

Academic identities and team management: mission impossible?

Identidades académicas y gestión de equipos: ¿misión imposible?

Roberto Di Napoli

r.dinapoli@gold.ac.uk

Goldsmiths College, University of London

Resumen:

El artículo presenta una reflexión sobre las posibles relaciones entre las identidades académicas y la gestión de equipo. Más que negar la importancia relativa de la gestión, se argumenta que sólo adoptando prácticas que tengan en cuenta las identidades académicas será posible llegar a una noción novedosa de la universidad como resultado de una construcción dialógica real entre las distintas partes, (académicos, directivos, administradores, líderes, estudiantes, etc.) que esté apuntalada por un conjunto de significados e intenciones compartidas.

Palabras clave:

Identidad académica, gestión académica, gestión universitaria.

Abstract:

This article is a reflection on the possible relationships between academic identities and team management. Rather than negating the relative importance of management, it is argued that only by adopting practices that are mindful of academic identities can one attempt to arrive at a novel notion of the idea of the university that is the result of a real dialogic co-construction among different parties (academics, managers, administrators, leaders, students etc) which is underpinned by a set of shared meanings and intentions.

Key Words:

Academic identity, academic management, university management

When science moves faster than moral understanding, as it does today, men and women struggle to articulate their unease. In liberal societies, they reach first for the language of autonomy, fairness and individual rights.

(Sandel, 2007: p9)

In *Misión de la Universidad* (1930/2007), Ortega y Gasset made the important point that many attempts at improving things, however moved by good intentions, do not achieve their ultimate aim: the existence of a being in its fullness, that is to say a being that is embedded in its own truth and authenticity. The reason for this is that the aim is often thwarted by arbitrary wishes and misguided action.

Ortega y Gasset's words are resounding in today's higher education world and are supported by much of the literature on academic identities. This reports a loss felt by many academics in terms of the very essence of their being and role in today's

universities in the face of a growing number of reforms that aim at re-framing the nature and scope of what academia ultimately is. Friction exists between the traditional notion of academic freedom, conceived as the autonomous and self-generated ability enjoyed by academics to define their own role, in their pursuit of disinterested knowledge, and more recent trends in which academic work is increasingly being defined by business, industry and market forces which, through government initiatives, put an emphasis on knowledge for use (Gibbons et al, 1994) and audit cultures (Strathern, 2000) in university life. Audit cultures, by giving prominence to a managerialist ethos, have been quantifying and technologising the spirit of academic life by framing it within flattening discourses of 'quality' and 'excellence'.

A significant amount of the literature on academic identities reports on the traditional notion of what an academic is being progressively eroded. This is a matter of ontological proportions. The 'truth' and 'authenticity' (to use Ortega y Gasset's words) of the traditional university project, which is incarnated in the love for the discipline, scholarship, research and teaching (Henkel, 2000), is being muddled by market and business forces. The push is for a productivity model which, growingly, pursues quantifiable efficiency and profit, often at the expense of human motivation, engagement and sense of worth.

In the light of these reflections, it is legitimate to ask oneself whether there is still space for academics' self definition and sense of agency in (re-) defining the nature, aims and scope of the university. Is there a difference between (good) intentions and (bad) practices, behind the current managerialist ethos? Is there a way of thinking creatively about the relationship between management and academia that can bring about a more fruitful and less acrimonious relationship between them? Is there space for fresher ways of looking at the university as a place in which its different constituencies dialogue with each other for a common, higher good? Can the literature and research on academic identities help us in this task and how? These are some of the questions that this paper will attempt to answer.

This article is a reflection on the possible relationships between academic identities and team management that is firmly based on the author's professional positioning within an experience of the English higher education system. Starting with a review of the notion of academic identities, within a conceptual framework borrowed by Castoriadis, with its emphasis on the dichotomy between interpretive and instrumental reason, the paper will consider the nature and scope of the changes affecting academia today, under the impact of market and business forces. It will subsequently move on to a discussion of how some lessons learnt from the scholarship of academic identities can help thinking about a type of team management which is 'middle across', that is at the borders between top down and bottom up initiatives.

