MAKING A UNIVERSITY

Introductory Notes on an Ecology of Study Practices

Hans Schildermans

*Écrire n'a rien à voir avec signifier, mais avec arpenter, cartographier,
même des contrées à venir.*

Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari, *Mille Plateaux*, p. 11

Abstract

The question of how the university can relate to the world is centuries old. The poles of the debate can be characterized by the plea for an increasing instrumentalization of the university as a producer and provider of useful knowledge on the one hand (cf. the knowledge factory), and the defense of the university as an autonomous space for free inquiry and the pursuit of knowledge for knowledge's sake on the other hand (cf. the ivory tower). Our current global predicament, however, forces us to rethink the relation between university and world. Indeed, an easy instrumentalization of the university for the purposes of society is no longer possible in troubled times when the future of society itself seems to be at stake. Nevertheless, urgent societal concerns do need to be addressed by the university. Hence, the disinterested position seems a highly irresponsible option. The aim of this dissertation is to reconsider the relation between the university and the world from an educational perspective by addressing the question "How to situate study in the relation between university and society?"

The dissertation consists of three parts. In Part One, the existing literature on the relation between university and society will be discussed. The first chapter discerns two main approaches to this issue, namely the transcendental-philosophical approach (cf. the idea of the university) and the critical-sociological approach (cf. academic capitalism) that conceive of the university, respectively, as an idea and as an organization. By means of an excursus on the emergence of the university in the Middle Ages, the case is made for an ecological approach to the university. In the second chapter, the work of two authors who have recently adopted such an ecological approach is briefly presented. Whereas Ronald Barnett's theory of the ecological university is situated more in the transcendental-philosophical tradition, Susan Wright's investigations of the university in the knowledge ecology can be placed in the critical-sociological tradition. Both conceptions, however, are hinged on an institutional understanding of the university. In line with recent developments in social theory, namely the focus on practices, it is proposed to work towards an ecology of study practices.

Part Two presents Isabelle Stengers' idea of the ecology of practices. The third chapter elucidates Stengers' work on scientific practices by first situating it within the so-called Science Wars, which provided the impetus to elaborate a theoretical framework for a civilized dialogue between scientists and the broader public. The basic tenets and concepts of her approach, such as the understanding of practice as a set of requirements and obligations, are presented, explained, and discussed. In the fourth chapter, the focus shifts from scientific practices to study practices. Assisted by Stengers' writings on Whitehead's speculative philosophy, this chapter aims to flesh out Whitehead's description of the university as a 'home of adventures' in order to come to an educational understanding of the study practices of the university. A conceptual inquiry into how study practices activate certain worldly problems and turn them into matters of study is presented.

Part Three develops the conceptual work on study practices further in relation to the activities of the Palestinian experimental university Campus in Camps. Chapter Five presents the work of Campus in Camps and explains how it relates to the theoretical discussion offered in the second part. On the basis of Stengers' conception of practice, which discerns requirements and obligations as vital ingredients, this chapter argues that life in exile is what drives the study practices of Campus in Camps, and hence, that it is the issue of life in exile that participants are obligated to when they study. Whereas Chapter Five is focused on *what* is being studied in Campus in Camps, Chapter Six inquires in to the specific requirements its activities need to fulfill in order to be study practices; in other words, *how* the participants study. Four requirements are discerned that, taken together, seem indispensable to understand the study practices of Campus in Camps; namely, storytelling, comparing, mapmaking, and using.

The concluding chapter returns to the research question and again takes up the main ideas developed in the dissertation, such as the adventure of study and the cohabitation of scientific and study practices in the university. The last two sections of the conclusion deal with two remaining issues of a more practical nature; namely, how to relate to institutionalization when working from a practice-theoretical point of view, and lastly the question of what can be done. In all, and returning to the initial problem, the dissertation asks what it means to conceive of the university as situated by and engaged with worldly questions.

De vraag hoe de universiteit zich tot de wereld kan verhouden wordt reeds eeuwenlang bediscussieerd. Dominante posities in het debat zijn enerzijds het pleidooi voor een verdere instrumentalisering van de universiteit als producent en aanbieder van bruikbare kennis (cf. de kennisfabriek), en anderzijds de verdediging van de universiteit als een autonome plaats voor vrij onderzoek en het nastreven van kennis omwille van de kennis (cf. de ivoren toren). Onze huidige globale conditie echter, dwingt ertoe de verhouding tussen universiteit en wereld te herdenken. Een al te gemakkelijke instrumentalisering van de universiteit voor de doelen van de samenleving is immers niet langer mogelijk in tijden waarin de toekomst van de samenleving zelf op het spel lijkt te staan. Desalniettemin lijkt het nodig dat de universiteit ingaat op urgente maatschappelijke bezorgdheden. Daarom lijkt de gedesinteresseerde houding een hoogst onverantwoordelijk alternatief. Het doel van dit proefschrift is om vanuit een pedagogisch perspectief een nieuw licht te werpen op de verhouding tussen universiteit en samenleving. Daartoe staat de vraag "Hoe studie te situeren in de verhouding tussen universiteit en samenleving?" centraal.

Het proefschrift omvat drie delen. In het eerste deel wordt de literatuur over de verhouding tussen universiteit en samenleving bediscussieerd. Het eerste hoofdstuk onderscheidt twee belangrijke benaderingswijzen, namelijk de transcendentaal-wijsgerige benadering (cf. het idee van de universiteit) en de kritisch-sociologische benadering (cf. academisch kapitalisme) die respectievelijk de universiteit als idee en als organisatie verstaan. Door middel van een excursus over het ontstaan van de universiteit in de middeleeuwen wordt gepleit voor een ecologische benadering van de universiteit. In het tweede hoofdstuk wordt het werk van twee auteurs die recent een dergelijke ecologische benadering voorgesteld hebben, kort gepresenteerd. Waar Ronald Barnett's theorie van de ecologische universiteit zich eerder in de transcendentaal-wijsgerige traditie situeert, past Susan Wright's onderzoek van de universiteit in de kennisecologie eerder in de kritisch-sociologische traditie. Beide opvattingen echter zijn geschraagd op een institutioneel verstaan van de universiteit. In lijn met recente ontwikkelingen in de maatschappijtheorie, met name de focus op praktijken, wordt voorgesteld te werken naar een ecologie van studiepraktijken.

Het tweede deel presenteert het perspectief van de ecologie van praktijken van Isabelle Stengers. Het derde hoofdstuk licht Stengers' werk over wetenschappelijke praktijken toe door het eerst te situeren binnen de zogenaamde Science Wars die de aanleiding vormden voor het uitwerken van een theoretisch kader voor een geciviliseerde dialoog tussen wetenschappers en het publiek. De basisprincipes en -concepten van haar benadering, zoals het begrijpen van een praktijk als een geheel van vereisten en verplichtingen, worden gepresenteerd, uitgelegd, en bediscussieerd. In het vierde hoofdstuk verschuift de focus van wetenschappelijke praktijken naar studiepraktijken. Geïnspireerd door Stengers' werk over Whitehead's speculatieve filosofie, tracht dit hoofdstuk Whitehead's omschrijving van de universiteit als een 'home of adventures' uit te diepen om zo tot een pedagogische begrip van universitaire studiepraktijken te komen. Op een conceptueel niveau wordt onderzocht hoe studiepraktijken bepaalde wereldlijke problemen activeren en transformeren in kwesties van studie.

Het derde deel ontwikkelt het conceptuele werk met betrekking tot studiepraktijken verder in relatie tot de activiteiten van de Palestijnse experimentele universiteit Campus in Camps. Het vijfde hoofdstuk presenteert het werk van Campus in Camps en legt uit hoe het verband houdt met de theoretische discussie van het tweede deel. Op basis van Stengers' praktijkbegrip waarbinnen een onderscheid gemaakt wordt tussen vereisten en verplichtingen als vitale ingrediënten van praktijken, beargumenteert dit hoofdstuk dat het leven in ballingschap de drijvende kracht is achter de studiepraktijken van Campus in Camps, en dat vandaar de kwestie van leven in ballingschap datgene is waaraan deelnemers verplicht zijn wanneer ze studeren. Waar het vijfde hoofdstuk focust op *wat* bestudeerd wordt door Campus in Camps, wil het zesde hoofdstuk de specifieke vereisten onderzoeken waaraan voldaan moet worden om van studiepraktijken te spreken, of in andere woorden, *hoe* ze studeren. Vier vereisten worden onderscheiden die onmisbaar zijn om de studiepraktijken van Campus in Camps te bestuderen, namelijk verhalen vertellen, vergelijken, kaarten maken, en gebruiken.

Het concluderend hoofdstuk herneemt de onderzoeksvraag en presenteert de belangrijkst ideeën die ontwikkeld zijn, zoals het avontuur van studie en het samenhuizen van wetenschap en studie binnen de universiteit. De laatste twee secties van de conclusie gaan dieper in op twee kwesties van een eerder praktische aard, namelijk hoe zich te verhouden tot institutionalisering binnen een praktijktheoretisch perspectief, en ten slotte de vraag wat gedaan kan worden. In het algemeen en terugkerend op het initiële probleem heeft het proefschrift als doel te onderzoeken wat het betekent om de universiteit te verstaan als gesitueerd door en geëngageerd in wereldlijke vragen.

Preface: The PhD-Octopus

Figure I: *Le poulpe brandissait la victime comme une plume*. Illustration by Edouard Riou for *Vingt mille lieues sous les mers*, Jules Verne (1871).

In 1903 publiceerde William James een korte opinie onder de titel *The PhD-Octopus* waarin hij aan de kaak stelt hoe een jonge onderzoeker ondanks zijn capaciteiten niet kon aangenomen worden aan zijn universiteit tenzij hij eerst het doctoraat behaalde. In de tekst schetst James de manieren waarop de universiteiten van de Verenigde Staten zich in toenemende mate in de greep van het doctoraat verstrengeld weten en zich steeds moeilijker aan haar greep kunnen ontworstelen.

Hoewel James vanuit een volledig andere problematiek schreef, vind ik het beeld van het doctoraat als octopus niet alleen een treffend, maar ook een heel herkenbaar beeld, tenminste als niet zozeer de universiteit als wel de doctoraatsstudent begrepen wordt als de prooi die zich verstrikt en verstrengeld in de greep van het doctoraat bevindt.

Voor mij immers begon dit doctoraat pas echt bij de ervaring die de universiteit van een onderzoeksonderwerp in een probleem veranderde, en mij in haar student. Het is een ervaring die mij gedurende bijna twee jaar in haar greep hield en van daaruit haar tastende tentakels uitsloeg naar de personen rondom mij. Het is daarom niet minder dan gepast om hen te bedanken die samen met mij niet anders konden dan de greep te aanvaarden en van daaruit pogingen te ondernemen om zelf terug grip te krijgen.

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Problem Statement

Think we must. In 1937, Virginia Woolf wrote a long reply to a letter she received a few years earlier from 'an educated gentleman' – she never mentions his name – who had asked her how, in her opinion, war could be prevented (1938/2016). Given the rise of fascism in Germany and Italy at that time, war was looming and the gentleman deemed Woolf a loyal ally to protect their so-called 'culture and intellectual liberty', as preserved in the public professions and educational institutions of their time, such as the university. Woolf declined the invitation of the gentleman to support his cause and instead took the opportunity to problematize the warmongering values of these professions and institutions.

She finds herself in a tension between, on the one hand, the desire to leave the private house in order to prevent war – a cause she, as a pacifist, definitely shares with her correspondent – and, on the other hand, an unwillingness to form an alliance with the public world of men. "Behind us lies the patriarchal system; the private house, with its nullity, its immorality, its hypocrisy, its servility. Before us lies the public world, the professional system, with its possessiveness, its jealousy, its pugnacity, its greed" (Ibid., pp. 193-194). She questions the utility of a university education if it instills such values that make it impossible for her to prevent war. Moreover, she problematizes the values that need to be defended, claiming that these are not her values and that, hence, she is not inclined to defend them. Besides, the idea of 'defending' values in order to prevent war sounded a bit strange to her

ears, as she spent most of her time in what she calls the private life, which offered her a perspective in which the ceremonies, decorations, and traditions of the public life seem quite odd. Neither is she inclined to join what she calls the 'procession of educated men'. She writes that "we have to ask ourselves, here and now, do we wish to join that procession, or don't we? On what terms shall we join that procession? Above all, where is it leading us, the procession of educated men?" (Ibid., p. 180).

In spite of her pacifist commitments, Woolf hesitates before the invitation that is offered to her to help prevent war. Instead of rushing in, she prefers to linger a bit longer on the threshold between private house and public life. Woolf argues that, in fact, she and all the others who have been excluded from a university education do not need the university in order to think. She argues that "the daughters of educated men have always done their thinking from hand to mouth; not under green lamps at study tables in the cloisters of secluded colleges. They have thought while they stirred the pot, while they rocked the cradle" (Ibid., p. 180). In that sense, they were thinking long before they were offered the opportunity to go to the university:

> Think we must. Let us think in offices; in omnibuses; while we are standing in the crowd watching Coronations and Lord Mayors' Shows; let us think as we pass the Cenotaph; and in Whitehall; in the gallery of the House of Commons; in the Law Courts; let us think at baptisms and marriages and funerals. Let us never cease from thinking – what is this 'civilization' in which we find ourselves? What are these ceremonies and why should we take part in them? What are these professions and why should we make money out of them? Where in short is it leading us, the procession of the sons of educated men? (Ibid., pp. 180-181).

Perhaps it is the kind of hesitation that Woolf communicates via her letter – a certain willingness to join, delayed by a vigilance concerning what consequences joining might entail – that could still be relevant to those who think about entering the ranks of the university today and, even more urgently, to those who have already entered.

Although it is evident that the university today does not resemble the university of Woolf's time, the question whether we want to join the procession or not – and if yes, how? – is an urgent question. Besides, the question becomes all the more urgent as universities are currently increasingly mobilized in a knowledge economy with buzzwords such as flexibility and competitiveness, which significantly impact the thinking practices of the university. Think we must. Do we want to join the procession of educated men (and women), nowadays a

procession under the banners of progress and growth? The challenge for us today will be to hear Woolf's cry not as a call for desertion, to bite the proffered hand, but rather as a call to reclaim our thinking practices, and to rethink our university. Think we must.

Let us dwell a bit longer, however, on this 'think we must', the hesitation it communicates, and the kind of thinking it calls for. Given the current mobilization of the university as the prime pawn in the knowledge economy, this 'think we must' might help to raise a slightly different awareness of the situation and to devise an interesting and relevant research question. It can be argued that this syntagma has a threefold efficacy.

First, it affirms the necessity to think. It makes clear that thinking is not a skill to be learned or a competence to be obtained. Hence, we do not need a university as a site where we would acquire the capacity to think – as if we were not able to think before entering the university. As such, the syntagma 'think we must' serves as a protection against the idea that lures us into believing that the university would be the thinking head of humankind. It dispels every understanding of the university as a thinking institution that contrasts a non-thinking outside, because it forcefully asserts that this outside was already thinking 'while stirring the pot and rocking the cradle'. Besides, it immediately attaches the university to issues of societal concern such as questions of how war can be prevented or how women can enter the public professions – issues that people, men and women, were already thinking about long before they were offered the possibility to join the ranks of the university. Think we must.

Second, 'think we must' not only conceptually convokes a 'we' around the issues of war or the public professions, but also – and pertinent to the framework of this dissertation – it turns the university itself into a problem. On a rhetorical level, it calls together a public, a 'we', around the question whether we would like to join the university, and on what conditions, especially given the fact that we do not need it in order to think. Moreover, the 'we' that is being invoked is not simply a 'we' of academics, of people who know the university from the inside, or of those who have acquired a specialized expertise on it. Rather, it includes everyone for whom the future of the university and its role in contemporary society could be of concern. In doing so, 'think we must' creates a public around the question of the university. Think we must.

Third, and finally, 'think we must' prevents us from rushing in when slowing down is required. It allows us to take care of the consequences of the transformations that the practices of the university (e.g. giving lectures, doing fieldwork, writing articles, conducting experiments, organizing seminars) are inclined to undergo given their current mobilization in the knowledge economy. Moreover, it resists such a mobilization that seems to require us in fact *not* to think, but instead to produce and to deliver as fast as possible, because it engages a thinking public

around the question of the university. In short, the efficacy of Woolf's cry is to dispel an understanding of the university as the thinking head of humankind, to invoke a 'we' around the question of the university, and to slow down before the consequences of the current mobilization of the university in the knowledge economy. Think we must.

Given its threefold efficacy, 'think we must' poses a double challenge, both parts of which need to be addressed together. On the one hand, it forces us to think about the relation between university and society without taking recourse to an understanding of the university as the thinking head of humankind. On the other hand, and given the first challenge, it demands that we think about the specificity of the thinking that takes place in the course of the practices of the university without assimilating this kind of thinking to the thinking done during other social practices such as 'stirring the pot and rocking the cradle'. Combined, these challenges that come from Woolf's 'think we must' lead to the problem statement of this dissertation, namely to investigate what it means to think in a university, given the fact that the university is not the only place where it is possible to think, that people have been thinking long before they entered the university. The question regarding the specificity of thinking at the university, moreover, transforms the relation between university and society into a problem since it is assumed that people do not need a university in order to think. As such, this dissertation is situated by an interest in the specificity of thinking at the university as well as the relation between university and society.

The remainder of this introductory chapter is structured as follows. The next section explains how this problem statement connects with current theoretical and practical issues. In the third section, I shed light on the specific trajectory of the research question and on the research process. The fourth section aims to give the reader an insight into how I conceive of doing theory by means of a methodological account, and the last section finally contains an outline of the dissertation.

Practical and Theoretical Relevance

The practical and theoretical relevance of the problem statement will be demonstrated by situating these two challenges in discussions in both the social sphere and disciplinary standpoints. Before doing so, however, it is important to underscore that the theoretical relevance cannot be easily separated from the practical relevance, that theoretical issues inevitably touch upon practical concerns, and that practical problems give rise to theoretical discussions; that, in short, practical issues are theoretical through and through and vice versa.

It seems as if the separation between university and society as it is present in the research question persists in the belief that theoretical and practical relevance are two different domains, as if theoretical relevance pertains to the university and practical relevance to the societal realm. Having touched upon this issue, the conceptualizations of the relation between university and society might be a good point to start.

Whereas in the case of Woolf the societal issues in which the university could or should meddle predominantly concerned the prevention of war and the entry of women in the public professions, today one could think of issues such as climate change, migration, unemployment, housing, or nuclear waste. These issues require knowledge and expertise, but in trying to formulate a proper response to them, knowledge and expertise cannot suffice, as these issues are strongly intertwined with the ways in which we live our lives collectively. As such, purely scientific-technocratic solutions are doomed to fall short as they fail to engage a public in the discussion of these problems. Herein lies the question of what role the university should take in mediating between scientific and political discussions; a role, moreover, that seems to be of continuous concern.

In the Belgian context, the two previous rectors of KU Leuven advocated conflicting views on this issue. The scholar who held the position from 2013 until 2017 claimed that the university should be a beacon of light for society. In his rectoral address of 2015, when the question of how to deal with refugees coming to Belgium was heavily debated in the media, he made a plea for the university as a place where thought is cherished and cultivated at times when emotions threaten to take over. It is possible to discern here, yet again, the university stepping to the front as a thinking institution that guides the ship of society through the storm (Torfs, 2015).

This poetic rendering of the university stands in sharp contrast with the more prosaic vision of the current rector. In an opinion piece on the societal role of academics, he referred to a report on the economic contribution of Flemish universities to society. In the report it was calculated that every euro invested in a university in Flanders yields seven euro for the wider economy. This was taken as proof of the contributions that the university has to offer to society (Sels, 2018). These are just two examples of how the relation between university and society and the possibilities and impossibilities for the university to assist in societal affairs have been brought forward.

It is not only during mediatized interventions, however, that the relation between university and society is discussed in various terms; an entire academic field is emerging that tries to develop issues related to the future of the university. Most notably in this respect is the foundation of the *Philosophy and Theory of Higher Education Society* in 2017, accompanied

by an annual conference on *Philosophy of Higher Education* and a journal, the *Journal of Philosophy and Theory of Higher Education*. The initiators of this branch of philosophy of education also started a book series, called *Debating Higher Education*, in which they aim to provide a forum to discuss several issues related to higher education.

Next to these efforts by philosophy of education to come to terms with questions related to the university, there has been the formation of the *Center for Higher Education Futures*, which adopts a broader approach to similar questions and engages an international community of scholars around issues of higher education policy, didactics, and experimental projects. These are just two developments that exemplify the increased concern for higher education and the university in academic educational discourses.

Within the academic discussions a variety of propositions have been uttered in recent years concerning the question how the university can relate to societal concerns. First, I will discuss the work of Rikke Toft Nørgård and Søren Bengtsen, and Jan Masschelein and Maarten Simons, for whom the concept of world seems to be an important point of reference in understanding the university. Thereafter, I will discuss the authors that have recently taken up the challenge to understand this relation between the university and the world in ecological terms.

Nørgård & Bengtsen (2016) have proposed the idea of a *placeful university* that aims to foster academic citizenship. Emphasizing the importance of the spatial aspects of academic education, they argue for a university that integrates, among others, the private, the social, and the professional spheres on the campus. The concept of integration is crucial in their argument since it allows for understanding the entanglement of these various spheres that turns the campus into a multifaceted place of academic discussion and debate in close relation to the spheres outside its spatial confines. A few years later, Nørgård & Bengtsen (2018) take these concerns regarding the university and its environment up again in what they call the *worldhood university*. The worldhood university, so they argue, is a university that thinks from the world and whose thinking affects the world, that is, in their words, both world-made and world-making. Thing, place, designing, and thinking are four concepts that make up the theoretical groundwork of the worldhood university, which is intimately entwined in worldly problems.

Nørgård & Bengtsen, however, have not been the only ones to situate the university in relation to the world (a somewhat broader and perhaps more philosophical rendering of what in the problem statements was termed 'society'). In 2009, Masschelein & Simons wrote not one but two proposals for what they call a *world university*. What is interesting is that in spite of the striking commonalities in the analyses that gave rise to their idea of the world university,

the two proposals seem to diverge in terms of the aims of the world university, the practices that are exemplary for such a world university, and the concepts that are deployed to understand these practices.

In the first proposal by Simons & Masschelein (2009), the world university is the place where the question how to live together, which they suggest is a political question in the Rancièrean sense, is taken up as a central concern. This question, they argue, asked by people not part of an established regime of living, emerges "from the mere presence of illegal immigrants, or the presence of demonstrators walking in the streets, or the public appearance of fully covered Muslim women in some countries" (p. 12). It requires of the inhabitants of the world university an attitude of curiosity for what is happening to us today and how we can live together. The practices that are exemplary for such a world university are those that allow for becoming attentive to the world. They associate these practices with study, which they understand as "an activity to become passive, and hence to become attentive" (Ibid. pp. 13-14). Examples that are given include reading, writing, listening, learning by heart, and mental as well as physical exercises. Central notions in the conceptualization of the world university are curiosity, care, exposition, and attention. These concepts are rather open, in the sense that they allow the authors to describe and grasp a variety of activities practiced at the world university.

These rather open concepts – or weak concepts, in the sense that they do not so much enforce a particular interpretation of the practices of the world university – stand in contrast to the rather strong concepts deployed in the second proposal for a world university by Masschelein & Simons (2009). In this second proposal, they conceptualize the university through the exemplary practice of the lecture (as opposed to the rather general practices of reading and writing of the first proposal). Public use of reason and public gathering come forward as important concepts to understand the world university. In a particular Stengersian reading of Kant's text *What is Enlightenment?*, they propose to understand this public use of reason as a thinking in the presence of something that has – due to the committed or devoted speech of a professor – acquired the power to call into being a thinking public. As such, the aim of the world university (once more, but not yet finished), is to gather a thinking public around something that the professor has lectured about (e.g. a virus, a poem, a river, a formula).

It is this second conception of the university, understood as a public gathering and grounded in the practice of the lecture (and the seminar), that they will further elaborate in later texts in which arguably even stronger concepts (e.g. de-identification, profanation, suspension) are brought in to grasp the scene of teaching (Masschelein & Simons, 2013,

2014). They will argue, for instance, that the educational gesture performed by the professor during the lecture is one of profanation, which they understand as an untying of the link between an object and its regular use, the way it functions in social, political, or economic life, thus making it free for common use. Discussing the profanation of the book, of reason, of culture and time, and production and communication, they trace the precise meaning of this gesture in different time frames (Masschelein & Simons, 2013). The reader is left with the question why they abandoned the first proposal, which differs most strongly from the second in the altogether different configuration of the political and the educational that they put forward, as well as the practices they understand as paradigmatic for the university.

Concerning the first point, the relation between the political[1] and the educational, it might be important to note that in the majority of their texts, and in almost all texts published after the first proposal for a world university, they understand this relation as one of suspension. This means that they assume that when public pedagogic forms, such as the lecture, but also the school, happen, the political is suspended, which means, according to them, that it is temporarily out of operativity, interrupted. An interruption that coincides with and is made possible by the profanation, the opening up, of the world and making it available for public use (and hence, detached from the regular use an object, a word, a motor, a tree might have in our current societies); an interruption moreover, that coincides with a de-identification of those who enter the school or the lecture hall, as being no longer coerced by certain expectations that might come from the family or the society.[2]

It is this understanding of the relation between the educational and the political as one of suspension that has been radicalized in recent years in what is called post-critical pedagogy. In a conversation between the authors of *Manifesto for a post-critical pedagogy*, Joris Vlieghe, one of the initiators of the movement, suggests that "a political activist relates in a different way to the world than the educator does: whereas the first is driven by indignation and hate, the latter is infused with passion and love" (Hodgson, Vlieghe, & Zamojski, 2017, p. 92). Although educators and activists obviously have different ways of relating to the world, such a sharp distinction comes through as an insurmountable contradiction between hate for the world, the political stance, and love for the world, the educational stance.

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[1] The notion of political is understood throughout these paragraphs in a very general sense as that which concerns the question how we can live together.
[2] The doctoral dissertation of Lut Vanden Buverie contains an elaborate ethnographic account of how these educational processes of suspension and profanation take place in school contexts which she theorizes as a pausing of expectations and functionalities external to the school (Vanden Buverie, 2018).

Though I sympathize with Maarten Simons' attempt to turn this contradiction into a contrast when he suggested after a presentation of the post-critical perspective on teaching last year, that both educators and activists might perhaps share a concern for the world, instead of being divided by love and hate for the world, respectively, suspension and interruption are concepts that I have learned to distrust, and I hope this dissertation bears witness to my conviction that an interesting connection between the political and the educational might be more fruitful than a strong separation. In that sense, shared concerns are more prone to foster polite encounters, whereas a combination of love and hate can only lead to bad break-ups. Nevertheless, having grown up with the images and stories of Belgian colonial history, I am aware of some of the many bad encounters between politics and education that have taken place and continue to take place all over the world, and that the wager on an interesting connection between the two thus always implies a risk, that it is not an easy or innocent job to do.

Concerning the second point, i.e. the practices referred to in order to understand the university, to focus only on the lecture and the seminar in the texts published in line with the second proposal for a world university is remarkable. It might be interesting to have a look at other practices that take place at the university as well. For instance, the practices that are named 'practices of study' in the first proposal, but remain barely conceptualized (e.g. reading and rereading a text, learning by heart, physical and mental exercises). As such, practices of study as a point of entry to shed light on the relation between university and society might offer an interesting avenue of thought next to the conceptualizations of this relation based on the practices of the lecture and the seminar.

In conceiving of the relation between university and society, the terms worldhood university or world university, however, are not the only routes that have been taken. Given our current global predicament marked by climate change, the term ecology has been taken up in recent years as a valuable concept in trying to understand the relationship between university and society. Susan Wright (2017), for instance, has raised the question whether the university can be a livable institution in the Anthropocene. Concerned about the increasing capitalization of the university in a knowledge economy, she proposes to rethink the bonds universities entertain with other organizations that make up its ecology (e.g. publishing houses, governments, transnational agencies) in order to arrive at a more livable landscape in which the university can fulfil its societal and public role. Also David Roussel (2016) raises the question of how what he calls university learning environments can be reimagined in response to the social and ecological changes stemming from the Anthropocene. Troubled by the humanist bias of the traditional university, he proposes a learning environment that

consists of "a series of emplaced bodies, objects, modules, networks and design elements that students and teachers collectively assemble into working prototypes and architectures to test ideas" (p. 149).

Other authors have intensified the link between the university and ecological thinking by not only conceiving of the university from an ecological point of view, as challenged by the Anthropocene, but by conceiving of the university as ecological through and through. Ron Barnett (2011, 2018), for instance, has suggested the idea of an ecological university as a way to understand how the university can relate to the ecosystems of, for instance, learning, knowledge, and social institutions amidst which it is situated, and repair human-induced impairment. Michael Peters (2016) has proposed the idea of an eco-university. Situated between economy and ecology, both sharing the root eco-, the university has to be reinvented in order to do justice to the responsibilities it has towards the world. In the second chapter of this dissertation, the work of Ron Barnett and Susan Wright, two authors who have been seriously engaged in thinking the university in relation to ecology, will be discussed at length.

Before moving on to the second challenge coming from Woolf's cry, namely the question regarding the nature of thinking in relation to the university, it might be relevant to underscore that focusing on *the relation between* university and society is an attempt to come to terms with the specific entanglements of the two and to avoid the dangers of either paying too much attention to the university in itself, as if there were no societal expectations to be met or urgent questions to be addressed, or conceiving of the university as just another cog in the societal machine whose only role is the constant and uninterrupted functioning of social reproduction. The relation between university and society is turned into a problem by Woolf's 'think we must', as it puts forward the question what thinking means for the university. This brings us to the second challenge; namely, how thinking can be understood in the context of the university.

In a somewhat timely manner, in 2018, Søren Bengtsen and Ron Barnett published an edited volume titled *The thinking university* (2018). They open the book with the following curious phrase: "The university is a thinking institution. Surely, that does not need to be said but it does" (Barnett & Bengtsen, 2018, p. 1). In spite of the fact that they assume that this is obvious, they still claim that it makes sense to reaffirm that the university is a thinking institution, it seems to pose a problem in the light of Woolf's 'think we must'. What could Barnett and Bengtsen mean when they claim that the university is a thinking institution?

In an article published one year before the book, the authors sketch the problems the university faces in the era of cognitive capitalism. The condition of the university in this era is, they argue, marked by a digitization of knowledge content and an increased importance of disciplines related to sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM-disciplines).

This brings the university's relation to knowledge and truth into a crisis. The authors propose thinking as a possibility for the university to reinvent itself. They argue that the university can rethink itself as an institution that thinks *from* the world, which means that it takes up worldly issues that require thought (Barnett & Bengtsen, 2017). They define the thinking university as "a university that is irredeemably inter-connected with the world. This inter-connection is not only about the university addressing the world, but also responding *to* the world" (Barnett & Bengtsen, 2018, p. 3). They explain that their concept of world not only includes society, but also the wider world of other societies and cultures, of subcultures within society, and of the natural world "and all that it encompasses of species and forms of wild growth" (Ibid., p. 3).

Returning to Woolf's 'think we must' and its efficacy to dispel the ghosts that would make us believe that the university is the thinking head of humankind, Barnett and Bengtsen's thinking university becomes suspicious. Although they do not assert explicitly that the world outside the university is not thinking, the reader is left with the question what the people outside the university have been doing all the time if the university is characterized by the fact that it thinks. As such, the thinking university might lead us into believing that the thinking university thinks from (and for) a non-thinking world, a world, moreover, that has its problems but is in need of the university to find ways of dealing with these problems, to think them through. Not hostile to the thinking university, but vigilant concerning what believing in a thinking university might entail, my question concerns what this thinking then precisely means, how it can be characterized?

At this point, the concept of *study* that has recently been rediscovered in educational discourses might help to shed light on the mode of thinking of the university. Study, as conceived in this dissertation, is the hypothetical name for the way in which the university relates toward the world. It is important to make clear that this statement serves as a proposition, as an idea that is being proposed to the reader, the consequences of which need to be traced in the course of the dissertation. From its inception onwards, the university seems to have been closely connected to the activity of study.

Universitas studii, the community of study, is the name medieval universities acquired when they were sanctioned by the Emperor or the Pope (Rüegg, 1992; Verger, 2013), and the name denoted, more than the usual name of *universitas magistrorum et scolarium*, the activity of this community, namely study (Durkheim, 1938). In the first chapter of this dissertation, I will reflect on the specific meaning of *universitas*, but it might be relevant to unpack the meanings of *studium* at this point. In the Oxford Latin Dictionary, we find that the verb *studēre* means not only studying, learning, or pursuing knowledge, but also being attached to or being in favor of. As such, the concept denotes not only a cognitive activity but also an affective

capacity. It is important to underscore yet again that the name *universitas studii* does not serve as the foundation upon which the dissertation is constructed, but rather as an historico-etymological heuristic device to give the proposition some plausibility and to invite the reader to follow where its consequences might lead.

There are, however, not only historical reasons to focus on the concept of study. In recent years, the theoretical concept of study has gained the interest of anthropologists (cf. Ingold, 2018) and cultural theorists (Harney & Moten, 2013; Manning, 2016). Moreover, study experienced a revival in educational philosophy and theory, for instance via the attempts to reconceptualize it in a volume edited by Claudia Ruitenberg (2017).

Most pertinently, Tyson Lewis has written extensively on the concept of study, particularly from an Agambenian point of view. In *The fundamental ontology of study*, Lewis (2014) argues that study can be considered as the profanation of learning.[3] As the acquisition of knowledge increasingly becomes an end in itself, detached from all kinds of intentions or aims initially held, the learner transforms into a student. As such, Lewis tries to get conceptual grip on these moments that one forgets that one is learning, that one has to achieve something, and that one is lost in a text or a book for instance. In his chapter in the aforementioned edited volume, Lewis (2017) compares the act of studying to melancholy. Referring to Freud, he argues that, whereas mourning implies an intentional relation towards something outside the subject that mourns, melancholy is a rather ambiguous or diffuse experience in which a feeling of loss discloses itself. What is disclosed in the act of studying, Lewis argues, is the educability of the student herself:

> Study becomes a kind of pure means without end. The result is an experience of *educability* without end. Here educability is not placed in the service of any aim outside itself. It is not made into a mean for an end. Nor is it merely an end in itself. Rather, it suspends the means-end logic altogether, producing a pure experience of the self as educable – as a 'whatever' being freed to be otherwise than (Ibid., p. 14).

The image of the student we encounter in Lewis' text seems to me to be rather sad and gloomy. Alone in the archive, reading books, completely forgetting about her intentions to study, Lewis' student gains an experience of her own educability. What she has lost, however, seems to be the world and its questions and problems that made her a student in the first place (or a learner, in Lewis' framework). Moreover, is the dilemma that Lewis confronts us

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[3] Again, we encounter the concept of profanation. It is quite a remarkable fact that educators often refer to theological terms to conceptualize educational experiences.

with – learner or student – and its accompanying understanding of education in terms of 'means', 'ends', 'ends in itself', and 'pure means' not reductive of educational realities and experiences? Is it not possible to think in an educationally interesting way about aims, intentions, attachments, efficacy, maybe even learning?

Jan Masschelein (2017) also seems slightly hesitant to fully embrace Lewis' isolated student. Comparing the iconography of Saint Jerome, in solitude, absorbed in the book, to the iconography of Saint Thomas, engaged in a conversation with a public while reading to them from a book, he argues for an understanding of the university as a form of collective public study. Such a university, he argues, is aimed at making something present (e.g. a planet, an insect, a disease, a stone) while at the same time raising the question of how to live together with what is made present.[4] He explains that collective public study has to do with specific architectures, experimental devices, modes of address, artifacts, etc., of which he gives a few examples. Zigzagging between Saint Thomas lectures during the early years of the university of Paris and Hannah Arendt's writings on the Greeks, he contrasts the pedagogical or scholastic art of speech with the political and philosophical art of speech (rhetorics and dialectics, respectively). Study seems to serve as a collector term to hold together all the activities of a university that gather a public (e.g. lecture, seminar). In that sense, it is quite a broad concept that encompasses many activities. What interests me still, following my discussion of the world universities (in the plural), is the specificity of study in what was then called 'practices of study' and how it diverges from the mode of study that can be discerned in the lecture and the seminar.

