

# Systemic aspects of academic repression in the New World Order\*

TAKIS FOTOPOULOS

It is generally acknowledged today that every single individual freedom, including of course academic freedom, has been effectively undermined, both on account of the systemic limitations imposed by the form of the system of market economy developed in neoliberal globalisation, and on account of the corresponding limitations imposed by the semi-totalitarian transformation of representative “democracy” in the aftermath of the 9/11 events. In fact, the present form of the market economy and representative “democracy” constitute integral parts of a new totality, which can be defined as the **New World Order**. The meaning of New World Order (NWO) used in this article has, however, little relation to the usual meaning given to this term, which simplistically refers to the changes at the political and military level that resulted from the collapse of the Soviet bloc and the end of the Cold War. Instead, the NWO in this essay takes a much broader meaning extending to the economic level (as expressed by the emergence of the present neoliberal economic globalisation in the form of the internationalised market economy, which secures the concentration of economic power in the hands of the transnational economic elite); the political-military level (as expressed by the emergence of a new informal political globalisation securing the concentration of political power in the hands of a newly-emerged transnational political elite); and the ideological level (as expressed by the development of a new transnational ideology of limited sovereignty — supposedly to protect human rights, to fight “terrorism”, and so on).

My aim in this essay is to develop a theoretical framework for the analysis of the systemic aspects of academic repression in the context of the New World Order, as defined by the present form of the system of market economy following neoliberal globalisation, and the semi-totalitarian transformation of representative “democracy” in the post 9/11 world.

## 1. Autonomy and academic freedom

### *Systemic limitations of freedoms*

The adoption of academic freedom, as part of an entire set of individual freedoms, constituted a basic element of the shift to modernity, which, in turn represented in more than one ways a break with the past. The new economic and political institutions in the form of the market economy and representative “democracy”, as well as the parallel rise of industrialism marked a systemic change. This change was inescapably accompanied by a corresponding change in the **dominant social paradigm**, i.e., the system of beliefs, ideas and the corresponding values, which are dominant in a particular society at a

particular moment of its history, as consistent with the existing institutional framework.<sup>[1]</sup> In pre-modern societies, the “dominant social paradigms” were characterised by mainly religious ideas and corresponding values about hierarchies. On the other hand, the dominant social paradigm of modernity is dominated by market values and the idea of Progress, growth and rational secularism. In fact, the flourishing of science in modernity has played an important ideological role in “objectively” justifying the **growth economy**, i.e., the system of economic organisation that is geared, either “objectively” or deliberately, toward maximising economic growth<sup>[2]</sup> - a role that has been put under severe strain in neoliberal modernity by the credibility crisis of science. Thus, just as religion played an important part in justifying feudal hierarchy, so has science, particularly social “science”, played a crucial role in justifying the modern hierarchical society.

However, the two main institutions which distinguish pre-modern society from modern society,<sup>[3]</sup> namely, the system of the market economy —which replaced the (socially controlled) local markets that existed for thousands of years before— and, its political complement, representative “democracy” —which replaced the classical conception of democracy based on direct democracy— determine also the systemic limitations of all freedoms and therefore of academic freedom as well. In accordance with the dominant social paradigm of liberal modernity, liberal individualism and the economic doctrine of laissez faire constitute the pillars on which the familiar individual freedoms and rights were based: freedom of thought and conscience, of opinion and expression —on which academic freedom is also based— freedom from discrimination, from arbitrary arrest and torture, from interference in correspondence, freedom of movement, of assembly and association, and the corresponding rights to life and liberty, to a fair trial, to participate in government through free elections as well as the right to property. Furthermore, consistent with the liberal conception of freedom, which is defined negatively as the absence of constraints in human activity, these freedoms and rights are defined in a negative way as “freedom from”<sup>[4]</sup> since their explicit objective is to limit state power. But, it was exactly this negative conception of freedom —on which academic freedom is also founded— that has historically determined its systemic limitations and which also defines the content of academic repression today.

In other words, the distinguishing characteristic of the liberal conception of freedoms is the complete abstraction of them from their socio-economic base. It was this characteristic that allowed generations of Marxists to dismiss such freedoms as “formal freedoms” on the grounds that few people in capitalist societies could exercise them effectively. Yet, despite the fact that it is now generally accepted that the liberal rights and freedoms are not merely formal —many important freedoms, such as freedom of assembly and association, freedom to strike, even academic freedom itself were conquered after long struggles in the last 150 years— Marx’s dictum that “equal right is still a bourgeois right,” in the sense that it presupposes inequality, i.e., that “It is a right of inequality”, is still valid.<sup>[5]</sup> Particularly so in today’s neoliberal modernity when every single individual freedom and right has so effectively been undermined, so that in fact a few fully benefit from such rights as that of free speech, given the oligarchic control of mass media, or such freedoms as those of assembly and association, as they are circumscribed today by the semi-totalitarian post 9/11 regimes in the West.

## ***Education and academic freedom in autonomous and heteronomous societies***

In this context, we may see the limitations on academic freedom of teachers and students, and on the related freedom of thought —as expressed in the education process and research— as imposed by the “system” itself, i.e., the system of market economy and its political complement in representative “democracy”. Leaving aside for the moment the relationship between the market economy and the education process that we shall consider in the next section, let us focus on the relation between representative “democracy” and education, which brings us to the intrinsic link between politics and education. In fact, the meaning of education itself is defined by the prevailing meaning of politics.

Thus, if politics is meant in its current usage, which is related to the present institutional framework of representative “democracy”, then politics takes the form of statecraft, which involves the administration of the state by an elite of professional politicians who set the laws, supposedly representing the will of the people. This is the case of a ***heteronomous society*** in which the public space has been usurped by various elites that concentrate political and economic power in their hands. It is only in forms of social organisation where political and economic power is concentrated in the hands of elites that many “rights” are invested with any meaning, whereas in a non-statist type of democracy, which by definition involves the equal sharing of power, these rights become meaningless. This is, for instance, the view adopted by Karl Hess when he states that “rights are power, the power of someone or some group over someone else ... rights are derived from institutions of power.”<sup>[6]</sup> In a heteronomous society education has a double aim: first, to help in the internalisation of the existing institutions and the values consistent with it (socialisation process) and, second, to produce “efficient” citizens in the sense of citizens who have accumulated enough “technical knowledge”, so that they could function competently in accordance with “society’s aims, as laid down by the elites which control it (training process). In this context, the very concept of academic freedom makes sense only within a heteronomous hierarchical society in which the state is forced to grant certain freedoms necessary for the self-protection of society from the elites controlling the system of the market economy and representative “democracy”.

On the other hand, if politics is meant in its classical sense that is related to the institutional framework of a direct democracy, in which people not only question laws but are also able to make their own laws, then we talk about an ***autonomous society***, i.e., a society in which the public space encompasses the entire citizen body. This is the case of an inclusive democracy<sup>[7]</sup> in which citizens take all effective decisions at the “macro” level, namely, not only with respect to the political process, but also with respect to the economic process, within an institutional framework of equal distribution of political and economic power among citizens. Unlike, therefore, a heteronomous society that is based on a negative conception of freedom (“freedom from”), an autonomous society is based on a positive conception of freedom (“freedom to”), in the sense of self-determination. So, in an autonomous society, the issue is not of the state forced to grant “freedoms” but of individual and social autonomy in every social realm.

All this implies that a fundamental precondition of an autonomous society is its capacity of bringing forth autonomous individuals — a capacity which implies the need for *paedeia*, i.e., the all-round civic education that involves a life-long process of character development, absorption of knowledge and skills and —more significantly— practicing a “participatory” kind of active citizenship, that is a citizenship in which political activity is not seen as a means to an end but an end in itself. Finally, a necessary condition for the development of balanced personalities, as I stressed elsewhere,<sup>[8]</sup> is the achievement of a balance between science and aesthetic sensibility, including an appreciation of philosophical thought. This implies that “students should be encouraged in all areas of study and particularly in the general knowledge area to appreciate all forms of art and to be actively involved in practising creative art so that a meaningful balance could be achieved between scientific/practical knowledge on the one hand and aesthetic sensibility/creativity on the other”.<sup>[9]</sup> Paideia, therefore, has the overall aim of developing the capacity of all its members to participate in its reflective and deliberative activities, in other words, to educate citizens as citizens so that the public space could acquire a substantive content.