Rather than negating the relative importance of management, I argue that this needs to be informed by practices that are mindful of academic identities, that is the delicate but all-important role of academics' personal beliefs and values in perceiving and carrying out their work. I argue that only by adopting such informed practices can one attempt to

arrive at a novel notion of the idea of the university that is the result of a real dialogic co-construction among different parties (academics, managers, administrators, leaders, students etc) which is underpinned by a set of shared meanings and intentions.

Academic identities: a story of the contemporary world

The French philosopher and sociologist Castoriadis (1975/1999) conceives of social life as revolving around two major forms of signification: *legein* and *tukein*. The former is linked to the idea of making sense of ourselves and the world in which we live through thinking, interpretation, reflection and communication; *legein* is dependent on the weaving and interweaving of meanings human beings practice in order to understand themselves and their surroundings, thus putting order in an otherwise chaotic existence. As such, it heavily relies on human relationships and favours interpretation. It ultimately represents the sense making *logos*.

The force of *legein* was most significant in traditional societies when individuals could easily position themselves in fairly structured and predictable social orders where they could make sense, without difficulty, of their place and role in life. With modernity, *legein* has progressively lost its force, under the impact of the modernist and liberal project. With temporal and spatial displacements becoming significantly the norm, individuals have become increasingly 'freer' from traditional bonds and have been 'empowered' to 'create' their own life project, independent from the chains of tradition and in line with new globalising trends. Technology has been instrumental in this. As Baumann (2000) has observed, liquidity has supplanted solidity in social relationships, giving us much more freedom but also disconnecting us from local contexts, thus making our understanding of the world so much more volatile and complex.

The second form of signification, *tukein*, is closely related to the idea of our acting and impacting on the world, both physical and social, in order to overcome difficulties and solve new problems. It incarnates the instrumental *logos* that is at the heart of the modernist project of controlling things and people. However, acting requires power: we act only when we are in position to do so. In this sense, the idea of *tukein* is firmly embedded within power relations, as it defines the limits of our actions within given contexts. Technology, understood as the structuring and rationalizing forces of social life, is the utmost incarnation of *tukein*, as it provides us with the tools and infrastructures to control our world. Through laws, policies, bureaucracy, audit systems and management, technology regulates and defines the legitimacy of certain interpretive frameworks in society over others, thus empowering or disempowering certain individuals in their actions. Technology today provides the guiding framework for most of our thoughts and deeds.

For Castoriadis, modernity can be seen as the complex, dynamic interaction between *legein* and *tukein*. While individuals have increasingly been given the freedom to make and mark their own world by cutting traditional ties from groups like the church, the family and the national state, thus becoming sovereign by and of themselves (Taylor, 1992), the progressive decrease in localised collective sense making (*legein*) has left

much space to the exponential growth of *tukein*, those formalised and technology-based relationships (think of the Internet) that have become the defining mark of our personal and professional lives (Magatti, 2009). We live in a constant paradox: becoming freer to 'be' and 'connect' as and with whom we want, while, at the same time, our lives are being increasingly dominated by *tukein*. Instrumental reason has been filling in the spaces once occupied by the interpretive one, within ever increasingly compressed time frameworks which narrow the horizons for reflection and interpretation in the pursuit of fast action (Virilio, 2009). Today, *tukein* provides the universal language that binds us together through rational rules and technical means that mark and guide our daily existence at a growingly fast pace, while de-voiding it of any real community sense. Time and space compression and intensity, have come to rule over depth and reflection (Aubert, 2003). The net result of this has led, as Block (2008, p1) puts it, to a situation in which... *the absence of sense of belonging is so widespread that we might say we are living in an age of isolation...*

Academic identities tell us of the evolution in the relationship between *legein* and *tukein* within the higher education sector; they inform us of the tensions between interpretive and instrumental reason that span and traverse it. The interplay between *legein* and *tukein* is at the basis of the narrative that characterises the literature on academic identities. These are 'snapshots' academics give of themselves and their work, through the lenses of their own value and belief systems, and their personal historical trajectory. They are dynamic in nature as they are constantly constructed and de-constructed, according to the evolving circumstances within which academics find themselves. As such, academic identities tell us about the state and status of higher education from localised and situated standpoints; they allow us the opportunity to understand what is happening in the sector at grass roots level (Barnett and Di Napoli, 2008).

