

***Index on Censorship: The voice of free expression, Volume 44 Number 02, summer 2015. Pp130 (Pbk). London: Sage Publications. ISBN 978-1-4739-42196-0. £7.99.***

Index on Censorship is an organisation campaigning for freedom of expression and against censorship in politics, culture and the media. Its journal is published four times per year. The edition for Summer 2015 is of interest to us because it includes a 'Special Report' on academic freedom in universities, entitled 'Fired, Threatened, Imprisoned.... Is academic freedom being eroded?'

It's not surprising that the short answer to the question is 'yes', substantiated by a collection of articles which demonstrates the different dimensions and methods of academic censorship across the globe. Rachael Jolley's editorial reminds us of the importance of academic freedom in the university: 'Universities are places where discoveries are made. Academia is an opportunity for students and teachers to challenge themselves, their perceptions and values....'(p5). She might also have pointed out that the principle of academic freedom in which the state funds the university with no strings was first established and enshrined in Humboldt's University of Berlin in 1809, and as such is a largely European invention.

What is significant across the articles is the variety of causes and grounds for censorship in different contexts. Kaya Genc reports that Resat Baris Ünlü, a lecturer at Ankara University received death threats, and vilification in the popular media, for teaching about Abdulla Öcalan, the imprisoned leader of Turkey's Kurdistan Worker's Party. This is part of intolerance of Sunni Muslims, Kurds and Christians. Genc goes on to say that the weakness of the university in protecting its academics is economic in nature with the shift from a state-driven education system to one based on neo-liberal principles where the wealthy students in the university have power.

The market-place is the cause of academic strictures in Ireland where Michael Foley finds that academics must turn to corporate bodies for funding where there is a short-term commercial imperative, and vested interests dictate the nature of the academy. Freedom of speech is a constitutional right in the United States in the first amendment of 1791. However, academic freedom is threatened by political bias. Mark Frary points to the case of Dr Steven Salaita, an English professor at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University who was preparing to take up a position at the University of Illinois. The university's board of trustees refused his appointment because they were informed of anti-Israeli tweets he had made. In India Suhrith Parthasarathy argues that elected governments there tend to see their role as

dictating the university's direction and that there is little concept of the notion of the academic freedom which is essential to India's development.

Britain, which has enjoyed a long tradition of academic freedom in its universities, is also threatened with government restraints on freedom of speech. This time it is the so-called threat of religious extremism: 'We must stop these groups from reaching people in public institutions like universities' (David Cameron, 2011). Thomas Docherty argues that this is merely another means of manipulating controversial opinion. Another is the notion of 'courtesy' in speech: 'If one speaks in a tone that stands out from the brand – if one is independent of government at all – then one is in danger of bringing the branded university into disrepute' (p39).

Duncan Tucker reports from Mexico where much less subtle and sophisticated methods are employed by government agencies to restrain free speech. He relates instances of students being arrested or abducted, protesting gatherings being fired on. Again, the reasons are political: that they voice opposition to the neo-liberal education model. As Tucker concludes, 'the fight for academic freedom looks set to become ever more intense' (p.43). In Ukraine, Tatyana Malyarenko describes the effects on academic freedom caused by the war. At the University of Donetsk, formerly collegial academics are divided as pro-Ukrainian or pro-Russian: 'in the pro-Ukrainian faculty, if you criticise the Ukrainian higher education system, you are immediately labelled a separatist or Kremlin agent'. In China the government's contempt for academic freedom is unrestrained. Jemimah Steinfeld notes that government guidelines of 2015 said that 'universities must prioritise ideological loyalty to the party, the teaching of Marxism and Xi Jinping's ideas' (p45). Western textbooks that promote western values are to be banned.

In a final 'Global View' Jodie Ginsberg argues that censorship is a product of fear and underlines the importance of monitoring and measuring its extent. She concludes, though, with the important point that such maps and indices can never measure *the silence*: the ideas that are never expressed, the books never written, the paintings never painted.

The articles in the journal are all succinct and written with clarity and passion. Authors are well informed, although there are no academic references. The journal is lavishly illustrated with photographs and cartoons. The collection would be a good source for students studying the university and those interested in global perspectives.

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