Maarten Simons (2017) has also published a small note on the concept of study in relation to the question of how the university can be situated towards truth and politics. After an astute analysis of how personalizing tendencies play into the hands of both post-truth politics as well as evidence-based policies, he puts forward a conception of the university as a site of study: "By taking care of something, by turning something into a matter of concern, by allowing it to speak or become visible and to make us hesitate, practices of study suspend the claims of both truth and politics" (Ibid., p. 244). Again, study is conceived here as a process of suspension. In the next sentence, however, Simons envisages the university as a site "to prepare for new connections between politics and truth" (Ibid., p. 244). As such, there seems to be a tension between university and study, in which the latter suspends the claims of both truth and politics, whereas the former wagers on a possible connection between the two. A few sentences later, however, the text is drawn to a close.

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[4] Perhaps this text could be read as an attempt to remedy the rift between the two world universities?

It is clear that there are both historical and theoretical reasons to conceive of the university in relation to the concept of study. By placing *studying* center stage, however, I defer from Woolf who wrote about *thinking* as something that we do anyway and for which we do not need a university. Focusing on the educational concept of study, instead of the more philosophical concept of thinking, however, allows for a rendering of the relation between university and society that is closer to the educational discussion in which this dissertation aims to intervene. Nevertheless, fleshing out the specificity of study in contrast to thinking is a matter that will have to be addressed in this dissertation, and that I will discuss at the end of Chapter Six.

Given the two challenges that stem from Virginia Woolf's 'think we must' and the theoretical work on study that seems to offer an interesting point of view, this dissertation aims to address the following question: "How to situate study in the relation between university and society?".

Trajectory of the Research Question

The question of how to situate study in the relation between university and society has emerged from work undertaken as part of two research projects that I have been involved in. The first project, *Under the spell of learning: The 'learning society' as challenge for the public role of school, university, and family education*,[5] started from the observation that educational theories increasingly have embraced learning as a referent for the educational practices and processes they investigate, at the expense of notions such as education, upbringing, or teaching. The ambition of this project was to analyze how the traditional educational institutions – school, university, family – have been affected by the current discourse of learning. More particularly, the aim of this research project was to investigate how this trend has affected the kind of gatherings or associations that are enacted within these institutions and, specifically, what this entails with regards to their public character. Based on ethnographic fieldwork with concrete case studies and philosophical theories on more fundamental issues, the project aimed to come to a cartography of actual trends and developments, a morphology of the school, the university, and the family as particular pedagogical forms, and an educational theory that articulates their public character under the regime of the learning society (cf. Laboratory for Education and Society, 2018).

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[5] Supervised by Jan Masschelein (KU Leuven), Maarten Simons (KU Leuven), and Stefan Ramaekers (KU Leuven).

The second project, *The place of university lecturing: A comparative analysis of the practice and experience of lecturing in physical and digital spaces*,[6] had as its point of departure the unabated presence of lecturing as the prime practice of contemporary university education. The objective of this project was to investigate the differences and similarities between physical and digital lecturing practices and, more specifically, the transformations that occur in the educational character of lecturing from the physical lecture hall to the digital Massive Open Online Course (MOOC). Concretely, this research project aimed to arrive at an educational theory of university lecturing, based on historical, philosophical, architectural, and ethnographic theories and methodologies with a specific interest in the materialities and experiences of both physical and digital lecturing. Hence, this project had a strong interest in the architectures of university education (e.g. lecture halls, digital platforms, seminar rooms, and online fora), including how these infrastructures are and have been experienced by professors and students.

While formulating my own research proposal to present to the mid-term committee in January 2017, I made an attempt to remain loyal to both initial projects, while also being well-aware that, given the specific requirements of each project, some kind of betrayal would be unavoidable. The project I presented, *Making a university. An educational inquiry into the conditions and potentials of university education as exemplified by Campus in Camps*, inherited from the first research project a strong interest in the relation between university and society – its so-called public character – and, more specifically, how the university investigates and responds to societal issues. From the second project I inherited a curiosity concerning the architecture of physical universities, while my colleague Lavinia Marin decided to delve into the practices and experiences of digital lecturing. Since both projects share an interest in ethnographic methodologies, I decided to do fieldwork with Campus in Camps, a Palestinian experimental university in Dheisheh Refugee Camp, with which I had been in contact for a few months already.[7]

Corresponding with Alessandro Petti, the program director, and Isshaq Al-Barbary, one of the participants, we agreed on a two-month visit, during which I would be involved in two of their projects – one concerning the presence of women in the camps, the other about designing walking tours for people who visit the camps – that would allow me to contribute to

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[7] In the first two years I had worked on a typology of architectural enactments of the relation between university and society. I discerned three different ways in which universities relate to the built environment (namely, instrumental, symbolic, interactional), each exemplified by a specific case study (respectively, the African Virtual University, the Rolex Learning Center, and Campus in Camps).

their work while taking notes on the ways in which the participants inquire in the camp and propose specific social and spatial interventions. Based on Tim Ingold's ecological anthropology and Peter Sloterdijk's philosophy of anthropogenic spheres, the two questions that would guide my fieldwork were: (1) In which and through which *medium* does the university take place? And (2) Which *techniques* enforce the event of the university as an educational sphere? Via these questions I hoped to shed a light on the study techniques that Campus in Camps deploys in order to affect and be affected by the sociopolitical medium they inhabit.

Nevertheless, in spite of the collaborative work that had been done in order not only to formulate my own questions, but also to consider which questions the participants of Campus in Camps would be interested to collaborate on, in spite of my efforts to establish a well-crafted network of contacts living inside Dheisheh as well as in their neighboring town, Beit Sahour, and in spite of my interlocutors' experiences in receiving foreign guests as part of their work with Decolonizing Architecture Art Residency (DAAR), KU Leuven's advisory board for risk destinations deemed it irresponsible to let one of their researchers travel to the West Bank as part of a doctoral research project.[8] Needless to say, this decision severely impaired my research project and it took almost half a year to devise a modified research proposal that did justice to my initial theoretical interests as well as the importance Campus in Camps had gained in my thinking about the university.

For me, it was already clear, quite early on, that there was no use in detaching the theoretical perspective that I had started to develop in relation to Campus in Camps from their actual practice in order to apply it somewhere else, which would resonate with the repeated suggestion on behalf of my supervisors to do fieldwork in another setting. I am infinitely grateful to Donna Haraway (2016) who gave me, in her own inimitable prose, the words to finally express my intuition that indeed "it matters what matters we use to think other matters with" (p. 12), and that it was not just stupid stubbornness that I felt at that time. There were important reasons for not doing theory in general, but always in relation to concrete practices, to study *some*thing, instead of *every*thing or *any*thing. Respecting the negative decision of the advisory board as well as my commitment to study Campus in Camps, I had to enforce a coupling between these two experiences that seemed, at first sight, and for a long time, impossible.

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[8] If Deleuze and Guattari (1994) are right that indeed "the feeling of shame is one of philosophy's most powerful motifs" (p. 108), then this dissertation might after all – although I would refuse it for many other reasons – be worthy of the name 'philosophy', as it was enormously embarrassing to communicate this decision, taken by a committee that did not even make the effort to discuss their doubts with either me or my hosts in Dheisheh, to my interlocutors in the field.

The decision of the advisory board of KU Leuven forced me to think; not only in the sense that I had to think about how to rewrite my research proposal, but also, and most importantly, in the sense that it made me think about what it means to be a researcher given the constraints the university has put on my work. Moreover, it had become an experience I could not exclude from my thoughts and that I did not want to exclude, since it touched so deeply upon my research interests as well. It had become clear to me that the challenge was not so much to find something else to do, to 'select another case', as if it was just a matter of lack of feasibility with the previous one, but to find a way to inherit this event that made me think:

> To attempt to inherit an event, to dare become children of the event, then, is to affirm that it is the latter that poses a problem, and it is this problem posed that transforms one into a researcher, into a developer of problems (Savransky, 2016, p. 167).

For me, it meant that I had to come to terms with the fact that I had got caught up in an experience that I could not exclude from my thinking anymore and that this event had transformed me into a researcher.

While rewriting my research proposal, I stayed close to my initial question concerning the relation between university and society. It was, however, clear that, given the impossibility of conducting fieldwork where it seemed relevant for me to do so, my dissertation would acquire a more theoretical character, and that it could be helpful to encounter an author with a rich and complex oeuvre that would allow me to delve deeper into the issues that concerned me. I have found such a companion and ally in Isabelle Stengers, a Belgian philosopher of science and Whitehead scholar, parts of whose work I had already read but barely understood, in particular her *Cosmopolitics* – in the course of my master's internship on the so-called learning sciences – and her discussion of the work of Whitehead – in whose philosophy of the event I had gained an interest in the first year of my research (cf. Stengers, 2010, 2011c, 2011e).

One can only guess how it is possible to acquire such a sudden affinity for an author, but in this case I think my recent experience with the university administration provided an appropriate medium (in the chemical sense) for a very powerful molecular binding with a recalcitrant author, best known for her analyses of the degenerating milieu in which scientific practices try to survive. Indeed, with an author such as Stengers, the concept of practices, including how they relate to other practices that make up their milieu, takes center stage. And hence, I had to take this up in reformulating my research proposal.

I translated my interest in the *medium* (as milieu) and *techniques* of Campus in Camps – the research in which they would have been the central matter of study – into an interest in

the university both *as* an ecology of practices and *from the perspective of* an ecology of practices (to borrow Stengers' term). In short, whereas the notion of techniques was broadened to practices, my interest in the medium was exchanged for an interest in the ecology of the practices of the university. It is clear that the notion of practice will play an important role in formulating an answer to my research question – "How to situate study in the relation between university and society?" – of which I have sketched the history. In the next section, I will reflect on my relation toward both Stengers and Campus in Camps and how I conceive of doing theory.

Methodology

In the previous section, I explained that I had to exchange my initial research design, based on participant observation, for a different way of addressing my research question. Given this adjustment in favor of a research design that is low on 'data', traditionally understood, a section on methodology might seem a bit odd. Indeed, is it necessary to claim the name of methodology if it is obvious that what has been followed is anything but the Royal Road to Scientific Discovery? For a long time it was not clear to me how to conceive of doing theory if I could not do it based on ethnography. What kind of relationship would be possible with the university I was particularly interested in if I could not properly take part in its work? Again, it was Haraway who helped me out, and the aim of this methodological section is to give an account of how I conceive of doing theoretical work, rather than providing assurance that I have followed the 'right road'. A second aim of this section is to shed light on my relation towards both Campus in Camps and Isabelle Stengers.

Cat's cradle is a game played all over the world albeit in different versions, Haraway (2016) explains.[9] In spite of the many different sequences and figures that can be made, some common characteristics can be discerned. The game is played with one piece of string of which both ends are tied together in order to form a loop. This loop is held between two hands and so the game begins. Now, another player takes over the piece of string which allows for

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[9] String figures sparked the interest of ethnologists at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. Franz Boas was the first to write a short text on Eskimo cat cradling and he was closely followed by Alfred Cort Haddon whose daughter came across this game while she accompanied him on an expedition in the Torres Straits. Haddon was the first to write a more extensive and comparative account of string figures in different regions of the world. He discerned a variety of openings and possible sequences. With *String figures. A study of cat's cradle in many lands*, Caroline Furness Jayne (1962) took up Haddon's work and furthered his attempts to collect and analyze different cat cradling games and string figures.
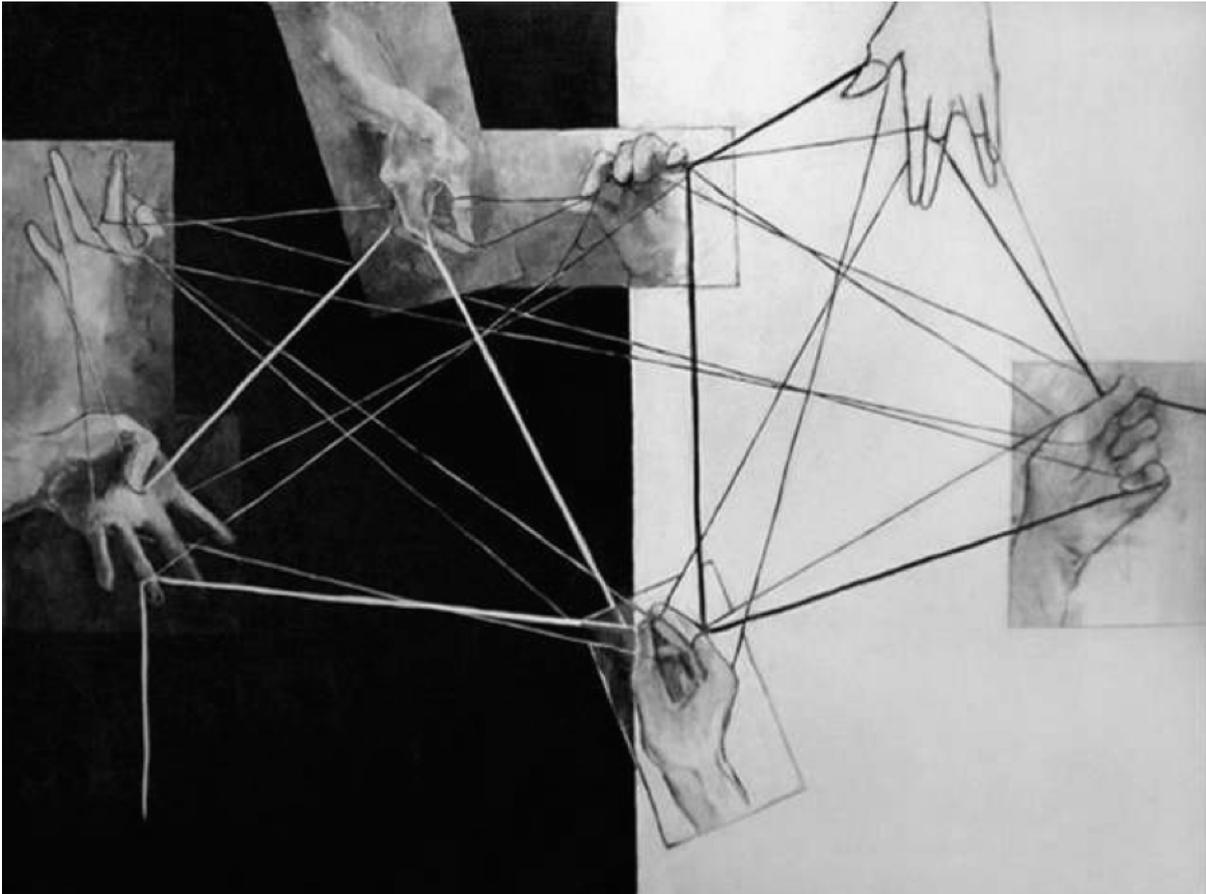
Figure 1: Baila Goldenthal, *Cat's Cradle/String Theory*, 2008.

another pattern to emerge.[10] Thereafter, the first player (or a third for that matter) receives the pattern again, thus creating a new figure. The game continues in this way until the players arrive at a string figure that does not allow it to be passed back again.[11] As such, cat's cradle is a game without winners or losers, or more precisely, to win means to be able to go on time and again, to take what is passed on and respond. To play cat's cradle, then, means to engage in a collective process of continuous unfolding in which new patterns arise continually.[12]

Often, the string figures depict scenes that are part of stories told while playing the game. A few examples are Little Boy Carrying Wood, a string figure found around the river Klamath in Oregon, Canoe with Two Sails, a string figure from the Gilbert Islands, Fish in a Dish, a quite common string figure that was rediscovered in various places, or the Navajo string figure Two Coyotes Running Opposite Ways.[13] Haraway argues that as storytelling devices string figures are not only a child's game but also a pedagogical practice, as they initiate children

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[10] The game, however, can also be played alone but that often also requires other limbs such as teeth and toes in order to play.

[11] There are cultural differences as to which string figures are understood as deadlocks, because practically any string figure can give way to another configuration.

[12] See Figure 1.

[13] See Figure 2.
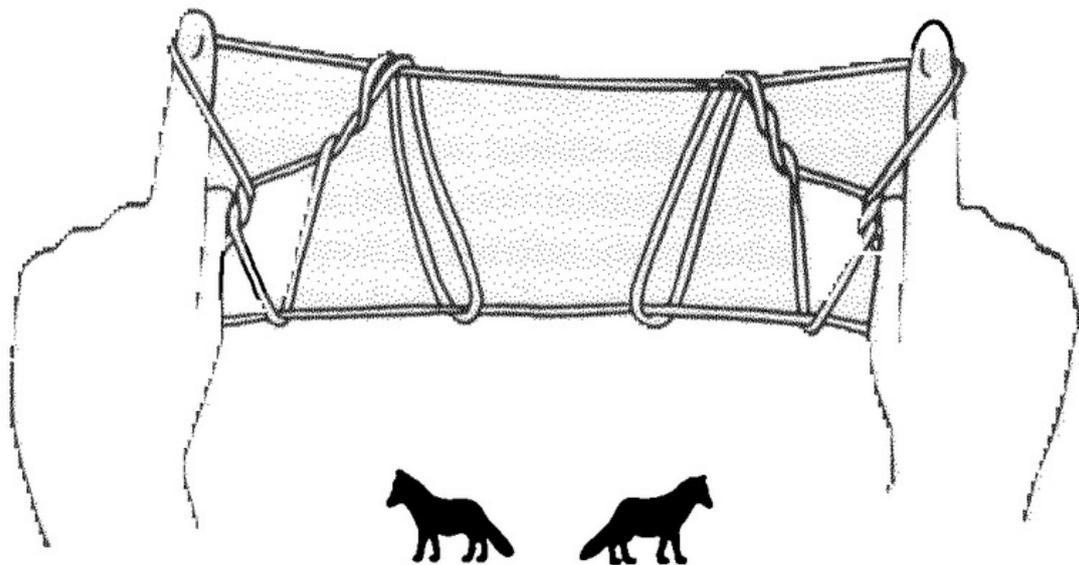
Figure 2: Two Coyotes Running Opposite Ways.

into the stories and narratives of the older generation while at the same time giving them literally out of hand to the new generation. For me, the game of cat's cradle, however, is not only a child's game or a pedagogical practice, but also a way to understand what it means to do theory in educational research. In order to make this clearer, I will further explain some of the game's features.

First, in the game of cat's cradle different people come together to play around a *common thread*. The different patterns that emerge when the thread is passed on present an idea of ongoing transformation without falling into the trap of growth, as the thread does not become bigger or longer. String figures do not propose an idea of educational theory as progress, development, or growth. It is not about an accumulation of knowledge. Besides this, it is a way of creating a series of patterns without cutting the loop. It is not about denunciation or debunking in order to lay bare particular presuppositions and so to extract a certain position from the debate, but rather to compose with unasked-for patterns. *Taking care of the thread* is hence the second feature and the core rule of the game. Cat-cradling never boils down to growing or cutting.

A third feature is that it demands a certain loyalty to what is given – maybe a methodology of 'data' after all, in a very literal sense –, and here loyalty should be distinguished from fealty or fidelity. The loyalty of taking the relay has to do with the care for the thread that is required. Knowing that what you take has been held-out requires a *thinking in-between*, a willingness to take the relay and draw out another pattern. As such, it is not the same as commenting, which stays often inappropriately close to what is commented on, or hacking a text to make it

affirm one's own ideas. Fourth, thinking in relays requires a response to the trust of the held-out hand. It is important to make clear that this trust is not a trust in the other, but rather a *trust in the creative uncertainty* of a specific encounter, an always partial connection in a particular milieu, of the in-between of the relay. It means to accept not to be the author of one's ideas, but to participate in a process and practice of thinking thoughts with other thoughts, to expose oneself to the risks of always-emerging beginnings without the security of fixed end-points. It is in giving hold and taking hold, passion and action, attachment and detachment that new patterns can be composed. Finally, it is an activity in which the participants experience the *joy of creation*, of making and thinking together, of taking care of a common thread in relay and return, of giving way to always new and unforeseen futures (Haraway, 2016; Hughes & Lury, 2013; Stengers, 2011d).

I like to think about the writing of my dissertation as a game of cat's cradle with Stengers, Campus in Camps, and others in which we play around the common thread of the question how to situate study in the relation between university and society. Although this question is of course neither the question of Stengers nor of Campus in Camps, I am convinced that they would deem this an interesting and relevant question and that there is hence a certain willingness to play, to take care of the thread. Since it is not a question that drives their work or activities, but nevertheless a question their work or activities touch upon, it provides a challenging opportunity to think together in the in-between of the relay. Trusting the creative uncertainty of their encounter, I wagered on the possibility of an interesting connection.

As playmates, however, both Stengers and Campus in Camps have other ways of interacting, of giving and soliciting response. It might, therefore, be relevant to elucidate how they relate to the issue of the university. In order to do so, some general remarks about their work and activities will be made.[14]

Throughout her work, Stengers has mainly addressed the transformations scientific practices undergo due to changes in the environment that either nourish or poison them. She has also addressed the question of how the public can meddle in scientific discussions, matters that are for her never questions that concern only the experts, but rather everyone and everything affected by the decision that risks being taken. Given this interest, it is highly

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[14] Later on in the dissertation, these will be elaborated more extensively. Section 4 of Chapter Two contains a general introduction to the work of Stengers. Chapters Three and Four deal respectively with Stengers' work in philosophy of science and her reading of Whitehead's speculative philosophy. Campus in Camps is introduced at the beginning of Chapter Five, and both Chapter Five and Chapter Six contain more elaborate analyses and discussions of their activities.

remarkable that she only sporadically writes about the university and almost never in a more elaborate fashion.[15]

A short passage from an interview she gave to Erik Bordeleau in 2011, in which she adopts an extremely defeatist stance with regards to the institution of the university, is noteworthy in this respect. She declares that:

> They [the universities] have already died once, in the Middle Ages, with the printing press. It seems to me that this is in the process of being reproduced—in the sense that they can only exist as diplomatic institutions, not as sites for the production of knowledge. Defending them against external attacks (rankings, objective evaluation in all domains, the economy of knowledge) is not particularly compelling because of the passivity with which academics give in. This shows that it's over. Obviously, the interesting question is: who is going to take over? (Stengers & Bordeleau, 2011, p. 12).

Her position is that the university qua institution is not an interesting locus of resistance anymore, and that it is probably more relevant to focus on scientific practices. Although her plea to concentrate on recalcitrant practices instead of compliant institutions is certainly reasonable and interesting, Stengers risks narrowing down the practices of the university to scientific practices and thus forgetting its other practices, most importantly its educational practices.[16]

In December of the same year, Stengers came back to the issue of the university in the course of her inaugural lecture for the Willy Calewaert Chair at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB). On that occasion she took issue with the dismissal of Barbara Van Dyck by the rector of KU Leuven after she had participated in political action on a potato field where scientists were experimenting with genetically modified crops. Stengers' lecture was a plea for a slow science, in which she argued that current fast and competitive research lacks balance, which means that it does not include the interests and opinions of the public in general, and promotes

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[15] A notable exception is her book with Vinciance Despret in which they collected a variety of experiences by female colleagues of working at a university. This book, however, does not present her own stance towards the university, as it is conceived as an assemblage of the different responses they received to the question of what it meant for their colleagues to enter the university and work there. For this reason, it is excluded from this short presentation of Stengers' thoughts about the university (Despret & Stengers, 2011).

[16] In a short video-interview with a student, Stengers makes a similar analysis of the threats posed by a university that behaves like a private business, inspired by the Bologna reforms. She focuses on the marketization of higher education informed by notions such as competitiveness and flexibility. She argues that these reforms severely harm the public and democratic character of the university. See https://vimeo.com/8116026.

speed over relevance and quality. She expressed her wish that "research institutions and researchers learn to be affected, actively affected, by the fact that for many people the task of universities, our task, and thus our responsibility, are engaged in the creation of this future, a future which would be worth living" (Stengers, 2011a, p. 12).

In her lecture, it is possible to sense a more positive appreciation of the university, although it is clear that she leaves it to the scientists to make the best of it,[17] to resist the acceleration of science,[18] and to reclaim scientific practices. Here again, it is remarkable that she defines the university almost exclusively as engaging in scientific practices. Although she refers to the shame she feels while addressing her students who come with great expectations of the university – a shame provoked by the incapacity of the university to prepare these students for the future they will have to face according to her – she does not further elaborate on the potentiality of the university's task to teach as a site for slowing down.[19]

The initiators and participants of Campus in Camps have an altogether different relation towards the university. Instead of turning one's back on the university and focusing on scientific practices in order to resist the acceleration of research, like Stengers did, the people involved in Campus in Camps claimed the notion of university as a denominator for their different practices. Calling themselves a university, instead of a social work initiative, a political action group, an organizer of cultural activities, or a non-governmental organization (NGO), allowed a new perspective to be opened up on their practice of bringing people together to investigate and discuss together their current living conditions in the camp, including possible futures.

In their handbook, which was written for the occasion of their second anniversary in 2013, Alessandro Petti, the program director, explained that: "Campus in Camps does not follow or propose itself as a model but rather as public space in formation. *Al-Jame'ah* translates in English as "university" but its literal meaning is a place for assembly, a public space" (p. 28). Hence, it is clear that Campus in Camps is mainly interested in the connotation that the name

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[17] A plea, as she reminds her audience, is always held from a marginal position towards a party that can effectively act upon a certain issue. Situating herself as a philosopher, she speaks to the scientists that are capable of effectuating the possibility of slow science that she aimed to activate, against the probability of acceleration.

[18] She explains that the acceleration of science is not a new phenomenon. As a philosopher of chemistry, she refers to Justus von Liebig who dramatically altered what it meant to be a chemist. For centuries, chemistry was conceived as a craft that took a lifetime to be mastered. In Liebig's laboratory, however, a student could obtain the doctoral degree after four years of intensive training, which was no longer focused on the acquisition of techniques and recipes, but rather on the following of standardized protocols. In the period from 1824 to 1851, he trained hundreds of students in his laboratory in Giessen, many of whom would create similar laboratories in other universities (Bensaude-Vincent, 2009; Bensaude-Vincent & Stengers, 2001; Stengers, 2011a; Stengers & Bensaude-Vincent, 2003).

[19] Instead she refers in this respect to the third task of the university, service to society, as a site to reclaim scientific practices and to slow down.

university bears of being a place of public gathering. This raises the question of the ways such gathering carries also an educational dimension. In texts on the activities of Campus in Camps, its initiators suggest that it has to do with the unlearning of colonial knowledges – decolonizing the mind – and communal learning based on shared and collective experiences. A strong conception of what a university is, or what is particular to its practices, is still lacking, however.

Playing string figures with Stengers and Campus in Camps means relaying to them a question that is not central to their work and activities. As argued above, Stengers is not so much interested in the university, and focuses instead on scientific practices. As far as the university is concerned, her interest in it is limited to the university as a milieu for scientific practices. The university as an educational milieu or as a habitat for educational practices seems to be of little importance to Stengers. Although Campus in Camps has warmer feelings towards the university, their conception of it is limited to it being a place for public assembly. This is obviously an interesting idea, especially in relation to resisting the acceleration of science that Stengers describes, but it lacks a profound educational dimension.

Playing string figures with Stengers and Campus in Camps means not to criticize them for not being interested in the educational dimensions of the university. Rather, it means to relay a question to them that is not theirs – How to situate study in the relation between university and society? – but to which their work and activities might come to matter. It is about composing and drawing out new patterns that were not already there. Lastly, playing string figures with Stengers and Campus in Camps means to receive unasked-for patterns, being forced to invent ongoingness when the received pattern could be considered a deadlock, such as, for instance, Stengers' defeatist statements concerning the university. It means to reckon with the fact that every held-out hand exposes itself to the risk of being bitten. I have experienced playing string figures with Stengers and Campus in Camps as a very challenging process and practice. At times it was hard to create the in-between of an interesting encounter with partners that were sometimes far removed, both literally and figuratively.

To conclude this methodological section, I will clarify which were my main sources in writing my dissertation. In this manner, I want to give the reader an insight into the thoughts I tried to think other thoughts with, in order for the reader to be able to verify what I have written. With regards to the work of Stengers, two books have been very helpful in guiding my own reading of and writing on her work. Her book *La vierge et le neutrino. Les scientifiques dans la tourmente* has been a useful source to understand Stengers' philosophy of science.[20]

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[20] Some but not all of Stengers' work has been translated into English. The two books, however, upon which I draw the most in this dissertation have no English translation yet. When I quote from her work,

Whereas the first part of the volume discusses the Science Wars and the problems with the idea of modern science as an objective vector of progress, the second part outlines the contours of what she calls an ecology of practices, the possibility of a peaceful conversation between diverging practices, all with their own particular requirements and obligations.[21] The third chapter of this dissertation contains a concise presentation of Stengers' ecology of scientific practices.[22]

The fourth chapter on the contrary, is mainly based on her book *Civiliser la modernité? Whitehead et les ruminations du sens commun*. Going back to the inspiration Stengers finds in Whitehead allowed me to retrieve an educational dimension in her work. In this book, Stengers reads Whitehead's philosophy of civilization mainly from an interest in its political implications. It is, however, important to bear in mind that Whitehead had a genuine philosophy of education in which this notion of civilization played a crucial role. In the fourth chapter, I take Whitehead's address at the inauguration of the Harvard Business School on the task of the university as a starting point to elaborate an ecology of study practices.[23]

With regard to Campus in Camps, it is important to discern two types of sources I have worked with. First, there are the texts written by the initiators, Alessandro Petti and Sandi Hilal, and by close collaborators such as Eyal Weizman and Bianca Elzenbaumer. These texts were important to get a general idea about the vision and activities of Campus in Camps. They have, however, only played a marginal role in the analysis, as they only provide a general account of what happens.

In order to acquire a more detailed understanding of their work, I have consulted the publications that the participants have worked on to present their activities. These were collected in *The Collective Dictionary* and *The Initiatives*. Whereas the first series deals with different notions participants deem relevant to understand the camp condition, the second series presents a variety of concrete actions they have undertaken in investigating the camp and effectuating social and spatial interventions. These series contain reflections, reports of discussions, photographs, and maps that have been generated in the course of the first two

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I have used the English, official translation if possible. If there was no English translation published, I translated the quote myself and put the original in a footnote so the reader can check the translation.

[21] Requirements and obligations are two technical concepts in the work of Stengers that will be quite central to the argument of this dissertation. Whereas the concept of obligation comes quite simply from the French 'obligation', the concept of requirement comes from the French 'exigence'. In some translations, the French 'exigence' is translated as 'exigency', but I have followed Robert Bonnono, who translated the seven volumes of *Cosmopolitiques*, in translating it as 'requirement'.

[22] Next to the aforementioned book, this chapter is based on Stengers' *Cosmopolitiques*, seven short volumes on the history of physics, and *The invention of modern science* (2000, 2003a, 2003b).

[23] Next to Stengers' most recent volume on Whitehead, this chapter is based on her authoritative introduction to Whitehead's speculative philosophy (2011e).

years of the program. It is mainly on the accounts that can be found in these two series that I have based my analysis of their task.

Playing string figures with Stengers and Campus in Camps has been for me a way of inheriting the event of the decision of the committee for risk destinations, an event that made me think about the university and that I wish to amplify with this text. Writing a text as a way to inherit an event means, however, that the text is "neither comprehensible nor audible except insofar as it is a function of a certain problematic which it contributes to modify, from which it allows an escape" (Schlanger, 1983, p. 228). As such, it might be important to keep the event that gave rise to this text in mind while reading it, in order to get a better grasp of the problematic from which it emerged and that which it seeks to escape from in order to modify it (cf. Savransky, 2017a).

Writing as a way of inheriting an event obviously holds consequences for the style of writing. In fact, I only became aware of these consequences after writing, but it might be relevant to contextualize these consequences somewhat, and to try to explain why I write in the way that I write, although this is probably an impossible task. Many of the claims that are made will seem to be untrue, slightly exaggerated, or grotesque. It is important to note that these claims are, in the first instance and intent, not aimed at describing what is, or what, according to probabilistic logics, will be. Instead, they are aimed at an activation of the possible, in the sense that they do not so much transmit a 'knowledge of' as they give expression to a 'belief in'. They bear witness to a belief in the university, a strange kind of belief I could draw strength from while writing this text, and that I found very hard to understand. This time it was not Donna Haraway but Kathrin Thiele (2010), taking the relay from Deleuze, who gave me the appropriate words to express my intuition; namely that:

> Thinking the world differently, when 'belief in' replaces 'knowledge of' the world, turns the world from something given into something to be explored, always to be constructed and created, and this again not according to the measure of 'what is' but according to the measure of 'what this world is capable of' (p. 33)

Belief in the world in spite of all the reasons we have to despair is a vital ingredient in the process of doing theory in the speculative-pragmatic mode. It means to wager on the possibility of a future that is different from the one that presents itself as obvious or unavoidable. For me, it is this way of doing theory that has helped me to inherit the event that has transformed the university into a problem and me into its researcher (cf. Savransky, 2017b; Wilkie et al., 2017). As a consequence, this text is written in a style that bears witness

to a passion for creating, rather than deconstructing, and for composing, rather than critiquing, to a willingness to forge interesting connections, and, most of all, a zest for thinking thoughts with other thoughts. In the framework of this dissertation, this has resulted in a style of writing that is perhaps as assertive as it is associative, and that does not concern itself too much with theoretical nuance or empirical detail.

Doing theory in a speculative-pragmatic mode is a way of theorizing that has gained importance in recent years and that emerged in line with Isabelle Stengers' pragmatist reading of Whitehead and the commitment he voiced "to make thought creative of the future" (1929/1958, p. 82). It welds together, on the one hand, speculation about possible futures and the concern for how these futures may constitute lures for action in the present, on the other hand (Debaise & Stengers, 2017). It is a line of thinking that has gained importance in fields such as social theory (cf. Wilkie, Savransky, & Rosengarten, 2017), ethics (cf. Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017), and architecture (cf. Doucet, 2015). With this dissertation my aim is to relay this way of doing theory to discussions in educational philosophy and theory.

Outline

To conclude this introductory chapter, I will briefly outline the structure of this dissertation. As argued in the previous sections, the aim of this dissertation is to reconsider the relation between university and society from an educational perspective by addressing the question, "How to situate study in the relation between university and society?" The dissertation will address this problem by drawing on the philosophy of Isabelle Stengers, as well as on the work of Campus in Camps.

As such, this dissertation is oriented in four directions. First, it is situated toward an issue, namely the relation between university and society. Second, it is situated towards an interest, namely the concept of study as a way to conceive of the activity of the university. Third, it is situated toward a perspective, more precisely Isabelle Stengers' ecology of practices. And fourth, it is situated toward a practice, namely the Palestinian experimental university Campus in Camps.

This text consists of three main parts that each contain two chapters. Whereas the first part analyzes the existing literature on the relation between university and society, the second part develops a theoretical framework based on Stengers' writings on the ecology of practices in order to shed a different light on this relation. In the third part, the approach that is proposed in the second part will be developed further in relation to the work of Campus in Camps.

Finally, the conclusion brings together the major findings of the research. In the following pages, the three parts will be presented in more detail.

The aim of Part One is to introduce the approaches that have been developed to the relation between university and society in a general way. Chapter One starts by discerning two main approaches to this issue: the transcendental-philosophical approach that emerged at the beginning of the 19th century in Germany, on the one hand, and the critical-sociological approach that came into being in the second half of the 20th century in the United States, on the other hand. It will be argued that whereas the transcendental-philosophical approach conceives of the university as an idea, the critical-sociological approach understands the university as an organization. In spite of the seemingly contradictory conceptions of the university – as idea and as organization – it will be argued that both approaches are hinged upon an institutional conception of the university. By means of an excursus on the emergence of the university in the Middle Ages, in order to omit such an institutional understanding of the university, the case is made for an ecological approach to the university and its relation to society.

