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Abstract

Drawing upon perspectives from diverse disciplines, this paper critically examines some taken-for-granted definitions about what is understood by 'public' and its relation to universities. It highlights the need to uncover assumptions and value orientations that are at the basis of these definitions and that tend to guide both conceptualizations and practices about the public role of the universities. It is argued that under neoliberal regimes, the public university takes on private aspects and the private university may even take on public aspects: Universities are here characteristically becoming hybrids. Despite these overlapping patterns, absences are discerned both in the idea and in the practices of public universities. The idea of the transformative university is proposed to help to remedy these deficiencies. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Guzman-Valenzuela, Carolina, E-Mail: carolina.guzman@ciae.uchile.cl