It is interesting to note that the literature on academic identities has increased exponentially over the last twenty years or so. In the Anglo-Saxon world, the works by Evans (1988 and 1993), Martin (1999), Taylor (1999), Henkel (2000) and Barnett and Di Napoli (2008) are just very few examples. The explosion of such a literature can be interpreted as the necessity of making sense of the fast changes traversing the higher education sector today, through the voices and interpretations academics, in different institutions and disciplinary domains, give of them. In a sense, the growing literature on academic identities reveals the need to revive the force of *legein* in a world that negates it; it is symptomatic of the need to make sense of academia at times of fast and steadfast changes, as ignited by the spreading force of *tukein*.

Among these changes, it is worth mentioning, first of all, the marketisation of the higher education sector, as the result of state funding becoming increasingly less, thus pushing universities to look for other financial sources by embracing a business ethos; the consequent birth of 'quality' and audit regimes that have made administrative and managerial practices increasingly central in academic life; the massification and diversification of the sector which has been opened up to serve a wide variety of students in terms of ethnicity, age and gender; the relative increased focus on teaching (in relation to research) in order to meet the learning needs of a growing student population; and,

finally, internationalisation, that is to say the growth of links among universities beyond institutional and national borders, partly as a result of market forces and through the support of technologies, which have made knowledge, student and staff flows more fluid, intense and frequent than ever in the past (Coffield and Williamson, 1997).

None of these changes are necessarily 'good' or 'bad' *per se*. Today, the higher education sector is traversed by a number of paradoxes. For instance, massification, while often creating problems in terms of resources, has meant access to higher education by groups of people that were once barred from it. Similarly, teaching has been attracting more attention in the higher education sector, even if mandatory forms of training may sometimes dampen the potential interest that some academics may have for it. More significantly, the rise of quality discourses have alerted academics to the conscious need to be accountable to society for their work; however, the audit systems which have been put in place, inspired as they are by a calculative and calculating business ethos, have flattened the very notions of 'quality' and 'excellence' by making them describable in terms of norms and standards, rather than making them a constant aspiration to be contextually interpreted and realised (Aubert and De Gaulejac, 1991/2007)

Such trends have often led to the significant growth of administrative and management practices that have infiltrated university life over the past three decades or so to an extent that has changed the nature and scope of higher education. Audit practices aim at producing a large number of standards and criteria of efficiency and effectiveness through which every aspect of academic life is scrutinised by a growing number of administrators. It is arguable that their power in defining academic life has developed to the detriment of academics' own judgement. These are obliged to simulate conformity to objectives that are usually hetero-produced and measured (besides being unrealistic) that cancel out of the process useful debates about change and innovation that may come from within academia. The result has been a depletion of the sense of academic community.

This signals the victory of *tukein* over *legein* in university life, the triumph of instrumental over interpretive reason. This has brought to fragmentation and the lack of real communication and dialogue among different constituencies – particularly between academics, on the one hand, and managers and administrators, on the other - in many higher education institutions. This trend is fully in line with general changes in a number of sectors of business and financial world where such practices and ethos were generated in the first instance to subsequently infiltrate the public sector at large (de Gulejac, 2005/2009). The good intention of making academics consciously aware of their duties towards society, thus avoiding some of the excesses of the 'ivory tower' syndrome, has been transformed into a weberian bureaucratic cage that may stifle creativity and encourage conformity. The value of what may have been good intentions is being lost; ideas and aspirations are being suffocated under the burden of productivity and efficiency audits relating to teaching, research, administration etc (Readings, 1997).

Taken cumulatively, such changes have had important repercussions on the way in which academics see themselves, their roles and their work. The vague notion of academic freedom which still governs, to an extent, the thinking and practice of higher education,

and around which, traditionally, academic identities have been firmly built, has been progressively eroded to make space for the emergence of a new academic professionalisation based on a host of business-related criteria that emphasize urgency and efficiency (Nixon, 2008).

