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Valorising University Education in Ghana

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Article

Valorising University Education in Ghana

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Abstract

There has been a neoliberal re-ordering of the political intent behind education in Ghana. Prior to the said re-ordering, education was a means by which the government facilitated the citizen's acquisition of the social capital required to enable the individual to contribute to the positive development of the state. The state intervened to create a common sense of nationhood and destiny among the citizenry in the quest for national reconstruction. However, the neoliberal "commodification" of education—in the form of a philosophical readjustment of the need for education, from being a "right" to a "privilege"—and its attendant shifting of the cost onto the citizen, have led to the creation of segregation based on income. The poor have thus been permanently locked out of education as a means of upward social mobility. The result of this is socio-economic disharmony, with the educational system as a political filter which separates those who can afford education and those who cannot. This has negative implications for the process of democratic deepening: the educationally empowered will lord it over the educationally disempowered. Stretched to its logical conclusion, the state, even though liberal, becomes an oppressive democratic state, with structurally limited options for the poor.

Keywords: neoliberalism; Ghana; university; free market; Foucault; academe

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Introduction

In recent times it has become easy to discern the marked shift towards valorising markets, especially market-like practices, technologies, and rationalities, which is taking place at the University of Ghana, an extremely problematic situation for us as a country. New forms of governing have been instituted through the creeping neoliberalisation of the academe, animated and increasingly facilitated by the changing patterns of demand for university education through higher pricing and development policy in Ghana. Over the last decade, university fees have increased astronomically, while accessibility has been further limited for a large number of young people due to inadequate infrastructure, among other things. This article seeks to examine this creeping neoliberalisation of the academy which pervasively circulates through the arteries of the University of Ghana. The higher education market requires students and precarious academics to cope with the neoliberal technologies of government, such as assessment and managerialist practices related to institutional performance indicators. Of course critical attention must be focused on the question of how, and to what extent, the ideological purity of free-market rhetoric and the seemingly pragmatic logic of neoliberal economics have influenced contemporary realities of structural distortion of academic freedom in Ghana, and the substantive abuse that neoliberalism (or more accurately neoliberalisation) unleashes. And again, it becomes all the more urgent and intensely pertinent to investigate what is prompting the market rationality at the University of Ghana.

The call for market rationality in higher education in Ghana has been characterised and propagated by a state-led version of neoliberalism. This is not to say that the University of Ghana has not wilfully been incorporating this market rationality and technologies. The market thinking in the Ghanaian case could be properly understood within the deepening economic and governance crisis, which precipitated the structural adjustment experience in Africa in general and in Ghana in particular in the 1990s (Akyeampong 2010). Since the 1990s, there have been a series of large public sector restructuring processes which targeted, amongst others, the higher education sector. Public sector reforms since the 1990s have therefore focused on a broader set of issues: changes in the internal structure of the public service, and economic reforms that seek to purify the relationship between the state and the market and, most importantly, to reconstitute the relationship between government and citizen, usually in the context of shrinking the paternalistic state. These economic developments brought about a drastic change in everyday work at the university. Part of the university's sector restructuring was an increased emphasis on finding ingenious means of raising revenue to oil the wheels of the university.

The reasons behind marketisation at the University of Ghana were largely budgetary and due to monetary constraints on public funds; it was also aimed at lessening the bureaucratic procedures of the state, and was based on the strong belief in neoliberal economics. By neoliberal economics I mean the "common sense" narrative that the

market is the only legitimate allocator of goods and services in society at large. The underlying rationality of neoliberal economics is that market forces of supply and demand operate for the betterment of a product or service, including the service of education. As far as neoliberal market-oriented education is concerned, the role and responsibility of the state in providing and governing educational services ought to be replaced by market-like forces. Here the role of the paternalistic state is reduced to that of a night watchman, except for the provision of the regulatory mechanisms within which the market can function efficiently and smoothly. Advocates of the marketised educational system see education as a commodity, the quality and outcome of which can be improved through competition. The decision to redirect funding from the state to students was propelled by the Ghanaian state. Since then, market thinking has, in many ways, been used to govern the university.

This article seeks to offer a neoliberal perspective on the contemporary university, which has been conditioned for and, importantly, enmeshed within the existing political and economic matrixes and institutional frameworks in Ghana. Rather than condemning this as a particularly foul idea and making crass assumptions of the enactment of a vile discourse of neoliberal hegemonic ideology and its naturalisation of market relations and behaviour, it is useful in my view to suggest that its importance lies in the fact that it effectively functions to reproduce the logic of maximising entrepreneurial freedoms. Thus this article will provide a framework aimed at explicitly reflecting on the context of the contemporary university in Ghana, one which is closely aligned with the ongoing power and influence wielded by neoliberal practices on our political imaginations.

I contend that even though the current resonances of neoliberalism have been dismissed as an "Orwellian fiction", neoliberalism emphasises, in my view, the embodied practice of enacting and greasing the rails as a supposed balm for an assured neoliberal future. In this article, I set out to argue that, rather than the grossly essentialist view of neoliberal power as a paradigmatic construct and its facade of invincibility (Springer 2016), what is also required is acknowledging its distinctive Ghanaian setting. The basic issue, I argue, is not blind faith, but the opposite: coherence and hegemonic acceptance of the neoliberalisation of contemporary universities insofar as it reflects a broader concession to the neoliberal schema itself. Thus I conceptualise neoliberal power and influence not in terms of what it might become, but in terms of what it has been turned into by the very regimes that have exploited it. The argument, of course, is that it only makes sense when considering the Ghanaian context as geographical inquiry thatilluminates the local variegation, hybridity, mutation, and variety of neoliberalism (Springer 2014). Such polychromatic thinking is also an indication of neoliberalism's expansion across various geographical settings. Geopolitically distinct theorisations of neoliberalism recognise its hybridised, protean, promiscuous, discursive, and mutated forms as it journeys around our world. By the same token, a variegated, hybridised, protean, promiscuous, and discursive framing of neoliberalism further reveals the vital importance of moving our theorisations of neoliberalism forward to enable their application to empirical contexts and realities (Brenner, Peck, and Theodore 2010).

Of course, my argument is not intended to simplistically reduce the current neoliberalised academy to social and economic arrangements which place stronger emphasis on minimal state intervention, market relations, and individual responsibility, which in many ways has become a cliché or a "radical political slogan" (Springer 2016). To call the current state of the academe neoliberalised is to draw attention to the practices, technologies, and rationalities that increasingly saturate today's university. Most significantly, the neoliberalised university has been reimagined and legitimised by a seemingly ubiquitous set of market-like policies and has since become suffused with market rationalities in its intersection with embodied subject formations. It will be argued that the insidious processes of neoliberalisation of the university are inescapably, and profoundly, marked by the resonances that might conceivably be characterised by the various shapes and sizes that neoliberalisation has taken all around the world. And that is what this article seeks to bring into productive conversation. The main point, however, is that the ongoing reconstitution of higher education in Ghana through the application of markets—and especially market-like practices, technologies, and rationalities—effectively highlights critical global features of the neoliberalisation of the university.