### **“Neutrality” and academic freedom**

A basic tenet of academic freedom, which clearly shows the systemic limitations of this concept in the context of a heteronomous society, is that of “neutrality”,<sup>[10]</sup> which, strangely enough, was adopted not only by liberals but by supporters of socialist statism as well. Both adopted the thesis of the neutrality of technoscience, according to which technoscience is a “means” which can be used for the attainment of capitalist or socialist development of productive forces. Within the Marxist movement, it was only the Critical Theory School which denied the neutrality of technology thesis, arguing that while technology serves generic aims, such as increasing the power of human over nature, its design and application serves the domination of human by human, and, in this sense, the means (technology) are not truly “value free” but include within their very structure the end of furthering a particular organisation of society (Georg Lucaks, Adorno, Marcuse, et. al.).

However, as we have seen above, modern science (particularly social science) has played an important ideological role in “objectively” justifying the modern hierarchical society in general and the growth economy in particular. Furthermore, applied science, like technology, is not “neutral” to the logic and dynamic of the market economy. As I tried to show elsewhere<sup>[11]</sup> modern technoscience is neither “neutral” in the sense that it is merely a “means” which can be used for the attainment of whatever end, nor autonomous in the sense that it is the sole or the most important factor determining social structures, relations and values. Instead, it is argued that technoscience is conditioned by the power relations implied by the specific set of social, political and economic institutions characterising the growth economy and the *dominant social paradigm*. What is needed, therefore, is the reconstitution of both our science and technology in a way that puts at the centre of every stage in the process, in every single technique, human personality and its needs rather than, as at present, the values and needs of those controlling the market/growth economy.

In this context, social science in particular shows even more clearly the systemic limitations of academic freedom, given the obviously non-neutral character of it. As I tried to show elsewhere,<sup>[12]</sup> the object of study plays a much more important role in social than in natural sciences, with respect to determining the choice of a paradigm by a practitioner, as it is not possible for social scientists living in a heteronomous society to really dissociate themselves from their object of study, i.e., society. Social scientists, more than natural scientists, have to make an explicit, or usually implicit, decision on whether to take the existing social system for granted or not in analysing social relations. In other words, given the inevitable social divisions characterizing a heteronomous society, there is a correspondingly inevitable division among social theorists arising out of their stand towards the existing social system. The fact that much less frequently a similar inevitable division arises among natural scientists (although this is changing in neoliberal modernity, as we shall see below) could go a long way toward explaining the much higher degree of intersubjectivity that natural sciences have traditionally enjoyed over social sciences in interpreting their object of study. No wonder natural sciences are characterized as more mature than social sciences, given the higher degree of intersubjectivity that can *actually* be achieved at a given time and place among natural scientists compared to the relatively lower degree of intersubjectivity that can *potentially* be achieved among social scientists.

Yet, science itself does belong to the autonomy tradition because of the methods it uses to derive its truths and, sometimes, even from the point of view of its content (see e.g., the demystification of religious beliefs). Thus, it may be argued that the essence of science lies in the constant questioning of truths, that is, in the procedures it uses to derive its truths. Science, therefore, although from the point of view of its content (as well as its technological applications) may enhance either autonomy or heteronomy (mainly the latter, given the usual heteronomous institutioning of society which conditions the development of science), it has historically been an expression of autonomy from the point of view of the methods it uses to reach its conclusions. Scientific “truths”, as well as the procedures used to derive them, unlike mystical, intuitional, and irrational “truths” and procedures in general, are subject to constant questioning and critical assessment. The very fact that the scientific truths have so drastically changed over time, unlike religious doctrines and dogmas and mystical “truths” which take the form of permanent truths, is a clear indication of the autonomous nature of the scientific method.

It is, therefore, exactly the semi-autonomous character of science, which results from the methods it uses to draw its “truths”, that makes the protection of academic freedom crucial in a heteronomous society like the present one. In other words, the moment academic freedom ceases to exist in practice —a necessary condition securing autonomy as far as scientific procedures is concerned— then, science becomes a completely heteronomous activity not worth pursuing. Having said this, it is obvious that a fully autonomous science, regarding both its content and its method, is impossible in the context of the existing power relations and the social paradigm which is dominant in today’s heteronomous society. Therefore, the non-neutral and overall heteronomous nature of today’s science precludes a truly democratic science. Yet, this does not imply that what is needed today is to jettison science in the interpretation of social phenomena,

let alone rationalism altogether, and adopt various forms of irrationalism. What is implied, instead, as far as the interpretation of social change is concerned, is the need to transcend both the “objective” rationalism (i.e., the rationalism which is grounded on “objective laws” of natural or social evolution) we inherited from the Enlightenment, as well as the generalised relativism of postmodernism, and develop instead, as I tried to show elsewhere,<sup>[13]</sup> a new kind of democratic rationalism.

## **2. Systemic aspects of academic repression in the market system of neoliberal globalisation**

### ***Academic freedom in liberal and statist modernity***

Although the fundamental institutions which characterize modernity and the main tenets of the dominant social paradigm have remained essentially unchanged since the emergence of modernity more than two centuries ago (something that renders as a myth the idea of post modernity, into which humanity supposedly has entered in the last three decades or so<sup>[14]</sup>), there have, nevertheless, been some significant *structural* changes within this period that could usefully be classified as the three main phases of modernity following the establishment of the system of the market economy in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century: liberal modernity (mid to end of nineteenth century) which, after World War I and the 1929 crash, led to statist modernity (mid 1930s to mid 1970s) and finally to today’s neoliberal modernity (mid 1970s-to date).

The various forms of modernity have created their own dominant social paradigms which in effect constitute sub-paradigms of the main paradigm, as they all share a fundamental characteristic: the idea of the separation of society from the economy and polity, as expressed by the market economy and representative “democracy” —with the exception of Soviet statism in which this separation was effected through central planning and Soviet “democracy”. On top of this main characteristic, all forms of modernity share, with some variations, the themes of reason, critical thought and economic growth. As one could expect, the nonsystemic changes involved in the various forms of modernity and the corresponding sub-paradigmatic changes had significant repercussions on the nature, content and form of education, teaching and research and therefore on the limits of academic freedom, both as a teacher’s and a student’s right. But, before we discuss the systemic limitations of academic freedom in present neoliberal modernity it will be helpful to examine briefly the evolution of the education process through the various phases of modernity.

The rise of the system of the market/growth economy in the period of liberal modernity created the need to expand the number of pupils/students in all stages of education to meet the needs of the expanding factory system specialised training and rapid technical progress. Massive schooling was introduced and the view was gradually accepted that education ought to be the responsibility of the state. Countries such as France and Germany began the establishment of public educational systems early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, this trend was in contradiction to the dominant social (sub)paradigm of liberal modernity. This paradigm was characterised by the belief in a mechanistic model of science, objective truth, as well as some themes from economic liberalism such as laissez

faire and minimisation of social controls over markets for the protection of labour. This is why countries such as Great Britain and the United States, in which the dominant social paradigm has been almost thoroughly internalized, hesitated longer before allowing the government to intervene in educational affairs. No wonder the idea of academic freedom, as a right of the student, originated in mainland Europe and was transplanted to the United States in the 19th century by scholars who had studied at German universities. Inevitably, it was not only the access to education that changed during liberal modernity. The nature of education itself changed as well, with educational institutions being expected to help in the internalisation of the existing institutions and the values consistent with it (i.e., the dominant social paradigm), on top of producing “efficient” citizens, in the sense of citizens who have accumulated enough technical knowledge so that they could function competently in accordance with “society’s” aims, as laid down by the elites which control it.

