

## EDITORIAL

Most academic ideas, even those grand enough to be presented as theories, are no more than transitory, useful for holding together the argument of the moment. Some linger unchallenged until forgotten, a few live long enough to acquire an esoteric notoriety within a specialism. Not often does an idea strike a chord in a whole range of academic thinking, resonating across the disciplines. The notion of Mode 2 knowledge swept through the academic world with the publication of *The New Production of Knowledge* by Michael Gibbons and his colleagues in 1994. Their suggestion was that academic thinking had been liberated from the traditional bounds of discipline by exposure to the world in which academic ideas might be applied. Mode 1 knowledge production had been, if not replaced, then at least complemented by Mode 2. From its chrysalis in technology policy, the Mode 2 notion burst forth magnificently to alter attitudes towards all academic research, not least among those responsible for government policy in the area.

Michael Gibbons himself is responsible for bringing together this collection of papers on Mode 2, the first versions of which were presented at a meeting at Noors Slott in Sweden. Authors were asked to appraise the Mode 2 notion in the light of events since 1994. Michael Gibbons has provided an introduction to the collection, one that certainly does not regard Mode 2 as sacrosanct. Indeed, he notes that there was much resistance to the idea in 1994, and that it may now be time to move on to a Mode 3 model.

Reflecting the ubiquity of Mode 2 thinking, our authors consider the impact it has made in a number of spheres. Janet Halliwell and Willie Smith compare science systems in Canada and New Zealand, finding a common Mode 2 core, but differences shaped by the circumstances of each country. Susan Cozzens concentrates on a single country, the United States. There she finds a paradox: scientists could hardly be more Mode 2 in their relations with industry, yet US research is still directed by a science and technology policy clinging resolutely to the requirements of the cold war.

Alan Hughes puts into a Mode 2 context the survey work he and his Cambridge colleagues have undertaken in recent years. He is critical of the formal systems imposed by government policy and the corporate university to link academic research to the outside world. Thousands of academics and managers in the UK confirm the paramount importance of their own informal links in the Mode 2 production of knowledge. The research university is also central to the interests of Arie Rip. He finds that a uniform corporate model with tight control from the top will no longer do; a variety of models is evolving to suit the new and changing demands being made of universities.

Ben Martin cleverly moves from what bibliometrics reveals about what academics study and how, to what can be learnt from a study of bibliometrics itself. He finds evidence of a shift towards Mode 2 knowledge production in bibliometrics and in science as a whole – though Ben Martin warns that the performance

indicators on which the academic world relies may have had a hand in this. If there is to be a Mode 3, it might incorporate the production of knowledge that simply ticks the right boxes.

*Prometheus* has changed its book review team. John Elliott, currently in Seattle, has agreed to take overall charge of reviews. There are easier tasks. Growing reliance on indicators to judge and punish the performance of academics, and their desperate determination to publish in a few core journals have diminished academic interest in activities that do not tick the required boxes. These pariah efforts generally include writing books and, of course, reviewing them. *Prometheus* has a proud tradition of reviewing books on every aspect of innovation, a tradition carried on marvelously by Hazel Moir in Canberra over the last 18 months, and now the responsibility of John Elliott. The book review is both a necessary antidote to the promotion of their wares by authors and publishers, and an art form in its own right.

Prometheus is relocating. We have moved to Aalto University, created from an amalgam of the old Helsinki School of Economics with other institutions in January 2010. The School of Economics at Aalto is keen to welcome and support the journal, and we are looking forward to a beneficial association.

Stuart Macdonald  
General Editor