The time and space coordinates of academic life have been shifting dramatically. Today, academics are increasingly being judged and evaluated by criteria often set by external agencies (like, in England, the Quality Assurance Agency and the Higher Education Funding Council, for example). These criteria determine their professional value and sense of worth. While this has been heralded as the dawn of professionalisation of academic life, there is, in fact, a sense of loss, among academics, of their own ability to define their own roles and value. Box filling and ticking has been substituting, to a large extent, collegiality. For this reason, rather than 'professionalisation', some academics talk of 'de-professionalisation' of academic life (Di Napoli, 2003).

For academics, the net result has often been a sense of dispossession, disorientation and fragmentation in terms of their own traditional project of serving research, teaching and the discipline. This is recorded by the literature on academic identities. The challenge is therefore whether there is a way of conjugating management with some of the virtues and values that, traditionally, academic life has represented, like criticality and reflection. Can the notion of academic identities help in this task? Or is such a task indeed impossible?

What kind of team management?

Historical shifts relating to the number of students going to university, as well as other concurrent phenomena like the quantity and quality of flows of information across the globe, the specialization of knowledge into new domains that are often informed by principles of professionalization and usability, and the consequent changes in university practices, have meant a re-adjustment of academic life around team work a necessity. In order to rationalise their increasing workload and responsibilities, academics have been called to form specific teams that deal with different aspects of academic practice, i.e. research, learning and teaching, administration, consultancy etc. This has meant an uprooting of academics from the departments (at least for some of their duties) into wider arenas that are theme and task based in order to address specific activities of institutional life.

While, on the one hand, this has had the positive effect of bringing academics from different disciplinary areas into contact, it has also meant a fragmentation of their sense of belonging, once based on their discipline and department. This sense of fragmentation of academic identities is made more acute, at times, by the bureaucratic and administrative ethos regulating teamwork, through forms of top-down management encouraged by a compliance, on the part of universities, with the business and market ethos imposed by governments. I wish to argue that the infiltration of the force of *tukein* into academic life detracts from current changes their possible positive aspects, thus damaging the tissue of academic life altogether. Academics are finding increasingly difficult to understand how the different parts of their professional life fit together around a university project that is hetero directed.

My proposal is not about condemning management *per se*, as some of it is necessary for the functioning of institutions. Sensible management and administration, and a healthy dose of business thinking are not negative in themselves but become pernicious when they are applied in blind ways that do not take into account the human and social costs of certain courses of action, like de-motivation, a decrease in creativity and the loss of collegiality.

Professor David Chiddick, retiring vice-chancellor of the University of Lincoln, has recently stated in an article for the *Times Higher Education* (2009) *...universities do not need... brutal encouragement to work closely with business. For most, it is already written in their DNA to achieve higher levels of graduate employment, develop curriculums with professional recognition, obtain leverage in research and consultancy contracts, or quite simply to attract students.* What is needed, Chiddick states later in the article, is a renewed debate about the very 'idea of the university'. What he reminds us of is that universities and academics are, in and for themselves, loci of intelligent thinking and action; they are fully capable of thinking creatively about their engagement with society at large, without having to be constricted by some blind business-inspired rules that often generate unhelpful knee-jerk initiatives. Debates which are nourished by time to reflect and interpret are necessary to redefine the ethos and rules of the university to give it some of its critical autonomy back, without suffocating useful links with business and industry that can contribute to a possible fair amelioration of society at large.

Ultimately, there is a need to re-construct the symbolic order of academic life. This exercise should be informed by the kind of critical and probing thinking that is typical of academia. What is being called for is not the return to an improbable 'golden age' of ivory towers (if it was ever 'golden', in any case, with its elitism and often unfair hierarchical order); the aim is to arrive at a type of enquiring university (Rowland, 2006) that puts at its centre civic reflection and critical interpretation of socio-economic and ideological trends. This is ultimately a call for the force of *legein* to achieve a more balanced relationship with *tukein*.

In their dealings with academic teams, managers often complain about the difficulty of managing academics. This is not surprising, given that the intimate nature of academic life is criticality. As much of the literature on higher education and academic identities tells us, the problem with the current business-dominated model is that it takes this criticality out of academic life and substitutes it with quantitative evaluative standards and practices borrowed from business. The result may often be acrimonious and despondent attitudes among academics: these are people who have made thinking, interpretation and love for debate the centre of their personal and professional existence and therefore rebel against practices that may flatten criticality, creativity and agency in the name of conformity. Academics, like anybody else, for that matter, need to give meaning to their work by injecting it with their own beliefs and values about the essence and practice of university life. Academic life is not just about epistemology, management or administration: it is an ontological project (Dall'Alba and Barnacle, 2007), as it involves people, their professional and personal value, and, ultimately, their sense of

worth. And the beauty of academic life is, first and foremost, in its variation that escapes conformity.