The statist phase in the West took a social-democratic form and was backed by Keynesian economic policies which involved active state control of the economy and extensive interference with the self-regulating mechanism of the market to secure full employment, a better distribution of income and economic growth. This phase reached its peak in the period following World War II, when Keynesian policies were adopted by governing parties of all persuasions both in Europe and the US, and ended in the late 1970s, with the rise of Thatcherism in Britain and Reaganomics in the US, when the growing internationalisation of the market economy —the inevitable result of its grow-or-die dynamic— became incompatible with statism. The statist phase was characterised by the post-war economic boom that required a vast expansion of the labour base, with women and immigrants, filling the gaps. On top of this, the incessant increase in the division of labour, changes in production methods and organisation, as well as revolutionary changes in information technology required a growing number of highly skilled personnel, scientists, high-level professionals, etc. As a result of these trends, the number of universities in many countries doubled or trebled between 1950 and 1970, whereas technical colleges, as well as part-time and evening courses, spread rapidly promoting adult education at all levels. The massive expansion of education at that period, which created a huge increase in the number of students and university teachers, accompanied with the conditions of job security that were created by the boom in a society which has imposed certain significant social controls on the market economy, made easier the radicalisation of the student body and of a significant part of the university teachers. This development has created, therefore, the objective conditions for May ’68, which led to an unprecedented flourishing of academic freedom in most Western universities.

### ***Academic freedom in neoliberal modernity***

The emergence of neoliberal globalisation during the last quarter of the 20th century was a monumental event that represented a structural change rather than simply a change in economic policy. The market economy’s grow-or-die dynamic and, in particular, the emergence and continuous expansion of transnational corporations’ (TNC) and the parallel development of the Euro-dollar market, were the main economic developments which induced the elites to open and liberalise the markets —the main economic characteristic of the neoliberal form of modernity. Thus, neoliberal globalisation implies a

major intensification of the marketisation process (i.e., the phasing out of effective social controls on markets<sup>[15]</sup>), which began with the establishment of the system of market economy two centuries ago.

An important characteristic of the neoliberal form of modernity was the emergence of a new “transnational elite”<sup>[16]</sup> which draws its power (economic, political or generally social power) by operating at the transnational level - a fact which implies that it does not express, solely or even primarily, the interests of a particular nation-state. This elite consists of the transnational economic elites (TNC executives and their local affiliates), the transnational political elites, i.e., the globalising bureaucrats and politicians, who may be based either in major international organisations or in the state machines of the main market economies, and, finally, the transnational professional elites, whose members play a dominant role in the various international foundations, think tanks, research departments of major international universities, the mass media, etc. The main aim of the transnational elite, which today controls the internationalised market economy, is the maximisation of the role of the market and the minimisation of any effective social controls over it for the protection of labour or the environment, so that maximum “efficiency” (defined in narrow techno-economic terms) and profitability may be secured.

Finally, at the ideological level, neoliberal modernity is characterised by the emergence of a new social (sub)paradigm that tends to become dominant, the so-called “post-modern” paradigm. The main elements of the neoliberal paradigm are, first, a critique of progress (but not of growth itself), of mechanistic and deterministic science (but usually not of science itself) as well as of objective truth, and, second, the adoption of some neoliberal themes such as the minimisation of social controls over markets, the replacement of the welfare state by safety nets and the maximisation of the role of the private sector in the economy.

The intensification of marketisation in neoliberal modernity implies the effectual privatisation of both scientific research and education.

As regards, first, the effects of privatisation of scientific research—following the scaling down of the state sector in general and state spending in particular—<sup>[17]</sup> the “neutrality” of science has become more disputable than ever before. Thus, as Stephanie Pain, an associate editor of *New Scientist* stresses, science and big business have developed ever-closer links in the present neoliberal era:

Where research was once mostly neutral, it now has an array of paymasters to please. In place of impartiality, research results are being discreetly managed and massaged, or even locked away if they don't serve the right interests. Patronage rarely comes without strings attached.<sup>[18]</sup>

In fact, as the same author argues, even more pernicious is the scientists' slide into self-censorship in an attempt to ensure that contracts keep coming—an effort which is vital for their survival after the institutionalisation of the (formerly informal) links between business and science introduced by neoliberals. In Britain, for instance, a 1993 Government white paper on science stressed the need to concentrate on research that

would help “the economy”, whereas industry was asked to pick out the areas of science that were likely to create wealth in the future. If, therefore, in the past, it was mainly the “neutrality” of social sciences that was untenable, as we saw above, today, as a result of the multitude of formal and informal links between business and science established in neoliberal modernity, the neutrality of science in general is also becoming increasingly untenable.

The marketisation of scientific research is particularly evident in areas such as agro-industry and biotechnology, whereby entire university departments are research outposts for Monsanto, Novartis, Cargill, Pentagon, etc. while research on the environmental and social impact of industrial agriculture is neglected or eliminated. Thus, as *The Ecologist* reported some years ago:

Through the strategic placing of grants, industry can direct public funds into research that best serves its own long-term agenda. The process has gained its own momentum and universities are embracing their own corporatist, profit maximising vision. In the US, public universities allocate scarce resources to research which it is hoped will yield patentable processes and products to form part of the universities 'future endowments'; biotech research thus receives considerable funds, while research on the environmental and social impact of industrial agriculture is neglected or eliminated.<sup>[19]</sup>

An even more disturbing example of the cooptation of science by corporate giants refers to the highly lucrative industry of climate change sceptics and the fossil fuel industry's attempts to wreck negotiations for a climate treaty aimed at preventing global warming — attempts which may have played a very important role in aborting any significant steps on the matter, leading us to the present critical stage. As Stephanie Pain, again, reports, scientists for many years have tried to establish a link between climatic change and burning fossil fuels. Finally, in 1995, more than 2,500 climate scientists reached consensus that the world had definitely begun to feel the effects of global warming as a result of human activities, that is, burning fossil fuels and the consequent generation of greenhouse gases which are responsible for the world's rising temperature. Still, fighting the consensus every step of the way has been a powerful group of industry lobbyists, aided by a handful of scientists, “who argued that global warming is a confidence trick to frighten governments into awarding large research grants ... [and] who have helped drag out the negotiations to win the fossil fuel lobby a reprieve of almost a decade.”<sup>[20]</sup> As reported, also, by *The Observer*, “a web of financial links exists between US university research scientists, fossil fuel lobby groups (whose members include Shell, Exxon, Texaco and Ford) and industry paymasters including British Coal and the Kuwaiti government.”<sup>[21]</sup> All this, at the very moment when it was estimated that for every year of that reprieve, another 6 billion tonnes of Earth-warming carbon dioxide was pumped into the atmosphere. Thus, transnational energy corporations, their lobbyists and ideologues, together with the venal academics, have dismissed global warming as a dangerous myth and have urged that the global economy must roll along, spreading enough doubt and dissimulation, so that people become inactive and confused, despite the abundantly clear and alarming facts of a planet out of balance.

Finally, as regards the effects of the neoliberal privatisation of education on access to it — a basic element of academic freedom as a student’s right— the British case is indicative. According to a recent study,<sup>[22]</sup> as a result of the growing poverty and inequality created by neoliberal modernity, the reading and writing skills of young people are worse than they were before the First World War! Thus, according to this study, 15 per cent of people aged 15 to 21 are “functionally illiterate”, whereas in 1912, school inspectors reported that only 2 per cent of young people were unable to read or write. Similarly, as regards the access to higher education, the UK General Household Survey of 1993 showed that, as the education editor of the London *Times* pointed out, although the number of youngsters obtaining qualifications is growing rapidly, the statistics show that a child’s socio-economic background is still the most important factor in deciding who obtains the best higher education. Thus, according to these data, the son of a professional man was even more likely to go to university in the early 90s than one from the same background in the early 60s!

### ***The US case as a pilot scheme for the transnational elite***

The transnational elite, in neoliberal modernity, works on a pilot scheme on education that is effectively based on the US case. This becomes obvious if we consider the drastic changes attempted at present in the European educational space and their consequences on the systemic limitations of academic freedom. Thus, as early as 1999, the EU’s Declaration of Bologna prescribed the creation of a European Space of Higher Education that would ensure:

- The international competitiveness of European Higher Education and
- The effective linking of higher education to the needs of society and those of the European labour market.

The latter represents a direct linking of education to market needs, in contrast to the corresponding indirect linking during the statist (social democratic) era. In this sense, it summarises the content of neoliberal globalisation as far as education and research are concerned and has defining implications with respect to their content and, of course, their financing. Thus, it is explicitly being declared now that the University is in the service of private enterprise, while at the same time the financing only of those courses and research projects which serve “society’s needs” (as far as they are identified with “market needs”), is being introduced, through various direct and indirect methods. Knowledge, like everything else in a market economy/society, is becoming an instrumental commodity in the main aim of serving the market economy and the elites controlling it, irrespective of the real needs of society, the desires of educators and the educated and, by implication, the “pure” cognitive needs of science.