What is needed then is to speak of the neoliberalisation of the university in such a way as to show how the substantive effects of neoliberalism may prevail to varying degrees across different geographical contexts, which implicitly allows enough space for alternative characterisation and categorisation.

This demands increased attention and sustained emphasis on the dynamic nature of the process, alerting us to the realities of the complex nuances of neoliberalisation within the wider terrain of the University of Ghana's development policy landscape. In order to advance these arguments, the discussion proceeds by exploring the theoretical implications of the neoliberalised university and also disrupts, troubles, and dismantles traditionally entrenched conceptual frameworks. The article captures and interrogates how particular theoretical strands and regimes have shaped the shifting priorities, policy discourses, and regimes of higher education institutions in Ghana over the last decade. Recent development policy frameworks and programmes at the University of Ghana demonstrate an unmistakable focus on promoting economic competitiveness, facilitated by a neoliberal market orientation. Presently, there are ten publicly funded universities, six publicly specialised/professional colleges, and 54 private universities/colleges in Ghana. It is important to clarify from the outset that, given the vastness of the subject, I will focus primarily on the University of Ghana in order to provide a snapshot of the neoliberalised academe. Obviously, the choice of the University of Ghana cannot be seen as representative of wider perceptions of the neoliberalisation of higher education. However, I believe that this article may provide food for thought to academics in other pressurised university contexts in Ghana. The University of Ghana was chosen given the fact that it is the oldest university in Ghana. This article aims to contribute to critical international political economy and strives to articulate a novel perspective to analyse the neoliberalisation of the academe. Additionally, it contributes to the debate on the

accessibility and relevance of higher education in general in Ghana. In going beyond what can be broadly defined as neoliberal policy, I straddle and align my arguments with the typical neoliberal university syndromes. These syndromes effectively cut through the following theoretical and often overlapping policy regimes, which have fundamentally shaped and become indissolubly embedded within the policy contours\landscape of the University of Ghana.

The Marketisation of the Meaning of the University

Increasingly, the pervasiveness of the neoliberalised university is understood in the form of a utopia promised via the process of ill-fitting marketisation. Indeed, the linchpin of neoliberal dogmatic theology is the idea that the market mechanism should primarily be allowed to make major social and political decisions—the belief that the involvement of the state in the economy should and must voluntarily be rolled back, ostensibly to ensure individual freedom or economic efficiency. The fetishisation and reification of the market ethos as a framework emerge from the belief that it will provide solutions to intractable problems. Most palpably, marketisation and the drive for privatisation in Ghanaian higher education are reflected in the radical shift in focus away from the state as an instrument of resolving the problems of development. This discourse of market rationality, we are told by neoliberal epigones, offers the best and most efficient way of allocating scarce resources. In essence, the benefits of deregulation are thought to far outweigh any conceivable drawbacks, precisely because the drawbacks of such policies pale into insignificance compared to state intervention, which it is believed will only make things worse; therefore, one must unquestionably accept the deleterious effects of an unregulated market.

In the academe, neoliberal dogmatic doctrine has become a dominant discourse which has gained credence and popularity, however conceived. The upshot is that the discursive market politics of neoliberalism has effectively eradicated the border between the social and the economic: market rationality—cost–benefit calculations—must be extended and disseminated to all institutions and social practices. Within the rubric of neoliberal fundamentalism, a naturalised and idealised market is presented as a limit to government. At the heart of neoliberal problematisation is the notion of "frugal government", by which the question of "the too much and too little" (Foucault 2010) develops into the central criterion around which the art of government revolves. In its minimalism, part of the narrative of the neoliberal notion of government, I believe, is that the market is in principle the best way of organising the economy and, to a very large extent, all spheres of social life. Neoliberals radically extend the market to a universal frame of government. Undergirding all of this is a rationality that is primarily concerned with individual rights and freedoms, not as exchangers in natural markets but as self-entrepreneurs in artificially constructed markets.

Neoliberal political rationality has comprehensively generalised the scope of the economy, to the extent that social relations and individual behaviour can be discerned by using economic criteria and in economic terms of intelligibility. In other words, the autonomous, self-maximising, (radically) opportunistic individual is faced with the choice of the literal maximisation of his/her own benefits, also being acutely aware of the sacrifices which are necessary for "market-friendly" conditions. Seen in this way, neoliberal political rationality radically reconstructs virtually every form of non-economic phenomenon using the market grid of intelligibility. In neoliberal market-talk and technologies, the market is no longer the principle of self-delimitation on the part of the government, but is instead the principle against which it rubs, or "a sort of permanent economic tribunal" (Foucault 2010, 247). I argue that the entire point of the neoliberal art of government has been to show how market practices and rationalities and the state are mutually exclusive, and that the rationality of government is defined in terms of market rationality. In fact, in neoliberal logic, the market hierarchically assumes a predominant role. The neoliberalisation of the academe is a grand attempt to remake the university using market-like practices and technologies. Indeed, in the shadow of neoliberalism's epithet of "more markets, less state account", the decisive turnaround to the market has implicitly meant the thorough withering away of the nanny state's power and legitimacy, which have been replaced by a more conventional "night-watchman state" and subsequently made utterly irrelevant. It therefore seems safe to say that in neoliberalism, the most important feature underlying neoliberal government has been—and still is—its anti-naturalistic and constructivist view of the market, in which the market is no longer just a quasi-natural phenomenon but rather serves as a constructivist vision for government.

Recent changes at the University of Ghana can primarily be grasped within wider neoliberal strategies for reshaping society based on the model of the marketplace. Exemplary of this logic of thinking is the way in which academics and students are interpellated as producers, exchangers, and consumers of valorised knowledge which is sold to the private market, rather than viewing the university as a community of academics and students in the pursuit of value-free knowledge. Many universities in Ghana are no longer a public or common good, but now remarkably resonate with and appeal to the idea of neoliberal economic thinking, where market-driven demands have become fundamental organising principles (Adaman and Madra Yahya 2014). I want to argue that the market as a form of politics achieves its goals discursively by rearticulating our social world and how we ought to be governed. Or, as Foucault (2010, 33) presciently stated, it is "a site of veridiction for governmental practice", hence enabling the reproduction and extension of the new doxa of an irreducibly and distinctly political rationality that increasingly renders social reality understandable, governable, knowable, and intelligible. The neoliberal narrowing down of education around a commercial, cost\instrumentalist cooperation of research\expertise, such that publics increasingly perceive "experts" as self-serving opportunists, I suggest generates and generalises an inherent discontent which requires more clamping down, policing, and

shutting up of dissent. Many of these features appear in various degrees at the University of Ghana.

