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COLD WAR AIN'T OVER YET (POLITICAL CORRECTNESS AND THE ACADEMIC CASTE)

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Summary

Cold War left hidden injuries in sense-making strategies of academic bureaucracies. Universities were left after three waves of expansion with an impossible mission. They had to embed the researchers-teachers-experts and to house the numerically increasing cohorts of future citizens and employees socialized into knowledge intensive societies. Are they succeeding? Brexit demonstrates that they do not. Citizens, if given a chance to bypass the established elites, reject the authority of the experts, and undertake the independent navigation of the information space, populist prejudice of the elites notwithstanding. Access to knowledge matters more than monopoly of patented intellectual property. Knowledge workers of the world unite? Hardly. Communism collapsed, neoliberalism failed. History of access to knowledge is no guarantee that a future will resemble it.

Key words: Cold War, elite establishment, social capital, academic bureaucracy

“How does science, in its quest for truth, fall prey to religion, repeating its past dogmatic and institutional struggles in new guises?” (Magala, 2009, 5)

“Information warfare has long existed and long blurred the lines between war and peace.(...) There were no clear lines between news and information, propaganda, espionage, sensationalism, and opinion. (...) The battles over what is legitimate news still rage today. One person’s news is another person’s gossip. One person’s fact is another person’s fake news.” (Tworek, 2019, 1-4)

Our knowledge does not grow in a perfect vacuum of logically cleaned neopositivist laboratories. In order to understand her... Her? Yes, her – because knowledge has a grammatical gender and it is female in a number of natural languages, including the one I happen to be the native speaker of. So in order to understand her, that is knowledge’s, environment, we have to rely on several domains of critical inquiry. First, we have to acknowledge environmental circumstances of knowledge generation and maintenance - and this acknowledgment actually belongs to philosophy. Second, we have to register constellations of events - and this recognition of the sequences and clusters of events around the emergence and transformations of knowledge actually belongs to history. Finally, we have to make sense of the streams of realities interwoven with the streams of consciousness and communications - and making sense of all these interlocking flows usually involves an artistic genius, capable of persuading us with his or her artistic vision. Max Weber and Florian Znaniecki tried to pave the way for a more frequent study of the humanist coefficient and the legitimization of critical understanding, which does not follow the reduction to covering laws. A separate status of the humanist inquiry called for a more subtle approach to explanations, interpretations and changes of the circulating paradigmatic elites. And yet Weber’s and Znaniecki’s exhortations went largely unheeded by the professional academic bureaucracies watching over the mainstream production of accepted knowledge. This relative

neglect of sensemaking activities (in spite of some notable exceptions – Serres, Archer, Eco, to mention but a few) left noticeable lacunae in public awareness and opinion. None of these lacunae is more important than the actual course and the ending (and subsequent rekindling) of the Cold War.

Not many researchers mention Cold War today, after Brexit and after the electoral victory of Donald Trump over Hilary Clinton. Except for Steve Fuller. He sees Brexit as the first popular rebellion against the expert knowledge (according to him, free citizens rejected the learned and informed opinions underwritten by experts and politicians, cf. Fuller, 2017). Apart from him, most social scientists and political commentators are not capable of going beyond a vague rhetoric of a “populist threat” to democracy, when explaining a growing distrust of established expert opinion (usually legitimized by academic bureaucracies with their global pecking orders) in making political decisions. Even less philosophers and sociologists of science and scholarship notice an intriguing analogy between the disbelief of the liberal public opinion makers in the reality of the triumph of a former actor, Ronald Reagan and the victory of Donald Trump. Both won in the polls, fair and square. Disbelief of the cultural communications professionals (public opinion makers) in the reality of the democratic choice of an entrepreneur, a performer and a relative outsider (to the political establishment) – Donald Trump, echoes the reactions which greeted Reagan at the time. Trump triumphed over a networker and an experienced insider of political establishment, with experience in the job of the secretary of state, Hilary Clinton. It is very surprising, indeed, that the first sensemaking analyses of the political victory of Donald Trump do not come from the media professionals or token academics in the public sphere – but from creative writers, a novelists, to be exact. Here is what the author of “American Psycho”, Bret Easton Ellis, has to say about the inability of the US public opinion makers to come to terms, to understand, to make sense of the electoral victory of Donald Trump:

“Post-election and well into 2017, a few of my friends and acquaintances, as well as my millennial partner of eight years, were undergoing a heavy psychosis, with no end in sight. The building that had been inhabited by liberal-identity-obsessed elitists was now, after eight years of an Obama hep-cat style and sensibility, being deconstructed – in fact decimated – by disruptors who’d taken over and were playing by an entirely new set of rules. Not only that, but these disruptors were telling those confused by their new rules to go fuck themselves – and rightly so: they won the election, it was their turn. But people were *still* fighting the fact that this man had been elected, fairly and legally, and was now actually residing in the White House, and yet they were constantly gasping at every turn “That’s *so* not presidential”. It was as if they still didn’t recognize what we’d all seen throughout the campaign when the disruptor played with the rule book and blew up the perceived truths about what *was* presidential, how campaign should be run, how social media could be used to create supporters. This game plan is what ultimately made the media look like an old-school anachronism unable to comprehend either the playbook or the electoral mood, instead flailing around and wasting everybody’s time by hectoring about what Trump did and said *literally*, while these anarchists in the shadows just smiled to themselves in triumph. Liberalism used to concern itself with freedoms I’d aligned myself with, but during the 2016 campaigns, it finally hardened into a warped authoritarian moral superiority movement that I didn’t want to have anything to do with.” (Ellis, 2019,142)

Ellis points out the establishment’s panic. Panic is indicative of cognitive helplessness. *Sensemaking* begins with the sharp and discomfiting observation. The predominantly left/liberal elites experienced an electoral victory of a candidate, who successfully innovated political campaigning, as the breakdown of the status quo. Their status quo. The author of “American Psycho” refers to the change in the rules of political communications game. In this context, the novelist mentions the panic of the media elites.

Political commentators started using the words like “apocalypse” (with reference to a result of elections the elites did not expect) and “Hitlerite” (with respect to an elected president, whom the abovementioned elites did not like). The rhetoric of the ultimate apocalypse seals the refusal to deal with and escape from political reality after the US presidential elections in 2016. Only very few members of the media establishment (whose behavior Ellis reports in his essay) are capable of a mild self-critical discovery. They become aware, through a slow learning process, that they had may have lived in a self-imposed, self-created “bubble” of wishful thinking and self-serving media. Does growing up and accepting the independence of reality checks from wishful thinking checks mean that Obama’s “yes, you can” should be replaced (as Ellis suggests) with “You can’t always get what want” (which, according to Ellis, had been “the background music of the Trump campaign”, *op.cit.*, 144)? The by now middle-aged novelist, Bret Easton Ellis, offers a generational intuition, which will certainly be picked up by social scientists, if they make an effort to understand changes in political, not only meteorological climate:

“The legions of the disappointed had failed to get over the outcome of the election, failed to move on, and at times it became appalling, almost unbearable, that there were no signs of accepting one of life’s simple if brutal truths: you win some, you lose some. “You Can’t Always Get What you Want” was the background music of the Trump campaign, a boomer elegy about ‘60s optimism sliding into disillusionment and finally a resigned pragmatism, and it was played at all of Trump’s rallies as well as after his victory speech, sealing the deal”. (Ellis, 2019, 144)

This bold sociological and political hypothesis makes us wonder if the baby-boomers’ optimism of the countercultural, student and youth movements of the ‘60ies did lead to more pragmatic and less ideologically driven civic attitudes in 2010s. What if we decided to explain this change with a reference to a single most important political event which happened half-way between anti-Vietnam war protests (1966-1972) and hippie flower-power songs and the 2016 US presidential elections, namely the peaceful end of the Cold War? It may seem a far shot, the extravagant and not very plausible attempt at a scholarly “collage” rather than a standard causal explanation. And yet, the Cold War studies, if pursued in a more focused and more sensemaking-friendly way, could shed light on some of the issues, which are troubling us today. Obama’s election seems to have been the last attempt to stick to generational illusions of the ‘60s countercultural utopias. Trump’s election seems to have been the first attempt of the baby-boomers (and millennials) to come to terms with reality, to leave the bubbles of wishful thinking behind. Why should we focus on Cold War as an essential ingredient in this transformation of political choices over the past half a century (1966-2016)?