It is not, therefore, surprising that in social-liberal Britain one can observe, as from the beginning of the last decade, a continuous shrinking in the number of “theoretical” courses being offered (History, Political Economy, Philosophy, Arts, etc.<sup>[23]</sup>), in order to make way for “practical” courses directly linked to the market (marketing, business studies, finance management, computing and so on). Needless to add that non-mainstream economics, politics, and similar social sciences courses have been simply

phased out in all universities —apart from some elite universities— on the grounds that such courses are not related to the demands of the market, as expressed by publications in mainstream journals and similar considerations. No wonder that the British theoretical journal *Capital & Class*, on the basis of a well-documented study,<sup>[24]</sup> predicted ten years ago that non-mainstream economics will have been eliminated by now from British economic departments. Furthermore, a similar process is in action in natural sciences as well, with Chemistry, Physics, and other departments closing down “in response to market demands” and being replaced by courses in forensic science and applied physics such as nanotechnology. Thus, according to the Royal Society of Chemistry, 28 chemistry departments closed in recent years, including the famous Kings College London department where the double helix structure of DNA was investigated!<sup>[25]</sup>

All this was not the result of a satanic plot by the elites, but the inevitable outcome of neoliberal globalisation policies, which prescribe drastic cuts in tax rates (corporation tax, personal income tax, etc.) for the benefit of the privileged social strata—always for the sake of competitiveness—financed through corresponding cuts in public spending in general and social spending (including spending on education) in particular. This has inevitably led to the creation of an “internal market,” in the education sector and to an indirect privatisation of study and research “from below”. Thus,

- On the demand side, university applicants, facing today’s rising unemployment and underemployment, select objects of study which are “in demand” in the job market, and therefore choose the corresponding degree courses, indirectly helping the channelling of more public funds towards them. Also,
- On the supply side, such “practical” courses easily secure sponsorship and private financing in general, both of which complement the dwindling public financing of education imposed by neoliberal globalisation.

No wonder that this process has already led to the mass production of pure technocrats, with superficial general knowledge and, of course, without any capability of autonomous thought beyond the narrow and specialised contours of their discipline. This is consistent with the fundamental aim of education in neoliberal modernity, which is the “production” of similar narrow-minded “scientists”, who are called upon to solve the technical problems faced by private enterprise in a way that will maximise economic efficiency. Naturally, this kind of mass production of similar “scientists” by no means implies that scientific rationalism has finally prevailed in thought. In the US, for instance, where this system of education has always been dominant, well-known scientists within their own disciplines (even in the natural sciences!) are religious, or adopt various irrational systems of thought whose central ideas have been drawn not through rational methods (reason and/or empirical evidence) but through intuition, instinct, feelings, mystical experiences, revelation, etc. The outcome of this is a Jekyll-and-Hyde scientist who is compelled to use the rational methodology of scientific research while wearing his/her scientific hat, yet who becomes an irrationalist of the worse kind once this hat is removed. This was a relatively rare phenomenon in Europe before neoliberal modernity, but the present direct or indirect privatisation of European universities is making such schizophrenic identities increasingly frequent.

## ***Academic freedom and control of education***

No real academic freedom, as both a teacher's and a student's right, is possible in either a private or a state-controlled education. A private university education is nothing more than a commodity manufactured mindset produced according to the principles of economic "efficiency", which aim to herd the maximum flow of students through the utilitarian curriculum as quickly as possible. In other words, on the basis of the criterion of how useful its research and teaching output is to the needs of the market system and of those controlling it. No wonder that even the most prestigious private US universities offer highly prized places to the offspring of generous sponsors and alumni relatively easily—a practice apparently well utilized by the Bush family!<sup>[26]</sup> Furthermore, the abolition of free education, which inevitably follows as a result of the establishment of private universities, effectively denies the right of many citizens to any kind of specialised knowledge—a clearly classist move.

An obvious example is Britain where the indirect privatisation of universities, through the introduction of tuition fees, has mainly affected students from lower income groups. Thus, the new system of student loans (similar to the US system), which was introduced by the social-liberals of the "New" Labour party to replace the old system of student grants adopted by the "Old" Labour party of the social-democratic era, is not only pushing students to work in bars, McDonald's restaurants, and strip joints to complement their income, but is also leaving them with serious debts at the end of their studies.<sup>[27]</sup> This has the important (for the system) indirect social effect of creating a docile class of citizens struggling to repay their student loans, mortgages, credit card debts, and so on—the perfect formula for a hyper-exploited, ultra-passive, conformist post-modern citizen who works hard to buy (usually unnecessary) goods and services and follows the rules of the elites—the American prescription for a "dream" society!

Similarly, a state-controlled university means a university directly controlled by the political elites and—through their links with the economic elites—indirectly by the economic elites. However, although a state-controlled university is obviously not an ideal, it is certainly preferable than a private-controlled university in at least one sense. It is much easier for changes in the programmes of study and research to be imposed "from below", i.e., by students and staff, in state controlled universities, than in private universities. It is well known, for instance, that significant changes to the programmes of study and research as well as to the running of universities were introduced in Western European universities in the aftermath of May '68, when academic freedom flourished briefly, before being mostly reversed within the context of neoliberal globalization.

### **3. Systemic aspects of academic repression in present representative "democracy"**

It is not accidental that, historically, both state repression and counter-violence have flourished in the last two centuries. This is because representative "democracy" and the market economy, which flourished during this period, not only institutionalised the concentration of political and economic power (i.e., systemic violence) but also made easier the flourishing of counter-violence, some forms of which were legally recognised.

There is no doubt that counter-violence in all its forms has increased significantly, since the rise of neoliberal globalisation. This can only be interpreted in terms of a significant increase in systemic violence (or even state repression) and the associated increase in the concentration of power at the hands of the ruling elites —that is, in terms of a growing asymmetry between rulers and ruled. One may therefore conclude that the ultimate cause of the September 11 attacks should be traced back to the NWO, which has established a huge inequality in the distribution of economic and political power **between** and **within** nations.

### ***The “war on terror” as a means of controlling populations in the New World Order***

The events of 9/11 functioned as catalysts and gave the perfect pretext to the transnational elite, headed by the US-based parts of it, for its present attempt to crush any resistance movement in the South, in the hope that this will eliminate serious threats to its interests. In other words, the so-called “war against terrorism” is a particularly expedient means of controlling populations that threaten the NWO. The “war” which was launched by the transnational elite in the aftermath of 9/11 —like previous “wars” against Iraq and Yugoslavia— aims at securing the stability of the New World Order by crushing any perceived threats against it. However, this is also a new type of war: it is a global and a permanent war.

It is a global war, not in the sense of a generalised war like the preceding two world wars, but in the sense that its targets are not only specific “rogue” regimes (as was the case with those of Hussein and Milosevic) that are not fully integrated in the New World Order or simply do not “toe the line,” but any kind of regime or even a social group and movement which resists the New World Order: from the Palestinian up to the antiglobalisation movements. Therefore, the resistance movements in the South are not the only targets of the “war against terrorism”. Direct action movements in the North, like the anti-globalisation movement, or even the animal liberation movement, have also been the targets of the transnational elite. The significant curbing of civil liberties introduced throughout the North (USA, EU, etc), ostensibly to subdue Islamic terrorists, has already been used to suppress both these two movements. As Dan Plesch, senior research fellow at the Royal United Services Institute put it, “the war on terrorism is analogous to civil war on a global scale, in that it is taking place in a world which globalisation has shrunk and interconnected.”<sup>[28]</sup>

Furthermore, it is a permanent war, because it is bound to continue for as long as the New World Order spreads throughout the globe. No wonder the US Pentagon called the war on terror a “long war.”<sup>[29]</sup> In effect, this latest war was planned to involve the entire transnational elite and was envisaged to take the form of an ongoing conflict, unlimited by time and space, as it could be fought in dozens of countries and for decades to come. It is therefore clear, that the transnational elite decided to launch this new type of global war — with 9/11 as the perfect pretext— in order to secure its unchallenged hegemony for many years to come. In other words, the “war against terrorism” is a particularly expedient means of controlling populations that threaten the NWO.

