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**Title:** On the really existing multiculturalism: nations, ethnicities and structural asymmetries within academic world-system

**Abstract**

The objective of our paper is twofold. Firstly, we attempt to outline certain structural and ideological patterns that are inscribed in and construct modes of power and inequality within international academic spaces. Our exemplifications concern systems/rules of knowledge production and distribution, channels and directions of discourse transmission and legitimization, hierarchies of professional contacts and exchange etc. We perceive these issues as a matter of economy in a double sense: reproduction of inequalities in the context of global neoliberalism, as well as economy of “symbolic goods” in the context of academia and related social fields. Secondly, we pose a set of questions concerning multiculturalism within contemporary academia and related spaces in international settings. By the “really existing multiculturalism” we understand the actual condition of interethnic, intercultural, cross-country encounters governed by bureaucratic and capital-benefiting conventions rather than by horizontally defined and created modes of co-existence. Therefore, one of our aims is to pose a question whether and under what conditions relatively more democratic and more egalitarian “multiculturalism” is possible. We use an approach that we call *semi-auto-ethnography* (drawing on our personal experiences, observations and data accumulated by us as participants in international academic projects, events and networks). We refer to “world-systems analysis” as a conceptual framework, which enables to grasp logics and mechanisms of asymmetrical functioning of and within contemporary academia.