of policy elites* transnationally are crucial to what is happening in universities worldwide. But we have yet to become privy to the thinking that is going on, and how it is legitimated and transmitted, and the means by which it is made opaque. We need studies that puncture this veil of silence.
4. None of what is happening that is converting universities into annexes of the economy would be possible without a particular version of *leadership* having been allowed to become dominant. We need to know how this is occurring, what forms of resistance there have been to it, how it has been suppressed, and the forms of solidarity necessary to unsettle and supplant this dominant paradigm.
5. Finally, and taking the lead from critical geographers, there is a pressing need for studies with a focus on universities as unique *spaces and places*—possibly in concert with sociologists and anthropologists.

We look forward to this series advancing these important agenda and to the reclamation and restitution of universities as crucial intellectual democratic institutions.

John Smyth
Professor of Education and Social Justice
University of Huddersfield &
Emeritus Professor, Federation University Australia

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1
Introduction

Writing in the 1850s, John Henry Newman argued that a university "may be considered with reference either to its Students or to its Studies."[1] Today, universities are most likely to be considered with reference to their rank or their reputation; students and studies as "port to pillow ratios" and cost-centres fall into place in a rankings race that prioritizes selective investment. For some time now, universities have been described as corporations, "unscrupulous profiteers," and "system[s] out of control" (Bok 2004; Bousquet 2008; Mettler 2014) that are "exacerbating" and "perpetuating" inequality and a "caste system" (Guinier 2015; Mettler 2014; Stevens 2007) by "laundering privilege" (Stevens 2007, 248). It is a system where academics either practice "barbaric rituals" (Bolaño 2009), or, as part of the growing legion of part-timers and adjuncts, are flushed out like "waste" (Bousquet 2008). However, the ivory tower and particularly its U.S. powerhouse remains impervious to criticism, buoyed up as it is by political lobbying, corporate investment, and in some cases campaign financing. Rankings criteria devised by public-private bodies and think tanks with stakes in their commercial success ensure universities can always point to objective test scores when accused of remaining set in their ways or of growing ever more homogenous.

If universities are "perpetuating inequality," then, as self-critical institutions riddled with routines of self-assessment, they must also be aligning the content and practice of their teaching with an educational philosophy that speaks for and in some way justifies this process. Their modes of transmission have become ever more informed by the practices and philosophies of the corporations they have come to

resemble and resource. In the age of globalization, transnationalism, and Asia-Pacific and ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) economic prosperity it is also no longer sufficient to look at the roles the US and UK neo-liberal academic powerhouses play in shaping these rituals of transmission. Asian universities have gathered momentum and they seek more of a central role in the global academic industry. The modern liberal arts university, the "liberal arts organizational ideal," its humanities model, and even its core undergraduate disciplines that are regarded by some leading American academics as essential for "good democratic citizenship" (Nussbaum 2010, 126), have long been regarded as American inventions.[2] They have emerged from the philosophy underpinning the "American dream." In *The Audacity of Hope* Barack Obama argues that a good education is integral to the narrative behind this "American dream": "the heart of a bargain this nation had made with its citizens: If you work hard and take responsibility, you'll have a chance for a better life" (in Mettler, 2014, 134). However the impact of the American Dream on education is waning due to the "dysfunctional state of American politics" (Mettler, 2014, 197) and the evangelizing force of a "Chinese Dream" built on its "growth model" is aiming to "become the Gospel of the world" (Liu et al. 2014, 168) in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

However, we cannot assume that efforts at social mobility through education that were so long a part of higher education's "American dream" with its Pell Grants, financial aid packages, and HEA commitments to diversity—commitments only paid lip-service in today's US academic industry where the "American dream is out of reach for most citizens" (Mettler, 2014, 191)—are as central to the east-west university that is emerging. The PRC's education spokesperson has recently compared shopping for education to shopping for clothes—if you can't afford it leave it on the shelf[3]—and Xi Jinping was reported telling villagers in Guizhou province that poverty is nothing to fear (Phillips 2015). The new academic powerhouse that is emerging transnationally with its newest and most high-flying flagships emerging in regions like China, Singapore, and Hong Kong, may only extend the era of "meritocratic extremism" that has already given us crises, corporate pay scales for presidents, and the "meritocratic ideal."[4]

It is important to assess present conditions before speculating on the future. If change is to be enduring then the university must change from within. Do the operations of the university merit being described as "practices of barbarism" (Henry 2012) that have created a system of "meritocratic extremism" (Piketty 2014)? I will examine what I am calling "academic barbarism" from a number of perspectives. In chapter 2, I explain how my use of the term is influenced by the work of Walter Benjamin and Michel Henry on barbarism. In chapter 3, I examine how systems of exclusion, credentialization, and prestige promoted by universities reveal strong links between educational inequality and social inequality. Academic barbarism is a phrase I am using to examine three key aspects of the academic industry: its work practices, educational philosophy, and fictional self-representation. These core aspects of the university industry—its work practices, educational philosophy, and fictional self-representation—can be brought together around the notion of barbarism, an idea that has received much attention in recent times.[5] I also take my cue from contemporary novelists who, as usual, have led the way in describing academics as committed yet alienated researchers who gravitate towards sites of barbarism or practice "barbaric rituals," all the time unaware of how they are perpetuating systems of concealment that hide the "book that really matters" (Bolaño 2009, *2666E*, 786). In chapter 4, I focus on the fictional representations of the university, the archive, and research practices in the work of Roberto Bolaño and W. G. Sebald. Any sociological study of barbarism in terms of the work practices and underlying philosophy of such a key global industry will also inevitably entail an examination of its contribution to inequality and to the emergence of a new "elite class" or "caste system." Chapter 5 examines how new technologies demand new forms of intellectual ethics that are transforming the work of the academic and the experiences of the student. Chapter 6 examines the university system in Hong Kong as a strong Asian university hub combining eastern and western traditions of learning that also displays the same aggravated links between social inequality and educational inequality.

Michel Henry describes the practices of the university as "practices of barbarism"; the university is then, if we accept Henry's claims, engaged in what I am calling academic barbarism. The academic work practices examined in this book include selection procedures,[6] investment[7] and employment practices,[8] and descriptions of research

and academic work by creative writers who doubled up as academics.[9] In chapter 2 I examine how these practices are perceived as perpetuating inequality.[10] Graduation, for example, is an important practice of the academic industry; however, recent studies reveal that only one out of every 200 UK students presently completing PhDs in science will end up as a professor (Wolff 2015) and that there are some 17,000,000 Americans who are over-qualified and do not need a bachelor's degree for the jobs they are doing (Vedder 2010). The academic corporation or "knowledge industry" is a sector that has experienced important institutional, philosophical, and management changes in recent years. University practices are now aligned with the practices of industries and corporations openly committed to performance-driven, neo-liberal ideologies that are often described as inhumane or psychopathic. Joel Bakan (2005) reminds us that the corporation as a legal person is a paradox that is open to all our most revealing characterizations and zoomorphisms; it is a psychopath who creates great wealth but also hidden harms; it is a monster trying to devour as much as possible; a whale that can swallow you in an instant; Frankenstein's monster. Noam Chomsky's description of the corporation, however, is most revealing for this book's examination of the influence of these changing university practices and philosophies. Chomsky admits that the corporation as psychopath has as its main goal to "ensure that the human beings who [it is] interacting with, you and me, also become inhuman. You have to drive out of people's heads the natural sentiments, like care about others, and sympathy and solidarity" (Bakan 2005, 134–5). This is where the unique danger lies in regard to the university-as-corporation. Unlike the corporation, the university is dedicated to the transmission of knowledge. If the knowledge deemed of service to the society that the knowledge industry helps create is mediated through "practices of barbarism," then it is only a matter of time before the students and graduates of these universities-as-corporations internalize the philosophies that undergird these practices.

There has been much work done in sociology and cultural studies in the age of the corporation on reproduction (Bourdieu 1977; Lynch 2010; van der Velden and Smyth 2011), the university as corporation (Aronowitz 2000; Menand 2010; Washburn 2006), and on the university's links with "multinational military-industrial complexes" (Derrida 2002). Mitchell L. Stevens reminds us that the reproduction

thesis essentially claims that "variation in educational attainment essentially is a coating for preexisting class inequalities" (2007, 11). However, this book examines how systems of reproduction grounded on "practices of barbarism," in turn, influence what goes on in the university classroom and lecture theatre. Is there any pedagogical moment that survives unscathed or that is sufficiently compelling to take our students' minds off the institutional drills and "practices of barbarism" that prime them for a "testocratic," competitive outlook divorced from an understanding of the "collective good" (Guinier 2015)? Recent studies in education detail the academic industry's role in a culture of competition, individualism, and low social mobility (Alon 2009; Guinier 2015; Lynch 2010). The university sector has expanded rapidly in recent decades but elite international institutions have become more exclusive than ever partially due to a rigid international adherence to the recommendations and rubrics of rankings companies (Pérez-Peña 2014). The university sector is now heavily involved in corporate work,[11] "Wall Street" (Stiglitz 2013 Unz 2014), and multinational initiatives that, for many, contribute to heightened inequality, "bonded labour," and labour exploitation. Universities have also been accused of work exploitation in their own right as global industries.[12] However, the influence of these institutional shifts is not only felt in the boardroom but also in the classroom and lecture theatre. These collaborations inform new management philosophies that, in turn, influence educational philosophies, teaching practice, and student learning.

Any examination of the academic industry must examine the nature of the educational philosophy underpinning the university sector today. Michel Henry describes this philosophy as an "ideology of barbarism." It is clear that the leading education powerhouses have embraced a neo-liberal, "testocratic" philosophy that has sociologists and psychologists pointing to its affects on young people. Young people are experiencing heightened levels of risk and anxiety (Bauman 2002; Verhaeghe 2014) and when they graduate there are few jobs and large debts to pay off (Stiglitz 2013 Wolff 2015). In fact, the system has become so intergenerational that attacks on the "western neo-liberal" system and its discontents sometimes seem routine. Detractors of all things western now channel the west's discontents right back at its culture and traditions. A recent PRC (People's Republic of China) State publication on the philosophy of

diplomacy makes all-too-familiar arguments about the nature of the "modern crisis" of inequality and individualism in "industrialized countries [read western]." Despite the publication's Party Speak, the very fact that it echoes long-held sentiments of leading western philosophers and sociologists means these western theories have at least become worthy of parody: "heightened levels of mental illness in industrialized countries" are the result of "social injustice generated by neoliberal capitalism" (Liu et al. "The Realization of the Chinese Dream" 2014, 172). The ultimate cause of this "modern crisis," reads this PRC State publication, is "value deviation and methodology deficiency." This PRC Party Speak is not suggesting that we have a deficiency of methodologies in the developed world but rather that the "analytic method and reductionism of Western philosophy has made great achievements in the knowing and changing of maximum and minimum things, but they are hardly useful when it comes to the more self-related questions of human beings" (173). It is an awkward, politicized retelling of truths the west has been telling itself for generations and yet inequality and the academic industry's "perpetuation of inequality" are as aggressive as ever and our students are anxious and divorced from the "collective good." In chapter 6 I will therefore turn to an emerging transnational, east-west educational hub—that of Hong Kong—so as to argue that universities can bring the two traditions closer but this is no guarantee against extreme inequality and meritocratic extremism.

The intervening decades have then confirmed Michel Henry's and Pierre Bourdieu's worst fears and systems of reproduction and practices of barbarism are still haunting the educational powerhouses of western democracies. Has the reductionism and "scientism" that is, for Henry, now so integral to the academic industry and to what it passes on or transmits, blinded it to alternatives? "Value deviation" has indeed occurred; the western liberal arts model that once championed equality and fairness through a privileged humanities core has adopted new values of individualization,[13] risk, and competition that are grounded on the modern university's privileging of a scientific or scientistic perspective. Henry argues that western thought nurtured by the university has turned away from an educational philosophy that privileges the humanities and the affective learning states humanities subjects promote towards an educational philosophy grounded on what he calls scientism, something quite different

to science. However, the academic industry has also moved on since Henry's day; any reliance on an overarching scientism is today also grounded on new economic discourses and the jury is still out on whether economics can ever be regarded as a science.[14]

Walter Benjamin's work on barbarism also prefigures this reading of academic transmission as barbaric. He reminds us in his "Theses on the Philosophy of History" (also translated as "On the Concept of History") that "there is no document of civilization that is not at the same time a document of barbarism" (Benjamin 2006, 392; Boletsi 2013, 77). Culture sides with the victors even though it too owes its existence to the downtrodden and the "anonymous toil of others" (392). Culture is then a record of victory and of the barbarism that is also integral to victory. The process of transmission, what our universities embody and mould today, is key to the passing on of this barbarism: "barbarism taints the manner in which it was transmitted from one hand to another" (392). But transmission has been transformed in the age of the knowledge industry by new technologies, self-monitoring systems, and new management discourses such as OBA (outcomes based assessment). Transmission may indeed now only take place if what is to be transmitted is sanctioned by rigorously monitored institutional review processes. Transmission to a wider public depends on funding competitions that are also dependent on rigorously monitored review processes that privilege the economic value of the output. Therefore the kind of victories Benjamin describes that incur barbarism where the "current rulers" "step over those who are lying prostrate" (1969, 256) do not typically take place today on battlefields but in classrooms, interview rooms, and boardrooms. The competition is less bloody but no less barbaric. Culture still has its victors and the stories and rubrics of these victories still need to be transmitted beyond the reach of those "lying prostrate." In the next chapter, I examine Benjamin's notion of "positive barbarism" in order to propose that today's barbarism is more academic in nature than ever before. Today's barbarism is more academic than ever before precisely because the type of transmission students experience today, the forms of elite transmission they find themselves excluded from, and the meritocratic networks and intergenerational strategies that can be built around a sense of entitlement to this elite form of transmission are what ultimately decide who emerges as "victor." Culture is more than ever channelled by these academic

strategies and competitions and the "victors" are the students who survive, safely credentialized and encultured, and who then go on to become living embodiments of the culture that must be transmitted to future generations.

Embroiled in these practices of barbarism, is it any wonder that much recent academic work in philosophy and cultural studies is reimagining the human through revised notions of barbarism (Henry), the "post-human" (Braidotti), and "the beastly" (Derrida)? Rosi Braidotti argues that the "political economy of biogenetic capitalism" reduces bodies to their "informational substrate," turning "Life/*zoe*—that is to say human and non-human intelligent matter—into a commodity for trade and profit" (2013, 61). This process produces deeply "inhuman(e)" subjects. This replays Jean-François Lyotard's reading of the "inhuman" as the "alienating and commodifying effect of advanced capitalism on the human" (in Braidotti, 2013, 108–9). Braidotti argues that these neo-liberal practices coupled with the barbaric events of the twentieth century have resulted in the "brutalization of our moral selves, or an increase of moral bestiality among humans" (110) that results in "cruelty and violence" (108). Braidotti posits a notion of the post-human that privileges "heteronomy and multifaceted relationality" as well as a recognition of our "shared ties of vulnerability"[15] as a concept that can transform the humanities into a post-human humanities that privileges "matter-realist" monism and a vitalist approach to life (159). Braidotti argues that the post-human can act as a counterforce to this inhuman(e) strategy, by salvaging "Life" from the "testocratic" and the "meritocratic" by reminding us of our "shared vulnerabilities." However, I will argue in chapter 3 that if any "post-human" subjectivity has taken hold in the university then it has exacerbated, rather than alleviated, biogenetic capitalism's commodification of life through systems of exclusion that perpetuate inequality. Therefore the academic industry that is driven more and more by the ethos of the corporation and by neo-liberalism practices its own form of academic barbarism that reduces students and academics to their "informational substrate."

Jacques Derrida's last seminars on the beast and the "beastly" explore how these notions are related to sovereignty and in doing so he sets out to deconstruct traditional determinations of the human. The examination of the beastly becomes a *lieu vague* from which to re-imagine the human in an age when neo-liberal practices

particularly relevant to the university ask us to re-evaluate disciplines such as the humanities and our understanding of research. In quoting Deleuze, he reminds us that "[a]ll determinations become cruel and bad when only grasped by a thought that contemplates and invents them, flayed, separated from their living form" (2009, 156). Derrida argues that the corporate university that is linked for him explicitly with "multinational military-industrial complexes" (Derrida 2002b, 11) has done away with the old academic distinction between "basic" and "end-oriented" research (12). New research is "at the service of war, [and] of national and international security" (13). This means, Derrida argues, that a "State power" no longer needs to "censor discourse"; censorship has been censored. It is the "techno-economic situation of a society" (14) that now drives research and that, in turn, allows the academic industry to "limit the means" and place "restrictions on support" for research it does not support (13). Derrida calls this a "new 'censorship'" (13). However, Derrida also separates the "beastly" from barbarism. As with Henry, Benjamin, and Braidotti, there is a tendency in Derrida to preserve the "beastly," the "animal," and the post-human in the face of the cruelty, violence, and barbarism endemic to neo-liberalism, and in the face of the "techno-economic situation of a society," and its academic barbarism.

It is important to examine how this renewed interest in barbarism and the "beastly" has emerged within the university. From Benjamin to Henry, and from Derrida to Boletsi and Braidotti, barbarism, the beastly, and the post-human offer some of the most captivating expressions of humanity or post-humanity for students on humanities courses in universities today and these have in turn influenced programmes of social justice, cultural policy, and expressions of identity in popular culture. How has this occurred? Is it simply coincidental that as the university complex and the knowledge economy are transformed into corporations where, in the case of the US academic industry, the private becomes public and the public private (Mettler 2014), there is also this turn to the beastly and the post-human as the latest, most compelling expression of identity? This book argues that these philosophies and theories are in a sense products of their environment, produced partially in response to changing university practices that take their lead from economic arguments. Philosophers are pushed ever harder to define and rescue back the basis of life, even in its "beastly," post-human dimension as society

itself becomes ever more barbaric. Encroaching barbarism is often related back to the economization of subjectivity in late capitalism. Self-commodifying ourselves, we became interchangeable, uniform, and ultimately expendable. However, if an economization of subjectivity has got us here and brought out a new barbarism so that all that swells our chests is the thought of how many lie "prostrate," then a rethinking of individuality back down through the chains of economics is needed. We are told to look for signs of the "beastly" but are we aware of how effortlessly we become beastly, what Camus found in Kafka? The university, as the old bastion of learning and civilization, can guide us but not if Pierre Bourdieu's *homo academicus* has become *homo ekonomicus*. In thinking back through the chains of economics, mindful of the beastly inheritance we let slip, we must recall the origins of our notion of economics. Giorgio Agamben (2011) reminds us that for Aristotle and Xenophon the term meant "administration of the house." It referred to a separate sphere from that of the *polis*. These early "economic" relations are "linked by a paradigm that we would define as 'administrative' ['*gestionale*'], and not epistemic: in other words, it is a matter of an activity that is not bound to a system of rule, and does not constitute a science in the proper sense" (*The Kingdom And The Glory* 2011, 17). Today, in our scientific age, we have made economics into a science and we have forgotten this distinction between economics, and politics and the sense of necessity that grounded an economics founded on the "administration of the house."

The knowledge industry's ever-closer alignment with the corporation and the recent description of the university sector and the cultural identity it embodies and transmits as barbaric are not mutually exclusive. For many educationalists, the university sector has inherited a reductive, corporate model of education that has all but killed off the older humanist ideal of a liberal education (Gallagher 2012; Menand 2010).[16] This book will argue that new definitions of merit in terms of purely economic value, prestige (Clauset et al. 2015), and "meritocratic extremism" (Piketty 2014), where empathy and compassion are forgotten (Lynch 2010; Guinier 2015), have also contributed to a highly individualist, competitive, test-based understanding of value and identity that is at the heart of these new "practices of barbarism." Mitchell L. Stevens describes these test-based selection systems as an "information-based evaluative regime that nevertheless systematically

favors the wealthy, well educated, and well connected" (2007, 22). In chapter 3, I examine how the university perpetuates inequality. Lani Guinier argues that today's academic industry sustains and engenders a "tyranny of the meritocracy" that has led us to accept that merit can be "measured, identified, standardized, and divorced from the context of a student's race" and background (2015, 37). She argues that we must redefine merit in terms of those characteristics that indicate a "student's potential for future success in our democracy—leadership, the ability to collaborate with others, resiliency, and a drive to learn" (33). Of course, the issue of democracy is hotly contested in many Asian regions where their universities are replacing the more famous U.S. universities in rankings tables. It can only mean that democracy is not a requirement for success in university rankings tables.

Credentialization[17] also transforms perceptions of higher education; perceptions of quality in higher education are now based on "inputs" rather than on measurable outcomes. As James P. Merisotis writes, all too often "high quality is when high-achieving students attend highly selective, richly endowed institutions, where tradition, along with well-paid faculty and other resources, ensures their predictable success" (2014, 50). But what do these students actually learn? Because the university sector is itself a training ground for the "professionals of the future," it is important to consider how the "testocratic" and highly competitive ethos the university instills in students, where contemplation and mindful analysis of texts is less and less a factor, is also denying them the opportunity to think beyond competition and individual success. As Lani Guinier writes in *The Tyranny of the Meritocracy*, education is divorced from collective good. This is somewhat ironic since scholars in the Asian humanities such as Joseph Chan have long held that the strength of the western liberal arts model lies in its teaching of "citizenship education" as opposed to what he calls the whole-person, moralistic education that is privileged in the Chinese tradition. Chan argues that traditional liberal participatory democracies tend to privilege civic virtue, "civic-mindedness," and civic education at the expense of human virtue and moral education (Chan 2014, 95). Chinese scholars have also recently argued that western models of learning are inherently more individualistic than Chinese models (Li 2012). If also, as Amartya Sen (2000) writes, merit is a term that is contingent on what a society deems to be good, then the unquestioned

adherence to meritocratic extremism in universities also speaks volumes for what our societies value.

However, it is possible that the kind of merit universities are inculcating is one they have themselves concocted so as to best serve rankings criteria that, at the end of the day, decide their own merit and, in turn, the merit of their students. The system is marked by ever decreasing circles of regulation and selectivity that draw the student further and further in, closer to an impossible academic ideal that ends up being a black hole. Therefore, the "practices of barbarism" that Michel Henry and others point to have their roots in this allegiance to an educational discourse of merit grounded on criteria devised in the private sector. Universities, like their students and lecturers, are ranked according to criteria devised to maximise profits and this feeds the concentration on competition. This book argues that the educational philosophies that are then created to accommodate these new practices are radically different to the ideals that still bring students out onto the streets in Hong Kong,[18] Chile,[19] and elsewhere. Is it any wonder that these students set up classrooms and reading rooms under blue tarpaulins and twisted umbrellas on the streets of Mong Kok and Santiago, where they give themselves a momentary taste of the passion that may only now arise when enquiry and a belief in fairness are taken outside the university?

2
Academic Barbarism: Practice and Transmission

The concept of barbarism has received much attention in recent years and in the process it has undergone an important critical reappraisal.[1] The sense of barbarism that is integral to what I am calling academic barbarism is informed chiefly by Michel Henry's and Walter Benjamin's theories of barbarism and also by what has recently been described as "weak barbarism." For Radu Vasile Chialda, "strong barbarism" refers to the "classic" definition of barbarism that invokes the ancient Greek distinction between Greeks and barbarians, which enables us to maintain a supposedly clearly demarcated barbarism/civilization dichotomy.[2] However, today the limits between barbarism and civilization are, for Chialda, so "transparent and permeable" that the character of these terms and what relates to them "weakens" (Chialda 2011, 228). Weak barbarism speaks for the "uncivilized character of human individuals" and it stresses the distinction between "weak barbarism" and "strong barbarism" (225). Weak barbarism describes our society's "tendency to decay," which illustrates a "symptomatic dehumanization of society" (228). Chialda argues that "its forms of manifestation are so violently *not* contrary to the principles of humanity [my emphasis]" that it works in a far more indirect way than "strong barbarism" by acting through the "normative inadequacies" of policy or law that societies allow to develop. In other words, the barbarian becomes a "consequence of the global policy for the insurance of the necessary living conditions" (232). Such barbarism strives to keep up with all technocratic developments only so as to redefine them.

This sense of weak barbarism replays aspects of the "civilized barbarism" Theodor Adorno linked to "the retarded state of society" (25) in the 1960s. Such civilized barbarism is sustained by society's belief in "eternal values," values that university disciplines, in drawing from cultural criticism, uphold in thriving on the "mythical obduracy of culture" (25). Adorno sees barbarism as resulting from the absolute reification of a "total society." Writing in 1967, Adorno argues that "[a]bsolute reification, which presupposed intellectual progress as one of its elements, is now preparing to absorb the mind entirely" (34). Adorno connects this regression to barbarism with society's systems of education where the "more primitive" and the "more undifferentiated" is promoted "no matter how much it may contradict the level of intellectual productive forces" (32). For Adorno, this is caused by a "world which denies the mass of human beings the authentic experience of intellectual phenomena by making genuine education a privilege" (30). University ranking rubrics, meritocratic extremism, and shared testocratic cultures reveal how these practices of reification and totalization have been taken up and embraced by universities to create a new kind of academic barbarism. This book asks how our students and academics are affected by an academic form of this weak barbarism that is installed by global education policies for maintaining necessary education standards. Many aspects of these various descriptions of barbarism can then be usefully applied to the practices of the academic industry.

Maria Boletsi has also recently traced a genealogy of barbarism that examines how the concept has often been posed as a "structural and inherent principle of culture" (2013, 77). Boletsi gives a reading of barbarism that helps explain these different facets of barbarism in the knowledge economy. She describes how the concept of barbarism has remained a constant oppositional force that determines how notions of civilization have changed with the passing of empires and with the emergence of different religious, sociological, and political discourses. Since barbarism's defining, oppositional term, civilization, is a moveable feast, a term that embodies a "number of standards under the umbrella of civilization" and that is "mobile and open to reordering" (66), the same fluidity must also now inform our understanding of barbarism. Boletsi argues that civilization has become a "machine for producing different versions of the barbarian tailored to the needs and priorities of the civilized 'we'" (66). Civilization

becomes a powerful conceptual wall for keeping "the 'barbarian' at bay" (66) and no institution is better at promoting "civilization" than the university. Boletsi opens out the term barbarism by explaining its different dimensions in different periods. Its meaning shifts from referring to non-Greeks and Christians to describing those who do not recognize the humanity of another (Todorov 2010).[3]

However, Boletsi also reminds us that Marx related barbarism to class and labour. The capitalist system is capable of casting many workers back into "barbarous forms of labour" (Boletsi 2013, 95; Marx 1992, 72); our form of labour then can also mark us out as barbaric. Barbarism has not only then been regarded as a biological or ethnic aspect of the individual but as a status that is consigned to the individual worker by a hegemonic capitalist system. The knowledge economy is not exempt from such practices. In fact, it is often regarded as sustaining new forms of "high grade" inhumane labour practices that often go unrecognized because of the traditionally high status accorded to university work. Marc Bousquet argues that the university not only engages in a "dictatorship of the flexible," through a "permatemping" (25) of student employees, where student staff are forced to endure inhumane forms of work, but that it regards the holder of the doctoral degree, the university's highest award, as the "waste product of graduate education"; "*in many disciplines, for the majority of graduates, the Ph.D indicates the logical conclusion of an academic career* [Bousquet's emphasis]" (23). In speaking from the perspective of the adjunct community in the university, Bousquet argues:

> [w]hat needs to be quite clear is that this is not a "system out of control," a machine with a thrown rod or a blown gasket. Quite the contrary: it's a smoothly functioning new system with its own easily apprehensible logic, premised entirely on the continuous replacement of degree holders with nondegreed labor (or persons with degrees willing to work on unfavorable terms) […] like a car's engine idling in the takeout food line, the system's greatest urgency is to dispel most of the degree-holding waste product. (24)

Barbarism therefore has a number of meanings that are relevant to the practices of the academic industry. As I suggested in the introduction, it is educational transmission, which includes adaptation (Alon

2009), selection (Stevens 2007), and credentialization processes, that decides the victors and the "prostrate" today. Benjamin's battlefield is today's boardroom, classroom, and selection interview room. The decisive battles and subsequent processes of transmission in which Benjamin traces barbarism are transformed, integrated, and streamlined in today's academic industry where the strategies of the victors are all the more difficult to chart.

Walter Benjamin on barbarism

The recourse to barbarism as an oppositional term that defines and sanctions the practice of civilization is an old concern. As we have seen, Adorno sees civilized barbarism at work in cultural criticism. However, it is the university that has traditionally been regarded as the institution that through educational transmission sanctions and upholds what constitutes civilization. Walter Benjamin reminds us in his "Theses on the Philosophy of History" that "there is no document of civilization that is not at the same time a document of barbarism" (Benjamin 2006, 391–2; Boletsi 2013, 77). It is worth reading more of his argument:

> Whoever has emerged victorious participates to this day in the triumphal procession in which the present rulers step over those who are lying prostrate. According to traditional practice, the spoils are carried along in the procession. They are called cultural treasures, and a historical materialist views them with cautious detachment. For without exception the cultural treasures he surveys have an origin which he cannot contemplate without horror. They owe their existence not only to the efforts of the great minds and talents who have created them, but also to the anonymous toil of their contemporaries. There is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism. And just as such a document is not free of barbarism, barbarism taints also the manner in which it was transmitted from one owner to another.

Many of our humanities "survey" classes still teach "cultural treasures" that have an origin which "we cannot contemplate without [the] horror" and trauma resulting from barbarism, as is so clearly evident too for W. G. Sebald's fictional academics and researchers

whom I will examine in Chapter 4. However, Benjaminian barbarism also privileges the process of transmission integral to the passing-on of knowledge and practices of transmission are central to the academic barbarism this book examines. Benjamin also develops his understanding of barbarism in his 1933 essay "Experience and Poverty" where he introduces the notion of "positive barbarism." For Benjamin then, barbarism is at once integral to every act of transmission while also, in its "positive" guise, being a trait that emerges from a new societal "poverty of experience." This "poverty of human experience," what would seem to parallel the artwork's loss of aura, emerges when the traumatised subject of the Great War returns to take up a now defamiliarised life and looks for new experiences in the "oppressive wealth of ideas" (1933, 732) offered by such discourses as astrology, mysticism and even the burgeoning university culture. Benjamin asks "what is the value of all our culture if it is divorced from experience?" and where does it all lead "when that experience is simulated or obtained by underhanded means" (1933, 732). These same questions can be aimed at today's academic industry and its institutions of perpetual credentialization that monumentalize Benjamin's claim that the subject is made to feel that she must endlessly "start from scratch." Benjamin argues that people "long to free themselves from experience" in order to "make such pure and decided use of their poverty" (734). For Benjamin, this new barbarism is found in systems where the "interior, rather than their inwardness" is privileged and this is what makes them barbaric. It is a form of barbarism that few institutions may practice as efficiently as the academic industry, a form of barbarism that the novelists W. G. Sebald and Roberto Bolaño suggest haunts the archive and the knowledge industry. Benjamin's description of this second kind of barbarism can be applied to the practices of the academic industry.

Benjamin's 1933 essay, written when he first fled to Paris to escape Fascism, describes a new kind of "positive barbarism." Maria Boletsi has questioned the English translation of the term *Barbarentum*. Boletsi points out that Benjamin's description of this new "positive barbarism"—"*eine Art von neuem Barbarentum*"—coins a new German word—*Barbarentum*—that he will never use again. Boletsi translates *Barbarentum* not as "barbarism," as most English translations do, but as "barbarianhood." The "positive barbarism" that Benjamin describes in this essay is then a new kind of "barbarianhood." In making this

translation, Boletsi also reminds us that, for Benjamin, there are "no good or bad concepts" and that words and concepts are always used, for him, in a way that seeks to express meaning's "constant movement." Benjamin wishes to keep in play in all concepts the "oscillation between their negative and affirmative functions, between their traditional and novel usages" (Boletsi 2013, 135). Of course, Boletsi is, it must be noted, focusing on Benjamin's importance for language and for the critic of language. However, I wish to employ Benjamin's theory for an examination of institutional practices. In doing so, I am aware that one of Benjamin's intentions as a writer was to incite a "critical rethinking of academic conventions" (Boletsi 2013, 135). Benjamin is not generally regarded as a sociologist of institutions. Hannah Arendt regards him as the ideal "collector" who tears quotations out of their original contexts and then likes "arranging them afresh in such a way that they illustrated one another and were able to prove their *raison d'être* in a free-floating state" (1999, 50–1; Boletsi 2013, 126). However, I believe Benjamin's conceptions of barbarism and barbarianhood prefigure key motivations of the knowledge industry in terms of transmission and work practice. The application of these concepts to contemporary institutional practices asks that we look beyond their "free-floating" intertextual play and examine how *Barbarentum* can also describe the "constructive destructive" force of these practices.

Benjamin coins *Barbarentum* in order to explain how his "positive barbarism" is different from the "old barbarism" he describes in his "Theses on the Philosophy of History," the kind of barbarism that is integral to transmission. This "old barbarism" is, Boletsi argues, unable to extricate itself from its cosy dialectic with civilization. With this new term, however, Benjamin is inciting a "critical rethinking of academic conventions" (Boletsi 2013, 135). For Benjamin, the "old barbarism" is a form of barbarism inextricably intertwined with the transmission integral to civilization that is always overwhelming and transforming culture. Through this dialectic, knowledge and culture become, for Benjamin, an "oppressive wealth of ideas" or the "horrific mishmash of styles and ideologies produced during the last century" (2005, 732; in Boletsi 2013, 127). Oppressive conservation rejuvenates the play of barbarism. As Boletsi argues, "the barbarism of fascism does not seek the destruction of tradition but its preservation" (127). *Barbarentum* or "barbarianhood" disrupts the easy complicity and also the authority of this dialectic between the "old

barbarism" and civilization, a stubborn dialectic that maintains an oppressive status quo. *Barbarentum* is therefore described as a process of "constructive destruction," which recalls Derrida's description of deconstruction as a process that first involves a break with the "structure of belonging" integral to a system of "metaphysical oppositions" and then "a force of dislocation that spreads itself throughout the entire system fissuring it in every direction and thoroughly delimiting it" (2002, 22). However, as with deconstruction and its claim, *il n'y a pas de hors-texte*, the application of such concepts to the practice of institutions throws up blind spots that assume a life of their own in being embodied by communities of subjects held together by what Foucault calls "infrapower." (2000, 87)[4] *Barbarentum* involves a complete break with tradition and an affinity with what Benjamin calls "the poverty of experience" only to the extent that an "authoritarian" connection with tradition is destroyed. Boletsi explains that this urge to break with tradition must be viewed as an "uprooting of the authoritative function of tradition in the present and a transformation of the relation of tradition with the here and now" (2013, 126). In other words, Benjamin's concept of *Barbarentum* or barbarianhood speaks for a mode of being that maintains our connection with tradition but only if our "hierarchical orderings" are replaced by a system or mode of operation that "privilege[s] the uniqueness of each object" for the here and now (Boletsi 2013, 127). As Benjamin reminds us in "Theses," failure to privilege the uniqueness of each object," or in the case of the academic industry, every student, faculty, and fragment of knowledge, will lead to the destruction of old values and a return of the "old barbarism": "every image of the past that is not recognized by the present as one of its concerns threatens to disappear irretrievably" (1999, 247; Boletsi 2013, 127). Technology is one aspect of this contemporary experience that Benjamin was eager to reach out to through this new concept of *Barbarentum*. *Barbarentum* is then a concept with great potential for "radical newness." It is representative of a "clearing" (Boletsi, 124) that seeks "to blast open the continuum of history" (1999, 254; in Boletsi 2013, 130). *Barbarentum* can appear as a creative force; Benjamin compares it to the work of creative artists who must first create a *tabula rasa* and then start again at the "drawing table." Benjamin even appears to go against the grain of humanism in employing a "constructed language inspired by technique

and technological developments" to bring out the value of this new concept (Boletsi 2013, 122). The technological then becomes a force that "may thus make humanity more human" enabling us "to bring out the technical in the human instead of the human in the technical" (122). However in another essay, "The Destructive Character," Benjamin writes that the "destructive character" essential to *Barbarentum* "sees nothing permanent" (2005, 542; Boletsi 2013, 124). Therefore, as Boletsi reminds us, "like all truly radical gestures" the process *Barbarentum* describes offers "no guarantee that it will indeed lead to the desired outcome. There is always the risk: the project may take a different and even nightmarish direction, and destruction may be the only thing left" (124–5).

The academic barbarism we witness today in the university is informed by both of these expressions of barbarism, both the old and the new, the negative and the positive. The academic industry replays Benjamin's "old barbarism" in the manner in which it has transformed pedagogical transmission into a competitive schooling in the "oppressive weight of ideas," a process mediated through the reproduction of prestige, credentialization, and testocratic selection procedures. However, the academic barbarism of today is also in thrall to new management discourses and economic models that often appear to be replaying the initial "slash and burn" technique of Benjamin's *Barbarentum*. The knowledge industry, particularly its for-profit model, is intent on cutting ties with traditional university values often aligned with the humanities. Technology is of course a vital resource for learning, as Benjamin suggests, but in embracing technology the academic industry must be mindful of how it is also contributing to a new "hierarchical ordering" or two-tier system where the "poverty of experience" and the "testocratic," competitive outlook universities promote are divorcing students from an understanding of the "collective good" and a willingness to engage with or "privilege the uniqueness of each object"; the object's potential connectivity or its place in a network is privileged above its uniqueness. I will examine this aspect of technology in chapter 5. If the institution is beholden to economic models and marketplace narratives that show little regard for how the "uniqueness of every object" and the particulars of modern life are rooted in, and revise, tradition, the risk of prolonging the initial process of destruction integral to *Barbarentum* becomes ever greater. In the next chapter

I will examine how the academic industry's perpetuation of inequality is the most visible sign of this lack of attention to the "collective good" what Braidotti calls our "shared vulnerabilities." In chapter 4 I will examine how the work of contemporary novelists responds to these descriptions of barbarism.