Privatisation and Liberalisation as the De-publicisation of the University

The idea of the entrenched neoliberal marketisation of higher education policymaking and conceptualisation in Ghana perpetuates the privatisation of its values, funding, and governance that suffuses the quotidian aspects of our lives (Springer 2016). By de-publicisation and liberalisation, I mean the extent to which private rather than public interests govern their actions (Oduro and Senadza 2004). Indeed, there are critics who have been extremely troubled by the funding and governance of the University of Ghana, which is increasingly governed as if it was private. This is in fact the exact paradigmatic version that de-publicisation and liberalisation appear to encourage, insofar as they are centred on drastic cut-backs in public\government funding, inexorably promoting the contemporary pervasiveness of the unabashedly neoliberal project in academia and privately funded students. Even though funding at the University of Ghana is largely public (Sawyerr 2004), one could say that it is being increasingly driven into entrepreneurial competition for external funds. This observation can be applied to a number of African universities.

Before the 1990s, higher education in Ghana was free, at least at the public universities (Appiah-Kubi 2003). The neoliberal academy became pervaded with market-like technologies and market rationalities when state funding began to dwindle and infrastructure started to decay. In a desperate attempt to find solutions to problems of accessibility and poor infrastructure, cost sharing between the state and students has become a key feature of university education, where students, viewed as "partners", are called upon to contribute towards building infrastructure and increasing accessibility. It became abundantly clear that the Ghanaian state could not single-handedly continue to bear the increasing cost of higher education; there was thus a need for cost sharing by all stakeholders. In zealous efforts to adhere to the sponsored adjustment policies of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, government expenditure on tertiary education in Ghana has been drastically reduced since the 1990s.

Students who do meet the threshold or entry criteria for admission pay academic facility user fees and residential facility user fees. As far as cost sharing is concerned, the University of Ghana represents a kind of neoliberal monster that is half public, half private, as part of restructuring the university within the cockpit of market rationality and technologies. For the most part, the University of Ghana functions fiscally like a traditional marketplace. The principles of cost sharing in the capitalist university is constituted on the basis of the consumerist principles of "common ownership" and "students as partners": a new type of approach to the academe, which is imagined as an institutionally autonomous and politically insulated realm. With the current neoliberalised state of the University of Ghana, full fees cost recovery is shifted to a

number of entrants who do not meet the standard entry criteria (Effah 2006). In this respect, the University of Ghana allows privately sponsored students to be admitted alongside the traditional government-sponsored students. Within the neoliberal context, higher education is not viewed as public, but rather effectively becomes a social good, which is maximised by regulated market behaviours.

The University of Ghana, through its office of international programmes, encourages the participation of international students through direct enrolment and exchange programmes. Presently, the number of international students is close to 1 500, drawn from over 71 countries. In fact, in this full-cost recovery project, the insidious neoliberalisation of the University of Ghana becomes distinctly manifest when quotas are instituted for foreign students, whose fees are paid in US dollars, in order to rake in more revenue for the university. Surely, the lure of monetary gain has pushed the University of Ghana towards discourses of internationalisation. Even the recently established publicly funded universities, such as the University of Professional Studies (UPSA) and the University of Mines and Technology, charge exorbitant fees compared to the older publicly funded universities, precisely because of inadequate government subvention and irregular disbursement of the subventions. The important point is that the internal policy structure and dynamics of even newly established publicly funded universities reflect how today's neoliberal market university is increasingly legitimised and governed according to market-like terms and practices.

It is instructive that there are some postgraduate programmes at the University of Ghana which are exclusively available at the full fee. For instance, foreign students are charged in US dollars for the postgraduate programmes offered by the School of Communication Studies, the School of Law, and the Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy, as well as the business school's MBA programmes. This is all the more pressing, since full fees cost recovery gravely limits accessibility to higher education and excludes a number of young people, especially those from disadvantaged and poor households, who see university education as a means for social mobility (Addae-Mensah 2000; Akyeampong 2007). The University of Ghana, in offering greater access to lifelong learning to students through distance education and sandwich programmes, summons the ethos of the entrepreneur and unobtrusively segues into a marketplace of ideas. The admission of distance learning students is increasingly motivated by private rather than public interests. Over 20 000 enrolled distance learning students annually are charged cut-throat fees for the survival of the entrepreneurial university.

This approach reflects and increasingly lends credence to the institutional appearance and matrixes of the funding and governance of the University of Ghana, which effectively shows the shifting understandings of liberalisation (transferring the heavy public burden of financing higher education to students). The overall policy paradigm of privatisation as de-publicisation of the university focuses on the complete overhauling of all forms of everyday quotidian life in a way that (re)produces, circulates, incites, and facilitates the process of nurturing neoliberal mechanisms of governing the

economic fates of intellectuals/academics. This obviously points to a grand attempt to reconstruct, reconfigure, create, and enhance the conditions of the neoliberal market within which, metaphorically, the "invisible hand" that Adam Smith described can be expected to do its work (Wallenstein 2013). Somewhat disingenuously and impetuously, those responsible for running the University of Ghana are disillusioned by the extent to which private rather than public interests govern their actions (that is, arguments that had dominated public policy discourse). What is clear is that it is in this concept of a competitive order that a whole new architecture of neoliberal mode of government is framed, which serves to diversify the sources of university funding and reduce the escalating costs of higher education for the state.

The De-democratisation of University Accountability and Governance

The understanding of who should be governing the university and to whom it is accountable has been subverted by the neoliberal marketisation of the university. From a broader perspective, the marketisation of the university, stemming from the neoliberalisation of the academe, has proceeded in such a way that it has displaced the democratic engagement, ideals, and values of a university that is necessarily governed by and for the academic community. Central to this is the recognition of the transfigurations and re-articulations of the process of neoliberal marketisation, which is effectively grounded and embedded within examples of spontaneous mechanisms and self-regulating (Dean 2014). However, in my opinion, an examination of the neoliberalisation of the University of Ghana calls for an understanding of the ongoing internalisation of neoliberal logics, purposefully reconfigured as a fully realised policy regime. The notion of the university as a bastion of democracy has been pushed back by the corporatised and for-profit university. The core values and mission of the University of Ghana have been taken over by corporate governing structures, streamlining internal decision making, and it is the external rather than the internal voices that have the upper hand (Appiagyei-Atua 2015), problematically tending to naturalise the smooth functioning of the market.