Giving academics a real right to debate and dissent is not and should not be tantamount to giving them the right to defend the old, privileged *status quo*; rather, it means allowing them the space and time for critical debate, interpretation and reflection out of which compliance and/or resistance can ensue, as it is normal in any truly democratic exercise (Rowland, 2006). Importantly, though, debate should not simply focus on how to operationalise governments' directives but should concentrate on debates about the very nature of the norms and ethos that underpin university life, within the context of our evolving social systems.

Arguably, a critical and informed edge to society's dynamics and evolution is the most valuable contribution academics can bring to the world. As I say, criticality is in the essence of academic work. This might, at times, materialise itself in a refusal to comply. If such a refusal is based on reasoned arguments and evidence, it should be totally acceptable to powers-to-be. This also means recognizing that the real value of the academic profession resides in its love for and interest in learning, teaching and research (however much in different combinations and degrees of commitment). Matters pertaining to the essence of these domains should fully involve both students and teachers, first and foremost. Their insights should be most valued and, whenever possible, taken into consideration for action, before anybody else's.

I believe there is a need for changing the angle of management, from being solely the quantitative administration of people and resources, which it is at present, to a qualitative organisation of ideas and debates. Bearing this in mind, pragmatically, such ideas might translate themselves into a thinking framework for team management:

- first of all, it is important to understand what really makes academic communities tick within specific institutional contexts (Bamber et Al, 2009). This implies understanding of and respect for academics' values, beliefs, needs and expectations is paramount for (re-) creating a sense of community that works as harmoniously as possible for the good of the institutions and society at large. Managers should make their first and foremost task to know, as intimately as possible, the academic environments in which they operate by engaging with the human beings that make them. The idea is to support academics rather than interfere with them in the nightmarish rush to comply with governmental initiatives. Senge (1990/2006) reminds us that the best businesses operate through a strong sense of a shared vision and this can be only be achieved through a careful, sympathetic 'study' of those contexts in which managers operate. Consensus should be built through knowledge and dialogue, as far as possible, in order to help academics make sense, in positive ways, of changes in academia. Not doing this can only achieve the negative result of reinforcing the sense of fragmentation many academics feel in their professional life which often results in reactive despondency and un-cooperative behaviours;

- it is necessary to (re-) create and facilitate an atmosphere of trust among all parties (academics, students, managers, administrators etc) by opening up channels of

communications. This means facilitating the flow of narrative within and among different groups, in a truly harbermassian spirit (2007). It is a form of middle-across management that takes into account both bottom-up and top-down reasoning. The role of the manager would be that of *managing debates* and framing answers that meet with the approval of the majority within an institutional community. As Mintzberg (2009) puts it: *...The way to start rebuilding community is to stop the practices that undermine it, such as treating human beings as human resources... the organization has to shed much of its individualist behaviour and many of its short-term measures in favor of practices that promote trust, engagement, and spontaneous collaboration aimed at sustainability...;*

- as a corollary to this, it is paramount to make the time dimension more flexible to accommodate real critical debates. Far too often, academic resistance may not simply be the result of a-critical despondency but may indeed depend on a real lack of understanding of a given debate and of the roles and *intentions* of those taking part in it. Managers should make sure that time frames are wide enough to accommodate reflection and interpretation, without always expecting immediate results to emerge. There is a substantial difference between management time and reflective time that must be always borne in mind. Process is often more important than certain results that, in the long run, can generate more problems than they solve. This may look like the long road to unravelling issues but is one that is animated by true dialogic and democratic principles (Nye, 2008). Democracy is a laborious and difficult process for arriving at some consensus and should be defended exactly because of its complexity, rather than being sidelined as an obstacle to immediate and profitable outcomes. Choosing the short route may bring immediate results and soothe any power-to-be, but may also, eventually, generate high levels of dissatisfaction and de-motivation that can, eventually, only disadvantage a project;