The manner in which barbarism in a society, and most particularly in a knowledge economy, is "transmitted from one owner to another" has taken on new significance in today's knowledge corporations. The archive, the research toll gate, the outcomes-based assessment agenda, selectivity, new forms of university and state censorship, the university admissions process, the research review system, and the tenure application process are all highly influential practices that have created new checks and balances for the transmission of culture and, in turn, barbarism in the knowledge economy. People become embodiments of culture, objects of cultural capital. The mode of transmission perpetuates, and is a reflection of, the kind of knowledge that, we will find in reading Michel Henry, is deemed appropriate and that has, he argues, become progressively more barbaric. Benjamin was not alone in seeing barbarism and civilization as unwilling bedfellows. In Adorno and Horkheimer's introduction to the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* they seek to "explain why humanity, instead of entering a truly human state, is sinking into a new kind of barbarism" (1988, xiv; Boletsi 2013, 77). Going back still further, we also find Friedrich Schiller asking in his "Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man," when the Enlightenment was in full swing under the shadow of the reign of terror, "how is it, then, that we remain barbarians?" (1995, 106; Boletsi 2013, 75).

Michel Henry and the university's "practices of barbarism"

Readings of barbarism have also looked more deeply at the kind of philosophy a society must endorse in order for its institutions of learning to be regarded as vast machines whose highest graduates have come to be seen as little more than "waste." Michel Henry's phenomenological reading of barbarism was one of the first studies to extend barbarism to the university. It is a concept that describes, for him, a unique moment of modernity whereby "knowledge and culture are diverging to the point of being opposed

in a titanic battle—a struggle to the death" (*la barbarie,* 2004, 1. Henry argues that a reductive interpretation of knowledge took hold in the seventeenth century and was responsible for initiating an ideology of science that inaugurated this divergence between knowledge and culture. Rosi Braidotti has also recently described how the "bio-genetic structure of contemporary capitalism" with its "global economy" is built on a technocratic convergence of previously differentiated branches of science and technology, what she humorously calls the "four horsemen of the posthuman apocalypse: nanotechnology, biotechnology, information technology and cognitive science" (2013, 59). Such advanced capitalism, Braidotti argues, "invests and profits from the scientific and economic control and commodification of all that lives" (59). However, Braidotti sees this as paradoxically producing an "opportunistic form of post-anthropocentrism on the part of market forces which happily trade on Life itself" (59). She appears to be suggesting then that these forms of commodification introduce unintended "social, psychic and ecological environments"—evidenced by the explosion of techno-creative and techno-management courses in modern universities—that produce a new kind of subjectivity, an "expanded relational self engendered by the cumulative effect of all these factors" (60). For Braidotti, this new kind of subjectivity can somehow steer clear of advanced capitalism's commodification of all life and instead, by still working with "market forces," "happily trade on Life itself" (59). Braidotti's recourse to a monistic philosophy is then similar in its embrace of "Life" to what Henry's similarly vitalistic approach calls "ontological monism." Both appear to privilege a similar notion of life as *zoe* as "the dynamic, self-organizing structure of life itself" (Braidotti 2013, 56).

However, in examining inequality in regard to the university in the next chapter, it is clear that the "trans-species commodification of Life" that Braidotti speaks for has not been as productive or enlightening for students as she imagines. This reclamation and reification of commodification for the purposes of privileging a more authentic notion of life, one that will "actualize the virtual possibilities of an expanded, relational self that functions in a nature-culture continuum and is technologically mediated," if it is happening now, especially in our universities, is simply not producing results that suggest we are "actualizing" our students' full potential. As I will discuss in the next

chapter, inequality in society is perpetuated by selection policies in universities that mean only a very few students will ever go on to have the opportunity of taking the kind of humanities courses Braidotti speaks for. We must then return to the underlying philosophies of education apparent in university practices that Henry describes as "practices of barbarism." Henry argues that such practices are perpetuated by the modern university which has in turn become the major institution for disseminating this underlying philosophy of barbarism. Henry's description of this barbarism in relation to the university is important for recent debates on education policy.

Henry's barbarism has its roots in an epistemological shift that, he argues, emerges in "the age of modernity," an age that began for Henry with the work of Galileo in the seventeenth century. Such modernity ushers in what Henry refers to as a "geometrical knowledge," a kind of knowledge that claims that matter is not apprehended by the "variable sensibility" of individuals, but through the "rational knowledge of these figures and forms." Recent work on cross-cultural studies has also associated "western" learning with a privileging of rationality and materialism (Li 2012). This type of knowledge, he argues, has reduced the universe to an "objective ensemble of material phenomena" (2004, 2).[5] Henry is very much against an ideology of science, or scientism, that, he argues, has affected all disciplines. It has produced a "crisis of culture" as a direct result of "the indispensable multiplication of knowledges that adhere to the rigour and objectivity of science, a presupposition that persists, unnoticed because it is a given" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 9). Henry argues that "these knowledges that are so diverse" are taken as constituting "the only knowledge possible, the only foundation attributable to a rational behaviour in every sphere of experience" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 9). The "same uncertainty and disarray" has affected all disciplines, the "sensible, affective and spiritual orders of life" and "the properly intellectual or cognitive" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 10). He asks whether this leads, not merely to the "unsettling of the values of art, ethics and religion," but to their "brutal and progressive annihilation?" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 10). Henry's argument is then chiefly concerned with the way knowledge is institutionalized and conceived. He argues that the "theoretical and practical methods" of what he refers to as "the hyper development of a hyperknowledge" mark "a complete rupture with the traditional learning of humanity" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 10). Similar arguments have

been made by many educationalists in regard to the transformation of knowledge in the university today (Collini 2012; Menand 2010; Washburn 2006); however, Henry goes further in describing these practices as a form of barbarism. Since the university has always been the exclusive locus of privileged cultural discourse and the site for the grooming and transmission of what is seen to undergird civilized thought and speech, it is important to examine Henry's claims.

Henry has a specific understanding of the life that comes to constitute culture. Boletsi reminds us too that there are at least two interpretations of culture that inform our understanding of barbarism: "Western civilizational discourse presents nonliberal people as *owned* by culture and liberal people in the West simply as *having* culture(s)," or as Wendy Brown puts it, "'We' have culture while culture has 'them,' or we *have* culture while they *are* a culture [emphasis in original]" (Brown 2006, 150–1; Boletsi 2013, 79). For Henry, the life of culture must not be confused with life as "the object of scientific knowledge" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 15), an object "that [scientific] knowledge has reserved for those who are in possession of this learning and who are due to acquire it" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 15). It is also then bound up with the system of privilege I will examine in the next chapter. Henry relates this also to the institutions of knowledge, the universities. Henry argues that one must earn the privilege to have access to this kind of knowledge. Henry contrasts this scientific conception of life with an account of subjectivity that he describes in terms of "the absolute phenomenological life," a life that "senses and feels itself" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 16). Henry's understanding of life is then deeply phenomenological and he has described phenomenology as the most important philosophical discourse of the twentieth century.

Henry sees scientism as positing an ideal "mathematical and geometrical world" that is "destined to form a univocal knowledge of the real world, for the real world itself" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 19). This recalls Marx's famous critique of the Hegelian ideal on the basis of its veiling of the real. In his *Critique of Hegel's Doctrine of the State*, Marx argues that when Hegel makes material or "subjectivized" the Idea and then describes the "*real* relationship of the family and civil society to the state" as "*unreal*, objective moments of the Idea referring to different things" (62) that they are from this point on not "self-determining but are instead determined by another" (63). The problem is essentially that, for the family and civil society, it is not

"the course of their own life that joins them together to comprise the state, but the *life of the Idea* which has distinguished them from itself [Henry's emphasis]" (63). Henry sees a similar "life of the idea" at work in the academic industry's new version of scientism. Rankings bodies employ a similar notion of the ideal in regard to the ideal university in order to foster greater homogeneity and competition. Henry challenges this model's "telos of evidence," that consistently places the object "in full light before our eyes" and takes the evidence that appears in such light to be "indubitable" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 23).

Henry extends his reading of barbarism in society to transmission, which we saw was central to Benjamin's "old barbarism." Henry argues that the transformation of our understanding of transmission has led to the "destruction of the University" (2012, 124). Henry describes transmission as an act "by which each evidence that constitutes knowledge—its principles, axioms, inferences and its consequences—is repeated and reactualized by someone who makes it into his or her own evidence, understands this knowledge, and thereby acquires it" (124). Henry argues that this repetition is twofold, both theoretical and practical. First, it involves the repetition of the evidence that was just in question and, second, it is the "repetition of the pathos in which the act of evidence stands; as a cognitive act, it only exists in and through its auto-affection." (2012, 124) It is this second moment of the transmission of knowledge, a moment that takes place within the "intersubjective, affective sphere," that speaks for the "felt" moment of teaching. Henry compares it to the first exchanges between "the mother and infant," to the "acquisition of bodily movements, apprenticeships in all forms," and to "the phenomena of imitation and intropathy which are at the basis of the individual and social life" (2012, 124). These are moments that, for Henry, allow for "an understanding of the transmission of knowledge that is primal but yet foreign to representational and objective knowledge" (2012, 124); it "precedes this knowledge." One must question whether such a teaching moment is being suffocated by the academic industry's almost universal adoption of an outcomes based assessment model of education.

However, Henry also argues that the transformation that has come to the transmission of knowledge in the age of the knowledge industry not only plays out in terms of practice but also in terms of content. He argues that the "uncertain features of an empirical state"

have been raised up to the "rank of theoretical norms." A new form of repetition in education has also taken hold even as we claim to have moved beyond rote learning: "[r]epetition in the productive contemporaneity of apodictic evidence and pathetic certainty is contrasted with the communication of information about facts that are external and superficial and can be assimilated with a pure factuality" (2012, 135). This model is the product of a society:

> engendered by the blind self-development of techno-science and its overturning of earlier stratifications, [in which] technical devices gradually replace the subjective praxis of human beings. Communication is no longer a living relation based on the personal word and always derived from individuals who enter into relation. It is no longer intersubjectivity but precisely a technical network. It has become media communication and is reducible to it. (2012, 135)

Henry's cry against the "blind self-development of techno-science" was made in the 1980s. However, his description of the changes that have come to communication, transmission, and "humanness" on the eve of the Information Age echoes recent works on the impact of the Internet on learning and on the brain. Nicholas Carr suggests in *The Shallows: How the Internet is Changing the Way We Read, Think and Remember* that our "intellectual and social lives may, like our industrial routines, come to reflect the form that the computer imposes on them" (2010, 207). In referring to the fears of Joseph Weizenbaum in his *Computer Power and Human Reason*, Carr also considers how Weizenbaum, after a life of computer programming, had come to believe that "what makes us most human […] is what is least computable about us—the connections between our mind and our body, the experiences that shape our memory and our thinking, our capacity for emotion and empathy" (207). However, technological determinists may see this simply as unscientific moralizing. At any rate, if we are collectively giving up our "humanness" to technology, in time there will simply be very few of us around with the capacity to "feel" what has been lost. Braidotti also argues, in not wanting to be one of the "prophets of doom" on technology, that the "technologically mediated post-anthropocentrism" she promotes can "enlist the resources of bio-genetic codes, as well as telecommunication,

new media and information technologies, to the task of renewing the Humanities" (2013, 207). However, once again, if such a "renewing" of the university through a more authentic techno-commodification of all that advanced capitalism has not yet managed to commodify still results in greater elitism and exclusivity, as appears to be the case today, then it would not seem to be promoting the vision of "Life" Braidotti privileges.

Henry also argues that a change to our understanding of the notion of "technique" has also contributed to the academic industry's "practices of barbarism." For Henry, the original understanding of *tekhnê* as "*savoir-faire*" has been replaced by the more recent and more scientific concept "technique." This recalls Hannah Arendt's distinction between *Homo faber* and *Animal laborans* but also, more recently, Richard Sennett's description of an understanding of "craft" that should inform our understanding of technique but that modern institutions and factories, like the knowledge factory, have forgotten. Sennett argues that competition has become the new driver of work and hence technique. Craft, on the other hand, "focuses on the intimate connection between hand and head. Every good craftsman conducts a dialogue between concrete practices and thinking" and this dialogue "evolves into sustaining habits" (9). The academic industry fails to promote such "sustaining habits" in its students. Henry argues that the modern conception of technique makes "an abstraction of life" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 79). He argues that the "original essence of technique is not a particular savoir-faire, but savoir-faire as such." In other words, its original essence refers to an understanding of knowledge that "consists in the doing," "a doing that carries in itself, and constitutes, its own knowledge" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 80). This kind of technique that informs subjectivity as the "original savoir-faire" is also, for Henry, praxis. Henry's two-volume reading of Marx also describes praxis in terms of how it is mediated through subjectivity and what he calls "real life," the experience we have of "our body" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 80).

Henry sees two main reasons for this change in our understanding of technique and, in turn, transmission. The first reason is grounded in our systems of representation. What Henry describes as the "representation of praxis" is responsible for an "ideology that interprets technique as the instrumental transformation of nature by man for his own ends" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 84). The second factor is the economization of production. This refers to an "economic revolution" in

discourse and thought that brings not only a "revolution interior to the preordained economic universe" but also an event that suddenly "appeared and installed itself in being itself" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 88). This prefigures the meritocratic revolution that Thomas Piketty argues has brought us meritocratic extremism and that I examine in the next chapter. For Henry, the overall effect of these changes was that action, work, and technique were now understood according to the rules of scientific knowledge. The nature of humanity's conception of work had now "totally changed"; work became another "object for consciousness" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 89). A subjective knowledge was replaced by an objective knowledge that fostered the abstraction of the senses and of the existence of the world's sensible qualities (*la barbarie*, 2004, 89). Such descriptions of technique and work speak for what Henry calls "nature without humanity"; they privilege nature as "abstract nature" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 94). For Henry, "the self-accomplishment" of an abstract nature as a substitute for what he describes as the "self-accomplishment of life" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 95) "is barbarism, the new barbarism of our time" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 95).

Henry refers to the methodologies of the disciplines that follow this version of scientism as "ideologies of barbarism." He argues that many university disciplines today "thematise nature" or "pretend to speak of man" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 131). The "objective body," or the "empirical individual posited" is, for Henry, the product of "a double objectification" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 143). This "double objectification" takes on a whole new meaning in the age of the social network and the online avatar. The objectivity that is suggested here is double in the sense that what is objectified is not life itself according to the "phenomenological actuality of its auto-affection," but the "self-objectification of life under the form of an unreal signification" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 139). In other words, university disciplines posit "empirical individuals" or flawed descriptions of subjects as objects for investigation. Henry argues that the "self-objectification of life" that "is posited and presented before us is never life itself, […] but its empty representation" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 138).[6] The "human being" of the "human sciences" is itself an objectification, categorization, or representation. Henry argues that the "objectivism of the Galilean project," (*la barbarie*, 2004, 143) that has inaugurated for him an ideology of science or barbarism, "inevitably presupposes in the human sciences both this given precondition of the empirical individual and therefore the double objectification that has come into question"

(*la barbarie*, 2004, 143). This double objectification affects all aspects of life, including sexuality, which is "examined" solely in terms of "a certain number of behaviours" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 144) and a repertoire of functions such as "age, sex, class, type of society, and the enumeration of the circumstances in which it is accomplished" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 144). Henry's work here echoes many of the themes elaborated in Michel Foucault's work on sexuality.[7]

The second essential component of every discipline of this genre is the development of "the project of knowledge" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 148). Academic industries and research bodies must decide what criteria must be retained as "essential defining characteristics of the object of research" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 148) for it is only when "these characteristics have been circumscribed and situated in a relation of unity that one is able to undertake the construction of laws" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 148) for the promotion of a particular science. This recalls Jacques Derrida's description of the "new censorship"[8] in the university. Henry argues that both of these processes have important repercussions when they become implicated in our understanding of ethics. He argues that sciences of "this genre" invest in a "pure objectivism" that is irrelevant to every instance of moral choice. Society, in its rush to embrace new technologies or new forms of research, rarely considers how they bring new ethics with them; Nicholas Carr argues that "the intellectual ethic of a technology is rarely recognized by its inventors" (45). As Walter J. Ong reminds us, "technologies are not mere exterior aids but also interior transformations of consciousness" (in Carr 2010, 51). For Henry, it is only a phenomenological description of "real life" that is capable of providing the "moral" ground for any new "intellectual ethic" and it can never be a consideration for a science that regards the "empirical individual" as its precondition.[9]

Henry also defines barbarism as "*an unemployed energy* [Henry's emphasis]" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 177) and "energy," for him, is "the irrepressible test of that which fulfills itself and fills itself with itself to the point of excess [...] *every culture is the liberation of an energy, the forms of this culture are the concrete modes of this liberation*" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 174). This recalls Georges Bataille's sense of "unemployed negativity," a notion that takes on new meaning for today's "Europe of Knowledge" where in some southern European countries there is 50 percent youth unemployment.[10] Bataille devises the notion of "unemployed negativity" for his end-of-history perspective in his famous letter to Alexandre Kojève from December 1937. He surmises:

"I can assume (as a likely hypothesis) that from that this point on history has been completed (with the exception of its outcome). […] If action ('doing') is—as Hegel says—negativity, the question then arises as to knowing if the negativity of one who 'no longer has anything to do' disappears or remains in the state of 'unemployed negativity' […]." (in Corn, 84–5) Bataille argues, for his own time, that:

> In effect, since the man of "unemployed negativity" does not find in art an answer to the question that he himself is, he can only become the man of "recognized negativity." He has understood that his need to act no longer had a use. But since this need could no longer be duped by the enticements of art, one day or another it is recognized for what it is: as negativity empty of content … He stands before his own negativity as before a wall. (in Corn, 86)

In an era when "unemployed negativity" has taken on a whole new meaning for the continent that gave us our traditional notion of the university, it is timely to consider how the university with its "practices of barbarism" has contributed to heightened levels of unemployment and inequality in our societies. As educators do we want to see students on our four-year BA courses or on our lengthy PhD courses witness this "contravention" of their potential and energy where "a stagnation, [a] regression" leads to the "self-negation of life" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 178)? For, in regression, as Henry explains, "neither the energy nor the affect disappear, on the contrary they serve to bring being through itself to a heightened degree of tension" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 185). Paul Verhaeghe has observed how society's promotion of our academic industry's notion of meritocracy has exacerbated this heightened state of unemployed energy, tension, and risk in young people. I examine this in more detail in the next chapter. For Henry, it produces *ennui* and ennui is "precisely the affective disposition in which unemployed energy reveals itself to itself" (*la barbarie*, 2004, 191). We are witnessing the trickle-down effects of these educational philosophies. These states of tension, anxiety, and *ennui* are integral to what Zygmunt Bauman calls our society's transformation of identity into a "task" and to the risk that is ever-present in our promotion of individualization. However, the academic industry may indeed be so caught up in the financing of its corporate model of educationl management that it has lost sight of how it is enforcing and developing these "practices of barbarism".

3
Academic Barbarism, Universities, and Inequality

Recent work by economists such as Thomas Piketty, Joseph Stiglitz, and others has fleshed out the claim that the academic industry is perpetuating inequality. Their work points to further crossovers between the meritocratic educational practices of the academic industry—what I am calling academic barbarism after Henry and Benjamin—and the neo-liberal economic practices of hedge funds and investment banks that have contributed more directly to heightened levels of inequality. Piketty reveals that the universities consistently at the top of the rankings tables are the universities with the largest endowment funds. The top 8 US universities in terms of endowments are invariably Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Stanford, MIT, Columbia, Chicago, and Pennsylvania with endowments ranging from about $30 billion to $7 billion. It is also no surprise that these universities are invariably inside, or close to, the top 10 universities in the university rankings tables year after year.[1] We must also remember, as Joseph Stiglitz informs us, that many of the US "for-profit schools" are "owned partly or largely by Wall Street firms" (2013, 244). It is no surprise then that the returns on endowments have been "extremely high" in recent decades. Piketty reminds us that the "higher we go in the endowment hierarchy, the more often we find" (2014, 449) what are called "alternative investment strategies" or "very high yield investments such as shares in private equity funds and unlisted foreign stocks (which require great expertise), hedge funds, derivatives, real estate, and raw materials, including energy, natural resources, and related products." Ron Unz goes so far as to argue that Harvard is, in truth, one of the "world's largest hedge funds" with "some sort of school or

college or something attached off to one side for tax reasons." Unz reminds us that the income each year from tuition—roughly $37,000 for each of the 6,600 new freshmen—amounts to something short of $250 million with a substantial part of this going back into the university's financial aid programmes (Unz 2012).

However, it is important to note that much of the aid comes in the form of student loans and tax credits. Eighty-six per cent of students at U.S. four-year for-profit colleges took out student loans in 2009–10. The figure is even higher at four-year, for-profit colleges in the US where 94 per cent of students take out student loans (Mettler 2014, 36). Suzanne Mettler describes the tax credit system as a "reckless response" to the problem of funding educational expansion. Studies also reveal that tuition tax credits "fail to expand access to higher education; rather, they permit students who were already planning to attend college to attend more expensive institutions than they would otherwise" (Mettler 2014, 81).[2] Student loans are often part of the reason so many fail to graduate—only 28 per cent of first-time, full-time degree students at for-profit colleges who started college in 2004 had completed a bachelor's degree within six years according to the US Education Department's "The Condition of Education: 2012," (Fuller 2014). Suzanne Mettler also reminds us that it is the less well-off students who principally attend the for-profit institutions in the US who end up paying full fees while the few students who attend elite private non-profit schools and flagship publics that advertise high "sticker prices" end up paying nothing near full fare. As state support atrophies, public universities and colleges in the US are shutting their doors and are "being transformed into institutions that are, in reality, increasingly private" with students regularly paying over 50 per cent of fees themselves (2014, 129). Students at elite privates, on the other hand, where "sticker prices" run as high as $62,000 per year, and where "70% of students come from the top income quartile" and only "5%" from the bottom quartile, received an average bill of only "$13,380" for the academic year 2012–13 (30). Elite private graduates also generally yield the most impressive returns; their earnings are 45 per cent higher than those who receive college degrees elsewhere and they "produce a disproportionate share of the nation's top corporate and government leaders" (31).[3] Students at for-profit private colleges in the US, on the other hand, where low-income students enrol at four times the rate of other students (Webley 2011), and where

"graduates had gone in debt by $32,700 on average" in 2008, pay on average higher fees than students at public and private nonprofit colleges. U.S. Department of Education data for 2011 reveals that full-time students paid an average of $30,900 annually at for-profit schools in the 2007–8 academic year, almost double the $15,600 average paid at public universities and more than the $26,600 paid at private nonprofits (Lauerman 2015). Private for-profits also get 86 per cent of their funding from the public sector, once again demonstrating how the private has become the public in the US academic industry (Mettler 2014, 169).

However, these politically entrenched mechanisms for perpetuating inequality and producing a "caste system" that directly affect students' financial well-being in the creaking US academic industry are not unique to the US and are not isolated from the content of the learning and from the values integral to the educational transmission practised. Students are, for the most part, young, impressionable, and highly ambitious and the modes of operation, habitus, and practices of the institutions they work in are quickly internalized for future gain. Why should we expect them to perform any differently? Therefore, if the practices of educational institutions are being described as "barbaric," "testocratic," and "divorced from the collective good," isn't it likely that the undergraduate and graduate student faces we see before us in our corporate management, social policy, economics, and humanities classes are, in fact, reflecting back at us the traits we see their universities promoting and upholding?

Ron Unz (2012) also reminds us that Harvard "disproportionately admits the children of the wealthy or those of its alumni" because of the "desperate need to maintain its educational quality by soliciting donations." To maintain their endowments at these levels private nonprofit universities are also paying exorbitant salaries to hedge fund managers to maintain their position at the top of the rankings. However, more unsettling is the for-profit practice of lobbying politicians by contributing to their PAC funds. John Boehner's PAC "Freedom Project" "received $2.9 million" from for-profit colleges to "distribute to his Republican colleagues to support their campaigns" (Mettler 2014, 107). Boehner in turn campaigned against moves to exempt for-profit private colleges from state financial funds despite the high proportion of students who default on their loans and the fact that huge tranches of this public money go to the "presidents"

and "leaders" of these private university groups. John Sperling, the chairman of the Apollo Group that founded the University of Phoenix and other private universities, received $263.5 million of public money over 7 years and Robert Knutson, chairman of Education Management, received $132.4 million of public money for the same period (Mettler 2014, 170). One is drawn to the conclusion that the elite US private nonprofits with the biggest endowments are ranked more on economic merit than on educational merit. The economic practices that have produced so much inequality, according to Piketty and Stiglitz, are the same practices that have kept universities competitive and high in the rankings. The "trickle-down" effect that should concern educators here is not trickle-down economics but rather trickle-down educational values. It is inevitable that students and educators will ultimately be heavily influenced by the economic policies and theories, as opposed to humanist philosophies, that university boards employ to explain their practices.

If our institutions of learning are so heavily committed to such "alternative investments" and to the underlying philosophy of maximized return that drives such investments, is it any wonder that educational administrators are singing from the same hymn sheet, and allocating internal resources on the basis of the kind of return individual departments and faculties—now described as "cost-centres"—bring in? Since funding from government bodies and philanthropists depends on the performance of a university in rankings tables, and since rankings tables rank departments more and more in terms of the money brought in from external sources and university–industry collaborations, it is hardly surprising that the departments and disciplines that have traditionally defined themselves in opposition to the fundamentals of business and profit margins are suffering today. It is also no longer sufficient or indeed justified for those same departments to simply rely on their imparting of cultural capital since cultural capital is less and less about canons, creeds, and representative curricula but about visible returns in terms of wealth and consumer products that demonstrate social network know-how, entrepreneurial skills, and *guanxi*.[4]

It is generally accepted that inequality is on the rise in the developed world (Piketty 2014; Stiglitz 2013; Wilkinson and Pickett 2010). Piketty argues that it is approaching levels not seen since the beginning of World War I. Piketty also makes the point that the

"distribution of wealth is too important to be left to economists, sociologists, historians, and philosophers" (2014, 2). Therefore, as the knowledge industry behaves more and more like the for-profit industry it could once only dream of becoming, it is timely that humanities scholars also respond to this growing inequality, especially when the economists themselves are calling on the work of artists and writers to strengthen their claims for growing inequality. In fact, Piketty looks to novelists, and in particular Austen and Balzac, in commenting on the distribution of wealth in Britain and France between 1790 and 1830. He argues that these writers grasped the "hidden contours of wealth" (2). However, in acknowledging that novelists had such a key role to play in unearthing some of these hidden contours of wealth, he also admits that:

> […] no contemporary novelist would fill her plots with estates valued at 30 million euros as Balzac, Austen, and James did. Explicit monetary references vanished from literature after inflation blurred the meaning of the traditional numbers. But more than that, rentiers themselves vanished from literature as well, and the whole social representation of inequality changed as a result. In contemporary fiction, inequalities between social groups appear almost exclusively in the form of disparities with respect to work, wages, and skills. A society structured by the hierarchy of wealth has been replaced by a society whose structure depends almost entirely on the hierarchy of labor and human capital. It is striking, for example, that many recent American TV series feature heroes and heroines laden with degrees and high-level skills, […]. The writers apparently believe that it is best to have several doctorates or even a Nobel Prize. It is not unreasonable to interpret any number of such series as offering a *hymn to a just inequality, based on merit, education, and the social utility of elites* [my emphasis]. (419)

This is quite a startling admission for a number of reasons. Firstly, it is important to note that Piketty sees inequality and unequal distribution of wealth being maintained today, not by a hierarchy of wealth based on land, but by a hierarchy of labour and human capital that is based on educational credentialization and the social prestige of elites. Owen Jones sees a similar transformation in UK society. Madsen Pirie, the former head of the Heritage Foundation,

a Republican Study Committee on Capitol Hill, informed Jones that the Institute for Economic Affairs (IEA), a UK think tank set up in the mid-1950s to push "free-market ideas," was doing an "excellent job of disseminating market ideas, particularly in universities" (25). As Marc Bousquet reminds us: "*Late capitalism doesn't just happen to the university; the university makes late capitalism happen* [Bousquet's emphasis]" (44). However, despite Piketty's claim that the perpetuation of an unequal distribution of wealth through credentialization is not being challenged by novelists today in the same way that Austen and Balzac challenged the systems their heroes and heroines inhabit, I will argue in the next chapter and in chapter 7 that writers such as W. G. Sebald, Roberto Bolaño, and David Foster Wallace describe the destructive tendencies of the university system in ever more complex ways.

A recent report by the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission in the UK supports Piketty's claims in regard to elitism. It reports that the social background of those "running Britain" reveals that elitism is so embedded in Britain "that it could be called 'social engineering.'"[5] This elitism is rooted in education. Alan Milburn, the former UK Labour cabinet minister who chaired the commission, said that the situation was unacceptable because "locking out a diversity of talents and experiences makes Britain's leading institutions less informed, less representative and, ultimately, less credible than they should be." The university is, once again, perhaps the fundamental institution for underpinning and perpetuating this hierarchy. In the above report, for example, although Oxbridge graduates comprise less than 1 per cent of the public as a whole, "75% of senior judges, 59% of cabinet ministers, 57% of permanent secretaries, and 50% of diplomats" were seen to attend these universities. Owen Jones also reminds us that "university economics departments have been emptied of opponents of the status quo" (2014, 43). Jones argues that one of the key tactics of "the establishment" in the UK is to isolate, or push out, "dissident academics working on economics" (44). One such dissident academic in the UK, Ha-Joon Chang of the Faculty of Economics at the University of Cambridge, argues that "[b]ecause of the ideological dominance of the free-market school, these people [the dissident academics] have found jobs in business schools, government schools, and international relations"; there is little option, he argues, but for them "to embrace neo-liberal ideas" (44).

In the UK the link between an elite education and being a member of the "establishment" is clear. Based on an analysis of the MPs elected to Parliament in 2010, the Sutton Trust—an educational charity—concluded that "Parliament as a whole remains very much a social elite." Of the current intake of MPs, "35 per cent were privately educated (even though, nationally, just 7 per cent of pupils go to private schools)" (Jones 2014, 68). The link between "costly postgraduate qualifications" and media jobs in the UK is another means by which the "establishment," for Jones, locks working-class and lower-middle-class young people out of the media industries. The proliferation of unpaid internships in the media, somewhat similar to the practice of "permatemping" that Marc Bousquet says is rife in US universities, ensures that only those with the means can take up these positions and "afford to work for free for long periods" (99). Journalism hopefuls, unlike "twenty years ago," are now "expected to pay for their own training, and then turn up and still take a crappy job on £15,000" having "mysteriously invested £9,000 themselves" (99). According to a 2014 UK government report, "54 per cent of the top 100 media professionals went to a private school—in a country where only around 7 per cent of pupils are privately educated" (99–100). Society's means for describing and passing on merit may then appear to have changed. Whereas previously hierarchy was explicitly maintained through a rentier system, today it is more bound up with systems of acculturation and credentialization endemic to our notion of meritocracy. However, we should not presume that the system of land ownership endemic to the aristocratic societies Piketty focuses on in Austen's and Balzac's day has disappeared. Owen Jones reminds us that in the UK the "legacy of centuries of aristocratic power has not vanished, though: more than a third of English and Welsh land—and more than 50% of rural land—remains in the hands of just 36,000 aristocrats."[6]

Such descriptions of the means by which the propertied classes, the landed elites, or the establishment maintain their power are, of course, not new. The writings of sociologists such as Thorstein Veblen and Pierre Bourdieu have long described how groups such as the leisure classes and the academic classes have worked to perpetuate privilege. Writing in 1899, Veblen already discerns an important distinction between the working classes and their industrial employments and the leisure classes and their pecuniary employments.

Both classes must follow disciplinary courses of "training" which take them off on "divergent lines." The disciplines of the "pecuniary employments"—what sounds very much like the practices of the elite classes Piketty and Jones describe with their principal earnings coming from monetary funds, shares, and investments—are educated to "conserve and to cultivate certain of the predatory aptitudes and the predatory animus" (173). These divisions between the working classes and those engaged in "pecuniary employments" must be maintained by "educating those individuals and classes who are occupied with these employments and by *selectively repressing and eliminating* those individuals and lines of descent that are unfit in that respect [my emphasis]" (173). In his typically sardonic style, Veblen argues that in the relatively peaceful times of the 1890s, a peace we might share today, "it is of course the peacable range of predatory habits and aptitudes that is chiefly fostered by a life of acquisition" (173). In other words, "the pecuniary employments give proficiency in the general line of practices comprised under fraud, rather than in those that belong under the more archaic method of forcible seizure" (173). That these repressive, pecuniary, and possibly fraudulent practices may now have migrated to the new academic meritocracy would only then be necessary for the preservation of systems of privilege that rely on credentialization. The role credentialization and university-driven systems of meritocracy now play in supplementing what older forms of inheritance still pass on has never been clearer. This book examines how this aggravated form of social inequality is represented in different disciplines: sociology, literature, and government documents on education and rankings.

Despite these sociological descriptions of the new meritocratic age, Piketty's point that there are no novelists writing today who fill their plots with estates valued at 30 million euros raises an important question. How then do novelists of the neo-liberal meritocratic age fill their plots with the privileges and inequalities perpetuated by the new social order that is built on university credentialization? In the next chapter, I examine how the work of W. G. Sebald and Roberto Bolaño can be regarded as challenging this university system. Are we willing to accept that any inequality based on credentials and merit gained through the education system, and specifically the elite university system, is fair? The obvious problem with the merit argument, one that Thomas Piketty, Kathleen Lynch, George Monbiot,

and many others question, is that even at the beginning of the process people do not start with equal opportunities; some people are a long way down the track before the starting gun is fired. Is a merit system strongly built on systems of credentialization from elite universities fair when, as Stiglitz points out, the for-profit university industry charges such excessive fees and requires that the less well-off students amass large debts?

Piketty also challenges the meritocracy argument because despite the overall rise in the percentage of lower-class and middle-class people gaining qualifications, even at elite institutions, the gap between the richest 1 per cent and the rest is still growing and the return on incomes is far lower than the return on investments and inherited wealth. However, it must also be noted that in the US the "wage premium—the gap between what employers are willing to pay for graduates as compared with those who do not have a postsecondary credential—is actually growing" (Merisotis 2014, 43) and that the median US family income by educational attainment of householder (1956–2011) was higher the higher the educational attainment. The gaps in income between the different attainment levels have kept growing over this 50-year period (Mortenson 2014, 23). However, Piketty argues that the "huge change in the social representation of inequality"—from the rentier system to the elite university meritocratic system—is in part justified but that it rests on a number of misunderstandings. For Piketty, it does not follow from this supposed acceptance of a meritocratic system that "society has become more meritocratic" (2014, 420). It also does not follow that "the share of national income going to labor has actually increased (as noted, it has not, in any substantial amount)." However, more important for educationalists is that Piketty argues that it "certainly does not follow that everyone has access to the same opportunities to acquire skills" (420). Piketty gives historical evidence to demonstrate that the advent of the meritocratic age, that would work its power through the universities, often did not even try to hide its attempts at "justifying the position of the winners" as a "matter of vital importance" (487). One might argue that this glorification of the "winner" is simply an aspect of neo-liberalism, a philosophy that most individuals and nations have subscribed to. The American writer David Foster Wallace describes this highly competitive "winner" mentality in US society with tragic humour in *Infinite Jest*: "Be constantly focused and

on alert: feral talent is its own set of expectations and can abandon you at any one of the detours of so-called normal American life at any time, so be *on guard* [emphasis in original]" (2014, 185). For Wallace, it has led to generations of US students who have "given themselves away to an ambitious competitive pursuit" to the extent that the anti-hero of *Infinite Jest*, a character named Hal, ends up "[l]ike most North Americans of his generation" knowing "way less about why he feels certain ways about the objects and pursuits he's devoted to than he does about the objects and pursuits themselves" (156). Feelings have been eradicated, as Michel Henry suggests, by this murder machine system of education, to borrow a phrase from Pádraig Pearse.

The reasons for this generational shift may also have much to do with a move away from educational values that were once privileged. Paul Verhaeghe describes how neo-liberalism departs from classical liberalism in ways that may not be apparent to everyone. Firstly, it has always been the case that throughout history economies have been embedded in religious, ethical, and social structures. However, this no longer applies in neo-liberalism. Second, whereas liberalism reacts to the excesses of the welfare state, "neo-liberalism seeks to turn society into a welfare state for banks and multinationals" (in Verhaeghe 2014, 114).

Such a philosophy seems to presume that whatever pertains to private individuals should be paid privately and not out of the public purse. This is most obvious in the competition for places at elite private universities. However, neo-liberalist philosophy simply raises the bar when it comes to policing cultural and social capital. David Robertson argues that whereas earlier periods, in response to political struggles and human capital considerations, combined "to compel an expansion of higher education," the age of globalization challenges that historical movement because "when the struggle for social equality […] can no longer be resisted, ruling elites worldwide intensify reputational (and therefore social) differentiation between institutions" (Robertson 1998, 224). This is also not such a new phenomenon. Piketty reminds us that Emile Bourmy established Sciences Po in 1872 with the following clear mission in mind: "obliged to submit to the rule of the majority, the classes that call themselves the upper classes can preserve their political hegemony only by invoking the rights of the most capable. As traditional upper-class prerogatives crumble, the

wave of democracy will encounter a second rampart, built on eminently useful talents, superiority that commands prestige, and abilities of which society cannot sanely deprive itself" (487). As Thorstein Veblen reminds us, over 100 years ago in writing on "the higher learning" the university must promote, "the higher learning takes its character from the manner of life enforced on the group by the circumstances in which it is placed" (*The Higher Learning in America*, 2005, 3). We should therefore not be surprised if the university mimics the neo-liberalist philosophy that has allowed it to become the rankings-driven knowledge industry it is today.