In Chapter Two, the work of two authors who have recently adopted such an ecological approach is briefly presented. Whereas it can be argued that Ronald Barnett's theory of the ecological university is situated more in the transcendental-philosophical tradition, Susan Wright's investigations of the university in the knowledge ecology can be placed in the critical-sociological tradition. Both conceptions, however, in my view, do still rely on an institutional understanding of the university. As such, it is clear that a merely ecological approach to the university is not enough to come to a more situated account of the relation between university and society from an educational point of view. In line with recent developments in social theory, namely the emergence of practice theories, it is proposed to combine both an ecological approach and a focus on practices and hence to work towards an ecology of study practices.

Part Two presents Isabelle Stengers' writings on the ecology of practices to shed a different light on the relation between university and society in which practices take center stage. Chapter Three elucidates Stengers' work on scientific practices by first situating it in the context of the so-called Science Wars, which provided the impetus to elaborate this theoretical framework for a civilized dialogue between scientists and the broader public. The basic tenets and concepts of her approach, such as the understanding of a practice as a set of requirements and obligations, are presented, explained, and discussed.

It is important to note that Stengers' work is situated within philosophy of science. This means that she has not, or at least not extensively, written on the study practices of the university. Moreover, as shown in this introduction, she holds quite negative views with regard

to the university and to education in general. Nevertheless, Stengers often uses typical educational notions such as learning, attention, empowerment, and care in her work. An explanation for this could be her interest in the work of Whitehead. Indeed, Whitehead had his own philosophy of education in which the concept of civilization, as opposed to professionalism, has an important position. However, Stengers holds on to a very political reading of this concept, which risks obscuring its educational dimension to a rather great extent.

Chapter Four – on study practices – therefore starts from Whitehead's description of the university as a 'home of adventures' in order to draw out an educational dimension in the work of Stengers. Assisted by Stengers' writings on Whitehead's speculative philosophy, this chapter aims to flesh out Whitehead's description of the university in order to come to an educational understanding of the study practices of the university. A conceptual inquiry into how study practices activate certain worldly problems and turn them into matters of study is undertaken. Together, the third and the fourth chapters propose a theoretical framework on the scientific practices as well as the study practices of the university.

Consequently, Part Three develops the conceptual work on study practices further in relation to the activities of the Palestinian experimental university Campus in Camps. Chapter Five presents the work of Campus in Camps and explains how it relates to the theoretical framework elaborated in the course of the second part. On the basis of Stengers' theory of practice, which discerns requirements and obligations as vital ingredients of a practice, this chapter argues that life in exile is what drives the study practices of Campus in Camps, and hence, that it is the issue of life in exile that participants are obligated to when they study, i.e., it is life in exile that makes them think. As such, it is the obligation of the practice of Campus in Camps that is at the center of attention in the fifth chapter.

Whereas Chapter Five is focused on *what* is being studied in Campus in Camps, Chapter Six inquires into the specific requirements their activities need to fulfill in order to be validated as study practices, in other words, *how* they study, or still in other words, which specific activities need to be done in order for the practice to be intelligible as a study practice. Four requirements are discerned that together seem indispensable to understand the study practice of Campus in Camps; namely, storytelling, comparing, mapmaking, and using. This analysis helps to develop further the conceptual work on study practices of the fourth chapter and to situate it within the work of an existing university, namely Campus in Camps.

Finally, the concluding chapter returns to the research question and takes up again the key ideas developed in the dissertation. The main arguments on the relation between university and society, the educational quality of study, and the togetherness of science and

study within the university are summarized. The last two sections of the conclusion deal with two remaining issues of a more practical nature; namely, how to relate to institutionalization when working from a practice-theoretical point of view, and lastly, the question of what can be done in relation to the university based on this dissertation. Overall, and returning to the initial problem, the dissertation inquires into what it means to conceive of the university as situated by and engaged with worldly questions. Think we must.

Part One

University and Society

Chapter One
University, Idea and Organization

The question how to situate study in the relationship between university and society can be approached from different angles. The aim of this chapter is first to shed light on two strands of literature that each conceptualize the relation between university and society in another way. In the first two sections of this chapter, respectively the transcendental-philosophical and the critical-sociological approach will be unpacked. At the outset, it is noteworthy that the educational concept of study, present in the research question, is quite alien to both the philosophical and the sociological discourse. Hence, the focus will be predominantly on the relationship between university and society, and what, according to both discourses, can be situated in this relationship if not study. By means of an excursus to the medieval university, the third and fourth section of this chapter argue for a different approach to the relation between university and society, more precisely an ecological approach. The chapter ends with an overview of the basic tenets of such an ecological perspective. In this first section, however, I will analyze the transcendental-philosophical discourse on the university.

The Idea of the University

For decades, philosophers have written texts and given addresses on the topic of the university. Coming from different national and theoretical backgrounds, they have given their thoughts on the question of the university and its relation to society. Hence, there is a vast

literature containing textual sources with titles promising an *idea of the university*, even to the extent that one could claim that it is a philosophical genre *sui generis*. It is important to note that the philosophers pertaining to this tradition did not present an idea of the relation between university and society but that it was their attempt to formulate an idea of the university in and of itself. This means that in their thinking they conceive of the university *as* an idea and that this idea of the university has specific consequences for the institution of a university (and hence also for its relation to society).

Perhaps the most famous text in this genre are the lectures John Henry Newman gave in 1852 upon his inauguration as the rector of the catholic university in Dublin. Throughout these discourses Cardinal Newman pleads for a liberal university education. Liberal should in this context, however, not be understood as referring to the liberal arts, but rather as an educational orientation or an educational spirit. Newman believed that in the university knowledge should be pursued for the sake of knowledge, and that such an unselfish strive for wisdom would lead to an ascent of the mind (Newman, 1852/1976). Newman's lectures on the idea of the university were very influential in the establishment and the expansion of the Anglo-Saxon tradition of liberal arts colleges and keep on inspiring discussions on the philosophy of higher education until today.

Newman, however, was anything but the only philosopher who thought about the university. In the German context, there are, for instance, Heidegger's rectoral address (1933/2018), or Habermas' reflection on the university reforms that caused the German university to differentiate in so many sub-systems (1987). In the United States, Clark Kerr (1963/2018) had made a similar observation when he stated that he often thought of the university as "a series of individual faculty entrepreneurs held together by a common grievance over parking" (p. 470). Until recently, the reader interested in philosophical discourses on the university could get easily lost in the complex body of texts on the matter. Only a few guides were available that could give a sense of direction in the multifarious landscape (cf. Drèze & Debelle, 1968; Horst et al., 2010; Scott, 2006).

In 2018, however, philosophers of education Michael A. Peters and Ronald Barnett published an authoritative anthology of the texts pertaining to the tradition of the Idea of the University (2018b). Well-aware of the problems and challenges associated with the collection of a canon of texts on the idea of the university, they group different authors together under four national contexts: the German tradition that placed philosophy central in the university (e.g. Schleiermacher, Jaspers, and Gadamer), the Anglo-Saxon tradition which organized the university around the national literary heritage, most notably the work of Shakespeare (e.g. Arnold, Leavis, and Oakeshott), the American tradition that had to deal with the establishment

of a general and democratic education for a multicultural society (e.g. Flexner, Hutchins, Bok), and lastly the authors that tried to think the university through the postmodern critiques of knowledge and truth (e.g. Lyotard, Derrida, and Said).

In this first section, the presentation of this literature will be limited to two texts. *The conflict of the faculties,* written by Immanuel Kant at the end of the 18th century, was selected because it inaugurated the tradition that approaches the university as idea. What becomes immediately clear in this text is that it is impossible to think about the university as idea without taking into account the institutional form the university should take. Hence, it can be argued that the more theoretical question concerning the idea of the university is intimately entangled with the more practical question concerning the foundation of an institution. The second text that will be discussed is *On the spirit and the organizational framework of intellectual institutions in Berlin* by Wilhelm von Humboldt. Humboldt was one of the first in taking the relay from Kant in formulating a vision of the university as idea. It gained enormous importance because it served as a guiding framework for the establishment of the modern research university of Berlin in 1810 which would become a model for many universities around the globe. Both texts were written at a time when the university was in decline and aimed to breathe new life into this age old institution (Bahti, 1987; Peters & Barnett, 2018a).[24]

In *The conflict of the faculties*, a compilation of three essays written in the 1790s, Kant (1789/1979) addresses the relationship between the university and the state, including the question how Reason can be given a place in a university that has been instituted by the state, and bears as such responsibilities for it. Indeed, the state is concerned with the welfare of its citizens, and more precisely their health, security, and salvation. These three objectives correspond to the three higher faculties of respectively Medicine, Law, and Theology. The lower faculty, of Philosophy, however, has no such responsibility for the administration of government and is solely interested in the pursuit of rational inquiry and disinterested knowledge[25].

Kant discerns a conflict between the higher faculties who work in the service of the state by providing physical, civil, and eternal well-being, and the lower faculty which is only concerned with truth and which acknowledges no other command than from Reason itself. Kant points out that the higher faculties base their teaching which the government entrusts to

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[24] For a more detailed account of the texts by Kant, Humboldt, and other authors that wrote on the university in the context of the German nation-state at that time, see Kwiek (2006).

[25] To complete Kant's institutional chart, it should be added that the lower faculty of philosophy is subdivided in two departments. Whereas the department of historical knowledge is concerned with history, geography, philology, the humanities, and the natural sciences), the department of pure rational knowledge focuses on pure mathematics and pure philosophy, the metaphysics of nature and morals.

them on writings, more precisely on the statutes of each of the disciplines. Otherwise, there would be no universally accessible norm that would grant the disciplines their unity. Whereas the theologian draws his teaching from the Bible, the professor of law is dependent on the law of the country, and the medical professor draws his method of therapy from the medical regulations (Kant, 1789/2018). As such, the higher faculties are dependent on the statutes sanctioned by the state. The role of the lower faculty is then to inquire these statutes and to judge whether they are in accordance with Reason.

In this vein, Kant (1789/2018) argues that the faculty of Philosophy is the home of Reason and that it is from there that it scrutinizes the workings of the higher faculties. He adds that:

> the higher faculties must, therefore, take great care not to enter into a misalliance with the lower faculty, but must keep it at a respectful distance, so that the dignity of their statutes will not be damaged by the free play of reason (p. 9).

In short, the university, by holding together the higher faculties who operate in the service of the state, and the lower faculty, only obedient to Reason itself, constitutes a membrane between Reason and state, knowledge and power. Whereas the higher faculties are subject to the state and have a utility in government administration, the lower faculty has to be conceived as free and subject only to the laws given by Reason, not by the government.

Kant (1789/2018) argues that the conflict between the higher faculties and the lower faculty is not only inevitable but that it is legal as well, since the lower faculty has the duty to inquire and judge everything put forward in public, including the teachings of the higher faculties. He formulates four principles of procedure for the conflict of the faculties and the consequences resulting from it. The first principle has to do with the nature of the conflict. Kant argues that it should not be conceived as a quarrel between friends, but as a lawsuit that calls for a verdict, "the decision of a judge (reason) which has the force of law" (Ibid., p. 16). As such, it is not just an exchange of opinions but an attempt to make Reason triumph over the content of the statutes of the higher faculties. Secondly, he goes on to explain that the conflict is ongoing and never-ending. The lower faculty should never stop scrutinizing the statutes of the higher faculties and must always be vigilant about attempts on their behalf to acquire power. As a third principle, Kant underscores that the conflict is not one between the lower faculty and the government, but between the higher faculties and the lower which the government can look at without being moved. In calling the university a parliament of learning he draws attention to the fact that the higher faculties, supporting the government's statutes, occupy the right side of the parliament, "but in as free a system of government must exist

when it is a question of truth, there must also be an opposition party (the left side), and this is the philosophy faculty's bench" (Ibid., p. 18). The last principle explains that this ongoing conflict incarnates a constant progress of both ranks of the faculties, and that it ultimately allows for a government fully inspired by Reason to come into being.

With this exposition of Kant's conception of the university, I have given the reader an insight in the seminal text of the transcendental-philosophical literature on the university. Approaching the university as idea, however, brings inevitably consequences concerning its institutional infrastructure with it, and it is at this point that the university's relation to society seems to come into play. I have shown that the social mission of the Kantian university consists in the fact that the university produces technicians for the state, and that the lower faculty perfects the reasonable character of the state by scrutinizing the teachings of the higher faculties. Kant proposes a university as a membrane that at the same time protects Reason from coercion by the state and protects the state from the free play of Reason. By means of the higher and the lower faculties the membrane both separates and gathers power and Reason respectively.[26] In the following paragraphs, I will present another text that can be situated in the same strand of literature.

In *On the spirit and the organizational framework of intellectual institutions in Berlin*,[27] published in 1810, Wilhelm von Humboldt provided the German nation-state with a blueprint for an institution for university education. The opening lines of his text contain the most important notions to understand his idea of the university:

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[26] With *Mochlos; or The conflict of the faculties*, Derrida (1992) has written an influential commentary on Kant's text. In his reading, Derrida problematizes the strong separation of Reason and power which seems to be at the basis of Kant's idea of the university. He argues that "the whole forms an *invaginated pocket* [sic.] on the inside of every part or sub-set" (p. 26). Just like the university as an institution founded by the state is an invaginated pocket of the state itself, the lower faculty is an invaginated pocket of the university as a whole, and the department of pure rational knowledge is an invaginated pocket of the faculty of philosophy. Derrida argues that there is continuous regression of Reason within this institutional framework. Moreover, the problem with the place of Reason is radicalized when considering the foundation of the university. With the foundation, Derrida means the very political act of establishing or founding a university. He raises the question how Reason can find a place within an institution of which the foundation is always an act on behalf of the state, and hence power (cf. Derrida, 2001; McCance, 2004). Readings (1996) takes the relay from Derrida and asks whether the institutionalization of Reason's autonomy in the university does not necessarily entail that it becomes dependent on itself, that, hence, the translation of the idea of Reason into an institutional reality can only be performed theoretically. He argues that in fact the Kantian university is a fictional institution: "Reason can only be instituted if the institution remains a fiction, functions only 'as if' it were not an institution. If the institution becomes real, then reason departs" (p. 60).

[27] In the original title, *Über die innere und äußere Organisation der höheren wissenschaftlichen Anstalten in Berlin*, the distinction between the inner organization, the educational principles of the university as idea, and the outer organization, its embeddedness amidst other scientific and educational institutions, is clearer.

The idea of disciplined intellectual activity, embodied in institutions, is the most valuable element of the moral culture of the nation. These intellectual institutions have as their task the cultivation of science and scholarship[28] [Wissenschaft] in the deepest and broadest sense. It is me calling[29] of these intellectual institutions to devote themselves to the elaboration of the uncontrived substance of intellectual and moral culture[30] [Bildung], growing from an uncontrived inner necessity (p. 46).

It is clear that the notions of *Wissenschaft* and *Bildung* take center stage in the Humboldtian university as its most significant aims. Important to underscore is the fact that both are deeply intertwined and that they are to the benefit of the individual as well as the state.

According to Humboldt, participation in scientific and scholarly research is educational through and through. Hence, it is not the case that the Humboldtian university first researches and then afterwards disseminates the findings of this research via teaching. Rather, the university initiates processes of collaboration in which intellectual achievements of one person can arouse the intellectual interests of others so that what was first expressed by an individual becomes a common intellectual possession. Humboldt argues that the inner life of the university should "call forth and sustain a continuously self-renewing, wholly uncoerced and disinterested collaboration" (p. 47). He argues that the synthesis of the minds of professors – more mature but oftentimes somewhat one-sided – and students – less able and committed but very open and responsive – proves to be a fruitful combination for collaborative study (von Humboldt, 1809/2018).

With the regards to the *inner organization*, the spirit, it is therefore possible to argue that the collaborative research practices of the university are what keeps *Wissenschaft* and *Bildung*, professor and student together. In the course of the collaborative research practices knowledge is created and at the same time shared among professors and students alike. Both the accumulation of knowledge as well as its simultaneous dissemination among the members of the university contribute to the national culture of the nation-state, the ultimate aim of the

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[28] The editors have translated the German *Wissenschaft* for 'science and scholarship' to underscore that the meaning of the term is not limited to the natural sciences, but that it includes the humanities as well.

[29] The explicit reference to the person of Humboldt himself as an advocate of the proposal is not present in the original German: "Der Begriff der höheren wissenschaftlichen Anstalten, als des Gipfels, in dem alles, was unmittelbar für die moralische Kultur der Nation geschieht, zusammenkommt, beruht darauf, dass dieselben bestimmt sind, die Wissenschaft im tiefsten und weitesten Sinne des Wortes zu bearbeiten, und als einen nicht absichtlich, aber von selbst zweckmässig vorbereiteten Stoff der geistigen und sittlichen Bildung zu seiner Benutzung hinzugeben".

[30] It is important to bear in mind that the German term *Bildung* was translated here into culture. *Bildung* is a central concept in Humboldt's idea of the university which will be discussed further on.

modern research university.[31] The Humboldtian university aims to unite research and teaching under the sign of culture, and German culture more particularly since the university's societal mission becomes part of a nationalist agenda that intends to promote the cultivation of reason among the citizens of the nation-state. As such, the university of culture of Humboldt has a double mission. One the one hand, it searched for objective cultural meaning as an historical entity, *Wissenschaft*. On the other hand, it provided subjective moral training of the subjects of the state that could become bearers of that identity, *Bildung* (Readings, 1996; von Humboldt, 1809/2018).

With regard to the *outer organization*, it is worth mentioning that Humboldt made the effort to carefully distinguish the university from the schools, the demands of practical affairs of the state, and the academy. First, Humboldt argues that the state should not conceive of its university as a school, and moreover that both educational institutions are unrelated. "The state must understand that the universities are neither a mere complement to the schools within the same category, nor merely a further stage in school" (p. 51). Such a strong separation between school and university grants both educational institutions their autonomy since the school is not conceived as a preparatory phase for the university and, vice versa, the university is not conceived as the fulfilment of school education. In spite of the fact that both schools and universities participates in the civilizational project of the nation-state, both institutions have their own finality. Whereas the aim of the school, according to Humboldt, aims to develop all the capacities of its pupils for participation in public life, the university engages in science and scholarship. Humboldt argues that if the state would treat the universities like schools, this would possibly harm the autonomy of the university by instrumentalizing it. This brings us to the next point.

Secondly, Humboldt warns the state about adopting an instrumental approach in relation to the university. The university, indeed, functions in the service of the state, but this does not mean that it should be conceived as a training center for public officials. Instead the university requires a great degree of autonomy in order to set its own aims in science and scholarship. If the university is granted this freedom, Humboldt argues, it will also be to the benefit of the state. Indeed, when the university is free to pursue its own ends, it will willy-nilly also pursue objectives relevant to the nation. Humboldt argues that the state "should adhere to a deep

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[31] Readings (1996) explains that Humboldt was inspired by the texts of Schleiermacher (1808/2018) and Schelling (1802/2018) who argued against an all too stark contrast between Reason and the state as it is present in Kant. The concept of culture allowed to think a process of cultivation, through *Wissenschaft* and *Bildung*, that could form a bridge between the population of the nation-state as it is and the cultured nation-state with educated officials.

conviction that if the universities attain their highest ends, they will also realise the state's ends too, and these on a far higher plane" (Ibid., p. 50).

Thirdly, the academy is perhaps closest to the university, as it has the same goal of pursuing *Wissenschaft*. However, whereas the university stands in direct relation to the German nation-state, the academy is relatively free, Humboldt explains. This has to do with the fact that the university has an educational purpose of its own, namely the promotion of *Bildung*. The academy, on the contrary, limits itself to *Wissenschaft* without any educational purpose. It rather refers to the community of scientists and scholars whose purpose is to subject the work of each member to the assessment of all of the others. Humboldt (1809/2018) even goes as far as calling the academy "the highest and ultimate sanctuary of science and scholarship and as that corporation which is freest of the control of the state" (p. 53).

In this section, two texts on the university, formative of a wide-ranging tradition, have been presented to give an impression of the transcendental-philosophical approach that conceives of the university as an idea. Based on these two texts, it is possible to indicate three general features of this literature. First, it is clear that there is no way of conceiving the idea of the university without thinking about its *institutional infrastructure*. For both Kant and Humboldt, it is necessary to think about respectively the organization of the faculties and the unity of teaching and research, in order to put flesh on the bones of their conception of the university as idea. Secondly, the formulation of the idea of the university always bears on the question how the university can organize its *inside*, as well as how it relates to its *outside*. Kant, for instance, thought about the distinction between the higher faculties and the lower faculties, both pertaining to the inside of the university, in order to grant the university autonomy while relating to the state, its outside. Humboldt formulated principles which the university should adhere to in order to attain its double objective of *Wissenschaft* and *Bildung*, the inside of the university. Besides, he reflected on the place of the university amidst other educational and other-than-educational institutions of his time such as the *Gymnasia* and the academies. A last common feature is that the transcendental-philosophical literature on the university could be described as quite *imaginative* of a future university. Indeed, both Kant and Humboldt propose a possible institutional infrastructure that would respectively lodge Reason in the structure of the state, and make the university an important mediator in the cultivation of humankind. In the next section, an altogether different literature on the university will be discussed.

Academic Capitalism

The previous section aimed to present the philosophical imagination of the university by shedding light on two characteristic and foundational texts in what has been called the transcendental-philosophical literature. For the current section, a short travel in space and time will be made in order to discover quite a different landscape of texts on the university, more precisely the mostly sociological literature that critically analyzes how economic developments impact the university. The German nation-state of the beginning of the 19th century which provided a milieu for the reinvigoration of a declined institution, will be exchanged for the United States at the end of the 20th century, where sociologists of education are tacking stock of the effects the emerging knowledge economy has had on higher education. In the time between its first formulation and the second world war, the Humboldtian model of the modern research university had been slowly spreading across the globe. In the postwar years, however, there had been a massification of both the institutions of higher education as well as the students attending these institutions (Neave, 2011; Rüegg, 2011). In the same timespan, the economy had transformed itself from an industrial to a knowledge economy, promoting the production and dissemination of commodifiable knowledge and information over the manufacture of goods (cf. Castells, 1993; Chomsky, 1994; Drucker, 1969; Sassen, 1991). It is exactly the impact of this transformation on the university that sociologists of higher education have tried to come to terms with at the end of the 20th century, and that constitutes today a considerable literature on the university next to the ideas literature. Again, it will be interesting to discern with which concepts these authors grasp the changing relationships between university and society.

The central role of the university in the new economy as producer and seller of knowledge has spawned a vast amount of articles and books that seek to construct the conceptual and methodological tools to map the thoroughgoing economization of the university in detail. Clark Kerr's book on *The uses of the university*, published in 1963, has been programmatic in that it set an entire research agenda about for instance, the relation between university and industry, the disintegration of the academic body into a loosely assembled network of research units that have closer relations to external parties than to the university itself, and the rise of the administrative staff and the correlated peripheralization of academic staff.

These and other related topics have been taken up in the second half of the 20th century by researchers whose aim was to investigate the university from a *critical-sociological point of view*. Analyses of the effects on the university of the transformation from an industrial economy towards a knowledge economy are variegated with regards to the national contexts that are

scrutinized, as well as to the topics that are specifically dealt with. Etzkowitz & Leydensdorff, for instance, have proposed the term of the triple helix of university-industry-government relations to analyze the new landscape in which institutions of higher education find themselves (Etzkowitz, 1994; Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 1997). Krimsky (1991) has traced the emergence of industrial genetics in the entanglement of the academic field of biotechnics and corporate interests. Marginson (1993) has studied the impact of trends in public policy on the higher education system of Australia. In another study of policy, Mowery (1994) has adopted a transnational approach in the analysis of the interrelationships between science and technology policies across different economies. Geiger (1993) has analyzed the increase of commercial endeavors on behalf of the university. And whereas Soley (1995) has argued that the industry is slowly taking over academe, Bowie (1994) asserts that universities are all too eager to sell out to corporations. These studies are just exemplary for the literature that emerged in the 1980s and 1990s that grappled with the new place of the university in the knowledge economy.

Particularly successful in this regard was the term of *academic capitalism* coined by Sheila Slaughter and Larry L. Leslie (1997). It has proven to be a relevant concept to study trends and developments that have taken place in the university and the wider societal network in which the university operates.[32] A sample of studies that have taken the term up again to grasp the shifting landscape of research and teaching at universities, includes the work of Hoffman (2011) who inventoried the new vocabularies that have severely altered the image and meaning of academic knowledge production. He discerns 'market-oriented entrepreneurialism', 'external consulting work', 'consumer-oriented research', and 'interdisciplinarity' as new concepts with which researchers are expected to understand their work under the academic capitalist regime. Cantwell (2015) has made a qualitative inquiry of laboratory management at three research universities in the United States in order to explore how the microdynamics of academic knowledge production possibly contribute to the regime of academic capitalism. In the context of international mobility, Kim (2017) has interviewed

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[32] Historians have argued that the concept of capitalism is making a comeback in social theory. They explain that in spite of its popularity in the second half of the 19th century, it was for a long time deemed too vague, too broad, too polemical, and too ideological. Recent years, however, have seen a reemergence of the concept in social, political, and historical research. They argue that this rediscovery has been amplified by the financial crisis of 2008 (Kocka & van der Linden, 2016). In the same timespan, there has been renewed interest in the theme of the commons (Linebaugh, 2008). After Hardin's tragic diagnosis of their precarious existence (Hardin, 1968), economists have investigated the commons as a forceful and robust alternative for market economies (cf. Ostrom, 1990). In his critique of primitive accumulation, Karl Marx (1867/1990) explains that the expropriation of the commons formed the starting point for capitalist modes of production. It is perhaps no coincidence that in recent years the commons have been rediscovered as a powerful counternarrative against capitalist market economies.

researchers from different national backgrounds that have settled for a shorter or longer term at universities in the United Kingdom, the United States, New Zealand, Korea, and Hong Kong. In doing so, she aims to grasp different local experiences of academic capitalism. A last example of recent scholarship on academic capitalism is the work of McClure. Instead of focusing on the research and teaching activities of the academic staff, he investigated the role administrators play in the promotion of an academic capitalist regime. Moreover, he argues that an institutional orientation towards knowledge privatization and profit-making is largely an administrator-driven project that is often contested by faculty members (McClure, 2016).

These examples illustrate that the concept of academic capitalism is easily taken up as an analytical tool to study a wide range of activities of the university in the knowledge economy. In what follows, hence, a few of the salient features of academic capitalism will be discerned based on the seminal work of Slaughter & Leslie (1997), and others that have made it a central concern of their writings. In a follow-up to the book of 1997,[33] Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) explain that:

> The theory of academic capitalism focuses on networks – new circuits of knowledge, interstitial organizational emergence, networks that intermediate between public and private sector, extended managerial capacity – that link institutions as well as faculty, administrators, academic professionals and students to the new economy. New investment, marketing and consumption behaviors on the part of the members of the university community also link them to the new economy[34]. Together these mechanisms and behaviors constitute an academic capitalist knowledge/learning regime (p. 15).

Based on this definition, it is possible to discern four mechanisms and two behaviors elicited by the knowledge economy.

With regards to the mechanisms there are first of all *new circuits of knowledge*. Indeed, knowledge is no longer confined within the scientific, professional, and scholarly networks,

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[33] Whereas the original study had a more empirical interest – it primarily aimed to map the new landscape of higher education in the national contexts of the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia –, the volume of 2004 has a stronger focus on the development of a theory of academic capitalism, elaborated in relation to the context of the United States.

[34] Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) use the terms new economy and knowledge economy interchangeably for the economic system that is, first of all, global in scope, that, secondly, approaches knowledge as a raw material that can be claimed by legal devices such as patents and consequently marketed as a product or service, that, thirdly, promotes non-Fordist manufacture which means that mass production is exchanged for just-in-time computer-regulated manufacturing processes, and whose outlet, fourthly, consists mainly of educated workers and technology savvy consumers.

and teaching is no longer the transmission and discussion of knowledge within the lecture hall. With regards to teaching, online platforms have made it possible to standardize teaching across different universities. Nationwide students can watch the same weblectures for instance, or get identical assignments or tests. This implies that the university administrators become more accountable for the task of the university to teach students, instead of the faculty. Another example of new circuits of knowledge, more related to research instead of teaching, has to do with the university-industry-government partnerships. University research is no longer judged only by peers but more and more also by patent officials. Moreover, the review boards of academic journals become increasingly populated with degree holders who work in the industry. It is obvious that these developments severely alter the expectations authors have to meet when submitting an article to a journal and that applied research increasingly becomes the norm (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

A second mechanism is *interstitial organizational emergence*. With this process, Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) indicate that the generation of external revenues often requires that universities engage in new activities and partnerships with corporations. They explain that these interstitial organizations are boundary spanning, which means that they induce close contacts and collaborations between academics and industrials. Examples of such interstitial organizations include technology licensing offices (management of intellectual property), economic development offices (linking the research strengths of the university with certain economic needs), and educational profit centers (providing instructional programs that are not part of the official curricula to specific niche markets). These new organizations emerging at the boundary of the university, draw the university closer to the world of industry and economics and force moreover the university to reconceive itself as a for-profit economic actor, just like the ones it engages with.

A third mechanism that the authors identify is the establishment of *intermediating networks* between public, non-profit, and private sectors, including the university. Examples of such network organizations are the Business Higher Education Forum, the University-Industry-Governments Research Roundtable, and the League for Innovation. Such organizations aim to gather different forms of expertise and public and private interests to solve common problems stemming from issues related to the knowledge economy. This implies that the university is increasingly inclined to understand its activities as contributing to the global knowledge economy and that it is more and more conscious about its pivotal role in societal economic welfare (Kauppinen, 2012; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

The last mechanism has to do with the effect foregoing mechanisms have had on university administration. Management of online course content, involvement in the creation

of interstitial organization via research collaborations, and participation in intermediating network organizations have called for an *extended managerial capacity* of the administration of higher education institutions. At its turn, this expansion of management functions has made it possible to engage with the corporate sector more frequently, as well as more intensely. As such, this is a self-amplifying mechanism since the expansion of collaboration with non-academic organizations has called for an increase of managerial staff which has, in its turn, made it possible to pursue even more such collaborations (Jessop, 2017, 2018; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

With regards to the behaviors – and it is obvious that these new behaviors cannot be understood separately from the shifting organizational landscape sketched above –, two features can be discerned. First, there is an increased display of *market and marketlike behaviors* on behalf of universities, "attaching a price to things that were once free or charging more for items or services that were once subsidized or provided at cost" (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004, p. 26). Examples of such behaviors are not limited to competition for external resources, but span the entire university infrastructure. Whereas in the past, students could obtain cheap meals in university restaurants, food services are nowadays often outsourced to fast-food companies such as McDonald's, which can be found grouped together in the on-campus minimalls. Besides, 'athleisure'-wear corporations work together with universities in branding campaigns turning students, prospective students, and alumni – its most important outlet – into colorful billboards (Hoffman, 2012; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

The second behavior has to do with the fact that departments and fields close to markets, for instance biotechnology, pharmaceutics and medical devices, or information technology, increasingly develop *commercial strategies* that help to position themselves via prospective customers. Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) argue that the proximity between a field of study and a possible market in no way predicts how successful it will be in terms of its ability to generate additional external revenue. They gave the example of classics departments – notoriously far removed from lucrative businesses – that have adapted extremely well to the new economy by organizing profitable educational trips to Greece and Rome. In the field of psychology and educational sciences, some departments sell tests and measurements copyrighted by the faculty. There are archaeology departments, lastly, that "offer tours of prehistoric sites, charging for the tour and the pleasure of digging" (p. 27). It is here not so much the case of calling guilty or claiming innocence, but rather of observing how different fields of study try to survive in an environment that increasingly consists of corporate and commercial organizations (Jessop, 2017; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

The central concern of the theory of academic capitalism seems to be the *redrawing of the boundaries between public and private* in the higher education sector under the pressure of an increased economization. In the course of the second half of the 20th century it was possible to witness a shift from a public good knowledge/learning regime to an academic capitalist knowledge/learning regime.[35] It is important to stress that both regimes endorse and operate within a different value framework. The first regime values knowledge as a *public good* to which the citizenry should have access. Communalism, universality, free flow of knowledge, organized skepticism, together with an idea of academic freedom as the right for each and every professor to follow research where it led, formed the cornerstone of the public goods regime. Necessary for such a regime is a strong separation between public and private sectors, which as we have seen, has become under pressure[36]. The ascendant regime of *academic capitalism*, on the contrary, values "knowledge privatization and profit taking in which institutions, inventor faculty, and corporations have claims that come before those of the public" (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004, p. 29). Knowledge, in this regime, is conceived of as a raw material that should be commodified as a private good via patents and trademarks. It acquires monetary value in the stream of profit-generating high-technology products that flow through global markets. The cornerstone of this regime is the necessity of a link between academe and commercial corporations in view of profitable growth (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

A few remarks on the general features of the literature on academic capitalism will conclude this section. First, an asset of this perspective is that it does not treat the university as a unified organization with sharp boundaries that separate it from the corporate world. Whereas conceptions such as the marketized university (Berman, 2012; Molesworth, Scullion, & Nixon, 2011; Regini, 2011; Robins & Webster, 2002), the corporatized university (Aronowitz, 2000; Barrow, 2018; Giroux & Myrsiades, 2001; Jarvis, 2001; Soley, 1995), or the enterprise university (Marginson & Considine, 2000) evoke the image of a bounded institution that has transformed its own value-system, the discourse of *mechanisms, networks and behaviors* allows to perceive the entanglements between parts of the university and several commercial and governmental organizations. The theory of academic capitalism rejects the assumption

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[35] Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) explain that this shift occurred gradually and that, hence, both regimes coexist at the same time. However, the academic capitalist regime is slowly taking prominence over the public goods regime.

[36] Having grown up in Cold War America, Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) explain that their work should not be understood as a form of nostalgia for the public goods regime which often spent a disproportionate amount of money on warfare and defense budgets.

that the university operates separated from but in close connection to state and market, in favor of a view that presupposes that they are enmeshed with each other through and through.

Secondly, with regards to the research question, it is clear that the literature of academic capitalism would refute a strong separation between university and society as two distinct entities. Focusing on the shifts in the *organizational landscape* in which university departments and faculties try to survive, it calls for a more networked view in which it is possible to discern how a capitalist logic parasitizes on the activities members of the university engage in, more specifically market and marketlike behaviors and commercial strategies. Hence, from a critical-sociological point of view the university appears as thoroughly enmeshed in and influenced by societal trends and developments.

The last remark refers back to the transcendental-philosophical literature of the first section and hence serves as a conclusion to the first two sections. It is possible to draw out a few differences and similarities between the transcendental-philosophical and the critical-sociological perspective. First, there is the obvious difference that whereas the transcendental-philosophical literature emerged in the German nation-state at the beginning of the 19th century, the critical-sociological texts dealing with academic capitalism are situated mainly in postwar United States under the predicament of globalized capitalism. A second difference has to do with the fact that the first literature is more imaginative of a possible future university. Proposed are various conceptions how the university should be equipped in order to fulfil its societal role. The second literature, on the contrary, relates critically to shifts and transformations that have occurred in the field of higher education in the recent past. Deploying the analytic framework of academic capitalism, authors in this tradition scrutinize the increasing capitalization of the higher education sector. This relates, consequently, to the third and most salient difference which concerns the issue how both literatures conceive of the university.

When adopting a transcendental-philosophical approach, the university comes to the fore *as an idea*. This means that the different authors in this tradition have proposed a more or less elaborate idea of the university, including how it can and should be institutionally incarnated. The second critical-sociological literature understands and analyzes the university *as an organization* entertaining a manifold of relationships with other organizations of the governmental or commercial kind. The institution of the university is conceived as intimately entangled within an organizational network.

