

EDITORIAL

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Faccio tutto (I do everything) was the most common answer when I asked migrant domestic workers about what their job includes in Naples, Italy, in early 2000s. *Doing everything* captures well the diffused characteristic of domestic work that includes the daily reproduction of the home and caring for its inhabitants. The statement *Faccio tutto* often comes to my mind when I think of the nature of academic work today.

Academic work under austerity in many cases signifies cuts in administration, which has meant that teachers and researchers are increasingly doing supporting tasks while administrative tasks have increased due to increasing reporting and recording. Academics not only teach, supervise and do research but also are increasingly involved in the domestic work of reproducing the academic institutions by taking over various organisational tasks.

Let us consider, for instance, the competition for external research funding. Bidding for funding takes several weeks or months of working time for success rates often below 15 percent. Research funding not only requires having a great research idea and writing it down into a coherent proposal but also, if and when one gets lucky and receives the funding, means a significant increase in work load related to project management from budget control to dissemination, reporting and producing results on an increasingly fast pace – sometimes even before the research has properly begun.

Cuts in staff combined with constant organizational restructuring – an important neoliberal frenzy – the domestic work load in academia has meant that, in addition to teaching, research and administration-related tasks, I seem to spend a lot of time fixing the printer, sending student grades to the registry, booking seminar and meeting rooms and trying to find the name and e-mail address of the right person to contact to answer IT or other daily problems. This is on top of the additional stress of having to constantly adapt to new organizational structures.

As Davies & Bansel (2005) have argued, neoliberal measures of work intensification and job enlargement through understaffing lead to a continuous sense of lacking enough time to do one's work well and to do what one really feels one is supposed to do: read, think and process before writing. Academic work requires certain kind of time,

time to do things slowly. In order to be creative, we need time to be seemingly unproductive, the mental space needed for thinking.

Yet increasingly, this time gets eaten away through the expansion of the institutional reproductive work. As we spend our working days doing the domestic work for the neoliberal universities, the only time left to do creative thinking is during evenings, weekends, holidays or when on sabbatical. Even worse, when we look for culprits why we fail to do what we are supposed to do during working hours, we tend to look into the mirror and are unable to see that what we perceive as a personal failure is in fact an institutional and a structural one.

So how to counteract these tendencies? I find Davies & Bansel's (2005: 57) proposition of finding "localized strategies of collective engagement to resist neoliberal imperatives of heightened individualization, competition and responsabilisation of workers" a useful first step. They suggest the following acts of resistance: "collegiality (making time); collaboration (refusing to work in isolation and competition) and collectivity (problematizing institutional structures and practices and generating proposals for reform)" (Davies & Bansel 2005: 57).

These acts of resistance can also be brought to the global scale, as for instance the slow-science movement is doing (Slow Science 2017). Moreover, we need to involve our institutions on all echelons to create healthier institutional practices that do not require us to do everything but allow us to focus on what we were hired to do in the first place. We should also be conscious about how we relate to each other as colleagues in this strenuous and increasingly competitive atmosphere. We need to help ourselves and our colleagues in making time for thinking and reading. The absurd outcome of the competition to publish or perish is that we do not have time to read what others write, when all we do is write.

This issue begins the eighth year of *Nordic Journal of Migration Research*, which brings some big changes to our journal. Our Managing Editor Tiina Vaittinen, who has been working for the journal since it was established in 2011, is leaving her position. Tiina has been an absolutely excellent managing editor, the backbone and heart of *Nordic Journal of Migration Research* or as well call it for short the Journal. I speak on behalf of all the staff of the Journal and

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the organisations behind it when I say, "Thank you Tiina! Your work has been invaluable".

We are very lucky to have been able to recruit Peter Holley as our new managing editor. Peter is finalizing his PhD at the University of Helsinki and has previously worked as the editor of *European Sociologist*. I am sure our journal will continue flourishing in Peter's capable hands. Welcome Peter!

Also our editorial team is going through changes. Since Spring 2017, Willy Brandt Research Fellow Nahikari Irastorza from Malmö University has been acting as an assistant editor for the Journal, and we are happy that she will continue in this role. Our other editor-in-chief Synnøve Bendixsen will be leaving her position in Spring 2018, and we will be looking to appoint one to two assistant editors to replace Synnøve. Again I speak on behalf of the Journal and the organisations supporting it when I express my deepest gratitude to Synnøve. Thank you for all the hard work you have put into the Journal. I could not have thought of a better colleague and friend to work with. Thank you Synnøve!

Keep thinking and keep reading, preferably *Nordic Journal of Migration Research*. If you do not recognize your university from the above description, i.e., there is less academic housekeeping at your university, you really want to make sure that continues to be the case.

References

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- Davies, B & Bansel, P 2005, 'The time of their lives? Academic workers in neoliberal time(s)', *Health Sociology Review*, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 47-58.
- Slow Science 2017, *The slow science manifesto*. Available from: <<http://slow-science.org/slow-science-manifesto.pdf>>. [Last accessed 21.12.2017].