Joseph Stiglitz compares the power associated with knowing how to "produce knowledge and information" to the "magnates" of the era of "cars and steel" (in Gary Hall *Digitize This Book!* 2008, 4). Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt extend this argument by claiming that if knowledge, information, and "communication [have] increasingly become the fabric of production" then the control over "networks of communication becomes an ever more central issue for political struggle" (in Hall 2008, 5). Universities are today, as never before, informers and often mediators of the "networks of communication." Thomas Piketty argues, in his proposal for greater equality, that "policies to encourage broader access to universities are indispensable and crucial in the long run, in the United States and elsewhere" (2014, 314). However, he acknowledges that desirable as such policies are, "they seem to have had limited impact on the explosion of the topmost incomes observed in the United States since 1980" (315). Piketty puts this down to two distinct phenomena that are related to university enrolments. The first is the fact that the "wage gap between college graduates and those who go no further than high school has increased" (315),[7] and the second is that the top 1 per cent (and even more the top 0.1 per cent)—a percentile that belong to the group of college graduates and in many cases is made up of "individuals who have pursued their studies at elite universities for many years" (315)—have seen their "remuneration take off." This makes Piketty's claim that the average salary of the parents of Harvard students is about $450,00 less surprising. Since the top 1 per cent recognize the need to have hard-earned qualifications from elite institutions, it is no surprise that their students are found in large numbers in the elite universities.

This trend can be related to the two most persuasive theories for relating expansion in education to inequality, namely Maximally

Maintained Inequality (MMI) (Raftery and Hout 1993) and Effectively Maintained Inequality (EMI) (Lucas 2001, 2009). Educational expansion in itself is unlikely to reduce educational inequalities. MMI argues that those from more advantaged groups are better placed to take up the educational opportunities expansion brings with it and EMI argues that these groups are likely to acquire for themselves a qualitatively better kind of education at any given level simply because they can afford to do so. Quantitative inequalities will be maintained until the enrolment rate for the highest socioeconomic group has reached saturation point and qualitative access to more prestigious programmes will be "effectively maintained" once again by the higher socioeconomic groups that can afford them. This is evident in the university system where the minority of poor students at these elite US institutions have no option but to take out high-interest loans so that their lifestyle can in some way match that of their classmates over the minimum four-year period of their study. The UK government's tripling of student fees since 2012 has also burdened poorer UK families with spiralling debt and interest rates of up to 5.5 per cent.[8] Only wealthier families can afford to pay up front and even this proves difficult; of the £22.5 billion in student loans taken out since 2012, only £388.2 million has been paid off ahead of time. However, despite the loan system, Rowena Mason and Shiv Malik report that the UK government is facing a "fiscal time bomb" with write off costs of the student loans already reaching 45 per cent of the £10 billion in student loans made each year.[9] The UK university sector, however, is pushing the outsourcing of its business with the majority of registered UK students now living outside the UK. Once again, it is the poorer local students who are priced out of the market. The educational model our educational "powerhouses" employ has created a system where local taxes are channeled more and more into funding educational programmes for elite international students. It is also the less well-off students at these colleges who will take debts with them when they leave, not the top 1 per cent. Stiglitz reports that "on average, students at these for-profit US schools have 45 percent more debt than students at other schools. Almost one-quarter of those who received bachelor's degrees at for-profit schools in 2008 borrowed more than $40,000, compared with 5 percent at public institutions and 14 percent at not-for-profit colleges" (2013, note 19, 469). Stiglitz also reports that indebtedness has increased markedly

over the past decade. Students who "earned a bachelor's degree in 2008 borrowed 50 percent more, in inflation-adjusted dollars, than those who graduated in 1996" (note 19, 469).

Piketty also relates this new stage of credentialization of the very wealthy to university endowments. Since it is only the very wealthy who can meaningfully contribute to university endowments, endowments can often appear to work as little more than an insurance policy that one's son or daughter is granted a place in the right institution. This rather unsavoury practice has been described for one top US university as the "Harvard Price." The "price," according to one right-wing publication, *The American Conservative*, is said to be $5 million for an applicant who is "reasonably competitive" and $10 million for an applicant who is not (Golden 2007). UK universities have also received many controversial endowments in recent years that reveal how the practice of for-profit universities can depart radically from the noble ideals of their mission statements and serve to promote the interests of profit-driven regimes that embody inequality.[10] It is a more complex version of the debenture system in elite expat schools in countries like Hong Kong and Singapore, where large monetary contributions to schools ensure that your children can attend.[11] Piketty uses the example of the higher returns that elite universities get on their larger endowments as an example to show that greater wealth in general produces larger returns. He focuses on the endowments of American universities over recent decades because he argues that these enable us to "gain a better understanding of unequal returns on capital without being distracted by issues of individual character" (447).

As we have seen, the top eight universities in terms of endowments are invariably Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Stanford, MIT, Columbia, Chicago, and Pennsylvania with endowments ranging from about $30 billion to $7 billion. Since many of the "for-profit schools" are "owned partly or largely by Wall Street firms" (Stiglitz 2013, 244), it is no surprise that the returns on endowments have been "extremely high" in recent decades. Piketty reminds us that the "higher we go in the endowment hierarchy, the more often we find" what are called "alternative investment strategies" (2014, 449). Ironically, one sought-after investment opportunity for both universities and professors at leading universities is student accommodation portfolios in the UK and the US, what is sold as part of the Coral Fund

Portfolio.[12] It is deeply ironic then that universities and professors are themselves often investing in the return on their own deeply indebted students' accommodation fees. However, these funds are sourced and monitored by highly skilled portfolio managers who are paid substantial six-figure salaries. Harvard itself gives nearly $100 million (0.3 per cent of its endowment) a year to these highly skilled portfolio managers, who, as loyal alumni, direct their alma maters and emeritus professors to the right kind of alternative investment.

As we have seen, Ron Unz argues that Harvard is, in truth, one of the "world's largest hedge funds" with "some sort of school or college or something attached off to one side for tax reasons" (Unz 2012). It is also important to note that the percentage of students receiving financial aid at all nonprofit, non-profit, and public universities has increased over recent years. Eighty-two per cent of first-time, full-time students at public four-year colleges received aid for 2009–10 while the figure was 92 per cent at for-profit colleges. However, it is important to note that much of the aid comes in the form of student loans; 86 per cent of students at four-year for-profit colleges took out student loans in 2009–10. As we have seen, student loans are often part of the reason so many fail to graduate—only 28 per cent of first-time, full-time degree students at for-profit colleges who started college in 2004 had completed a bachelor's degree within six years according to the US Education Department's "The Condition of Education: 2012," (Fuller 2014). The income each year from tuition—roughly $37,000 for each of Harvard's 6,600 new freshmen—amounts to something short of $250 million. Income from tuition is therefore a mere "financial bagatelle" beside the endowment of approximately $30 billion. The story of Harvard's salary bill is also revealing. Harvard's Division of Arts and Sciences—the central core of academic activity—also contains approximately 450 full professors. Their combined annual salaries tend to average higher than any other university in America. Each year, these "hundreds of great scholars and teachers" receive an aggregate total pay of around $85 million. However, Unz (2012) also reminds us that, in the fiscal year 2004, the five top managers of the Harvard endowment fund alone shared a total compensation of $78 million, an "amount which was also roughly 100 times the salary of Harvard's own president." As Unz argues, these figures clearly "demonstrate

the relative importance accorded to the financial and academic sides of Harvard's activities."

Students and parents paying high fees for elite non-profit, public, and for-profit universities know there is no option but to continue greasing the wheels of an industry that has for so long contributed to Wall Street firms dealing in the "mortgage-derivatives market or the international cost-of-funds index" (Unz, 2012). These firms were often responsible for much of the hardship families experienced through foreclosures and bankruptcies during the global financial crisis. This crisis has in turn led to universities becoming more selective in recent years, thus further raising costs for students. However, it is endowments, built on Wall Street alternative investments, that account for the bulk of the prosperity of the most prestigious universities, with alumni gifts only accounting for "one-tenth to one-fifth of the annual return on endowment" (Piketty, 2014, 451).

Adaptation

Sigal Alon has argued that social class has a "direct and persisting impact on enrolment and access to selective postsecondary schooling" (2009, 749). Students from low socioeconomic strata are at a marked disadvantage in access to postsecondary education. Alon argues that this inequality increases with college selectivity. Raftery and Hout's 1993 study on MMI also makes the point that when education is highly selective, as it is at all the top schools and universities, as a general principle, to "try and advance merit and retract class advantages as a basis of selection in a system that remains highly selective is likely to rankle too many entrenched interests" (60). The important point that Alon makes in relation to this inequality is that the increased inequality does not work through exclusion—which is universal since all applicants are made to take the same tests—but through *adaptation*. Adaptation describes the process whereby the privileged adapt to the changing closure rules. This is turn creates a polarization of resources and amplifies the class divide. In other words, the privileged pay for access to the information sources that influence and predict how new selection processes are to be managed and designed. Adaptation is, for Alon, the "cornerstone to building a comprehensive theory regarding the evolution of inequality" (749). Alon argues that the privileged "devote considerable effort to cultivating

their own stock of the currencies required for entry into lucrative positions" (750). Mitchell L. Stevens argues that the selective college admissions system plays a central role in guiding these processes of adaptation. For the affluent upper-middle-class parents who predominantly send their sons and daughters to these elite colleges, the "transition from high school to college is a seamless web of interdependencies" (247). From 1870 to 1930 academic leaders in the US "secured a central role for their institutions in the arbitration of social distinction" (246). Stevens argues: "[j]ust why scholars of higher education have so long ignored the consequences of this ceremony for the organization of childhood and family life is a sobering question" (248).

As Raftery and Hout remind us, when the competition is great and schools are highly selective it is highly unlikely that privileges will be given up easily. The failure of the underprivileged to keep pace creates a "remarkable class-based polarization in the level of test scores" which, in turn, "intensifies and expedites the formation of inequality" (750). Alon argues that this has resulted in more people seeking to "acquire even higher educational credentials, fueling a continuous escalation in educational status" (750). This system is nowhere more evident that in Asian metropolitan centres with high concentrations of universities. Adaptation rituals for students in the international schools and expensive English Schools Foundation (ESF) schools in Hong Kong that are key feeder schools for elite universities internationally see families invest hundreds of thousands of dollars on extracurricular activities deemed important for university admissions interviews. I will discuss the Hong Kong region as a case study for the academic industry in Asia in chapter 6.

As I will discuss in chapter 5, the rankings agenda is based on the notion of an idealized and optimum university. The top university of the future, and hence the top student, can be as exclusive as the will to believe in this ideal is strong or well-endowed. The rankings system prides itself on its scientific objectivity and yet the ideal university it posits as a target for all institutions worldwide is an impossible ideal. Rankings criteria lead to ever more competitive tests for all institutions where university Presidents compare rankings tables to medals tables. Is it any wonder that in the "current meritocracy" our students inhabit rules by "testocratic merit" where "easily measurable criteria award status to individuals" (Guinier 2015, 27)? Alon argues that these practices, that are fuelled by the belief in such an

ideal, "pose a threat to equality of educational opportunity" (751) and "carry devastating implications for the ethos and operation of meritocracy in higher education, diverting it from being the great American equalizer" (750).

Social inequality and educational inequality

The relationship between social inequalities and educational inequalities has been well examined in the European context (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977; Lynch 2010; Lynch and Baker 2005; van der Velden and Smyth 2011). Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron's research on reproduction in pedagogic work highlighted how education can forge links between social inequality and educational inequality. Pedagogic work (PW) is capable of "perpetuating the arbitrary it inculcates more lastingly than political coercion" (1977, 33). Recent work on the university in Europe has also developed Bourdieu's critique of education. Rolf van der Velden and Emer Smyth argue that the elites "continue to play an important role *within* mass higher education in many countries, based on stratified higher education, protected labour market positions, or both" (2011, 135, emphasis in original). John Major, the former Conservative Prime Minister, has also recently spoken out in regard to the "truly shocking" privilege of the privately educated elite in UK society (Foot 2013). Recent studies on university spending in developing countries also reveal that increased spending at the tertiary level relative to spending at primary level—what is called the "tertiary tilt"—means that high primary enrolments will be associated with *higher* Gini coefficients a decade on, and thus greater inequality. The global incentive to enter the knowledge industry race is therefore holding back developing countries. Gruber and Kosack argue that this is because the "politically constrained policymakers who govern developing countries have a strong interest in protecting the earnings of elite university graduates, the vast majority of whom come from wealthy families whose political support these leaders need to stay in power" (Gruber and Kosack 2014, 262).

Bourdieu's reading of the university, in terms of the perpetuation of a cultural arbitrary that acts as a safeguard for forms of hierarchization, has a new element to contend with in the current age of mass education, where tertiary education is so popularized that it is no longer a sufficient condition for success. To "guarantee excellence

or … to protect privileges of the in-group against outsiders," entry to many professions is now made difficult through a set of complex and demanding criteria that is nonetheless more easily deciphered and controlled in the age of the social network (van der Velden and Smyth 2011, 136). Prestigious educational affiliations, which Lynch, Bourdieu, Oleksiyenko, and others demonstrate are clearly now principally the possession of the wealthiest, can be displayed alongside other exclusive memberships that substantiate a candidate's further cultural capital to ensure that such capital and credentialization are easily channeled into a suitable employment class. The educational system plays an important role in perpetuating broader inequalities in society (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977), but by corollary, there is also an important connection in society between the promotion and privileging of social responsibility in government policy and the nurturing of social responsibility in the practice of that society's educational policy.

Education and soft power

The ordering of society through credentialization, the conferment of honours related to knowledge acquisition, and academic prestige might be described as a form of soft power. It also relates to the Foucauldian notion of infrapower. The far-reaching connections that Foucault privileges between knowledge, information, and power that are "not just superimposed on the relations of production," as many claim for ideologies, "but are deeply rooted in what constitutes them," are most fully realized and enforced by what he calls "infrapower" (*Power* 87). This is found in the "whole set of little powers, of little institutions" that must be put in place, he argues, as a "prior condition of hyperprofit" so that it can then begin to function and give rise to a "series of knowledges—a knowledge of the individual, of normalization, a corrective knowledge" (87). This cultural materialist schematization of power may sound somewhat old-school; however, given that today's most lucrative national knowledge industries, namely the US and the UK, have long been described as educational "powerhouses," it makes sense to examine how the micro-management of this most fundamental of power relations, that between knowledge and the "things that knowledge must know," is disseminated by universities and whether novelists have responded to this (9).

Foucault takes from Nietzsche the idea that this knowledge relationship, one we might rephrase today as one between knowledge and the things knowledge must *grow*, one that educational powerhouses are embroiled in through the circular rubrics of rankings regulations, cannot be one of "natural continuity". It must be one of "violation" and "violence" that also disrupts the "unity of the subject" that was once "ensured by the unbroken continuity running from desire to knowledge" (10). It recalls Benjamin's account of positive barbarism. In other words, the violence that these systems of power—the new educational "powerhouses"—exert on the "unity of the subject" or on what the Belgian psychologist Paul Verhaeghe refers to in his new book (*What About Me? The Struggle for Identity in a Market-based Society*) as identity is hugely influential for how we internalize the values and worldviews these systems of credentialization uphold. Verhaeghe also reminds us that identity and identification have the same etymology, deriving from *idem*, Latin for "equal" (11); therefore identity is strongly motivated by feelings that we *should* be equal to some peer group or even to some elite group. However, the corollary of this is that our understanding of our identity takes a beating when we do not manage to match up to the standards this system sets us. We begin to act and think like rankings bodies; a person is measured by where he or she studied and what he or she studied. While this violence at the subjective level was always primarily an ontological and philosophical notion for Foucault and Nietzsche, today in the age of the economist kings it is more than ever described in terms of a lived socioeconomic reality and represented as a form of economic violence that is no less violent in now being principally economic.

Rankings and the meaning of merit

Michael Sauder and Wendy Nelson Espeland's (2009a, 2009b) work extends these readings of Foucault and power in regard to knowledge and the university to the discipline of rankings. They examine the organizational responses of universities and colleges, and specifically law schools, to rankings. They investigate why these rubrics have "permeated law schools" so extensively and why these institutions have been unable to "buffer these institutional pressures." They pay particular attention to Foucault's notions of surveillance and normalization in arguing that these are strategies employed by rankings bodies in order to get universities to internalize rankings criteria.

They argue that rankings have inaugurated a unique set of "public measures of performance" for organizations that are almost impossible to buffer against. In the end, the schools and universities are encouraged to self-impose the discipline that rankings foster (64). One of the reasons for the organizational "tight coupling" and for the inability of the institution to buffer itself in relation to the rankings criteria is that members, both individual universities and faculty, display a strong "capacity to *internalize* external pressures, whether because of the anxiety they produce or the allure they possess" (2009a: 65). Sauder and Espeland also recognize that the coupling is strong and the anxiety levels are high because of the "evolving responses of an assortment of actors who struggle to reconcile their sense of themselves as professional educators with an imposed market-based logic of accountability" (2009a: 66).

It is most likely that this struggle is greater the further the discipline is from understanding or indeed espousing a market-based logic of accountability. Therefore, a theology or philosophy professor may find the struggle more alien than an economics or business professor. In returning to Foucault, however, Sauder and Espeland remind us of how Foucault argues that:

> In discipline, the elements are interchangeable, since each is defined by the place it occupies in a series, and by the gap that separates it from the others. The unit is, therefore, neither the territory (unit of domination), nor the place (unit of resistance), but the *rank*: the place one occupies in a classification, the point at which a line and a column intersect, the interval in a series of intervals that one may traverse one after the other. (in Espeland and Sauder, 69: Foucault 1977, 145–6)

Academics and, in turn, students therefore become the objects of particular kinds of knowledge, and in this case, it is rankings knowledge that is the driver. Faculty become intervals in a grid, spaces in a system of classification that then decides their futures. As Verhaeghe argues, in the neo-liberal meritocratic system that the education system has become, meritocracy has become a form of exclusion and a form of perpetuating an elitist status quo. Universities follow the lead of rankings bodies that employ a "rigid top-down approach to quality that stifles individual initiative" (2014, 169); "autonomy and

individual control vanish, to be replaced by quantitative evaluations, performance interviews, and audits" (169).

It is also important that such rankings charts construct an "abstract, ideal law school [or university] comprised of discrete, integrated components" (74); this ideal that the university and the knowledge businesses construct and then enforce on all educators and institutions is reminiscent of the Hegelian Absolute, what Marx described as an anomaly, an ideal that sets itself up as a new reality for the sake of forms of hierarchy and exclusion. In his famous critique of Hegel in his *Critique of Hegel's Doctrine of the State* Marx decries an homage to ideals and concepts removed from reality that is as relevant today as it was in the middle of the nineteenth century: "the appearance is created that there is an idea over and above the organism" (66). Today this idea is more than ever a meritocratic ideal. Marx argues that "Hegel's sole concern is simply to re-discover 'the Idea,' the 'logical Idea,' in every sphere, whether it be the state or nature, whereas the real subjects, in this case the 'political constitution,' are reduced to mere *names* of the Idea" (67). Fate becomes predestined also, by the "nature of the concept" (70). Therefore, the meritocratic ideal that the knowledge industry has concocted is the latest version of the Hegelian Ideal. It is then, if we follow Marx, bound up with the practice of belief and with the kind of structures of becoming and states of institutionalization that Marx challenged in such belief systems as the religion of his day. In a secular age, what Charles Taylor calls our age, meritocracy is then a substitute for religion; we might have lost our faith but the form remains. The meritocratic ideal and its accompanying notion of true merit that, following Nietzsche, we align with our contemporary Ivy League or Oxbridge graduates are then as illusionary as the beautiful or the good. As Nietzsche reminds us, "the beautiful and the ugly [and to be truly credentialized is the true beauty and good of today] are recognized as *relative* to our most fundamental values of preservation. It is senseless to want to posit anything as beautiful or ugly apart from this […] In every case it is a question of the conditions of preservation of a certain type of man" (Nietzsche, *The Will To Power*, 1968, 423). To strive for a sense of true merit in education, or to believe that such a thing exists, is as "senseless" as positing "anything as beautiful or ugly" apart from these standards and practices of preservation (423). Our capacity and susceptibility for belief have been harnessed to the meritocratic ideal of the knowledge

industry. While it has long been acknowledged that Information is the new God, the information disseminators—the universities—have of course been much slower to describe their new roles as anything like disseminators of the Good News.

Espeland and Sauder are also quick to acknowledge that resistance is only part of the compulsory organizational workings of discipline in institutions. Therefore, universities, academics, and students alike who cling to some notion of academic identity by way of a gentle resistance to rankings become motivated by anxiety. This recalls Zygmunt Bauman's notion of risk that is integral to our age where identity has become a "task" with numerous checks and balances and rigorous monitoring systems. Espeland and Sauder argue that "[r]ankings create a public, stable system of stratification comprised of unstable positions. The result is a social structure exquisitely suited for generating anxiety, uncertainty, meticulous monitoring, and discipline. Processes of normalization and surveillance change how members make sense of their organizations, their work, and their relations to peers" (2009a: 79). However, in borrowing from Foucault, Espeland and Sauder argue that Foucault's approach is limited for today's knowledge industry by the fact that he focuses on "individuals as the locus of discipline" and therefore neglected the "organizational dimensions of discipline" (80). However, it is of course relatively easy to apply Foucault's description of power to the actions of institutions such as corporations, especially given the fact that, legally, corporations are regarded as individuals.

Rankings have become the "driver and rationale for significant restructuring" of universities and the "means by which success and failure are gauged" (Hazelkorn 2010, 22; see also Aghion et al. 2007; Ritzen 2010). Ellen Hazelkorn describes the ideal rankings university by way of the moniker "emerging global model" (EGM). She argues that this is the model of the future, one that emerges straight out of the rankings criteria. She admits that "while widening participation remains a policy priority," the "emphasis has shifted from getting more students into school to quality and excellence" (27) or to what is called "selective investment and greater concentration of research" (Marginson 2007). What emerges therefore is a discussion that tries to paper over the obvious "conflict between equality and excellence" (Berger 2009; Flynn 2010). Wendy Espeland and Michael Sauder also argue that rankings (and in their case they focus on *U.S. News & World*

Report (USN) rankings for law schools in the US) "subtly, powerfully, and enduringly shape perceptions of ability and achievement" because they influence "organizational decisions such as whom to admit or hire" (Espeland and Sauder 2009b: 588). Their study is also important for the sense of inequality that Piketty describes in society. Piketty argues that university credentials and academic qualifications are often accepted as societal structures that perpetuate forms of inequality because they are grounded on a belief in meritocracy, i.e. this form of social stratification that grounds social inequalities is regarded as more acceptable than earlier forms of stratification based on the rentier system because they are based on merit. However, Espeland and Sauder argue that the kinds of standardized tests that the colleges they examined base their admission procedures on, admission policies that are then used in rankings criteria for the rankings bodies, employ a "highly restrictive form of merit" (2009b: 588). They also argue that the notion of "diversity" has "increasingly supplanted language about rights or redressing racial, gender, or economic inequality" (2009b: 591). This therefore suggests that it is timely, in response to Piketty's, Stiglitz's and Wilkinson and Pickett's studies on inequality, that we return to an examination of university admissions policies and their reliance on rankings and the forms of "merit" that this reliance promotes through a discussion of economic inequality.

Amartya Sen reminds us that there are two main ways of describing merit and systems of rewarding it. These are the incentive-based approach and the action propriety approach. Incentive-based systems reward actions for the good they do and the remuneration of the activities that generate good consequences tends to produce a better society (2000, 8). Action propriety models, on the other hand, reward the intrinsic quality of such actions. One of the main problems Sen perceives in regard to recent meritocratic systems is that "what are often taken to be 'meritocratic' demands have moved, in many ways, so far away from their incentive-based justification that they can scarcely be defended on the classic incentive grounds" (14). The objectives of actions deemed worthy of merit are often "biased toward the interests of more fortunate groups" (14). This is very much the case for Alon and Stevens in their studies of academic college selection procedures. Since merit is a "hypothetical imperative" contingent on what is the preferred view of the good society, merit's relationship with economic inequality depends very much "on whether

an aversion to economic inequality is included in the objective function of the society" (14). Since our societies are experiencing aggressive levels of economic inequality, it is clear that economic equality is not of great interest to our societies. Therefore, perhaps we should not be so surprised if the meritocratic models of our universities employ objectives that appear to be biased towards the interests of more fortunate groups. However, if our systems of meritocracy become so divorced from the action propriety model that they simply reward entitlement, our society will lose the vocabulary that enables us to distinguish practices of civilization from those of barbarism.

Descriptions of merit are driven by a society's prevailing "success narrative." As Piketty suggests in his readings of Austen and Balzac, novelists can help us to reimagine the prevailing "success narrative." The kinds of futures we project onto our students in classes are a direct reflection of the kinds of futures we imagine as real possibilities. By introducing students to works of art and specifically to the imaginative works of writers and novelists, they can begin to find the cognitive space for reimagining their own success narratives. It must also be noted that rankings are changing our understanding of merit. In their interviews with hundreds of admissions staff at law schools, Espeland and Sauder discovered that "nearly all admissions staff reported that rankings had dramatically 'changed admissions,' and one reason why they resent rankings so deeply [...] is because they see rankings as constraining their discretion to admit deserving students" (597). They admit that the more emphasis law schools, for example, place on "test scores" in their admissions—what drives their rankings score—"the more costly it seems to admit racially and economically diverse students" (2009b: 599). They argue that some groups cannot be well represented in law schools "unless race or class is considered or a more expansive notion of merit is adapted" (600). They point out that both the scholarly literature and their interviews reveal that "'merit' is narrowly defined by test scores, or, to a lesser extent, grade averages" and therefore certain minority groups, and also majority groups such as the less well-off or the poor and lower middle classes, will need "some form of preference to ensure they are admitted in meaningful numbers" (2009b: 601). Because they believe it is clear that "rankings generally reinforce the advantage of schools with privileged statuses and plentiful resources" (607), one way to

offset this tendency is to get rankings bodies to include diversity (which includes racial, gender, *and* socioeconomic diversity) as part of its overall ranking and not simply as a separate indicator, which is generally the case today. They argue that we simply must learn to change the "success narrative" (608) and it is writers and novelists who are most gifted at enabling us to reimagine the "success narratives" that we pass on to the next generation.

Paul Verhaeghe has argued that the reason our "success narratives" and our understanding of merit are so restrictive today is a direct result of the neo-liberal system. Verhaeghe argues that despite the fact that meritocracy was a fairly unknown word until recently, even the Bible has its meritocratic parable about the talents being doubled when someone works hard and does not bury them in the ground (Matthew 25: 14–30). The argument is that power (*kratos*) is merited through effort. Verhaeghe argues that two kinds of meritocracy developed, one in Europe that he describes as an educational meritocracy that was tied in with greater social mobility and the welfare state in places such as the UK. In America, however, the rags to riches stories were the basis of the meritocratic narratives that went to build the notion of the American dream. It is related to "negative liberty" and it essentially means that the "individual may not be hampered by others, least of all by a paternalistic state" (2014, 116). This has typically been regarded, Verhaeghe argues, from an economic perspective where there is to be "no state intervention in business" (116). Verhaeghe believes that the European system was more political in holding that "a state should not impose ideologies on its people" (116). However, Verhaeghe argues that what has happened in neo-liberal society is that the two meritocratic narratives have merged to the extent that "intellectual achievements without economic added value are regarded as largely worthless" (116).

Moral value and human value are also determined more and more by economic success. Verhaeghe argues that this neo-liberal merging of educational and economic meritocracy has brought about a "turning point"; in no time social mobility has ground to a halt in the developed world and the social divide, or inequality, as Piketty, Stiglitz, and others have argued, has become greater (117). Verhaeghe even argues that this has led to freedom making way for "general paranoia" (117). What has transpired is that meritocracy has given rise to a "new elite, who carefully shut the door on those coming

up behind them" (117). Of course, this is not a new phenomenon even though it has led to elite groups becoming more imaginative in regard to how their status is to be protected. Right-wing apologists tell us that capital will always find new ways of putting itself beyond government sanction. The right-wing blogger and columnist Paul Staines argues: "We've had nearly a century of universal suffrage now, and what happens is capital finds ways to protect itself from, you know, the voters".[13] This kind of sentiment, of course, carries on a tradition of fearmongering among the upper classes that recalls the words of the Conservative statesman Lord Salisbury to Parliament in the UK in 1866 in response to the question of extending the vote to the working classes: "I have heard much on the subject of the working classes in this house which, I confess, has filled me with feelings of some apprehension." Giving working-class people the vote would, he stated, tempt them to pass "laws with respect to taxation and property especially favourable to them, and therefore dangerous to all other classes."[14] It is incredible to think that such a philosophy might still exist in the developed world in regard to the granting of universal suffrage. However, this turned out to be the case in Hong Kong when the Beijing-appointed Chief Executive of Hong Kong, Leung Chun-ying, argued during the recent Umbrella Revolution that it was "unacceptable to allow his successors to be chosen in open elections, in part because doing so would risk giving poorer residents a dominant voice in politics" (Bradsher and Buckley 2014).

Verhaeghe's prognosis for such a meritocratic system that "rewards the most intelligent and industrious" and "punishes the rest" is that it soon "becomes toxic to its citizens" and ends in chaos and revolution. The merging of an educational and economic meritocracy might sound democratic in spirit; however, one quickly realizes that not everyone starts from the same position in this race. Not everyone is born into a family that equally respects education and learning and it goes without saying that it is impossible to ensure equal starting positions when it comes to economic meritocracy. However, as Verhaeghe and Piketty suggest, "the two best starting positions often coincide: a wealthy background usually goes hand in hand with a good education" (119). After an initial period of raised living standards for all, such systems eventually descend into reactionary and restrictive regimes for perpetuating forms of elitism. Verhaeghe even argues that it becomes an essentially social Darwinist system

where the "best get precedence and the rest are selectively removed" (2014, 119). Verhaeghe argues that such meritocratic systems create a version of who is "naturally" the best and who is the "fittest" by essentially determining how merit and being the fittest are to be measured. They create an "increasingly narrow version of reality" while claiming that they "promote 'natural' winners." They preserve that "reality" by "systematically favouring those winners" (120). Verhaeghe describes this as a kind of reification where on the basis of "figures" and "rankings" decisions are made over people's heads and these "figures" then create the reality on which they are supposedly based (122). As we have seen, this notion of reification is perhaps at its strongest in the rankings systems used in the university.

If we look more closely at rankings we can see that they increase selectivity, influence institutional management, and perpetuate educational inequality. University rankings use very different criteria to secondary school rankings scores like PISA. In fact, rankings have very little to do with the academic performance of the students themselves. It might be argued that if the academic performance of any group is important for the rankings of national education institutions at the university level, it is the academic performance of the teachers and professors, not the students. Hazelkorn argues that in recent years we have witnessed the "growth of a worldwide rankings industry" (2010, 45). There are six major types of rankings and there are also now international guidelines on the "principles of ranking" (the *Berlin Principles of Ranking of Higher Education Institutions* that was adopted in 2006). There are national, supra-national (the European Commission's *U-Multirank*), and international rankings that are conducted by private commercial media organizations, governments, and think tanks. Hazelkorn breaks down the various criteria of the different rankings bodies into the following major categories and subcategories: Beginning Characteristics (e.g. Student entry scores and % of international students), Learning Inputs-Faculty (e.g. Faculty/Student ratio), Learning Inputs-Resources (e.g. Budget, physical resources, library volumes), Learning Environment (e.g. Student satisfaction), Learning Outputs (e.g. Graduation or completion rates), Final Outcomes (e.g. Employability), Research (e.g. Publications and outputs), and Reputation (e.g. Peer and stakeholder esteem) (60). Many of these categories are obviously weighted towards institutions with money and large endowments. Performing well in rankings, in

turn, brings in more money from governments and philanthropists who always want to have the buildings they name in pre-eminent institutions. It should also be remembered that US universities, unlike typical private foundations, are not legally required to spend 5 per cent of their assets on charitable activities and therefore the wealthier institutions can keep all the money they make from investments. For example, the *de minimis* educational activities of for-profit industries or hedge funds like Harvard bring enormous tax advantages. Ron Unz argues that since Harvard's endowment is now back over $30 billion the legally required contribution of 5 per cent for private institutions to give back would come to around $1.5 billion annually. This is many times the total amount of undergraduate tuition, which should arguably be eliminated, thereby removing a substantial financial barrier to enrolment or even application at top universities like Harvard.

It quickly becomes apparent that the OECD PISA rankings system and the different university rankings systems are very different beasts. While it can still be claimed that the PISA secondary school rankings primarily rank the achievements of the students, this was never the case for university rankings. As the leading universities operate more and more for the benefit of their hedge funds, and since tuition brings in so little in terms of the annual budget of these institutions, it would of course seem odd to rank these institutions solely on educational criteria. Since Mitchell L. Stevens has argued that the elite colleges and universities generally favour wealthier students, it is also worth examining how rankings criteria might favour wealthy *institutions* by looking more closely at Hazelkorn's six main categories. If a university is to score well on Beginning Characteristics (Student entry scores and % of international students) and if it, like most universities, has a student population made up predominantly of local or national students, then it simply has to be selective and limit the number of places available. This is how the university system works, for example, in Hong Kong and Singapore. There are strong controls on the numbers of students accepted on each programme in the top universities. Also, if universities want to have a high percentage of international students and they do not have the reputation of a Harvard or an Oxford, then the only option is also to keep the number of local students low. Internationalization can then be a key factor in keeping down the numbers of local

students. Jeroen Huisman and Marijk Van Der Wende paint a less than benevolent picture of the motivations for internationalization and what they call in their context, Europeanization, in educational policy. They read between the lines of the 1992 Maastricht Treaty in arguing that "whereas higher education was previously accredited a national and cultural role, the economic rationale became more and more important" (2004). They argue that it was recognized that "national views on the role of higher education gradually grew closer—not necessarily intentionally—to the EC's perspective." The reason for this was not always grounded on the founding humanistic principles of Bologna University. Huisman and Van der Wende argue that "the economic rationale became even more dominant in the context of globalization where the market for transnational supply [in education] was estimated to have an annual value of 30 billion US dollars in 1999 and expected to be a growth market" (22). They argue that even though "large amounts of financial support were given for research and development projects" the "supranational support was negligible compared to the national support for research." It was at the level of "individual higher education institutions" that EC support was often "quite substantial" (352). This might explain the greater degree of freedom evident in arts and humanities programmes in many universities in Europe since the 1990s with more course choices being offered than ever before.

Hazelkorn's next principal category—Student/Faculty ratio—makes it clear that universities must also ensure that the number of students is kept within strict limits. If the university wants a high number of international staff and it is not a Harvard or an Oxford it will need to attract foreign academics. The category Learning Inputs-Resources is also strongly weighted towards those universities with big endowments. Annual subscriptions to journals and research databases are extremely expensive. John Willinsky argues in *The Access Principle* that "[a]lthough it may seem that a vast, rich world of information is now within a click or two of most connected computers, the toll gates that surround the carefully reviewed and well-financed information constituted by scholarly research have grown more expensive and restrictive, even as many pockets of open access have emerged" (2006, 126). It should not be surprising that as our definition of merit gets more restrictive—based as it is on rankings criteria—so access to the information and scholarly research that feed this notion

of merit is also becoming more restrictive. However, due to reports such as the Finch Report in the UK from 2012 wider access at least to government-funded research does appear to be on the horizon. I discuss this in more detail in chapter 5.

Learning Outputs (graduation or completion rates) also means that student numbers, especially in the arts, must be kept to a minimum, since, as Joseph Stiglitz informs us in regard to US students, arts students are notorious for dropping out. Almost 80 per cent of first bachelor degree students at for-profit universities in the US do not complete their studies. Final Outcomes (employability) is an interesting category since it also pressures universities into taking only those students who are employable. The safest option for a university is then to select students from families who are in the upper percentiles in terms of income since working-class students are more likely to end up unemployed. Research and reputation also depend very much on the reputations of faculty. The spate of celebrity hirings before the GFC (Global Financial Crisis) of academics such as Niall Ferguson[15] and Simon Schama and of Nobel Laureates demonstrates that reputation is expensive. It is clear that the rankings are always likely to pressurize universities into being cost-effective. Educational philosophy comes after the fact when the rankings criteria have been adhered to in the most cost-effective manner.

The rankings ideal is grounded on the US model of the liberal arts university that owes much to the "American dream." However it is a dream that has become weighed down by the burden of its own endowments. Surely a better dream in an era of aggressive inequality would be one where strong national university rankings are accompanied by, or are built on, an educational philosophy that strives for less income inequality and greater social mobility? If not, then we simply have to accept that income equality will always be inversely proportional to educational achievement at the national university level. Must we accept the Kuznets hypothesis according to which development (which brings educational prestige) must have a U-shaped relationship with inequality? It is what the policies of our national education "powerhouses" are presuming in privileging the criteria and requirements of rankings institutions. In applying psychological notions such as "reactivity" and "reflexivity," Espeland and Sauder (2007) have argued that over time higher education institutions are gradually transformed into "entities that conform

more closely to the criteria used to construct rankings," that they are ultimately moulded and shaped by the "contaminating influence of measurements on their target object" (Espeland and Sauder 2007, 6). John Garvey also notes that "powerful market and regulatory norms" have pushed, in their case, "law schools toward uniformity" (in Espeland and Sauder 2009b: 603). However, a university is not, and never should be, synonymous with a rankings body. A university, if we are to follow educationalists and philosophers like John Henry Newman and Immanuel Kant, must inspire engaged critical debate and a striving for the imaginative and inquisitive embrace of all that is finest about humanity. It cannot be an institution whose philosophy is grounded on the disengaged financial meritocracy of rankings criteria. If this is what our universities become, then they will lose the creative, emotionally engaged, and inspiring students that have always spoken out on behalf of universities, and that still speak out on the streets of Hong Kong and Santiago for the values they want their universities to uphold. If universities lose this kind of student then true education will be found elsewhere. An educational philosophy grounded in values integral to the humanities has been replaced by a business model drawn up by rankings bodies and these have not yet been able to concoct a persuasive educational philosophy on which to ground this enslavement to rankings.