- the encouragement of critical compliance should go hand in hand with an acceptance of critical resistance. Any team manager should bank on dissent as a positive asset, without, however, condoning it at all costs, when this is used in a sterile, defensive fashion. On their part, academics have a duty to understand their managers and the governmental pressures under which these are. A spirit of critical co-operation is required, however, that should not be read as blind compliance. Dissent can in fact be productive, as it can bring, within itself, the germs of different perspectives on a given issue that may indeed contribute to find a better solution (Benasayag and Del Rey, 2006). The problem with many superficial business-based management models is that they advocate a kind of transparency that eliminates uncertainty and, indirectly, creativity. The result of this may be the pernicious sidelining of creative solutions in favour of misguided quick fixes. Managers need to listen to and learn from people, rather than talking at them about things to be done in the dubious name of 'quality' and 'excellence', as conceived by governments and business.

This thinking framework might indeed seem, to some readers, unpractical or only marginally helpful for its generality and difficulty in terms of implementation, as it requires time, space, patience and trust, all increasingly rare things in university life today. I make no apologies for this, as there is no practical solution that fits all contexts.

Moreover, giving precise advice would go against the very spirit of this paper, which is exactly that of arguing against one-for-all, fast solutions as inspired by the *tukein* ethos. A wider framework may be more flexibly adapted to different circumstances. It is our thinking that needs changing, not just a series of behaviours.

However, the framework proposed cannot be realised, if it is not underpinned by courageous and generous leadership. What is required is a form of leadership that is agentic (and not just reactive) in relation to governments, business and industry, when it comes to fulfilling a higher education project that is inspired not just by economic efficiency but, as importantly, by civic responsibility. This is the nature of what Nixon (2008) calls *civic leadership*, one that has firm ethical foundations and places the university at the heart of the debates occurring within a democratic society.

There is indeed a need for a leadership that does not just re-act, passively, to governmental directives, but encourages a firm critique of these within and among universities, and throughout society at large, defending, in the process, those values of enquiry, doubt and fairness that have traditionally been at the heart of university life. This is essential for the survival of the spirit of the university as a critical agent in our world. As Chiddick says in the same article quoted above (p.25): *...As vice-chancellors we have been seduced into trading our independence for short-term and divisive funding pots*. It is time to claim that independence back.

In an interview published in Issue 174 (July 2009, p5) of *Staff Hallmark*, the internal magazine of Goldsmiths College, at the vigil of the election of a new warden, a member of staff wishes for somebody who *...puts himself about a bit*, somebody who is as communicative as the current warden is. But, even more poignantly and importantly, the Students' Union President, Jesse Fajemisin, quoting an Oxford professor, says that there is a need for wardens who speak for universities to government and not ones who speak for government to universities. His wish is therefore for somebody who is *willing to challenge government proposals*, when appropriate. What both interviewees are ultimately advocating is a return to the force of *legein* over *tukein* in higher education, in the pursuit of a university that is fully informed by debate and is not afraid of voicing dissent. This requires a management model that is underpinned by a type of leadership that favours critical action over uncritical reaction (Knights and McCabe, 2003). Ultimately, this is what is needed to transform change into innovation, thus giving the university a fresh opportunity to realise its own authenticity.

Artículo concluido el 2 de Noviembre de 2009

Di Napoli, R. (2009). Academic identities and team management: mission impossible?. Red U. Revista de Docencia Universitaria, Número 4. Consultado (día/mes/año) en http://www.redu.um.es/Red_U/4