At this point it is possible to discern a link between the two approaches to the university. Both discourses indeed seem to rely on an understanding of the *university as institution*. This means that an institutional understanding of the university seems to be a 'common

presupposition' of both the transcendental-philosophical literature on the university as idea and the critical-sociological literature on the university as organization. Nevertheless, it needs to be remarked immediately that both of the approaches relate *differently* to the university as institution. Before going somewhat deeper into what it might mean that both approaches share a 'common presupposition', it might be relevant to clarify what is meant with an institutional understanding of the university.

Invoking the concept of institution here, may cause troubles with regards to its precise meaning in this context. Institution is indeed a rather vague and broad notion that includes both formal institutions of, for instance, the political, religious, or educational kind – think, respectively, of the US Congress, the Catholic Church, and the Catholic University of Leuven –, as well as informal institutions that have to do with passing on customs and values – think, for instance, of gift-giving or praying (North, 1990; Unsworth, 2010). In the context of this dissertation, an institution is conceived of as the formal structure that aims to warrant the persistence of certain informal customs and values. Hence, in this understanding, institutions come to the fore as formal bodies with implicit and explicit rules that are based on certain values and customs for which the institution grants endurance. However, as stated before, both literatures appropriate the university as institution in a slightly different way.

On the one hand, the first literature requires the institution of the university in order to put flesh on the bones of its idea. The idea of the university seems only to make sense if one conceives of it in relation to its institutional infrastructure. As such, it could be argued that the idea of the university has to do with its customs and values, for instance passing on knowledge to the broader public, but that these customs and values need to be thought of as embodied by a formal institutional infrastructure (e.g. the relation between the faculties, the relation between the university and the academy) to give them very precise meaning and to grant them endurance. The second literature, on the other hand, conceives of higher education institutions as organizations that are increasingly enmeshed with other organizations. The reliance on an institutional understanding of the university might be less outspoken in the second literature. It becomes, however, more present when considering the fact that they understand the impact of the ascending academic capitalist regime as a transvaluation of the values of the university as public institution (e.g. communality, openness, and universality) in favor of more entrepreneurial and mercantile values.

It is important to be nuanced at this point and to make clear that it is not because both approaches seem to be hinged on an institutional understanding of the university that it would be possible to equate them, or that the concept of institution means the same from both angles. It is as if the institution of the university is at the background of both approaches and

forms a common presupposition. Although it is more or less hidden behind the university as idea and the university as organization, it has a clear and distinct function in the construction of the argument of both approaches. Whereas in the first approach the institution comes in to make the idea of the university more palpable, the second approach takes its recourse to the institution to evoke that which is currently under threat by the capitalization of academia. Nevertheless, it can be argued that both approaches seem to presuppose the importance of an institutional understanding of the university with both its formal and informal aspects.

However, it needs to be clear that asserting that both the transcendental-philosophical and the critical-sociological approach share a common presupposition, should not be confused with the argument that they would find common ground there, or that they stem from a common root. What seems rather to be the case is that there exists a reciprocal capture between both of the approaches in that each strand of literature seems to refer to the other in order to gain its strength and relevance. Although this is perhaps less clear for the early texts of Kant and Humboldt,[37] contemporary texts that articulate the idea of the university often do so in relation to analyses of the critical-sociological kind in order to defend the idea of the university in the face of the threats posed by current neoliberal policy reforms. Symmetrically, these analyses of the university under the predicament of globalized capitalism seem to take the transcendental-philosophical accounts of the modern research university as a zero-degree to measure the impact of changing policy discourses on academia. The literature of academic capitalism seems to suggest that the modern idea of the university as an autonomous institution for the disinterested pursuit of knowledge has been eroded since the 1950s and more intensely since the development of neoliberalism in the 1980s.

Foregrounding the institution of the university as a link between the transcendental-philosophical and the critical-sociological approach lays bare a last similarity between the two strands of literature, namely a negligence of the non-institutionalized university (in the sense of 'formalized'), or more precisely, a *forgetting of the medieval university*. It might be worthwhile therefore to have a look at the emergence of the university in the Middle Ages which will be the topic of the next two sections.

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[37] Nevertheless, this case could be made as the modern texts on the university generally aim to breath new air into an institution that had been in decline due to organizational failure for decades already (cf. Bahti, 1987; Peters & Barnett, 2018a).

Universitas Magistrorum et Scolarium

In the course of the long twelfth century, at various places in Europe people started to gather around texts in order to study them. These were the very first universities, named *universitas magistrorum et scolarium*, a term which meant in that time simply 'association of masters and students'. In my attempt to offer an other-than-institutional understanding of the university as it is present in the transcendental-philosophical and critical-sociological literature on the topic, I will focus in this and the next section on the very *birth of the university* in medieval times. Not only, however, will the specific grounds for the emergence of a university (which in its first years was much more like a grassroots movement than a full-fledged educational institution) be under scrutiny, also the specific claims that were made on the university will be discussed. Different reasons can be figured why, at a certain instant, in a certain city, a university would come into being. It is possible to discern five strongly interrelated ingredients of the medieval context that allowed for the birth of the university: first of all, the presence of translators and translations in the area around the Mediterranean Sea; secondly the struggle between secular and religious powers, most notably the Investiture Controversy; thirdly, the discovery of *universitas*[38] as an organizational principle for the guilds in the expanding cities; fourthly, the proliferation of monastic and cathedral schools; and fifthly a change in the reading and writing technologies, more precisely the emergence of the bookish text that could be read at a glance. This section begins with a presentation of these ingredients and how they interrelate with one another.

A first ingredient is the presence of *translators and translations*. Already in the Carolingian era, a lot of translations of antique texts had been produced. For instance, the *Bible*, texts by the Church Fathers and other classical authors had been around for centuries. A great amount of Latin and almost the entirety of Greek literature, however, remained practically inaccessible. Translators living close to the Arab and Byzantine world, for instance James of Venice, Burgundy of Pisa, Aristippe of Palermo and John of Sevilla, rediscovered many works,

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[38] The concept of *universitas* was found for the first time in written sources in Cicero's translation of Plato's *Timaeus*. Cicero used the word as a translation of τό παν, a syntagma that denoted the world in its entirety. The concept brings to the fore a sense of comprehensiveness and totality. It designates the world as an all-comprising whole. Next to this mention in *Timaeus*, Cicero uses the concept twice in his *De natura deorum*. Here it is accompanied by a genitive that clarifies what is contained within the totality of *universitas*, first the totality of things, *'universitatem rerum'*, secondly the totality of human beings, *'universitatem humani generis'* (Schnorr von Carolsfeld, 1933). Whether it was of human beings or of earthly things, the concept of *universitas* expressed the idea of a totality, an all-including assemblage. *Universitas* designated a singular unit, constituted by different elements that could however not be defined as merely an enumeration of these constituting parts. The *universitas* has an existence of itself, independent from the elements that compose it (Michaud-Quantin, 1970).

especially from Greek philosophy and science. Not only Aristotle's *Logic*, *Physics*, and *Metaphysics* were translated, but also mathematical works from the Ancient Greeks, such as Euclid and Archimedes, and medical works of Hippocrates and Galen. Besides, a lot of Arab commentaries on these texts were made accessible, for instance the works of Al-Khwarizmi, Al-Razi and Avicenna. At last, and quite important for the next condition of emergence, was the rediscovery of the *Corpus Iuris Civilis* of the Byzantine emperor Justinian.[39] In short, the quantity of secular and religious texts that had become accessible in translation represented an enormous amount of intellectual materials that could be investigated and studied. It should be noted, however, that accessibility should not be overestimated in times before the invention of the printing press. Texts were available in vernacular language, but needed to be carefully copied and transmitted (Leff, 1992; Verger, 2013).

The second ingredient is the *conflict between ecclesiastical and secular power* that reached its climax in the Investiture Controversy between the emperor Henry IV of the Holy Roman Empire and pope Gregory VII. This conflict, which also gave rise to a self-redefinition of the Church as *universitas fidelium*, induced a *réveil* of juridical activity in France and Italy. In order to defend their arguments, followers of Pope and Emperor took recourse to the classical texts to be found in the *Corpus Iuris Civilis.*[40] This renewed attention for Roman and

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[39] Noteworthy is the fact that in this text the concept of *universitas* acquired a juridical meaning. The document aimed to draft a categorization of things and to whom they could pertain. Firstly, the things belonging to divine law are discerned as *res sacrae et religiosae, sanctae quoque res*. Secondly, the things pertaining to human law are subdivided into four categories. First, there are the things that belong to nobody or to everybody, called *res nullius* or *res omnium* respectively. An example of something that belongs to nobody would be the sun or the moon, whereas the sea and the land are examples of goods that were believed to belong to everybody. Second, there are the things that belong to somebody. This somebody could either be an individual or a community. Public goods such as stadiums or theatres were believed to belong to the *universitas*, the community, whereas private goods were believed to belong to individuals. It is cleary explained that the *universitas*, in this case as *communia civitatium*, the community of citizens, does not equal the aggregate of the individual citizens. The *universitas* has an existence of its own and slaves pertaining to the *universitas* could not be used by an individual member of the community of citizens. The servant of the community could only be employed for tasks ordained by the community as a whole. The quasi-metaphysical meaning of the word *universitas* as it came to the fore in Cicero's work which expressed the idea of the *universitas* as an all-encompassing whole, shifts here towards a rather juridical conception of *universitas*, indicating a community of citizens (Schnorr von Carolsfeld, 1933).

[40] The struggle between secular and ecclesiastical power provided the impetus for a politicotheological revaluation of *universitas*. This struggle had mainly to do with a reinterpretation of how *libertas*, an important medieval virtue, could be realized. In its original form, the medieval liberty pertained to the private sphere of the *familia* and its associated ideas of peace and protection. It was believed that the solidarity of the family tie granted the individual members their freedom. This freedom was not absolute, it did not express an independency of all possible bonds, but, on the contrary, conceived of these bonds, especially the familial ones, as a precondition for freedom because they provided shelter for the family members. This structure of organizing private life was extended to public life in the feudal system in which dependency relations between suzerain and vassal safeguarded the freedom through mutual protection. A crucial turning point in the reinterpretation of *libertas* was the experience that this feudal system was insufficient to provide peace and protection. On the contrary, it led to several wars and was

Byzantine law resulted in a collection of both primary and secondary texts compiled by the Bolognese monk Gratian, called *Decretum Gratiani*, a work that would become the central object of study of medieval canon law. In short, not only the presence of texts, but also the societal need to study in order to formulate responses to timely issues necessitated the coming into existence of a university (García y García, 1992; Nardi, 1992; Verger, 1999).

This relates to the third ingredient. As a result of the Investiture Controversy, the Church reinvented itself as *universitas fidelium* outside and above the hierarchical system of secular feudalism. Inspired by the ancient legal texts, the Gregorian reform, written down in the papal bulls *Dictatus Papae* and *Libertas Ecclesiae*, conceived of the Church as a community of equals cut loose from the dependency structures of feudalism. This new social structure would quickly become interesting for other associations founded in the growing cities.[41] Because of

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primarily a system of exploitation. The entirety of dependency ties proved to be no guarantee for freedom, but even to be a means to institutionalize unfreedom. As a consequence, the medieval *libertas*-idea was enriched with a sense of liberation, which it lacked previously since it was mainly understood as protection. *Libertas* was being reinterpreted as the liberation from the web of secular personal dependency ties that pervaded the entire society. These dependency ties which originally were believed to safeguard the individual's liberty, indeed stifled individuals in an exploitative and belligerent feudal sociopolitical organization. As a reaction to this failure of the secular power to act as *patronus*, *advocatus* et *defensor* of the Church and the believers, a new ecclesiastical order was established. The reformation of Cluny disconnected the bishops from the feudal order and under the guidance of the monk Hildebrand, the new pope Gregory VII, the Church reconceived of itself as one association that autonomously could realize its goals, as it believed itself to stand above the secular power. The Church hence played an important role in redefining the medieval *libertas* by re-inventing itself as *universitas fidelium*. It should be noted that this new self-conception of the Church was not so much aimed at the destruction of the feudal system as such, but rather at going above and beyond this system in a new order which made it possible to postulate the supremacy of the Church. The engagement of a believer towards the *universitas fidelium* was very different from the feudal relation. Inspired by the Stoic and Paulinian tradition, an egalitarianism between believers is implicated in this new social structure of *universitas*. The social, horizontal ties of the people included in the *universitas* is of another kind, than the personal, vertical ties of the people being part of the feudal system. Hierarchy, dependency and inequality, all implicated in the feudal verticality, were replaced by the personal freedom and mutual equality of the members of the *universitas* (Van Den Auweele, 1984; Waelkens, 2014).

[41] In the course of what is often called the Renaissance of the 12th century *universitas* increasingly became the hallmark of a communitarian ideal. It did not express anymore the totality of the world as such (cf. Cicero) or a legal category (cf. Iustinianus), although these meanings are still present in the notion albeit to a lesser extent. Instead, it became the name for politicotheological body that held together in a tensive agreement the existence of an immortal and eternal collective on the one hand, and its mortal and perishable members on the other. In *The King's Two Bodies*, Ernst Kantorowicz (1997) describes the politicotheological meaning of the *universitas* as follows: "The essential feature of all corporate bodies was not that they were 'a plurality of persons collected in one body' at the present moment, but that they were that 'plurality in succession', braced by Time and through the medium of Time. It would be wrong, therefore to consider the corporational universitas merely as the simul cohabitantes, those living together at the same moment; for they would resemble, in Aquinas' language, only the physical body of man whose members were present 'all at once', but they would not form the genuine corpus mysticum such as Aquinas had defined it. The plurality in succession, therefore, or the plurality in Time was the essential factor knitting the universitas into continuity and making it immortal" (Kantorowicz, 1997, p. 310). As such, the concept of *universitas* preserved the tension between the unity of community given the plurality of its members, as well as the tension between the reality of

the improvement of life conditions in the 11th and 12th century, this era saw a rapid population increase, especially in the cities. The cities, where people practicing the same craft lived and worked close to each other and shared similar socio-economic interests, allowed for the establishment of corporations or guilds, which were called *universitates*. People in similar conditions could, when associated, achieve more than individuals. Examples include the association of ironworkers, of druggists, of bakers, of furriers, and of saddle makers. The urban context facilitated a self-organization of people in labor associations where they could meet as a community around their craft, unlike as in the feudal structure, and together claim the same rights and privileges). In short, the third ingredient hence refers to the myriad of labor associations that emerged in the medieval cities. *Universitas* no longer denoted merely an association, but more specifically an association around a craft. It brought together master craftsmen and apprentices that engaged with the materials and techniques of their craft. In this way, the organizational structure of *universitas* sparked also the interest of the communities that formed themselves around texts in order to study them (Miethke, 1999; Verger, 1992, 2013).

The fourth ingredient for the emergence of universities is the increase of student numbers in the cities. Around 1117, Guibert de Nogent wrote that when he was a child there were barely any masters to be found in the cities. Besides, their knowledge was so little that it was not even comparable to the big amount of knowledge of the 'clercs vagabonds d'aujourd'hui' (Verger, 2013). In the 12th century, the number of schools exploded and it became more problematic for students to find appropriate housing. Moreover, schools were overflown by the swelling current of masters and students. Masters started to organize their own private schools where one could obtain the *licentia docendi*, which allowed one to teach in all schools of the diocese. To preserve its monopoly on education the Church laid claim on these teaching facilities by granting the *universitas magistrorum et scolarium*, a corporation of masters and students analogous to the *universitas fidelium*, the *universitas civium* and the different *universitates* wherein different people from a similar labor context were associated, the privilege to hand out the *licentia ubique docendi*, the right to teach everywhere. This made it possible to decrease the proliferation of private schools. Besides, the rediscovery of Aristotle's

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perishable members participating in an immortal association. After its politicotheological revaluation this new mode of social organization was copied in the conception of the city as *universitas civium*. It involved a desacralization of the Paulinian-Stoic doctrine of the *corpus mysticum* and reinforced it with the Aristotle-interpretation of Avicenna concerning society, viz. that a social existence within a society is a precondition for the survival of man. "Le lien social est ainsi découvert et avec lui la conscience de sa permanence: les individus peuvent changer, l'universitas demeure" (Mairet, 1978, p. 197). As such, it become possible to conceive of the coexistence of human beings in the emerging Italian cities as *universitates civium*. *Universitas* came to contain and preserve the tension between the one and the many, oneness and allness, concrete reality and abstract concept of a communitarian ideal.

Organon introduced dialectics as a new way to read texts, specific to this new *universitas*, as opposed to the schools. In short, the increase of students induced a proliferation of schools and hence also their related often idiosyncratic teaching methods. In order to preserve some unity, the Church deemed it necessary to establish an educational association that could grant a degree to teach everywhere, something the schools were not allowed to (Nardi, 1992; Riché & Verger, 2006; Verger, 1999).

The fifth ingredient has less to do with the social, cultural, economic, intellectual, or political milieu in which the university came into being as it has to do with the technological conditions that allowed people to establish another relationship toward text, the principal material of study in the medieval universities. It has been argued that in the course of the 12th century, the text underwent some drastic changes in order to make it readable at a glance (as we can still do nowadays). A few of these new features include a more extensive use of punctuation, adding footnotes, and structuring the text into paragraphs. Perhaps the most import shift, however, was separation of words with white spaces. Whereas before the text had to be read out loud in order to be understood, it could now be read at a glance. This technological shift induced a transformation of the experience of reading. Before the emergence of what has been called 'university script', reading was a spiritual exercise that required not only the eyes, but also the mouth and the ears. After this technological shift, the eye took center stage as the text became readable at a glance. Reading was no longer primarily a matter of sensory embodiment of the divine text, but became an exercise in taking a certain distance with regards to the text. At the same time, the text was no longer something that could only be believed in, but it became something that could be studied (Illich, 1991, 1993; Marin, Masschelein, & Simons, 2018).

In sum, five ingredients together formed a milieu in which the first first universities could come into being, namely the accessibility of study materials in the form of texts, tensions between Pope and Emperor that necessitated a learning process around questions of how to live together, the rediscovery of *universitas* as an organizing principle for church, city, and craftsmen associations, the need for the Church to assert itself as most important distributor of knowledge, and the coming into being of university script as a textual format. It is clear that the coming into being of the university was a highly contingent event and that the foregoing five ingredients as such should not be conceived as causes, but rather as intellectual, political, socio-economical, cultural, and technological particularities of the environment of the medieval cities. It has been argued that specific societal concerns such as the conflict between Pope and Emperor, urban expansion in Italy, and the decline of the feudal structure required not only political debate, but most importantly, that they initiated study activities. These study

activities were facilitated by the presence of a vast amount of ancient text that were rediscovered or made accessible in translation. However, it was not only due to the amount of text that study had become possible. Maybe even more important was the fact that the text was transcribed as university script which allowed for a different sensory experience of the text, one in which the reader could acquire a certain distance towards the text and study it. Lastly, *universitas,* as a principle of self-organization for craftsmen groups brought together with similar interests, proved to be very helpful in granting these newly formed communities of students some sustainability.

The spontaneous emergence of the first universities was closely followed by a second movement, the discussion of which will be the topic of the remainder of this section. This second movement, that comprises both the increase of universities as well as the attempts of powerful actors to lay claim on their activities, was foreshadowed by the fourth ingredient mentioned before, namely the interest of the Church in these newly formed associations of study. Soon after the emergence of the first universities as grassroots associations of masters and students both secular and religious powers attempted to seize hold over these communities by offering them official statutes and sanction them as legitimate educational organizations, or so-called *studia generalia*. The birth of the first universities was indeed initiated by different masters or students coming together in an association to gain some autonomy, these were truly *universitates magistrorum et scolarium*. When these associations were recognized by Church or Empire, however, they received the title of *studium generale*. The force field of different powers and social changes that the 12th century was – most notably students and masters organizing themselves in their quest for autonomy, the Church trying to preserve its monopoly on education – unleashed the potential for a university to come into being. This potential was actualized in several concrete universities of which Bologna and Paris are the most prominent examples. In the historical literature, these universities are called universities *e consuetudine* [having grown by custom], as opposed to swarm universities and universities *e priviligio* [foundation by explicit decree]. These *studia generalia* already existed as associations of masters and students before they were officially recognized and were granted there statutes. Other early universities *e consuetudine* are the universities of Montpellier and Oxford. The medical school of Salerno shared a lot of characteristics with other *studia generalia* but was only later recognized as a real university (Nardi, 1992; Verger, 1992, 2013).

From the first decades of the 13th century onwards, two principal ways in which a university could be established crystallized: by 'swarm' or by prior decision of the civil or ecclesiastical authorities. A *swarm university* involved a group of masters and students who,

because of their discontent with their prior university, fled away to another city. Most of the time, when conditions improved in their prior university, they returned but also sometimes it marked the beginning of a durable new scholarly community. The university of Cambridge, for instance, came to be founded after disputes in Oxford between 1209 and 1214. In France, the universities of Orléans and Angers benefited from the flight of the Parisian masters and students between 1229 and 1231, although they were only officially recognized much later. Yet, northern Italy is considered to be the heartland of university migrations. These migration processes benefited enormously from Italy's economic wealth, the student population which was itself often a mix of migrated students from different towns and regions, and its political structure of rivaling city states which made authorities very aware of the fact that they should keep the students in their town pleased which afforded the students the opportunity to claim a lot of rights and privileges. Some universities founded after a bargaining process between student associations and cities are Padua, Reggio Emilia, Vicenza, Arezzo, Vercelli and Siena. All these universities, except the university of Padua, disappeared again after a few years or decades (Cobban, 1975; Verger, 1992).

In contrast to the swarm universities, some universities, the so-called universities *e priviligio*, were founded (or 'planted') by decision of civil or ecclesiastical authorities. A first example is the university of Naples which was planted by the Emperor Frederick II to compete with the university of Bologna and to train the jurists he required. Another university *e priviligio* was the university of Toulouse, initiated by a civil authority. It was founded with the Treaty of Paris, after the crusade against the Cathars and the count of Toulouse. This top-down decision to plant a university in Toulouse incited a lot of discontent in the city which caused the university to change its program from one centered on theology to a more juridical one. Not only civil authorities planted universities. Also the pope created a university. Innocent IV chose to establish a university in the curia itself, *studium curiae.* Undoubtedly it was the Iberian peninsula that saw the most universities *e priviligio* to come into being. The *studium* of Palencia was initiated by Alfonso VIII, king of Castile, and confirmed a few years later by a papal bull. After a few years, royal favor had shifted to Salamanca where another university was founded. Other examples are the university of Valladolid and the university of Lisbon. This phase of university development ended around 1378, when the Great Schism began. By this time there were thirty-one universities (Gieysztor, 1992; Rüegg, 1992; Verger, 1992).

In sum, it can be argued that already shortly after the first masters and students began to organize themselves in associations, both secular and religious powers successfully attempted to co-opt these grassroots movements. *Studium generale* became the name for an organization for higher learning in the fields of theology, law, or medicine, authorized by either

Prince or Pope. As such, it is clear that the history of institutionalization of these newly formed associations of study is almost as old as these associations themselves. Whereas this section aimed to sketch out the first phases of university development in Europe, the next section, this rather general account will be provided somewhat more detail by focusing on the organization of three of the earliest universities.

Salerno, Bologna, Paris

The three universities that will be central in this section are the proto-university of Salerno, and the universities of Bologna and Paris. The medical school of Salerno is included because it had a similar reputation in medicine as Paris had in theology and Bologna in law. In line with Alan Cobban (1975), it is called a proto-university here, because of the fact that it got its papal recognition as *studium generale* much later than the universities of Bologna and Paris. De facto, it was organized as a *universitas* but because the school matured quite slowly it got its official recognition only in 1280. Bologna and Paris are discussed because they are considered to be the two archetypes of university organization in the Middle Ages. Oxford, historically the third university, is not included because qua organization it is modeled after the Parisian archetype. The guiding thread throughout the discussion of the three cases will be how *universitas* provided a model for organizing activities of collective study in the Middle Ages.

To begin with, the *school of Salerno* was the first center for medical teaching and learning. Its foundation is estimated to have taken place in the 9th century. Throughout the 9th and 10th century it was the most important center of medical learning, with a strong focus on medical practice, instead of theory. What makes it unique qua organization is its lack of organization. Salerno was a heavily specialized center in medical practice, with a reputation comparable to the reputation of Bologna in law and of Paris in theology, but technically it was for a long time not institutionalized as a *studium generale*. Medical practice was deemed more important than theoretical considerations which resulted in a very dispersed body of literature. For a long time, there was no formalized instruction, nor a fixed curriculum or regularly appointed teachers. The medical school benefited from its central position in the Mediterranean area, which allowed it to access a lot of sources of both Greek and Arab philosophy and medicine. Constantine the African, who taught medicine in Montecassino but moved to Salerno in 1077, has made Latin translations of many theoretical and medical texts, for instance *Viaticus* of Al Dschaafar, compilations of Isaac Judaeus on diets, urines and fevers, and, most importantly,

the encyclopedia of medicine of Haly Abbas written more than a century earlier in Baghdad. Besides, his translations of Hippocrates and Galen gave a new impetus to the study of Greek medicine, although some of these texts were already in circulation. As such, in the 11th and 12th century Salerno became a melting pot for Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Byzantine, Muslim and Norman science and philosophy (Cobban, 1975; Siraisi, 1992).

In the 12th century, the focus of the Salernitan school shifted from a more empirical to a more theoretical interest. Application of the scholastic method as practiced in Bologna and Paris, allowed the scholars of Salerno to develop a body of theory and commentary.[42] This constituted in fact a synthesis of the Greco-Arab literature on medicine. The result was a curriculum that was, through the efforts of Gilbert of Corbeil, the first teacher of medicine in Paris, transmitted to his alma mater, but also to faculties of medicine in other university cities. This period is considered to be the apogee of the medical school of Salerno. From 1224 onwards, when Frederick II founded the *studium generale* of Naples, the Salernitan school started to decline. It did not disappear completely but was marginalized and lost its reputation as the most important center for medical teaching. In a statute conferred on the school of Salerno by Charles I of Anjou in 1280 the medical center is for the first time in history specifically named a *studium generale*. It lasted however until 1359 for the students of the school to obtain degrees and medical licenses valid for the whole kingdom (Cobban, 1975; Verger, 1999). Due to its lack of organization, the medical school of Salerno is often called an embryonic university, or – as we have seen –, a proto-university.

The *university of Bologna*, to move on to the second university that will be discussed, was in origin designed for the career interests of laymen studying Roman law. It was lay both in terms of the people teaching and attending, and in terms of subject matter. Only from the 1140s onwards canon law was being taught in Bologna. The focus on Roman law was due to the flourishing of career opportunities for laymen occupied with law and jurisdiction in the 11th century cities. The professional demands stimulated the school activities aimed at the production of practical legal skills such as the compilation of official documents and pleading in courts. Besides, there was a renewed attention for the texts of Roman law because of the Investiture Controversy. For laymen the study of, and argumentation based on texts from

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[42] The scholastic method places a strong emphasis on dialectical reasoning to extend knowledge by inference and to resolve contradictions. It often takes the form of explicit disputation, both written and orally. This means that a topic drawn from the tradition is brought forward in the form of a question, to which opponents' responses are given, and for which a counterproposal is argued. Because of its emphasis on rigorous dialectical method, scholasticism was eventually applied to many other fields of study (e.g. law, medicine). Scholasticism began as an attempt to harmonize the various authorities of the Christian tradition, and to reconcile Christian theology with classical and late antiquity philosophy, especially the philosophy of Aristotle (Hyman & Walsh, 1973; Schoedinger, 1996).

Figure 3: Laurentius de Voltolina, *Liber ethicorum des Henricus de Alemannia*, 14th century.

Roman law was the best way to confront the papal governmental claims and to establish an original political theory (Cobban, 1975). Pepo was the first master to teach at the law university but especially relevant for its intellectual development was the presence of Irnerius in Bologna between 1116 and 1140. Irnerius commented extensively on Justinian's *Corpus Iuris Civilis*. He used a method of critical analysis reminiscent of Abelard's *Sic et Non*, some hermeneutical rules of thumb to gather and confront different authorities or different claims in one and the same authoritative text (Verger, 1999).[43] In the 1140s, the monk Gratian who taught at the Bolognese monastic school of San Felice, completed his *Concordia Discordantium Canonum*, which role in the establishment of canon law in Bologna is similar to the Irnerian commentaries and glosses for Roman law. The combination of a quasi-curricular basis for Roman law, consisting of on the one hand texts of Roman law, most importantly the books comprised in *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, and on the other hand the method of scholastic dialectics, made Bologna the most important center for law studies attracting students, mostly professional lay lawyers, from all over Europe (Cobban, 1975; García y García, 1992; Verger, 1999).

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[43] For an impression of a medieval lecturing scene, see Figure 3.

These students coming from other Italian cities or from abroad, however, were not protected by the city laws of Bologna. Therefore, emperor Frederick I Barbarossa issued in November 1158 the *Authentica Habita* as the formulation of a *privilegium scolarium*, a privilege which acquired a specific significance for academics because it protected them and their freedom from humiliations and malpractices such as reprisals for debt. Since Bolognese students were already protected by municipal law, and canon law students were already protected by canon law itself, this meant an amelioration of the rights and privileges of foreign students. Besides, it was a means to promote the study of civil law. The *Authentica Habita* protected the students from exterior factors but it left the question of the organization of a student body open. Echoing the emergence of communes, craft guilds, and trade guilds, characterized by their democratic and anti-feudal nature, the students organized themselves as a *universitas*, a protective association of students (Kibre, 1962; Rüegg, 1992). By the end of the 12th century, the foreign students of Bologna founded their *universitas scolarium*. This was a student association with elected officers, statutes and an independent legal status. Around the mid-13th century, there was a *universitas citramontanorum* for the students coming from the Italian peninsula, and a *universitas ultramontanorum* for the other foreign students. Each *universitas* had its own elected student rector. The doctors assembled in a quite rudimentary association for the regulation of examining procedures and the entry to their professional group (Cobban, 1975; Gieysztor, 1992; Kibre, 1962; Nardi, 1992).

Since students were protected by the *universitas* and doctors by the commune, there was no cohesive academic community. Students were very well organized, while doctors did not really form a strong association. The student associations adopted a trade union attitude in order to survive, bargaining for strong rights. After some time, the student association was so strong that it resembled a totalitarian student regime. Students had a distinctive social status, were assembled in executive committees, and treated doctors as hirelings who had to take the oath of submission. Each year students elected a number of doctors whose income depended on the student fees. The statutory controls imposed by the students were extremely rigorous, which granted them a very powerful position. Besides, under the student governmental system doctors were excluded from voting in the university assemblies, yet they had to obey the rules that were postulated there. The strong control of students over doctors was exemplified in the fact that doctors were constantly assessed. Four students were elected to act as spies and attended the courses in order to report irregularities such as bad lecturing and cancellation of lectures. Besides, student permission was required for almost every doctoral act which severely damaged the independence and autonomy of the doctors. This even went so far that students were able to control the doctors' private life. By the mid-14th

century, at last, students progressively lost their controlling power over the teaching staff (Cobban, 1975; Verger, 1992, 1999).

In short, the Bolognese *universitas scolarium* exemplifies at the same time both the wish for a democratic organization of university life and the reality of a totalitarian regime. Students established a social structure so strong that it left no space for doctoral autonomy. Power was concentrated in the hands of a few long-tenured student executive officials who could decide which doctors should be hired, what their salary should be, and how they should be controlled. Due to the existence of the two *universitates* of law, *ultramontanorum* and *citramontanorum*, next to a *universitas* of arts and a *universitas* of medicine, which were founded a few decades after the university, the university of Bologna as *studium* was an amalgam of separate jurisdictions, a series of self-contained empires. The *studium* hence existed as a diversity with different rectors, which made that the different *universitates* were more important than the *studium generale* as a whole. As such, conflict prevailed over co-operation in the university that claims to be Europe's first.

University life in Paris, at last, developed more or less in the same time span as in Bologna. It took, however, a few years longer for the *Parisian university* to crystallize. Besides, the context was slightly different which resulted in a university that differed qua organization from the Bolognese. Already in the 11th century, there was a lot of educational activity in Paris, more specifically around the cathedral schools in the houses of the canons around the Notre-Dame. In the 12th century, the social and cultural climate of Paris seemed very fruitful for the expansion of schools. The arrival of the logician Peter Abelard in Paris is both a cause and a sign for the proliferation of schools, masters and students in and around Paris. After a dispute with the archdeacon, Abelard was forced to move from Île de la Cité to the left bank of Paris where he started to teach at Mont Sainte-Geneviève, which induced a multiplication of the masters and students in the monastic schools located there. In his *Metalogicon*, John of Salisbury, who has studied in Paris from 1136 until 1148, bears witness to the enormous influx of students from all parts of France, Germany, and England in the schools of the 12th century. The cathedral schools of the Notre-Dame remained the most important for theology while the old and new monastic schools around the bridges and on the left bank offered refuge to the masters in logic and grammar[44] (Riché & Verger, 2006; Verger, 1999). This dispersion of schools and learning resulted in a quasi-anarchical educational situation in which the Church became practicably incapable to control what was taught in the schools. Hence, what developed in the course of the 12th and the beginning of the 13th century was a conflict

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[44] For a map of medieval Paris including the location of university activities, see Figure 4.

between the Church and the masters, informed by at the same time a quest for educational autonomy and ecclesiastical imperialism. The Parisian masters did not want to submit to the demands of the Church while the interest of the Church was to bring some unity in the laicizing multiplicity of schools (Cobban, 1975; Nardi, 1992).

At that time, the students were, however, very dependent on the Church because the Church provided them with clerical rights on the condition that the students themselves were considered to be clerics, *clerici vagantes*, religious people who led a wandering life going to a school in a town which was not their hometown (Schwinges, 1992). In this way, students were submitted to ecclesiastical jurisdiction and became dependent on the Church in exchange for security. In the years between 1170 and 1180, the first embryonic associations between Parisian masters and their schools came into being in order to claim more rights vis-à-vis the bishop of Paris and the chancellor of the Notre-Dame, who were still in charge of granting the *licentia ubique docendi*, the right to teach. In the first decade of the 13th century, these hesitant associations gained some momentum resulting in an overarching community of masters and students in Paris. In 1215, the legate Robert of Courçon sanctioned the de facto statutes of this *universitas*. The masters were authorized to recruit new masters themselves, to let them, by oath, obey to the statutes that they could themselves issue. Besides, they obtained the right to exclude recalcitrant masters. At last, rents of lodging, costume, burial, lectures and disputations were formalized. In this document the right to act as a guild or *universitas magistrorum et scolarium* was confirmed. The struggle between the masters and the chancellor and the bishop over the *licentia docendi*, however, continued (Solère, 2005; Verger, 1999).