Another reason for the disconnect between secondary school education and university education at the national level in terms of how universities rank internationally is the difference between levels of public and private expenditure in each nation studied. In Norway, the most equal of the countries that Blanden et al. (2005) studied, almost all (97.8 per cent) spending on school education is public expenditure. In contrast, in the USA, the least equal of this group of eight countries, only about two-thirds (68.2 per cent) of the spending on school education is public money. Therefore, as Wilkinson and Pickett argue, this is likely to "have a substantial impact on social differences in access to higher education" (161). Even taking into account the relatively large number of students on financial aid in the form of student loans, recent reports reveal that there is a significantly lower number of students from low-income families—in some regions in the OECD countries students from affluent neighbourhoods are more than six times more likely to go on to third-level education[16]—at the elite institutions and that the top

institutions are predominantly catering for the better-off.[17] Student debt is another feature of the for-profit private university system in the US that clearly influences social differences in access to higher education. Joseph Stiglitz reminds us that when the bankruptcy law changed in the US in 2005 it "made it impossible for students to discharge their student debts even in bankruptcy" (2013, 244). He argues that this "eviscerates any incentives for banks, and the for-profit schools that they work with, to provide an education that will yield a return. Even if the education is worthless, the borrower is still on the hook" (244). Stiglitz refers to this arrangement between the for-profit schools and the for-profit banks as a "conspiracy," a conspiracy students are never warned about. This is all the more unsettling when we remember that many of the "for-profit schools" are "owned partly or largely by Wall Street firms" (244). Stiglitz also blames the government; he says that it wasn't "as if the government was trying to regulate a private industry that was seemingly doing well on its own" since the "for-profit schools existed largely because of the federal government" (245). The for-profit education sector which is worth $30 billion a year in the US receives as much as 90 per cent of its revenue from federal student loan programmes and federal aid. So the loans are provided at high interest rates by the government to students, 80 per cent of whom do not graduate (244), and then students are "locked in" for the rest of their lives—thanks to the government's 2005 bankruptcy law—with the vast majority of them never reaping the "real financial rewards of education" that come only upon completion of the degree programmes. Given the already low social mobility figures in the US, this can only mean that there is an intergenerational debt burden that will either price children of indebted graduates out of the education market or lead them to run up further debts at higher rates. Tamar Lewin reminds us that US students who earned a bachelors's degree in 2008 borrowed 50 per cent more, in inflation-adjusted dollars, than those who graduated in 1996 (Lewin 2011). Despite the fact that this is an educational system that emerged out of the political climate that gave us the American dream, is it a system that we should follow even if its universities do consistently top the rankings tables?

This, in turn, suggests that university rankings are in fact a good indicator of greater social *inequality* in a specific country. The percentage of universities in the top 30 that are found in countries with

high income inequality is 80 per cent. In the latest QS Rankings only 8 of the top 30 universities are outside the US and the UK. Two of these are Swiss universities, two are Canadian, and Singapore, Hong Kong, Australia, and France have one each. None of the countries that scored high in terms of social mobility and income equality, apart from Canada, feature in the top 30. Hong Kong and Singapore also have extremely high Gini coefficients. High rankings for a country's universities seem to ensure high income inequality. However, because the academic industry is a global industry, the pressure to perform well in rankings and to therefore invest in tertiary education has been found to contribute to greater inequality for developing countries. Lloyd Gruber and Stephen Kosack find that in the case of a "tertiary tilt" in a developing country—where educational resources are concentrated on students in higher education and not in primary education—"higher primary enrollment is associated with higher future inequality" (2014, 258). Elites benefit more when a "government concentrates its limited education resources on restrictive upper levels of education" (259). Therefore, the competition that rankings create is not only leading to the "perpetuation of inequality" in education powerhouses like the US and the UK but it is also contributing to greater inequality in developing countries. The ethos of rankings is one that tells governments that if you wish to attract students to top-ranking national universities you must give up the idea of public funding and seek private funding and also be prepared to accept greater income inequality and less social mobility.

Wider social implications of inequality

Inequality also has wider implications for society as Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett reveal in their book *The Spirit Level: Why Equality is Better for Everyone* (2010). Like Piketty, the authors acknowledge the central role education plays in perpetuating inequalities. They argue that education is "generally thought of as the main engine of social mobility in modern democracies" (161). Their research also argues that "[p]eople with more education earn more, are more satisfied with their work and leisure time, are less likely to be unemployed, more likely to be healthy, less likely to be criminals, more likely to volunteer their time and vote in elections" (103). The biggest influence on educational attainment is family background.

No matter how good the school system it seems that disadvantaged children do less well at school. As Kathleen Lynch argues, it is therefore equality of conditions not only equality of opportunity that will allow disadvantaged children to perform better. Lynch's recent work on inequalities in education does note, however, in reference to Pierre Bourdieu, that inequalities that exist in Irish and European society have a direct impact on "lower rates of attainment among students from low-income backgrounds"; "[t]heir educational marginalization" is, she argues, "economically generated even though it may subsequently take cultural and political manifestations" (Lynch and Baker 2005, 131). Wilkinson and Pickett's research also demonstrates this clear link between general social inequality and educational inequality. They discover that maths and literacy scores of 15-year-olds are lower in more unequal countries but also that the steepness of the social gradient (which plots the level of income inequality) has an important influence on a country's average literacy scores, or, in other words, on national levels of achievement.

Referring to the International Adult Literacy Survey, Wilkinson and Pickett also demonstrate that the two leading educational "powerhouses" in terms of university rankings, the US and the UK, have markedly low average literacy scores due to the steepness of the social gradients in both countries. Douglas Willms (1999) has also shown that this link between average literacy scores and the steepness of a country's social gradient holds more widely "among twelve developed countries, as well as among Canadian provinces and the states of the USA" (109). Willms argues that there is a "strong inverse relationship between average proficiency levels and the slope of the socioeconomic gradients" (109). It is clear then that national literacy levels, or the level of education of a country's students at age 15, are strongly influenced by the levels of inequality in that society. Hong Kong society might, however, disprove the theory to a certain extent. Hong Kong always performs well in the PISA rankings,[18] and it tops the polls in terms of university rankings when rankings are correlated with GDP and per million population (Hazelkorn 2010, 26) and yet Hong Kong has one of the worst Gini coefficients in the developed world. It is difficult to explain this anomaly. One reason may be found in a recent UNICEF report on childhood well-being.[19] This study discovered that more children reported low aspirations in more equal countries; in unequal countries children were more likely to have high aspirations

and high aspirations can lead to better performances. Wilkinson and Pickett argue that some of this may be accounted for by the fact that in more equal societies "less-skilled work may be less stigmatized, in comparison to more unequal societies where career choices are dominated by rather star-struck ideas of financial success and images of glamour and celebrity" (2010, 116–17).

Gillian Evans also notes in *Educational Failure and Working Class White Children in Britain*, in quoting an inner-city UK primary school teacher, that often the kids don't know they're working class; "they won't know that until they leave school and realize that the dreams they've nurtured through childhood can't come true" (in Wilkinson and Pickett 2010, 117). This is quite a revealing response in terms of the pastoral care that should be part of the education of our young people; students should be prepared for life outside the secondary school and not simply for SAT tests and admissions interviews. To "discover" how the socioeconomic reality will influence one's academic trajectory only when one is "released" after graduation is very often too late.

These factors also have an important influence on social mobility in a society. Jo Blanden et al.'s study (2005) at the London School of Economics on social mobility is revealing. They take social mobility as the correlation between fathers' incomes when their sons were born and sons' incomes at age 30. Their study reveals that there is a strong relationship between intergenerational social mobility and income inequality. Countries with bigger income differences tend to have much lower social mobility. This has also been revealed to be the case in Hong Kong (Lee et al. 2007). Recent studies on educational inequality in China also reveal that "educational development gaps between regions are still deep" (9). Educational disparities in access to education between rural and urban areas are the major cause of educational inequality in China. However, as 54.32 per cent of the population live in rural areas this is a major concern (7). None of the other leading players in the university rankings tables makes such a clear distinction between educational opportunities and educational funding in urban and rural areas. Growing social stratification in China and the "*hokou* system" exacerbate these inequalities; as a result of unequal distribution, students who want to get a good education but are not qualified due to residency requirements for exams in certain regions must pay extra expenses when selecting

a school. Such fees are approximately 35,000RMB. However, the annual per capita net disposable incomes of urban households and rural households are 15,781 and 4,761 RMB respectively (Yang et al. 2014, 8). Blanden et al.'s study reveals that the US has the lowest mobility rate among the eight countries examined in their study and that the UK also has low social mobility. It is curious then that the notion of the American dream still remains so engaging for millions of parents, particularly in Asia, where students flock to US and UK school and college fairs.[20] In fact, leading American educationalists still play on the power of this metaphor and even relate it to America's uniquely "democratic" political system. Geoffrey Galt Harpham, the President of the National Humanities Centre, entitled his new book *The Humanities and the Dream of America* and it is a book that argues that the humanities as now understood and taught in universities internationally were "invented in America" along with rock and roll. Martha C. Nussbaum argues in her latest book, also on the humanities, *Not For Profit: Why Democracy needs the Humanities*, that European and Asian universities do not share America's "liberal arts system" and, therefore, have "no secure place in the structure of undergraduate education" for "new disciplines of particular importance for good democratic citizenship" (2010, 126). However, the notion that citizenship education and "education for democratic citizenship" were always championed in US or UK liberal arts programmes or humanities education has been contested. Audrey Osler and D. Heater note that there was a lack of focus on education for democratic participation in England until the last decade of the twentieth century (Heater 1990; Osler 2014). Before then, an "elitist, knowledge-based form of civic education, usually entitled British Constitution, was offered to privately educated students and those judged to be academically able" (in Mettler 2014, 41). Suzanne Mettler also argues that, despite the commitment to democratic values in the traditional liberal arts universities in the US, "[c]itizenship in the United States has never come with a guaranteed standard of living or political influence" (18). These are somewhat startling admissions and yet, considering the numbers of Asian parents that skimp and scrape to send their sons and daughters to US and UK universities, "citizenship education" or "democratic values" are not necessarily integral to the cultural capital they want their children to acquire.

However, one wider question these studies raise is why there is a clear correlation between relatively high levels of income inequality and relatively low scores in national literacy tests but no similar correlation between relatively high levels of income inequality and low national university rankings scores. For example, as Blanden et al.'s study demonstrates, the US has the lowest mobility rate among the eight countries studied and the UK also has low social mobility, and yet these are the educational powerhouses when it comes to university rankings. Wilkinson and Pickett's own study on social mobility also reveals that the UK and the US have relatively high income inequality and low social mobility, well below that of all the Scandinavian countries and Germany and Canada, countries that also have much lower income inequalities. The kinds of national benchmarks used for success internationally at the secondary school level are clearly quite different to those used to rank success internationally at university level. One reason is that it is not only student achievement that is being examined in university rankings. Student achievement is a minor consideration for rankings scores, a fact that clearly demonstrates that universities are no longer ranked as teaching institutions.

4

Academic Barbarism and the Literature of Concealment: Roberto Bolaño and W. G. Sebald

If there are any writers who describe the experiences of graduate students, adjuncts, early career academics, and soon-to-be-retired academics working on the fringes of the academy as forms of academic barbarism, they are W. G. Sebald and Roberto Bolaño. No author's work has more literary critics than the work of Roberto Bolaño and no writer's protagonists are as caught up in research as those of W. G. Sebald. The researchers and academics of Bolaño's and Sebald's novels display a devotion to the literary search, the archive, and the intertext that often sees them promoting a literature of concealment through a form of academic barbarism that conceals "the book that really matters" ["el libro que realmente importa" (*2666S* 983)]. Their modes of enquiry into their cultural and literary histories focus our attention on their authors' different renderings of the Information Age's institutionalization of the archive as fortress of knowledge or as pastiche of literary formalism and academic hubris. Their protagonists are either left stranded, like Sebald's Austerlitz, in the new Grande Bibliothèque, "Schatzhaus unseres gesamten Schrifterbes" [the treasure-house of our entire literary heritage], feeling like "einen potentiellen Feind" (*A* 404) [a potential enemy (*A1* 398)], or, like Bolaño's academics, they are left in a site of barbarism unaware of how their academic work conceals the literature that really matters—["el libro que realmente importa" (*2666S* 983)], the "magic flower of winter!" (*2666E* 786) ["la flor mágica de invierno!" (*2666S* 983)]. Both writers present scholarship and academic enquiry as a new kind of barbarism, a barbarism that replays Benjamin's multifaceted description of this concept. For Benjamin, barbarism is at

once integral to every act of transmission while also in its "positive" guise emerging from a "poverty of human experience" (2005, 732) that compels the subject to endlessly "start from scratch" in developing modes of expression dependent on the "laws of their interior" (2005, 733). For such systems it is their "interior, rather than their inwardness" that is privileged and this is what makes them barbaric, a form of barbarism that Sebald and Bolaño suggest flourishes with the archive and the academic industry.

The moral landscapes of Bolaño's and Sebald's novels often return us to scenes of trauma that have their origin in the barbarism of National Socialism. Sebald's novels exhibit a negative teleology where his protagonists struggle to piece together life histories sublimated by the trauma of atrocity while Bolaño's novels are also often haunted by the Holocaust.[1] In *La literatura nazi en América*, for example, Franz Zwickau, one of Bolaño's fictional authors, has the narrative voice wax lyrical about the aesthetic merit of fictional holocaust works such as "Concentration Camp" and "The War Criminals' Son."[2] However, the enquiry into the archive of this era of barbarism spawns artistic and academic modes of semblance and concealment that perpetuate barbarism. This paper therefore examines how these two very different authors present the reader, possibly for the first time, with detailed explorations of the different "ritual *bárbaro*" (*ED* 139) ["barbaric rituals" (*DS* 131)] unique to academic enquiry in the age of the knowledge industry. Their work indirectly passes comment on the present state of the institutionalization of the archive, of cultural memory, and of the knowledge industry and in doing so calls for a bringing together of educational and literary discourses on the state of the archive and the university. These authors examine the effects of this barbarism for a reading industry while also saying something more profound about how the literary work is becoming progressively more occluded by archival systems that Bolaño describes in terms of "ocultamiento" [concealment] and "la apariencia" [semblance].

Both writers' work has been read in various ways in terms of how it negotiates this historic barbarism. Sebald's style has been described as a "melancholic method" (Duttlinger 2009), a negative teleology (Long 2003), an aesthetics of resistance (Oesmann 2014), and as foregrounding the "inadequacy of language" (Dubow 2012) and the impossibility of exemplarity (Bewes 2014). Stewart Martin (2005) and Ignasi Ribó (2009) criticize him for not being political enough

in neglecting post-1945 politics and in engaging in an aesthetic of evasion. However, his unique intertextual representations of the effects of barbarism challenge basic concepts such as exemplarity, communicative reason, and redemptive memory and can be political in their critique of the archive and the knowledge and reading industries. Sebald confronts head-on Benjamin's positive barbarism, a self-serving privileging of the interior of institutional discourse at the expense of "inwardness," which flourishes in the technological age. He reveals how academic enquiry is a perfect breeding ground for such philosophies of the interior, demonstrating how the unique historical "blind spots" intertextual scholarship throws up not only reveal how the archive turns against itself à la Derrida, but how the humanist project can, in dismissing these blind spots, begin to work against its core aims. As Sebald's Austerlitz explains: "unsere besten Plane im Zuge ihrer Verwirklichung sich verkehrten in ihr genaues Gegenteil" (*A* 46) ["just as our best-laid plans […] always turn into the exact opposite when they are put into practice" (*A* 37–8)]. Bolaño's more picaresque, postmodern works can also be read as unveiling the barbarism of such philosophies of the interior through a concentration on the literary quests of researchers and academics. Whereas Bolaño employs notions of concealment and semblance and the figure of the void to represent the deleterious effects of this negative epistemology, Sebald employs a melancholy of resistance through figurations of writing as fissure or chasm, again through the employment of academic protagonists, so as to also elicit how a new kind of academic barbarism has emerged.

Bolaño and Sebald have been compared in terms of their use of the "long dramatic sentence"; however, I want to focus on their shared interest in what I am calling academic barbarism.[3] J. Agustín Pastén B. has described the political motivations of Bolaño in terms of his employment of a kind of "metaliteraria" where he sets in play a "discurso narrativo" [narrative discourse] that oscillates "entre una fuerte valuación de lo literario y una especie de desvalorización de la literatura" (2009, 423) [between a strong valuation of the literary and a kind of devaluing of literature]. This opposition plays itself out most importantly, for Agustín Pastén B., in Bolaño's presentation of the "institucionalización" and the "disolución" of literature. Agustín Pastén B. focuses on how booksellers, editors, and even a publishing "mafia" marshal this institutionalization of literature while also

allowing writers such as Bolaño the opportunity to create "una suerte de democratización textual de la actividad literaria" (429) [a sort of textual democratization of literary activity]. Diego Trelles also notes how Bolaño incorporates the narrative mechanisms of political literature into his fiction in order to engage the reader and to unsettle any possible institutionalization of reading (2005, 143). However, while criticism has been quick to respond to Bolaño's targeting of the institutionalization of literature, little has been made of his presentation of one of the most powerful institutions for mediating literature, namely the university. It is important to note that one of his last collections is entitled *The Unknown University*. This chapter therefore focuses on both writers' presentation of the academic and of academic research.

In making this comparison, it must be noted that Bolaño's notes on what he calls "la literatura de la pesada" (*EP* 28) [a literature of doom (*BP* 25)][4] may suggest that he dislikes the kind of solipsistic, autobiographical narratives Sebald's protagonists are granted. In his "speech" "Derivas de la Pesada" [The Vagaries of the Literature of Doom] from *Entre paréntesis* [*Between Parentheses*] Bolaño argues that such literature is essential, yet "[n]o es mucho para iniciar una escuela" (*EP* 25) ["[h]ardly the basis for a school" (*BP* 21)]. It is a literature that is about "el valor" [bravery] and "la mugre" [squalor] rather than "la inteligencia, mucho menos sobre la moral" (*EP* 23) ["intelligence, let alone morality" (*BP* 19)]; "si sólo existe ella, la literatura se acaba" (*EP* 28) ["if nothing else exists, it's the end of literature" (*BP* 24)].[5] Such writing is also, for Bolaño, marked by "la subjetividad extrema" (*EP* 28) ["extreme subjectivity" (*BP* 24)]. He argues that we live in the age of "la literatura solipsista" (*EP* 28) [solipsistic literature] and "si sólo existieran literatos solipsistas toda la literatura terminaría convirtiéndose en un servicio militar obligatorio del mini-yo en un río de autobiografías, de libros de memorias, de diarios personales, que no tardaría en devenir cloaca" (*EP* 28) ["if all writers were solipsists, literature would turn into the obligatory military service of the mini-me or into a river of autobiographies, memoirs, journals that would soon become a cesspit" (*BP* 24)]. Who cares, he argues, about "las idas y venidas sentimentales de un profesor?" (*EP* 28) ["the sentimental meanderings of a professor?" (*BP* 24)]. However, Sebald's professors and researcher-narrators are caught up in the double bind Bolaño describes. In becoming so immersed in

the framing of cultural memory through their archival study of the causes and effects of National Socialism, any "extreme subjectivity" they manifest draws the reader-researcher self-reflexively with them into the vertiginous yet profound examination of the "morality" Bolaño finds lacking in his "literature of doom."[6] This process can immerse the reader and critic in Benjamin's notion of "positive barbarism." Bolaño and Sebald, then, share this interest in the "barbaric rituals" and "vertigo" academic enquiry unearths for their scholars of barbarism and National Socialism[7], which ultimately elicits a deep unease about the present state of the institutionalization of the archive. Bolaño's fictional academic critics[8] reap far more destruction for his narrators than those responsble for the brutal murders in Santa Teresa in *2666* while Sebald's[9] research-protagonists are a danger to themselves because of the states of "vertigo" their research produces in them.

To write about the work of Roberto Bolaño and W. G. Sebald is to write about the academic; their work holds a mirror up to the attentions and practices of the academic critic and researcher and, in doing so, can appear to simply guide the literary critic to a form of commentary aligned with what Bolaño's narrators call the "void"; the critic is directed to a style of commentary that has already been derided and evacuated of meaning. Critics have, of course, long been an object of scorn. Rónán McDonald has recently come to the defence of this eroding milieu, arguing that "without critics of authority, the size and variety of contemporary criticism may ultimately serve the cause of cultural banality and uniformity" (McDonald 2007). McDonald argues that the "popular widening of criticism" in the age of the blogosphere and the "academic contraction" of academic criticism due to the heightened specialization of the knowledge industry are symptoms of the same condition, namely that "artistic value" is now simply a question of "personal taste" (McDonald 2009, x). Henry A. Giroux argues that this "neutralization of ethics" is difficult to achieve since "intellectual inquiry and research free from values and norms are impossible to achieve" (Giroux 2011, 27). However, Bolaño and Sebald reveal that this may be to idealize academic endeavour. McDonald's arguments on behalf of the critic also demonstrate how the mid-twentieth-century public intellectuals he lauds, figures such as Leavis and Tynan, are far removed from the new breed of critic that the knowledge industry and the academy as marketplace of ideas

have launched on generations of unsuspecting and impressionable undergraduate readers, the kind of critics Bolaño and Sebald pass comment on.

Bolaño and Sebald respond to the cultural shift brought about by this relatively recent academic institutionalization of criticism in the knowledge industry. Semblance [la apariencia] is a central concept for Bolaño's take on critics and the academy in his novel *2666* and it also a concept that enables us to examine more closely Bolaño's and Sebald's shared concerns about barbarism. Bolaño's fictional writer Hans Reiter, the "real" identity of Reiter's later semblance Benno von Archimboldi, has received the iron cross from his German superiors for his bravery during the Second World War. Reiter realizes how much of life has been a form of semblance as he thinks over the notebooks of Boris Abramovich Ansky, a Polish writer from a Jewish family who has most likely been shot by the Germans at the beginning of the War. Ansky, a fictional author, was a founding member of "Teatro de las Voces Imaginarias" (895) ["the Theater of Imaginary Voices" (716)], who wrote "un ensayo sobre el futuro de la literatura, cuya primera palabra era 'nada'" (896) ["an essay on the future of literature, which began and ended with the word *nothing*" (717)]. Rieter finds the notebooks in Ansky's home in the village of Kostekino on the banks of the Dneiper near the end of the Second World War. In Ansky's notes he also finds the name of the painter he will take as his *nom de plume*, a painter whose technique is "happiness personified" for the young Ansky. Reiter contemplates the notebooks of this undiscovered writer when he is "mal alimentado y por ende débil" (926) ["malnourished and weak" (741)] and recovering from a bullet to the neck; he detects a theme running through Ansky's work:

> La apariencia era una fuerza de ocupación de la realidad, se dijo, incluso de la realidad más extrema y limítrofe. Vivía en las almas de la gente y también en sus gestos, en la voluntad y en el dolor, en la forma en que uno ordena los recuerdos y en la forma en que uno ordena les prioridades. La apariencia proliferaba en los salones de los industriales y en el hampa. Dictaba normas, se revolvía contra sus propias normas (en revueltas que podían ser sangrientas, pero que no por eso dejaban de ser aparentes), dictaba nuevas normas.
>
> El nacionalsocialismo era el reino absoluto de la apariencia. (926)

> [Semblance was an occupying force of reality, he said to himself, even the most extreme, borderline reality. It lived in people's souls and their actions, in willpower and in pain, in the way memories and priorities were ordered. Semblance proliferated in the salons of the industrialists and in the underworld. It set the rules, it rebelled against its own rules (in uprisings that could be bloody, but didn't therefore cease to be semblance), it set new rules.
>
> National Socialism was the ultimate realm of semblance. (741)]

Both Bolaño's and Sebald's academics delve deep into the origins of the form of semblance National Socialism throws up for cultural memory.[10] Sebald's protagonists often live out lives that appear as little more than semblances of life histories they feel compelled to revisit through excursions into cultural memory. They become like Kafka's man before the law who realizes all too late, after a life spent waiting tentatively before one possible avenue of investigation that he assumed would hold the answer to the law, that there are as many approaches to the law as there are lives lived. The lifelong academic enquiry leaves Sebald's protagonists in *Vertigo* and *Austerlitz* either facing a "void" or cast adrift with "vertigo." Mistaken identity is also a figure for both writers. Sebald's Austerlitz only unravels his historical identity and discovers his lost native tongue towards the end of his research. National Socialism, as the ultimate realm of semblance, is also, in a sense, what grants Bolaño's Reiter his identity as a writer and what, in turn, provides Bolaño's academic sleuths with a reason for being. Reiter discovers the notebooks of Ansky while recuperating with other wounded German soldiers in a small Polish village and he learns that name-changing and the practice of semblance can keep the past hidden as it does for Leo Sammer, a former Volkssturm soldier and commander of sorts, that Reiter meets in a prisoner of war camp after the War. Sammer, or Zeller as he was known in the camp, ran an "organismo era civil, no militar ni de las SS" (940) ["a civil operation, not military or SS" (752)], in which he received "la orden de deshacerse de los judíos griegos" (950) ["the order to dispose of the Greek Jews" (760)] who were formerly employed by him as sweepers and land-clearers. Bolaño's description of the events surrounding the genocide is all the more harrowing as it keeps the details of the murders from us. It concentrates on the strain on the German soldiers who dispatch the bodies to the "hollow" and on

the pressures on Sammer to carry out his orders. This brooding, apophatic silence also acts as a form of prosopopoeia in which, as Paul de Man reminds us, the "dead speak." It "prefigures our own mortality" since "by making the death speak, the symmetrical structure of the trope implies, […] that the living are struck dumb, frozen in their own death" (de Man 1979, 928).

The mood is heightened in the episode by the contrast thrown up by the previous section's—La parte de los crímenes [The Part about the Crimes]—forensic and graphic detailing of the physical condition of hundreds of women's bodies, the victims of contemporary atrocity in the form of violent murder and rape in the town of Santa Teresa in Mexico. Bolaño dispatches National Socialism's unrepeatable exemplar of institutional barbarism and atrocity to "the hollow" of representation where the descriptions of its events are limited to the psychological pressures they bring to the perpetrators of the crimes—at one point Bolaño has Sammer relate to Reiter: "El trabajo nos había excedido. El hombre, me dije contemplando el horizonte mitad rosa y mitad cloaca desde la ventana de mi oficina, no soporta demasiado tiempo algunos quehaceres" (957) ["The work was too much for us.[11] Man wasn't made to bear some tasks for very long, I said to myself as I contemplated the horizon from my office window, striped in pink and a cloacal murk" (765–6)]. This is likely a statement about the responsibilities of the academic writer who tries to speak for, or bear witness to, contemporary atrocity through the lens of this institutionalized discourse of cultural memory. Despite academic discourse giving us such phrases as "bearing witness," "ethics of analogy," and "ethics of alterity," it is noteworthy that Bolaño consigns this barbaric moment to the "hollow" of representation. Sebald takes a similar course in consigning writing to the figures of chasm and fissure while leaving his narrator at the end of *Vertigo* staring into the ruins of the Breedonk death camp. Even though Bolaño reminds us at one point in the novel that voids can't be filled, he appears to be asking us to re-examine the degree of semblance and concealment that academic language brings to literature that describes atrocity. It either consigns the enquiry into atrocity to the void as does the narrative of Sammer's work or it engages in a somewhat formulaic forensic detailing of the bodies and the scenes of death in approaching an atrocity exhibition of sorts. Reiter—perhaps the embodiment of every *writer*—ultimately prevents a certain

truth from emerging; he confesses to killing Sammer before Sammer is made to confront the camp interrogators. Reiter therefore saves Sammer, a man whom "almost everyone [at the camp] respected" and believed to be "a decent person" (750), from "escarnio público" (959) ["public disgrace"] (767). One of the last things Sammer says to Reiter is "Hacemos cosas, decimos cosas, de las que luego nos arrepentimos con toda el alma" (959) ["We do things, say things, that later we regret with all our souls" (767)] and it is the act of killing Sammer that leads Reiter to a degree of semblance of his own in feeling he has to take on the name Archimboldi.

The question the episode raises is, how is academic enquiry complicit in dispatching atrocities to the "hollow" of representation? But not only this. The episode raises the question of whether the knowledge industry's institutional requirement to churn out reports and papers on such atrocities in which the atrocity itself cannot be represented has pushed academia into a uniquely economic form of the "positive barbarism" Benjamin describes, where a focus on the "interior" of a discourse to the exclusion of "inwardness" through a "poverty of experience" inculcates a mode of collectively administering and dispatching painful cultural blind spots. However, this learned response then leaves the knowledge industry devoted to its sense of interiority, its internal mechanism for dealing with trauma, which recalls the Freudian death drive and its tendency to turn the subject, in this case the humanist project, against itself.

Bolaño's juxtaposition of the brutal murders and rapes in Santa Teresa with the academic search for an elusive writer who has played a part in the concealment of atrocity, raises important ethical questions for the academic critic who approaches such literature. Bolaño relates the resulting acts of "semblance" to the critic's own formal version of "ocultamiento" [concealment] that works to shield readers' hungry eyes from "el libro que realmente importa" (*2666S* 983) ["the book that really matters" (*2666E* 786)]. An old typewriter seller reminds Reiter later in the novel that writing is "ocultamiento" [concealment]. The vast majority of all writing, he argues, apart from masterpieces, merely accepts "los dictados de una obra maestra" (983) ["the dictates of the masterpiece" (786)] because "¡Es necessario que haya muchos libros, muchos pinos encantadores, para que velen de miradas aviesas el libro que realmente importa, la jodida gruta de nuestra desgracia, la flor mágica de invierno!" (983) ["There must be

many books, many lovely pines, to shield from hungry eyes the book that really matters, the wretched cave of our misfortune, the magic flower of winter!" (786)]. However, the important point that Bolaño's typewriter seller raises here is that it is the "writing machine" or industry, spearheaded by the academic and university printers that is responsible for the worst indulgences of this blinding to our misfortune, this blinding to the "book that really matters":

> El juego y la equivocación son la venda y son el impulso de los escritores menores. También: son la promesa de su felicidad futura. Un bosque que crece a una velocidad vertiginosa, un bosque al que nadie le pone freno, ni siquiera las Academias, al contrario, las Academias se encargan de que crezca sin problemas, y los empresarios y las universidades (criaderos de atorrantes), y las oficinas estatales y los mecenas y las asociaciones culturales y las declamadoras de poesía, todos contribuyen a que el bosque crezca y oculte lo que tiene que ocultar, todos contribuyen a que el bosque reproduzca lo que tiene que reproducir, puesto que es inevitable que así lo haga, pero sin revelar nunca qué es aquello que reproduce, aquello que mansamente refleja. (985)
>
> [Play and delusion are the blindfold and spur of minor writers. Also: the promise of their future happiness. A forest that grows at a vertiginous rate, a forest no one can fence in, not even the academies, in fact, the academies make sure it flourishes unhindered, as do boosters and universities (breeding grounds for the shameless) and government institutions and cultural associations and declaimers of poetry—all aid the forest to grow and hide what must be hidden, all aid the forest to reproduce what must be reproduced, since the process is inevitable, though no one ever sees what exactly is being reproduced, what is being tamely mirrored back. (787)]

This from a book-lover who gave up writing to rent on typewriters to budding writers, budding writers who will go on to become beacons for academics who do the conference circuit. Writing, "is almost always empty"; writing typically as "novela o poemaria, decentes, decentitos, salen no por un ejercicio de estilo o voluntad, como el pobre desgraciado cree, sino gracias a un ejercicio de *ocultamiento*" (983)

["novel or book of poems, decent, adequate, arises not from an exercise of style or will, as the poor unfortunates believe, but as the result of an exercise of *concealment*" (786)]. And yet are the critics who devote themselves to the work of Archimboldi aware of what this typewriter seller, a man who grants Reiter (Archimboldi) the epiphany that may actually push him into writing, advises? How do they further the work of the universities and academies as "breeding grounds for the shameless" that promote the "play and delusion" of minor writers?

Sebald has also criticized the academic industry, in the shape of the Kafka industry, for "wrestling 'meaning' out of Kafka's 'difficulty'" (in Bewes 2014, 20). However, Sebald has argued that literary description is essential for the evocation of a state of melancholy that resists any institutionalized erasure of history: "Die Beschreibung des Unglücks schließt in sich die Möhglichkeit zu seiner Überwindung ein" [The description of misery involves the possibility of overcoming it]. He continues: "Melancholie, das Überdenken des sich vollziehenden Unglücks, hat aber mit Todessucht nichts gemein. Sie ist eine Form des Widerstands" [Melancholy, the pondering of existing sorrows, has nothing to do with a death wish. It is a form of resistance] (*Die Beschreibung des Unglücks*, 12).[12] Critics have spoken too of the notion of semblance and necessary concealment in Sebald whether it be in terms of a personal history or a Proustian real the "inadequacy of language" keeps at bay. Writing becomes a "fissure" or "confirmation of its failure" (Bewes 2014, 28) and protagonists reveal that personal memory is nothing more than quotation where the past is never appropriated by the present but instead reinvents the present by revealing ever more "lines of continuity that run through history" (Modlinger 2012, 357). This aspect of semblance is particularly striking in the case of Austerlitz who spends most of his life on an academic enquiry into his own past only to realize that "I had never really been alive, or was only now being born, almost on the eve of my death" (*A* 137). Once again, it is the figure of the library and the archive that lies at the heart of these failures. Ann Pearson finds the figure so powerful that she even discerns an "imaginary library of Sebaldian intertextuality" (2008, 277) that like the numerous "real" libraries in *Vertigo* and *The Rings of Saturn* provide "if not the evidence of a culture's failures" then a "sobering contrast between its ideals and the historical reality investigated" by

Sebald's narrators (277). Pearson argues that Sebald uses "scholarly research" to create a semblance of the trauma (272) that also helps him to turn "away from himself" and possibly from the "inwardness" that Benjamin sets up in opposition to "positive barbarism." Duttlinger argues that Sebald's melancholy of resistance affects even his depiction of beauty, revealing an "inadequacy of language" that once again only leaves him with a form of semblance where objects are only seen through a "melancholy veil" that tranforms them in a "process of mortification" (2009, 335). Sebald also suggests, in beginning Austerlitz's narration to the narrator with a description of a personal crisis where Austerlitz feels that language itself has been "enveloped in impenetrable fog," that once again it is a certain schooling or academic inheritance that is at the root of this breakdown. During his breakdown Austerlitz feels that any sentence that "appears to mean something" ["das ist etwas nur vorgeblich Sinnvolles"] is "in truth a makeshift expedient" ["allenfalls Behelfsmäßiges" (183)] and that "the very thing which may usually convey a sense of purposeful intelligence—the exposition of an idea by means of a certain stylistic facility—now seemed to me nothing but an entirely arbitrary or deluded enterprise" (*A* 175) ["Gerade das, was sonst den Eindruck einer zielgerichten Klugheit erwecken mag, die Hervorbringung einer Idee vermittels einer gewissen stilistischen Fertigkeit, schien mir nun nichts als ein völlig beliebiges oder wahnhaftes Unternehmen" (183–4)]. Austerlitz's thoughts on the archive's part in this "deluded enterprise" reveal, once again, how Benjamin's notion of "positive barbarism" with its focus on the interior of any system or discourse is replayed here by Sebald: "Sitting at my place in the reading room […] I came to the conclusion that in any project we design and develop, the size and degree of complexity of the information and control systems inscribed in it are the crucial factors, so that the all-embracing and absolute perfection of the concept can in practice coincide, indeed ultimately must coincide, with its chronic dysfunction and constitutional instability" (*A* 393) ["Ich habe an meinem Platz in dem Lesesaal […] und bin zu dem Schluß gekommen, daß in jedem von uns entworfenen und entwickelten Projekt die Größendimensionierung und der Grad der Komplexitat der ihm einbeschriebenen Informations- und Steuersysteme die ausschlaggebended Faktoren sind und daß demzufolge die allumfassende, absolute Perfektion des Konzepts in der

Praxis durchaus zusammenfallen kann, ja letztlich zusammenfallen muß mit einer chronischen Dysfunktion und mit konstitutioneller Labilität" (398–9)]. To preface a narration that forms the spine of the novel with such an admission places the whole stylistic enterprise of Sebald's excursion into cultural memory on a fissure, one that is once again traced back to a certain schooling and academic style. Sebald suggests, for Astrid Oesmann, that the best-laid humanist plans can therefore produce the opposite of what is intended. The humanist becomes anti-humanist because of the "scale" of the project he or she pursues. In the case of the architecture of oppression, the researchers appear more content to "represent themselves as superstructures" (457) and these then act as "allegorical forms of cultural and natural history." My argument here is that these allegorical forms can also be extended to the architectonics of an oppressive archive as knowledge industry where the "scale" of the archive or knowledge industry throws up destructive "blind spots." The researchers and protagonists of Sebald's novels have, in a sense, been duped by the acquisition of a certain "stylistic facility" into upholding an expectation that the act of revealing these blind spots will return the narrative to the path of redemption the modernist project sustains.