The key point being made here is that on university campuses, students are frequently left out of decision-making processes. Governance, accountability, and democratic engagement in university structures and decision-making processes are far from participative and inclusive. Even if students are part of the decision making in a neoliberal university, their voices are not important. The move to integrate traditionally all-male residence halls at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) is a case in point. Instead of university managers facilitating constructive dialogue to resolve differences and chart a peaceful path forward, students' input on real solutions was blatantly ignored, blunted, and subverted. This led to students protesting against the university's management policy and continued institutional injustice. Recently, the Students' Representative Council (SRC) of the University of Ghana put university management on the spot by demanding greater accountability on the four

University of Ghana Enterprise Limited (UGEL) halls involved in hefty debt to the university.

A close examination of the current University of Ghana Act 2010 (ACT 806), which signalled the replacement of the University College of Ghana, reveals that the vice-chancellor shall be selected by the university's governing council. According to this Act, the University of Ghana's council is constituted of 21 members, with five appointed by the president, including the chairperson of the council, who is responsible for strategic direction of the university. These external state appointments are external experts with varied backgrounds, from the academe, the chieftaincy institution, and the judiciary, and they are charged with the responsibility of promoting means of generating income. The risk involved in this is that private interests may exert a disproportionate influence on the university's policy. The centralised nature of decision making in neoliberal universities has given rise to increased bureaucratic professionalisation, which dilutes the power of the academic community to control strategic decisions. I am suggesting that the governance and participation structures of neoliberal universities are top-down, command-and-control governance structures, with increasingly cosmetic processes of academic participation paving the way for the bureaucratisation of university life. Centralised top-down management structures at the University of Ghana have, in many respects, increasingly de-emphasised societal priorities and participatory governance in favour of notions of professionalisation, leaving precarious academics and students with little or no formal power to influence decisions or set agendas. The neoliberal marketisation of higher education has ignited the debate around how the university should be governed. It is significant to recognise that in Ghana the unavoidable inconvenience is the perpetual contestation for centrality and dominance, evident in who has the final say and to whom one is answerable and, more importantly, resulting in contradictory, messy, and conflicting visions of democracy in the academe. This represents a severe indictment of higher education in Ghana.

The Entrepreneurialisation of the Academic Ethos

The ongoing process of omniscient neoliberal market-driven policies provides a wonderful rationalisation of complex policy shifts, which had come to serve as the ideological matrix renewing the markedly neoliberal ideas in the academe. The view of universities as marketplaces of ideas has implications for the unfolding ethos of competition and the culture of entrepreneurialism and individual self-responsibility (Bonefeld 2015; Foucault 2010; Gertenbach 2010, 15; Mirowski 2009). This, I suggest, has provoked a chain of reactions from departments, research institutes, researchers, lecturers, professors, and students who are seen as entrepreneurs of their own successes and failures, according to the logics of the neoliberal market orientation. The perceptible rise of transferring the cost of higher education research to the market economy can be understood in the context of the deepening and devastating economic crisis, which precipitated the structural adjustment experience proselytised by the World Bank and

the International Monetary Fund in Africa in general and in Ghana in particular (Akyeampong 2007; Sawyerr 2004). Within this policy context, there was a series of large public sector restructurings in the 1990s, *à la* Bretton Woods institutions, including drastic reductions in public expenditure, which targeted, amongst others, the higher education sector (Effah 2006). Public sector reforms since the 1990s have therefore focused on a broader set of issues: changes in the internal structure of the public service and economic reforms that seek to purify the relationship between the state and the market and, most importantly, to reconstitute the relationship between government and citizens, usually in the context of remaking the state. These economic developments brought about a drastic change in everyday work at universities and subsequently hampered their capacity to engage in any productive research (Akyeampong 2007).

Part of the university sector restructuring is an increased emphasis on cost sharing for regulating private entrepreneurial conduct in the public sphere of society. As a consequence of this, among other things, tertiary education expenditure as a percentage of total government expenditure declined, from 22.2% to 18.7%, between 1990 and 1994 (Baiden-Amissah 2006). The factors that prompted market rationality in the Ghanaian case were budgetary and monetary constraints on public expenditure and the strong belief in economic rationalism. The underlying rationality of economy is that neoliberal market forces of supply and demand operate for the betterment of a product or service, including the service of education (Adu-Gyamfi, Donkoh, and Addo 2016). As far as entrepreneurial university education is concerned, the role and responsibility of the paternalistic state in providing and governing educational services ought to be replaced by market-like forces. The neoliberal higher education restructuring and the associated discourses of free-market rationality during the mid-1990s introduced a new policy shift in the way universities define and justify their institutional existence. Indeed, it was within this context of neoliberal economic policies, characterised by market-led reforms, that deeply shaped, changed, and transformed the nature of academic work and subjectivities in Ghana's publicly funded universities (Manuh, Gariba, and Budu 2007)—which is to say, it introduced a new mode of regulation and a new organising principle. Under this framing, the role of the paternalistic state is reduced to that of a night watchman, except in terms of providing the regulatory mechanisms within which the market can function efficiently and smoothly.

The entrepreneurialisation of the neoliberal university sees education as a commodity, the quality and outcome of which can be improved through competition. This point is absolutely critical, given that an understanding of the entrepreneurialisation of the academic ethos appreciates and places substantive focus on market rationality. The latter stimulates a range of performance indicators and incentive schemes in the production of suitably responsible subjects, through a series of techniques by partaking in the constitution of their own subjectivity. This, according to Foucault, can appropriately be read as the return of a new form of "homo economicus" or the entrepreneurial subject (Foucault 2010; Brown 2015).

It follows, for me, that the options for agency and autonomy imply an individualised understanding of social bonds, which subsequently repudiates and refabricates alleged social solidarity—social life in this connection becomes individualised in the typical neoliberal logic.

The bottom line is that the neoliberal subject, as a disembodied "homo economicus", is in a precise sense the subject which biopolitics relentlessly seeks to create, individuate, target, control, and reproduce. This is predicated upon the "rolling out" of reconfigured patterns of governance, wherein academics are called upon to take the initiative and excel (and this, indeed, is being played out at the University of Ghana). A crucial implication is that this engenders and reproduces a process of governing the conduct of neoliberal academics, whereby market competition is modelled on the principles of normalisation (Foucault 2010; Springer 2014).