This was achieved, mainly, through the introduction of draconian “anti-terrorist” legislation in the North, supposedly to fight terrorism, but in reality as an effective means to suppress the collective counter violence against the present intensification of systemic violence. Thus, in US and UK, the electronic policing of every citizen word, email, and conversation have reached unprecedented heights. As the US now incarcerates 1 out of every 100 adults, the USA Patriot Act anti-terror legislation has effectively suspended parts of the US Constitution, thereby creating —as a Columbia University law professor pointed out—<sup>[30]</sup> “one of the more dramatic Constitutional crises in United States history.” This means eclipsing the Constitution as a quaint relic from a pre-9/11 world, and giving the federal government sweeping new powers to investigate electronic communications, personal and financial records, computer hard drives, and other areas of private life normally out of government right to surveil and subpoena.

Similar legislation in Britain suspended parts of the European Convention for Human Rights so that, among other provisions, foreigners could be detained indefinitely without charge or trial, on the basis merely of suspicion. This legislation is currently extended by the social-fascist “New” Labour Government, so that any suspect can be arbitrarily arrested and detained for a period that could extend to 42 days. Meanwhile, the UK security services brandish their right to “shoot-to-kill” any suspected bomber —as they did to their first victim, a worker from the shanty towns of Brazil, shot dead with seven bullets to the head. No wonder that, in a Panopticon society full of trigger-happy cops and paranoid citizens stripped of free speech rights, even the ex-head of Scotland Yard’s anti-terrorist squad during the anti-IRA campaign feels that Britain is “sinking into a police state.”<sup>[31]</sup> Still, as if all this was not enough, the same “Labour” government has surpassed itself by introducing new arrangements that punish thought itself, by penalising the “glorification” of terrorism—something that, today, includes the justification of peoples’ resistance against occupying powers in Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan and, yesterday, the resistance against the Nazi occupation or the British and French colonialism!<sup>[32]</sup> Similarly, the European Union had drafted legislation to define terrorism in a way that would even allow the arrest, as terrorists, of students and workers occupying public buildings.<sup>[33]</sup>

At the same time, the ideologues of the NWO undertake the theoretical justification of the elite’s “wars” and attempt to defame every intellectual that would dare to reveal the criminal character of its actions. In this effort, the most valuable assistance comes from the ideologues of the system, particularly those in the “Left”<sup>[34]</sup> who, having abandoned any antisystemic vision after the collapse of the socialist project, have opportunistically endorsed the NWO in all its aspects and are feted accordingly by the elite-controlled mass media to satisfy their huge ego. The assimilation process has been gradual in Europe. Thus, the first war of the transnational elite (Gulf war) was adopted only by the centre-Left intellectuals and analysts; the second war (Yugoslavia) was endorsed also by most of the Green and broadly “Left” intelligentsia; finally, the present “war” against terrorism has been adopted by most of the remaining “Left” including several Marxists, ex-communists, and others. No wonder that in this climate of fear and suspicion, whipped up by G8 states and widely spread by the fog machines of the mass media controlled by the transnational elite, significant majorities living in capitalist metropolises are ready to sacrifice their civil liberties for the sake of “security”. Neither is it surprising, of course, that the meaning of “enemy” is gradually being extended to include everybody whom the elites classify as

“terrorist.”

Academic freedom was therefore bound to be one of the first —and most important— freedoms to suffer. The cases of Ward Churchill and Norman Finkelstein, among others in the USA, are well documented. Less well known are instances of academic repression in Europe, such as targeted Dr. Andrej Holm and Dr. Matthias B., as well as of two other persons, all of them engaged “in that most suspicious pursuit — committing sociology.”<sup>[35]</sup> As Richard Sennett and Saskia Sassen point out, Dr. B. is alleged to have used, in his academic publications, “phrases and key words” —such as “inequality” and “gentrification”— common to a particular militant group (and indeed, much of the population!). In fact, Dr. B. was not actually accused of writing anything inflammatory, but seen rather to be capable of “authoring the sophisticated texts” a militant group might require. Further, this scholar, “as employee in a research institute has access to libraries which he can use inconspicuously in order to do the research necessary to the drafting of texts” of militant groups — though he has not written a single one!

### ***The Zionist case of academic repression***

However, perhaps the most systematic repression of academic freedom, in the period since the launching of the “war against terrorism”, and the following classification by the transnational elite of Palestinian resistance against the occupiers as an act of terrorism, is the case of the repression exercised by the international Zionist movement in its effort to distort History and present reality in Palestine, with the aim to justify the historical crime of ethnic cleansing against the Palestinian people since the establishment of the state of Israel.

Contrary to what is commonly thought, Zionists do not just aim at distorting recent History, following the establishment of an expansionist “pure Jewish” state in Palestine, despite the condemnation of such a move by prominent Left Jews like Hannah Arendt and Isaac Deutscher and the Left Zionists who demanded a bi-nationalist, instead of a pure Jewish state. In fact, earlier History, going as far back as Biblical times, is also their target! Thus, a keynote research paper showing that Middle Eastern Jews and Palestinians are genetically almost identical has been pulled from *Human Immunology*, a leading US academic journal —after a massive mobilisation of its pro-Zionist readers and academics— who, having already received copies of the journal, had then been urged to rip out the offending pages and throw them away whereas its author, geneticist Professor Antonio Arnaiz-Villena, of Complutense University in Madrid, was sacked from the journal’s editorial board!<sup>[36]</sup> The author’s “crime” was that, in common with earlier studies, his team found no data to support the idea that Jewish people were genetically distinct from other people in the region and in doing so, the team’s research challenged claims that Jews are a special, chosen people and that Judaism can only be inherited.

Interestingly enough, however, a similar view (though not based on genetics) is supported by Shlomo Sand, a “Young Historian” professor at Tel Aviv University who is highly critical of the exclusively ethnic base of Israel, which, as he argues, stems from the racism of Zionist ideologues. Sand, in a forthcoming book,<sup>[37]</sup> attacks what he calls the myth that the Jews are the descendants of the Hebrews, exiled from the kingdom of Judaea and

attempts to show instead that the Jews are neither a race nor a nation, but ancient pagans - in the main Berbers from North Africa, Arabs from the south of Arabia, and Turks from the Khazar empire - who converted to Judaism between the fourth and eighth centuries. His conclusion, according to which Israel should not be a Jewish state, but a democratic secular one which belongs to all its citizens, is not far from the solution to the Palestinian problem proposed by the Inclusive Democracy project for a multicultural state, as the first step towards a Confederated Inclusive Democracy.<sup>[38]</sup>

Ilan Pappé, another prominent member of the so-called “Young Historians”, having access to documents from 60 years of Israeli archives and the testimony of survivors of ethnic cleansing, further contributed to the discrediting of Zionist mythology that the creation of the Israeli state was the result of a national liberation struggle rather than of the deliberate ethnic cleansing of Palestinians<sup>[39]</sup>. Pappé’s recent book clearly shows that the Zionist ethnic cleansing of Palestine was planned and executed in order to extend Israel’s territory- in effect to Judaize it.<sup>[40]</sup> Needless to add, as Eric Rouleau, the editor of *Le Monde Diplomatique*, stresses, that Pappé’s book, “provoked a furor in Israel that forced its author - like so many others - to resign from the University of Haifa and go into exile at a British university.” This was hardly surprising given that the book revealed the real intentions of Zionists, as Eric Rouleau pointed out in a significant series of articles on the matter<sup>[41]</sup>:

For although the Zionist leadership had publicly approved the UN plan, in reality they thought it intolerable: their consent was just a tactic, as several documents in the archives and Ben Gurion’s own diary show” (...) Thus Zionism risked losing its very *raison d’être*: “making Palestine as Jewish as America is American and England is English”, in the words of Haim Weizmann, who went on to become Israel’s first president.

But, the most prominent case of academic repression by Zionists is that of Norman Finkelstein, author of the seminal book *The Holocaust Industry*<sup>[42]</sup>, which documents how Zionists the world over hurl the charge of anti-Semitism to disarm criticism of Israeli state terrorism against the Palestinians. He shows, moreover, how the US Jewish establishment —well known for its fanatical Zionism and which, according to Aronowitz, “tragically, enjoys the support of the overwhelming majority of organized US Jewry”—<sup>[43]</sup> shamelessly exploits the Nazi Holocaust for financial and political gain, as well as to further the interests of Israel. The price Finkelstein paid for challenging Zionist dogmas and taking on powerful Jewish and Israeli interest groups was to be denied tenure at one of US’s top 20 private universities; not penalty enough, on May 23, 2008 Israel banned Finkelstein (a prominent Jew and child of Holocaust survivors) from entering the country for 10 years!

