

**“Not to be governed like this and in such a way”
Defending Truth, Contesting Power, Imagining the Commoning University**

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As Foucault (1992) sees critique as being governed “not like this”, “not in this way” and “not in such a way”, he always has been interested in reversing relations by an enlightenment-oriented critique. Critique as “the art of not being so governed” (Foucault 1992, p. 13) implies the will to oppose (unreflective) obedience with rights. From Foucault's perspective, “not wanting to be governed” means “not accepting as true what an authority says is true” or prescribes (ibid., p. 14). Taking a critical stance means paying attention to the “relations between power, truth, and the subject” (ibid., p. 15). As an “art of voluntary servility” and “reflected inflexibility”, critique has the function of “de-subjection.” Thus, maturity, determination, and courage are elements of an enlightened and critical attitude (ibid., p. 17), which becomes relevant in the context of research and development.

Reflecting on academia's positionedness in our times, we remember yesterday's critiques against a neoliberal shift, the critiques of industrialized, normalizing, market-oriented or economized universities.

Nowadays, global politics towards Higher Education and Universities shows massively alarming trends of threatened academics, delegitimized universities, withdrawn material basis for academic work. In times of authoritarian rule, which even turns into a tyrannic quality of power, “speaking truth to power” becomes more and more important. In midst these struggles against an economized, marginalized and subjected university, the question is, “can the subaltern speak”? Can academia defend truth and contest power? For many academics and universities, fear has started to rule their lives.

Can imagining a different tomorrow support to find strength against these massive threats? Can envisioning the commoning university support cocreational forces and support to shape university as a heterotopic space? Might relating to alternatives and speaking from the desired future open up liberating energies to the threatened minds? “Radical imagination” (Castoriadis, 1990) can support to overcome this “culture of fear” (Han 2023).

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Envisioning the Commoning University connects to the works of Ball and Collet-Sabé (2022) and Collet-Sabé and Ball (2023; 2024), who argue “against school” (Ball and Collet-Sabé 2022), “beyond school” Collet-Sabé and Ball (2023), and “without school” (Collet-Sabé and Ball (2024), – claiming the “new” episteme of commoning for education. Can the episteme of commoning offer a heterotopic space for re-imagining the university empowered by vision?

Literature:

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