In other words, market rationalities endorse the logic of competition as a socially beneficial model (Adaman and Madra Yahya 2014). The upshot is quite curious. Indeed, the prevailing neoliberal common sense (Harvey 2011; Peck 2010), which has become increasingly manifest at the University of Ghana, is reflected in the way that departments, teaching programmes, and researchers are encouraged to take risks, and this has been instrumental in obliging them to permanently struggle and compete for external funding and recognition. The crux of the matter lies in establishing a community of essentially self-reliant, self-interested, self-propelled academic subjects, whose actions are controlled and coordinated by market competition. In this neoliberal context, the University of Ghana is pressured to change and reform in order to ensure its competitiveness in the higher education market.

For example, promotions to higher academic positions at the University of Ghana are thoroughly and rigorously reviewed, internally as well as externally (University of Ghana 2015). The criteria for promotions at the University of Ghana include the applicant's research, teaching, professional, and extension activities. By contrast, external evaluation and/or assessment for promotion to associate professor and professor at the University of Ghana is greatly prioritised and carries much greater weight than the internal assessment of competence for promotions (University of Ghana 2015). More significantly, true to its neoliberal ways of functioning, at the University of Ghana, the standard of research outputs, for example, are increasingly assessed for promotions to the professoriate by focusing on the amount of external research grants that pressurised academic subjects are able to secure (University of Ghana 2015). External research grants are increasingly valued and accorded great esteem by the university management, because of their economic profitability. This is done at the expense of teaching, which subjectifies academics as researchers rather than teachers. Of course, teaching in absolute terms is pre-eminently the primary and core duty of senior members and a route for promotions (University of Ghana 2015), but in reality, teaching has been devalued, relegated to the back burner, and accorded secondary importance compared with research roles. This shapes what it means to be a successful

academic, which, I believe, contradicts the core values which should guide the academy. Interestingly, the evaluation of high-quality research outputs has become synonymous with capital, as it is valorised in re-defining the University of Ghana as a broad-based research-intensive university by 2024 (University of Ghana 2017). To this end, the university encourages its faculty members to actively engage in cutting-edge research that will enhance the image of the university (University of Ghana 2015). One example of this enterprise of securing "funded research" is the fact that the Office of Research, Innovation and Development (ORID)—which is charged with the responsibility for research and ensuring effective distribution and efficient use of external research funds, congruent with the university's strategic objectives, including business plans and fund-raising strategies—takes approximately 40% of external grants that academic subjects secure (University of Ghana 2017). ORID liaises with the university's strategic partners, relevant industries, and the business community, and also patents and commercialises intellectual property, effectively turning "research" into a revenue-generating operation. In this respect, external research grants have become a terrain for neoliberal market orientation, and the process is increasingly resource-driven, with emphasis on measurable outputs. External research grants have been inconspicuously financialised in the increasingly neoliberal management of academic institutions in contemporary university contexts, where pressurised academic subjects have to compete for external grants in order to gain recognition. Certainly, in the much-touted neoliberal marketisation agenda, the ability to secure external grants via a competitive procedure has become one of the key measurements of performance that increasingly judge academic subjectivities to be excellent and efficient. This represents how the University of Ghana has become suffused with market rationalities and reimagined by market-oriented aspirations in the form of shaping academic subjectivities.

In tandem with the neoliberalisation of academic work, interactions with students by way of teaching have been curtailed as a path of progression (Ntiamoah-Baidu 2010). This implies that free thinking based on ideas that cannot be sold to research financers no longer has value in the marketised neoliberal university. One can harbour the most theoretically profound insights into epistemic formulations, but if such ideas cannot be financed, there is the real likelihood that they will not serve one's purpose of academic progression. This has become characteristic of the University of Ghana, where capitalist academics who are able to secure external research grants are assured of security of employment. Within this highly competitive and self-interested research environment, pedagogical processes of teaching have largely lost their original meaning, as academic subjects increasingly struggle to secure funded research as a means to enhance their positions (University of Ghana 2015). This is worrying, particularly as it disables the capacity for independent, critical teaching and research. Even more fundamentally, neoliberal funding technologies in many ways epitomise the pressure towards marketising higher education. Neoliberal technologies at the University of Ghana—such as "academic auditing", an emphasis on "metrics", "accountability", "measurement", "the new performative criteria/indicators", and "quality assurance

measures"—attempt to scrutinise academic practices, as part of the technologies that increasingly govern academics and their work (University of Ghana 2015). Academics' work is scrutinised, ultimately for the sake of institutional market position and international visibility. It is important to note that the new ideal of academic subjectivity tends to be a reflection of being efficient and scrutinised in the neoliberal university setting.

This, in essence, has contributed to regulating and modulating the university, and has ultimately resulted in its inscription into the mechanisms of the neoliberal political rationality of competition, which are so evidently linked to the politics of neoliberal marketisation. It is suggested here that there is a correlation between neoliberalisation and the viability of investment in education. In this regard, some of the following trends and issues are evident at the University of Ghana: increasing criticism of or attempting to reverse diversity\heterodoxy and increased conformity with commercial considerations (affecting space and freedom, sense of ownership, and therefore self-determination by students, workers, and even faculty in terms of buildings, facilities, spaces and so forth). However, more to the point here is the way in which neoliberal universities focus on securing funding, and on professionalism rather than social responsibility, which skews research and creates pressure for quantitative output (such as lecturers published, student results and so forth). This compromises experimentation, exploration, scope, the spirit of enquiry, and expression, and instead promotes conformity, conservatism, rote, sycophancy, careerism, and so forth, powerfully constraining academics from playing an active part in the global community of scholars. The entrepreneurialisation of the academic ethos has also contributed to a more or less overt "securitisation" of university space, with security guards, controlled or blocked-off access to\in\within\all over campus, factors which appear to be constantly shaping new forms of academic subjects.

The Precariasation of Academic Work

The neoliberalisation of universities has changed the aims of the higher education system. Neoliberal advocacy of the competitive market, research and teaching, and finance has also led to a different material organisation of intellectual labour. In fact, the increasingly dominant neoliberal higher education system is governed through a competitive, supposedly superior market-based incentive framework (Sheppard and Leitner 2010), hence curtailing the community of tenured members, whose academic freedom was hitherto protected and secured. Self-interested advocates of the entrepreneurial university make very pliant and pliable use of the highly mobile intellectual labour force, where booms and busts give immeasurable resonance to and impact upon competitive research, teaching, and finance. In this context, it seems that as a consequence of promoting the superior capacity of the market, the university's unalloyed commitment to academic labour has thoroughly plummeted, retrograded, and plugged into globally circulating economic imperatives (and its existing policy

understandings) in unique ways that lend themselves to contributing to a growing army of precarious intellectuals, susceptible to the market-related and privately controlled realm. The general picture should now be clear: I want to argue that it is only an understanding of the realm of self-ordering ("laissez-faire" non-intervention) which leads us back to the broader question of neoliberalism as a distinctive mode of governing (Crouch 2011).