The next step in the quest for ecclesiastical recognized autonomy of the *universitas* was initiated by the street riots in 1229. Several students were killed by royal sergeants which was seen as a severe violation of the clerical privilege which exempts them from civil jurisdiction. This event caused a magisterial strike and initiated the exodus of masters and students out of Paris to other cities in the north of France, Toulouse and even England. In 1231, pope Gregory IX promulgated his bull *Parens Scientiarum*, exclaiming Paris to be the new Cariath Sepher, the brilliant Old Testamentic city of books and letters. In this bull he granted the Parisian masters the right to confer the *licentia docendi*. This was an essential step for the autonomy of the university of Paris which consequently became a real and autonomous *studium generale* (Cobban, 1975; Nardi, 1992; Verger, 2013).
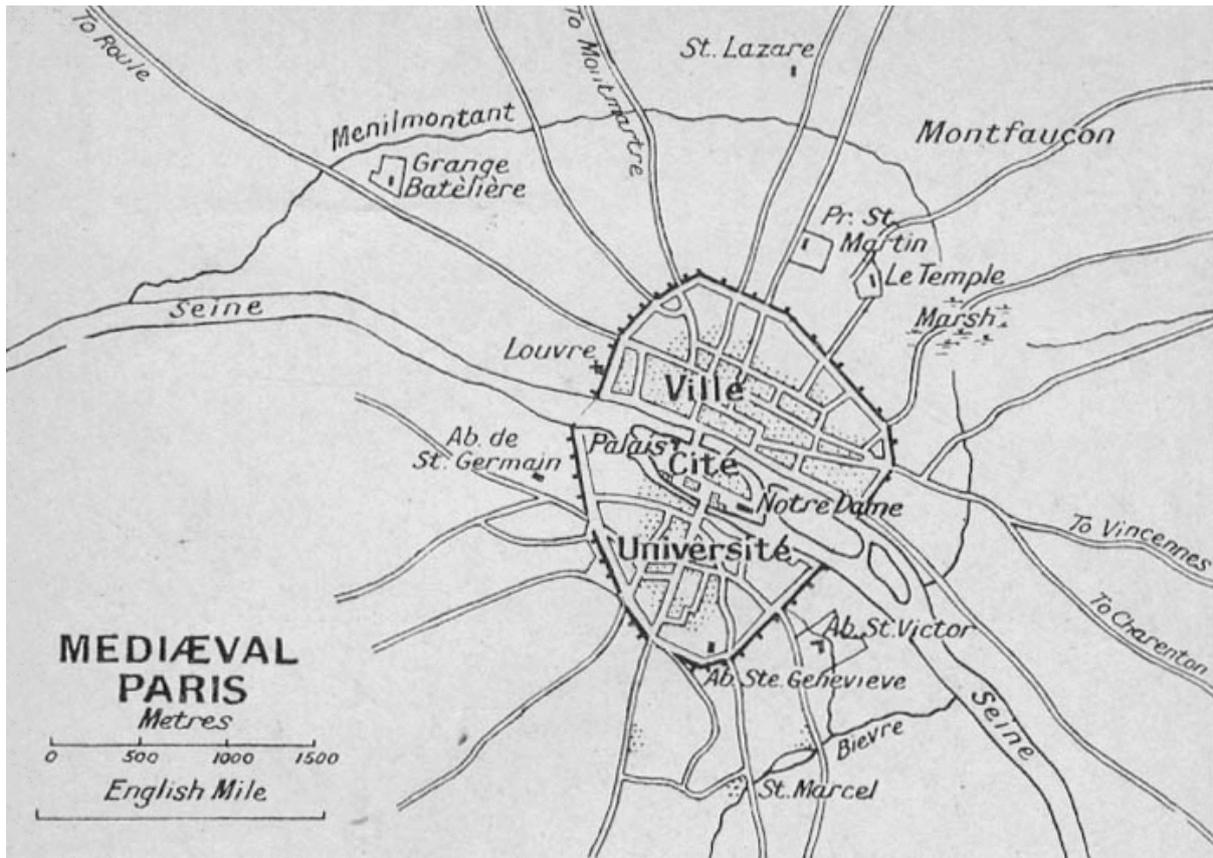
Figure 4: Map of medieval Paris.

The university of Paris comprised an extensive faculty of arts. Two thirds of the university's population were part of this faculty that was divided into four nations: French, Norman, Picard and English-German. Each nation was led by a proctor who had his own administration. They all had their own statutes and archives, finances, seal, schools, assembly point and feast days. The faculty of arts had its own head or rector unifying the four nations. This faculty functioned as a propaedeutic to the superior faculties of theology, medicine and canon law. Each superior faculty had its own organization and dean. In contrast to Bologna, the *studium generale* of Paris had just one rector. He represented the symbolical unity of the *universitas*. All students with the degree of master of arts were full member of the university government. The students of the faculty of arts were considered to be associated in the university government and were allowed to attend assemblies although they had no voice. This implies that once a student was in the superior faculty of theology, canon law or medicine, he was considered to be a worthy participant in the university government (Cobban, 1975; Riché & Verger, 2006; Verger, 1999).

The Parisian archetype exemplifies less the wish for a democratic organization than the Bolognese. It was less legalistic and far less vociferous in its expressions of democratic involvement and control. However, in reality, the organizational infrastructure of the university

of Paris turned out to facilitate the democratic process to a greater extent than in Bologna. In Bologna, power was concentrated in the hands of a small student committee, while in Paris it was dispersed and flowed through all nations and faculties of the university.

To summarize the relevance of this short excursus on the medieval *universitas magistrorum et scolarium* for our study of the relation between university and society, it seems as if the early university confronts us with a double challenge. First, it makes clear that from the very beginning onwards, the university was enmeshed in societal affairs through and through. Not only because it emerged out of the need that was felt to investigate and study societal issues, or because it was modelled after an organizational structure that had gained importance also for the organization of society which became increasingly urbanized, but also because immediately after its inception a myriad of claims have been made on its activities on behalf of both religious and secular powers in society.

Besides, and this is the second challenge the medieval university poses, the early *universitas magistrorum et scolarium* cannot be thought of as a full-fledged educational institution. Here it is important to bear in mind that the notion of *universitas* had two meanings and that both are necessary to grasp what this organization was about. On the one hand, *universitas* denotes association and community. This meaning foregrounds the collective aspect of the university, more precisely that it is always a gathering of different people. In that sense, it is clear that from the perspective of *universitas*, it is impossible for a person to study alone or to form a university on him- or herself. On the other hand, *universitas* means guild. We have seen that in the same timespan other professional groups started to organize themselves as guilds. This brings in a specific focus on the university as a community of people engaged with a craft, a particular technical way of dealing with materials. It has been argued that indeed the medieval university was such a community that dealt with texts and that the invention of university script allowed them to establish a different relation towards the text, to maintain some distance. It is these two challenges that we need to bear in mind in the continuation of this review of the literature. In the next section, it will be proposed to address the first challenge by adopting an ecological approach towards the question of the university and society.

An Ecological Approach?

Based on the previous sections, it could be argued that each time a university emerged, it was in close relation to the problems and challenges of a particular time and place. The

urbanization occurring in the North of the Italian peninsula, for instance, forwarded the question how to organize societal life outside the hierarchical, feudal order. The Investiture Controversy, to take another example, initiated the rediscovery and reinterpretation of ancient legal texts. It could be argued that gathering around these texts, such as the *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, allowed for responding to aforementioned problems and issues. This response, the result of taking in hand again texts that were almost forgotten, should, as we have seen, not be understood as a purely political decision, but rather as an ongoing process of study. In spite of the fact that indeed these emerging universities were almost instantaneously captured by other-than-educational aims, such as the Church's concern for an orthodox reading of the Scriptures, or the establishment and maintenance of a legal class, the contingency of their coming-into-being can be considered an event of educational relevance that at the same time requires and overshoots its historical and societal context.

Looking back now on the literatures of university ideas and academic capitalism under the constraint of the challenge to understand university and society as intimately intertwined – let us call this for a moment a proto-ecological point of view –, it is striking that they also emerged around the time of a profound rescaling of sociopolitical life that is to a certain extent comparable to the intensive urbanization of the 12th century which played an important role in the coming into being of the universities in the first place. At the time of the birth of the university, the question how to live together outside a feudal order was a pressing societal issue that needed to be addressed.

In a similar vein, Kant and Humboldt imagined their ideas of the university under the constraint of the respective questions how to give reason a place in the nation-state, and how to civilize the nation-state. It could be argued that the prospective German nation-state as a new sociopolitical environment created the necessity to give thought to the question of the university or how the university could be re-invented given its new environment.

Lastly, the literature on academic capitalism emerged exactly at the time when the nation-state was in decline in favor of a global economic environment. Again, the rescaling of sociopolitical life and the coming-into-existence of an expanded global habitat had severely altered the activities of the university that inhabits this global environment. It is these alterations that the literature on academic capitalism aims to grasp and scrutinize.

In short, from a proto-ecological point of view it could be argued that the city, the nation-state, and the globe have taken turns in being the name for the environment in which living together had to be organized, coinciding with the emergence of the medieval, the modern, and the contemporary university respectively.

Understanding the university in close relation to its environment seems to offer a relevant and promising perspective. The reader will have noticed that the initial formulation of 'university and society', as if these would constitute two bounded and separate entities, has been exchanged for 'university in its environment'. Although the term of environment could denote the society in which a specific university is situated, it is broader and takes into account that this environment could denote a city, a nation-state, or even the globe. In that sense, it is more general than the notion of society, but because of that, it forwards the question what this environment more specifically is. Besides, the 'in its' of the new formulation imposes a conception of the university as always already situated within an environment that can be either fostering or damaging. It can be argued that such a perspective that aims to grasp the university in its environment, can be termed *ecological*.[45] In the remainder of this chapter, the basic tenets of the ecological approach will be outlined following three stages that can be developed in relation to ecological thinking.[46]

Historian of ecology, Frank Egerton (2012), explains that it is not easy to date the emergence of ecology as a theoretical perspective. For thousands of years, human beings have been making descriptions and drawings of a variety of animals and plants in their coexistence. Egerton mentions for instance Herodotos who travelled to Egypt in the 5th century BC and wondered about the huge Nile crocodiles. Basking in the sun they would open their mouths for the sandpiper to eat leeches from inside, without ever harming the little bird (Egerton, 2001b).[47] Another example of proto-ecological descriptions are the botanical and zoological treatises by Aristotle and Theophrastus and the tradition of writing accounts in natural history that ensued (Egerton, 2001a). It took, however, until 1866 for the first definition of 'Ökologie' to emerge. In *Generelle Morphologie der Organismen*, Ernst Haeckel[48] asserts that:

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[45] And in that sense, the initial readings of both the transcendental-philosophical and the critical-sociological literature from an interest in the relation between university and society, can be termed proto-ecological as suggested before.

[46] Important to underscore is that what follows is a rough sketch of three stages in the development of ecological thinking. It will become clear that *ecological thinking* has been taking place centuries before an *ecological science* crystallized in the beginning of the 20th century with the work of Arthur Tansly, botanist and founding editor of the *Journal of Ecology*, and Frederic Clements, author of *Research methods in ecology* (Begon, Howarth, & Townsend, 2014; Smith & Smith, 2015).

[47] In the modern lexicon of 19th century almost organized ecology, such situations would come to be known under the denominator of mutualism, a concept coined by Pierre Joseph Van Beneden in 1876 in his study *Animal parasites and messmates* (Van Beneden, 1876).

[48] Perhaps Haeckel is most well-known for his artful lithographic representations of plants and animals in *Kunstformen der Natur* (see Figure 5).

By ecology, we mean the whole science of the relations of the organism to the environment including, in the broad sense, all the 'conditions of existence'. These are partly organic, partly inorganic in nature; both, as we have shown, are of the greatest significance for the form of organisms, for they force them to become adapted (Haeckel as quoted in Stauffer, 1957).

A great admirer of Alexander von Humboldt's expeditions[49] and a fervent reader and contemporary of Darwin, Haeckel brought different zoological descriptions together in support of his attempt to reorganize zoology along evolutionary lines. Ecology is defined by him as the study of the relations between organism and environment which he understands as a compound of inorganic (e.g. light, warmth, and humidity) and organic (e.g. other organisms that might foster or harm the organism) conditions to which the organism is adapted. Here we touch upon a first feature of the ecological approach, namely that it offers a perspective of *interdependency*. Haeckel explains that an animal exhibits specific features that are directly related to the environment in which it lives. A rabbit for instance has long pointed ears and eyes at the sides of its head to increase awareness for potential predators such as foxes. Its tail is short and white because it had evolutionary advantage in warning the rest of the colony so they can withdraw into the warren in case of danger. The presence of the fox in the territory of the rabbits, however, is not merely harmful to their survival. The regular elimination of the weaker and slower rabbits, protects the

Figure 5: Ernst Haeckel, *Gamochonia*, 1866.

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[49] The brother of Wilhelm von Humboldt whom we encountered at the beginning of this chapter, traveled from 1799 until 1804 through Latin America in order to collect descriptions of plants and animals which he brought together in drawings that aimed to relate the prevalence of specific sorts to isothermal lines in mountainous areas (see Figure 6) (Egerton, 2009).

colony from nutritional shortage due to overpopulation. Hence, rabbit and fox depend on each other for their survival and enact the feature of interdependency.[50]

The view that the natural world including the relationships between organism and environment does not constitute a static entity, but is rather to be conceived as a dynamic process, an evolution, was seen as a slightly disreputable idea in the early 19th century (Egerton, 2011). Moreover, in spite of for instance Lamarck's speculations about species striving to change, there was no convincing argument to account for the evolution of species.
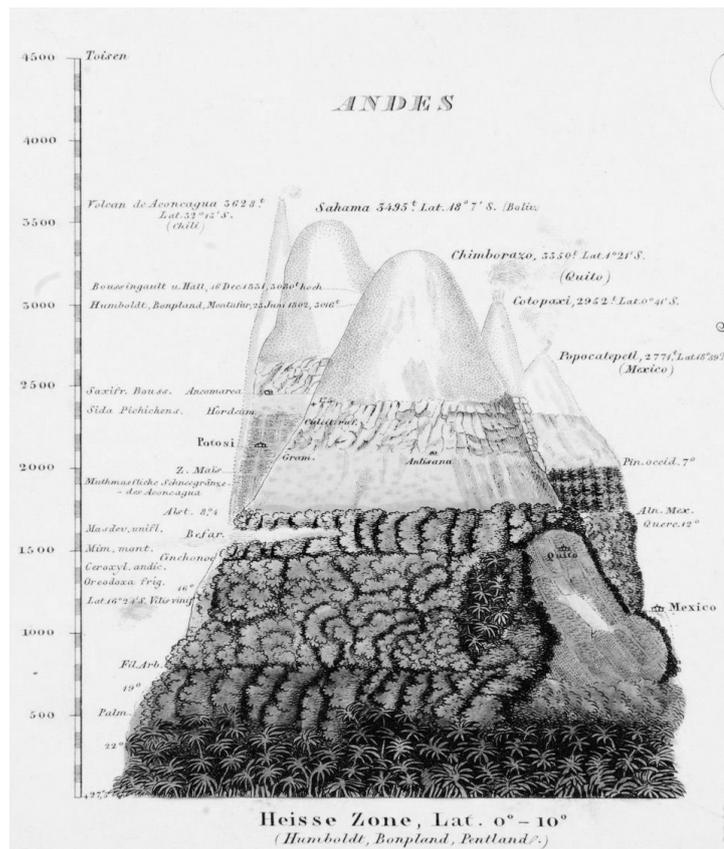
Figure 6: Alexander von Humboldt, *Anden: Heiße Zone*, c. 1802.

With *On the origin of species*, Charles Darwin (1859) wrote a coherent and convincing theory concerning the evolution of populations over the course of generations through a process of natural selection. He argued that the diversity of life arose by common descent through a branching pattern of evolution. He evidenced the theory with findings from research and observations he made during his expedition with a government ship, *HMS Beagle*, to the Galapagos Islands in the 1830s. What puzzled him during that expedition was that there were differences in the morphology of the beaks of finches that were related to the specific island they inhabited. He argued that an evolutionary process had been taking place in the course of which specific beaks had been more successful in surviving under the environmental constraints of a specific island. Whereas the beak of the large ground finch, for instance, is more suited to crack nuts for nourishment, the beak of the woodpecker finch allows him to pick insects out of trees and shrubs[51]. Hence, it is due to specific environmental conditions

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[50] The example represents an important concept in classical ecological discourses, namely balance of nature. This principle assumes that nature has its own ways of maintaining equilibrium by means of negative feedback loops. In the case of the example this means that if the foxes would kill too many rabbits, this would result in a shortage of prey and consequently a thinning of the skulk until the population of rabbits has restored itself (Egerton, 2012).

[51] For a diagram depicting four types of beaks, see Figure 7.
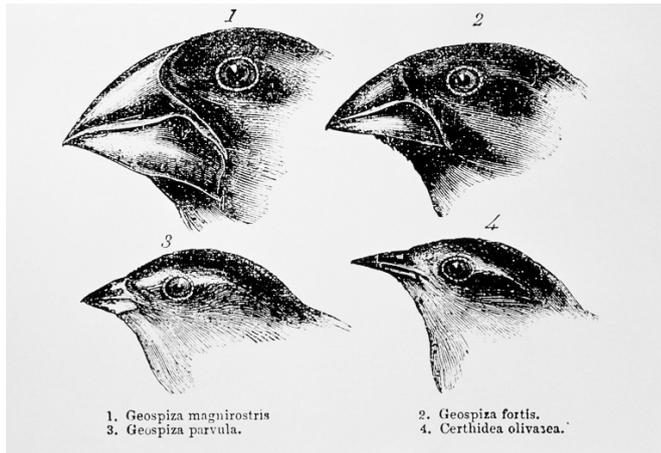
Figure 7: Charles Darwin, *Diagram of beaks of Galapagos finches*, 1889.

1. Geospiza magnirostris
2. Geospiza fortis.
3. Geospiza parvula.
4. Certhidea olivasea.

that certain phenotypes manage to survive and reproduce, while others extinct. Moreover, Darwin argues that because of the importance of the fit between organism and environment, new species have come into existence over the course of thousands of years (Egerton, 2010, 2011). Here, a second characteristic of the ecological approach comes to the fore, namely the feature of *generativity*. From an ecological perspective, the world is in continuous formation and interdependent relationships between different organisms engender ever more differences. This means to perceive the world not as a container filled with static entities, but rather as an entanglement of different living lines.

As a third stage in the development of the ecological perspective, the work of Rachel Carson is worth mentioning. With the publication of *Silent spring* in 1962, she triggered a movement of eco-alarmist writings. It is important to underscore that ecology in this context does not refer solely to questions concerning the birds and the bees dealt with from a perspective that embraces interdependence and generativity as its most important features. With Carson's work, the focus of the ecological approach becomes the complex interplay between different actors and the ways in which these entanglements foster or hinder diversity of life. *Silent spring* is hence not only ecological because it is concerned with the terrible possibility of a spring without birdsong, but also because it sketches out the different links between the spreading of disinformation by the chemical industry, the naïve attitude of public officials, the indiscriminate use of pesticides, and increasing rates of illness and disease (1962). Her work is not a description and analysis of natural phenomena as if they would occur in a vacuum, but explicitly addresses the place of the human being in complex ecosystems. To a certain extent, it is possible to argue that in her writings the ecological approach unveils itself as a normative perspective, since she adopts a critical stance with regards to the developments and policies of her time. In fact, it seems as if the ecological endeavor was normative from its beginnings, as concerns such as biodiversity seem not only to denote natural phenomena but also to attribute a value judgment – biodiversity is deemed better than monoculture. The conflation between a descriptive and a normative account seems to be the third feature of the ecological perspective. What sets the ecological approach apart is its deep

concern for matters of living and dying on a shared planet, matters that are political through and through.

In the wake of *Silent spring* and the environmental movement of the 1960s and 1970s, authors coming from a variety of disciplines retooled the ecological approach or the ecological conceptual apparatus for the questions they were dealing with. Social anthropologist Gregory Bateson (2000), for instance, brought several of his observations and theories together under the denominator of the ecology of mind. Within perceptual psychology, James Gibson (1986) elaborated an unconventional, even quirky approach to visual perception which he described as ecological. Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979), a developmental psychologist, proposed an ecological approach to human development. He underscored the fact that the parent-child relationship does not take place within a social vacuum but is imbued with meanings from broader social, political, religious, and economic contexts. A last example comes from Félix Guattari (2000) who made a distinction between three ecologies, the mental, the social, and the environmental ecology, and warned for the deterioration of these three interlinked systems.[52] Bearing in mind the three characteristics of ecology, namely interdependency, generativity and the concern for living and dying on a shared planet, the next chapter will explore how the ecological perspective can be a fruitful approach to study the university.

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[52] Following quote is just an example of how Guattari (2000) maps and analyzes similar developments in the three ecologies: "In the field of social ecology, men like Donald Trump are permitted to proliferate freely, like another species of algae, taking over entire districts of New York and Atlantic City; he 'redevelops' by raising rents, thereby driving out tens of thousands of poor families, most of whom are condemned to homelessness, becoming the equivalent of the dead fish of environmental ecology" (p. 43).

Chapter Two
Ecology and the University

In recent years, two authors have already embraced ecology as a promising perspective to rethink the relation between university and society. Within the field of philosophy of higher education, Ronald Barnett has proposed the idea of an ecological university. It is the culmination of his life-long work on the history and theory of the university, including its relation to its environing world (cf. Barnett, 2011a, 2011b, 2013, 2014, 2016). In the field of anthropology of policy, Susan Wright has, together with a team of fellow-researchers, mapped the environment in which universities try to survive and make their living. In her own writings, Wright (2016, 2017) has related this to the concept of a knowledge ecology in which universities, next to, for instance, publishing houses and governmental agencies, are situated. In the project *Universities in the knowledge economy*, they come to terms with the shifting landscape of higher education policy and organizational infrastructures.[53]

The first two sections of this chapter aim to present the parts of the work of both authors that deal with the university in relation to an ecological approach. Thereafter, it will be explained how these strands of theory development can be inherited in a way that possibly opens up another perspective on the relation between university and society, loyal to the legacy of ecology. It requires, as will be argued, to conceive of ecology in relation to the concept of practice, the topic of the third section. The last two sections of this chapter aim to present Isabelle Stengers, the author who has introduced the concept of ecology of practices

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[53] For more information about the research project, see http://unike.au.dk.

as a means to think the relations between diverging scientific and other-than-scientific practices. The chapter starts with a presentation of Barnett's ecological university.

The Ecological University

Barnett (2018) explains that the occasion for his conception of the *ecological university* was formed by the observation that universities nowadays enormously grow both in number and size, and that they play an increasingly prominent role in national and transnational policies around the globe. This development raises the question as to their purposes and their relation towards the world. Barnett argues that universities greatly fail in realizing their potential to take up their responsibilities in an ever-changing and always challenging global environment. In taking up the task to repurpose the university to its current global situation, Barnett deploys the notion of ecology in a double sense, running parallel with the double objective he pursues.

On the one hand, Barnett aims to place the university in an ecological perspective and to identify the concepts that come into being in doing so. He argues that once one places the university in an ecological perspective, one has to rethink the categories in which one is usually inclined to think about the university. He identifies, for instance, the figure of the ecological learner, the necessity of an ecological curriculum, and the possibility of an ecological professionalism. On the other hand, Barnett aims to promote his conception of an ecological university that could serve as a guiding idea for reshaping higher education institutions. He places himself in the long-standing philosophical tradition of formulating ideas of the university that goes back to Kant. According to Barnett, the ecological university is a feasible utopia whose time has come and he discerns specific principles and maxims such a university should adhere to.

In short, Barnett's objective is to grasp the ecosystems amidst which the university is situated and to propose an idea of the ecological university which can be understood as a university that intensifies the relationships with its surrounding ecosystems[54]:

> The ecological university accepts that it is already ecological, albeit in a weak sense. Willy-nilly, the university is implicated in seven ecosystems. It can choose to ignore those ecosystems, it can act malevolently – even if unwittingly – towards them, or it

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[54] Barnett is aware of the two differing understandings of ecology. Therefore he proposes to preserve the name ecosystem for the notion of ecology in the descriptive sense. The name ecology is then preserved for the normative idea of the university that he wishes to put forward.

can choose to explore its ecological possibilities. With this last stance, ecology becomes a unifying and strong narrative for the university (Barnett, 2018, p. 39).

Barnett argues thus that the university is always already implicated in different ecosystems but that the university can be named truly ecological when it becomes aware of and seeks to intensify the bonds with these ecosystems (Barnett, 2018).

Before presenting Barnett's description of the university and its ecosystems on the one hand, and his normative idea of the ecological university on the other hand, it might be helpful to bring forward the definition of ecology that he seems to endorse. Barnett (2018) discerns five dimensions particular to the notion of ecology, namely interconnectedness, potential diversity, impairment, responsibility, and restoration. Besides denoting a holistic understanding of the world in which different parts are connected to each other, hence facilitating or inhibiting a diversity of life-forms in various flourishing or deteriorating ecosystems, his conception of ecology also encompasses a strong orientation towards the damaging effects human interventions have had on the world – the dimension of impairment –, and the imperative to take up responsibility for the recovery of all ecosystems and their interconnections. Barnett's ecology is essentially an ecology on human soil. In spite of his awareness of the existence and interconnectedness of various ecosystems, these systems seem only to matter to the extent that they relate to humankind, and that humankind relates to them. Barnett's distinction that separates ecology as a descriptive notion to understand the relation between the university and the world, from ecology as a normative ideal – in which hence human responsibility comes in – will be used as means to analyze his ideas. His descriptive notion of ecology will be presented first.

Barnett (2018) argues that the university – every university – lives, moves, and has its being amidst different *ecosystems*. He discerns seven such ecosystems that surround the university, namely knowledge, social institutions, the economy, learning, human subjectivity, culture, and the natural environment. Together they constitute the *ecosphere* of the university. He explains that every university unavoidably always has to relate towards these ecosystems. In claiming that the university is necessarily implicated in its ecosphere, Barnett underscores that it is important to note that not only the university moves throughout these ecosystems, it is also always already permeated by them:

Being caught in these ecosystems, the university is influenced by them, whether it realizes it or not. But then, especially if it has a care for the world, the university is

impelled to turn towards these ecosystems and bend its resources in assisting their advancement (Ibid., p. 113).

Hence, he argues that the university is not only affected by current trends and developments in the natural environment, the economy, or social institutions. In addition, it actively helps shaping these trends and developments.

Assuming that the university is always already an ecological university in the weak sense, means to open up a perspective on universities that pays attention to the entanglement between the university and its ecosphere. Understanding the university ecologically, which means for Barnett to understand the university as implicated in seven ecosystems, bears the germ for a university that is ecological in the strong sense. This is the second, more normative position that Barnett puts forward, which we encounter when the university not only realizes that it is implicated in its ecosystems, but more importantly has a care for these ecosystems and tries to develop them further, all in view of what Barnett calls the promotion of world wellbeing (2011b, 2018).

In order to shed a light on the ecological university in the narrow, normative sense, Barnett (2018) places it on three axes, namely sustainability versus advancement, natural world versus whole Earth, and instrumentalism versus transcendentalism. He argues that the discourse of ecology is all too often focused solely on sustainability of the natural world. Barnett pleas, on the contrary, for a university that not only wants to sustain the natural world, but rather one that *advances the different ecosystems* in which it is implicated of which the natural world is just one. Barnett's ecological university aims to develop the different ecosystems by restoring impairment and promoting world wellbeing. Since the ecological university does not stand outside the natural world, but is implicated in *the whole Earth*, this can, however, never be an instrumental aim. Rather, it is a disclosing of the ecological university's "*transcendental spirit* that energizes it in and towards the whole Earth, as it imaginatively attempts to discern its possibilities" (Ibid., p. 75). As such, the ecological university is situated in the corner of advancement, whole Earth, and transcendentalism of the three-dimensional space constituted by the three axes.

In his attempt to provide the reader with a stronger sense of what the existence of an ecological university *sensu stricto* would entail, Barnett (2018) enlists *seven principles* that each relate to a maxim of the ecological university he envisages. These seven principles and maxims are the following:

    i.   Active concern: Strive to live out your concerns for the world;

ii.   Exploration: Continue always to explore possibilities for realizing the potential of the university in the world;

iii.   Wellbeing: Aim continually to increase wellbeing in the world;

iv.   Epistemological openness: Go on opening yourself to new insights, new ways of conceiving the world and countervailing frameworks;

v.   Engagement: Engage with all that or whom you encounter;

vi.   Imagination: Develop and put to use your imaginative capacities, at all levels of the university;

vii.   Fearlessness: Hold fast to the university as a space of critical and open dialogue (Ibid., pp. 78-80).

By keeping to these principles, he reasons that the ecological university stays true to both its inner and outer calling. Barnett (2011b) defines the *inner calling* of the university as the "traditional concern with the advancement of learning in wanting to permeate society with enhanced enlightenment and understanding" (p. 452) which he immediately relates to the *outer calling* of the university, namely to take up responsibility to society which he believes the ecological university is faithful to, due to its commitment to world wellbeing. However, because of the degree of vagueness of the general description of the ecological university as well as the principles and maxims attached to it, it is hard for the reader to get a clear picture of what it might entail if universities would live up to their ecological calling.

To conclude this section, a few remarks will be formulated with regard to Barnett's ecological university. Firstly, from the beginning of his book, Barnett is explicit about his double use of the notion of ecology as both a theoretical lens with which it is possible to grasp the university as implicated in a wider network of ecosystems, as well as a critical-normative standard that could be deployed as a guiding idea for shaping the future of the university. More than once, though these two lines of reasoning, corresponding to a different use of the notion, seem to get caught up with each other, which makes the distinction that is made at the outset between the university as implicated in ecosystems and the ecological university hard to uphold. In recent decades, new theoretical perspectives have been put forward that explicitly aim to go beyond the distinction between fact and value (cf. the onto-ethico-epistemological perspective of spacetimematterings of Karen Barad (2003, 2007) or the ontological politics of Annemarie Mol (1999)), and it is clear that the notion of ecology bears the promise of going beyond such distinctions. Barnett's intuition that the notion of ecology embraces both a theoretical-descriptive perspective as well as a critical-normative stance is probably right, but in his attempt to keep these two separate, he fails to recognize the

possibility of developing a framework that could grasp how these interconnections between different ecosystems can come to matter.

Secondly, and related to the first remark, it can be noted that Barnett's trouble with the two-sidedness of ecology resurfaces in his conception of the university as situated in the middle of seven ecosystems. Placing the university in the middle as a point where each ecosystem reflects upon itself in the view of further advancement undermines the potential of a genuine ecological perspective, which means a perspective without an actual middle or where everything is a middle for another middle. In other words, Barnett fails to develop an ecological perspective that takes interdependency seriously. Such a perspective would pay as much attention to the interrelationships between the other ecosystems, for instance between learning and economy, or between knowledge and social institutions, as it does to the university and these ecosystems. Barnett's ecology is an ecology with a center, and a very human center more precisely as it is burdened with the ethical obligation to restore human-induced impairment and to promote world wellbeing.

Returning to our research question of situating study in the relation between university and society, it could be argued that for Barnett study is the university's way of reaching out to the seven ecosystems that make up its ecosphere, its environment. As such, it is very much a university-centered approach that risks to remain inattentive with regard to the ways in which these ecosystems lay their own claims on the university. The most obvious example in this respect would be the claims coming from the ecosphere of the economy that bid the university to produce useful knowledge. Such kinds of issues and problems are more developed in the second ecological perspective on the university discussed in the next section, namely Susan Wright's work on the university in the knowledge ecology.

The University in the Knowledge Ecology

Since the main assets and stakes of economic development have shifted from labor power and industrial production to education and training, economists have argued that the second half of the 20th century has witnessed a transition from an industrial economy to a knowledge economy, apt to the opportunities and challenges of an increasingly globalized market of commodified information and communication (cf. Drucker, 1969). In such a global knowledge economy, universities form an important link between supply and demand of information and knowledge. The university has adapted to its new environment and has become an autonomous and entrepreneurial knowledge organization that promotes competition, is eager

to cooperate with private investors, puts higher education in the service of economic competitivity, and empowers students to maximize their skills and competencies in the global labor market (cf. Chapter One).

It is these developments that Susan Wright (2016, 2017) aims to grasp as specific transformations in the environment of organizations amidst which universities are situated themselves. While investigating the university, she adopts an ecological approach by proposing to exchange the term of knowledge economy for knowledge ecology, which opens up, accordingly, new possibilities for the university to relate in more symbiotic ways to its environing organizations. Hence, it can be argued that Wright pursues a double objective. On the one hand, she wishes to shift from an understanding of the university as a static entity in an all-encompassing market economy, to one in which the university is grasped as a dynamic and fluid set of relations within a broader ecology of diverse interests and organizations. On the other hand, she aims to map new, alternative university initiatives and modes of university organization that relate critically to the current economization of higher education.

Again, before presenting the basic tenets of Wright's work on the university in the knowledge economy, it might be helpful to concentrate on her understanding of the notion of ecology. In that respect she refers to the distinction Karl Polanyi (2001) makes between the formal and the substantive economy. Polanyi argues that in *substantive economies* of non-capitalist societies social, political, and religious relationships are the bedrock of economic transactions such as gifts and exchanges. When however economic relations constitute a sphere *sui generis*, apart from the social, political, and religious spheres, such as, for instance, in the case of a market economy, he argues that this new, *formal economy* reshapes the original relations in its image.

Wright compares the knowledge economy with Polanyi's formal economy in which educational relations have been reshaped in the image of a market model, hence becoming economic relations. Besides, Wright proposes to conceive of universities in a network of relations with for instance publishing houses, governments, and transnational agencies, forming as such a *knowledge ecology*, which comes close to conceiving of the current higher education landscape as a substantive economy. Here again, there is thus both a descriptive and a normative aspect to the notion of ecology, however more tightly interwoven than in the work of Barnett. Wright argues that studying the university as embedded in a knowledge ecology, rather than an economy, raises awareness for the manifold other-than-economic aspects of higher education that remain underappreciated in the light of the knowledge economy. Moreover, she argues that when conceived of as an ecology, it is more feasible to foster symbiotic relations between universities and their surrounding organizations, in

opposition to a conception of the university as an important resource in the economy of predative capitalism (Wright, 2016, 2017).

The knowledge ecology in which the contemporary university tries to survive, can, according to Wright (2016) be characterized by different organizations and trends that make up the university's environment. With regard to the *organizations*, Wright mentions first of all the governments that create the national policy environment, including national funding opportunities and student scholarships. These national governments, however, operate under the pressure of the second kind of organization Wright distinguishes, namely transnational agencies such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank. In spite of the fact that these organizations cannot decide directly on national policies, they forcefully exert control over the policy space in which national governments operate via management techniques such as benchmarking. It is also these organizations that have created the horizon in which universities come to the fore as important pawns in the competition of the global knowledge economy, rather than as public institutions of higher education.

Wright argues that this upheaval, the removal of the protective ring around the university as public institution, has made the university an alluring partner around which a motley crew of commercial and other kinds of organizations have nested themselves. A few examples Wright gives are the proliferation of research collaborations with the industry, the emergence of an international trade market in fee-paying students, the intensification of bonds with banks and financiers, and the expansion of public-private cooperation for campus planning including its place in urban infrastructures. Moreover, she adds the entire industry that has formed around the world rankings and league tables such as Times Higher Education, QS, US News and World Report, and Shanghai Jiao Tong. Calling on data collected elsewhere, for instance the bibliometrics of Elsevier or Thomson Reuters, they classify and rank all universities in the world. Her last example of new inhabitants of the ecology around the university are consultancy offices and audit companies such as McKinsey and Deloitte that assist transnational agencies and local governments in shaping their higher education policies. Universities can invoke them to measure and optimize their quality in research, teaching, and administration in order to become 'excellent' in these domains (Wright, 2016).