Cold War gave rise to quite a number of viral developments, for instance to the re-design of the military-industrial complex, which apparently concocted the Internet, and willy-nilly, according to most academics - probably rather nilly, nudged almost everybody towards the worldwide web. It is easy to live in a bubble of one’s wishful thinking online, but it is also easier to burst the bubble and to leave it both online (dropping out of a Facebook for instance) and in real life (voting for Trump instead of for Clinton). When examining the late Cold War inventions, we may discover that the emergence of the hyper-connectivity was as random and unintended consequence of ARPANET in the 1990ies as the invention of a computer was a byproduct of the Manhattan Project in the 1940ies. The invention of hyperconnectivity happened as, well, as a kind of an afterthought, as a welcome outcome of an elitist (the new name for the establishment is the elite) gamble on world history, sold to the masses as innocent individual liberation from the constraints of social norms. The facts and consequences were – again, as in the case of the media failure after Trump and Brexit - first noticed by writers, novelists actually. In a novel by Thomas Pynchon, “Bleeding Edge”,

devoted to the internet crime, and located in Manhattan's *Yupper* West Side, one of the characters claims that the Internet is a Cold War invention. The father of the main protagonist claims that a design for what has become an Internet with a world wide web and satellite links was prompted by "a permanent establishment of admirals, generals and corporate CEOs". If we consider the fact that the rapid growth of Internet communications leads to the accelerated warming of the cultural climates - we shall have a reasonable doubt about the immaculate conception of the world's current technological evolution. When suffering the unexpected tropical storms of mass hysteria (the mourning after the death of lady Di, the hysteria after the electoral victory of Donald Trump), we should think about crowd control techniques. When pondering grave consequences of the tsunamis of fake news leading to real violent actions (the radio-propaganda which generated genocide in Rwanda is a macabre case in point), we should remember about hidden persuaders. In other words, we should keep in mind that the roots of the hyper-connectivity may very well be found in the unpredictable twists and turns of crowd control research.

In the light of what we slowly come to know about the uses of data mining for nudging the electorates, it is rather unsurprising that the research into the hidden injuries of the Cold War is neither encouraged by the sponsors of research, nor missed much by the researchers. It remains to be seen who and when will become interested in a transition from a dictatorship of science to the democracy of knowledge. Concerned citizens belong to the possibilities.

We – and I mean us, professional academic researchers/teachers - are all trying to hide under the banners of Enlightenment, but most of us are interested only in the ideological, sanitized version of Enlightenment. This sanitized and streamlined version of the cult of scientific and scholarly reason is understood as a world view designed and articulated – and re-designed and re-articulated - in the light of what we know, including of what we had just learned. But what do we actually know?

Let us examine the cultural landscape after the Cold War ended and the Internet came to stay, which mainly cover the last decade of the 20th century and the first two decades (actually, nineteen years as of the present writing) of the 21st. First, the Cold War itself (herself? Like knowledge, war has a gender and the noun is feminine in many languages, for instance in French or Polish) has been won by the United States of America and by the western alliance of NATO-linked countries, most of which are located west of the iron curtain in Europe (running from Szczecin to Trieste, in Churchill's Fulton speech). The victory, or rather the softness and bloodlessness of it, came as a mild surprise. The military build-up, designed and staged as the "star wars" project in the USA, put an additional strain on inefficient state socialist economies and bankrupted the Soviet Union. It is surprising how little attention has been paid to the purely fictional, purely imagined, visionary determinants of this swift collapse. Had we paid more attention to it – we would have known that Hayek turned out to have been right (central planners can go to hell, because their control is a fiction) and Lange wrong (central planners will save mankind because they will predict benevolently). Central planning was a fiction, while systematic dismantling of emergent monopolies (also based on an illusion of total control of the market) - a desirable future. The Marxist layer cake of a social order crumbled at the economic base, but political cream and ideological whipped cream with cherries of classless societies on top crumbled as well, although not everybody was ready to admit it.

August 1980 was a breakthrough in the Cold War trajectory. The Polish "Solidarity" had demonstrated the possibility of a peaceful dismantling of the single party rule and the neutralization of an ideological hegemony. The breaking of the Berlin Wall nine years later was a logical conclusion in historical short run. In the longer run the outcome of the peaceful dismantling of the Soviet empire turned out to be less clear. The winning of this long, cold

war of 1945 – 1989, did not coincide with the equivalent of the Nuremberg trial for the Stalinist mass murderers safely embedded in Soviet vast bureaucracies.