The In-equalisation of the Academic Community

A neoliberalised academic community—deeply ingrained in market imperatives, logics, and values, rather than a singular, unified, harmonious, and fully actualised policy regime among its faculty and students—unashamedly promotes the logics of inequality, exclusion, the politics of marginalisation, and the race to the bottom in labour standards. To a large extent, the neoliberal academic community, in symbiosis with free-market utopian fantasies, necessarily and/or fully reinforces deep socioeconomic disparities and has unleashed a firestorm of labour-market-regime precarious intellectuals, thus subjecting them to the perpetual struggle for presence (Ankomah et al. 2005). Neoliberalised academic communities with free-market utopian vistas have, for all intents and purposes, limited the potential for adequately redressing existing socioeconomic disparities and reducing inequality or ensuring upward redistribution, by relying on a clear distinction between inside and outside. I maintain that anchored upon the in-equalisation of the academic community is a sustained trajectory of the politics of marginalisation, which has intensified unprecedented, devastating, and deepening inequalities (Lemm and Vatter 2014). Incidentally, the principles for creating an inclusive community of research, as substantive components of education, are undermined by the vision of naturalised market relations analysed in terms of cost-and-benefit approaches in the economic analysis of educational investment, which is intrinsically and originally tied to rational-choice theory in which precarious academics are pressured to become entrepreneurial in order to ensure their competitiveness in a higher education market. And indeed, the overarching objective in this respect is inspired by radical economic individualism, responsibilisation, and self-conduct, based precisely on the understanding that individuals are calculative and calculable **(**Adaman and Madra Yahya 2014).

The fact is that this highlights the ways in which the market model not just governs the economy but is also intimately tied to the government of the individual, in terms of a particular manner of living (Reid 2012). Apparently, what characterises the central conception of the neoliberal market is the emergence of a novel problematisation of rule, and a new form of governance whose organising principle is that of political economy. This perspective thus presupposes the promotion of unfettered marketisation as the foremost causal factor that functions as market sloganeering in the University of Ghana's ubiquitous and diverse policies for attracting and targeting international students. In more recent times, this has taken on increasing importance and complexity,

which is predominantly manifested in transnational and transdisciplinary academic cooperation, mobility, and the discourse of internationalisation in the agenda of the University of Ghana.

The Financialisation of University Funding

With unfettered market forces prescribing the various units of the University of Ghana, individual students too have been urged to view their own education as a valuable investment in their human capital. This position takes its cue from a critique of the treatment of the problem of labour within economic theory through logics of competition, strategic positioning, and as a force which can promote entrepreneurship (Brown 2015). The theoretical stature and transplantation of the human capital theory and manpower development principles have significantly influenced the character and production of education policy within the political economy of the University of Ghana. This indicates how the economic subject is irrevocably excluded and effaced from being human to becoming an economic being. It is claimed that this line of thinking explicitly seeks the radical extension of the economic analysis to previously unexplored economic domains, thus eliding any difference between the economic and the social. To a very large extent, this tendency is prevailingly characterised by an "unlimited generalization" of the market form (Foucault 2010, 243). My point, in other words, is that it turns the idea of the economic rationality of the market into a general "grid of intelligibility" (Foucault 2010, 243), "as well as a principle of decipherment for social relationships and individual behavior" (Oksala 2013, 67), far beyond its ordinary economic context. As such, the market, understood as the grid of intelligibility, makes it possible not only to epistemologically understand human action, but, at the same time, to understand non-economic processes, relations, and the behaviour of a number of formal and intelligible relations. Put very simply, the market has comprehensively generalised the scope of the economy to the extent that social relations and individual behaviour throughout the social body can be discerned by using economic criteria and through economic terms of intelligibility, including relationships that were not conducted, and therefore not usually analysed, through monetary exchanges.

This epitomises the central idea of the University of Ghana, where higher education is not viewed as a public good, but is becoming increasingly resource-driven; funding thus enables the circuits of financialisation based on the diversification of sources of funding and private income mobilisation. Financialisation has allowed for profit to be made by estate developers by constructing hostels (accommodation) dotted around the campus of the University of Ghana. Financialisation leads to students being seen as consumers of housing, an opportunity to extract the maximum amount of profit from them. A very interesting example is that the university, in conjunction with private developers, has constructed student hostels, which has become a kind of real estate, a niche market, a Frankenstein. Neoliberal market universities are now rethought in terms of the logic of

finance, the logic of returns, which results in seeing the various parts of a university as profit centres.

The intense promotion of financialisation and deregulation at the University of Ghana effectively acts to suffocate, or better yet, striates and degrades, labour flexibility. Such asphyxiation is brought to bear under the neoliberal frameworks of economy, governance, affectivity, and subjectivity (Schmidt and Thatcher 2013). It is in this sense of the neoliberal idea of allowing the market to reign supreme that leveraging the University of Ghana is widely recognised as a justifiable system of engaging in risky capital projects without proper democratic control. The operation of an endowments fund for the University of Ghana, it is said, has provided a rationale for gigantic private equity funds. It is my contention that applying a cost–benefit calculus aggressively and exhaustively to labour and human capital allows for the reformatting and reshaping of all problems of social and personal life through the market logic. Clearly then, all aspects of thought and activity that were formerly not seen as such have become the universal model of all social behaviour—or, more precisely, in radically reconstructing and configuring the subject herself into an object of her calculations and choices, regardless of the ubiquitous constraints. In the long run, the University of Ghana has been reduced to financialisation after the model of the global corporation.

The Commodification of Teaching and Research in Ghana

Research and teaching are thoroughly enmeshed with the marketised university, which tends to recast valorised knowledge as goods that are produced, positioned, and consumed (Effah and Mensah-Bonsu 2001; Sawyerr 2004). It must be noted that within this realm, the very idea of research becomes pathologised and denigrated to the extreme. In research assessment, output and valorisation are gaining in importance, parcelled out in greater public financial investment with specified inputs and deliverables. Neoliberal technologies of governance at the University of Ghana are mired in the obscurity of research assessment, where the overarching shifts to research are framed by a pro-market orientation via the commercialisation of knowledge or through commissioned research and development. This is disastrous for the academe, which repeatedly demonstrates itself to be operating not out of concern for collective humanity and social responsibility, but to further the transformative aspirations of global capital in the pursuit of the maximisation of rational individual values (Crouch 2011).