With regards to the *trends*, Wright argues, together with her colleague Cris Shore, that seven shifts are characteristic of the changing ecology of the university (Shore & Wright, 2017). The first trend is the progressive withdrawal of government support for higher education. In the United Kingdom, for instance, the Dearing Report published in 1997 has shown that in the previous twenty years state funding per student has dropped by forty

percent. Shore and Wright (2017) demonstrate that this trend is not limited to the UK, but gains access in other national contexts as well. Related to the first trend, is the creation of funding and assessment regimes that aim to increase productivity and competition between university both on a national and a global scale. Allocation of means is increasingly based on all kinds of easily quantifiable output-oriented quality indicators such as the number of publications. The third trend has to do with the raise in ranking systems and the performance and output measures that come in their wake. This has led to the installation of a pervasive audit culture in higher education. Shore and Wright argue that these audits not simply measure performance, but that they reshape the institutions in which they operate. Resources and activities, for instance, are increasingly focused on what counts to funders and governors, instead of disciplinary requirements or societal objectives. The enormous growth in number and status of university managers and administrators is what they identify as the fourth trend. They argue that this coincides with a change in the way administrators perceive their role, which is no longer to provide practical support for academics, but rather to manage them as so-called human capital and as a resource in order to meet the management's targeted outputs and performance indicators. This relates to the fifth trend which has to do with the rise of what they call the 'administeriat' and the shift in power relations within the university this induced. They argue that today "rather than being treated as core members of a professional community, academics are constantly being told by managers and senior administrators what 'the university' expects of them, as if they were somehow peripheral or subordinate to 'the university'" (Ibid., p. 8). The sixth trend is a consequence of the cuts in national budgets for higher education. Universities nowadays have to find alternative income streams, such as lucrative partnerships with industry, conducting commissioned research for companies, commodifying the results of intellectual labor via patents and licenses, developing spin-off companies, and making profit from the rental of university real estate for residence, conference facilities, and industrial parks. The last trend has to do with a shift in the perception of investment in higher education. In the post-war era, higher education was deemed a public investment that contributed significantly to the economy and society, as well as to personal growth and social mobility of the population. In the 1990s, however, the aforementioned more Keynesian model was displaced by the Chicago School economic doctrine according to which the individual, not the state, should take responsibility for investment in education and training. Due to this shift of perception, the individual is made responsible for investing her human capital in order to keep up with the competition in a global labor market (Shore & Wright, 2017).

Wright (2017) argues that the transformations in the ecology of the university share two common features. First of all, universities come to the fore as a new kind of subject in a new

context. Think, for instance, of the so-called world class universities, the entrepreneurial universities, the university sector as a competitive market, or the university as driver of a competition state.[55] Secondly, this new context is without exception an economy that necessarily attributes to universities an instrumental role in knowledge production and the development of human capital. Wright (2017) concludes that in recent decades the university needed to transform itself from a public institution into "a new kind of subject, responsible for negotiating its relations with these diverse economic, political and social interests in 'surrounding society', and is made responsible for determining its boundaries and maintaining its own values, research freedom and ethics" (Ibid., p. 22).

Using Polanyi's terms she seems to suggest that the context in which universities operate is no longer a substantive economy, but has become a formal economy. This has led to the reshaping of diverse activities of the university, such as teaching, research, and service to society, in the image of formal economic exchange in an increasingly globalizing market. Wright's concern about the public role of the university urges her to reconceive of the relations the university has with its surrounding organizations in a somewhat different way. Here again, the notion of ecology proves to be an important inspiration. She pleads for a livable landscape in which universities can remain loyal to their core values:

> If the university is to have a relationship of responsibility and care towards humanity and the planet, it has to be the 'critic and conscience' of society, rather than the driver of a particular market-driven model of the formal economy. This requires a different way of thinking about the 'scene' or world that universities could inhabit and the relationships that would bring it about (Ibid., p. 27).

By placing the university in the livable landscape of a substantive economy, Wright argues that the current landscape, damaged by the rationalities and relationalities of the formal economy, can become a fostering and nurturing ecology of symbiotic relations again. In line with Anna Tsing (2015), she convinces her reader that whereas the formal economy isolates people and things as resources for investment, alienating them from the entanglements of living, the substantive economy of the knowledge ecology enables to pay attention to the myriad of interconnections that make predatory or symbiotic relations between organizations in the ecology of the university possible. Wright gives some examples of more livable university habitats such as the cooperative university of Mondragon, the trust universities, and

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[55] These examples correspond to the policies of respectively Chile, Australia and New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and Denmark (Wright, 2017).

the free universities. Besides, she refers to the reclaiming movements that are organizing themselves in many universities around the world (Shore & Wright, 2017; Wright, Greenwood, & Boden, 2011).

A few remarks conclude this section on Wright's work on the university in the knowledge ecology. First of all, Wright's careful and precise ethnographic analysis allows to map the way in which a myriad of commercial and other organizations relate to the university nowadays. This makes it possible to shed light on how the university has to position itself if it wishes to survive, but also on a variety of alternative forms of university organizations that relate critically to the trends and developments Wright has mapped. To a rather great extent, however, the university is still seen as a monolithic whole of which core values such as freedom, autonomy, and its public character, need to be defended in an increasingly hostile environment. Invoking the term ecology as a methodological lens with which to study the relationships between the university and its surrounding organizations, seems to involve a critical-normative perspective. It is indeed argued that when conceived of as a bundle of dynamic entanglements with other organizations, instead of as an isolated whole, the university is more apt to engage in symbiotic relationships with its contiguous organizations.

In opposition to Barnett, for whom it was necessary to keep both the theoretical and the normative understanding of ecology separate, Wright makes a call for a livable landscape in which universities can flourish and that fosters entanglements in which the university can participate while keeping to its own value framework. In the next section, a third possibility will be put forward. Instead of presenting an idea of the university inspired by the discourse of ecology, or proposing an ecological framework to understand the university in relation to other organizations, the case will be made to focus on the *practices of the university* and hence to inquire the possibility of an ecology of practices.

A Third Ecology

At the end of the first chapter, it has been argued that an ecological perspective could be relevant to consider the relation between university and society. The first two sections of the current chapter have been devoted to a presentation and analysis of two such perspectives with regard to the university. Barnett's ecological university, as has been argued, can be placed in the tradition of the university as idea, dating back to Kant. Wright's critical analysis of the universities in the knowledge economy entails a great deal of the concerns of the literature on academic capitalism, including its conception of the university as organization.

As such, the work of Barnett and Wright takes the relay from respectively the literature of ideas and the discourse on academic capitalism in explicitly ecological terms. We have seen that both theoretical strands have always already dealt with issues concerning the inside and the outside of the university, its relation to the state and the economy, but with Barnett and Wright these ways of theorizing become ecological through and through. They respond to the first challenge posed by the medieval university, namely to think the university in close relation to its environment.

However, they do not respond to the challenge formulated based on a comparison between the transcendental-philosophical and the critical-sociological literature, namely to understand the university in a non-institutional manner, as *universitas*. Indeed, it has been argued that what connects the university as idea and the university as organization is a common reliance on the institution of the university as a unit of analysis, albeit in relation to its environment. This was the first reason to reach back to the medieval university. We have seen that the communitarian ideal of *universitas* provided a model for the gatherings of students and masters around texts in the course of the long 12th century. Perhaps the newly formed *universitates* can point to a third possibility that allows to inherit the work of Barnett and Wright in a way that stays loyal to their ecological commitment but succeeds in omitting the university as institution. This means that it is not our aim here to criticize or to point out where Barnett and Wright were wrong. The question is rather again how to make the relay, how to take in hands what has been held out, how to compose with two diverging lines of thought.

The medieval concept of *universitas* has helped here as it denotes at the same time – as we have seen – *association* and *guild*. The medieval *universitas* is not an institution but a gathering. It is however not any kind of gathering as it bears resemblances with the guilds. These were technical associations that practice a craft. Expanding on this, it might be interesting to think about the university as a mangle of *practices* instead of an institution. It is important to underscore that this historico-etymological argument here should not be understood as a final and watertight answer to the challenge of thinking the university without taking recourse to its institutional existence. It is rather to be conceived as an inspiring directive in taking the relay, knowing that there are many other ways in doing so. In the remainder of this chapter, I will outline the basic tenets of what has come to be known as the 'practice turn' in social theory and I will present the first major interlocutor, Isabelle Stengers, who has developed an ecology of practices.

The focus on practices in social theory (instead of, for instance, discourses, structures, or systems) emerged in the course of the 1980s. Some theorists have even claimed that there

was a real *practice turn* comparable to the linguistic turn the academic world went through during the beginning of the 20th century.[56] At the moment, one of the most prominent voices in this intellectual movement is Theodore R. Schatzki. His work will be used to give a general overview of the so-called practice turn.[57] An extensive introduction of Schatzki's practice theory will be omitted.[58] Instead he will be read as a theorist of practice theory. While contextualizing the practice turn, Schatzki (1996) describes the history of social theory as one in which two master concepts dominated, viz. the society and the individual.

Schatzki explains that under the denominator of *society*, we find the perspectives that privilege the social as a totality that is more than the sum of its parts. This implies that the social totality has an existence beyond that of its parts and that it can be regarded as an explanatory principle for the behavior of the parts. The notion of society as a bounded and unified totality has guided theorists such as Hegel, Marx, Durkheim, Malinowski, Althusser, Parsons, and Luhmann. Critics of this approach claim that the totalizing view of sociality neglects the "contingent, shifting, and fragile relations among social phenomena that weave them into ever-changing constellations" (Schatzki, 1996, p. 2).

Schatzki mentions two theorists who have critiqued such a totalizing view of social relations and have initiated a different approach to the social. Firstly, Zygmunt Bauman proposes a kaleidoscopic view of society in which social order is at once momentary and contingent. He compares it to a whirlpool in a flow of water, retaining its shape only for a brief period of time and at the expense of constant renewal of content (cf. Bauman, 2000). In his analysis of power, Michel Foucault, secondly, attends to local and small-scale phenomena, such as drill exercises or prophylactic campaigns. Power, a central category in his thought, is conceived of as flowing through a web of relations of force among individuals that find themselves in miscellaneous social formations, such as the prison, the hospital, or the school.

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[56] See, for instance: Ortner (1984); Schatzki, Knorr Cetina, & von Savigny (2001). From a Schatzkian perspective it is arguable that the practice turn is an outcome of the linguistic turn, since his understanding of practice theory is heavily indebted to the thought of Heidegger and especially Wittgenstein. For a discussion of the practice turn in educational theory, see: Higgs, Barnett, Billet, Hutchings, & Trede (2012). It is worth mentioning that in the latter volume practice theory as a methodological perspective is conflated with an understanding of practice theory as a didactical method.

[57] Stengers, whose concept of practice will be discussed later on, is critical of the idea of describing these movements in terms of turns. Her argument is that describing these often small theoretical shifts in focus in terms of turns is not to the benefit of intellectual discussions. According to her, the only ones who benefit from these so-called turns are the publishing houses. Hence, she persistently places practice turn between quotation marks.

[58] Schatzki's own project for a practice theory is heavily indebted to the thought of Ludwig Wittgenstein, foregrounding the understanding and intelligibility of the tacit rules that govern practices. As a result, his approach understood the social initially mainly as what happens between human beings (see Schatzki (1996)). Later on, presumably under the influence of sociomaterial approaches to social theory, Schatzki was moved to attribute a greater importance to the material environments or arrangements in which practices take place (see Schatzki (2002)).

This view requires an ascending analysis of power, starting from its infinitesimal mechanisms, techniques, and tactics (cf. Foucault, 1977, 2000). Due to theoretical critiques, thinking the social as a bounded and united totality hence has become problematic.

Mutatis mutandis, the same goes for thinking the social world as consisting of interrelations among *individuals* that are autonomous and free. Game theory, neoclassical economics, symbolic interactionism, and most versions of ethnomethodology are examples of schools of thought that employ an individualistic understanding of the social according to Schatzki. Critiques of this tradition have focused on the fact that the individual requires initiation in social structures of signification, or that the subject itself is fragmented and lacking unity. Julia Kristeva, for instance, drawing on the Lacanian lexicon, states that a human being only becomes self-conscious and intentional by mastering the signifier/signified structure of language. This structure is shared, transcends the individual and is moreover constitutive of its becoming (cf. Kristeva, 1991). Instead of focusing on the social constitution of the subject, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, conceptualize how subject positions, such as 'mother', 'Catholic', 'professor', and 'lesbian' function as identifications that enter into and help compose who people are. From this point of view, a person is a particular ensemble of subject positions she assumes whilst participating in various social arenas that can entertain more or less antagonistic relationships towards one another (cf. Laclau & Mouffe, 1985).

As an alternative to these either individualizing, or totalizing social ontologies, theory development of the late 20th century saw an increasing interest in the concept of *practice* and its promise to provide a middle way between the individual and society as a whole: "Practices are where the realms of sociality and individual mentality/activity are at once organized and linked. Both social order and individuality, in other words, result from practices" (Schatzki, 1996, p. 13). In spite of the diversity of practice theories, Schatzki (2012) argues that the concept of practice can be characterized by three main features.[59]

The first is that a practice is "an organized constellation of different people's activities" (p. 13). This means that different people are involved and brought together by an activity that unfolds according to a more or less organized structure. It is assumed that the people engaged in the activity know the tacit rules of the activity which not only means that they know what to do and how to do it but also that they know how to go on with the activity given unforeseen circumstances. As such, practices, according to Schatzki, are shared social situations in which

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[59] Bourdieu and Giddens are considered the first ones to embrace the concept of practice as a way to innovate social theory. Other practice theorists include Dreyfus, Taylor, Lyotard, Reckwitz, Shove, and Kemmis.

the different participants have certain expectations from each other's activities and act accordingly.

The second feature is that important characteristics of human life or social phenomena such as science, power, and social change must be understood as rooted in the organized activities of multiple people. A person's individual behavior cannot, for instance, be understood outside of the context of the practice in which this person participates. From a methodological point of view, this means that practice theorists will focus not so much on science, economics, or politics in general, but rather on specific scientific practices (e.g. conducting an experiment), on economic practices (e.g. negotiating a price), and on political practices (e.g. a debate in the parliament).

The last basic tenet of practice theory is that human activity rests on implicit rule-following and knowing how to go on. This non-propositional tacit knowledge is bodily. As such, practice theoretical accounts of social phenomena aim to challenge the modernist subject-object distinction, or the mind-body split. Being involved in practices means indeed not so much having a clear idea about what this means, but rather being capable of performing the activities of the practice according to the expectations that circulate around it.

This last characteristic, the blurring of the boundary between subject and object – or human and non-human actors in a more contemporary vocabulary – is also a strongly developed idea in the work of Bruno Latour, Donna Haraway, and other authors in the disciplines of sociology of science, philosophy of science, sociology of technology, and science and technology studies.[60] They understand science as something that is always *in the making*, encompassing activities such as perfecting scientific instruments, writing articles, and having coffee machine conversations between colleagues. Another author that is situated in this field of philosophy of science is Isabelle Stengers whose concept of practice will be central in the remainder of this dissertation. She describes the practice-theoretical point of view as follows: "Nothing is 'done'. Everything is to be negotiated, adjusted, aligned, and the term 'practice' refers to the manner in which these negotiations, adjustments, and alignments constrain and specify individual activities without determining them" (Stengers, 2006a, p. 62).[61]

The scientist, from a practice-theoretical perspective, in short, situates herself in a field, but not one that structures or dictates her behavior, but rather one that constrains her activities in the light of what can or cannot be risked, hence taking into account the consequences her

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[60] See, for instance: Latour (1987, 2005b); Latour & Woolgar (1986); Pickering (1995).
[61] "Rien n'est 'tout fait'. Tout est à négocier, à ajuster, à aligner, et le terme 'pratique' désigne la manière dont ces négociations, ajustements, alignements contraignent et spécifient les activités individuelles sans pour autant les déterminer".

action may involve. As such, Stengers' concept of practice has a strong sense of open-endedness. Science – or politics, or religion, or economics, for that matter – are always unfinished endeavors, in the making. This, however, does not mean that anything goes in a practice or that every practice is like any other. Stengers argues that practices are recalcitrant, have their own ways of defending their borders by means of inclusion and exclusion, and she proposes to draw out the specificity of a practice by means of investigating its requirements and obligations – two central notions in the practice theory of Stengers that will be explained and discussed in Chapter Three of this dissertation.

Situating Stengers

This section aims to present the major concerns of Isabelle Stengers and elucidate why she became a philosopher in the first place. Describing her intellectual trajectory and the events that cause her to think, will clarify the relevance of her work when writing about the question of the university and its relation to society. I discern three heavily interrelated problems that situate Stengers. In short, the first problem concerns the relation between the experimental sciences and the humanities. The second problem has to do with the relation between science and the public. The third problem, at last, concerns what Stengers prophetically calls the intrusion of Gaia. This section follows Stengers' intellectual biography which provides the necessary information to distinguish the three problems and to understand their interrelations.

Stengers entered the university as a chemistry student, but already quite soon she understood that she could not ask the questions that interested her most at a faculty of science. As a chemist she felt mobilized towards the questions and discussions that were recognized as relevant to the discipline, while the problems that caused her to think were more fundamental. After a few years she chose to desert and to reorient towards philosophy, a field that she retrospectively considers a refuge for the lost causes of the sciences, whom she considers as:

> refugees seeking in philosophy a host country, even, more precisely, political refugees, researchers who come to philosophy because the questions they want to ask, and that

their country of origin has led them to ask, is now refusing to acknowledge these questions as theirs (Stengers, 2004a, p. 42).[62]

However, after obtaining her degree in philosophy, Stengers returns to the sciences and starts to work under the supervision of Ilya Prigogine. She contributes to his research into chaos theory, dissipative structures, and irreversibility. Together, they publish two books. In *Entre le temps et l'éternité*, they deal with the problem of the arrow of time and argue that physics' focus on the universality of the laws behind natural phenomena has led to a neglect of the aspect of temporality. By introducing the arrow of time, Prigogine and Stengers (1992) pave the way for an indeterminist physics that attends to processes of becoming. In *La nouvelle alliance* they reconsider the relation between the sciences and the world, pleading for a more integrative understanding of their coexistence – a theme which will continue to play an important role in her work (Prigogine & Stengers, 1986). They propose to understand the production of scientific knowledge as "a 'poetic listening' to nature and to natural processes in nature, open processes of production and invention, in an open, productive, and inventive world" (Stengers & Prigogine, 1997, pp. 58-59).

Stengers considers her time in Prigogine's laboratory as a real apprenticeship during which she learned that science can be a lively, demanding, and inventive practice. She understood that science is in the first instance not a question of belief in the unity of intelligibility of the world, the physicist's faith as she will later relate this to Max Planck (cf. Stengers, 2010). Rather, scientists are passionate and the physicist's passion does not interfere with the lucidity of her investigations. Moreover, she learned that the humanities and social sciences – with which she became acquainted in the meantime – differ in some respects greatly from the experimental sciences. Here we touch upon the first problem, namely the relation between the experimental sciences and the social sciences.[63]

In an interview, she explains that for social sciences it is harder to create a situation in which one can study an issue in depth. For the experimental sciences, it suffices to create an experimental apparatus which makes it possible to ask a specific question. For the humanities and social sciences, it is hardly possible to mimic such a situation because the respondents answer all too easily. The problem is, if the aim is to resemble the experimental sciences, to create the power relations that allow for making a difference between scientists and those who respond, and here the problem becomes indeed political. Imitating the experimental sciences

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[62] "des exilés cherchant en philosophie une terre d'accueil, voire, plus précisément, des réfugiés politiques, des chercheurs qui viennent en philosophie parce que les questions qu'ils veulent poser, et que leur terre d'origine les a menés à poser, cette terre refuse de les reconnaître pour siennes".

[63] The terms humanities and social sciences are used interchangeably.

implies to create situations where the scientist can analyze the answers in a way that short-circuits the respondent's speech, and that situates the other in a framework that allows to detect the objective meanings of the responses uttered, of which the respondent is unaware (Stengers & Deléage, 2014).

Such a strong demarcation, however, is according to Stengers too simple. Political events force the humanities to change, exactly because some people take the word and refuse to be reduced to an unconsciously uttered meaning. Her own work with users of illicit drugs has shown that because of their refusal to be identified as victims that should be helped in spite of themselves, these people managed to affirm themselves as citizens like any other, causing the expertise concerning the subject of drug abuse to change (cf. Stengers & Ralet, 1991). Moreover, she makes clear that the humanities have not invented the problem of the equality of men and women. Rather, the humanities were forced to change because others have foregrounded this problem through social and political struggle (Stengers & Deléage, 2014). The question of the relation between the experimental sciences and the humanities causes Stengers to think about the relation between science and society, a challenge that she will take up at various points in her work.

Further inquiry into the issue of the relation between the experimental sciences and the humanities has brought Stengers to psychoanalysis. She discerns in the work of Freud the ambition to create a real experimental laboratory. In *La volonté de faire science*, Stengers (2006b) argues that the aim of Freudian psychoanalysis was exactly to transform the human being into an experimentally reliable subject that testifies to the functioning of the unconscious. From her work with Léon Chertok, she learned that hypnosis constitutes a major problem for those who believe that they can prove, like in the experimental sciences, that they have in no way induced the answer elicited from their respondent. The hypnotized subject demonstrates in a more dramatic fashion that he – and hence everybody – although less dramatically, accepts to play the role the question suggests. The subject's speech and her susceptibility for suggestion problematizes the idea of a social science modelled after the experimental sciences as it is impossible to arrive at a truly 'objective' utterance without suggestion (Chertok & Stengers, 1989, 1990).

Consequently, Stengers renounces the temptation of the humanities to pursue resemblances with the experimental sciences where in fact the differences should be emphasized. Understanding science as a unified and ossified category obstructs the possibility to conceive of the variety of *scientific practices*, pertaining to both experimental sciences and humanities, as they diverge. In her work with Prigogine as well as in her work with Chertok, Stengers recurrently encountered these problems concerning the identity of

science and its relationship with politics. She agitates against an idea of science that limits itself to a description of the world as it is, and attempts to think science as interested in what the world is capable of, hence open to participation of the world it studies (Stengers, 2003c). Dissolving the amalgam of Modern Science and opening up a space where knowledge practices, which – as we will see – seem also always to be practices of care and attention, can flourish, comes to be Stengers' main project as a philosopher of science.

Via a close reading of consecutive scientific debates in classical mechanics, thermodynamics, quantum mechanics, complexity theory, and biology the seven volumes of *Cosmopolitiques* aim to break open the ground for what she calls an *ecology of practices*, an approach which proposes to understand scientific practices via their specific requirements and obligations and hence allows for understanding their divergences instead of bringing the 'sanctioned' under the denominator of modern science while expelling other – 'nonscientific' – practices to the realms of irrationality. As such, Stengers renounces strong divisions between the rational and the irrational, the objective and the subjective, fact and value, those who know and those who believe. She rather tries to think their intertwinement via the practices that produced them in the first place.

Science, in the conception elaborated in the course of the seven volumes, is not about finding pre-existing truths, but is rather a constructive endeavor, an interdependent, diverse, and contingent system, that through specific practices helps to shape the truths it discovers (Stengers, 2003a, 2003b). The ecology of scientific practices will be presented and discussed at length in the third chapter. While *Cosmopolitiques* constructs a strong and well-grounded internal understanding of scientific practices, Stengers' more recent work explicitly bets on the possibility of using this conception of scientific practice to tighten the links between science and society while preserving a space for other-than-scientific knowledge practices (Stengers, 2006a). Events like the sudden involvement of the public in the discussion around genetically modified organisms (GMO) for instance, cause Stengers to reconsider the democratic dimension of scientific practices. It produced, she writes,

> a collective and widely shared learning process, weaving relations among the question of intensive industrial agriculture, environmentally destructive pesticides and fertilizers, the danger of monocultures, the monopoly on seeds, the patent policy, the problem of genetic transfer and acquired resistances, the direct enslaving of public research to the private sector by the knowledge economy, and the resulting conflicts of interest that make contemporary expertise deeply unreliable (Stengers, 2017a, p. 390).

She understands this process as a transversalization of different struggles, since it linked together discussions on seeds, law, science, pests, soils, production strategies, politics, development aid, and knowledge dispersal into a *hybrid forum*.

What happened was that an assemblage of shareholders came into being around an issue that is of importance to all of them, although in different ways, in a manner that makes the insistence of the question resonate, that made them feel that there is something more important than their own particular interests, namely their shared future and how it could be affected by GMOs (Stengers, 2013a, 2017a). Stengers' question of the relation between science and society, or how to think a science that is democratic in the sense that it allows the people it deals with a chance to redefine the situation in their own terms, is suddenly taken up into a more general discussion on the involvement of the public in scientific debate on the one hand, and the problem of the responsibility of the sciences for what becomes of the world on the other hand. Stengers considers the GMO-event, the fact that the public started to meddle in questions that matter to them in spite of their lack of scientific expertise, as a powerful possible, causing her to speculatively extend the scope of this event to retake the problem of the relation between science and society.

The challenge we face today, according to Stengers (2013a), and which requires a new alliance between scientific practices and public discussion, is how to respond to what she calls the *intrusion of Gaia* – and this is the third problem. It is important to emphasize that Gaia is neither the Earth in the concrete, nor is it a name for she who is invoked to stress our connection to the Earth. The bastard of 20th century science and ancient paganism, Greek mythology and the Gaia-hypothesis formulated by Lovelock and Margulis, she is the living assemblage of oceans, atmospheres, plants, climates, micro-organisms, animals. She is the one that holds together in her own particular way and who responds in an unexpected manner to the questions that are addressed to one of her constitutive processes often bringing into play all of them (Stengers, 2014). Long before the Greeks conferred on their Gods a sense of justice and an interest in our destinies, Gaia already was the one who was feared by the peasants since they knew all too well that they depended on something greater than them and that nevertheless tolerated them, but in a way, that should not be abused. She was a cause for care and attention, hence definitely not to be offended. Today, this margin of tolerance has been transgressed, ticklish and irritable Gaia has been provoked. Utterly indifferent to the question who is responsible, Gaia is not interested in our response to her intrusion. She asks nothing of us. It is not she who is threatened today, as the micro-organisms will safeguard her existence as a living planet, with or without Man. Naming Gaia as the one who is provoked, as the one who intrudes, as the question of our time means to decentralize mankind, and to

pave the way for an unprecedented or forgotten form of transcendence: "a transcendence deprived of the noble qualities that would allow it to be invoked as an arbiter, guarantor, or resource; a ticklish assemblage of forces that are indifferent to our reasons and our projects" (Stengers, 2015a, p. 47).

Here, we touch upon the concern which turns the three problems outlined above into causes for thinking. In an autobiographical text, Stengers proposes the following question as central to her work: "What has made us so vulnerable, so ready to justify the destructions committed in the name of progress?" (Stengers, 2004a, p. 68).[64] She wonders how the present situation of ecological deterioration has come about, especially how we as human beings have paved the way for environmental destruction. Stengers argues that capitalist modes of production have injured the practices in which humans as well as non-humans participated in order to take care for the world, to pay attention to it. She warns for the devastating effects capitalist catchwords such as flexibility and competition have on the way we relate to ourselves, to others, and to the world. Inspired by Félix Guattari's three ecologies, she asserts that this discourse and its correlated policies have an impact on an individual, a social, as well as an environmental level. It has for instance, severely damaged scientific practices, distorted their entanglement with the world in a quest for individual gain or profitable results, and impoverished the mental activities of the researchers involved. She argues that the damage brought to the Earth is correlated with the atrophy of practices of care and attention – often swept away as irrational by the standardized and sanctioned practices of modern science –, and the numbing of thought that scientists and other people involved in these practices can afford to bear on the issues that concern them. Stengers' plea is to reclaim these practices, to rehabilitate their force, and nurture their inventiveness, in the light of the destructions capitalism has brought to them (Stengers, 2013a, 2013b; Stengers & Deléage, 2014).

To conclude this section, it is important to emphasize that these three problems – the problem of the relation between experimental sciences and social sciences, the problem of the relation between science and the public, and the problem of the relation between science and the world – are interrelated and constitute the web of problems in which Stengers situates herself. On a general level, she is concerned about the ecological devastations capitalist science has brought to the world. Related to this first problem, is her second concern, namely how the public can let its voice be heard within the scientific discussion, which is, from a Stengersian point of view at least, never a joust with facts but rather a coming together of interested interlocutors around something that matters to them, and hence requires

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[64] "Qu'est-ce qui nous a rendus si vulnérables, si prêts à justifier les destructions commises au nom du progrès?"

consideration. Part of this problem is the first problem which concerns the relation between experimental sciences and social sciences, and how both make what they study come to matter (or not). I have shed light on what causes Stengers to think and what situates her as a philosopher. The different problems that are sketched out above will return in the second part where I discuss the ecology of practices which has a bearing on the three of them. In the next section, I will shift the discussion from what causes Stengers to think to what thinking means for Stengers as a philosopher.

Towards an Ecology of Practices

In this final section of the first part, I will unpack some of the characteristics of the thinking of Stengers. These characteristics will be brought forward in relation to some of the theoretical sources Stengers draws from. Characteristics, moreover, that have a bearing on her conception of the ecology of practices which will be presented in short. A more elaborate discussion of the ecology of practices and how it can come to bear on the question of the university and its relation to society will follow in Part Two

   In her struggle for a science that is both respectful to the world it inquires, including its many inhabitants, as well as considerate with regard to what it, due to the inventions of science, can become capable of, Stengers' brothers in arms are Leibniz, Whitehead, and Deleuze, three philosophers from who she has learned to say 'and' when others are inclined to see 'or' and that help her to elaborate a philosophy that is reconciliatory, but nonetheless recalcitrant. Short characterizations of Stengers' relation to the work of these philosophers will help to give an impression of how Stengers conceives of her position as a theorist.

   From Leibniz, firstly, she has learned the *art of diplomacy*, and a way to think variation as irreductive, this means that nothing is entirely the same as anything else, or entirely opposite. She keeps true to what she calls the Leibnizian constraint, viz. the requirement not to go against the established sentiments but rather to find a way to compose with them in order to arrive at a non-exclusive world. This means to think a world that does not ban those who are from the dominant point of view considered as irrational, but rather tries to find ways – and here the diplomacy comes in – to engage in a conversation *with* these sentiments, instead of against them. It means to take up responsibility for the consequences of what is said and done, just like a mathematician respects the requirements that make his problem meaningful and interesting. A mathematical discovery indeed does not imply the destruction of definitions and questions of the past. The old terms are preserved as a specific aspect of a transformed

definition that elicits new questions. Leibniz, himself a mathematician, knew this all too well, she claims. Similarly, the Leibnizian constraint unites truth and becoming by tying to the enunciation that one believes to be true the responsibility not to obstruct becoming. This implies to take up old definitions in new problems and questions (Stengers, 2000). In the third chapter, we will clarify how Leibnizian diplomacy allowed Stengers to make a peaceful intervention during the so-called science wars of the 1990s.

From Whitehead, secondly, Stengers inherits the struggle against the bifurcation of nature and a commitment to a more integrative experience and understanding of reality. With the bifurcation of nature Whitehead described the split of reality into objective nature, a reality that is mute, devoid of values, and insensible, on the one hand, and subjective nature, a reality which is full of colors, sounds, and emotions, on the other hand. When seeing a sunset, a physicist could describe it in terms of waves and molecules, whereas the poet could celebrate its colorfulness and the glow in which the sunset covers the landscape. Both the physicist and the poet have an experience of the same sunset. What differs is the way they pay attention to it and the abstractions they produce in order to communicate their experience of the sunset. Our abstractions are what we experience a specific and concrete situation with. They pave the way for a certain kind of experience, rather than another. Compare, for instance, the experience of the physicist and the poet. In spite of the fact that they both witnessed the same event, the same sunset, each had a particular experience of this event based on the abstractions he experienced this event with. This does not mean that there have been two sunsets that are mutually incompatible or of which one is more real than the other. Likewise, this does not mean that the physicist's account of the sunset in terms of radiation does more justice to the event than the poet's account of the sunset in terms of illumination, that it would be more 'real'. Rather, it is a matter of the abstractions with which both gentlemen have experienced the event of the sunset. Together with Whitehead, Stengers understands the task of philosophy as *civilizing our abstractions* through a welding of imagination and common sense. New abstract propositions can be a lure for the possible, to become attentive to an event, and to make something come to matter in a certain way rather than another (Stengers, 2011e).

Deleuze, whom Latour (1997) has called Stengers' "only true mentor" (p. xii), thirdly, has been a highly inspirational philosopher for Stengers. Already in her early work with Prigogine she engaged with his ideas concerning time and becoming to think the problem of irreversibility in physics. From him, she learned what she calls to *think through the middle*. This means not to think from points of departure or fundaments, neither from points of arrival or ends, but rather through what is happening, and to understand what is happening as a complex process

of becoming in which different lines of divergence meet or part ways. Thinking through the middle requires to leave the point from which it is possible to judge – a judgement that can be based on principles or desired results – and forces to follow the situation where it leads. It makes it possible to think conjunction – and… and… – where there was only disjunction – or… or… And this, moreover, not by adding different causes that others would oppose, but rather to transform them so they are not mutually exclusive anymore. This resonates indeed with what before has been called Leibnizian diplomacy. For Stengers, as it was for Deleuze, thinking is creation and invention, instead of denunciation or deconstruction. It means to set out on an adventure knowing that "there is no adventure without a risky relation to an environment that has the power to complicate this adventure, or even to doom it to failure" (Stengers, 2011e, p. 18).

Bringing these three theoretical commitments that Stengers has inherited together, it is possible to characterize Stengers' thinking as at once constructivist, speculative, and pragmatic and it is – as will become clear in the next part – along these axes that also her ecology of practices can be understood. In explaining this characterization of Stengers' thinking the reader will get already a first impression of her project of the ecology of practices.

First of all, Stengers' thinking can be characterized as constructivist. Her constructivist approach is echoed in her concept of practice. A practice, according to Stengers cannot be understood based on some kind of transcendental principle that would guarantee the practice its existence (e.g. a foundational knowledge or a universal aim). Each practice is always a specific, concrete holding together of human and other-than-human actors (e.g. a molecule, a microscope, a God, a text), situated at a particular moment in time and space. It is a radically contingent event. From a constructivist point of view, every statement concerning the nature of a practice (e.g. 'scientific discovery is motivated by a general love for wisdom') does not legitimize the practice from a transcendental point of view, but is rather an active ingredient in the self-maintenance of this practice, how it brings people together, how it understands its own functioning, and how it defends its borders (Stengers, 2005b).

As constructions however, practices are no static entities. They are subject to transformations and change. At this point, the second characteristic of Stengers' thinking, speculation, comes in. A speculative approach, according to Stengers, has nothing to do with formulating guesses as to the question why reality is as it is. Rather, it has to do with paying attention to the possible that makes itself felt in the course of practices. It is this possible that is present that bears the promise of transformation and change, that, indeed, there is an alternative. Thinking about the relation between a constructivist and a speculative mode of theorizing, Stengers (2002) writes that:

To try to think together, while knowing that we are, should be, and must continue to present ourselves as unable to transcend the actual limitations of this togetherness or to escape toward some dreamed of universality, is, I would submit, the very stamp of a constructivist philosophy. Speculation thus becomes not the discovery of the hidden truth justifying reality, but a crucial ingredient in the construction of reality (p. 239).

Speculation, hence plays an important role in the way practitioners experience being part of a practice and its potential for change.

Lastly, the mode of thinking Stengers proposes, can be termed pragmatic. Stengers explains that pragmatism has to do with care for the consequences. It avoids every 'now we know… and thus…' that links a so-called universal knowledge to a particular circumstance via the law of applicability. Instead, it forces to pay attention to the specific ways in which this knowledge comes to matter in this situation, and which chain of consequences it sets in effect. Moreover, and coupling back to the speculative-constructivist understanding of practice, it makes present how the relation between the philosopher and the practices she theorizes about can be conceived. Philosophy, in the Stengersian understanding, is in short not so much about describing a practice as it is, but an attempt to activate the sense of the possible, a speculative gesture (Stengers, 2015b).

Conceptualizing practices from a Stengersian perspective requires to create new relations with scientists and to rethink the relations between the world and its scientists.[65] Calling Stengers approach to practice pragmatic does not involve that every idea or proposition would be reduced to the consequences it plays into, to what it 'yields' so to say. It rather requires refusing a separation between an idea or proposition and its consequences. It makes the question of the consequences, and our obligation to take care of them, present. Thought, in this understanding, takes as its point of departure the possible in the world, instead of the world as it is, and hence need to bear in mind the consequences of its creations (Debaise & Stengers, 2017).

By means of this characterization of Stengers' philosophy as constructivist, speculative, and pragmatic, the reader will have gained a sense of what it means to think with Stengers as well as have acquired a preliminary understanding of Stengers' concept of practice. In the next

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[65] Endorsing a pragmatist conception of truth and foregrounding the researcher's standpoint in studying its 'population', taking an interest in creating new possible relations with this 'population', or a so-called pragmatics of alliance, Stengers places herself in the feminist tradition of sociology of science (cf. Hilary Rose, Sandra Harding, Donna Haraway, Joseph Rouse, etc.).

part, Stengers' ecology of practices will be discussed at length. To conclude this first part, however, I will summarize the argument thus far.