Germans lost a hot war and faced a hot pursuit, although they did sabotage the denazification. Russians lost a cold war and had time to subvert the desovietization, limiting it to destalinization and giving the communist elites time to reinvent themselves as the post-communist, even capitalist elites, a new establishment. **There came no full-time recognition and punishment of the communist crimes and misdemeanors.** There were many historical reasons and causes for this, primarily the ambiguous role of the communists in the political history of the western European societies. For instance the French communists collaborated with the Nazi occupiers as a result of the Stalin-Hitler pact of August 1939, and played an important role in legitimizing Soviet regime in spite of the growing public knowledge about the communist genocide from Stalin to Pol Pot. In Italy and France the communists became part and parcel of the political establishment in spite of their willing participation in Soviet genocide and its legitimization in the eyes of the world public opinion. Legitimization of the communist genocide required some cultural creativity. Some fellow-travellers followed Gramsci and invented a communism with a human face for the world media. Communism with a human face was a useful ideological invention, but it did not involve serious and critical revision of the communist policies. **Ideological hegemony of the left leaning public intellectuals reinforces the media bubbles, does not burst them. Bursting the bubbles is rarely rewarded. When the Polish dissident philosopher, Leszek Kolakowski, wrote “The Main Currents of Marxism”, where he traced the transformations of the communist utopia under Soviet rule, he became an authority of the academic bureaucracies. He was invited by All Souls College in Oxford and by the University of Chicago. When the Polish dissident sociologist, Adam Podgorecki started research on the role of the communist secret services in designing political realities, he found himself isolated in his specialization as a sociologist of law and legal institutions, but quietly ignored by public opinion makers. He remained in Ottawa until his retirement, with occasional international seminars in Spain and research projects in the Dutch NIAS.**

It may come as a surprise to the western liberal audiences following the politically correct media, but the communist nomenklatura (the elite of the politically correct and economically privileged) did survive the fall of the communist system quite well. Interestingly enough, but hardly surprisingly, the younger generation of the late communist elites and the offspring of nomenklatura members, scored very highly on the side of the relative and absolute winners of the postcommunist transformations. Communist elite’s children and young recruits managed the fall of communism and the transition to the post-communist democracy and market economy much better than the former political opposition. Communists and neo-communists fared thus better in the former Warsaw Pact countries than could have been predicted by those who watched the fall of the communist regimes from the Polish August 1980 strikes to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Moreover, the postcommunist elites continued to fare better still when these societies shifted towards the NATO and the European Union. The former political elite of the communist regimes, especially their youngest generation of the top politicians and staff of the secret services, the media and the new business elite, saw the windows of opportunity. They masses, who created “Solidarity” as a mass movement masked as a trade union were deserted by the leaders and part of the oppositional intellectuals. These oppositional elite members, who made a deal with the communists and neo-communists, in case of Poland neatly summarized as “the round table agreements”, facilitated safe passage from the communist to the post-communist elites. Is this a new historical version of “trahison des clercs”? The former communist secret service functionaries privatized the bankrupted communist state, promising

the new western allies a steady and safe supply of mass consumer markets, cheap labor, weak governments and obedient mass media.

It took about a quarter of a century for the masses to recover from this desertion and betrayal of the post-communist hopes. The refusal to tolerate this unholy alliance of post-communists and former anti-communists resulted primarily in a clear change of the political power in Hungary and Poland. It also led to the Ukrainian uprising of the Maidan Square – and to the attempted Russian military coup. The coup misfired so the Russian military complex went for the second best – the partition of Ukraine and the land-theft of the Crimea. Meanwhile the Russian media trolls tuned their online propaganda to the expectations of the radical and the leftist bubble inhabitants. The Russian psychological warfare against NATO, the USA and the western democracies in general focused on the critique of the a democratic change in Poland and Hungary (they are supposed to be apocalyptic, populist, authoritarian, even Hitlerite at times), on the mourning of the British citizens decision to do the Brexit (citizens are described as victims of mad demagogues) and on the demonization of Donald Trump in the USA.

The policies of Orban and Kaczynski, no matter what they have done until the present day are criticized by the left/liberal establishment dominating the media in the EU member states. The critique is opaque and perverse: they are accused of introducing the communist-like authoritarian policies – but the accusers are simply political opponents in their respective countries, who accuse as part and parcel of a political struggle they had recently lost. They are wrong on two counts. First, all democratic safeguards and liberties are in place (including free media, mostly hostile to the Italian, Polish or Hungarian government, but very lenient with respect to the French and very obedient to the German government). Second, and this is much more important, the political enemies of Orban and Kaczynski are closely collaborating with the communists and postcommunists, which is exactly what they are charging their political opponents with. To name but the last case: the Polish Citizens' Platform of Donald Tusk, which lost the elections to the European parliament, has sent neo-communist delegates to the European parliament, preferring them to the former anti-communist opposition members. If anyone deserves a name of a crypto-authoritarian – it certainly isn't the present Italian, Hungarian or Polish government.