Another notable case of academic repression by Zionists is that of two prominent US academics, Stephen Walt, the academic dean of Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government, and John Mearsheimer, a political science professor at the University of Chicago, authors of *The Israel Lobby*<sup>[44]</sup> whose book was condemned as anti-Semitic. Their crime was to reveal the mechanisms used by the Zionist elite to pursue its objectives, with the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) playing a leading role by repeatedly targeting members of Congress whom it deemed in-sufficiently friendly to

Israel to drive them from office, often by channelling money to their opponents.

The story begins a couple of years ago when an article entitled “The Israel Lobby” by the two US academics (later published in full book version) triggered a furious row in USA, pitting allegations of anti-semitism against claims of intellectual intimidation. Although the thesis of the two authors was far from radical, the book and its authors were condemned by the elites and the mass media controlled by them as “anti-semitic”. Yet, as Prof Mearsheimer told *The Guardian*,<sup>[45]</sup> “we argued in the piece that the lobby goes to great lengths to silence criticism of Israeli policy as well as the US-Israeli relationship, and that its most effective weapon is the charge of anti-semitism. Thus, we expected to be called anti-semites, even though both of us are philo-semites and strongly support the existence of Israel.” In fact, the authors implicitly adopt also the bourgeois liberal ideology that US foreign policy is determined by the interests of the “nation” —to which the Israel lobby supposedly exerts a dominant and damaging influence— and not by those of the elites controlling it, among which the Zionist elite (i.e., the elite among Zionist Jews) plays a vital role. In other words, the authors could not grasp the fact that the US elites (of which the Zionist elite is an important element) share the common aim of establishing the NWO of neoliberal globalisation in the broader Middle East area —something that would secure also the control of vital energy resources— as well as the consequent dominance of the transnational elite headed by the US elite. This aim implies that a fundamental instrument in their strategy is an all-powerful Zionist state in the area, in order to control —directly or indirectly—the Arab populations and smash any attempt by them for a break from this world order.

It seems therefore that what particularly annoyed the Zionist elite was not their liberal stand itself on the matter but, instead, their systematic research and revelations about the mechanisms used by the Zionist elite (wrongly called by the authors the “Israel Lobby”) to pursue its objectives. One such important mechanism is AIPAC which, they argued, with a staff of more than 150 and a budget of \$60m, has repeatedly targeted members of Congress whom it deemed in-sufficiently friendly to Israel and helped drive them from office, often by channelling money to their opponents. Furthermore, AIPAC allied to pro-Zionist Christian evangelists and influential Zionist neo-conservatives such as former Pentagon officials Paul Wolfowitz, Douglas Feith and Richard Perle, who played a crucial role in the launching of the criminal war against Iraq. Similarly, their research showed that in recent years the US government (i.e., the US political and economic elites and the Zionist elite which is part of both) has given Zionist Israel unconditional support, showering it with \$3bn in direct foreign assistance each year, which is roughly one-fifth of America’s foreign aid budget — i.e., in per capita terms, the United States gives each Israeli a direct subsidy worth about \$500 per year. Thus, as the authors show, since the October War in 1973, Washington has provided Israel with a level of support dwarfing the amounts provided to any other state, as it has been the largest annual recipient of direct US economic and military assistance since 1976 and the largest total recipient since the Sec-ond World War. Total direct US aid to Israel amounts to well over \$140bn in 2003 dollars, despite Israel’s continuous expansion through violence, the illegal “Wall”, etc. Finally, as regards the Zionist’s respect for academic freedom, as the same authors revealed, Martin Kramer and Daniel Pipes, two passionately pro-Israel neo-conservatives, es-tablished in 2002 a website<sup>[46]</sup> that posted dossiers on suspect academics and

encouraged students to report behaviour that might be considered hostile to Israel!

Of course, the charge of anti-Semitism, particularly if it is thrown against the Left by Zionists and pro-Zionists, is nothing less than “poisonous intellectual thuggery”, as even a British Labour Government adviser characterised the Zionist attack against the Left’s universalism:

A more sweeping charge is that this universalism is itself a source of anti-semitism since, in its maximalist interpretation, it denies Israel’s right to be a Jewish state. But the few still calling for a single “secular, democratic state” in the whole of historic Palestine are making a statement about the inadmissibility of defining statehood according to religious or ethnic criteria that they apply as a universal norm. Impractical and idealistic this may be, but it is not anti-semitic, and it is plainly dishonest to suggest it is.<sup>[47]</sup>

In fact, the radical Left, including the anti-Zionist Jewish Left, as it was recently documented by Stanley Aronowitz,<sup>[48]</sup> consistently stood against Zionism—an effectively racist ideology and practice—in favour of a secular democratic state for all the peoples of Palestine, Arab and Jews alike. However, this is of anathema to the Zionist elite, as well as to the transnational elite led by the US elite, as it could lead to the control of Palestine by the peoples themselves rather than by the elites, for their own interests.

From this point of view it is strange indeed (to say the least!) that even radical Left journals lately seem to have adopted a version of what has been called the “new anti-Semitism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century”—a thesis presumably promoted by pro-Zionists disguised as Leftists, according to which anti-Zionism, anti-Americanism, anti-globalisation, Third Worldism, and demonisation of Israel constitute in fact disguised anti-Semitism—in other words, every critique of the New World Order is potentially anti-Semitic! The Left libertarian journal *Communalism*, for instance, launched recently an attack against what it calls “socialist anti-Semitism”, in the name of fighting xenophobia “precisely for the purpose of rescuing the libertarian and humanistic dimensions of anticapitalism and the Left”.<sup>[49]</sup> Thus, at the very moment the so called “war on terrorism” and the resulting Islamophobia<sup>[50]</sup> have effectively destroyed the lives of thousands of poor immigrants in Europe and the US, these Left libertarians could not find a word about this massive xenophobia (probably Islamophobia is not an important enough form of xenophobia for them!) and come back instead to the anti-Semitism of the 19th century and what they call the recent rise of anti-Semitism in Europe—which for them presumably has nothing to do with the Zionist crimes in Palestine and the corresponding crimes of the transnational elite in Iraq and Afghanistan!

Finally, the double standards on academic repression adopted by Zionists became all too obvious in the case of the British Lecturers’ attempt to boycott Israeli universities. At the 2007 annual conference of the British University and College Union (UCU), representing all university teachers in this country, a resolution was passed by 158 votes to 99 calling for a nationwide debate on a proposed academic boycott of Israeli universities in protest at the continued occupation of the Palestinian territories. This was in fact a much milder resolution than the one passed a month before by the National Union of Journalists (who

presumably have a first hand account of what is actually going on in Palestine) who voted for a boycott of everything Israeli. It seems obvious—as several of the proposers of the motion argued—that British academics naively thought that, as a similar boycott against South Africa’s regime was successful in bringing down apartheid, a boycott against the Zionist regime’s state terrorism and discrimination might have the same effect. Clearly, they have not taken into account the role that the transnational elite, including the Zionist elite, could play in thwarting any attempt to boycott a state that was the main instrument of their Middle East strategy, reflecting strategic interests crucially more important to the transnational elite than those represented by the South African regime. The immediate and massive reaction following the passing of this resolution was aptly described by the Guardian correspondents:<sup>[51]</sup>

Within hours it was headline news in Britain and Israel, within days it was making waves in Europe and north America, and soon every newspaper from the *Kansas City Star* (“A stain on British academia”) to the Turkish *Daily News* (“Israel discusses retaliation to boycott threats”) was in on the act. Tony Blair phoned the Israeli prime minister to reassure him that the motion did not reflect wider public opinion. In Israel, MPs began drafting a bill to label British imports — allowing consumers to stage their own counter boycott. But in the two weeks since the vote, it is the US that has had the biggest surge of activity among the anti-boycott camp. About 2,000 American scholars—including at least nine Nobel laureates— have vowed to stay away from any event from which Israelis are excluded...Alan Dershowitz, the prominent lawyer and Harvard law professor, says he has mustered a team of 100 high-profile lawyers on both sides of the Atlantic to “devastate and bankrupt” anyone acting against Israeli universities. “If the union goes ahead with this immoral petition, it will destroy British academia,” Dershowitz told the Guardian last night. “We will isolate them from the rest of the world. They will end up being the objects of the boycott because we will get tens of thousands of the most prominent academics from around the world to refuse to cooperate and refuse to participate in any events from which Israeli academics are excluded. It will totally backfire.”