The irony and pastiche of Bolaño's novels mean his writers have left such consoling myths far behind. In the first section of *2666* entitled "The Part about the Critics" and in other works such as *Estrella distante* [*Distant Star*] and *La literatura nazi en América* [*Nazi Literature in the Americas*] Bolaño develops his pastiche of academic critics. One of his protagonists from *Distant Star*, Bibiano O'Ryan, in commenting on a fellow writer called Di Angeli, remarks: "al menos, decía, *todavía* no se dedica a la *crítica literaria*" (*ES* 68) ["at least he hasn't started writing literary criticism" (59)].[13] In Bolaño's work professors do not live in ivory towers but in "oases or miserably immaculate deserts." He gives critics the opportunity to be less than precious about their profession and to acknowledge how it has dragged them down into "literature's bottomless cesspools." This thematic challenge to the "world of letters" also affects the business and processes of criticism. The relentless satirizing of the critic as anti-hero and of the academic and would-be writer as criminal or Nazi-sympathizer, works against the task of constructing any argument around this satire. The critics, researchers, and writers of Bolaño's and Sebald's novels inhabit such an alienated and murky underworld built on a self-consciously

ambiguous representational terrain that any attempt to describe the complex vertigo from which they suffer is consistently undermined. Modernist characters such as Leopold Bloom and Herzog may be advertising salesmen or newspaper men, but they are rarely academics living off the acquired traits of the academic profession like Di Angeli, Diego Soto, Bibiano O'Ryan, Pelletier, Espinoza, Morini, and Norton from *2666* and Austerlitz, and Sebald's alter egos. Since modernism literary criticism has lived ever more shamelessly off the literary work. Bolaño's work challenges this parasitic arrangement by pushing the objectification the other way. By having his critical anti-heroes attend academic conferences and gain professorships and by relentlessly describing the lives of failed writers in a pseudo-academic writing style he pastiches not only the structures of the academic industry but also its manner of relaying literary ideas to readers. Literary critics and would-be writers who give in to the university profession and to literary criticism drag literature down into "literature's bottomless cesspools" (*DS* 130). They further the concealment that assigns to the life of the writer-as-exile narratives that can only be described in terms of "el triste folklore del exilio" (*ED* 75) ["the melancholy folklore of exile" (66)] that are "en donde más de la mitad de las historias están falseadas o son sólo la sombra de la historia real" (75) ["made up stories that, as often as not, are fabrications or pale copies of what really happened" (66)].

The writers that matter in Bolaño's world belong to the fictional literary movement, the visceral realists. None of the historical literary movements we might recall seem to capture the exploits and ambitions of this now defunct, fictional movement forever elegized in *Los detectives salvajes*.[14] All that we can be certain that the movement scorns is any institutionalization or archiving of itself as a movement. And yet the book does make an attempt at self-archiving; the longest section of *Los detectives salvajes* is devoted to narratives and short biographical sketches for all those writers, editors, filmmakers, publishers, and lovers associated with the movement and the movement's elusive standard-bearers—Arturo Belano (Bolaño's alter ego) and Ulises Lima (an unassuming Latin American parody of the father-figure of all narrative protagonists suffering from wanderlust, Homer's Ulysses, and the alter ego of Bolaño's "best friend" Mario Santiago). However, we discover in the course of the novel that "la famosa antología de Zarco en donde están censados más de quinientos poetas

jóvenes" (*LDS* 509) ["the notorious Zarco anthology that catalogs more than five hundred young poets" (*SD* 480)][15] possibly associated with the movement includes "un número a todas luces excesivo, democrático pero poco realista" (*LDS* 276) ["an excessive number no matter how you looked at it, democratic but hardly realistic" (*SD* 256)]. And this is not the only example of the book's self-parodying as anthology or archive of a movement; the book we are reading that would appear to be Belano's own sketch for "la antología definitiva de la joven poesía latinoamericana" (*LDS* 207) ["the definitive anthology of young Latin American poets" (*SD* 189)], a book he is contracted to write for the publishing house of Lisandro Morales, is ultimately a work that includes none of the works of the movement's authors. The hundreds of writers, editors, critics, and lovers are simply interviewed by the nameless narrator for the interesting asides and anecdotes that, for the most part, describe encounters with Belano or Lima or serve to create an atmosphere of visceral realism.

Joaquín Font, another member of the visceral realists, has also already informed the narrator and the reader that he has warned Belano and Lima about the obvious perils of publishing good literature, which, we must imagine, includes the lengthy anthology or history of a movement we believe we are reading. Font argues that "una literatura escrita para lectores serenos, resposados, con la mente bien centrada" (*LDS* 202) ["a literature written for cool, serene readers, with their heads set firmly on their shoulders" (*SD* 185)] will always struggle against the "literature of desperation" and the "literature of resentment" that sells so well (185). Bolaño is once again targeting the reading industry and how it has been shaped and transformed by institutionalized descriptions of readership and by the technologization of the archive:

> Primero: se trata de un lector adolescente o de un adulto inmaduro, acobardado, con los nervios a flor de piel. Es el típico pendejo (perdonen la expresión) que se suicidaba después de leer el *Werther*. Segundo: es un lector limitado. ¿Por qué limitado? Elemental, porque no puede leer más que literatura desesperada o para desesperados, tanto monta, monta tanto, un tipo o un engendro incapaz de leerse de un tirón *En busca del tiempo perdido*, [...] Otrosí: los lectores desesperados son como las minas de oro de California. ¡Más temprano que tarde se acaban! ¿Por qué? ¡Resulta evidente!

> No se puede vivir desesperado toda una vida, el cuerpo termina doblegándose, el dolor termina haciéndose insoportable, la lucidez se escapa en grandes chorros fríos. El lector desesperado (más aún el lector de poesía, ése es insoportable, créanme) acaba por desentenderse de los libros, acaba ineluctablemente convirtiéndose en desesperado a secas. (*LDS* 202)
>
> [First: the reader is an adolescent or an immature adult, insecure, all nerves. He's the kind of fucking idiot (pardon my language) who committed suicide after reading *Werther*. Second, he's a limited reader. Why limited? That's easy: because, which amounts to the same thing, the kind of person or freak who's unable to read all the way through *In Search of Lost Time*, for example, […] Furthermore: desperate readers are like the California gold mines. Sooner or later they're exhausted! Why? It's obvious! One can't live one's whole life in desperation. In the end the body rebels, the pain becomes unbearable, lucidity gushes out in great cold spurts. The desperate reader (and especially the desperate poetry reader, who is insufferable, believe me) ends up turning away from books. Inevitably he ends up becoming just plain desperate. (*SD* 185)]

Critics are also parodied throughout *Los detectives salvajes* with the most pointed description of the critic's work coming from "el típico crítico provocador, el crítico kamikaze" (*LDS* 477) ["the typical provocative, kamikaze critic" (*SD* 449)], Inaki Echevarne. Bolaño targets modernist-inspired accounts of criticism through his critic Echevarne:

> Durante un tiempo la Crítica acompaña a la Obra, luego la Crítica se desvanece y son los Lectores quienes la acompañan. El viaje puede ser largo o corto. Luego los Lectores mueren uno por uno y la Obra sigue sola, aunque otra Crítica y otros Lectores poco y la Obra sigue sola, aunque otra Crítica y otros Lectores poco a poco vayan acompasándose a su singladura. Luego la Crítica muere otra vez y los Lectores mueren otra vez y sobore esa huella de huesos sigue la Obra su viaje hacia la soledad. Acercarse a ella, navegar a su estela es señal inequívoca de muerte segura, pero otra Crítica y otros Lectores se le acercan incansables e implacables y el tiempo y la velocidad los devoran. Finalmente la Obra viaja irremediablemente

> sola en la Inmensidad. Y un día la Obre muere, como mueren todas las cosas […]. (484)
>
> [For a while, Criticism travels side by side with the Work, then Criticism vanishes and it's the Readers who keep pace. The journey may be long or short. Then the Readers die one by one and the Work continues on alone, although a new Criticism and new Readers gradually fall into step along its path. Then Criticism dies again and the Readers die again and the Work passes over a trail of bones on its journey toward solitude. To come near the work, to sail in her wake, is a sign of certain death, but new Criticism and new Readers approach relentlessly and are devoured by time and speed. Finally the Work journeys irremediably alone in the Great Vastness. And one day the Work dies, as all things must die […]. (456)]

Bolaño's "made up stories" for the lives of his fictional would-be writers and critics describe numerous barbaric rituals. In *Estrella distante* his writers, as criminals, partake in "ritual *bárbaro*" (*ED* 139) ["barbaric rituals" (131)] where "había que fundirse con las obras maestras" (*ED* 139) ["one had to commune with the master works" (131)] by, among other things, "masturbándose y desparramando el semen sobre las páginas de Gautier o Banville" (139) ["masturbating and spreading one's semen over the pages of Gautier or Banville" (131)] in a process called "humanización" [humanization]. These become symbolic of the more devastating barbarism inflicted by the "real" literary critics of the knowledge industry who perpetuate a parasitic feeding off the truths, disjectia, and marginalia of their hounded "masters." The reader is left wondering whether the only work that does not engage in concealment and semblance is the work written by the unknown author, Archimboldi, the impossibly youthful 80-something who remains concealed from the academics. His non-appearance keeps his German military history and hence his association with barbarism something of a secret and the academics' prognostications only further the play of semblance and concealment in regard to his work.

In *2666* the four main protagonists of the first section—Pelletier, Espinoza, Morini, and Norton—are all early career literary critics. All four of them are Archimboldians, devotees of Benno von Archimboldi, the *nom de plume* for Hans Reiter. When Bolaño describes a comparative literature conference focusing on contemporary German

literature held in Amsterdam in 1995, his description of the adjoining conference rooms devoted to German literature and English literature respectively, once again lampoons the academic conference circuit and its reduction of the book that really matters, the "book of our misfortune," to mere "slogans":

> De más está decir que la mayor parte de los asistentes a tan curiosos diálogos se decantaron por la sala donde se discutía sobre literatura inglesa contemporánea, [...] los aplausos que arrancaba la literatura inglesa se oían en la literatura alemana como si ambas conferencias o diálogos fueran uno solo o como si los ingleses se estuvieran burlando, cuando no boicoteando continuamente a los alemanes, por no decir nada del público, cuya asistencia masiva al diálogo inglés (o angloindio) era notablemente superior al escaso y grave público que acudía al diálogo alemán. Lo que, en el cómputo final, fue altamente provechoso, pues es bien sabido que una charla entre pocos, donde todos se escuchan y reflexionan y nadie grita, suele ser más productiva, y en el peor de los casos más relajada, que un diálogo masivo, que corre el riesgo permanente de convertirse en un mitin o, por la necesaria brevedad de las intervenciones, en una sucesión de consignas tan pronto formuladas como desaparecidas. (32)
>
> [It goes without saying that most of the attendees of these curious discussions gravitated toward the hall where contemporary English literature was being discussed, [...] the applause sparked by English literature could be heard in the German literature room as if the two talks or dialogues were one, or as if the Germans were being mocked, when not drowned out, by the English (or Anglo-Indian) discussion, notably larger than the sparse and earnest audience attending the German discussion. Which in the final analysis was a good thing, because it's common knowledge that a conversation involving only a few people, with everyone listening to everyone else and taking time to think and not shouting, tends to be more productive or at least more relaxed than a mass conversation, which runs the permanent risk of becoming a rally, or, because of the necessary brevity of the speeches, a series of slogans that fade as soon as they're put into words. (17)]

Sometimes Bolaño's critics are "butchers" and their lectures are "massacres" (136) but something happens to them in the "horrible city" of Santa Teresa where they are surrounded by real post-1945 barbarism for the first time. They meet a Chilean lecturer at the university of Santa Teresa named Amalfitano. The "first impression[s]" the French, Spanish, and English professors of German literature have of him reveal[s] how their institutionalized frames of reference conceal and misrepresent his character:

> […] Amalfitano sólo podía ser visto como un náufrago, un tipo descuidadamente vestido, un profesor inexistente de una universidad inexistente, el soldado raso de una batalla perdida de antemano contra la barbarie, o, en términos menos melodramáticos, como lo que finalmente era, un melancólico profesor de filosofía pasturando en su propio campo, el lomo de una bestia caprichosa e infantiloide que se habría tragado de un solo bocado a Heidegger en el supuesto de que Heidegger hubiera tenido la mala pata de nacer en la frontera mexicano-norteamericana. Espinoza y Pelletier vieron en él a un tipo fracasado, fracasado sobre todo porque había vivido y enseñado en Europa, que intentaba protegerse con una capa de dureza, pero cuya delicadeza intrínseca lo delataba en el acto. (152–3)

> [Amalfitano could only be considered a castaway, a carelessly dressed man, a nonexistent professor at a nonexistent university, the unknown soldier in a doomed battle against barbarism, or less melodramatically, as what he ultimately was, a melancholy literature professor put out to pasture in his own field, on the back of a capricious and childish beast that would have swallowed Heidegger in a single gulp if Heidegger had had the bad luck to be born on the Mexican-U.S. border. Espinoza and Pelletier saw him as a failed man, failed above all because he had lived and taught in Europe, who tried to protect himself with a veneer of toughness but whose innate gentleness gave him away in the act. (114)]

However, it is Amalfitano, like the old typewriter seller, a writer who has turned his back on a certain kind of academic writing deemed acceptable, who is left to explain in the most lyrical and profound way what it is critics and criticism seek to do. In Bolaño

it is never established literary critics and writers from the centres of institutional educational power that are made to ponder the work of criticism or the academy. When Norton, the PhD candidate from England, asks Amalfitano whether "getting by" is the "main concern of all Latin American intellectuals" Amalfitano replies: "some of them are more interested in writing, for example" (120). Amalfitano then describes the work of literary critics in Mexico in terms of actors on a stage who stand before a gaping chasm they cannot see from which emerges the faint echo of all those voices of the great delirium of the literary dead. The section recalls both Kafka's hunger artist and Sebald's narrators who like the audience members in the front seats of Bolaño's imaginary stage are left at the end of their scholarly searches staring into a "chasm" (*A* 414) or a "breathless void" (*V* 262), terrified by the emptiness and sense of displacement their searches have left them with. Sebald's narrator in *Austerlitz* still finds the figure that encapsulates his terror in a book the academic Austerlitz gave to him at their first meeting in Paris. He still needs to conceal his own firsthand emotions behind figures found in old books, gifts from one academic to another. Dan Jacobson's book describing his search for his own grandfather ends in something of a dead end, a dead end Jacobson represents by way of a childhood memory of staring into old, unfenced mines thousands of feet deep near the town of Kimberley in South Africa where his Jewish family had emigrated to. Sebald then redeploys this image for his narrator's and alter ego's own sense of vertigo before the ruins at Breedonk at the end of his intertextual study of the "vanished past of his family" (*A* 415) ["die untergegangene Vorzeit seiner Familie" (420)]. These people "can never be brought up from those depths again" ["von dort drunten nicht mehr heraufholen läßt" (420)] no matter how diligent the research; like Bolaño's stage academics Sebald's narrators' scholarly research only transmits vague echoes of the dead that leave their audiences staring into a bottomless pit. However, the irony is that while Bolaño's academics and Sebald's narrators come to these chasms secondhand through the writings of others or even face away from the chasms or caves, only sensing the scale in the echoes of the dead writers they feed off, it is the audience who see the chasm firsthand for what it is, a vast chasm of emptiness where there was "no transition, only this dividing line, with ordinary life on one side and its unimaginable opposite on the other" (*A* 415) ["sondern nur

diesen Rand, auf der einen Seite das selbstverständliche Leben, auf der anderen sein unausdenkbares Gegenteil" (420)]. Bolaño's image of the stage academic is a powerful image for encapsulating the academic barbarism Sebald's and Bolaño's work resists in its unveiling:

> Y así llegas, sin sombra, a una especie de escenario y te pones a traducir o a reinterpretar o a cantar la realidad. El escenario propiamente dicho es un proscenio y al fondo del proscenio hay un tubo enorme, algo así como una mina o la entrada a una mina de proporciones gigantescas. Digamos que es una caverna. Pero también podemos decir que es una mina. De la boca de la mina salen ruidos ininteligibles. Onomatopeyas, fonemas furibundos o seductores o seductoramente furibundos o bien puede que sólo murmullos y susurros y gemidos. Lo cierto es que nadie ve, lo que se dice ver, la entrada de la mina. Una máquina, un juego de luces y de sombras, una manipulación en el tiempo, hurta el verdadero contorno de la boca a la mirada de los espectadores. En realidad, sólo los espectadores que están más cercanos al proscenio, pegados al foso de la orquesta, pueden ver, […]. Por su parte, los intelectuales sin sombra están siempre *de espaldas* y por lo tanto, a menos que tuvieran ojos en la nuca, les es imposible ver nada. Ellos sólo escuchan los ruidos que salen del fondo de la mina. Y los traducen o reinterpretan o recrean. Su trabajo, cae por su peso decirlo, es pobrísimo. Emplean la retórica allí donde se intuye un huracán, tratan de ser elocuentes allí donde intuyen la furia desatada, procuran ceñirse a la disciplina de la métrica allí donde sólo queda un silencio ensordecedor e inútil. […] Junto a este escenario, por supuesto, hay otros escenarios. Escenarios nuevos que han crecido con el paso del tiempo. […] De la boca de la mina siguen saliendo rugidos y los intelectuales los siguen malinterpretando. En realidad, ellos, que en teoría son los amos del lenguaje, ni siquiera son capaces de enriquecerlo. Sus mejores palabras son palabras prestadas que oyen decir a los espectadores de primera fila. (162–3)

> [And so you arrive on a kind of stage, without your shadow, and you start to translate reality or reinterpret it or sing it. The stage is really a proscenium and upstage there's an enormous tube, something like a mine shaft or the gigantic opening of a mine. Let's call it a cave. But a mine works, too. From the opening of the mine come unintelligible noises. Onomatopoeic noises, syllables

> of rage or of seduction or of seductive rage or maybe just murmurs and whispers and moans. The point is, no one sees, really sees, the mouth of the mine. Stage machinery, the play of light and shadows, a trick of time, hides the real shape of the opening from the gaze of the audience. In fact, only the spectators who are closest to the stage, right up against the orchestra pit, can see the shape, but at any rate it's the shape of something [...] Meanwhile, the shadowless intellectuals are always facing the audience, so unless they have eyes in the backs of their heads, they can't see anything. They only hear the sounds that come from deep in the mine. And they translate or reinterpret or re-create them. Their work, it goes without saying is of a very low standard. They employ rhetoric where they sense a hurricane, they try to be eloquent where they sense fury unleashed, they strive to maintain the discipline of meter where there's only a deafening and hopeless silence. [...] Next to this stage there are others, of course. New stages that have sprung up over time. [...]. The roars keep coming from the opening of the mine and the intellectuals keep misinterpreting them. In fact, they, in theory the masters of language, can't even enrich it themselves. Their best words are borrowings that they hear spoken by the spectators in the front row. (121–2)]

Norton, one of the "shadowless intellectuals," tells Amalfitano that she doesn't understand a word of what he says but the academics' time in Santa Teresa, the homicide capital of Mexico, makes Norton rediscover the importance of what she calls the "practical, real, tangible things" (142). The academics' sense of distaste for Santa Teresa and all it represents is shaken by their experiences there and yet we know they do not have "eyes in the backs of their heads." Espinoza and Pelletier have their own epiphany. They know they will never find what represents all that is best in culture and literature for them, namely Archimboldi, but that he has guided them to Santa Teresa and "this is the closest we'll ever be to him" (159).

Sebald's protagonists and narrators are very often researchers or academics who have internalized genealogical, historical, and cultural forms of archival enquiry to the extent that they no longer seem able to differentiate between life and research, which is, of course, already understood to be a false dichotomy.[16] Sebald is indirectly pointing to another kind of semblance or concealment that

academic enquiry privileges and that his protagonists discover again through their meticulous study of events surrounding the atrocities of National Socialism. His researcher-protagonists can only come to terms with painful memories by navigating a labyrinthine, heavily annotated research path into various cultural memories. The personal voice appears for the first time in *Schwindel. Gefühle* [*Vertigo*] on the first page of the second section—ALL'ESTERO—after a lengthy first section on the notes of a Marie Henri Beyle, one of the soldiers in Napoleon's legendary transalpine march through the Great St Bernard Pass in May of 1800. It begins: "Ich war damals, im Oktober 1980 ist es gewesen, von England aus, wo ich nun seit nahezu fünfundzwanzig Jahren in einer meist grau überwölkten Grafschaft lebe, nach Wien gefahren in der Hoffnung, durch eine Ortsveränderung über eine besonders ungute Zeit hinwegzukommen" (39) ["In October 1980 I travelled from England, where I had then been living for nearly twenty-five years in a country which was almost always under grey skies, to Vienna, hoping that a change of place would help me get over a particularly difficult period in my life" (33)].[17] The academic reader may become conscious of the parallels between Sebald's life and that of the narrator of *Vertigo*, leading him or her to reflect on his or her own internalized academic discourses for self-understanding.

In the final section of *Vertigo*, a section entitled *Il ritorno in patria*, the protagonist decides to go back to W., before returning to England, where he had spent his childhood. However, this will be no ordinary homecoming. As Bolaño reminds us, "[p]ara el escritor de verdad su única patria es su biblioteca" (*EP* 43) ["books are the only homeland of the true writer" (*BP* 42)]. Sebald will demonstrate how the contemporary writer as exile has a whole new bulwark of academic discourses on diaspora identity, post-exilic trauma, and auto-ethnography with which to save himself from himself. The narrator tells us that as a researcher, he has been "working on my various tasks" in the summer in Verona. He gets shown into his room in the Engelwirt Inn, a room that "was approximately where our living room had once been, the room was furnished with all the pieces my parents had bought in 1936" (193) ["befand sich das mir angewiesene Zimmer an derselben Stelle, an der unser Wohnzimmer gewesen war mit der Einrichtung, die die Eltern angeschafft hatten" (210)]. He spends hours looking over the Engelwirt's

landlady's "collection of postcards she kept in three large folio volumes" (196) ["und habe stundenlang die in drei großen Folianten untergebrachte Ansichtskartensammlung angeschaut" (213)]. This leads the protagonist and Sebald's alter ego to vertiginous asides about the Far East, Vesuvius, and about the life of Rosina Zobel's (the landlady) husband, old Engelwirt. All the time we know the research is necessary for the composed revelation the researcher-protagonist knows he has hit upon in relation to this return to the *Unheimlich Heimat*. In other words, the composed and studious manner of the work of scholarly research is being assigned to a somewhat traumatic and alienating retelling of an imagined return to a homeland. The protagonist recounts how he spends his day: "Den Nachmittag über bin ich, mit meinen Aufzeichnungen und dem damit verbundenen Nachsinnen beschäftigt" (223) ["I spent the afternoons sitting [...], turning over my recollections and writing up my notes" (204)]. Through the research he revisits the scenes of his youth: "Immerhin ht es mich durch das Gehen von Bild zu Bild weitergezogen, und ich bin hinaus auf die Felder und hinauf auf die auf den Anhöhen ringsum liegenden Weiler" (228) ["At all events I found that as I went from one of his works to another I was drawn onward, and I walked through the fields and towards the outlying hamlets on the surrounding mountainsides and hills"] (208–9). Sebald's narrator is Proust's Combray narrator in the age of mass education and the knowledge industry where memory itself has been colonized by invasive instititutional discourses of cultural memory. But even the composed and studied manner of the protagonist's return to the scene of his childhood does not prevent him from discovering a deep sense of loss as he walks the hills and fields of his youth:

> [...] alles Wege, die ich in der Kindheit neben dem Groβvater her gemacht hatte und die mir in der Erinnerung so viel, in Wirklichkeit aber, wie ich jetzt feststellen muβte, so gut wie gar nichts mehr bedeuten. Niedergeschlagen kehrte ich jedesmal von diesen Exkursionen in den Engelwirt zurück und zu den disparaten Notizen, an denen ich in letter Zeit doch einen gewissen Halt gefunden hatte, selbst wenn mir dabei das Beispiel des Kunstmalers Hengge und die Fragwürdigkeit der Kunstmalerei überhaupt immer warnend vor Augen standen. (229)

> [[…] paths that I had walked in my childhood at my grandfather's side and which had meant so much to me in my memory, but, as I came to realise, meant nothing to me now. From every one of these excursions I returned dispirited to the Engelwirt and to the writing of my notes, which had afforded me a degree of comfort of late [notes are a constant support for his narrators when they discover, as the narrator of Austerlitz does, that events have "dulled my sense of other people's existence" (46)], even as the example of Hengge the artist, and the questionable nature of painting as an enterprise in general, remained before me as a warning 210)]

The reader recalls that the writer is an aging academic, an academic who may well be playing with the Proustian motif of memory as a device that his alter ego has interiorized. The reader becomes aware that the worldview adopted is grounded on an outmoded and esoteric academic speculation that further alienates the subject when interiorized as a mode of self-knowing. The note-taking and the research into a life that is traced back as one's own, can only offer a modicum of relief. Even at moments of profound despair alienation remains because the protagonist-researcher is incapable of divorcing personal reflection from the modes and cues of cultural reflection. Sebald's researcher still stands centre-stage like Bolaño's, a "shadowless intellectual" who has given his own shadow up to the play of the archive and cultural memory.

The reminiscences take on a darker hue and the alter ego recounts family illnesses and passings. The reader is also burdened by the fact that this German childhood of the 1920s is moving ever closer to the context of the emergence of National Socialism in government in the 1930s. He speaks of the "years of continuous disappointment and perenially revived hope" (216) and he describes how the chance archives found in an attic become physically marked in the mind of the researcher by the content they conjure and record: "Zeichen einer langsamen Auflösung in die auf dem Dachboden herrschende völlige Stille" (244) ["tokens of the slow disintegration of all material forms in the complete silence of this attic" (223–4)]. They then become a metaphor for all archives that drive enquiry and are thus complicit in a process of concealment: the archival objects defy the gaze of the researcher: "Man konnte sich leicht einbilden, daβ diese gesamte Versammlung der verschiedensten Dinge bis zu dem Augenblick,

da wir eingetreten waren, sich in Bewelgung, in einer Art Evolution befunded hatte und jetzt nur aufgrund unserer Anwesenheit lautlos verharrte, als sei nichts gewesen" (244) ["It was easy to imagine that this entire assemblage of the most diverse objects had been moving, in some sort of secret evolution, until the moment we entered, and that it was only because of our presence that these things now held their breath as if nothing had happened" (224)]. The narrator then recalls a litany of catastrophes to have hit the town of W. that become subsumed by the memories of complete terror before "old Kopf" the barber whom he recalls "setting about shaving the fuzz from my neck with that freshly stropped knife" (243) ["als wenn der Köpf, bei dem ich mir, […] mir mit diesem an dem Lederriemen frisch abgezogenen Messer den Nacken ausrasierte" (266)]. The memories of trauma at W. are then sublimated into a selective Adlerian life-history that looks for evidence in childhood of a life always proleptically turning towards research and academic enquiry. The narrator has been academically diligent in his appreciation of how memories must be selectively stored in order to recreate the personal life-story that is deemed most appropriate: "I would sit with my teacher on the bench by the stove and on sunny days outside in the revolving summer-house under the trees, completely devoted to the tasks I was set, filling my exercise books with a web of lines and numbers in which I hoped to entangle Fraulein Rauch for ever" (252) ["und saß bei schlechtem Wetter neben der sanftmütigen Lehramtskandidatin auf der Ofenbank, bei schönem Wetter draußen in dem drehbaren Gartenhaus inmitten des Arboretums und füllte mit Hingabe meine Schulhefte mit einem Netzwerk von Zeilen und Zahlen, in welches ich das Fräulein Rauch auf immer einzuspinnen und zu verstricken hoffte" (275)]. Of course, the irony is that it is the protagonist-researcher who has become entangled to a much greater extent in the lines and numbers of scholarly amanuensis and in personal memory as cultural memory. Where can the personal now be found? It is on this note that he becomes dispirited about his exploits into researching himself, finding as we all will, if we research ourselves as Proust did, that it only leads to the discovery that "my writing had reached the point at which I either had to continue for ever or break off" (252–3) ["meinen Aufzeichnungen an den Punkt gekommen war, wo ich entweder immerfort weitermachen oder aber abbrechen mußte" (276)]. He refers to his own profession, one in

which he "was forever bent over my papers" ["ich andauernd über meine Papiere gebeugt war" (275–6)] so that any ordinary salesman would regard him, upon having taken one "look at my outward appearance," as "perhaps [in a] more dubious profession" ["zweifelhafteres Metier schlossen" (276)] than theirs (*V* 252). He eventually falls to more direct notes about the countryside of his homeland, saying it "has always been alien to me, straightened out and tidied up as it is to the last square inch and corner" (253). We then get apocalyptic descriptions of the landscape of Germany for this academic exile as well as the description of his personal blackout that leaves him regarding his academic learning that has granted him "a certain stylistic facility" as a "deluded enterprise": "zu der Überzeugung kam, daβ so etwas wie die Zersetzung meiner Schädelnerven nunmehr endgültig eingesetzt habe" (278) ["I came to the conclusion that something like an eclipse of my mental faculties was about to occur" (254)] and "Der Zwang, unter dem ich mich befand, legte sich erst, als der Zug in den Heidelberger Bahnhof hineinrollte, wo derart zahlreich die Menschen auf den Bahnsteigen standen, daβ ich sogleich annahm, sie seien auf der Flucht aus der untergehenden oder bereits untergegangenen Stadt" (278) ["the compulsive fixation did not wear off until the train pulled into Heidelberg station, where there were so many people crowding the platforms that I feared they were fleeing from a city doomed or already laid waste" (254)].

The protagonist then has a momentary epiphany before a woman in front of him who recites some lines of poetry after reading a book entitled *The Seas of Bohemia*, a book he can later never find on any bookshelf or catalogue. Once again, all this academic's revelations come to him secondhand through the intertext. But the sense of levity this momentary encounter with another nameless and almost visionary fellow commuter allows him is almost immediately dispelled after his long walk from the National Gallery to Liverpool Street Station by him once again succumbing to the reverie of researcher's notes. He falls into a dream on the way home inspired by him idly turning, as most academics of course now never do, the pages of an "India paper edition of Samuel Pepys's diary, Everyman's Library, 1913" ["der Dünndruckausgabe—Everyman's Library 1913—des Tagebuchs von samuel Pepys" (285)] and the dream becomes not all his own, not a key to the sense of fatigue and horror and vertigo he experiences in returning twice to different homes, but something

that rushes to fill the "breathless void" created by these sensations. The silence is now absolute but his dream becomes an echo of the "fragments from the account of the Great Fire of London as recorded by Samuel Pepys" (262) ["Fragmente aus dem Bericht über das große Feuer von London" (287)]. The notes of the Great Fire become a terrifiying metaphor for the fury of research itself that leaves him feeling one with the terrified Londoners "flee[ing] onto the water. The glare around us everywhere, and yonder, before the darkened skies, in one great arc the jagged wall of fire. And, the day after, a silent rain of ashes, westward as far as Windsor Park" (263) ["Wir fliehen auf das Wasser. Um uns der Widerschein, und vor dem tiefen Himmelsdunkel in einem Bogen hügelan die ausgezackte Feuerwand bald eine Meile breit. Und andern Tags ein stiller Aschenregen—westwärts, bis über Windsor Park hinaus" (287)]. The researcher, it would seem, must only dream, not in technicolor, but in aquatint and yellowed paperback. However, the fact that this yellowed recording of the Great Fire by one of the English canon's greatest annotators must then become a metaphor for the roots of the personal trauma he cannot confront is revealing of the destructive power of the modes of academic enquiry he has internalized.

The recasting of how research can become a tool to sustain oneself while also saving oneself from oneself is repeated in *Austerlitz*. At the end of the book Sebald has the narrator report how Austerlitz, the lecturer in art history, describes the archive itself as becoming the greatest obstacle to the work it drives. For Austerlitz, the newly constructed Grande Bibliothèque becomes a vast metaphor for the institutions and practices of learning that himself and the narrator have grounded their self-enquiries on; it is now an institution that bars them from entry at every point and treats them as one would an "enemy." Sebald's description of Breedonk as a "penal colony" comes to mind. Martin Modlinger and Richard Crownshaw have described Sebald's comparison of the archive and the "deathcamp" at Theresienstadt in terms of the archive that is "working against itself […] towards the eradication of memory" (Modlinger 2012, 352). Like Kafka's protagonists Sebald's scholars and researchers confront the archive knowing they must climb all the right stairs, descend all the right passageways, pass all the security checks, respond to all the interrogations in small cubicles, and wait at all the right doors before the book they require is recovered for them. Once in possession of

the book these academics are so wearied by the quest their academic pursuits have launched them on, a ship they can now never disembark from, that they simply sit and peer out the glass windows at the cityscapes where the life flowing beneath is, for Austerlitz's fellow reader Lemoine, nothing but the "body of the city" ["daß Körper der Stadt" (405)] that has "been infected by an obscure disease spreading underground" (399) ["befallen sei von einer obskuren, unterirdisch fortwuchernden Krankheit" (405)]; life beyond the archive often appears dead to these researchers. But even these images of decay send these weary academics into labyrinthine reveries that grant them further justifications for seeing the physical bulk of this High Church of academic enquiry, this Grande Bibliothèque, as yet another metaphor for the obstacles that the research industry now embodies for the researcher intent on locating the "book that really matters," Bolaño's "flower of winter." However, the irony is, as Bolaño's stage academics remind us, that they are all the time turned away from confronting the real chasm of emptiness that the literature of suffering records. Austerlitz laments how any research into the nature of the "loot […] taken from the homes of the Jews of Paris" (401) from 1942 by the "Germans" is now impossible since the Grande Bibliothèque has been built on the site of the complex on the wasteland between the marshalling yard of the Gare d'Austerlitz and the Pont Tolbiac. In the end these researchers are left researching dead ends; Austerlitz takes his leave from the narrator discussing an Ashkenazi cemetery in London and the narrator ends his narrative sitting before the remains of the German deathcamp at Breedonk and staring into its dark chasms once again through the pages of a book he reads about another fruitless search for a Jewish grandfather. As we have seen, Jacobson's mines that describe the experience staring at Breedonk's architecture of oppression are offered up as a final terrifying metaphor for the researcher's inability to distinguish personal memory from cultural memory: "Wahrhaft schreckenerregend sei es gewesen, schreibt Jacobson, einen Schritt von dem festen Erdboden eine solche Leere sich auftun zu sehen, zu begreifen, daβ es da keinen Übergang gab, sondern nur diesen Rand, auf der einen Seite das selbstverständliche Leben, auf der anderen sein unausdenkbares Gegenteil" (420) ["it was truly terrifying to see such emptiness open up a foot away from firm ground, to realize that there was no transition, only this dividing line, with ordinary life on one side and its unimaginable opposite on the other side" (414)].

Sebald and Bolaño present us with different aspects of the "barbaric rituals" of academic enquiry that flourish in the age of the archive and knowledge industry. Their work returns us to Benjamin's notion of positive barbarism in describing a new kind of academic barbarism. They describe how a reading industry moulded by the knowledge industry creates discourses of concealment and semblance that detract from the "book that really matters." However, in passionately evoking the visceral search for this "book" and in meticulously recreating the sense of wonder still found before the riches of an archive stolidly repelling the reader, their work also offers stubborn, heroic readers glimpses of the evasive vertigo and playful wanderlust writing must still hope to elicit.

5
Aaron Swartz, New Technologies, and the Myth of Open Access

> Those with access to these resources—students, librarians, scientists—you have been given a privilege. You get to feed at this banquet of knowledge while the rest of the world is locked out. But you need not—indeed, morally, you cannot—keep this privilege for yourselves. You have a duty to share it with the world. And you have: trading passwords with colleagues, filling download requests for friends.
>
> Meanwhile, those who have been locked out are not standing idly by. You have been sneaking through holes and climbing over fences, liberating the information locked up by the publishers and sharing them with your friends.
>
> But all of this action goes on in the dark, hidden underground. It's called stealing or piracy, as if sharing a wealth of knowledge were the moral equivalent of plundering a ship and murdering its crew. But sharing isn't immoral—it's a moral imperative. Only those blinded by greed would refuse to let a friend make a copy. *from* Guerrila Open Access Manifesto by Aaron Swartz[1]

Aaron Swartz's untimely death in 2013 and the claims of his family in regard to the prosecuting university legal teams[2] show up a less than supportive university or subscription knowledge industry.[3] It is an industry that is often backed up by state prosecutors.[4] The "silence" of

M.I.T., and M.I.T.'s refusal to sign off on a plea bargain that would have meant Swartz would not have had to serve any time in prison for wire fraud[5] reveals how ruthless the subscription knowledge industry can be when it comes to protecting what Swartz describes as the university's "wealth of knowledge". The case demonstrates how university power and authority in the twenty-first century in regard to intellectual property rights infringements through the illegal downloading of "millions" of articles from university servers (in this case MIT[6]) can be draconian.[7] This comes at a time when MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) learning is prevalent and when the UK research environment, in response to the Finch Report,[8] and the US scholarly journal business in response to the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014, are making state-funded and US department and agency-funded research more readily available to the public (Greco 2015: 251).[9] Professor Peter Mandler, President of the UK Royal Historical Society and professor of modern cultural history at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, notes that these changes will cause a "fundamental revolution in the way academic life carries on" (Boffey 2013). Universities and educational corporations appear then to be sending out mixed messages in regard to open access (OA). This chapter will examine two related questions that these developments raise for researchers who are often expected to embody the new knowledge transfer and "open-access" principles of the subscription knowledge industry. Firstly, how are developments in science and technology in regard to information and its dissemination, developments that are driving the new knowledge transfer and MOOC initiatives, changing the role and profession of the researcher in higher education, and secondly, how effective will government and corporate claims for "open access" be for tackling educational inequalities in regard to access to education? In other words, will the toll gates to online sources simply be placed at a further remove down the university's information highway?

Open access

Aaron Swartz worked in collaboration with the A2K, or access to knowledge, movement that challenges the spread of intellectual property law and that strives to make as much knowledge as possible available to as many people as possible. Swartz was also the initiator of the first petition to defeat the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA) and the founder of Demand Progress, which was instrumental in

stopping this bill. In *Access to Knowledge in the Age of Intellectual Property* Gaelle Krikorian and Amy Kapczynski examine this movement for access to knowledge in two ways, firstly "as a reaction to structural trends in technologies of information processing and in law, and [secondly] as an emerging conceptual critique of the narrative that legitimates the dramatic expansion in intellectual property rights that we have witnessed over the past several decades" (2010: 19). This chapter argues that the academic industry is complicit in this dramatic expansion in intellectual property and in the development of a philosophy of exclusion. The academic industry's recent investment in MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) as a means for providing free and "open" courses to thousands of cash-strapped students has been questioned at a number of levels and can be regarded as serving to extend exclusion (Laurillard 2014; Whitehead and Padgett, 2013). These courses, in effect, construct a new "two-tier" university model, reserving the option of real-time face-to-face contact with tutors and professors, real degree awards, unlimited access to a university's articles, books, and archives, and the five-star campus experience for those who are fortunate enough to be selected for traditional university learning experiences. Despite the fact that publicly funded research is likely to be more readily available to the public due to the Finch Report and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, it must be noted that publishers and information corporations are pushing subscription prices ever higher for non-publicly funded databases and publishing fewer and fewer paperback editions of books (the kind that public libraries and members of the public could once consider buying) in favour of eBooks that are only accessible behind toll gates as bulk subscription packages.