The public opinion makers of the US media system also refuse to come to terms with real, square and fair electoral victory of Donald Trump. The present ruling parties in Hungary and Poland face the internal opposition, which cannot accept reality of a fair electoral victory of their rivals. The same holds true for the opponents of Donald Trump. The postcommunists, George Soros and the largest EU media networks and conglomerates (Springer, Bertelsman, German government, Bildersberg group) condemn the Italian, Polish and Hungarian governments for actions, which German, French, Danish or Dutch governments are free to pursue with tacit approval of the EU officials. Retiring judges, exceeding public debt limits, limiting immigrant numbers, fighting terrorism, all these issues are ignored if identified in the “old” EU member states, but they become topics of media assault when they emerge in the “new” EU member states. The European Union's top officials (for instance the chairperson of the European Council, Donald Tusk, and one of the EU commissioners, Frans Timmermans) do not intervene in German, Danish, Dutch or French politics, but they do so in Italian, Polish or Hungarian case, issuing warnings and threatening with sanctions. The cooperation between Donald Tusk who represents the Polish post-communists and German government (Tusk has been elected to the post of a chairperson of the European Council as a delegate of Germany and Malta, against the Polish veto and according to unclear procedures) and Frans Timmermans (who misused his office in order to assist Tusk's political friends intervening directly in the domestic Polish politics) - is a case in point. The same holds true for the anti-Trump US media professionals.

Officially, the Cold War ended with the dismantling of the Soviet Union. However, the inner policies of the European Union do not allow us to forget about the Iron Curtain. The influence of the Cold War and the effect of the byproducts of this war loom large on the political, technological, economic and social horizon of contemporary social life, both global and local. Some of the long term consequences of the Cold War remain a challenge for researchers, a mystery for concerned citizens and a treasure garden for ideological spin-doctors trying to shape public opinion. Let us therefore mention some of the activities triggered before the Cold War has officially ended. They would have been easier to notice, handle and acknowledge, if the military scenarios of both sides were made a topic of a systematic study. They would have been discussed more thoroughly if they entered the curricula of broadly based teaching programs and if they became a focus of political debates on both sides of the former Iron Curtain. Why haven't they interested the makers and breakers of public opinion? Causes and reasons are complex, but they have not been made an object of a sustainable attention of concerned citizens, because citizens had to wait until the Brexit referendum to finally overcome the fear of breaking the divine right of experts. The divine right of experts has replaced the divine rights of kings – this was what the British prime minister (1957-1963) Harold Macmillan ironically complained about in the early 1960ies, just before the explosion of political protest and social unrest. He was right. Which did not save him from being forgotten, except for the comment on the British standards of living: “you never had it so good”.

Experts are entitled to the general covering name of “experts”, because this title emerged as a result of a reference to “experience”. This professional experience has been redefined as educational merit (certified by proper diplomas) and a record of successful research (publications), teaching (testimonies and careers of the past students) and consulting projects. Experts influence political decisions, because, as Fuller succinctly notes:

“... social order in complex democracies requires a ‘distribution of knowledge’ or ‘division of cognitive labor’. The proposal basically generalizes the feudal model behind the cartographic imaginary that continues to lead academics to characterize their expertise as ‘fields’ and ‘domains’ of knowledge bounded by rituals of mutual respect and deference.”(Fuller, 2017, 579)

Fuller probably exaggerates the level of feudalization of expertise-driven legitimation of research domains and the never-ending story of copyrighting and patenting knowledge products. If we look more closely at the context of the end of the Cold War, we will be able to notice that the educational industry increased its range, enrolling many more individuals in the university and college level programs. Is this growth in numbers of educationally privileged individuals matched by institutional and legal controls imposed on intellectual property and access to data? The acceleration of educational distribution of knowledge happened twice: once after WWII (GI bill in the USA, communist indoctrination of “workers and peasants” east of Elbe), and once when the baby boomers threatened to flood the job markets (I was born in September 1950 and thus turned 18 in 1968, beginning my university education). Needless to say, 1968 had also been the year of student protests all over the world, after which still more university level educational opportunities have been created (as education became an even more lucrative business in newly opened post-communist markets). The third explosion of the higher education has happened again in the last decade of the 20th and in the first decade of the 21st century, after the fall of communism.