These were not empty words. The British academics’ union was forced, a few months after it has taken the resolution for a debate on a boycott, to drop any action related to it, under the threat of legal action against the union and its funds, on the grounds that the resolution could be in breach of anti-discrimination laws! It is worth noting however that an important aspect of the anti-boycott campaign was the preposterous argument that the passing of this resolution “would infringe on academic freedom”—an outrageous argument, as Sue Blackwell, who spoke in favour of the motion, pointed out. It was presumably forgotten that this was a decision for the opening of a democratic debate on how to help Palestinians, who often are not allowed to get to college or university, as documented, among others, by Tamara Traubman (a journalist for the Israeli daily *Ha’aretz*) and Benjamin Joffe-Walt:

About 9% of Arabs are accepted for university studies in Israel, compared with about 25% of the children of Ashkenazim (Jews of European origin) and about 16% of the Mizrahim (Jews of north African or Middle Eastern origin). The

percentage of Arabs in university faculties is about 1%. While individual Israeli academics have spoken up in defence of academic freedom in the occupied territories, not one institution has officially condemned injustices related to the occupation: not when in Operation Defensive Shield the army sowed destruction on Palestinian campuses, or when students are arrested on their way to university, and hundreds cannot reach their classrooms because of the separation wall or the other restrictions on movement. Under Israeli occupation, all 11 Palestinian universities have been closed at some point, often for years at a time.<sup>[52]</sup>

It is important to add that these data refer to the period before the Zionist Israel put the entire population of Gaza in an effective huge ghetto (including Gaza students who lost their scholarships after Israel refused visas to them<sup>[53]</sup>) for voting democratically “the wrong way”, i.e., in favour of Hamas. It seems therefore, that some are more equals than others as regards academic freedom (as well as any other liberal kind of individual freedom in a representative “democracy”) and the protection of the academic freedom of one group of people should be protected at all cost, even when it is dependent on - and often aids in - the suppression of the overall freedoms of other groups, academic and otherwise!

Needless to add that in the US moves to censure Israel by students on American campuses has been met with much stronger, well-organised opposition. Campaigns for universities to divest from firms that sell arms and equipment to the Israeli army have been strenuously resisted. Only one governing body – at the University of Wisconsin, Platteville – has issued such a call. As Mohammed Abed, a philosophy student who was active in the divestment campaign put it, “the political climate here is a lot different than Britain. It’s difficult in the States even to get a discussion going about boycotts.”<sup>[54]</sup> A British academic teaching in the English faculty at Cambridge University aptly described in *The Guardian* the present state of US academic freedom:<sup>[55]</sup>

In the US, it is under increasing assault from within and outside academia. Even as freedom of speech is invoked as the great western value to be spread across the globe, by force if necessary, its limits are marked by two unbreachable taboos: anti-Americanism, and criticism of the Israeli state and its occupation of Palestine. Organisations, such as Campus Watch, monitor what academics write and teach, compile blacklists and attempt to shut down debate, despite their claim to support free speech. Respected scholars who have faced campaigns include Columbia University’s Middle East specialist Joseph Massad, who was accused and then cleared of anti-semitism; outspoken University of Michigan professor Juan Cole; and Norman Finkelstein, refused tenure and forced to resign after DePaul University came under external pressure. Most recently, Archbishop Desmond Tutu was banned by the University of St Thomas in Minnesota because of his stance on Israel/Palestine.

Lastly, it is significant to examine the effective mechanism through which any idea of boycotting Zionist Israel is thwarted, as it was documented by Tamara Traubmann (a journalist for the Israeli daily *Ha’aretz*) and Benjamin Joffe-Walt with respect to a

previous attempt by the UCU's predecessor unions, the Association of University Teachers and the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education (NATFHE), to boycott Israel. As the journalists report, the General Secretary of NATFHE received over 15,000 insulting messages accusing him as an "ultra anti-semitic Nazi" and the like, as soon as a proposal calling on the lecturers' union to encourage an academic boycott of Israel had been made public. At least 50,000 more were sent to other leaders of NATFHE and the Association of University Teachers. Petitions with more than 17,000 signatories were sent to the union. As the two authors point out:

While much of the criticism was well formulated and respectful, there was something troubling about the massive international campaign (...) The pickle is trying to determine whether the campaigns against such boycotts are actually motivated by concerns for academic freedom, or whether they are using the universalist ideal to stifle critical discussion of Israel. We have found much more evidence of the latter (...) we found the vast majority of the tens of thousands of emails originated not with groups fighting for academic freedom, but with lobby groups and think tanks that regularly work to delegitimise criticisms of Israel (...) The main Israeli anti-boycott organising group is the International Advisory Board for Academic Freedom, which claims to have a network of hundreds of American and European academics. With few exceptions, its principal work is to defend Israeli academic freedoms (...) In the US, home to the vast majority of those organising against the boycott, one major campaigner was the American Jewish Congress, for which academic freedom is not the central aim. AJC supporters could go to the website, type in their name and an email would be sent on their behalf — 5,480 individual emails were sent to each of five union leaders in this manner. The International Fellowship of Christians and Jews also held a website-based email campaign, yielding 5,015 individual emails to each union leader. The only US organisation whose mission is explicitly related to education is Scholars for Peace in the Middle East, a Zionist organisation working on US campuses "to develop effective responses to the ideological distortions, including anti-semitic and anti-Zionist slanders that poison debate". The group organised a large petition and appealed to its 6,000 supporters to email a letter to union leaders.

Their conclusion is devastating of the Zionist rhetoric: "This is not to say such groups do not have a right to counter criticisms of Israel. It is simply to argue that advocacy of academic freedom is not the motivation behind the anti-boycott campaign, and the mission statements of the organisations behind it—all of which involve pro-Israeli advocacy, rather than academic freedom — do not match their rhetoric. Campaigners have used academic freedom as a tactic in a political campaign seeking to redirect public discussion away from the question of the complicity of the Israeli academy with the occupation and discrimination in Israeli universities (a debate they are likely to lose) towards academic freedom (a debate they are likely to win)."

It is through similar means and machinations and, of course, through the mobilisation of the mass media controlled by the transnational elite that academic repression on this crucial issue is exercised and any voice referring to the ultimate cause of the catastrophe

in Palestine, i.e., the Zionist “solution” to the historical problem of Jewish persecution (instead of the bi-nationalist solution that was proposed in the past or a multicultural one-state solution which is proposed today) is stifled as “anti-Semitic”.

## 4. Conclusion

Hopefully, the above analysis should have made clear that unless universities are directly controlled by society itself (which, alone, could express the general interest) and the academic community, i.e., teachers and students, no real academic freedom is possible. This applies not only to the cases of universities controlled by economic or political elites, i.e., the cases of private or state-controlled universities respectively, but also to “intermediate cases” where universities are controlled instead by elites and social groups within society that express special interests, whether cultural (e.g., religious organisations or the Church itself) or the industrial-military complex (e.g., the US Pentagon) and so on. The issue, therefore, is whether teaching and research programs are defined directly by society in general and the academic community in particular rather than by specific social groups with vested special interests — i.e., the economic and political elites created by the market economy and representative “democracy” respectively.

A democratic *paideia*, therefore, presupposes a struggle for radical change not just in the educational structures but also in the socio-economic structures, so that students are not forced to choose only those programs of study meeting *market needs* but, instead, are able to select those programs of study genuinely meeting *human needs*. This choice is fundamental if we take into account the fact that there is little (if any) relation between market needs and human needs in the market economy system, in which what determines “market needs” is crucially conditioned by privileged social groups, through the concentration of income, wealth and economic power at their hands. It is therefore only within the context of an inclusive democracy, which institutionalises an equal distribution of political and economic power among all citizens that one could meaningfully talk about academic freedom.

---

\*A shorter version of this essay was originally written for Anthony J. Nocella II, Steven Best and Peter McLaren (eds.), *Academic Repression: Reflections from the Academic Industrial Complex* (Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2008).