Relay

The aim of this part has been to review the literature on the relation between university and society. In the first chapter, I have discerned two broad strands of literature that deal with this question. The first strand of literature is the tradition of writing texts about the idea of the university and how it reflects back on the institutional structure of the university. This tradition goes back to Germany around the beginning of the 19th century, but has spread over other countries as well. Famous texts in this line of thought include Kant's *The conflict of the faculties*, Humboldt's *On the spirit and the organizational framework of intellectual institutions in Berlin*, and Newman's *The idea of a university*. I have called the approach these texts adopt vis-à-vis the relation between university and society a transcendental-philosophical approach and I have demonstrated that in this mode of reasoning the university comes to the fore as an idea.

For the second strand of literature, we had to go to the United States of America a few decades after World War II. As the economy had shifted from an industrial economy based on the production of commodified goods to a knowledge economy based on the creation and circulation of commodified knowledge contents (cf. patents) and high-tech products, the place of the university in society had altered. The second strand of literature analyzes and critically reflects on these developments that are grouped together under the denominator of academic capitalism. It can be argued that Kerr's book on *The uses of the university* has been seminal in setting the research agenda for investigating the changing role of the university in society. I have called the approach that researchers in this line of thinking adopt with regard to the

relation between university and society a critical-sociological approach and I have shown that in their studies the university is conceived of as an organization.

In comparing the two approaches to the university, it was striking that in spite of clear differences in aims and scope, both seem to rely on an understanding of the university as institution. As such, it has been argued that although both literatures conceive of the university as either idea or organization respectively, they find common ground in the university as institution. Whereas the first approach requires the university as institution in order to put flesh on the bone of the university as idea, the second approach relies on the university as institution in order to scrutinize the transformations it underwent while engaging with other organizations. I have argued that next to this point of convergence between both approaches, there is something else that both literatures seem to share, namely a forgetfulness with regard to the medieval university.

By means of a concise excursus to the 12th century, I have shed light on the specific ingredients that have played a role in the coming into being of the university in different cities of medieval Europe. What stood out was that the early universities matured in close relation to societal and political issues (e.g. urbanization, religious struggle) and that they created the possibility to relate to these issues via the study of texts. These texts had become accessible due to translations and transcriptions, but most importantly is the fact that due to a shift towards what has been called university script, masters and students alike started to relate to the text in a different, more distanced way. These small-scale universities organized themselves as a *universitas*, a concept that had gained increasing importance in that time, not only for religious and political organization, but also for the organization of communities of artisans and craftsmen (e.g. weavers, cobblers, or masons).

I have argued that not only due to the strong link between the early universities and the societal and political contexts in which they originated, but also due to the fact that both the transcendental-philosophical and the critical-sociological approach to the university emerged at times of a profound rescaling of social life (cf. the German nation-state, globalized capitalism), it could be interesting to adopt an ecological approach with regard to the topic of our research, more precisely one that attempts to grasp the university as entirely entangled in its environment. To conclude the first chapter, I have generally outlined three basic principles of an ecological approach, namely interdependency, generativity, and a concern for matters of living and dying on a shared planet.

Sharpening my focus, the second chapter aimed to present the work of Ronald Barnett and Susan Wright, two authors who have already embraced an ecological approach to the university. Whereas Barnett has proposed an ecological university that engages with its

different ecosystems in the pursuit of their advancement and hence promotes world well-being, Wright has mapped, analyzed, and criticized trends and developments that happen to the university in the knowledge economy which she proposes to grasp as a knowledge ecology. My argument has been that indeed both authors have adopted an ecological approach and hence have addressed the first challenge the medieval university poses. However, they did not address the second challenge of the medieval university, namely to understand the university as *universitas*, an association of masters and students that practice together the activity of studying.

It is this meaning of *universitas*, as a practice, that I aim to put forward to open up an alternative understanding of the university. Welding my interest in an ecological approach with a focus on practices has brought me to Isabelle Stengers' ecology of practices. The last sections of this chapter contained an introduction to the thought of Stengers, including what it means to think with Stengers, an endeavor that is at once constructivist, speculative, and pragmatic. The next part extensively deals with the ecology of practices. More precisely the focus will be on scientific practices on the one hand, and study practices on the other hand.

Part Two

Ecology of Practices

Chapter Three
Scientific Practices

The aim of this second part is double. First, I want to explain Stengers' theoretical work on the ecology of practices in its own right in the current chapter, and then to bring it to bear on the question of the relation between university and society with a specific interest in study in the next chapter. The three problems around which Stengers' thought revolves discerned in the previous chapter (the relation between the experimental sciences and the humanities, the relation between the sciences and the public, and the intrusion of Gaia) will echo throughout both chapters. In the current chapter, I will outline the basic ideas and concepts of the ecology of practices, while staying close to Stengers' work in philosophy of science. The fourth chapter then aims to inquire how study practices can be situated in this ecology of practices. Therefore I will turn to a proposition concerning the university that Whitehead uttered at the occasion of the inauguration of the Harvard Business School. Stengers' scholarship on Whitehead will help to understand this proposition and to come to terms with the consequences it entails. In short, whereas the third chapter aims to present Stengers' ecology of scientific practices, the fourth chapter aims to expand this ecology of practices by developing the concept of study practices. As such, the third chapter will mainly contain a concise presentation of Stengers' work in philosophy of science. The fourth chapter then will offer an educational reading of Stengers' work on the speculative philosophy of Whitehead situated by an interest in its potential to bear on the concept of study practices.

Scientists in Turmoil

Before presenting the central concepts of Stengers' ecology of practices, this section aims to explain how she situates herself in a socioscientific context that is marked by firstly, the quarrel between natural scientists and their deconstructivst readership that took place in the 1990s; secondly, the changing relations between modern science and its interlocutors from the state and the industry; and thirdly, the possibilities that are opened up by the involvement of the public in scientific debates.

In the opening lines of *L'invention des sciences modernes*, published in 1993, Stengers foresaw the coming into being of a conflict between the natural sciences and their interpreters (Stengers, 2000, 2006a). For many decades, there had been a more or less peaceful interaction between chemists, physicists and other natural scientists on the one hand, and philosophers of science on the other. In the tradition of French epistemology for instance, authors such as Pierre Duhem and Gaston Bachelard have been conceptualizing the relations between societal or technological developments and scientific discovery without provoking the scientists' anger (cf. Bensaude-Vincent, 2005). During the 1970s and 1980s, however, the analyses of the interpreters of the sciences became bolder as they became more politically pledged, claiming that the scientific endeavor is in fact a social practice *like any other*. This stance undermined the scientific claims to objectivity and neutrality, and smudged the reputation of science as a rational and decent enterprise. A reaction from the besieged scientists could not stay out. In 1994, the mathematician Norman Levitt and the biologist Paul R. Gross launched a first counter-strike with the publication of *Higher Superstition. The Academic Left and Its Quarrels with Science* about the misuses and abuses of science for the advancement of political goals (Levitt & Gross, 1994). Stengers (2006a) explains that this event constituted the commencement of "la tragicomédie académico-médiatique" (p. 7) that came to be known as the *Science Wars*.[67]

In 1996, the conflict crossed the Atlantic with the so-called Sokal affair. In the journal for postmodern cultural studies *Social Text*, the physicist Alan Sokal submitted a hoax article "Transgressing the Boundaries: Towards a Transformative Hermeneutics of Quantum Gravity" to prove that in spite of the nonsensical content of the article the editors would publish it, since the message pertains to an ideological stance close to the one endorsed by the editorial board. These two events are exemplary for the quarrels between natural scientists and academics from the humanities. It is clear that the natural scientists were irritated by the attacks against

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[67] For a more extensive account of this debate, see Gieryn (1999).

their field coming from the impostors of disciplines such as social studies in science, anthropology of science, and sociology of science. Inheriting from postmodern authors such as Lyotard and Derrida, these newly emerging perspectives on the sciences attempted to deconstruct natural science as a practice like any other and to demystify physicists' claims to neutrality and objectivity (Stengers, 2000, 2006a). The critical and often virulent exchange between the more realist stances defended by the natural scientists and the more relativist positions advocated by their postmodern interpreters hardened the fronts between the different disciplines.[68]

Next to this academic skirmish between the natural sciences and their critical-deconstructivist readership, Stengers (2006a) discerns in the same time span a real change in the relationship between the sciences and their classical interlocutors, namely the state and the industry, especially in the fields of biotechnology and biomedicine.[69] Related to this quarrel about the validity of truth claims uttered in the field of natural sciences is indeed the problem of the relation between science and society, or more specifically the social and economic institutions that make science possible and expect something in return. Stengers (2006a) argues that progressively, the industrial and state protagonists have broken their contract with the sciences in which they were assigned the role of disinterested sponsor of scientific research which guaranteed the autonomy of the scientific endeavour. Patenting of experimental results that were suddenly called inventions, systematic partnerships with private companies, and spin-offs announced what she has called the enslavement of scientific research to private interests.

These developments pose a serious threat to the autonomy of research which, as became clear during the Science Wars, is so dear to the scientists. More precisely, it is conflictual with the view of the scientist as the goose with the golden eggs (Stengers, 2013b). This goose, that needs to be fed in order to produce, cannot, however, be forced to produce since such a coercion would damage the autonomy of scientific research, and hence its claim to objectivity, thus spoiling the eggs. In line with Dominique Pestre, Stengers (2006a) argues that this

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[68] As the time we live in today is often described as a post-truth era, it could be argued that the concerns of the mostly leftist natural scientists who spoke up during the Science Wars with regards to the relativist position promoted by the deconstructivists were justified. Denouncing the claims to truth uttered by the representatives of knowledge institutions has not opened a mode of living together beyond rationality and irrationality, hence doing away with the straightjacket of normality, but has rather served populism. Especially rightwing politicians proved to be very eager apprentices of the craft of critique, that allowed them to denounce scientific knowledge, for instance proof that climate change does indeed exist, as being part of a leftist ideological agenda (cf. Latour, 2004).

[69] To a certain extent Stengers' description of the changing relations between the sciences on the one hand, and the state and the industry on the other hand, echoes concerns that were voiced by authors that in the first part were situated in the critical-sociological discourse on academic capitalism (Kerr, 1963; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

specific image that scientists have of their work and its relation to the state and the industry, originated in the knowledge regime[70] of the 1870s that proclaimed the idea that scientific research participates in the modernist project of the advancement of society and that, hence, it is justified to finance the work of scientists with public funding. In reality, however, in spite of its societal ambitions, this knowledge regime emerging at the end of the 19th century is specifically characterized by an intensification of the bonds between academic, industrial, military, and state interests. The analysis of Pestre shows that the autonomy of the sciences as the goose with the golden eggs, was deceitful from its inception onwards (Pestre, 2003; Stengers, 2006a).

In order to evoke the predicament the sciences find themselves in, Stengers (2006a) refers to the painting *Fight with Cudgels* by Francisco de Goya.[71] Depicted in the painting, we see two men fighting each other while a rising mud flow threatens to engulf them both. On the one side, we find the cultural studies that critically deconstruct the claims that are made within the scientific field. Their attack comes in the shape of a demystification of notions such as 'objectivity' and 'rationality', which scientists use to validate their work, and is aimed at unveiling the sociopolitical liability of the sciences. On the other side, we find the natural sciences, offended by these humiliating accusations, and trying to defend their position as the privileged path to what they call physical reality. What both sides seem to be utterly unaware of – and what intensifies the situation even more – is the mud flow which has already risen to their knees. Fully involved in the conflict, accusing one another of political indebtedness on the one hand, philosophical drivel on the other, the belligerent scientists forget what threatens them both: the progressive atrophy of the academic body due to its enslavement in capitalist modes of knowledge production, of which the aforementioned patenting, spin-offs, and partnerships with private corporations are just a few symptoms.

The question that situates Stengers in this problematic context as a deserted chemist and philosopher of science, is how to make an intervention that opens up what she calls a

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[70] A knowledge regime ('régime de savoir') is defined by Pestre (2003) as an assemblage of institutions, beliefs, practices, and political and economic regulations that delimit the place and mode of being of the sciences.

[71] See Figure 8. While Stengers interprets the rising mud as the ever stiffer grip of capitalism on the sciences, her fellow philosopher of science Michel Serres offers a slightly different interpretation. He opens *Le contrat naturel* with a description of the scene which he reads as the intrusion of the Earth in political debates. Serres argues that political theory has always neglected the Earth as a powerful political actor due to its focus on intersubjective relations. In recent decades and due to climate change, the Earth has claimed its place at the negotiating table. It is no longer possible to neglect its existence and the profound impact processes such as climate change have on political issues as diverse as social inequality or economic exploitation (Serres, 1990). Although Stengers gives another interpretation, it is arguable, because of her ecological commitments that become more clear in her later work, that she would probably sympathize with Serres' reading of the painting.

Figure 8: Francisco de Goya, *Fight with Cudgels*, c. 1820-1823.

possibility for peace when war is more probable. She follows the critical interpreters of the sciences when they claim that science is a *practice*, but diverges from their perspective where their argument becomes insulting, namely when they state that it would be a practice *like any other*. Stengers agrees that natural science is indeed a practice, but not like any other. There is a particularity to every practice which makes it diverge from other practices. The stakes of the Stengersian project of the *ecology of practices* is to make representatives of practices engage in a civilized dialogue about their specificity, what makes their practice unlike any other, rather than indulging in the violent attacks of the Science Wars. Her aim is to repopulate the scene depicted by Goya with a multitude of other people:

> It is not a question of dreaming that the fighters' would forget about what makes them diverge, of calling for an unanimous resistance to the mud, of a great reconciliation between the work of proof and subversive critique. It is rather a question of repopulating the stage with new protagonists, some interested in the work of the critics, others in what proof can do, and still others in aspects of the landscape which do not interest either of the fighters, what they would both agree as being of only secondary importance (Stengers, 2006a, p. 14).[72]

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[72] "Il ne s'agit pas de rêver à l'oubli par les combattants de ce qui les fait diverger, d'en appeler à une résistance unanime à la vase, à une grande réconciliation entre le travailleur de la preuve et le critique subversif. Il s'agit plutôt de repeupler la scène avec de nouveaux protagonistes, intéressés les uns par ce que peut la critique, les autres par ce que peut la preuve, et d'autres encore par des aspects du paysage qui n'intéressent aucun des deux combattants, qu'ils s'accorderaient à juger secondaires".

Stengers admits that she can only speculate about such a possible transformation of the scene. She argues, however, that speculations are always elicited by a sense of the possible that has already begun to actualize itself, even if for the moment this possible has no other power than to disturb established ways of thinking.

These days, Stengers discerns such a possible in the change of the role that is played by what is called *the public*. The public, traditionally conceived of as the beneficiaries of the golden eggs of scientific progress, or the flabbergasted spectators of the struggle between scientists, has acquired the capacity to leave this mute position of the beneficiary or spectator, and has learned to meddle itself in the scientific discussion. Stengers gives the example of the debate on genetically modified organisms, or what she calls the GMO-event. Suddenly the public understood that it is not necessary to undo the link biologists established between sequences of nucleotides of a DNA-molecule and of a protein's amino acids, but that it is sufficient to follow the arguments of biologists in favor of GMOs and to learn to detect the difference between arguments for laboratory research on GMOs on the one hand, and the effects of using GMOs outside the laboratory on the other. She celebrates the GMO-event as a crossing of the boundary that held science and politics so neatly separated, as an event in which the public started to ask the questions how GMOs can affect their lives and what kind of consequences this has for our living together.

From the perspective of the public, such kind of events are not so much about participating in disciplinary discussions that only interest the scientific community, but rather about meddling in the conversation on propositions that affect our very future, and putting forward questions that are often neglected by the traditional interlocutors of the sciences, viz. the industry, sponsors, and state representatives. Drawing on Dewey, Stengers argues that a public emerges at the moment when the indirect consequences of the activities of a specific part of the population become perceived as harmful to another part of this population. In the words of Dewey (1927/2016):

> The characteristic of the public as a state springs from the fact that all modes of associated behavior may have extensive and enduring consequences which involve others beyond those directly engaged in them. When these consequences are in turn realized in thought and sentiment, recognition of them reacts to remake the conditions out of which they arose. Consequences have to be taken care of, looked out for (p. 78).

And in still other words, the coming into being of a public around an issue that is then no longer a private affaire, but becomes a public issue, makes count what was not taken into account before, and organizes itself to make those consequences matter that until then made nobody think (Stengers, 2006a).

Hence, what is at stake for Stengers is to rethink the relations between the sciences and their milieu, to create, via practices, new modes of belonging. Contrary to an identity, a belonging, she explains, does not define those who belong, it rather unlocks the question what this belonging renders its participants capable of, makes the question felt how those who belong will be affected by the consequences a certain decision might entail. In the case of the GMO-event for instance, it means that biotechnologists are not pinned down on their scientific expertise, consumers on their economic interest in a profitable price, or subsistence farmers on their capacity and need to remain self-sufficient – what makes up their respective 'identity', but rather that they are all engaged in a process of collective thinking around an issue that calls a public into being. This means, moreover, that they perceive this issue not in terms of their private interests, their identity, but rather in terms of the way in which they belong to this issue, what this process makes them capable of perceiving and thinking about. The understanding of belonging that Stengers puts forward is, hence, not one of a belonging to a scientific discipline, an economic interest, or a political stake – something that could be 'identified' which would stabilize the belonging – but rather one of a belonging to an issue, a matter at stake in the sense that it destabilizes the identities of the people that gather around it (Stengers, 2006a, 2015a).

In conclusion, the ecology of practices, Stengers' diplomatic intervention in the Science Wars and the ensuing discussion on the relation between the sciences, between the sciences and the public, and between the sciences and the world – Stengers' web of thinking, her three problems –, is not aimed at describing scientific practices – or any practice whatsoever – in a way that determines what these practices are. Stengers deems descriptions of a science that is 'good in itself' but perverted by its relations with power and that should be returned its freedom to produce reliable knowledge in the service of everyone, as dangerous as the accounts that unveil a science identified with power, taking part in an enterprise of taking charge, of submission to calculation, and of manipulation. Both the utopian perspective of a science untied from the interests that it elicited, and the dystopian perspective of science compliant with power are to be averted.

What is at stake for Stengers in the ecology of practices, is to think the possibility to weave the sciences *differently* into the fabric of the world, to refuse the confidence the scientists demand ('more autonomy will save the sciences!'), but to trust in the possibility of other

relations between the world and its scientific practitioners. In the course of this chapter I will explain the theoretical underpinnings of the ecology of practices. For a more precise understanding of the problem of the autonomy of science – recall the story of the goose with the golden eggs –, we will need to go back to what Stengers calls the invention of modern science.

Dissolving the Amalgam of Modern Science

Stengers (2000, 2006a) identifies the *invention of modern science* with Galileo's triumph over the Vatican. She argues that the Galilean event not only makes clear how the experimental apparatus works but also how it is used to defeat the warlords of 'traditional' knowledge, in this case most notably the Church. "All science, following that of Galileo, would have as its grandeur and destiny to face a tradition, to negate what this tradition adheres to" (Stengers, 2006a, p. 87).[73] This section begins with an analysis of Galileo's experimental apparatus of the inclined plane, which gives the necessary background to understand what it means to found what Stengers calls a scientific territory. At the end of this section I discuss the shift this scientific territory underwent when it got surrounded by the representatives from the state and the industry, the classical interlocutors of modern science in the 19th century.

In 1608, Galileo designed an experiment to scrutinize what philosophers had taken for granted since Aristotle: the motion of falling bodies. He decided to interrogate this motion without mystery in a new way and therefore he put an inclined plane on a table. A ball descends the plane, rolls over the table, and falls to the ground, as is shown in folio 116v.[74] Afterwards, Galileo measured the distance between the edge of the table and the point of impact on the ground for every different point of departure on the inclined plane and its corresponding height. The experimental apparatus relates two features of the situation in order to verify a reason ('raison'). Two terms need some further clarification here. First, 'to relate' needs to be understood in the strong sense here. It is the creation of a relation between different variables. In French, Stengers calls this a 'mettre en rapport'. It is important to bear

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[73] "Toute science, à la suite de celle de Galilée, aurait pour grandeur et destin d'affronter une tradition, de nier ce à quoi cette tradition fait adhérer".
[74] See Figure 9.

Figure 9: Galileo Galilei, Folio 116v, 1608.

in mind this strong understanding of relation as something that is made, rather than found, throughout the remainder of this chapter. Second, 'reason' can denote both cause and proportion, from the French 'raison'. It will be argued that in this context, the second meaning prevails over the first.

The distance between table and point of impact measures a speed that is acquired during the descent and that has maintained itself in a uniform way while the ball traversed the table, and finally fell to the ground. Hence, it is because the apparatus is capable to verify the fact that the speed is 'the same' in its three phases – when it starts to roll, when it crosses the table, and when it falls to the ground –, that it constitutes the prototype of an experimental success. Galileo's experimental apparatus of the inclined plane verifies a reason ('raison'), in the sense of a relation ('rapport'), but it does not give the reason for this relation. Consequently, Galileo can become the spokesperson of the experimental achievement that has proven *how* bodies fall. Nevertheless, he cannot dispute with the philosophers that are concerned with the question *why* bodies fall. Galileo and the philosophers need to face the experimental verdict, their accord is imposed by the facts as they are taken note of in Galileo's logbook.

Stengers characterizes the experimental achievement, which lies at the heart of modern science, as "the invention of the power to confer on things the power to confer on the experimenter the power to speak in their name" (Ibid., p. 90).[75] Power comes to the fore three times in this definition and it takes up three times another meaning. Firstly, 'the invention of the power to confer…' refers to Galileo's discovery of the fact that the inclined plane is capable of transforming the common phenomenal experience of the falling bodies into an articulated fact. This means that it is defined in terms of variables, in quantities that Galileo can vary

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[75] "l'invention du pouvoir de conférer aux choses le pouvoir de conférer à l'expérimentateur le pouvoir de parler en leur nom".

independently from one another. The experimental apparatus of the inclined plane has made it possible to describe the motion of falling bodies by means of an articulation in terms of relations between point of departure and point of impact. As such, the first time power intervenes in Stengers' definition of the experimental apparatus it has to do with *the power to articulate*, to give expression to a phenomenon by creating a relation between two variables.

Secondly, '… on things the power to confer on the experimenter…' is the definition of what is made possible by the experimental achievement, namely to solemnize the marriage against nature which ties together two lineages that had until then nothing in common, one of theoretical reasoning, the other of empirical description. Before the experimental event, bodies that fell had nothing to do with the empirical knowledge that could be produced due to the experimental event. For millennia, the fact that the apple falls from the tree was nothing but a particular instantiation of the general principle that heavy bodies fall to the ground. After Galileo, however, the physicist no longer deals with apples falling from trees, or avalanches hurtling down mountains, or human beings falling out of the window, but rather with something different, namely Galilean bodies of which the privileged locale is no longer the center of the Earth, as it had been since Aristotle, but instead the laboratory – and the Heaven[76] – because their movement needs to align itself as close as possible with the ideal of frictionless motion. A relation has been created that allows the Galilean bodies to testify, to play a determining role in a discussion between human beings. As such, they give Galileo the power to disclose a new terrain of questions and problems, of new possibilities for scientific inquiry. Conceived as Galilean bodies, the moon, the planets, and the comets, for instance, gain the power to ratify the Newtonian astronomy and to introduce gravitational force of attraction. Hence, it can be argued that the second power is *the power to abstract*, to make the articulation of a phenomenon come to bear on a theoretical argument, in this case the motion of the celestial bodies.

And lastly, '… the power to speak in their name' means that Galileo becomes the spokesperson of the phenomenon of the falling bodies. He does not need anymore to convince his opponents by means of rational argumentation in an intersubjective discussion. Due to the experimental apparatus, Stengers (2006a) argues, he can turn his back to his adversaries, remain silent, limit himself to 'showing the facts'. As such, and this is crucial, the third power is *the power to authorize*. This means not only that the experimental apparatus authorizes Galileo to make a valid argument in a theoretical discussion by 'showing the facts', but also that the experimental apparatus has become authorized to testify of the motion of

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[76] Stengers writes 'le Ciel' with capital letter.

falling bodies, that it has become a powerful witness in the discussion between Galileo on the one hand, and the philosophers and theologians on the other hand. The question that imposes itself now is the following: To whom will Galileo show the facts?

Together with his discovery of the possibility to transform rolling balls into reliable witnesses of the way in which to interpret their motion, Galileo invented what can be called the *scientific territory*. This invention comprises two operations. First, Galileo needed to chase all who could be deemed an intruder – philosophers and theologians –, of the terrain in order to define a new class of legitimate inhabitants, those who recognize the experimental achievement just as it is. This means, those who are, together with Galileo, obligated by the fact that this very experimental achievement has been proven to be possible and are willing to extend its scope to new questions and verifications, such as, for instance, the movement of the celestial bodies. But, Stengers continues, one cannot chase philosophers and theologians if they just shrug their shoulders, if they accommodate to the possibility that we now know *how* bodies fall, but underscore that this not really matters to the questions they want to address, namely *why* bodies fall. Such indifference is an inconvenience to the belligerent scientists. Hence, it is important that they *feel* being chased. This means to hold them captive at the borders of the war zone, and let them watch how the scientists address the questions that were theirs in a new way.

Hence, Galileo, the usurper, Stengers (2000, 2006a) argues, is the inventor of an 'epic' genre, in which the scientific hero as a groundbreaker for a new future, expels the impostors that turned their back to this future. In the course of the third day of the *Dialogues concerning two new sciences*, composed in 1637, after his condemnation, Galileo (1836/1914) defines uniformly accelerated motion. Conscious of his imminent death, he addresses his future colleagues and successors. He, however, not only bequeaths them his knowledge, but also, and most importantly, he relays a way of making relevant, *come to matter*, something that would otherwise perhaps interest nobody. Galileo disentangles the question of *how* bodies fall from the question *why* bodies fall. He does not pretend to give insight in the reasons why bodies fall, but merely provides a descriptive account of their trajectory. He claims moreover, that such a scientific approach, modest in nature since it limits itself to the question of how they fall, benefits from this modesty. In defining uniformly accelerated motion and describing its properties, Galileo does not address the reason for this motion. Assuming the disjunction between *how* and *why* – one of the achievements of the experimental event –, he dismisses the latter question to philosophical quarrel based on imaginations not worthy of examination. Galileo, in other words, cannot respond the question of the reason why bodies fall, but he turns this weakness into a strength by claiming that such a question can only arouse the

interest of merchants in nonsense. He, on the contrary, would practice a method that due to its modesty generates results that can be proven. From the Galilean point of view, only those who concern themselves with the *how*-question can give ground to the slowly progressing army that fights under the banner of modern science.[77]

What Stengers (2000, 2006a) sketches here comprises two aspects. On the one hand, she argues how Galileo's experiment apparatus of the inclined plane constituted a new way of inquiring phenomena, in this case the motion of falling bodies. She explains how natural phenomena gained the power to intervene in discussions between human beings due to the experimental apparatus that could describe the trajectory of the rolling ball in terms of two variables: height of the starting point and point of impact on the ground. On the other hand, she makes clear how the experimental event was abused to disjoin the question *how* bodies fall from the question *why* bodies fall. She argues that this disjunction allowed to denounce the latter question in favor of the first which is correlated to the slow but steady expansion of the newly founded territory of modern science:

> So I will argue that what has been called 'science' – that which ascetically restricts itself to the 'how' of things, and that which conquers a knowledge that is finally valid where before there existed only arbitrary opinions, where there were only conflictual quarrels - is nothing more than an 'interface product'. 'Science' can not be defined independently of the way in which it makes something come to matter, independently of an environment accepting as an image of itself all the judgments organized around the qualifier 'unscientific'. This image draws its power from the way it captures and reacts to its own benefit, questions and obsessions that belong to this environment, transforming them into a stable definition of the entire scientific milieu (Stengers, 2006a, p. 97).[78]

Stengers, hence, conceptualizes the invention of modern science which is correlated with the invention of the experimental apparatus by Galileo, as embedded within an environment from

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[77] Shapin and Shaffer make a similar analysis of the experimental event in the context of Boyle's air-pump and his quarrel with Hobbes (cf. Shapin & Shaffer, 1985).

[78] "J'avancerai donc que ce que l'on a appelé 'la science' – celle qui se restreint ascétiquement au 'comment' des choses, celle qui conquiert un savoir enfin valide là où ne préexistaient que des opinions arbitraires, là où prévalaient des bavards en conflit – n'est rien d'autre qu'un 'produit d'interface'. 'La science' ne peut se définir indépendamment de son faire-valoir, indépendamment d'un milieu acceptant comme image de lui-même l'ensemble des jugements qui s'organisent autour du qualificatif 'non scientifique'. Cette image tire sa puissance de la manière dont elle capture et réagence à son profit des questions et des hantises qui appartiennent à ce milieu, les transforment en définition stable du milieu de toute science".

which it detaches itself and denounces as nonscientific in order to strengthen its claim of scientific autonomy.

In the course of the 19th century, however, this environment, Stengers (2006a) argues, underwent profound changes. The apparition of the modern state, industrial development, and the strong connection that is being established between technological progress and the progress of humanity in general creates a new environment for scientific practices and poses new challenges to its claim for autonomy. What is, moreover, significant for this era is the newly created alliance between science and the university which was conducive to the institutionalization of scientific practices. Although the scientific endeavor obviously took advantage of the opportunities made possible by this change of environment (e.g. funding), this shift posed also some challenges. The defenders of the scientific territory could not limit themselves any longer to chasing the representatives of the old questions. Given the new environment they found themselves in, they were compelled to attract the right interlocutors that could be interested in financing their venture, most notably the state and the industry, while at the same time keeping them at the right distance to prevent that they would become *too* interested, which means that they would harm the image of science as a disinterested enterprise because they would be interested mainly in what scientific discovery yields.

The scientists, however, cannot chase these new protagonists from their territory because they are dependent on them for the financing of their research and the extension of their discoveries into the everyday lives of the people, which allows them to identify scientific progress with human progress. The claim for autonomy, hence, becomes only stronger. Scientists require autonomy to perform their practice, to choose their own questions and methods according to their own insights. Modern science relies on its environment, state and industry, for its financial resources, but, by making a strong demand for autonomy, they attempt to preserve the right distance. "Every practice needs an environment that accepts to nurture it without enslaving it" (Stengers, 2006a, p. 101).[79] Stengers invokes here the aforementioned fable of the goose with the golden eggs to explain the image that scientists constructed around themselves. Like the farmer can only wait for the goose to lay the golden eggs, the interested interlocutors of the scientists should stay at a distance, feed the goose but not force her to produce faster and certainly not slaughter her for immediate output. The disinterested and hence 'innocent' goose, however, conceals, according to Stengers, the scientist-strategist who persuades with this deceitful narrative her possible partners to finance her without harming the autonomy of her research. Stengers claims that, contrary to the stories

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[79] "Toute pratique a besoin d'un environnement qui accepte de la nourrir sans l'asservir".

scientists make their partners believe, there is no such thing as a disinterested or innocent science.

Factually, a scientist, as Latour's case study of Pierre Joliot-Curie has shown, does not demand to let her work in peace and quiet (cf. Latour, 1999). On the contrary, she incessantly enters into relations with different interlocutors, with diverging interests. The scientist needs to form alliances with the representatives of foreign realms (e.g. commercial, governmental), to turn the environment in which she finds herself into a nurturing milieu for her research, in order to create the possibility that her eggs are worth gold. The allies Latour distinguishes include the nonscientific protagonists who pay the scientists hoping that they will profit from the outcomes of the research, but also a bunch a resources, instruments, and equipment without which the scientists' ideas would remain merely ideas, and the colleagues of the scientific community that need to recognize the credibility of her research. Lastly, the scientist needs to construct a public representation of her research and what it affords so the public can estimate its legitimacy (1999).

Hence, Stengers argues, scientific practice is partly a 'social construction', in the sense that it is heavily formed by the demands and expectations of its societal interlocutors, but this does not mean that it would be a construction that effaces the particularity and recalcitrance of scientific practice itself. It is rather the environment in which the scientist needs to activate herself and mobilize the interests of her possible interlocutors in favor of her own research interests in order that the scope and importance of her work can be expanded via these interlocutors.[80] The scientist works at the limit between 'her' territory and an environment that is a priori indifferent to her research but which she seeks to transform into 'her' milieu, or better milieus since the way the scientist presents her research changes according to the interests of the interlocutor she addresses.

Consequently, Stengers (2006a) explains that the concept of modern science as a monolithic entity is an obstacle on our path to understand the particularities of scientific practices. The strong claim to autonomy, indeed obscures the embeddedness of scientific practices in different environments and the relations scientists have with their diverse interlocutors. The fable of the goose with the golden eggs may be a compelling narrative to keep too interested state officials or business men at a distance – it has indeed proven its worth –, but in order to really understand the specificity of scientific practice it is rather deceitful. Stengers proposes to dissolve the amalgam of modern science, and hence reject its

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[80] It is clear that this social construction constitutes the necessary, not the sufficient conditions for the experimental event to take place. In spite of the negotiations of the scientist with human and other-than-human interlocutors, it is possible that the experimental achievement does not take place, that the experiment did not bring the expected outcomes.

claim to autonomy that unites different scientific practices in order to become capable to grasp the specificity of scientific practice itself. Instead of speaking of modern science in the general sense, Stengers chooses to inquire the meaning of the adjective 'scientific' via the generic question that according to her drives all scientific practices, namely "How to learn something new?" (Stengers, 2006a, p. 78).[81]

Asking this question to scrutinize the meaning of the concept of *scientific practice* sets a double operation in motion that will dissolve the amalgam. Stengers (2006a) argues that on the one hand, this question cannot unite scientific practices without making them diverge. In their attempt to respond to this question, it will become clear that in spite of the fact that this question concerns every scientific practice, they will all respond to it in a different manner. On the other hand, this question excludes the practices for which this question does not matter. Since scientific practices are engaged in different discussions, make use of different methods, and raise different standards concerning their work, it is impossible for them to answer the question how to learn something new – although this question is pertinent to all of them – unequivocally. In their attempts to respond to this question, the spokespersons of different scientific practices will inevitable diverge from one another. Besides, the practices for which this question does not matter, for instance, juridical, medical, or therapeutic practices, are kept out of the firing line, instead of being denounced and devalued as merely nonscientific.[82] The generic question *"how to learn something new?"* unbinds the sciences from their consensual justifications that identify them with an approach that is rational in general, opposed to the irrationality of opinion. Instead, it allows to inquire the specificity of scientific practices as they diverge from one another.

Stengers, the chemist, has put heat to the amalgam of modern science in order to undo it and disinhibit an activity that had been made impossible by it, namely to think science as an infinite variation of diverging scientific practices.[83] The question that imposes itself now is double. On the one hand there is the question of convergence: what makes a practice scientific? On the other hand, there is the question of divergence: what makes a specific scientific practice different from any other scientific practice? These two questions correspond with two central concepts in the work of Stengers, namely requirement and obligation. However, before entering into this discussion, I will provide an example of a scientific practice that takes an important position in Stengers' argument, namely the proof of the existence of

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[81] "Comment apprendre du nouveau?"

[82] Bruno Latour, for instance, has showed that the specificity of juridical practices lies not in learning something new, but rather in relating a case to other cases in order to recognize.

[83] Here it might be helpful to bear in mind the irenicist-irreductivist commitments that Stengers inherited from Leibniz as discussed in Chapter Two.

the neutrino. This allows not only to demonstrate the paradoxical mode of existence of scientific discoveries, but also how the scientific practice itself matters in making *what* it investigates come to matter, and *how* it comes to matter. Moreover, it shows that scientific practice is always a heavily constrained practice, and these constraints, what Stengers calls its requirements and obligations, make a particular scientific practice diverge from other scientific or other-than-scientific practices. The topic of requirements and obligations, however, will be left for the fourth section.