The academic industry's commitment to open access as a form of unlimited access for the public (even as MOOC participants) to all that full-paying students can access is of course impossible. After all, it was MIT, the number one ranked university in the world at the time of writing, that initially filed the suit against Swartz that led to him being faced with a possible prison sentence of 35 years or a fine of $1 million for illegally downloading millions of science articles, the majority of which were already in the public domain. The articles were downloaded from JSTOR, a digital library, onto a computer at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology while Swartz was a fellow at Harvard University's Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics in 2010 and 2011. It is ironic that John Willinsky, writing in 2006, claims that MIT

"has proven [to] be a beacon of educational access though its Open Knowledge Initiative, which is setting standards for learning technologies worldwide" (149). While it is widely agreed that Swartz intended to share some of these articles, critics argue that Carmen Ortiz, the Obama-appointed district attorney overseeing the case, made "no distinction between crimes committed for profit and those carried out as a public service" (Gould, 2015). Since Swartz was never likely to make much money from these articles, it is the principle and the wider implications of a more general infringement of intellectual property rights that rankled university authorities. However, despite recent developments in regard to open access in the UK and the US, the Swartz case and the realization that MOOCs do not offer the educational new dawn they once promised, reveal that motivations for developing new technologies for open access often hide a willingness on the part of the academic industry and the information publishing sector to use aggressive procedures for enforcing exclusive ownership rights.

The MOOCs experiment is important in that it reveals how universities are eager to promote hierarchical models of transmission and how students as informed consumers are unwilling to "buy into" any system that would perpetuate notions of exclusivity and privilege in tertiary education. MOOC organizers quickly realized that the "massive" element of their courses would have to follow less "massive" traditional formats. UK students maintain a staff–student ratio of roughly 1:25. Harvard Law School, which uses the edX platform for its course on copyright, quickly realized it had to limit enrolment to 500 because it has only 21 tutors. It knows, as it says on its website, that "high-quality legal education depends, at least in part, upon supervised small-group discussions of difficult issues" (Laurillard 2014). MOOCs also have "painfully few users." A recent University of Pennsylvania study reveals that only about half of those who registered for a class ever viewed a lecture and completion rates averaged about four percent across all courses (Perna et al. 2013). San Jose State University also partnered with Udacity to offer credit-bearing MOOCs at low cost; however, completing rates and grades were much lower than on traditional courses (Westervelt 2013). Whitehead and Padgett's study also reveals that MOOCs may be even less successful outside the US in jurisdictions with different copyright law. They argue that copyright exceptions are unlikely to allow MOOC users to engage fully with the copyright content and that since MOOC content must be licenced as Non Commercial

(NC), the massive nature of the courses means the application of NC licences is likely to inhibit "intended use of educational content." Therefore, the MOOC notion of "open" is also unclear since a "majority of third-party texts wil never be available under free non-commercial licences." Whitehead and Padgett argue that countries such as Australia use statutory licences to enforce copyright on materials, however the materials must be for "educational purposes" in connection with a "particular course of instruction provided by the institution." The problem with MOOCs is that they are "open" and therefore there is no way to ensure the materials' use is limited to "authenticated users" since MOOC users are registered on the MOOC courses but are not enrolled students at the host university. Therefore, both the "massive" and "open" elements of MOOCs are unclear. MOOCs may also be serving to increase educational inequalities rather than providing access for underserved students. One study reveals that 60 percent of registered students on MOOCs already had degrees (Laurillard 2014).

As Willinsky also reminds us, history contains numerous instances of literate classes restricting opportunities for others to learn; the OA revolution will likely bring with it new sets of restrictions and "toll gates." Jonathan Rose sums up the politics of literacy as follows: "the exchange value of knowledge can be enhanced by creating artificial scarcities, monopolies and oligarchies" (2003: 394). The push to make scholarly work available to all classes cannot exempt itself from such practices of exclusion. Willinsky argues that OA seems "far less likely to threaten the position of the scholarly classes, except as it expands participation in the climb to the top ranks of professordom" (2006: 137). Adaptation will once again play a part in the new rubric of exclusion. Willinsky also reveals another possible problem with OA when the government decides on what constitutes good research. The U.S. Education Act of 2001 (the No Child Left Behind Act) was passed in order to promote "informed parental choice" as well as "innovative programs" of education that were "based on scientifically based research." In other words, only "scientifically based research" would be supported and, in turn, funded by institutions. However, Willinsky makes the obvious point that because education is a discipline that is chiefly concerned with the "human qualities and values at stake in schooling" (140), only a very small proportion of research in education follows a "clinical trials model" and can therefore be regarded

as "scientifically based research" (140). Therefore, if governments or academic industries create such criteria for the publication of research, it is research with access to "clinical trials" and scientific equipment that will be privileged. A great deal of more traditional, rigorously researched scholarship will be left behind.

Recent studies in library research also reveal that "if OA is to be relevant to the respective research communities, a major shift in resources has to occur" (208) because OA in 2015 is still a "niche activity" (208) where the "resources assigned for gold[10] (and also green) OA so far represent only a very small fraction of the overall spending for research information" (208).[11] Sven Fund argues that one reason for the slow uptake of OA by academic institutions is because "research output" is also "not distributed evenly among the players within the system"; many "research-intensive universities or academic institutions […] would require many more financial resources to publish their researchers' papers all in OA" (2015: 208–9). It is therefore a matter of resources once again.

Open Access (OA) stakes the interests of the publishing industry against what it claims are the best interests of authors and academics. However, the "best interests" these industries purportedly wish to serve are author interests in the form of citation indexes that are built into these publishers' online publication models. In response to questions about why he had asked OA sites such as academia.edu to take down copyrighted Elsevier papers, Tom Reller, Elsevier's head of Global Corporate Relations, argued: "One key reason is to ensure that the final published version of an article is readily discoverable and citable via the journal itself in order to maximize the usage metrics and credit for our authors, and to protect the quality and integrity of the scientific record" (Solon 2013). The academic is only a concern because he or she has a citation score. However, the only reason academics are treated as citation scores is because they are locked into publishing models like Elsevier's that then charge extortionate subscription fees. The only way to ensure real OA is for academics to collectively refrain from publishing on such platforms, since by granting the publishing sector control over published work academics are directly contributing to the funding of exclusive access and, in turn, to the perpetuation of inequality. At any rate, Troll Covey argues that "publisher support for OA is disingenuous" and that publisher policies on OA are "problematic" and are "actually an attempt

to subjugate self-archiving authors as a niche community under the 'auspices of orthodoxy'" (Troll Covey 2010).

John Willinsky speaks of an access principle in discussing the possibility of open access.[12] He argues that the access principle embodies a belief that "*a commitment to the value and quality of research carries with it a responsibility to extend the circulation of this work as far as possible, and ideally to all who are interested in it and all who might profit by it* [Willinsky's emphasis]" (2006: 5). He traces this principle back to the "fabled collection at Alexandria founded in the third century B.C." and to the early mosque libraries such as "the one at al-Azhar in Cairo" (5). However, he notes that the practice by publishing corporations such as Elsevier, Taylor & Francis, and others of "bundling" journal titles in licensing arrangements with libraries and of charging extortionate rates for access to these titles is leading to "*declining access* to research and scholarship" despite, as the MOOCs suggest, an otherwise expanding global academic community. The digitization of books is also making online "readers" feel part of a larger virtual global university; Hall argues that there is "nothing outside the university" (2008: 2). However, this mass availability of new information, what Hardt and Negri refer to in terms of the "informational colonization of being" (in Willinsky 2006: 108), also produces a new "two-way knowledge gap" around the practice of credentialization. As students of edX or the large MOOCs learn, most courses do not lead to any regular academic credentials but to awards described by one leading university as "certificates of mastery." The scholarly range of materials that an edX student has access to is very often restricted to what is being covered directly on the course, thereby denying the student the opportunity to research and browse freely. Students of MOOCs and edX courses therefore have no opportunity for contributing to the archive of the "real" university they feel virtually connected to. A new two-tier student model is being constructed that gives the impression of greater universal access to elite education. Open access may also lead to further entrenchment of the two-tier system that exists between students from developed and developing countries.

In his book *The Access Principle* John Willinsky acknowledges that the current understanding of the access principle is not one that suggests that access is completely free since access presumes the possession of an amount of hardware on which to access the online

versions of documents. He admits that the goal of his book is to "inform and inspire a larger debate over the political and moral economy of knowledge that will constitute the future of research" (xiv). Willinsky cites the case of *PLoS Biology*, a science journal that was made free to online readers in 2003. Willinsky notes that "the U.S. House Appropriations Committee was expressing concern" shortly afterwards over "public access to medical research that had been funded by taxpayers through the National Institutes of Health (NIH)" (2). The House then instructed the NIH to arrive at a policy that would make NIH-funded research freely available through PubMed—an open access journal—"within six months of the work's publication." This time lag or delay is regularly put in place between the time of publication of a print issue of a journal and the e-issue in order to "protect subscription sales of journal publishers." The UK model of open access for 2014 will no longer include the commitment to such a delay between partial and full access. The universities are expected to contribute financially to publication so that publishers can survive. The Finch Report discusses the relative merits of the "gold" and "green" approaches to open access in future science publishing in the UK. The main issue preventing the researchers from advocating a "green" approach to academic publishing which would mandate "authors to deposit their final peer-reviewed manuscripts in institutional or subject repositories" where articles would be available most likely only after an embargo period of not less than 12 months, is that, according to Michael Mabe, the former chair of the Peer project (Publishing and the Ecology of European Research), it would likely be a nightmare to organize. As one European Commission official admitted: "If green is cumbersome, messy, involves assumptions about cooperation and investment in infrastructure, and still only delivers an imperfect version of the article, and then several months after publication, surely it's better to pay for the final version to be accessible upon publication?" (Price 2012). However, the cost of the gold option is simply prohibitive and well beyond the finances of the majority of academics who are struggling for a more permanent job contract or for substantiation or tenure; the cost of the gold option for a single chapter such as this one, for example, is almost £2000. However, the question is what procedures will the academic industry use to decide what research is fundable? The case for making top medical journals available is easier to make than it is for humanities

and social science journals. The Japanese government's recent decree that all national universities close or downsize humanities and social sciences faculties so that universities can "serve areas that better meet society's needs," together with national education reports such as the Browne Report in the UK, suggests that universities will become ever more reluctant to regard humanities research as fundable (Traphagan, 2015). However, even though humanities articles may not be fundable, their illegal use can still draw the wrath of the academic industry; it was articles from JSTOR, a favourite database for those working in the humanities, that were downloaded by Aaron Swartz.

Willinsky's work also draws attention to how university publishing and the academic review of research, which again contributes to rankings, has for a long time been done on a "goodwill" basis in a less than transparent manner. In the humanities and in other fields, editors, reviewers, and authors are not paid. As John Naughton (2012) writes: "This gives enormous power to outfits like Elsevier that publish key journals. […] An annual subscription to *Tetrahedron*, for example, costs a university library $20,269 (£12,600)" and the average cost of an annual subscription to a chemistry journal is about $3,792 and many journals cost far more. The result, Naughton argues, "is that unconscionable amounts of public money are extracted from our hapless universities in the form of what are, effectively, monopoly rents for a few publishers." He notes that most major British universities are giving between £4m and £6m a year to publishers like Elsevier (Naughton 2012). Naughton also reminds the general public that content for publishers like Elsevier and Springer is provided free by researchers, most of whose salaries are paid by this general public. The peer reviewing that ensures quality in these publications can also be argued to come from taxes because researchers are paid from public money. A report in *Times Higher Education* from 2008 "has attempted to quantify in cash terms exactly what peer reviewers are missing out on. It puts the worldwide unpaid cost of peer review at £1.9 billion a year, and estimates that the UK is among the most altruistic of nations, racking up the equivalent in unpaid time of £165 million a year."[13] We must also remember that the publication and dissemination of information is big business. The high-impact business and professional information sector is dominated by a number of "global information companies" and these include Reed Elsevier, Wolters Kluwer, Sage, John Wiley, Informa, Springer,

Pearson, and McGraw-Hill. In 2013 this business was worth $90.72 billion (Greco 2015: 253). Estimated North American revenues in the Scholarly and Professional Journal sector alone are estimated at $7.6 billion and this does not include the huge global market for these subscription-based journal collections (Greco 2015: 246). The estimated total annual revenues in 2015 in North America for professional and scholarly books (including print, digital, hardbacks, and paperbacks) are $8.345 billion (233). Albert N. Greco argues that global financial firms invest heavily in these sectors for a number of reasons: the return on invested capital is exceptionally attractive; the market for business and professional information is global, with the majority of operations located in the US; digital distribution generates the type of yields investors want; and the need for information will accelerate in the next decade (254). Greco also argues that "Wall Street" became interested in investing in certain publishing and information industry firms after the Global Financial Crisis because they offered "acceptable volatility levels versus firms in other sectors with higher rates of returns and higher rates of volatility, including financials (especially in 2007–2008 because of the sub-prime disaster, mortgage foreclosures, reductions in capital, etc.), technology (cyclical), or retailing (e.g., subject to discretionary consumer spending)" (5). Therefore, as of 2013 Allianz Global Investors of America, L.P. has invested $312.2 million in this sector, Barclays Global Investors UK Holdings LTD $442 million, and Morgan Stanley $317.3 million and there are hundreds of firms making investments (255).

New technologies and the power of information

These new higher educational initiatives are the result of new technologies that are reshaping our understanding of information and bringing with them new manifestations of institutional power. Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge* revealed in the 1960s how structures and archaeologies of knowledge management were not exempt from the power paradigms he had already revealed in other institutions. He recognizes that our understanding of the knowledge or information each discipline imparts needs to be re-evaluated: "We must also question those divisions or groupings with which we have become so familiar. Can one accept, as such, the distinction between the major types of discourse, or that between such forms or genres as science,

literature, philosophy, religion, history, fiction, etc., and which tend to create certain great historical individualities?" (2012: 23). The far-reaching connections that Foucault privileges between knowledge, information, and power are "not just superimposed on the relations of production." He argues, as we have seen, that these connections between information and power "are deeply rooted in what constitutes them," and are most fully realized and enforced by what he calls "infrapower"; a "whole set of little powers, of little institutions" must be put in place as a "prior condition of hyperprofit" that, in turn, gives rise to a "series of knowledges—a knowledge of the individual, of normalization, a corrective knowledge" (*Power*, 2000, 87). Given that today's most lucrative national knowledge industries, namely the US and the UK, have long been described as educational *power*houses that are, in turn, allowing the global information sector to make such good returns for "Wall Street," the university's micro-management of this most fundamental of power relations—that between knowledge and the "things that knowledge must know" (2000, 9)—extends Foucault's description of power relations in general. Since Foucault, as we have seen, describes this knowledge relation as one that cannot be about "natural continuity" but must be one of "violation" and "violence" that disrupts the idea of the "unity of the subject," it is of the utmost importance that we examine how ranking rubrics are not only transforming research into a means for hyperprofit but how the academic learning environment feeding this system is violating, or enacting violence on, young people's emotional and intellectual growth (10). This new manifestation of the power of knowledge therefore affects both researchers and students.

Contemporary work in knowledge management and information technology that derives a new working ethic from AMA (artificial moral agent) experiments disrupts any such traditional sense of "natural continuity" between knowledge and desire and between information and learning. Aaron Swartz was also aware of this machine discourse in organizational psychology. He writes in his blog *Raw Nerve*: "an organization is not just a pile of people, it's also a set of structures […] And when the system isn't working, it doesn't make sense to just yell at the people in it […] When there's a problem, you shouldn't get angry with the gears—you should fix the machine" (Swartz, 2012). There is a growing tendency to apply a machine language both to the workings of the academic subscription

knowledge industry and to any ethical model we might perceive underlying its practice of information dissemination.

How do these developments in the life of the university in regard to intellectual property and information dissemination relate to the ideals for a university education put forward by writers like Newman, Leavis, and Kant? Despite Gary Hall's claims that the old "paternalistic and class-bound" university simply championed "an elite cultural training and reproduction of a national culture, with all the hierarchies and exclusions around differences of class, gender, ethnicity" (2008: 2), Newman does argue that a university must be chiefly concerned with "contemplating students" and their "exercise and growth in certain habits, moral or intellectual" (6). He argues that what must be privileged is how to "make its students" into "'something or other'" rather than "simply to protect the interests and advance the dominion of Science" (9).

The debate on open access can also be seen as the latest phase in a long-running discourse on exclusion in the university. Kathleen Lynch reminds us that to be able to "challenge social class inequality in education," the arguments for which can be made most effectively by the humanities and social sciences subjects, requires "a widening and deepening of education on social class issues" (2005: 142). The social exclusions that the subscription knowledge industry sustains and upholds are implicated directly in the strengthening of the correlation between social-class background and highest level of education. When the debate on the knowledge industry is phrased in terms of social exclusion it also raises the old issue of the two-tier university; is the university to be a place where the attention is primarily on the training of an elite or is it instead to take a more democratic approach and think in terms of access for all?

How new technologies bring new intellectual ethics

However, these aspects of power and exclusion beg the question in relation to what ethos or ethic the university might be embodying. As Nicholas Carr notes, new technology users are slow to acknowledge that the new system brings with it a "new intellectual ethic" (2010: 45). Issues of exclusion and transparency run much deeper in an age where societal practices and discourses moulded by systematizations of knowledge are highly dependent on how a "computer/human

interface" is determining ethical best practice in regard to access to knowledge and information. Allen Buchanan has argued in *Beyond Humanity?* that the potential of cognitive enhancements for increasing productivity is important for theories of economic development. Central to this argument is the nature of what he calls "the computer/human interface" (2013: 46), an area of investigation that is central to the university's response to government dictates to make its research public. Buchanan argues that up until now:

> we have only had the option of developing new software programs—web browsers, data-mining programs, etc.- to help us get the most out of the staggering power of digital information systems. In the future, one important avenue for further cognitive enhancement and for gains in the ability to coordinate activities may well be the use of biomedical technologies to create more efficient interfacing between the brain and increasingly sophisticated computers. (46)

James Gleick has also recently examined how our very understanding of information has changed over time to the extent that information, the raw material for the knowledge the knowledge industry privileges, is now regarded as the basis of evolution, where evolution is regarded as "an ongoing exchange of information between organism and environment" that also returns us to questions of force and power (2012: 9). Werner Loewenstein argues that "the information circle becomes the unit of life" (in Gleick 2012: 9). The meme is seen as the "cultural analog" of the gene. Therefore, the power relations that Foucault alerts us to that are so fundamental to knowledge and information are today implicit in the university's means of exhibiting and disseminating information. Joseph Stiglitz has compared the power associated with knowing how to "produce knowledge and information" to the "magnates" of the era of "cars and steel" (in Hall 2008: 4). Information, represented by the bit, has come to be regarded as the "fundamental particle"; it is the God particle. As John Archibald Wheeler, a former collaborator of both Einstein and Bohr writes, "It from Bit […] every it—every particle, every field of force, even the space-time continuum itself" (Gleick 2012: 9) is derived from the bit. Information itself is then the source of every field of force.

Wendell Wallach and Colin Allen also argue in *Moral Machines* (2009) that our interaction with "moral machines" is challenging accepted notions of ethics and moral education and this will, in turn, affect the kind of research universities produce and fund. Wallach and Allen argue that the need to conceive of machines as AMAs (Artificial Moral Agents) has led psychologists and philosophers to re-imagine "programs of moral education" in schools long before the possibility of AMAs had become the reality it is today. This growing human reliance on practices, discourses, and philosophies that take place around the computer–human interface and in the interaction with, and self-incorporation into, the subscription knowledge system with all its corporate investments informs our understanding of what an AMA should be. In other words, as research funded by universities on AMAs and the human/computer interface progresses and is incorporated into the information publishing sector, it becomes far more difficult for old-school humanists to retreat to the ethical comforts of the old liberal university. The ethical foundations of influential moral discourses underpinning these older models of the university as institutions are being undermined by this research.

In demonstrating how research into AMAs is challenging traditional education programmes in moral reasoning, Wallech and Allen cite the work of Lawrence Kohlberg as particularly influential in regard to how moral reasoning is being defined for moral education programmes in schools. They argue that the stages for "moral development" are, in Kohlberg's view, "largely built on evaluating the applicability or limitations of reasons for moral judgments within a given context" (108). According to this model, "children move on to the next level of moral reasoning as they come to appreciate the limitations of the reasons they have been relying on for guidance" (109). Wallach and Allen's work makes clear both that such models or systems are now being "adapted" for "training" "artificial system[s]" that are seen to have the "right sort of logical capacities" and that growing attention to AMAs is also leading to new perspectives on the viability of ethical models we had taken for granted in regard to moral education programmes (109). This also affects debates on the nature of meritocracy. Wallach and Allen devise new criteria and terminology for the "ethical" action of machines whose meaning the reader can only properly grasp by imagining how such terms might define human action of a similar ilk. They argue that there are "many gradations of what we call

'functional morality'" between "'operational morality'"—what one presumes is a very basic description of a model for "behaviour" assigned to machines—and "functional morality." The gradations range from "systems that merely act within acceptable standards of behavior to intelligent systems capable of assessing some of the morally significant aspects of their own actions" (26). Questioning how a "system" can be ethical in the first place may now only be regarded as a weak hypothesis that recalls ethics as a potentiality related to the ontological and epistemological reality of being human. These new designations do suggest, however, that work on ethics in regard to AMAs and "moral machines" does not only work in one direction. It is not only about beginning with the human and working out how ethical paradigms might apply to machines; we can also now see that new descriptions of the kind of work machines do in terms of "functional" or "operational" morality are also leading philosophers and educationalists to reimagine what exactly it is that we had presumed was ethical about human action in the first place. This brings new meaning to Walter Benjamin's claims about technology and "positive barbarism," where the technological can become a force that "may thus make humanity more human," enabling us "to bring out the technical in the human instead of the human in the technical" (Boletsi 2013: 141).

Computer ethics philosopher James Moor has proposed another hierarchical schema for categorizing AMAs that also calls into question performance-based criteria or virtue-based approaches to ethics for human behaviour integral to older liberal arts models of citizenship education and values education. At the lowest level of Moor's hierarchical schema are "ethical impact agents," or machines that can be "evaluated" for their "ethical consequences." Next are "implicit ethical agents," which refers to "machines whose designers have made an effort to design them so that they don't have negative ethical effects, by addressing safety and critical reliability concerns during the design process" (in Wallach 2009: 33). Next come "explicit ethical agents" or machines that "reason about living ethical categories as part of their internal programming, perhaps using various forms of 'deontic' logic that have been developed for representing duties and obligations" (34). Above all of these categories lie "full ethical agents" and these are described as "those that can make explicit moral judgments and are generally quite competent in justifying

such decisions. This level of performance is often presumed to require a capacity for consciousness, intentionality, and free will" (34). The ethical language of AMA enhancement is therefore muddying any distinction that might have prevailed between animate and inanimate ethical behaviour. When "reason," "living ethical categories," and "consciousness" are applied to machines, the human as anthropological machine is also redefined. This becomes even more apparent when physicists such as Christof Koch describe "consciousness" itself, which Moor has also already suggested can be allocated to AMAs, as being comprised of "processors" and "membrane-bound machinery" (16). Academics who are now plugged in at all hours to the human/computer interface of the subscription knowledge industry must now begin to assess how their online research avatar, impact factor, or h-index fits with this redrafting of ethical behaviour in the AMA ethical enhancement language. It would appear that some computer ethicists are beginning to discover the limitations of these language games around ethics. Selmer Bringsjord, who suggests that all the ethics of virtues, duties, and obligations to logic should fall under "deontic logics," admits that the "approach will never be suitable for inserting AMAs into situations where humans themselves cannot say what the relevant principles are for making life-or-death decisions" (in Wallach 2009: 126). It would seem then that the human has become the "weakest link" or the spanner in the works in the futures plotted for AMAs.

Drew McDermott also acknowledges that "artificial morality" impacts on "human dignity and responsibility" (in Wallach 2009: 40). When the nature and field of human responsibility are changing daily due to the simultaneous incorporation of "artificial morality" into human practice and the "infusing [of] technology with [human] values" (in Wallach 2009: 39) it becomes progressively more difficult to use a non-AMA located sense of responsibility as a benchmark for further developments in AMA technology. The wider dimensions of these developments cannot be overlooked as we come to some new understanding of the position of the academic in the subscription knowledge industry and therefore the kind of ethical language we must employ to deal with educational inequality. The academic invests more and more of his or her time in thinking around, for, and through, systematizations and networks of knowledge transfer that are triggered, processed, and very often initiated by machines

and machine models. The process of surviving and excelling in the subscription knowledge industry therefore requires a new kind of skill set. It helps if one understands both how such models work and how they intervene in, or complement, human action. A university that promotes such systematizations of knowledge for the enhancement of the "Market University" while perpetuating platitudes about global learning is undermining core values of an older, democratic, and liberal tradition of university education no matter how elitist that tradition might have been.

Recent advances in biomedical research also reveal distinct cultural differences in the understanding of how ethics relates to research. In 2015, scientists at Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou, led by Huang Junjiu, published results of experiments on editing the genes of human embryos. The technology, called Crispr-Cas9, may one day be used to eradicate inheritable illnesses. However, in theory, it could also be used to alter traits such as intelligence, if intelligence is regarded as something that is "in our genes." Dr. Huang's team tried to modify a gene that causes a blood disorder called beta-thalassemia. The experiment failed in 85 embryos and for many western researchers the research was unethical. In a telephone interview with *The New York Times*, Deng Rui, a medical ethicist at Shanxi Medical University, explained: "Ethics are a question of culture, and that is about tradition, especially where it touches on human life. Confucian thinking says that someone becomes a person after they are born. That is different from the United States or other countries with a Christian influence, where because of religion they may feel research on embryos is not O.K." (Tallow 2015).

Recent attempts to remodel ethical categories on the basis of AMA may also be regarded as influential for the recent "turn" in neuroscience towards reading and the brain. Works such as Jonah Lehrer's *Why Proust was a Neuroscientist*, Stanislas Dehaene's *Reading in the Brain*, and Jerome Feldman's *From Metaphor to Molecule* offer new neuroscientific readings of the brain, memory, and reading. However, some of Lehrer's claims about Proust—"What molecular secret lurked in our dendritic densities, silently waiting for a cookie?" (2008, 92)—suggest he would appear to be straying into what Ben Goldacre calls "bad science."[14] However, researchers in neuroscience do also demonstrate how the sciences can learn from the humanities and vice versa. Martha J. Farah (2010) writes that memory and specifically painful memories "may

play a role in establishing a personal identity, because in coming to terms with them we forge a stronger personality and construct a life narrative that helps give meaning to our lives" (85). In relating this to literature, she argues that "[f]or reasons unknown, a disproportionate amount of great literature has been written by melancholics, and hence a fundamentally cheery view of the world seems inauthentic to those with a literary worldview" (85). She refers to the President's Council on Bioethics Report of 2013 and its examination of memory-dampening drugs that suggests, for Farah, that "editing memory could undermine our personal authenticity and our individual and societal conscience and make us into happy but shallow beings" (83). The sense is then that the coming to terms with "painful memories" in a life is important both for personal identity and for a "societal conscience." The President's Council on Bioethics Report—"Memory Blunting: Ethical Analysis"—examines whether memory-altering drugs and beta-blockers should be used to "dull the emotional impact of what could become very painful memories" (in Farah, 2010, 88). They ask the obvious questions about how anyone can make a "*prospective* judgment that a particular event is sufficiently terrible to warrant preemptive memory-blunting?" (88) and what participants in, or witnesses of, a terrible crime or atrocity should be regarded as necessitating such treatment. The report and related articles such as Adam J. Kolber's "Ethical Implications of Memory Dampening" ultimately focus on the question of how important "truthful memories" are for notions of authenticity and a "genuine life" (in Farah, 101). The President's Council Report goes so far as to describe the remembering agent or the faculty involved in allowing the individual to access the "truthful memories" as essential for living a "genuine life" as "the Remembering Soul" (94). It concludes by arguing, after much neuroscientific investigation, that "memory is puzzling" and it argues that literature, and more specifically, Jane Austen, may have "captured this complexity best." The Report's conclusion then begins to sound very much like a close reading of a work of literature on the theme of memory. It argues that we do have "some measure of freedom in *how* we live with such memories—the meaning we assign them, the place we give them in the larger narrative of our lives" (95). It continues:

> But this meaning is not simply arbitrary; it must connect the truth or significance of the events themselves, as they really were

> and really are, with our own continuing pursuit of a full and happy life. In doing so, we might often be tempted to sacrifice the accuracy of our memories for the sake of easing our pain or expanding our control over our own psychic lives. But doing so means, ultimately, severing ourselves from reality and leaving our own identity behind; it risks making us false, small, or capable of great illusions, and thus capable of great decadence or great evil, or perhaps simply willing to accept a phony contentment. (95)

It would therefore seem that the best way to implement and develop the new "intellectual ethics" of new technologies is by combining the best of the university's older disciplinary pursuits such as literary analysis with the best of the university's new techniques such as AMA experiments and studies on the neuroscience of the brain.

Of course, there have been those who have long questioned the noble pretensions of any knowledge industry and who have instead noted knowledge's relation with violence. Charles Babbage, the man who invented the first machine that could properly be called a computer, albeit without finally constructing it, noted that "knowledge is power" and that knowledge "is itself the generator of physical force" (Gleick 2012: 123–4). Foucault, as we have seen, also argues in *Power* that the Cartesian model of consciousness created a notion of a unified subject by describing a direct relation between knowledge and desire. Knowledge was seen as instinctual. For Foucault, this relationship between knowledge and desire is tied in to our basic concept of language—what has influenced our understanding of the "subject of knowledge." Since language is both a set of regulated practices and rules and a system of strategic relations or rhetorical gambits then knowledge is also marked by this distinction. Knowledge and language are deeply embedded in the whole system of power relations. The description of what constitutes information is therefore of the utmost importance. It would seem that as long as knowledge, which refers to both the objects and ideas known and the structures for knowing, remains described as knowledge it is most typically housed in a human brain. However, once it becomes information, we see a movement to the machine and to machine language, even though phrases such as knowledge transfer and knowledge management are muddying this distinction. John Guillory defines information as "any given (datum) of our

cognitive experience that can be materially encoded for the purpose of transmission or storage" (in Greene et al. 2012: 705).

This raises the question of how our language of the machine is also changing. The first entry for machine in the *OED* defines machine as "a structure regarded as functioning as an independent body, without mechanical involvement" and yet it has been used historically in what the *OED* describes as "a later development of the meaning of the word" as an application to the living human and animal body. Those in the sciences also devise elaborate descriptions of the machine. Christof Koch, in contemplating how his laptop differs from his brain in terms of feeling pain, asks whether his laptop would not feel pain simply because it "operates on different physical principles?" He goes on to describe the difference: "instead of positively and negatively charged sodium, potassium, calcium, and chloride ions sloshing into and out of nerve cells, electrons flow onto the gates of transistors, causing them to switch. Is that the critical difference? I don't think so, for it seems to me that, ultimately, it must be the functional relationships of the different parts of the brain to each other that matter" (2012: 2). Is the machine in this description simply a stopgap or transmitter in different entropic processes? He describes the unique power of the nervous system as lying in its "massive parallel communication and computation capabilities: its ability to link very large and highly heterogeneous coalitions of neurons over large distances in very specific synaptic patterns" (16). Koch describes the nervous system as an "organ" that is yet made up of diverse "sophisticated processors" (neurons), "membrane-bound machinery," and "output wire[s]" (16). Koch's early work in the physics of the brain concentrated on how "the electrical charge inside and outside of the membranes surrounding a nerve cell is transformed by the branching patterns of its dendrites and the architecture of its synapses" (16). Koch has also shown how the electrical activity of the "tens of thousands of neurons and their millions of synapses" produces a "local field potential," the "distant echo" of which is "visible" in the "never-ceasing peaks and troughs" that can be recorded "outside the skull" by an electroencephalograph (16). The discovery of such electrical "'parasitic' cross-talk" between humans once again brings new meaning to commonly used metaphors for human "bonding" or interaction. The manner in which such discoveries will colour descriptions of human interaction and

intersubjectivity will in turn influence how human ethics is phrased. Research into, and practice around, the human/computer interface that is being spearheaded by academics in all disciplines under the supervision, surveillance, and funding of the subscription knowledge industry will be key to this development. If the academic is to regain a feeling of control over the production, dissemination, and archiving of his or her work, then radical changes to the research landscape are necessary.

For Deleuze and Guattari, the twentieth-century's representation of desire and the body through psychology and philosophy has tended to reduce nature and human life to the state of desiring-production machines. Humanity no longer lives "nature as nature but as a process of production" (2004: 2). This recalls Michel Henry's description of the university's "practices of barbarism." Deleuze and Guattari describe most forcibly the dichotomy society negotiates because of its devotion to the notion of the human as a productive machine. However, this devotion has negated a version of life that Deleuze describes in terms of immanence and that Deleuze and Guattari, in quoting Artaud, describe in terms of the repulsion that exists between the body without organs and the desiring-machine (9–10): "The body is the body/it is all by itself/ and has no need of organs/ the body is never an organism/ organisms are the enemies of the body" (9–10). How then can our computers ever be organisms and how can research ethics accommodate the demands of the AMA?

Is it time then to think of the university itself also as a body without organs where the organs—its academics and students—are reduced to the desiring-production machines that Deleuze and Guattari describe as paranoiac machines? Of course the playing field has altered dramatically. The fetishization of action of the kind Deleuze describes (2004) no longer holds sway in the subscription knowledge industry since desire itself has had to contend with the vast hyperlinked desiring-machine of the social network and the online systematization of knowledge. This fetishization of action may only now seem real to us when it is described as our "beastly inheritance" (Derrida 2009), a "beastly inheritance" our philosophers are more eager than ever to reframe and revise for us; it is what we must cling to in order to counter the encroachment of barbarism. New theories of barbarism have emerged alongside a philosophical discourse that is redefining identity in terms of the posthuman and the beastly (Derrida, 2009,

Agamben 2004, Braidotti. 2013). Our philosophers are attempting to rescue back what remains of the human and its revivifying "beastly inheritance" as barbarism takes hold. Deleuze and Guattari's body/organ opposition may even begin to sound quaint when virtual realities claim to negate both the bodies and the organs and when biomedical enhancements as "*interventions that directly improve human capabilities by the application of technologies to the human body or to human gametes or embryos*" are exposing older accounts of ethics for their reluctance to embrace the machine (Buchanan 2013: 43). While the humanities wriggles awkwardly to make itself more science-savvy, it is also sometimes best placed to survey how the systems of thought and the structures of power that govern university research and knowledge are becoming ever more like the AMAs they fund.

The philosophy of information, the related discourses on information dissemination, knowledge management, and human/computer interface research, as well as the related debates in AMA technology and human enhancement will continue to redefine the academic and determine the practices and objectives of research even in the humanities and social sciences. It is therefore important that we retain some sense of the intellectual ethic that once made us aspire to more equal societies and more equal access to education. For it is in our aspiration to move towards equality that we revisit the practices that consigned our "beastly inheritance" to an "anthropological machine" (Agamben, 2004, 29) and that allowed barbarism to emerge again, through meritocratic extremism, in all its user-friendly, unfeeling dimensions. In the end it may only be the academics and students—as weak machines or "beastly" appendages to the machine—who will be sufficiently sensitive to the "local field potential," the "parasitic cross-talk," and the howls of the biopolitical academic commons to warn us of unsustainable inequality.

6

Academic Barbarism and the Asian University: The Case of Hong Kong

Michael O'Sullivan and Michael Yat-him Tsang

Introduction

Asian universities are featuring more prominently in ranking tables and levels of investment into research in China are producing world-leading research centres. In 2013, the Chinese government invested more than 1.18 trillion renminbi, or $190 billion, which is more than two percent of its gross domestic product, in "the development of scientific research and experimentation," according to China's National Bureau of Statistics (Tallow 2015). However, recent studies reveal there are still strong educational inequalities in China and that the main reason for this is disparities in access to education between urban and rural areas (Qian and Smyth 2005). A survey by the *China Youth Daily* in 2009 reveals that only 11.2 percent of respondents believe educational gaps are narrowing (Yang et al. 2014). Hannum and Wang (2006) have also recently discovered that these regional inequalities have led to educational stratification in recent times. Studies reveal that a significant factor for the reproduction of educational inequalities is the degree of stratification of educational opportunities (Allmendinger 1989; Hopper 1968). Stratification is generally understood as the extent "to which education opportunities are differentiated between and within educational levels" (Nikolai and West 2013: 60). Yang et al.'s study also reveals that income inequality strongly impacts educational inequality in China. The figure for average years of schooling (AYS) is 6.66 years for the lowest income group and 10.39 years for the highest income group in China (2014: 7). Since the rigid stratification of society is also based on the rural/urban

divide, where 54.32 percent of the population still live in rural areas, and where an expensive *hukou* system prevents many working-class students from access to premier educational institutions, it appears likely that the recent "tertiary tilt" in government spending will lead to great inequality in the future. As we have seen, a "tertiary tilt," built on international pressure to enter the university rankings race, can lead to heightened inequality in developing countries and developing regions (Gruber and Kosack 2014).