More acutely, marketisation through patents or through commissioned research legitimates itself at the sharp end of policy rationalisations and simply seeks to fashion money-creating abilities, increasingly viewed as a result of the subjectification of universities steeped in the production of the neoliberal governmental regime. It must be conceded that the bid to attract students at home and from abroad has primarily been oriented around teaching programmes which amplify the instrumentalisation of market-

like policies. But equally problematic is the underlying logic of the marketisation of the university, manifested in the shared enthusiasm which calls on students to accept the injunction to view the university as a service provider and, more broadly, education as an investment product, which emphasises the prima facie case for the public economic returns of higher education. This, without doubt, is the governing rationale of the neoliberal project, which has retained, if not augmented, its ideological prominence and practical relevance in our historical present. Under the influence of economic rationality, the value of academic knowledge is exclusively determined by its market use in an important sense. Academic knowledge in many respects becomes an externalised and de-socialised commodity that totalises all forms of life. At the University of Ghana, programmes have been commercialised in pursuit of monetary gain for the survival of the entrepreneurial university. The commodification of teaching and research at the University of Ghana is pre-eminently manifested and enacted through the internationalisation of education. This strongly emphasises the policy of transferring the public costs of higher education to students (Effah and Hoffman 2010). Education, intrinsically, thus becomes a service from which the university must maximise its economic profit. For instance, consider the frequent battles and discontent over fees, pay, money, relations of all sorts and the differential distribution\burdens of costs and benefits, profits\accountability, exclusion, and so forth. These simply multiply, and they are born from the conceptual shift in the interventionist paradigm over the last two decades.

An Uneasy Division of Labour between Research, Teaching, and Management

In a fundamental sense, the entrepreneurial ethos of active governance interventions of the free-market economic programmes (Konings 2016) views research and teaching in line with broader neoliberal market rationalities. Increasingly, in the interest of the excessiveness and the exuberance of the market autonomy, the division of labour between the three roles of the academic is thoroughly inscribed, entrenched, reinforced, and reproduced within global neoliberal power. It ought to be obvious that the threadbare market theology or the gospel of free-market religion emerged as a powerful image that has infiltrated, captured, invaded, and altered the academy into the amorphous component parts of research, teaching, and governing the university (Appiagyei-Atua 2015). To make this point perfectly clear, the hybrid and ambiguous hierarchical power structures between research and teaching have been practically affected by currently dominant neoliberal norms. Markets and market rhetoric (Obamba 2011) rearticulate and are elided through this divide between academics and administrators, and between research and teaching. At the most simple level, the relationships among research, teaching, and governing the university inform and instantiate the market as a precondition for governing policy intervention—as well as what it means to govern (Reid 2012)—thereby undermining the unity between research and teaching.

In my view, markets and market imagery are imagined as an alternative for structuring, guiding, and governing the University of Ghana—too fixated on the ideological drive of neoliberal structures and too keen to allow the conditions and possibilities for naturalised market-based economic solutions, marginalising non-market alternatives better suited to a radical development agenda. Perhaps most conflating of all, however, is that the artifice of the entrepreneurial ethos is always and already entangled or embedded in pitting academics against administrators. Academics, in different ways, favour research (whether by applying for competitive grants, begging for research time, or securing prestigious publications), particularly in relation to teaching and, in many respects, despise departmental services. Neoliberal reason as an entrenched part of academic practices, framed under the banner of the exuberance of market rationality, has tended to disembed research and teaching as administrators/managers appear to be dictating to the marginalised and peripheralised neoliberal academe (Appiagyei-Atua, Beiter, and Karran 2015).

The Corporatisation of University Governance, Research, and Teaching

Strictly speaking, contemporary neoliberal academic life more easily falls prey to usurpation by corporate interests and other external economic forces, having submitted to market rationality (Chandler and Reid 2016). The increasingly corporatised space of the university forms the backdrop to the commodification of knowledge. Within the global neoliberal environment, higher education institutions have been encouraged to develop links with industry and business in a series of new venture partnerships. The poor state of the current neoliberal academe is closely aligned with powerful economic interests and the growing prioritisation of the integrated policy perspective to higher education funding in the contemporary university development policy landscape and discourse (Salmi, Hopper, and Basset 2010). The University of Ghana is experiencing greater difficulties in maintaining its independence and values, and its internal coherence and capacity to reorganise have therefore become the carriers of the interests of large corporations (external bodies) revolving around the sizeable rise of research funding and competition (Akyeampong 2010). The governing council, as a strategic and change "agent", runs the University of Ghana as a corporation, according to formulae, incentives, targets, and plans. Neoliberal corporatisation and the rise of new property structures at the University of Ghana—such as intellectual property, relations with industry, and the partial breakdown of traditional disciplinary structures in the creation of schools (rather than departments) for teaching purposes—doubtlessly point to an emphasis on market processes and quantifiable output measures.

Neoliberal funding technologies have inserted the University of Ghana into the private sector, which is reflected in but also increasingly reinforced by research partnerships with industry. Thus, the University of Ghana has been turned into a hybrid and complex neoliberal monster with unprecedented reconfiguration patterns, organisation, political dynamics, partnership discourse, and impacts on the heightened demand for

development cooperation. Anchored in this new broad reconfiguration, the neoliberal university emphasises a remarkable, radical shift from its so-called lone-ranger approach and recognition of the substantial harmonisation, mobilisation, and growing centrality of multilevel partnership approach to the university education policy landscape and funding in a rapidly changing global environment (World Bank 2011).

More importantly, the multi-stakeholder approach to university education investment and policymaking explicitly obfuscates the boundaries between the public and the private. The new fundamental emphasis is undoubtedly built on the premise of formal/informal asymmetry (Schmidt and Thatcher 2013). The traditional occupations of research and teaching have lost a large part of their original meanings. The corporatisation of university governance has deconstructed and changed the way we think about research, teaching programmes, how to fund, and what good research is all about. In fact, competitive market thinking has inspired a myriad ways of governing the neoliberal university whereby its meaning and modes of operation have been deconstructed. In conjunction with neoliberal policies, MBA programmes and postgraduate studies at the University of Ghana have become "cash cows". MBA programmes have rapidly multiplied, with the claim that the high cost of tuition would be more than offset by future earnings. In a corporatised university, courses and programmes are designed to reflect new market order/needs or preferences.

Conclusion: Imagining the "New University"—What Is to Be Done?