REFERENCES

- Aubert, N. (2003). *La culture de l'urgence: la société malade du temps*. Paris: Flammarion.
- Aubert, N. and De Gaulejac, V. (1991/2007). *Le coût de l'excellence*. Paris: Seuil.
- Bamber, V. et Al. (eds) (2009). *Enhancing Learning, Teaching, Assessment and Curriculum in Higher Education*. Maidenhead: SRHE and Open University Press.
- Bauman, Z. (2000). *Liquid Modernity*. London: Polity Press.
- Benasayag, M. and Del Rey, A. (2008). *Elogio del conflitto*. Milano: Feltrinelli.
- Barnett, R. and Di Napoli, R. (2008). *Changing Identities in Higher Education: Voicing Perspectives*. London: Routledge.
- Block, P. (2008). *Community: The Structure of Belonging*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
- Castoriadis, C. (1975/1999). *L' institution imaginaire de la société*. Paris: Seuil.
- Chiddick, D. 'Short term goals will damage our long-term health and strength'. *Times Higher Education*, No, 1,909, 13-19 August 2009 (pp24-25).
- Coffield, F. and Williamson, B. (eds). *Repositioning Higher Education*. Buckingham: SRHE and Open University Press.
- Dall'Alba, G. and Barnacle, R. 'An ontological turn for higher education'. *Studies in Higher Education*, Volume 32, Issue 6, December 2007 (pp679 – 691).
- De Gaulejac, V. (2005/2009). *La société malade de la gestion: idéologie gestionnaire, pouvoir managérial et harcèlement social*. Paris: Editions du Seuil.
- Di Napoli, R. (2003). *Modern Languages: Which Identities? Which Selves?* Institute of Education, University of London (unpublished doctoral thesis).
- Evans, C. (1988). *Language People: The Experience of Teaching and Learning Modern Languages in British Universities*. Buckingham: SRHE and Open University Press.
- Evans, C. (1993). *English People: The Experience of Teaching and Learning English in British Universities*. Buckingham: SRHE and Open University Press.
- Gibbons, M. et Al (1994) (eds). *The New Production of Knowledge: The Dynamics of Science and Research in Contemporary Societies*. London: Sage.

- Habermas, J. (2007). *La condizione intersoggettiva*. Bari: Laterza.
- Henkel, M. (2000). *Academic Identities and Policy Change in Higher Education*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Knights, D. and McCabe, D. (2003). *Organization and Innovation: Guru Schemes and American Dreams*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Magatti, M. (2009). *Libertà immaginaria: le illusioni del capitalismo tecnico-nichilista*. Milano: Feltrinelli.
- Martin, E. (1999). *Changing Academic Work: Developing the Learning University*. Buckingham: SRHE and Open University Press.
- Mintzberg, H. 'Rebuilding Companies as Communities'. *Harvard Business Review*, Volume 87, Number 7/8, July-August 2009 (pp140-143).
- Nixon, J. (2008). *Towards the Virtuous University: The Moral Bases of Academic Practice*. London: Routledge.
- Nye Jr, J. S. (2008). *The Power to Lead*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ortega y Gasset (1930/2007). *Misión de la Universidad*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial.
- Readings, B. (1997). *The University in Ruins*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Rowland, S. (2006). *The Enquiring University: Compliance and Contestation in Higher Education*. Maidenhead: SRHE and Open University Press.
- Sandel, M. J. (2007). *The Case against Perfection: Ethics and the Age of Genetic Engineering*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Senge, P. M. (1990/2006). *The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of the Learning Organisation*. London: Random House.
- 'What do you want in the new Warden?'. *Staff Hallmark*, Goldsmiths College, University of London, Issue 174, July 2009 (p5).
- Strathern, M. (2000) (ed). *Audit Cultures: Anthropological Studies in Accountability, Ethics and the Academy*. London: Routledge.
- Taylor, C. (1992). *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Taylor, P.G. (1999). *Making Sense of Academic Life: Universities and Change*. Buckingham:

SRHE and Open University Press.

Virilio, P. (2009). *Le futurisme de l'instant: stop-eject*. Paris: Editions Galilée.

Bio note

Dr Roberto Di Napoli is Head of GLEU (Goldsmiths Learning Enhancement Unit) at Goldsmiths College, University of London. Previously, he worked as a Senior Lecturer in Educational Development at Imperial College London, and in a number of other institutions in the UK and the Republic of Ireland. His scholarly and research activities focus on academic identities and various aspects of academic practice. Among other things, he is co-editor (with Ron Barnett) of *Changing Identities in Higher Education: Voicing Perspectives* (Routledge) and (with Loredana Polezzi and Anny King) of *Fuzzy Boundaries: Reflections on Modern Languages and the Humanities* (CILT). He has worked in a consultancy role both in Spain and France.