---

[1] See Takis Fotopoulos, “[Mass media, Culture and Democracy](#)”, *Democracy & Nature* Vol. 5, No. 1 (March 1999).

[2] See Takis Fotopoulos, [Towards An Inclusive Democracy](#) (London/N.Y.: Cassell/Continuum, 1997), ch. 2.

[3] See T. Fotopoulos, “[The Myth of postmodernity](#)”, *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (March 2001), pp. 27-76.

[4] Isaiah Berlin, “Two Concepts of Liberty” in Isaiah Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969).

[5] Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1966), p. 16.

[6] Karl Hess, “Rights and Reality” in *Renewing the Earth: The Promise of Social Ecology*, John

Clark, ed. (London: Greenprint, 1990), pp. 130-33.

[7] See T. Fotopoulos, *Towards An Inclusive Democracy*, ch 5; see also, for a brief description, the entry “[Inclusive Democracy](#)” in *Routledge Encyclopedia of International Political Economy*, Vol. 2, pp. 732-740 (London: Routledge, 2001).

[8] See Takis Fotopoulos, “[From \(mis\)education to Paideia](#),” *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (March 2003).

[9] Ibid.

[10] See e.g., The “Academic Bill of Rights” drafted by *the Students for Academic Freedom*, which calls for regulation of colleges that would ensure a “neutral” attitude in matters of politics, ideology or religion.

[11] See T. Fotopoulos, “[Towards a democratic conception of science and technology](#)”, *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (1998), pp. 54-86.

[12] Takis Fotopoulos, *Towards An Inclusive Democracy*, ch. 8, pp. 340-42.

[13] Takis Fotopoulos, *Towards an Inclusive Democracy*, Part III, “Towards a democratic rationalism”.

[14] See Takis Fotopoulos, “The Myth of Postmodernity”.

[15] Takis Fotopoulos, *Towards an Inclusive Democracy*, ch.1.

[16] See T. Fotopoulos, “[Globalisation, the reformist Left and the Anti-Globalisation movement](#)”, *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (July 2001), pp. 233-280.

[17] Takis Fotopoulos, *Towards an Inclusive Democracy*, pp. 33-46.

[18] Stephanie Pain, “When the Price Is Wrong,” *The Guardian* (27 Feb. 1997).

[19] *The Ecologist*, Vol. 22, No. 4 (July–August 1992), pp. 157–58.

[20] Stephanie Pain, “When the Price Is Wrong.”

[21] Polly Ghazi, *The Observer* (10 March 1997).

[22] Tracy McVeigh, “Level of illiteracy among young is above that of 1912”, *The Observer* (August 19, 2001).

[23] Matthew Taylor, “University says market forces course cuts”, *The Guardian* (23/11/2004).

[24] Frederic S. Lee and Sandra Harley, “Peer Review, the Research Assessment Exercise and the Demise of Non-Mainstream Economics”, *Capital & Class*, Issue no. 66 (Autumn 1998), pp. 23-53.

[25] Donald MacLeod, “Newcastle drops physics degrees,” *The Guardian* (3/12/2004).

[26] Rick Fantasia, “United States: unequal opportunities- elites still control the universities”, *Le Monde diplomatique* (November 2004).

[27] Will Woodward, “Students are the new poor,” *The Guardian* (27/6/2001).

[28] Peter Beaumont, “America gears up for a new kind of war”, *The Observer* (March 10, 2002). According to the same report US forces are now fighting and deploying across the globe - in Afghanistan, the Philippines, Iraq and Colombia and in the former Soviet republics. American arms and money are flooding elsewhere as its military takes up new bases across the globe .

[29] See the Pentagon’s Quadrennial Defence Review in Simon Tisdall et. al., “America’s Long War”, *The Guardian* (15/2/2006).

[30] Patricia J. Williams. “This dangerous patriot’s game”, *The Observer* (December 2, 2001).

[31] Alan Travis, “Britain’s sliding into police state”, *The Guardian* (28/1/2005).

[32] See Takis Fotopoulos, “[From Social-Democracy to Social-Fascism](#),” *The International Journal Of Inclusive Democracy*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (November 2006).

- [33] John Brown, “Euro law wrongly defines terrorism”, *Le Monde diplomatique* (February 2002).
- [34] A typical example is ex-Trotskyite Christopher Hitchens, who in a vitriolic attack against the critics of the “war” against Afghanistan, wrote in the *Spectator* that intellectuals who seek to understand the new enemy are no friends of peace, democracy, or human life; see Tariq Ali, “The new empire loyalists”, *The Guardian* (March 16, 2002). The same author has reached new lows when he described the great London antiwar demonstration in February 2003 as “the silly... led by the sinister” [quoted by J. Burchill, *The Guardian* (1/3/2003)].
- [35] Richard Sennett and Saskia Sassen, “In the name of the war on terror, our colleagues are being persecuted – for the crime of sociology”, *The Guardian* (21/8/2007).
- [36] Robin McKie, “Journal axes gene research on Jews and Palestinians”, *The Observer* (25/11/2001).
- [37] Shlomo Sand, *How the Jewish people were invented, from the Bible to Zionism* (forthcoming in French with Fayard).
- [38] Takis Fotopoulos, “[Palestine: the hour of truth](#)”, *The International Journal of Inclusive Democracy*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (January 2006).
- [39] See Takis Fotopoulos, “[The ‘catastrophe’ and Zionist mythology](#),” *The International Journal of Inclusive Democracy*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (July 2008).
- [40] Ilan Pappé, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, (Oneworld Publications, 2006).
- [41] Eric Rouleau, “The «ethnic cleansing» of Palestine”, *Le Monde Diplomatique* (English edition) (May 2008).
- [42] Norman Finkelstein, *The Holocaust Industry* (Verso, 2001).
- [43] Stanley Aronowitz, “Zionism from the Standpoint of its Jewish Critics”, *Logos*, Issue 3.3 (Summer 2004).
- [44] John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, *The Israel Lobby and US Foreign Policy* (Allen Lane, 2007).
- [45] Julian Borger, “US professors accused of being liars and bigots over essay on pro-Israel lobby”, *The Guardian* (31/3/2006).
- [46] They refer to [www.cam-pus-watch.org](http://www.cam-pus-watch.org) which, after the fuss created by it, has probably been replaced by another website by now.
- [47] David Clark, “Accusations of anti-semitic chic are poisonous intellectual thuggery”, *The Guardian* (6/3/2006).
- [48] Stanley Aronowitz, “Zionism from the Standpoint of its Jewish Critics”.
- [49] Kjetil Simonsen writing in *Communalism*, which expresses the views of the late Murray Bookchin, stresses that “Leftists too have espoused anti-Jewish sentiments, trumpeting them in the name of opposing globalization, defending the rights of Palestinians, and fighting imperialism”, “Anti-Semitism in the Socialist Tradition”, *Communalism*, issue # 11 (August 2007).
- [50] See Takis Fotopoulos, “[Islamophobia: the new anti-Semitism](#)”, *The International Journal of Inclusive Democracy*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (January 2007).
- [51] Matthew Taylor, Suzanne Goldenberg and Rory McCarthy, “We will isolate them”, *The Guardian* (9/6/2007).
- [52] Tamara Traubman and Benjamin Joffe-Walt, “Israeli university boycott: how a campaign backfired”, *The Guardian* (20/6/2006).
- [53] Rory McCarthy, “Gaza students lose scholarships after Israel refuses visas”, *The Guardian* (19/5/2008).
- [54] See Tamara Traubman and Benjamin Joffe-Walt “Israeli university boycott: how a campaign

backfired”.

[55] Priyamvada Gopal, “A shameful silence”, *The Guardian* (5/10/2007).

[56] Tamara Traubman and Benjamin Joffe-Walt, “Israeli university boycott: how a campaign backfired”.

How do academic concepts develop in the mind of the child who undergoes school instruction? What are the relationships between the child's proper learning<sup>2</sup> and the acquisition of knowledge and the processes governing the internal development of an academic concept in the child's mind? Do they actually coincide and are they really only two sides of essentially one and the same process? Does the process of internal development of concepts follow the teaching/learning [obuchenie] process, like a shadow follows the object which casts it, never coinciding, but reproducing and repeating its