This article set out to analyse the market-like practices, technologies, and rationalities that have shaped the contemporary education priorities, approach, and development policy landscape at the University of Ghana. The article has shown that neoliberal governing practices, together with market rationalities, have produced a new neoliberal university that is neither public nor private and that lacks democratic ideals and values. In particular, the article suggests that the active and interventionist framing of neoliberalism has facilitated regulatory governing agendas which are at the heart of the rise of the neoliberalisation of universities. The point is that the neoliberalisation of universities has been shaped by economic and market-oriented aspirations, as highlighted by Foucault (2010) in his prescient analysis of the key essence of the neoliberal shift in the mode of government.

I am not in any way suggesting that the University of Ghana is not wilfully complicit in incorporating the governing rationality of the market. The fact, nonetheless, is that the structural conditions and bottlenecks remain that of state-led neoliberalisation. This article has illuminated some significant transformations that have indirectly relegated the University of Ghana to the marketplace, which follows from a specifically and distinctively Ghanaian variety of neoliberalism. One illustration is how market-like technologies and rationalities (Dean 2014) have pervaded the current neoliberalised state of academe to replace interventionist techniques. The significance of this

rethinking resides in the fact that the ideal of the university has been thoroughly deconstructed and remade in market terms, using market-like technologies or rationalities. Unlike those who have epistemologically interpreted the "economic rates of return" approach and manpower planning paradigms for university education as economics imperialism, I think that the most dramatic consequence of this de-essentialising and denaturalising notion of the market is not primarily epistemological, but quintessentially governmental. It is thus my submission that if we want to understand the specific forms that the extended application of the market thinking framework takes in contemporary universities, then we need a careful analysis of the new ways in which neoliberal deconstructions show how the social world is governed and becomes governable. The importance of such an analysis, I claim, questions the significant policy shift in the relation between the market and how it rearticulates, reinstalls, and re-assembles our governmentalities, as already observed above.

The article has presented the presumed power of the market logic as lying precisely in the fact that it explicitly presents a concurrential mechanism but, more broadly, a rationality of governing through which state-led neoliberalisation can be rationalised (Cotoi 2011). But perhaps, to fully appreciate the theoretical implications of the neoliberalisation of the academe and to ascertain why it has become so attractive and appealing, it may be instructive to explore how the image of the market has increasingly manifested itself within a highly mobile set of market technologies and rationalities. The Ghanaian case shows how, in fact, ideological trends and a state-led version of neoliberalism have emerged to articulate the revitalisation mission of marketisation, framing these as reproductions of embedded neoliberalism rather than as an anti-statist project in the development and policy landscape of Ghana. As indicated earlier, although similar neoliberal technologies are at stake, the exact shape of the neoliberalisation of the academy tends to be determined by local conditions. The point is that there are various degrees of neoliberalisation at universities worldwide.

The distinctiveness of this article resides precisely in the specificity of the Ghanaian context and its variety of neoliberalism. The narratives of hybridised neoliberalism, particularly over the past two decades, appear to be countered by a commingling with existing parasitical institutions such as the state or the university. This transformation articulates the problematic of destabilising and disentangling current market thought in terms of a continuous rethinking of the university (Read 2009). The neoliberal academe has been altered and undermined beyond recognition by neoliberal market-talk and technologies, to the extent that academics are ultimately responsible for their own successes and failures—in essence, their capacity to adapt to the neoliberal market-based order and market thinking. As opposed to the "lack of ready alternatives nonsense" (a prerequisite in Ghanaian politics in trying to formulate an answer to neoliberalism), what the new neoliberal university desperately needs to do is to deconstruct its deconstructions, in part inspired by preordained new imaginaries, and as a matter of urgency inaugurate a post-neoliberal university by reconsidering, rethinking,

and offering a renouncing counterpoint to neoliberal practices and technologies. In this way, we may ultimately help to repudiate neoliberalism for good, without any polemics.

There is no straightforward way back to the golden age of higher education in Ghana. Of course, I admit that the subject of the creeping neoliberalisation of the University of Ghana is politically sensitive, unpleasant, and uncomfortable, and that there are no readymade and concrete solutions. I agree that, at least, it will stay with us in the interim as a "zombie neoliberalism" that aimlessly roams around in a dead body (Peck 2010). In looking into the potential future(s) and alternative approaches to university education in Ghana, I pose the following fundamental question which, in my view, requires an urgent answer: What are universities for and what should universities be? My alternative approach to university education in Ghana is that universities, as institutions charged with the important task of producing new knowledge, should be seen to lead the way towards something better, rather than naively mimicking already outdated, stale, narcissistic, and profit-oriented forms of corporate organisation. My diagnosis is that in order to disentangle, dismantle, and destabilise market thinking and the dominant neoliberal norms which have thoroughly corrupted the soul of university education in Ghana, there is a need for precarious individual academics, non-academic workers, and students to maintain and foster forms of alliances and understand the commonality of the struggle against the market-based approach. Clearly, a sustained alliance against sour neoliberal reforms at the University of Ghana has the radical potential of ensuring the ideal of quality, affordable higher education.

Knowledge production, quite simply, cannot and should not be reducible to market forces, a goal to which I wholeheartedly subscribe. It is misguided to reduce knowledge to market forces. The Ghanaian academic community, I insist, should stubbornly resist neoliberal attempts to reduce knowledge production to economistic accounts and rather appropriate the idea of the social relevance of knowledge production. I propose the very idea of the New University—that is, a university within the university, a kind of a parallel university. This framework conceptually allows us to forge new solidarity, rethink, recalibrate, and restructure social relationships of common knowledge and the collective right to higher education in Ghana when dealing with neoliberal zombies in our midst. This, in my view, is an intervention in and of *itself* and has the capacity to spark our political imaginations. And so, in the tedious struggle of building the University of Ghana anew, we should eagerly create the means and space for our political imaginaries to manifest themselves in a collective and shared presence: an entirely different way of re-orienting our thinking about the neoliberalisation of the academe, our ability to imagine new forms of life and generate new forms of being. We can only act upon this future in the present if we learn to imagine different futures and world our world differently.

And, in fact, the most direct way of cancelling, rooting out, and changing neoliberal practices at the University of Ghana is to engage them in our everyday practices, our classrooms, grant proposals, referee reports, academic associations, and our research, as

well as in departmental meetings, in hiring committees, on examinations boards, and in our degree programmes. We need to start practising, and we need to start now. The current moment of the dominant discourses of the neoliberal university's top-down, command-and-control modes of governance, based on distrust, should immediately give way to critical and emancipatory contributions so that we can move beyond the complex labyrinth of neoliberal university strictures. Here lies the rub: we should not supinely surrender higher educational services to the market forces and rationalities which ominously portend a transfer from public monopoly to private monopoly. But, above all, researchers, students, and critical academics should fight with renewed intensity against the nightmare of the commodification of knowledge, which has become thoroughly entrenched in neoliberal universities.

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