Hong Kong, of course, has a very different educational structure and history to that of China. As a former colony of the UK it shares many of the organizational structures of the UK academic system. For example, it has always followed the RAE (now REF) guidelines in monitoring research. Hong Kong also still performs consistently well in the PISA rankings (unlike China).[1] However, what is most noteworthy for this study and for the examination of the academic industry in general in the Asian region is that Hong Kong tops the polls in terms of university rankings when rankings are correlated with GDP and per million population (Hazelkorn 2010: 26). However, this is despite the fact that Hong Kong has one of the worst Gini coefficients in the developed world. Harsh levels of social inequality stunt social mobility and progress towards equality of opportunity in Hong Kong. There are also strong connections between levels of social inequality and educational attainment in this "global city." Hong Kong is a society where upwards of 20 percent of the population live beneath the poverty line. This chapter therefore extends the arguments made earlier in relation to how the university is "perpetuating inequality" to Hong Kong as an example of a leading twenty-first-century Asian education hub. It seeks to contribute to the important body of work on equality studies and attainment research by examining two interconnected aspects of educational inequality in higher education in Hong Kong: first, the relative shortage of degree places available for local students at local universities, and second, the relatively strong correlation between income and educational attainment across the districts in Hong Kong. This chapter also assesses government initiatives that claim to encourage higher levels of post-secondary participation, in particular through the rapid development of self-financed sub-degree programmes. A secondary argument discusses how university rankings criteria have a deleterious effect on the commitment to promote mass

higher education, especially in terms of participation rates at publicly funded full-time degree programmes.

The recent protests in Hong Kong—the Umbrella Movement—have been led by a diverse student body fronted by the Hong Kong Federation of Students (HKFS). Many commentators are beginning to accept that the demands of the protesters for revision of the decision on universal suffrage made by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China on August 31, 2014 are grounded on broader social and cultural anxieties. In a society that has always prided itself on its high quality of education and its commitment to education, young people are beginning to question the relative merits of an education system that sees them living with their parents well into their 30s because of the exorbitant price of apartments and the stagnant wages. Many young people in Hong Kong and elsewhere (some southern European countries have youth unemployment rates of 50 percent) are now faced with diminished career prospects in a job market that offers little beyond soulless service jobs with stagnant wages. The case of Hong Kong can then be informative for societies where university rankings are a government priority. The Hong Kong government caps on admissions to University Grants Committee-funded (UGC) universities also force students into "cut-throat competition" for spots in top universities, where even those students who succeed in this system are then offered little more than repetitive service jobs with long hours where they will be spending "an average of 40% of their income on housing."[2]

From social injustice to educational inequalities

As we have seen, the relationship between social inequalities and educational inequalities has been well examined in the European context (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977; Lynch 2010; Lynch and Baker 2005; van der Velden and Smyth 2011). Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron's research on reproduction in pedagogic work (PW) highlights these connections. Pedagogic work is capable of "perpetuating the arbitrary it inculcates more lastingly than political coercion" (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977: 33). Recent work on the university in Europe has similarly shown that the elites have an important role in mass higher education in many countries, "based on stratified higher education, protected labour market positions,

or both" (van der Velden and Smyth 2011: 135). John Major, the former Conservative Prime Minister of the UK, has also recently spoken out in regard to the "truly shocking" privilege of the privately educated elite in UK society, a society Hong Kong modelled itself on for so long (Foot 2013). As we have seen, studies reveal that in order to "guarantee excellence or … to protect privileges of the in-group against outsiders," entry to many professions is now made difficult through a set of complex and demanding criteria that is nonetheless more easily deciphered and controlled in the age of the social network (van der Velden and Smyth 2011: 136). Prestigious educational affiliations, as Lynch, Bourdieu, Oleksiyenko, and others demonstrate, are clearly now principally the possession of the wealthiest and therefore increase their level of credentialization. Educational inequality cannot be examined separately from social inequality. The educational system plays an important role in perpetuating broader inequalities in society (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977), but by corollary, there is also an important connection in society between the promotion and privileging of social responsibility in government policy and the nurturing of social responsibility in the practice of that society's educational policy.

Research on education and inequality is generally considered in terms of equality of opportunity, i.e. in terms of how to divide educational and education-related resources more equally or fairly (Lynch 2010). The fact that most developed nations have embraced in principle equality of educational opportunity as an end as well as a means is evident even in the 1948 United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (Pong and Post 1991). However, in the European context, research has confirmed that "lower rates of attainment among students from low-income backgrounds," or educational marginalization, is primarily "economically generated even though it may subsequently take cultural and political manifestations" (Lynch and Baker 2005, 135). A 2006 OECD report on education and inequality also finds that in 2001 in Ireland—like Hong Kong a former colony of the UK with the majority of its third-level institutions established under British colonialism—"nearly 100% of the children of higher professionals and over 80% of the children of employers and managers entered higher education as compared with only around 20% of the children of unskilled and semi-skilled manual workers" (OECD 2006: 52). The correlation between social-class background and

highest level of education attained has now become so pronounced that "education credentials are operating in practice, albeit not in principle, as a kind of state-supported system of inherited privilege" (Lynch and Baker 2005: 135).

However, attainment research and equality studies in the European context have broadened their understanding of equality in recent years. Lynch and Baker (2005) describe a more holistic approach to the study of inequality that focuses on equality of conditions in such areas as equality in educational and related resources, equality of respect and recognition, equality of power, and equality of love, care, and solidarity. They also note that if social class and other biases are encoded in the deep structures of curriculum design and assessment, they are unlikely to be challenged by the experts who are themselves socialized into the received wisdom and are also beneficiaries of the system itself.

Levels of educational equality are also related to state policy. Research in different countries has assessed how successful different national education strategies are in the promotion of socio-economic equality (Breen et al. 1999; Clancy 2001; Erikson and Jonsson 1996; Goodstadt 2013). Evidence from social democratic societies shows that provision of high-quality childcare and universalized welfare support for children and adults can "offset negative class effects on educational attainment" (Lynch and Baker 2005, 140; Shavit and Blossfeld 1993). On the other hand, attempts to tackle educational inequalities in "economically more unequal countries" with little history of extensive welfare support are generally "neutralized by the efforts of economically advantaged households to increase their private investment in their children" (Lynch and Baker 2005, 140; Sharma 2013). While it must be noted that addressing the roots of class inequality is a complex issue, Lynch and Baker (2005) suggest that any movement to challenge social class inequality in education requires "a widening and deepening of education on social class issues" (142). It is time that Hong Kong addressed such issues of inequality. If education in Hong Kong is to embody the principles that many leading educationalists such as John Dewey (1909) and Henry A. Giroux (2011) have laid down in terms of moral education and critical pedagogy, namely to offer equality of educational opportunity and to instil principles of equality and fairness, then the educational philosophy must be altered dramatically.

Social and educational inequalities in Hong Kong

Hong Kong has long regarded itself as a society that values free market economic policies, an entrepreneurial spirit, and a business approach to social issues (Goodstadt 2013). Its government, legislative council, and to an extent its people, accept as normative all the resultant inequalities that such policies bring to society. Hong Kong's Chief Executives have never shied away from describing their society as one that is "capitalist." The Chief Executives seem intent on resisting egalitarianism in society; moves to eradicate such markers of inequality as intergenerational poverty are regarded as extraneous to general government policy. In 2005, Hong Kong's second Chief Executive, Donald Tsang, was opposed to "assisting the poor by giving them financial assistance," because "the Government must never try to assist the poor using its own resources for this is doomed to failure" (LCHKSAR 2005: 8944–5). More recently, Hong Kong's third Chief Executive C. Y. Leung has blatantly rejected a politics that caters for half of Hong Kong's population who earn below US$1,800 a month, in favour of taking care of the corporate elites (Bradsher and Buckley 2014). Such policies and beliefs have not been without deep-set societal results. Hong Kong, often described as "the most unequal city in the developed world" in terms of wealth distribution (Lubin 2012; Zhao et al. 2004: 443), now has a Gini coefficient of 0.537 and levels of inequality that, for some commentators, exceed those in mainland China (Chen 2012; Wang 2010). Joseph Stiglitz has suggested that when a Gini coefficient is so high it is consistent with levels of inequality found in "dysfunctional societies" (Stiglitz 2013).

When it comes to educational inequality, however, it is fundamental to observe that, since key government systems in Hong Kong such as the tax system incorporate little sense of social responsibility (Goodstadt 2013), there has also been a general failure in Hong Kong society to nurture an ethos of social responsibility in educational policy and in educational practice. Research also notes that government initiatives on education may, in fact, produce "open discrimination in favour of the better-off" rather than strategies that "invest in education to combat inter-generational poverty" as Donald Tsang, the second Chief Executive of Hong Kong, promised in 2005 (Goodstadt 2013: 150). For example, even though the government

has recently divested the English School Foundation international schools of what has been regarded as their "colonialist" subsidy, this has only resulted in these schools raising their fees and debentures and thereby moving beyond the finances of the vast majority of families in Hong Kong. Indeed, the new elite international schools in Hong Kong with names like Harrow would appear intent on making the most of any colonialist legacy that still commands considerable cultural capital and ultimately justifies the extortionate school fees at these elite schools.

Such economic discrimination is even more notable when we consider the Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) that was implemented since the early 1990s. A reformed version of the scheme in 2001 began to allow primary and secondary schools to receive a block grant per year from the government *and* charge school fees from students. The number of DSS schools rapidly increased from 40 schools each receiving an average subsidy of HK$23 million in 2003 to 84 schools each receiving an average HK$34 million in 2012 (LCHKSAR 2013: 7366). When these figures are set beside the minuscule sum of HK$37 million allocated in 2006 to assist 234,000 students who could not afford the fees for extracurricular activities, the government's role in contributing to educational inequalities becomes clearly evident (Goodstadt 2013: 150). The situation becomes ever more galling when we consider that the Education Bureau's Director of Audit discovered that 40 percent of DSS schools for which accounts were available did not comply with the obligatory requirement to allocate a part of their fee income "towards a fee remission/scholarship scheme" or were engaged in "financial irregularities" (quoted in Goodstadt 2013: 149). Once these best secondary schools are allowed to levy substantial fees, it is only the better-off who are able to attend these schools, which then become the chief feeder schools for full-time degree programmes in the University Grants Committee-funded (UGC) public universities (HKIE 2013). Conversely, the recent widening of social polarization, labour market segmentation, and the emergence of new regimes of urban marginality that have produced a "low-income-poverty vicious cycle" should also then entail a "vicious cycle" of intergenerational exclusion of "poor households" and "lower-class people" from an ever more selective university system (Lee et al. 2007: 27; Pong and Post 1991).

The historical context of educational inequality in tertiary education in Hong Kong

This brings us to the investigation of inequality in higher education in Hong Kong. With only two universities—the University of Hong Kong (HKU) and Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK)—before the 1970s, tertiary education in Hong Kong was always a privileged experience. While state-sponsored compulsory education at primary and secondary levels generally eased traditional stratifications in 60s and 70s Hong Kong, it also created a surging demand for post-secondary education. This forced the colonial government to address this issue on several occasions. First, the Hong Kong Polytechnic, previously offering only diplomas, was allowed to provide limited degree programmes in 1978. Then in 1989, former Governor Sir David Wilson proposed to upgrade several post-secondary colleges (Polytechnic, City, Baptist, and Lingnan) to university status, eventually tripling the amount of first-year-first-degree (FYFD) undergraduate intake from only 5,459 in 1987–88 to 14,500 seven years later, equivalent to about 18 percent of the 17–20 age group (ECHK 1988; UGCHK 2014).

After Hong Kong's handover to China in 1997, in line with the government's emphasis on lifelong learning and on creating a knowledge-based economy, the first Chief Executive of Hong Kong, Chee-hwa Tung (2000), proposed that the tertiary education enrolment rate be doubled to 60 percent within ten years, bringing the total number of places to about 55,000. Tung's solution was to develop a privatized market of self-financed sub-degrees, often operated by the continuing education arms of tertiary institutions or by business enterprises. Subsequent governments have generally affirmed and followed this direction. At first glance it may seem that the government has succeeded in pushing up the overall educational attainment of Hong Kong. In the 2011 census, 23.8 percent of the population aged 15 or over had completed post-secondary education (including diploma, sub-degree, and degree courses), a percentage rise of 10.4 percent from the 2001 census (CSDHKSAR 2011: 45). The increase is chiefly due to the contribution from diploma and sub-degree courses. While the percentage for degree holders for the population aged 15 and over only rose by half in the decade 2001–11, the percentage for diploma and sub-degree holders almost tripled from 2.9 to 8.1 percent, highlighting the fact that any

sizeable increase in attainment has only been made at the sub-degree level (CSDHKSAR 2011: 45). Even considering this fact, the figure of 23.8 percent for that section of the population over 15 who had attained post-secondary education is still low when compared with a country like Ireland where 45 percent of the population had attained post-secondary level in 2011 (CSOI 2011).

While these initiatives to increase mass post-secondary education show the right intentions, their effectiveness in removing wider obstacles to learning in the community must be critically evaluated. Wilson's commitment to increasing the undergraduate degree quota was commendable but it remained an ambition; subsequent governments pre- and post-handover never sought to move well beyond the 14,500 FYFD quota; on the contrary, the policies of successive governments have only resulted in a meagre increase to 15,000 per year from 2012–13 onwards. Chief Executives after the handover showed even less interest in the undergraduate provision and instead encouraged the sub-degree market. Two key aspects in understanding government policy on higher education in Hong Kong are therefore the sudden expansion of marketized sub-degree education and the stagnant FYFD undergraduate quota.

Problems with the rapid increase in post-secondary education

As a result of the rapid expansion of the privatized sub-degree market, the numbers of full-time self-financed sub-degree programmes and their enrolments have surged in the past decade, as seen in Table 6.1 which compares the years 2001–02, i.e. one year after Chee-hwa Tung's ambition of expansion, and 2012–13.

In the meantime, however, the number of places on UGC-funded (publicly funded) sub-degrees is shrinking. Rows 1–3 of Table 6.1 show that the supply, enrolment, and number of graduates of UGC-funded sub-degree programmes have more than halved since 2001–02. It seems evident that the UGC, representing public funding, is gradually withdrawing from providing sub-degree education. However, combining the numbers in rows 3 and 6, we can see that the sub-degree market has grown substantially, now producing three times as many sub-degree graduates as in 2001–02, thanks to the self-financed degrees (see Table 6.1).

Table 6.1 Statistics on full-time post-secondary programmes

	Row		2001–2002	2005–2006	2011–2012	2012–2013
UGC-funded sub-degree	1	Target supply	12,585	9,330	5,591	5,345
	2	Enrolment	12,201	9,070	5,606	5,541
	3	No. of graduates	4,876	3,312	1,835	1,960
Self-financed sub-degree	4	No. of programmes	38	233	311	315
	5	Enrolment	8,895	33,276	51,796	58,694
	6	No. of graduates	1,068	9,335	17,137	19,812
Total noumber of sub-degree graduates (Row 3 + 6)			5,944	12,647	18,972	21,772
Self-financed degree	7	No. of programmes	3	40	72	97
	8	Enrolment	268	3,646	12,003	15,870
	9	No. of graduates	0	411	5,918	7,696

Sources: IPAPPHKSAR (2013a, 2013b); UGCHK (2003a, 2003b, 2006a, 2006b, 2007, 2014).

The obvious problem with the Hong Kong government's solution to expand the sub-degree market is that there is insufficient access to UGC-funded bachelor places for sub-degree holders—a problem already anticipated only two years after Tung's stated ambition to expand tertiary education:

> As the associate degree programme expands, so a demand-led market will be created from successful students to enhance these qualifications, by entering higher education programmes in the second or succeeding years and completing first degrees … the UGC's funding mechanism will have to be capable of creating extra capacity for new entrants other than through the current first year first degree quota. (UGCHK 2002: 24)

Despite these inequalities, measures to tackle the problem have been ineffective. There have been plans to increase the second-year intake of sub-degree graduates into UGC-funded undergraduate programmes: from only 801 in 2004–05 to 2,987 in 2013–14, and ultimately progressing to a cap of 4,000 (UGCHK 2006c, 2014). Yet the current 3,000 places are clearly inadequate for the huge number of potential sub-degree graduates from both self-financed and UGC-funded programmes each year, which stood at 21,772 in 2012–13 (see Table 6.1).

We therefore ask why it is necessary to control admissions so tightly, particularly when it has been generally acknowledged that associate degrees are a "stepping stone" qualification and not terminal vocational awards. This is also a concern for other education hubs in the Asian region such as Singapore. Surprisingly, existing social prejudices towards associate degree students, sometimes even coming from the mouths of education officials, indicate otherwise. Former Secretary for Education and Manpower Arthur Kwok-cheung Li has been quoted in 2006 as saying that he doubts whether there would be "a sufficient number of qualified students" if the second-year intake quota were to rise from 840 to 2,000 (quoted in Heron 2006), slighting the 12,647 full-time sub-degree graduates in 2005–06 (see Table 6.1). In addition, local media have published frequent complaints about the self-financed sub-degree programmes and local academics have questioned their academic merit and the employability of their graduates (Kember 2009). The community colleges that

provide these programmes even offer popular pre-associate degree programmes for those students who are unable to gain places in the final years of the elitist and competitive secondary school system. These programmes do little more than whet the appetites of impressionable young learners, many of whom possess ambitious learning attitudes. The qualifications gained ultimately count for much less in the job market than relevant work experience or further recognized study (local or abroad) (Kember 2009). If these students wish to continue their education, they will have to opt for self-financed top-up degrees or enter the extremely competitive UGC-funded degree programme application system.

The lack of government initiatives to increase the quota of the senior intake in publicly funded degree programmes means that most sub-degree graduates will be barred from entering universities. This creates a stigma in which the "second-class" status of sub-degree graduates is a direct result of the ever-strengthening "elitist position" of the universities and the incessant "first-class" status of university graduates. We now turn to an examination of the relationship between educational inequality and broader social inequality.

Degree-level attainment and income inequality

The relatively small number of degree places available to local students at local universities is a key contributing factor to educational inequality in higher education in Hong Kong. The participation rate for university education in Hong Kong is comparatively low. In 2011–12 there was a total secondary school enrolment of 467,087, but the undergraduate enrolment at UGC universities was 58,412, plus an enrolment of 12,003 in self-funded degree programmes and 7,177 in top-up degrees (IPAPPHKSAR 2013a; UGCHK 2014). This brings the total to 77,592. If we view this in terms of the entry rates of young people into university-level education as a percentage of the population in the corresponding age group, then we have a figure of about 16.6 percent. This figure is dramatically lower than figures for entry levels of young people into university-level education in developed OECD countries. The OECD average is 62 percent, and Australia, Poland, and New Zealand have figures of 80 percent or above (OECD 2012). In 2011, 30 percent of Irish people aged 15–64 had attained degree-level education, while the Higher Education

Initial Participation Rate (HEIPR) for English-domiciled first-time entrants to higher education courses in the UK was 40 percent for 2001–2 (Connor et al. 2004). In contrast, only 15.8 percent of the Hong Kong population aged 15 or above have completed a degree course (CSDHKSAR 2011: 45).

The high university entry rates in some OECD countries, such as in Poland and the Nordic countries, are often the result of a higher education system where fees are either very low or non-existent. Given that such subsidized education is not available in Hong Kong, despite the fact that there are now unprecedented numbers living in poverty, educational inequality in higher education in Hong Kong is often a result of extreme levels of income inequality. A recent study by the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd) finds that the university degree enrolment rate of young people (aged 19 and 20) living in the top ten percent richest families (48.2 percent) is now 3.7 times that of those living in poverty (13 percent) (HKIE 2013). Statistics on income reveal that poor households are often at a huge disadvantage in terms of equality of opportunity in higher education. This is most evident in the 2001 and 2011 census statistics. Sixty-two percent of men aged 24–44 and 63 percent of men aged 24–44 had degree-level educational attainment in Wan Chai and Central & Western respectively, the two districts with the highest monthly median income. On the contrary, in 2011 only 22 percent and 24 percent of men aged 24–44 in Tuen Mun and Yuen Long respectively had degree-level educational attainment, these being two of the districts with the lowest monthly median income. These figures become more aggravated when we look more closely at the poorer communities in these districts. In 2001 only eight percent and four percent of residents aged 15–34 in the Tung Tau region of Wong Tai Sin and the Pek Long region of Yuen Long respectively held degrees. These regions have some of the lowest median monthly income figures for Hong Kong. On the contrary, in 2001 50 percent of 15–34-year-olds living in the Stubbs Road region of Wan Chai and 51 percent of 15–34-year-old residents in Mid Levels East in the Central and Western District held degrees. These areas are consistently at the top of the monthly median income tables. Figures 6.1 and 6.2 plot the income levels per district against the educational attainment levels per district based on the 2001 and 2011 census data. The trend across districts shows a clear correlation between income disparity and degree-level

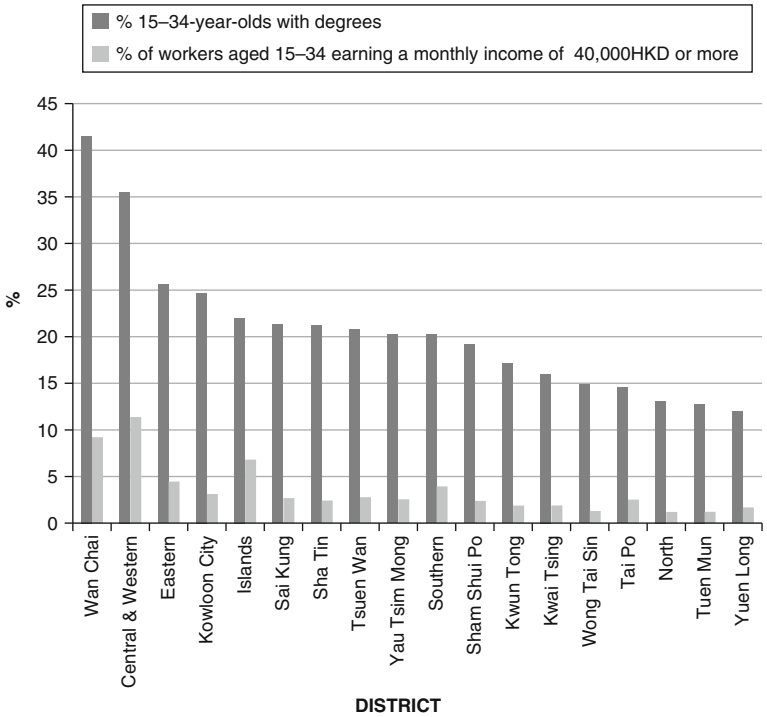

Figure 6.1 Educational attainment and monthly income of 15–34-year-olds by district (2001)
Source: CSDHKSAR (2001).

attainment. Statistically the census data show strong correlations for both 2001 ($r = 0.73$, $p < 0.01$) and 2011 ($r = 0.99$, $p < 0.01$).

Since Hong Kong's Gini coefficient has increased in recent years, it can only mean that educational inequality will likely worsen if government officials keep enforcing elitist policies that fail to deal adequately with what Goodstadt (2013) describes as the "Third World legacy" in Hong Kong education. The refusal to increase the university degree quota not only serves to perpetuate class distinctions in this polarized city, but it also extends the "vicious cycle" already observed in the employment sector to the education sector (Lee et al. 2007). Ironically, from an economic point of view, this widening gap in educational opportunity will eventually hinder

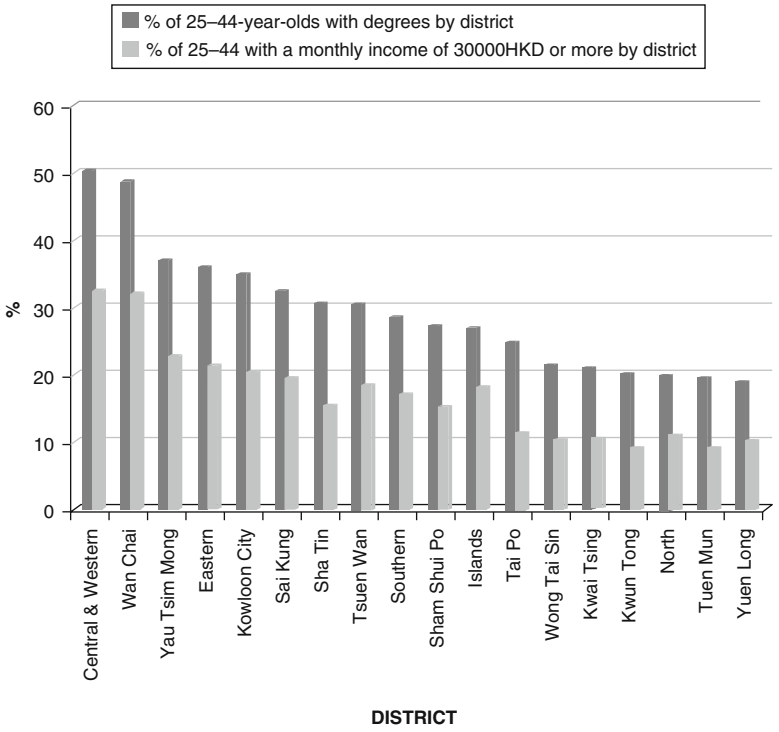

Figure 6.2 Educational attainment and monthly income of 25–44-year-olds (2011)
Source: CSDHKSAR (2011).

Hong Kong's competitiveness. Even though the World Economic Forum (2014: 22, 206–7) ranked Hong Kong 22nd out of 144 economies in the higher education and training sector, and 43rd in gross tertiary education enrolment in its latest Global Competitiveness Report, it has nominated higher education participation as an area Hong Kong needs to improve on.[3]

Internationalization, university rankings, and educational inequality

While the low UGC entry figures raise important questions about income and educational attainment, they also call into question

university priorities in education. Maintaining local undergraduate enrolments at the current low levels helps to achieve a favourable Student–Faculty Ratio (SFR) and a desired proportion of international students, both of which are key factors in world university ranking tables.

Michael Lee (2010) has contextualized the call for internationalization in higher education in Hong Kong, identifying a 1996 UGC report as the origin for this call. It was always presumed that greater internationalism in higher education would be justified by Hong Kong's role as the pre-eminent Asian economic hub. Chee-hwa Tung's own brand of internationalization led him to announce in his inaugural policy address in 1997 ambitious plans for admitting larger numbers of non-local students (Lee 2010). The success of this initiative is clearly evident: in 2000–01, there were 362 non-local undergraduate students in Hong Kong; by 2012–13, this figure has increased 23 times to 8,325, or about 11.2 percent of the total undergraduate enrolment (Lee 2010; UGCHK 2014).

These figures reflect an educational philosophy that is reluctant to increase local student numbers dramatically since it will negatively affect the proportion of international students, which in turn affects ranking scores. The relationship between internationalization and ranking tables is revealed in a study by Andrejs Rauhvargers (2011: 66), who notes that:

> Indicators on the proportion of international staff and students depend on the definition of these categories. Therefore, the use of such indicators in global rankings is prone to manipulation, as long as there are no exact definitions, for example as to whether domestic students (or staff) with foreign citizenship can be counted as being "international."

Hong Kong universities appear particularly susceptible to this kind of manipulation, since statistically most non-local undergraduates in Hong Kong are from mainland China, Hong Kong's political sovereign. Michael Lee's (2010) statistics from 2000 to 2005 show that over 90 percent of non-local undergraduates come from mainland China; from 2010 to 2014 this percentage dropped to about 72–75 percent (UGCHK 2014). However, absolute numbers of these mainland Chinese undergraduates have increased seven times in a

decade—from 842 in 2003–04 to 6,463 in 2013–14—a sharp surge that has outperformed the increase in total full-time undergraduate enrolment in all Hong Kong universities (Lee 2010; UGCHK 2014). As a result, the percentage of mainland Chinese undergraduates out of all local and non-local full-time undergraduates in Hong Kong has been on the rise in the last three years. The irony in designating mainland Chinese students as non-local—and therefore as "international" students in university rankings—contrasts with the stagnant FYFD quota for local students, consequently leading to increased visibility of Mainland students on campus and therefore further fuelling the popular antagonistic sentiment against mainland China.

There is nonetheless little doubt that Hong Kong universities have accepted rankings criteria and a neoliberalist philosophy of education that privileges greater internationalization in education above any philosophy that focuses on equal access to education (Oleksiyenko 2013). Even in the most prestigious universities in Hong Kong, university rankings are the new driver of educational strategy and philosophy. Presidents of Hong Kong universities frequently compare university rankings with sports medal tables with little apparent regard for the unique ethical, social, and humanistic responsibilities a university embodies. Tony Chan, HKUST's President, comments:

> our KH-EMBA [programme] got its global No 1 ranking in three years. … How many times does Hong Kong ever become No 1 in the world in anything? When we won the East Asian Games soccer tournament last year, we felt we were on top of the world. But this is much bigger. This is like being the World Cup champion in higher education. (Chan 2010)

In 2009, Lap-Chee Tsui, then Vice-Chancellor and President of HKU, remarked that its No. 1 position in Asia in a ranking table "indicates that our strategic direction—with a focus on research and teaching excellence, and the internationalization of our staff and student body—is being recognized, particularly by other academics as well as employers" (quoted in Friends of HKU 2009). Tsui's words clearly reveal the fierce levels of competition that exist in Hong Kong in regard to university rankings and the lengths universities will go to in attracting the best international students and staff at the expense of greater access for local students.

Such internationalization is an "achievement" that can be recognized by major ranking tables such as the *Times Higher Education* (THE) ranking system and the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings. Of the two, QS seems to be the more influential ranking system in Hong Kong as it awards 20 percent of the ranking score on the basis of a university's SFR (Column (3), Table 6.2) and an additional 5 percent apiece for the proportions of international students and international faculty (Column (2), Table 6.2). This unique emphasis (30 percent) on student composition contrasts with the 9.5 percent[4] that the THE system allocates for such factors. Nonetheless, it is apparent from Table 6.2 that in the last four years most Hong Kong universities have scored relatively low in research indicators (Column (1)) but consistently high in internationalization indicators (Column (2)) and SFR scores in the QS system (Column (3)). This demonstrates that internationalization and SFR are capable of exerting a kind of "pull-up" effect in the total rankings and compensating for other possible weaknesses especially in the QS rankings.[5] It will be no surprise if a trend to "look international" continues across UGC institutions.

The allegiance to rankings criteria has an adverse effect on movements for greater education equality in Hong Kong. UGC universities are reluctant to admit more local students on their publicly funded degree programmes—which is necessary if the government is to tackle inequality in access to higher education—since this would impact negatively on both the SFR and the ratio of international students in these universities. Rauhvargers, for one, has argued that aligning educational goals too stringently with rankings criteria risks the unquestioned privileging and channelling of funds for such goals and the consequent sacrifice of "issues that are not rewarded in ranking scores such as … *widening access, lifelong learning, social issues of students and staff*" (Rauhvargers 2012, emphasis added).

Possible future developments and controversies

Various efforts are afoot for building a "diversified, well-supported and creative post-secondary sector" (UGCHK 2010: 14). Many community colleges have been offering self-financed top-up degrees that would eventually lead to the award of a non-local (mostly British or Australian) bachelor degree. Secondary school students have also been

Table 6.2 Score breakdown of selected indicators in THE and QS World University Rankings, 2011–2014

Key: **Average** *(Range)*	**Research Indicators (1)**		**Internationalization Indicators (2)**			**Student–Faculty Ratio (3)**
	THE	**QS**	**THE**	**QS**		**QS**
	Research (30%)	**Citations per faculty (20%)**	**International outlook (7.5%)**	**International faculty (5%)**	**International students (5%)**	**Student–Faculty Ratio (20%)**
HKU	**77.1** *(69.9–80.1)*	**53.5** *(50.5–57.2)*	**81.9** *(80.3–83.7)*	**100.0** *(100.0)*	**98.8** *(98.4–99.1)*	**93.3** *(89.1–95.1)*
HKUST	**62.4** *(58.6–66.8)*	**51.9** *(47.5–54.7)*	**78.3** *(77.0–80.1)*	**100.0** *(100.0)*	**98.1** *(96.4–98.9)*	**83.0** *(78.0–86.5)*
CUHK	**55.4** *(50.2–63.1)*	**51.2** *(47.1–55.1)*	**65.8** *(62.6–69.5)*	**96.2** *(94.9–98.2)*	**75.9** *(63.6–83.1)*	**81.7** *(78.4–87.9)*
City	**35.8** *(32.9–41.8)*	**46.5** *(38.6–54.3)*	**65.7** *(61.6–71.3)*	**100.0** *(100.0)*	**84.2** *(76.6–89.5)*	**74.1** *(67.7–80.5)*
Polytechnic	**37.7** *(35.7–41.2)*	**40.5** *(33.5–50.9)*	**65.1** *(62.5–69.9)*	**99.7** *(99.2–100.0)*	**85.4** *(82.1–89.1)*	**43.6** *(39.0–48.4)*
Baptist	**13.4** *(11.2–15.1)*	**23.4** *(19.8–28.5)*	**60.7** *(58.9–62.3)*	**89.7** *(87.5–95.3)*	**70.7** *(65.0–77.6)*	**68.8** *(63.5–75.5)*

Note: The full score for each indicator is 100.0. Averages are rounded off to one decimal place. The THE ranking has no separate indicator for student–faculty ratio.
Sources: THE (2011, 2012, 2013); Quacquarelli Symonds (2011, 2012, 2013, 2014).

encouraged to take up bachelor education in Taiwan and mainland China. Locally, the supply of self-funded undergraduate degrees has increased (Rows 7–9, Table 6.1). Examples include the recognition of Shue Yan as the first private university in Hong Kong in 2006, the founding of the degree-awarding Hang Seng Management College and the Savannah College of Art and Design in 2010, the granting of degree-conferring status to Chu Hai College of Higher Education, Tung Wah College, and Caritas Institute of Higher Education, and the relocation of The University of Chicago Booth School of Business to Mount Davis on Hong Kong Island. While these are slowly becoming popular routes, they may once again be beyond the resources of many Hong Kong families due to their self-financing nature.

In the long run, the Hong Kong government lacks a coherent educational strategy for alleviating unequal access to tertiary education. For instance, Baptist University expressed interest in expanding its School of Chinese Medicine on a site in Kowloon Tong. Another plot of land in Queen's Hill in Fanling was first reserved for a private university. The site originally attracted a bid from a Jesuit Liberal Arts College but the plans were shelved. Both sites eventually became residential, disappointing many. The granting of the Mount Davis site to Chicago's business school for its Executive MBA programme, mentioned above, also fuels the impression that the Hong Kong government is more concerned with selling internationalization than with solving unequal access to public undergraduate education which increasingly segregates the younger generation. The allocation of resources and college places is thus reliant on zoning competitions and bidding wars that clearly demonstrate that the government's key decisions in education are motivated by business interests. As one UGC publication (2010: 1) notes, the post-secondary sector's unprecedented expansion "had resulted in a fragmented and complex post-secondary education system with a degree of incoherence and duplication."

Conclusion: educational equality and citizenship

There is a strong correlation between income inequality and educational inequality in Hong Kong. This, in turn, contributes to achievement inequality. While a certain degree of achievement inequality is always implicitly produced in any national school or university system,

achievement inequality can only be usefully assessed across different socio-economic groups when there is a presumption of a "level playing field" where students have as much access as possible to equality of opportunity. Many studies, recent or past, have confirmed that socioeconomic background is the most "robust and consistent predictor of student achievement" and a key factor contributing to achievement inequality in different geographical regions (Baker et al. 2002; Buchmann and Hannum 2001; Montt 2011). A reduction in total achievement inequality can be attained by implementing equality in the distribution of teachers across schools and by employing greater intensity of schooling in the form of better teachers across the board (Montt 2011). Government and social institutions can also constrain socioeconomic diversity through the reduction of inequalities in living conditions, as the examples of the Netherlands and Sweden have shown (Breen and Jonsson 2005; Shavit and Blossfield 1993). A lack of motivation on such issues has however helped to perpetuate the hierarchies in educational and attainment equality in Hong Kong (Oleksiyenko 2013).

Eradicating educational inequality should be a key area that is privileged in Hong Kong and elsewhere in future. If Hong Kong and other regions in Asia are to be serious about tackling the rising educational inequalities in its society, and if it is to pay more than lip-service to the range of western liberal and Chinese humanistic educational philosophies that its plethora of general education courses include on their curricula, then it will need to adopt policies and establish social institutions that work to reduce educational inequalities. Education does not take place in a vacuum; students embody the hierarchies of the societies in which they are reared. If they cannot find alternatives to the systems of exclusion they witness outside university in the practices and procedures they partake in inside the university, they are unlikely to ever understand how alternatives are possible. Education is also an investment for the future and if Hong Kong and other regions are serious about transforming its economy to a knowledge-based economy, as repeatedly affirmed in government publications such as the biennial *Hong Kong as a Knowledge-based Economy: A Statistical Perspective*, then Hong Kong and other regions should consider drastically increasing *and* subsidizing the FYFD quota. Only when knowledge of specialization and profession is spread as widely as possible will Hong Kong succeed in achieving sustainable prosperity.

It is traditionally liberal arts programmes that are regarded as most important for imparting to students notions of social responsibility and moral reasoning that are essential for the promotion of responsible citizenship. Chinese and western traditions of education obviously have distinct interpretations of what constitutes responsible citizenship. However, in a globalized education environment that privileges internationalization and shared rankings criteria, it is a cross-cultural programme of liberal arts education that is required in order to sustain the promotion of responsible citizenship. Nevertheless it is precisely the liberal arts programmes that are most affected in terms of funding and resources by a knowledge industry that ranks departments as "cost centres" that must compete against each other for grants and government support. In such an environment liberal arts programmes must avoid simply paying lip-service to the values their programmes traditionally privilege. Hong Kong is uniquely positioned to lead the way in implementing a cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary, east–west liberal arts programme. However as Hong Kong shifts ever closer to Communist China in terms of ideology and administrative practice, it must avoid the same pitfalls that You Guo Jiang, S. J. has recently argued have plagued leading Chinese universities' attempts to implement liberal arts programmes that were meant to promote moral reasoning and moral education. Jiang (2015: 175) argues, in quoting an administrator at Shanghai Jiaotong University, that Chinese moral reasoning and social justice are not traditionally linked. He also argues that traditional Chinese "moral education" courses neglect the precise qualities that would enable students to learn about social responsibility and thus about the value of promoting equality of opportunity (173); the promotion of such "moral education courses" as "Marxist-Leninist Theory," "Mao Zedong Thought," and "Deng Xiaoping Theory" has, for Jiang, led to the neglect of such "traditional values" as "social justice," "fairness," and "responsibility" (172). It is therefore obvious that the philosophical debate over what values should underpin a cross-cultural programme of east–west liberal arts education must run alongside practical attempts to broaden access to state-funded university education in Hong Kong and elsewhere in the region. One of the first steps that should be taken then is for universities to be courageous in opening up more places to local students, even if this will affect certain criteria deemed important for rankings bodies.