Higher education became accessible to much larger school-educated cohorts, and although expansion of educational services did increase public control of upward social mobility and of the socializing processes (since even private universities had to be

accredited) – it also had a less predictable outcome, namely it did contribute to the undermining of the cognitive authority of teachers.

For Fuller this seems to be a natural and desirable consequence of the dual nature of a university as an institution, which “reproduces” economic, political and social conflicts in the very heart of the expertise “industry”. But Fuller limits his discussion of the ambiguities of a university education to the case of the Brexit. Instead of following him, we should link this generalized undermining of the cognitive authority of all professional communities (medical doctors are another case in point) to the end of the Cold War. When communism crumbled and congresses of cultural freedoms or Radio Free Europe became redundant - a relaxation of ideological controls has temporarily set in. In the aftermath of this perceived ending of cultural policies as instruments in Cold War struggle for hearts and minds of globally connected constituencies, audiences and communities there was an interregnum, which facilitated the election of an Islamic terrorism to the position of the major enemy of the western democracies. In trying to formulate an anti-expert ideology for rebellious anti-authority students, who may some day grow up to become concerned and informed citizenry, Fuller writes:

“The academic capacity for countering expertisation is expressed in the classroom, as teaching provides access to knowledge to those who would otherwise not acquire it because they have not been part of the contexts in which such knowledge is produced and distributed. Thus, universities manufacture knowledge as a public good through the creative destruction of the social capital originally formed by research networks.”(Fuller, 2017, 580)

The above statement belongs to the boldest hypotheses about the transformations of the public function of universities. Research is supposed to generate value, according to this view. At least potentially, because basic research does not always lead to industrial implementation. Teaching, on the other educational hand, is supposed to destroy value for the academic bureaucrats-owners. At least this might be a conclusion for those who would like to copyright or patent their newly created knowledge bites under the aegis of World Intellectual Property Organization and The Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, or WIPO and TRIPS.

However, the paradox of knowledge disseminated by university teaching is much more complex and the distribution process is much more sophisticated than a simple analysis of graduate courses would suggest. What matters is a multidimensional access to knowledge (A2K) as a precondition for equal start of informed citizens in their struggle to voice their concerns in the public arena. Teaching is destroying the opportunities for some forms of monopolies of knowledge – but this seems to be an acceptable price for an improvement of social and individual learning chances. Contemporary universities, with a renewed focus on mass education, and cheaper ways of institutionalizing it (e.g. Massive Online Open Courses – MOOC) can accelerate social learning processes. The emergence of the mass movement of the Polish “Solidarity” is one of the most significant pieces of historical evidence for this social learning. Universities can succeed in saving and accessing knowledge for society at large – but they do not have a monopoly on always dominating the institutional arrangements for social learning. Winning Cold War did secure the top positions of the Harvard, the Stanford or the Oxford universities, but the question in 2019 is not linked to a simple replacement of the Russian universities with the Chinese ones as the potential rival in a struggle for expert excellence. We should also ask if researchers-teachers are not led astray by a myth of a researcher-entrepreneur, who hoards his, her or their exclusive knowledge and safeguards it as intellectual property to be distributed as a profitable product or part of service (cf. Liang, 2010). In other words: so far the post-communist transformations favored the protection of private property and by association the concept of intellectual property prevailed (hackers and pirates and Wikileaks notwithstanding). But should future free actors,

let us say emergent groups, networks, clusters and entrepreneurial individuals in a networked society care enough for the cultural commons, the anti-ACTA-like instant mobilization for political action becomes possible. Otherwise universities are institutionally bound to start selling knowledge online with price tags attached by experts understanding themselves and identifying themselves as knowledge owners. Much depends on individual decisions of us, academic professionals, and on decisions of the young academic proletariat. But much also depends on what happens on the globally networked institutional field where Cold War arrangements are being slowly renovated. Shall we, the researchers/teachers/experts toe the politically correct intellectual property line? Or shall we reinvent the creative commons burying the Cold War with unprocessed Russian legacy as we had buried WWII in Nuremberg? Can we avoid and prevent countless other cold wars dividing academia into feudal fiefs (1) conquered by the empires of bureaucracies and markets?

(1) The concept of a “fief” has been introduced into contemporary debates on information space and knowledge assets by Max Boisot (cf. Boisot, 1995, 1998).

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