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Knowledge Production and Cognitive Labour: Higher Education in the Age of Financial Capitalism

There is a connection between the transformation of universities and the transformation of labour; this link is evolving within the heterogeneous constitution of global space. The current transformation of universities involves trends and processes such as differentially inclusive techniques of recruiting students, the financialisation of student life, and the increasing use of student internships. These tendencies and their accompanying logistics make it possible to observe a progressive overlapping between the labour market and the market for education. Knowledge is becoming not only the new means of production but also the new measure of cognitive labour. At the same time, classical student struggles are being reconfigured as workers' struggles. The paper reads the latest round of student protests (in locations as diverse as California and Austria, Italy and China) as struggles over the production of knowledge, seeking to discern the antagonistic subjectivity of cognitive labour within and against contemporary financial capitalism.