After all, the goal of the rankings philosophy is ultimately to push all universities closer to an impossible ideal, towards a vision of the university that epitomizes elitism and towards a vision of the teacher as an academic machine. Opening up more places for local students at state-funded universities will return the university to the people, creating a university that is for and of the people; in doing so it will also indirectly promote one of the currently fashionable goals of the contemporary university, namely knowledge transfer.

A radical rethinking of the role of university in Hong Kong and elsewhere is needed. Philip Holden has already examined what academics in Singapore should do (Holden 2014). On the other hand, Martha Nussbaum, a leading American academic in law and philosophy, notes in a recent book that there is "no secure place in the structure of undergraduate education" in Asian universities for "new disciplines of particular importance for good democratic citizenship" (Nussbaum 2010: 126). Despite the obvious bias here, it is important that Hong Kong universities and universities in Asia strive to put into practice educational policies that enable younger generations to see how undergraduate learning can embody "democratic citizenship." Academics in Hong Kong recognize that social and educational inequalities are intricately connected to broader issues such as globalization, identity, and citizenship. However, the existence of such structural inequalities in this self-proclaimed "world city" questions Hong Kong society's approach to social issues through the privileging of business models and entrepreneurialism. In the wake of the Hong Kong student-led Umbrella Movement and the Hong Kong Legislative Council's bundled rejection of Beijing's specious universal suffrage proposal for the 2017 Chief Executive election, it is high time Hong Kong and its government accepted that civic virtue and social justice are also integral to the kind of internationalization so many of its people feel must be privileged as it searches for its own model of "democratic citizenship." Hong Kong people, and specifically its students, have brought to the fore key political and philosophical questions about the relationship between citizenship and education that will be central to the academic industry as it develops in the Asian region.

7
Notes towards an Educational Transformation

> "But it transcends the mechanics. I'm not a machine. I feel and believe. I have opinions. Some of them are interesting. I could, if you'd let me, talk and talk. Let's talk about anything. I believe the influence of Kierkegaard on Camus is underestimated. I believe Dennis Gabor may very well have been the Antichrist. I believe Hobbes is just Rousseau in a dark mirror. I believe, with Hegel, that transcendence is absorption. I could interface you guys right under the table," I say. "I'm not just a creātus, manufactured, conditioned, bred for a function." David Foster Wallace, *Infinite Jest*, 2014, 132

So ends 18-year-old Hal Incandenza's response to the selection committee at the University of Arizona where he is being interviewed by three Deans, of Admissions, Academic Affairs, and Athletic, the university's Director of Composition, its varsity tennis coach, and its Academy prorector. He is a shy athlete of "substantial promise" being considered for the "University's varsity tennis program." Unfortunately Hal has some "subnormal" test scores and he is too nervous to explain them to the Admissions Committee. He greets their "expectant silence" with his "silent response" (2014, 125). His Uncle Charles does all the talking. Finally, infuriated by both Hal's silence and his uncle's unwillingness to stop talking, one of the Deans comes clean: "Look here, Mr. Incandenza, Hal, please just explain to me why we couldn't be accused of using you, son. Why nobody

could come and say to us, why, look here, University of Arizona, here you are using a boy for just his body, a boy so shy and withdrawn he won't speak up for himself" (130). Hal finally explodes into a stream of verbiage that ends with the above monologue. Appalled by what they have heard, the Deans pinion his arms and legs and wrestle him to the floor. He is dragged through the Administration offices to an "old-fashioned men's room" and "rolled over supine on the geometric tile" (133). The Deans, thinking he has had a "seizure," are then lost for words to describe his response and possible breakdown in the interview room: they describe his words as "*Sub*animalistic noises and sounds"; he was "like some sort of animal with something in its mouth"; he was a "writhing animal with a knife in its eye" (134).

The short episode from David Foster Wallace describes with post-modern tragicomic irony the societal pressures and states of anxiety so many young people experience in interview rooms and test centres right across the global academic industry. The Deans' descriptions of Hal's erudite, imaginative speech on Hobbes, Kierkegaard, Rousseau, and others as "*Sub*animalistic noises" where his gestures make him look like "some sort of animal" speak for the wall of incomprehension that divides the university administration system and our bright, anxious students. Instead of seeing a sovereign subject, they see a beast. Derrida tells us that these are "indissociable figures of the same Thing," (2009, 127) however it seems this sense is lost on the Deans. Hal pleads to be perceived as more than "a creātus, manufactured, conditioned, bred for a function" and, in return, he is taken for "some sort of animal." The violence with which Hal is dispatched from the interview room by the Deans who then hold him down on the floor of the men's room with his face pressed into its "geometric tile" also movingly references the kind of violent struggles that, Walter Benjamin informs us, are integral to the emergence and transmission of barbarism. Benjamin reminds us that all forms of barbarism that require systems of transmission leave us with the defeated "[lying] prostrate" as the victors pass on, awaiting the systems of transmission that will ensure the preservation of the culture they now embody. Wallace describes the academic barbarism of a knowledge industry that is so absorbed by the routines and discourses of meritocratic extremism and testocratic acculturation that it can no longer see even a glimpse of the human in a narrative linking some of the university's most revered thinkers. Academic barbarism reduces

a teenager with great potential but with "subnormal" test scores to a delusional wreck who is consigned to one of society's numerous forms of correctional detention.

Wallace's narrative technique gives us the stream of consciousness of Hal interspersed with Hal's perceptions of the uncomprehending committee members. The reader is left with a sense of the impenetrable web of practices and discourses meritocratic extremism foists on students in transforming them into test machines "bred for a function." The irony is that it is only when a student fails to play the game due to some instinctual unwillingness to be reduced to a machine that he or she is then perceived as less than human. Hal's "beastly" nature is, at the end of the day, what saves him from being incorporated into the system. However, the academic barbarism embodied by the Deans is clear. They can only ever perceive Hal as beastly amidst their barbaric rituals and violence; to recognize anything of the human in Hal's brilliant monologue would be to undermine the foundations of the academic practices they uphold. Espeland and Sauder (2007) have argued that over time higher education institutions are gradually transformed into "entities that conform more closely to the criteria used to construct rankings"; they are ultimately moulded and shaped by the "contaminating influence of measurements on their target object" (Espeland and Sauder 2007, 6). The university, in other words, contaminates itself in striving for the ideal candidate and the ideal university but it fails to realize it is contaminated all the while. Therefore, it is only by returning to our "shared vulnerabilities," vulnerabilities that might now appear beastly in the eyes of the university, that academics can salvage what remains of the human in the face of barbarism. As Lani Guinier reminds us, we must redefine merit in terms of those characteristics that indicate a "student's potential for future success in our democracy—leadership, the ability to collaborate with others, resiliency, and a drive to learn" (2015, 33). However, since the university is now enchanted by economic arguments, we must, as Thomas Piketty reminds us, employ an approach that is "at once economic and political, social and cultural, and concerned with wages and wealth" (2014, 576). Those of us working in the humanities and those concerned with education in the university must explain how the barbaric admissions system is the product of a rankings philosophy that, as we have seen, favours the wealthiest institutions, which, in

turn, favour the wealthiest students. A progressive education system, therefore, requires a progressive economic model similar to the one Piketty suggests for unequal societies. The "right solution is a progressive annual tax on capital" for this is all that "will make it possible to avoid an endless inegalitarian spiral while preserving competition and incentives for new instances of primitive accumulation" (572). This solution will only be implemented if tomorrow's economists do not see their own individual academic merit solely as currency to be cashed in to reap the rewards of meritocratic extremism. However, our universities' Business Schools are becoming ever more exclusive enclaves in ever more elitist ivory towers where community is always already a resource or a market before it is ever a space for sharing and engaging. These are regional concerns that transcend disciplinary boundaries even if the futures of our individual disciplines depend on them. However, as academics and as teachers we can begin the work of engagement so that our interdisciplinarity, like that of Hal above, confounds those who wish to assess/rank/abolish our respective disciplinary appeals for greater equality. We can embody the fact that our "beastly inheritance" and our sovereignty are "indissociable figures of the same Thing," (Derrida, 2009, 127), and, in doing so, we can throw a spanner in the works of academic barbarism. Just as economists like Piketty have called on novelists like Austen and Balzac to explain their economic motivations, and just as the President's Council on Bioethics has called on Austen again to speak for the true nature of memory, so must humanities academics and educationalists see through academic barbarism and its perpetuation of inequality by looking for the beauty in numbers and the poetry in equality. After all, the success narratives of our students will only change if they have stories to believe in.

Notes

1 Introduction

1. Newman began Discourse V of what would become *The Idea of a University* with this statement. The Discourses were delivered in Dublin beginning on 10 May 1852 to inaugurate the Catholic University of Ireland. *The Idea of a University*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976, p. 99.
2. See Geoffrey Galt Harpham's *The Humanities and the Dream of America,* Martha Nussbaum's *Not For Profit: Why Democracy Needs The Humanities*, Suzanne Mettler's *Degrees of Inequality* and Mitchell L. Stevens' *Creating a Class: College Admissions and the Education of Elites* (10).
3. See http://edu.people.com.cn/GB/7528877.html.
4. Mitchell L. Stevens argues in *Creating a Class: College Admissions and the Education of Elites* that "very few of us, however, question the morality of the meritocratic ideal" (247).
5. Recent work has given us new descriptions of "positive barbarism" (Maria Boletsi, *Barbarism and its Discontents*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013), "gentle barbarism" (Jean-Pierre Le Goff, "Modernization and Gentle Barbarism" *Diogenes*, No. 195, 49 (3), 2002), and "weak barbarism" (Radu Vasile Chialda, "Weak Barbarism" *Cultura: International Journal of Philosophy of Culture and Axiology* 8 (1), 2011, 223–35). Chialda argues that "weak barbarism" has emerged in an era of "weak thought" (Vattimo). It describes not only aspects of external barbarism but also what he calls "interior barbarism"; it focuses on the "uncivilized character of human individuals" and it stresses the distinction between "weak barbarism" and "strong barbarism" (225). See my book *Weakness: A Literary and Philosophical History* for more discussion of weak thought. I will discuss these forms of barbarism in more detail in the next chapter.
6. Mitchell L. Stevens. *Creating a Class: College Admissions and the Education of Elites*. Stevens argues that "the terms of college admission have become class-biased standards by which we measure the fruits of parenting and the preponderant means of laundering privilege in contemporary American society" (2007, 248).
7. Joseph Stiglitz informs us that many of the US "for-profit schools" are "owned partly or largely by Wall Street firms" (244).
8. Aaron Clauset, Samuel Arbesman, and Daniel B. Larremore. "Systematic Inequality and Hierarchy in Faculty Hiring Networks." *Science Advances* 1 (1), February 12, 2015, e1400005. DOI: 10.1126/sciadv.1400005. The authors argue: "Using a simple technique to extract the institutional prestige ranking that best explains an observed faculty hiring network—who hires whose graduates as faculty—we present and analyze

comprehensive placement data on nearly 19,000 regular faculty in three disparate disciplines. Across disciplines, we find that faculty hiring follows a common and steeply hierarchical structure that reflects profound social inequality. Furthermore, doctoral prestige alone better predicts ultimate placement than a *U.S. News & World Report* rank." Their findings reveal that "a quarter of all universities account for 71 to 86 percent of all tenure-track faculty in the U.S. and Canada in these three fields. Just 18 elite universities produce half of all computer science professors, 16 schools produce half of all business professors, and eight schools account for half of all history professors."

9. This book reads the work of literary critics, philosophers, educationalists, sociologists, economists, and novelists on the life of the university.
10. Recent UK budget cuts will make it even harder for "poorer students" to attend university. Andrew Grice, "Budget 2015: Maintenance Grants for Poorer Students 'to be Scrapped' in Next Round of Cuts" *The Guardian*, Wednesday, July 8, 2015. Prior to these cuts, students in England and Wales from families with annual household incomes of £25,000 or less qualified for maintenance grants of £3,387 a year. If the family's income was £30,000, the grant fell to £2,441; at £35,000 to £1,494; and at £40,000 to £547. It was not paid when household income was more than £42,620. The grants were not repaid—unlike the loans which cover tuition fees of up to £9,000 a year, which UK graduates start to pay off when their income reaches £21,000 a year.
11. Graham Bowley. "The Academic-Industrial Complex" *The New York Times*, July 31, 2010. The American Council on Education says that from "2001 to 2006, the proportion of presidents from all doctorate-granting institutions sitting on corporate boards rose to 52.1 percent from 47.8 percent at public institutions, and to 50.9 percent from 40.6 percent at private ones." James H. Finkelstein believes this is because "corporations think this is a way of enhancing their prestige and legitimacy, especially in the case of Ivy League presidents."
12. Ariel Kaminer and Sean O'Driscoll. "Workers at N.Y.U.'s Abu Dhabi Site Faced Harsh Conditions" *The New York Times*, May 18, 2014. Kaminer and O'Driscoll report on the working conditions of construction workers at N.Y.U.'s new university site in Abu Dhabi. They report that the workers "lived in squalor, 15 men to a room." N.Y.U.'s president, John Sexton, has "called the outpost, an entire degree-granting institution, 'an opportunity to transform the university and, frankly, the world'."
13. Individualization has emerged as a central concept in recent times. Zygmunt Bauman argues that individualization describes the process whereby human identity is being transformed from a "given" into a "task" [Bauman, Zygmunt. *Intimations of Postmodernity*. London: Routledge, 2002] and that it is the individual who is variously charged with the responsibility for "performing that task and for the consequences of their performance" (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002, xv) [*Individualization*. London: Sage, 2002].

14. Paul Krugman. "Maybe Economics Is a Science, but Many Economists Are Not Scientists." *New York Times*. October 21, 2013. Krugman argues that "while there are clearly scientific elements in economics, a lot of economists aren't behaving like scientists. [...] Whole subfields of economics, notably but not only business-cycle macro, have spent decades chasing their own tails because too many economists refuse to accept empirical evidence that rejects their approach."
15. See my earlier book *Weakness: A Literary and Philosophical History* (London: Continuum, 2012) for more on how writers have privileged the recognition of "our shared ties of vulnerability."
16. Mary Gallagher argues in *Academic Armageddon: An Irish Requiem for Higher Education* that "Higher Education worldwide appears to be in crisis" (1). She argues that "Until such time as humanity has solved all the problems facing it globally [...] societies and economies do not just need well-trained consumers, tax payers and debt reimbursers but also trustworthy sources of genuinely critical, independent and humane thinking" (51). Louis Menand argues in *The Marketplace of Ideas: Reform and Resistance in the American University* that a "meritocratic philosophy" in postwar American higher education involved believing in "the dominance of a scientific model in academic research" (73–4).
17. Sociologist Randall Collins is generally regarded as having coined the term "credentialism." According to Mitchell L. Stevens, he integrated the reproduction and transformation models of education: "Collins argued that the reproduction theorists were correct: the terms of social privilege are deeply contested in every modern society, and the haves perenially seek to translate their advantage into forms that render them legitimate in the eyes of have-nots. But he added that the transformation thesis also is true: privileged groups create educational institutions that have considerable independence from the people who pay for them. Schools function as quasi-autonomous third parties between haves who support them and have-nots" (2007, 13). However, the "institutional autonomy" of universities from the processes of "reproduction" has been almost completely eroded in the US academy by what Suzanne Mettler describes as the "dysfunctional state of American politics" (2015, 197).
18. Samuel Chan and Timmy Sung. "Hong Kong Students Prepare to Kick Off Classroom Boycott: Hundreds of Academics Supportive" *South China Morning Post*, Sunday, September 21, 2014. http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/1597540/lets-stand-them-hong-kong-students-boycott-gets-support-400-academics.
19. Students in Chile have been protesting since 2011 because there are no free universities in Chile and middle-class students obtain the majority of places in the best universities with poor students having to settle for low-quality institutions. *BBC News*, "Chile Students Resume Protests for Free Education," May 8, 2013. http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-22459229.

2 Academic Barbarism: Practice and Transmission

1. This chapter concentrates on Michel Henry's and Walter Benjamin's descriptions of barbarism. However, descriptions of barbarism have emerged in recent times such as "gentle barbarism" (Jean-Pierre Le Goff, "Modernization and Gentle Barbarism" *Diogenes*, No. 195, Vol. 49/3, 2002) and "weak barbarism" (Radu Vasile Chialda, "Weak Barbarism" *Cultura: International Journal of Philosophy of Culture and Axiology* 8 (1)/2011: 223–35).
2. G. W. Bowersock's work reveals how difficult it can be to maintain even this early sense of the dichotomy. In discussing an allusion to "barbarised Greeks" in the work of Strabo, where Strabo describes the Hellenized communities of southern Italy in the years before the end of the Republic as being "barbarized through and through" (ἐκβεβαρβαρώσθαι), Bowersock describes this as an "astonishingly strong word with which to describe what historians have traditionally called 'Romanization'" (4). Bowersock argues that Strabo's phrase was an "emotional or evaluative interpretation" that displays a "concerted resistance in a variety of classical and early Hellenistic Greek writers to the assimilation of overseas Greeks" (6). "The Barbarism of the Greeks" *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, Vol. 97, Greece in Rome: Influence, Integration, Resistance (1995), 3–14.
3. In *The Fear of Barbarians: Beyond the Clash of Civilizations* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2010), Tzvetan Todorov proposes a definition of the barbarian as someone who does not acknowledge the humanity of others.
4. The far-reaching connections that Foucault privileges between knowledge, information, and power are "not just superimposed on the relations of production." He argues that these connections between information and power "are deeply rooted in what constitutes them," and are most fully realized and enforced by what he calls "infrapower" (2000, 87). This is found in the "whole set of little powers, of little institutions" that must be put in place, he argues, as a "prior condition of hyperprofit" so that it can then begin to function and give rise to a "series of knowledges—a knowledge of the individual, of normalization, a corrective knowledge" (87).
5. I use the abbreviation *B* to refer to the original French edition of Henry's *La barbarie* throughout this chapter. All translations are mine.
6. The original French of the concluding line of this extract reads: "[…] *mais sa représentation vide, une signification, la signification d'être la vie ou d'être la vie*."
7. Foucault is also aware of how our understanding of sexuality has changed since the nineteenth century. In the *Histoire de la sexualité 1: La volonté de savoir* (1976) he writes: "When one compares those discourses on human sexuality with those on the physiology of animal and vegetal reproduction from the same era, there is an astonishing discrepancy. Their weak content, and I am not speaking in terms of their scientific character, but in terms of their elementary rationality, places them apart in the history of knowledge. Throughout the nineteenth century, sex seems to have inscribed itself under two very distinct registers of knowledge: a biology

of reproduction, which was continually developed according to a general scientific normativity, and a medicine of sex obeying completely different rules of formation [my translation]" (73).

8. For Derrida, censorship is important in any discussion of the different faculties in the university because even in "industrial societies with supposedly liberal and democratic regimes, even if State censorship is very reduced [...] for the system in general, there are, on the other hand, mechanisms of prohibition, suppression, repression, *without censorship* (*stricto sensu*)" (2004, 51).
9. In an essay entitled "Ethics and the crisis of contemporary culture" from the posthumously published *Phénoménologie de la vie*, Henry describes ethics as a "theory of action" (*PV4* 32). He writes that "action entails this essential immediacy of life," an immediacy that reveals to us what he describes as our "Archi-body" (32), a state of being that experiences itself as body prior to the categorisation of this corporeity into distinct parts with distinct uses. What he describes as the "immanent teleology of this life," or this state of being, "proceeds from its interior essence" (*PV4* 34) and it is this state that must be acknowledged by any theory of ethics that wishes to speak of "life following values" (*PV4* 34). Henry argues that science does not remain open to such a state of ethics: "culture and science distance themselves from each other because of the reciprocal exclusion of their respective domains" (*PV4* 36). Henry regards art as something that has the potential to bring these two domains back together and I will examine literature's role in this in chapter 4. Henry describes art as the "ethic of sensibility, the development and intensification of all its powers to the point where its exalted exercise transforms itself into the inebriation of aesthetic experience" (*PV4* 36). Henry believes that because contemporary culture remains dominated by a prevailing scientism it even regards the "famous laws of beauty" as nothing other than "the appearance of ideal and objective mathematical laws" (*PV4* 36). It is only when culture and science examine their respective conditions of being from the perspective of phenomenological life that a universal ethic might reveal itself.
10. "A Europe working for young people: The current young generation is worse off than 20 years ago. Europe cannot afford to go backwards." http://en.theeuropean.eu/claire-courteille-mulder/7924-the-eus-alarming-youth-unemployment-rates. February 19, 2014.

3 Academic Barbarism, Universities, and Inequality

1. In the 2014 QS Rankings, for example, the majority of these universities were in the top 10, with Chicago at 11, Pennsylvania at 13, and Columbia at 14.
2. Also see Bridge Terry Long, "The Impact of Federal Tax Credits for Higher Education Expenses" (NBER Working Paper no. w9553.JEL no. I2, H2, 2003), 1–70.

3. See also Richard D. Kahlenberg, "Introduction," in *Rewarding Strivers: Helping Low-income Students Succeed in College* (New York: Century Foundation Press, 2010), 11–12.
4. *Guanxi* is the Chinese term for the system of social networks and influential relationships which facilitate business and other dealings.
5. The report examines the background of "more than 4,000 people filling jobs at the top of government, the civil service, the judiciary, the media, business and the creative industries." The commission investigated "where they went to school, on the grounds that going to a private school is reasonably indicative of a wealthy background. Only 7% of members of the public attended a private school. But 71% of senior judges, 62% of senior officers in the armed forces, 55% of permanent secretaries in Whitehall, 53% of senior diplomats, 50% of members of the House of Lords and 45% of public body chairs did so. So too did 44% of people on the Sunday Times Rich List, 43% of newspaper columnists, 36% of cabinet ministers, 33% of MPs, 26% of BBC executives and 22% of shadow cabinet ministers." Andrew Sparrow, *The Guardian*, August 27, 2014.
6. This is from an extract from Jones's *The Establishment* that appeared in *The Guardian* on Tuesday, August 26, 2014. http://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/aug/26/the-establishment-uncovered-how-power-works-in-britain-elites-stranglehold (retrieved August 26, 2014).
7. See also Claudia Dale Goldin and Lawrence F. Katz, *The Race between Education and Technology: The Evolution of U.S. Educational Wage Differentials, 1890–2005*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2010.
8. See "Student Loans are tought to clear – even when you've got the cash." Katie Morley. *The Telegraph*. Nov. 7, 2015. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/personalfinance/11393480/Student-loans-are-tough-to-clear-even-when-youve-got-the-cash.html (accessed, Nov. 7, 2015).
9. Rowena Mason and Shiv Malik. "Unpaid student loans 'a fiscal time bomb for universities'." *The Guardian*. March 21, 2014. http://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/mar/21/student-loans-unpaid-debt-problem-universities-adrian-bailey [retrieved Aug. 21, 2015].
10. "Durham University's £2.5m Kuwaiti gift 'Astonishing', Says Conservative MP." *The Telegraph*, October 1, 2012. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/universityeducation/9574061/Durham-Universitys-2.5m-Kuwaiti-gift-astonishing-says-Conservative-MP.html (retrieved August 10, 2014).
11. "The $1m Question: What Is the Price of a Good Education?" *The Economist,* June 14, 2007. http://www.economist.com/node/9340150 (retrieved August 10, 2014).
12. See www.coralportfolio.com. The website reads: "Student accommodation investment is now expanding globally. With a proven track record, the Coral Student Portfolio offers investors exposure to the strong student accommodation sector in the UK and Internationally."
13. This quotation appears in Owen Jones, "The establishment uncovered: how power works in Britain." *The Guardian*, Tuesday, 26 August, 2014. http://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/aug/26/the-establishment-uncovered-how-power-works-in-britain-elites-stranglehold. [accessed Aug 21, 2015]

14. Owen Jones. "The Establishment Uncovered: How Power Works in Britain." *The Guardian*, August 26, 2014. http://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/aug/26/the-establishment-uncovered-how-power-works-in-britain-elites-stranglehold (retrieved August 26, 2014).
15. Niall Ferguson. "College Becoming The New Caste System." *Newsweek*, August 27, 2012. http://www.newsweek.com/niall-ferguson-college-becoming-new-caste-system-64553 (retrieved August 1, 2014).
16. RTE news. "Report Highlights Disparity in Progress to Third-level Education between Affluent and Poorer Areas." Wednesday August 20, 2014. http://www.rte.ie/news/2014/0820/638197-education/. See also Higher Education Authority, Consultation Paper, August 2014. "Towards the Development of a new National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education." https://static.rasset.ie/documents/news/access-consultation-paper.pdf.
17. Jeevan Vasagar also notes in "So Who Is Good Enough to Get into Cambridge?" *The Guardian*, January 10, 2012, that "Cambridge is committed to admitting between 61% and 63% of its UK students from state-sector schools and colleges. At present, that proportion is 59.3%. The university has also agreed with the Office for Fair Access—an official watchdog set up when the Blair government brought in top-up fees—to increase the share of students from neighbourhoods where few people have gone to university". http://www.theguardian.com/education/2012/jan/10/how-cambridge-admissions-really-work (retrieved August 24, 2014).
18. See the OECD PISA statistics for 2012: http://www.oecd.org/pisa/keyfindings/PISA-2012-results-snapshot-Volume-I-ENG.pdf.
19. UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre. *Child Poverty in Perspective: An Overview of Child Well-being in Rich Countries*. Florence: Innocenti Report Card, 2007, 116.
20. Hugo Gye reports that 23 per cent of students doing full-time masters degree programmes in UK universities are Chinese while 26 per cent are British. "There Are Now Almost as Many Chinese Students on Postgraduate Courses at English Universities as British Students." *Mailonline*. April 2, 2014. http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2594935/There-Chinese-students-postgraduate-courses-English-universities-British-students.html (retrieved August 24, 2014).

4 Academic Barbarism and the Literature of Concealment: Roberto Bolaño and W. G. Sebald

1. Jonathan Long argues that Sebald's "view of historical process […] is characterized by a negative teleology in which entropy, both literal and metaphorical, results in the decline of cultures, the diasporic scattering of peoples, environmental destruction, and the inexorable decay of matter." His works function then "at the level of form, to counteract the dispersal, dissipation, and rupture inherent in the historical process" (137). See Long, J. J. "History, Narrative, and Photography in W. G. Sebald's Die Ausgewanderten," *Modern Language Review* 98 (2003), 117–37.

2. Roberto Bolaño. *La literatura nazi en América*. (Barcelona: Editorial Anagrama, 2010) [LNA]; Roberto Bolaño. *Nazi Literature in the Americas*. (London: Picador, 2010) 96 [NLA]. Hereafter both cited by page number.
3. James Wood argues that "[m]uch of the most successfully daring postwar fiction has been by writers committed to the long dramatic sentence (Bohumil Hrabal, Thomas Bernhard, W. G. Sebald, José Saramago)" and that Bolaño "is in their company." "The Visceral Realist" *The New York Times* (April 15, 2007).
4. Roberto Bolaño. *Entre paréntesis: Ensayos, artículos y discursos*. (Barcelona: Anagrama, 2013). [*EP*]; Roberto Bolaño. *Between Parentheses; Essays, Articles and Speeches*. (London: Picador, 2004). [*BP*]. Hereafter both cited by page number.
5. Bolaño describes his rejection of the "literary establishment" in his introduction—"Total Anarchy: Twenty-Two Years Later"—to *Antwerp*: "The scorn I felt for so-called official literature was enormous, though only a little greater than that I felt for marginal literature" (ix).
6. Adam Zachary Newton argues that Sebald's style itself brings the moral into play by reminding the reader of the undercurrent of violence underpinning his works. Newton argues that Sebald's prose is "aggressively rhetorical in two senses: as a formal patterning that sifts the data of the world through its own system of tropes, and as an art of persuasion that aims at transcendence" (368). See Newton (2004).
7. Ira Radisch is more negative in her treatment of Sebald's approach to the memories of Holocaust survivors. She argues that Sebald's style is destructive of the very history of atrocity it strives to find some kind of redemption from, that Sebald's "collector's" approach to his subject is ultimately "paving the way" to "sites of expulsion and annihilation with antiquarian curiosities," and that this, as McCulloh argues, "effectively relativizes and cheapens the sufferings caused by the Holocaust" (in McCulloh 2006, 406). Also see, on this point, Ruth Franklin, "Rings of Smoke: After Nature by W. G. Sebald," *The New Republic* (September 23, 2002).
8. Wimmer tells us that Bolaño had a "definite predilection for writers concerned with form, for the Baudelairian outsider who observes a stricter, more classical rigor than any academician" (ibid., 582).
9. The theme of barbarism or destruction features prominently in secondary work on W. G. Sebald but rarely in connection with the archive and how Sebald's narratives put the practices of academic enquiry under the spotlight. Mark R. McCulloh argues that the themes of destruction and creation are inextricably linked in his work: "the very reasonableness of Sebald's acknowledgment of uncertainty, combined with his meticulous and deliberate narrative style, contribute much to what many regard as the paradoxically 'reassuring' tone of his unsettling works. In Sebald's literary monism, the concept of coincidentia oppositorium rules, predicated upon a dialectic in which destruction and creation (among other opposites) are inextricably linked" (405). See McCulloh (2006).

10. Indeed Todd Samuel Presner argues that the destructive forces of the "modernist war" are the "condition of possibility" for the realism of historical novels such as Sebald's where the "boundaries between fact and fiction, history and literature, real and imaginary are blurred." See Presner, Todd Samuel. "What a Synoptic and Artificial View Reveals: Extreme History and the Modernism of W. G. Sebald's Realism" *Criticism* 46.3, (Summer 2004), 341–60.
11. Wimmer notes that the "abyss" (what is represented here as "the void" or "the hollow") is a "constant metaphorical presence" in Bolaño's work. Through this metaphor the "charnel house of Santa Teresa is linked to the corruption and decadence of twentieth-century European history and culture" (590). However, the "abyss" is for Bolaño, Wimmer reminds us, in one of his final essays, "Literature + illness = illness," also "the only place we can find the cure" (Wimmer, 2009, 591).
12. See Sebald's essay on Thomas Bernhard in *Die Beschreibung des Unglücks. Zur Österreichischen Literatur von Stifter bis Handke*. Frankfurt a.M. 1994, pp. 103–14.
13. Roberto Bolaño. *Estrella distante*. (Barcelona: Anagrama, 2013). *Distant Star*. Trans. Chris Andrews. (London: Vintage, 2009).
14. *The Savage Detectives* is a novel which, for Wimmer, "lovingly resuscitates the characters, the love affairs, the squabbles, the pettiest details of bohemian Mexico City, around 1976" (Wimmer, 2009, 584).
15. Roberto Bolaño. *Los detectives salvajes*. (Barcelona: Vintage Español, 1998). [*LDS*] *Savage Detectives*. Trans. Natasha Wimmer. (London: Picador, 2009). [*SD*] Hereafter both are cited by page number.
16. Wimmer points out that "life and fiction seem to cross-pollinate" (588) in Bolaño's work and the same can be said of the work of W. G. Sebald.
17. W. G. Sebald. *Schwindel. Gefühle*. Frankfurt (Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2009). W. G. Sebald. *Vertigo*. Trans. Michael Hulse. (London: Vintage, 2002).

5 Aaron Swartz, New Technologies, and the Myth of Open Access

1. https://archive.org/stream/GuerillaOpenAccessManifesto/Goamjuly2008_djvu.txt.
2. In a statement, Swartz's family wrote: "Aaron's death is not simply a personal tragedy. It is the product of a criminal justice system rife with intimidation and prosecutorial overreach. Decisions made by officials in the Massachusetts U.S. Attorney's office and at MIT contributed to his death" (http://www.rememberaaronsw.com/memories/).
3. See Rebecca Gould, "Aaron Swartz's Legacy." Gould argues: "MIT's decision to hand over Swartz's case to the FBI without a warrant or subpoena is the most obvious recent example of academia's failure to protect civil disobedience and suggests how the scholarly community has

subordinated free inquiry to the directives of the state. But the failure of the academic community reaches well beyond MIT. Our complicity is entailed in—and dangerously reinforces—the very distinction Swartz lamented between the intellectual and the academic in American higher education." For Swartz an "intellectual" as opposed to an academic was someone who possessed the "intellectual drive," what he describes as "the tendency to not simply accept things as they are but to want to think about them, to understand them. To not be content to simply feel sad but to ask what sadness means. To not just get a bus pass but to think about the economic reasons getting a bus pass makes sense." See the American Association of University Professors website at http://www.aaup.org/article/aaron-swartz%E2%80%99s-legacy#.VZSaied-M7N.

4. Larry Lessig, the lawyer and friend who represented Swartz, writes the following in a blog on the actions of MIT in this case: "So what was that appropriate punishment? Was Aaron a terrorist? Or a cracker trying to profit from stolen goods? […] Early on, and to its great credit, JSTOR figured 'appropriate' out: They declined to pursue their own action against Aaron, and they asked the government to drop its. MIT, to its great shame, was not as clear, and so the prosecutor had the excuse he needed to continue his war against the 'criminal' who we who loved him knew as Aaron" (http://lessig.tumblr.com/post/40347463044/prosecutor-as-bully).
5. *Cullen, Kevin (January 15, 2013)*. "HYPERLINK," http://bostonglobe.com/metro/2013/01/15/humanity-deficit/bj8oThPDwzgxBSHQt3tyKI/story.html "*On humanity, a big failure in Aaron Swartz case". Boston Globe*. Accessed May 17, 2015.
6. It is somewhat ironic that John Willinsky can then write in 2006 in *The Access Principle: The Case for Open Access to Research and Scholarship* that "MIT has proven a beacon of educational access through its Open Knowledge Initiative, which is setting standards for learning technologies worldwide. MIT's OpenCourseWare is designed to 'provide free, searchable, coherent access to MIT's course materials for educators in the non-profit sector, students, and individuals around the world,' as its Web site puts it" (150–1).
7. Lessig writes the following in relation to Swartz's illegal downloading of "millions" of articles from an MIT server: "As my repeated injunctions against illegal file sharing attest, however, I am not a believer in breaking bad laws. I am not even convinced that laws that protect entities like JSTOR are bad. And even if sometimes civil disobedience is appropriate, even then the disobedient disobeys the law and accepts the punishment" (http://mediafreedom.org/2011/07/larry-lessig-responds-says-swartzs-alleged-actions-crossed-ethical-line/).
8. The Executive Summary of the "Finch Report" or "Accessibility, sustainability, excellence: how to expand access to research publications: Report of the Working Group on Expanding Access to Published Research Findings" chaired by Dame Janet Finch and published in July

2012 argues that "Barriers to access—particularly when the research is publicly-funded—are increasingly unacceptable in an online world: for such barriers restrict the innovation, growth and other benefits which can flow from research" (http://www.researchinfonet.org/publish/finch). Following on from this report, the UK government announced proposals, through its universities minister David Willetts, to make publicly funded research immediately available for anyone to read for free by 2014.

9. "The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014, passed by the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate and signed into law by the president of the United States, has certain stipulations that mandated that any research funded by various U.S. departments and agencies (with certain restrictions regarding classified research and levels of funded research) must appear in an OA [open access] journal within 12 months of the publication of the research in a traditional subscription-based scholarly and professional journal […] Section 527 mirrors the European Union's 'Horizon 2020' OA mandate" (Albert N. Greco, *The Economics of the Publishing and Information Industries: The Search for Yield in a Disintermediated World*. London: Routledge, 2015, 251).
10. The recent "gold" option allows authors to distribute their work wherever they wish. However, it comes at a significant cost. This author was recently offered two copyright options for an article being published with a leading international publisher. The first option involved handing over copyright to the publisher and it came with no fee. The second, "gold" option would allow for publication of the article anywhere online but the fee was €2,120.
11. Outsell's latest report forecast a total volume of open access of $336 million for 2015, representing approximately 1.3 percent of the total STM market. See Outsell (ed.): Open Access: Market Size, Share, Forecast, and Trends, Burlingame, January 2013, p. 14.
12. Gary Hall's definition of open access goes a little further than that of Willinsky: "By open access, I mean access that is digital, online, and free of charge to those able to connect to the Internet, without having to pay subscriptions either to publish or to [pay per] view, in its purest form, anyway. This is turn means free to upload to and download from, read, print, reproduce and distribute copies, and also free of most licensing and copyright restrictions" (2008: 3).
13. "Unpaid peer review is worth £1.9bn." May 29, 2008, http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=402189.
14. Ben Goldacre writes in "The Dangers of Cherry-picking Evidence" (*The Guardian*, Friday, September 23, 2011): "A deliberately incomplete view of the literature on any topic [and by 'literature' here I take Goldacre to mean, in the case of writers like Proust, both the literary and the scientific literature] isn't a neutral or marginal failure. It is exactly as bad as a deliberately flawed experiment."

6 Academic Barbarism and the Asian University: The Case of Hong Kong

1. See the OECD PISA statistics for 2012 (OECD 2013).
2. See Nao (2014).
3. These rankings have already taken associate degrees into account.
4. This includes 4.5 percent on SFR, and 2.5 percent apiece on ratios of international staff and international students.
5. Ironically, "research" has also been identified as another key area of internationalization (Lee 2010: 288).

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