Pharmacology of the Factish

In the 1960s, the existence of neutrinos had already been predicted theoretically but it had not been detected empirically. In order to observe the neutrino, an almost weightless, electrically neutral particle emitted by the sun, that due to its non-participation in strong interaction passes through matter unimpeded, the chemist Ray Davis devised in 1967 an experiment in the Homestake Gold Mine in South Dakota. Davis placed a 380 m^3 tank of perchloroethylene, a common dry-cleaning fluid which is rich in chlorine, 1,478 meters underground. Upon interaction with an electron neutrino, a chlorine-37 atom transforms into a radioactive isotope of argon-37, which can then be extracted and counted. Every few weeks, Davis bubbled helium through the tank to collect the argon that had formed. A small gas counter was filled by the collected few tens of atoms of argon-37 to detect its decays. In such a way, Davis was able to determine how many neutrinos had been captured. It turned out, however, that the number of neutrinos detected by Davis amounted to only a third of the number that the astrophysicist John Bahcall had predicted in his theoretical model of neutrino emission by the sun. This discrepancy between measurement and model has become known in the literature as the *solar neutrino problem* (Stengers, 2006a).

What interests Stengers (2006a) in this example is how scientists have hesitated before this problem, how this hesitation can be understood, and how the nature of the neutrino as an empirically undetected, yet theoretically predicted particle is to be conceived. She distinguishes two rivaling narratives concerning the hesitation of the scientists. The first claims that the scientists hesitate because socially they did not manage to come to an interpersonal agreement on how the model needs to be accommodated to render the data intelligible. The second narrative states that the scientists hesitate because they did not manage to design an experimental situation that has the power to make them agree, after which can be claimed that 'nature has spoken'. The notion of hesitation takes on a different meaning in both of these

narratives. In the first, the scientists are understood as searching for an agreement between human beings. Nature itself is excluded from this process and cannot make a difference allowing one interpretation of the phenomenon to prevail over the other interpretations. Stengers claims that this is the narrative of the critical-deconstructivist tradition of sociology of science which understands science as a social practice like any other. It holds the scientists responsible for the difference that can be made in the bargaining process over the right interpretation, which the scientists themselves attribute to nature itself.

Contrary to this understanding of a scientific discussion as a conversation between scientists that try to convince each other of their own interpretation of a natural phenomenon, Stengers (2006a) argues that it is not a bunch of neutral scientists awaiting nature's verdict on their conflicting interpretations that we encounter in the laboratory. As opposed to this narrative, the second narrative, rather conceives of the scientists as obligated by their scientific practice. It does not claim that nature intervenes in the scientific discussion to put an end to the hesitations and make scientists agree. It supposes, rather, that the way in which scientists hesitate, imagine, object, and search, testifies for what obligates them, namely the very *possibility* that 'nature' can make a difference between the different interpretations concerning a natural phenomenon. Scientists trust in the possibility to create a situation that confers on what the question addresses the power to make a difference between different interpretations. Stengers calls this the definition of experimental achievement as we have seen before, the fact that scientists are no longer free to interpret as they like, but that the experiment has put constraints on the different possible interpretations. In general, it is the possibility of experimental achievement that makes scientists construct experimental apparatuses that will hopefully recruit reliable witnesses to testify for a certain interpretation of a phenomenon. Concerning the solar neutrino problem, the scientific practitioners hesitate because their practice obligates them to hesitate. It obligates them not to decide until they have managed to create the situation of which they can claim that nature has spoken.

Beyond the realist account that claims that nature speaks to silence the scientists, and the relativist account that claims that science is a social practice like any other, Stengers' constructivist account claims that science is a practice obligated to the experimental success that confers on the scientists the power to speak in the name of the natural phenomenon under scrutiny. Long before the neutrino had been detected, it was already part of the scientific discussion since the existence of this phantom particle had been postulated for theoretical-aesthetic reasons of symmetry and conservation. It is, however, not situated at the intersection of rational activity and phenomenal world, but rather "binds together the mutual involvement of two realities undergoing correlated expansions: that of the dense network of our practices

and their histories, that of the components and modes of interaction that populate what is referred to as the 'physical world'" (Stengers, 2010, p. 22). Simultaneously and inseparably the neutrino exists 'in itself' and 'for us', and it becomes even more 'in itself' as it participates in countless experimental events that affirm its existence 'for us'.

Stengers (2010) calls the neutrino – and all other beings produced by scientific experiment – *a factish*. Following Bruno Latour (2009), Stengers defines a factish as something the experimenter fabricates and that at the same time fabricates the experimenter. It establishes an unnatural coupling between experimenter and experimental achievement, by giving the experimenter the power to speak in the name of the experimental achievement for which she had to construct the experimental apparatus that would allow for the experimental achievement to happen (cf. the threefold conferral of power). In that sense, the experimental achievement is dependent on the experimenter to take place, just like the experimenter is dependent on the experimental achievement to be able to speak on its behalf. In this case the scientist receives autonomy by giving the neutrino an autonomy she herself does not have.

Understanding the neutrino as a factish creates a divergence between the themes of transcendence and assurance, Stengers (2010) explains. On the one hand, the factish transcends its creator. The neutrino, for instance, exists independently of Ray Davis, John Bachall, or any other scientist that has occupied himself with this particle. On the other hand, however, the produced transcendence does not make a transcendent world available from which it would be possible to judge or disqualify. "Factishes are a way of affirming the truthfulness of the relative, that is, a way of relating the power of truth to a *practical event* and not to a world to which practices would merely provide access" (Stengers, 2010, p. 24). The factishistic proposition makes it impossible to claim a neutrality that can be accepted by all. It rather forces physicists and other constructors of factishes to differentiate the fabricated autonomy of their creatures from the always-already-there autonomy of a world awaiting its discovery.

In a next step, Stengers (2010) claims that modern scientific practice is itself a pharmakon that by claiming to provide a neutral and objective access to truth, denies its own pharmacological mode of existence, which it shares with other practices. She relates the question of the pharmakon with Plato's problem with the sophists in so far the sophists embody the instability of the effects used to qualify them. Instead of pursuing universal truth like Plato and the philosophers, the sophists were men who relied on opinion which is changing and malleable. Dealing with a sophist, "vector of lucidity or creator of illusion, doctor or soul thief" (Ibid., p. 28), is always a gamble of which you never know whether the effects will be beneficial or rather detrimental. The pharmakon – the poison that cures, the antidote that kills – is

likewise instable. It does not have a clear and well-defined attribute. Depending on the dose, the circumstances, or the context the intended effects of taking the drug can turn into its opposite.

Stengers (2010) explains that the pharmakon, just like the sophist, does not provide a guarantee, nor does it define a fixed point allowing us to recognize and understand its effects with some assurance. Stengers asserts that the question of the pharmakon is not unique to the tradition that expelled the sophists out of Plato's city. She states that "every human culture recognizes the intrinsic instability of certain roles, certain practices, certain drugs" (Ibid., p. 29). What makes our culture unique, however, is its intolerance for the ambiguity of the pharmakon. Our cultural tradition, Stengers argues, has a strong inclination towards fixed points, foundations, and guarantees, and today there are a manifold of modern practices – scientific, medical, technological, political, psychoanalytic, pedagogical – that denounce and disqualify their evil twins – the charlatan, the populist, the ideologue, the magician, the astrologist, the hypnotist, the charismatic teacher. The pharmakon, however, in spite of these efforts, cannot be excluded. It inhabits the heart of the fortresses that were to protect us from its instability. Like the sophists used Plato to promote their arguments, the question of relation, which is the expertise of traditional therapists, resurfaces as an enigma at the core of medicine, and, scientific demonstrations still imply an element of subjective persuasion although they claim to rely purely on objective proof.

The problem of the pharmakon amplifies the challenge of the factishistic proposition. It raises the question how we can understand the presence among us of physicists and other constructors of factishes. The neutrino, the atom, DNA, or any other scientific creature is to be understood as a factish to the extent that it intends to resist the pharmacological accusation. This means that as factishes, these constructions have a strong pharmacological quality that needs to be covered up in order to stabilize their existence as objective knowledge of a real-world phenomenon, that they need to conceal the history of their construction. These productions can claim to exist autonomously with respect to the physicists who constructed them, that they are not just fictions powerful enough to deceive their authors.

The factish exemplifies the experimental achievement: "the invention of the power to confer on things the power of conferring on the experimenter the power to speak in their name" (Stengers, 2000, p. 89). This threefold power, however, is not warranted by an external and fixed point that allows to differentiate scientific statement from personal opinion, but is related to the practical event of the experimental achievement elicited by the experimental apparatus: *truth of the relative*. Once the neutrino, the atom or DNA exits the specific site where it achieved its existence, the laboratory where the experimental event has taken place, and it

moves into the networks of scientific opinion, unbinding existence, invention, and proof, it starts to change meaning. In short, scientific factishes conceal a very strong pharmacological instability.

The coming into being of the scientific factish is correlated with the functioning of the experimental apparatus and the figure of the experimenter (cf. Galileo and the invention of the inclined plane). Hence, it is strongly dependent on the circumstances in which it is produced and therefore situated. Stengers (2010), in line with Latour, argues in favor of an understanding of science as a *cult of factishes*. The notion of cult refers here on the one hand to the celebration of the coming into existence of a new being, and, on the other to the art of establishing relationships. As has been made clear, the modern cult attributes to the factish a power it does not and should not have, namely the power to disqualify practices and questions that are considered nonmodern such as those related to the charlatan, the magician, or the hypnotist. It is important to consider the cult – and here we can relate it again to Stengers' notion of practice –, which produces the factish and establishes the relations between the factish and the world in which it comes into being. Indeed, all cults – or all practices for that matter –, are not equal, and when studying practices where factishes are produced it needs to be taken into consideration how the factish is 'acculturated': what kind of relationships are established with the factish, and how are its terms of use defined within the community that celebrates its coming into existence.

Due to the strong interdependence between pharmakon and cult, factish and experiment, Stengers (2010) wagers on the possibility of an *ecological approach to scientific practice*. She defines ecology as:

> the science of multiplicities, disparate causalities, and unintentional creations of meaning. The field of ecological questions is one where the consequences of the meanings we create, the judgments we produce and to which we assign the status of 'fact', concerning what is primary and what is secondary, must be addressed immediately, whether those consequences are intentional or unforeseen (Ibid., pp. 34-35).

Here again, it is possible to discern the three basic tenets of an ecological approach as outlined at the end of Chapter One, namely that it has to do with relations of interdependency, that difference is generated unintentionally, and that it touches upon matters of living and dying on a shared planet, taking care of the consequences this or that decision might entail. Hence, endorsing an ecological approach makes it impossible – and here we shift to the Latourian

lexicon –, to conceive of scientific practice as dealing with *matters of fact*, as if it only provides access to a factual and inert world that until then was undisclosed. It needs to be understood, rather, as enacting a *matter of concern*. Scientific practices initiate processes in which the world is put at risk due to the questions that are asked or the inquiries that are undertaken. This is, consequently, a process in which the consequences of our actions, and the milieu that emerges around the factishes we produce, should be taken into consideration.

It means to understand our ways of living together and living with factishes as a *symbiotic agreement*. Contrary to a consensus, which always requires the putting aside of the particular interests of different parties in the name of a shared intent, or a superior good, a symbiotic agreement respects the diverging interests in the production of new, immanent modes of existence. It means to become entangled within a reciprocal capture, a *noce contre nature*, a mutual process in the course of which both the identity of the experimenter as well as the identity of the neutrino (or the factish in more general terms) is constructed. In the case of the neutrino, it means to take into account the newly produced being but also the producing community who has recruited it for their argument. Moreover, it means to understand the constraints that are put on scientific production/invention/discovery.[84] This question, the question of constraints forces us to have a closer look on Stengers concept of practices and how scientific practices put constraints on thinking.

Requirements and Obligations

As we have seen, Stengers' ecology of practices forces to turn the attention away from big overarching concepts such as science, politics, or power, and proposes to take practices as a methodological point of entry to study the relation between the sciences and their environment. The question that will guide this section is how Stengers conceives of practices and more particularly scientific practices, and how she relates to the work of scientists as a philosopher of science.

It might be helpful here to return to the question that makes scientific practices converge according to Stengers, namely "How to learn something new?". It has been explained that this question immediately engages the representatives of scientific practices in a debate, while the question concerns them all, although they will give different answers to this question. The

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[84] The notions of production, invention, and discovery can be used interchangeably from a Stengersian point of view. The three of them denote the very specific process in which due to an experimental achievement a paradoxical being comes into existence, a factish.

question evokes the core business of scientific practices and makes it possible to differentiate them from, for instance, political or religious practices. Hence, resisting a subsuming of scientific practices under the all too general denominator of so-called social practices. Scientific practices are indeed no social practices 'like any other', just like political and religious practices are no social practices 'like any other'. The question now will be how to grasp the specificity of scientific practices and thereby refuse scientists the comfort of hiding themselves behind an identity. Instead, Stengers proposes to understand scientific practices in terms of the way in which they constrain processes of thinking practitioners engage in. Therefore, it is important not to understand practices as guided by a set of norms (which would grant the scientists the comfort of an identity), but rather as constrained by requirements and obligations.

Indeed, Stengers is convinced that it is counterproductive to situate scientists in a field of norms, since these norms predominantly function as a way to construct a collective identity for the scientists that allows for unmasking those who ask questions about their practice as traitors, as people who do not adhere to the norms of the practice and question them. Nevertheless, this does not mean that science is *just* a construction. Scientific practices have their own, non-arbitrary, way of functioning, although the people involved in the practice may obscure this by their attachment to particular norms. In order to grasp scientific practice itself, and not the norms, rules and values that hang around it, Stengers proposes to characterize a practice along two axes that the notion of norm does not allow to differentiate, namely *requirements and obligations*.

Affirming the identity of a scientific practice, Stengers (2006a, 2010) argues, is always part of a defensive or offensive operation that renders the *requirements* that the practice needs to fulfill in order to pass through as scientific explicit. Its aim is always to silence the critics or to oppose objections during disputes. As such, it could be argued that requirements still grant the practitioners the comfort of an identity, although they do not refer to all too abstract norms such as objectivity or neutrality. Instead, requirements are the specific things that have to be done by a scientist to make her work intelligible to colleagues as seriously scientific (e.g. setting up an experimental situation). Requirements provide the scientific practice with some kind of consistency. Although they leave scientists with a large degree of freedom, they put specific constraints on their activities. In the case of the solar neutrino problem, an extensive experimental setting needed to be designed, as well as different colleagues needed to be mobilized to make sure that the right protocols were followed. In that sense, requirements grant some stability to scientific practices, because they allow to differentiate between scientific practices and other-than-scientific practices.

It is important to underscore, however, that the requirements not merely refer to the practices for which these requirements apply. This would indeed again reduce requirements to norms and scientific practices to social practices (in general). The requirements do not so much come forth from what, for instance, colleagues, students, financers, or the public require from the scientist, but rather from what the world requires, or more specifically what that which needs to be researched requires from the scientific practitioner in order for it to become responsive to the questions of the scientist. The construction of an experimental apparatus, for instance, is what the solar neutrino problem (and physics more in general) required in order to become responsive to the obligation of the neutrino, because the neutrino both affords and demands the construction of such an apparatus. This means that the paradoxical mode of existence of the neutrino (predicted but not proven) allows for setting up an experiment that could demonstrate the existence of a particle that had been a necessary unknown of theoretical models, and that the particle lends itself for such an experimental achievement. As such, requirements indeed do not merely refer to the practices as if they would be the rules that govern these practices, but rather, and most importantly, they refer to what the world requires in order to become an object of scientific inquiry. This means that they refer to what the scientific practitioners are obligated by, and that is, coming to the second axis, the obligations.

Contrary to the requirements, *obligations* do not mobilize scientists, they do not grant stability, but rather make scientists hesitate. Because scientists are obligated towards what they inquire, they are not easily compelled to endorse the theories that their colleagues have fabricated concerning their object of study unless they have recruited reliable witnesses. What for Stengers seems to be at stake is to address scientists not only by identifying them with what they require, but also, and most importantly, to address them as being obligated via their practice. To address a scientist in this way, means to wager on the possibility that she is capable not to take shelter behind the identity the requirements afford. To address her, for instance, not as a physicist that follows the rules that govern her practice and make it 'good science', but as a physicist for whom something is at stake in this scientific practice, someone who is obligated by what makes her hesitate, and not only as someone who is mobilized by the requirements of 'good science':

> An obligation, indeed, does not identify, because it leaves open the question of how it should be fulfilled or what would betray it. It is not intended to gather around the same mode of judgment, and it can divide. Moreover, the question of what practitioners are obligated by is never general. It is always about what such a situation, such a proposal

obligates to. But it also asks from those who want to approach the practices not to claim to know, where practitioners hesitate (Stengers, 2006a, p. 68).[85]

In short, whereas requirements grant stability to a scientific practice and make practitioners converge around what they inquire (in the sense that they prescribe what protocols or procedures have to be fulfilled in order to pass the test as being particular to that specific scientific practice), obligations make practitioners diverge. Obligated by the neutrino, scientists formulate hypotheses, devise experimental apparatuses, and perform calculations to substantiate theoretical arguments in order to slow down before the problem the neutrino poses to them. The obligation, hence, makes it impossible to claim to know, where practitioners are inclined to hesitate. Or in still other words, it could be argued that whereas obligations denote *what* is being thought about in the course of a scientific practice, requirements denote *how* practitioners are required to think. As such, requirements and obligations exist in a reciprocal capture which means that the requirements can only be articulated in relation to the obligation of a particular object of scientific inquiry (e.g. the neutrino) and that the obligations can only gain relevance within a scientific practice for which this obligation matters and that incites practitioners to become responsive to what this obligation requires (e.g. constructing an experimental apparatus).

Stengers' ecology of practices, and her unwillingness to think from the premise that reason can be segregated from opinion, fact from value, opens a perspective in which practices can be understood as specific constructions of requirements and obligations in which the question of what is true always needs to be considered in relation to the practice for which it has acquired the authority to be true. In line with Deleuze, Stengers calls this the *truth of the relative*. This does not mean that everything is true, or that truth depends entirely on the position of the one who speaks the truth, but rather that in relation to the specific requirements and obligations of a practice a proposition can be considered as true. "Truth *happens* to an idea. It *becomes* true, is *made* true by events" (James, 2000, p. 88). This implies that truth is neither universal, nor relative to the position of the one who speaks it, but rather that it is the effect of a risky construction that puts its own constraints, the aforementioned requirements and obligations, on the production of truth. Stengers (2010) argues:

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[85] "Une obligations, en effet, n'identifie pas, car elle laisse ouverte la question de savoir comment elle doit être remplie ou ce qui la trahirait. Elle n'a pas pour vocation de rassembler autour d'un même mode de jugement, et elle peut diviser. De plus, la question de ce par quoi les praticiens sont obligés n'est jamais générale. Il s'agit toujours de ce à quoi oblige telle situation, telle proposition. Mais elle demande aussi à ceux qui tentent d'approcher les pratiques de ne pas 'savoir', là où les praticiens hésitent".

In constructivist terms, we could say that the production of obligations pertains to the register of creation, which must be acknowledged in its irreducible dimension, while the assertion of requirements presents the problem of the possible stability of that creation, of its scope, and of the meaning it proposes to embody for others. The concepts of requirement and obligation allow us to keep both the respectful ratification of claims to rationality and the relativist irony that judges them at a distance (pp. 53-54).

As such, practices are a specific holding together of requirements and obligations. Whereas requirements grant a certain stability to practices, obligations make them diverge. Dissolving the amalgam of modern science and conceptualizing scientific practices in terms of their requirements and obligations allows for understanding the immanent divergences of scientific practices.[86]

This is the meaning Stengers attributes to the practice turn presented in the second chapter, which she believes to be able to break with the ideas of neutrality and objectivity that surround science, since a focus on practices, in the Stengersian understanding, demands of the people studying scientists – and this brings us to the question of Stengers' relation to the scientists as a philosopher of science – to practice the pragmatic art of thinking starting from the consequences of which the verification is always creation, this means creation of new types of relations *with* the scientists (cf. Rose, 1996). Investigating practices from a Stengersian perspective requires to create new relations with scientists and to rethink the relations between the world and its scientists.[87]

Calling Stengers approach to practice pragmatic does not involve that every idea, construction, or proposition would be reduced to the consequences it plays into, to what it

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[86] Interesting to note is the fact that in conceptualizing scientific practices in terms of what practitioners are obligated to and what this obligation requires of them, Stengers seems to omit the debates about scientific methodology. From a Stengersian perspective, the question of methodology seems to be an utterly modern question in that it reduces the scientific endeavor to a matter of following the right road (cf. the ancient Greek meaning of *methodos* as path or track), without properly taking into account how something might come to matter in the course of a scientific practice and which kind of requirements this coming to matter might impose on the scientific practitioners. To a certain extent, one could argue that methodology is the name for a thorough formalization of the requirements and hence a contribution to the institutionalization of science in what came to be known as Modern Science. From the point of view of an ecology of practices, the will to methodology could be understood as a defensive operation of a scientific practice in order to maintain its border and to keep out those who might ask the 'wrong' questions (cf. Stengers, 2000, 2006).

[87] Endorsing a pragmatist conception of truth and foregrounding the researcher's standpoint in studying its 'population', taking an interest in creating new possible relations with this 'population', or a so-called pragmatics of alliance, Stengers places herself in the feminist tradition of sociology of science (cf. Hilary Rose, Sandra Harding, Donna Haraway, Joseph Rouse, etc.).

'yields'. It rather requires refusing a separation between an idea, construction, or proposition and its consequences. It makes the question of the consequences, and our obligation to take care of them, present. It is not so much about describing scientific practice as it is, 'in the making', but rather to confer on the possible as possible the power to oblige us to think. As such, thought takes as its point of departure the possible in the world, instead of the world as it is, and hence needs to bear in mind the consequences of its creations.

The possible, in this case, is what Stengers would call a *cosmopolitics*, a thing-centered discussion between scientists and other people affected by the issue at hand and the unknown consequences this problem could give way to. It is this possible, and Stengers' speculation on how it can become actually possible, that will be the topic of the last section of this chapter.

The Diplomat's Peace

Drawing on Stengers' speculative understanding of peace, I argue in this section why the ecology of practices can be understood as *a call for diplomacy*. Moreover, and this will allow to open the way to the next chapter in which I discuss study practices, Stengers' aforementioned concept of cosmopolitics is introduced as being at the heart of her project of the ecology of practices as an intervention in the Science Wars. In a first step, however, I summarize the basic tenets of Stengers' ecology of practices. Grasping the multiplicity of practices in terms of an ecology foregrounds, I argue, four aspects.

First, it requires to understand a practice itself as an ecology in which different human, other-than-human, and more-than-human beings depend on each other for their survival. Thinking a practice ecologically makes attentive to the *reciprocal capture* that comes into existence between the scientist and what she is obligated to. On the one hand, the scientist owes her existence to the neutrino, since the neutrino gives meaning to her activities. Claiming that neutrinos do not exist or only exist as theoretical constructs, insults the scientists that are obligated to them. Such a claim indeed undermines the scientific practice itself because it takes away that from which the practice of the scientists draws relevance. On the other hand, the neutrino owes its being to the scientists that are interested in proving its existence. Without the scientists who believe that the neutrino exists and are willing to prove this paradoxical mode of existence, the neutrino could not come to matter in the scientific discussion. Stengers understands this situation as a reciprocal capture. This means that each pole of the couple – neutrino and scientist – needs to include a reference to the other in order to give meaning to

its own existence, which is hence always dependent on the other. The identity of the scientist studying neutrinos is coinvented with the identity of the neutrino studied by the scientist.[88]

Second, an ecological understanding makes attentive to the way in which practices relate to and engage with each other in *sometimes fertile, sometimes hostile coexistences*. This aspect highlights that practices never come alone but that there are always many and that these practices are often engaged in a struggle over what they consider as true and the means to achieve an insight in what is true. Stengers explains how scientific practices that conceive of themselves as pertaining to the monolith of modern science, which she argues is in fact rather an amalgam of different practices, often denounce and disqualify other practices that are considered irrational and hence nonscientific. Galileo's expulsion of the philosophers and theologians is exemplary for the way in which new practices, in the case of modern science experimental practices, denounce their henceforth considered as superstitious predecessors. What the ecology of practices requires concerning the relation between practices, is that in order to engage in a dialogue, the representatives of the practices need to be clear about the requirements and obligations that circulate within the practice and that make the constructions hold together. It means to exchange the ecology of predator and prey in which modern science devours other knowledge practices, for an irenicist-irreductivist stance towards the diversity of practices. This means that no single practice can be conceived of as *like any other*, neither that any single practice is diametrically *opposed to any other*. This makes it possible to think a more or less peaceful cohabitation of different practices in a shared world.

Third, the ecology of practices allows to grasp how practices are embedded in and influenced by *at times fostering, at times poisoning environments*. To think practices as embedded within an environment draws the attention to the way they relate to the state and the industry, which were the most important interlocutors of the sciences in the 19th and 20th century, and increasingly also to their relationship with the public which has started to meddle into scientific discussions over inventions that could profoundly impact the world in which we live, such as GMOs. It implies to understand scientific practice as heavily engaged with the nonscientific world in processes of, for instance, finance, public opinion, patenting, and output regulation. Stengers argues that capitalism has profoundly poisoned scientific practices. Catchphrases such as competitiveness and efficiency have induced an acceleration that severely damages these practices. The call for quick results creates a hostile environment for

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[88] Here it might be interesting to refer to the etymology of obligation. According to the Oxford Latin Dictionary, the Latin *obligatio* did in the first place not refer to duty, responsibility, or obligation (in the moral sense). Instead, it denoted a binding. Combining the verb *ligare*, which meant 'to bind' or 'to tie' with the prefix *ob-* which meant 'against' (think of 'to ob-ject') intensifies the sense of a coupling against all odds, of an anything but natural achievement.

practices that require that scientists hesitate before what obligates them to think. Eventually, capitalism will have turned scientific practices into mind-numbing procedures for profitable discoveries. Therefore Stengers' ecology of practices needs to be read as an attempt to reclaim scientific practices. Reclaiming always means nurturing and fostering, to create an environment that is conducive to the flourishing of knowledge practices, after the destructive mutilation committed under the banners of capitalist imperatives such as competitiveness and efficiency.

Fourth, to think practices ecologically also forces to keep in mind the *relation between knowledge practices and the world*. Via the ecology of practices Stengers expresses a deep concern about the world and about the part predatory practices have played in its recent devastations. The ecology of practices calls for a pragmatist conception of the relation between practices and the world. This means that the question how the consequences of a practice will affect the world needs always to be part of the discussion. It implies that knowledge practices should always be conceived as practices of care, this means as specific ways of dealing with the question how to live together with the factish at hand, under scrutiny. Scientific practices do not invent in the abstract, but always in close relation with the world that will harbor these inventions. Therefore, it is important to practice the pragmatic art of taking care of the consequences of our creations.

What Stengers calls for with the ecology of practices is a *civilized dialogue between practices*. This requires that practices display their divergence, the specific ways in which they, via different requirements and obligations, hold together. It is a way to deal with the Science Wars, and more generally with the often fierce attitudes of the representatives of practices vis-à-vis one another. It is however important to underscore that Stengers does not plea for an eternal and universal peace. She refuses to think peace as a transcendent principle before which different practices have to bend the knee. Instead of conceiving a posthistorical peace that would signify the suspension of all struggles in a finally harmonious coexistence of practices that tolerate each other, Stengers proposes to think peace as an ingredient of the current belligerent regime. It means to think peace as speculative, as a possibility, when war is more probable (Stengers & Spire, 2000). It requires that the representatives of practices act in the presence of a virtual peace. This means that peace is not already actualized or can be actualized once and for all, but that it is a possibility for which the conditions need to be created to be achieved.

The diplomat's peace, as Stengers calls it, cannot impose the terms on which this peace could be acquired since that would deny the recalcitrance of practices, the fact that they cannot be put under a common predefined measure. Gathering different practices together under the

constraint of a speculative peace requires to invent an always local, momentary, and partial connection via which the practices could engage in a civilized dialogue, an eventual convergence via the display of their divergence:

> The 'diplomat's peace', therefore, is another name for a belligerent regime that is singularized by peace as a possibility. The diplomat's commitment, the requirements her practice assumes, the obligations that put her at risk, make her the representative not of a general and hollow ideal of universal peace, but of possible peace, always local, precarious, and matter for invention (Stengers, 2011c, p. 387).

As such, the aim of peace is not a unity beyond differences, requiring suspending differences in favor of an abstract principle of togetherness, but rather toward the creation of very concrete, small-scale, and always partial entanglements. It is an "ecological production of actual togetherness" (Stengers, 2002, p. 248).

This is Stengers' intervention in the Science Wars and her alternative for the ecology of predator and prey of modern science. Introducing peace as a possibility in the belligerent regime of modern science, forces scientists to hesitate where they were hitherto inclined to judge. It makes it impossible to uphold the binary opposition between those who believe and those who know, and opens a space for a diversity of knowledge practices, with their own requirements and obligations: truth of the relative. Stengers calls the situation she speculates about *cosmopolitics*:

> The term 'cosmopolitics' introduces what is neither an activity, nor a negotiation, nor a practice, but the mode in which the problematic copresence of practices may be actualized: the experience, always in the present, of the one into whom the other's dreams, doubts, hopes, and fears pass. It is a form of asymmetrical reciprocal capture that guarantees nothing, authorizes nothing, and cannot be stabilized by any constraint, but through which the two poles of the exchange undergo a transformation that cannot be appropriated by any objective definition (Stengers, 2011c, pp. 371-372).

Cosmopolitics is thus the name for a gathering of different practices around a problem that concerns them all and that cannot be appropriated because of the expertise of one of the participating representatives, or resolved by the quick fix of a transcendental principle to which all practices would have to comply. It requires of the participants to acknowledge that there is something more important than their own interests or the interests of the practice of which

they are the representative, and hence makes the *cosmo-*, the unknown that makes practitioners converge in their divergence, present. Moreover, it makes it present as a *cause for thinking*. This means that a particular situation can come to matter in its own terms, that it is conferred the power to make us think:

> The prefix makes present, helps resonate, the unknown affecting *our* questions that our political tradition is at significant risk of disqualifying. I would say, then, that as an ingredient of the term 'cosmopolitics', the cosmos corresponds to no condition, establishes no requirement. It creates the question of possible nonhierarchical modes of coexistence among the ensemble of inventions of nonequivalence, among the diverging values and obligations through which the entangled existences that compose it are affirmed (Ibid., pp. 355-356).

The cosmopolitical event requires to establish a reciprocal capture between different practitioners and their problem in a way that gives this problem, that is henceforth no longer posed in the terms specific to a particular practice but rather in generic terms such as cause, obligation, and risk, the power to make the assembled practitioners think. This implies to succeed in establishing an always temporary and precarious convergence not in spite of but indeed *due to* the divergences of their respective practices, and more specifically by means of displaying divergence (Stengers, 2005b, 2005c, 2006a). It is clear that the cosmopolitical event is not easily produced. All too quickly we fall into the trap of either reducing the unknown to a problem which each practitioner can relate to in the terms specific to her practice – 'the problem is only relevant to the practitioner in so far as it provokes the interests specific to her practice' –, or producing a transcendent principle that would unite the different practitioners by means of a shared identification – 'the problem is relevant to all of us and requires a common and shared response because all of us share in the common identity of being human'. As such, the cosmopolitical proposal comes with a challenge, namely to create the conditions for a civilized dialogue between the representatives of diverging practices.

It is clear that Stengers' intervention is political through and through (or cosmopolitical if you like). She inherits Whitehead's speculative philosophy of civilization – which forms the theoretical background of her cosmopolitics – in a strongly political way. However, the argument could be made that an educational reading of the concept of civilization might also be possible, and even that it might help to think about the ways in which the conditions might be created that give something the power to make us think. This challenge will be taken up in the next chapter. Here I will return to a statement Whitehead has uttered on the occasion of

the inauguration of the Harvard Bussiness School in 1927. Inspired by this proposition, my aim will be to conceptualize study practices as a different response to the situation Stengers tries to address.

Chapter Four
Study Practices

The aim of this chapter is to conceptualize study practices in relation to but distinct from Stengers' conceptualization of scientific practices as presented in Chapter Three. Whereas the third chapter aimed at a discussion of Stengers' philosophy of science and the ecology of scientific practices which obviously have a place in the university, the current chapter focuses on the educational practices of the university which I propose to call study practices. Together, the third and the fourth chapter form the more theoretical or conceptual part of the dissertation. Although this chapter shares the basic assumptions of the ecology of practices as sketched by Stengers[89], it is important to underscore that one of the challenges of this chapter will be to delineate study practices from scientific practices in order to come to a better conceptual understanding of their specificity. In crafting the concept of study practices, however, I will still draw heavily on the work of Stengers. But, whereas my presentation of scientific practices was based on her philosophy of science, I will draw my inspiration for the conceptualization of study practices from her work on the speculative philosophy of Whitehead.[90] At the end of the previous chapter, it has been argued that Stengers mainly reads Whitehead's philosophy in order to propose a political, or maybe better cosmopolitical, intervention in the Science Wars,

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[89] For instance, the assumption that every practice can be understood in terms of its requirements and obligations will prove to be very helpful in the analysis of a concrete study practice as undertaken in the third part.

[90] Next to her extensive work in philosophy of science, Stengers is a fervent reader of the work of Whitehead. Her authoritative introduction to his philosophy, *Thinking with Whitehead. A free and wild creation of concepts*, based on a course she had been giving for many years, has been of great help to me in getting a grasp on Whitehead's thinking.

but that an educational reading of Whitehead might not be too far-fetched, especially given the fact that he had a genuine philosophy of education (cf. Whitehead, 1929).

In this chapter, I will put forward the concept of study practice. In developing this concept, I will take my lead from a proposition Whitehead has uttered on the occasion of the inauguration of the Harvard Business School in 1927. In the course of his address *Universities and their function*, he argued that "the universities should be homes of adventure shared in common by young and old" (Whitehead, 1929, p. 98). The first two sections of this chapter aim to come to terms with Whitehead's puzzling proposition.[91] Whereas the first section focuses on how we should understand Whitehead's notion of adventure, the second section inquires the meaning Whitehead attributes to the university as a 'home', and hence the question of habitation. It is at that point also that the proposition particularly comes to matter in respect to the research question of situating study in the relation between university and society. Arguing that the university should be a 'home of adventures' seems to imply a separation between the adventure that is inside the home and the world that is outside. Putting forward the theme of habitation in the second section will allow to bring Whitehead's proposition to bear on the research question. At the end of that section, I will formulate a proposition with regards to the research question, namely that study practices enact a relation between the university and the world by convoking matters of study. In the remainder of the chapter, I draw out the implications of this proposition by explaining what this conception entails with regards to the relation between scientific practices and study practices, by situating the concept of matter of study, and by shedding light on what makes it possible for a matter of study to be convoked. In short, I will propose an understanding of the university as a habitat for study practices that due to the arts of composition, problematization, and attention fosters the coming into being of matters of study. However, Whitehead's notion of adventure as it is present in the proposition he puts forward concerning the university will form the point of departure of this chapter.

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[91] I call this statement a proposition in the Whiteheadian sense. Stengers (2005d) explains that a proposition should not be understood as a declaration about the state of things as they are, but rather as something that is proposed and can make us think in certain way. As such, a proposition should not be evaluated on a cognitive level ('indeed we know that the cat is on the mat'), but rather on an affective level. A proposition can make something come to matter. Therefore, propositions should not be judged ('is it true?'), but should be entertained ('how does it make something come to matter?'). "The primary mode of realization of a proposition in an actual entity is not by judgement, but by entertainment. A proposition is entertained when it is admitted into feeling. Horror, relief, purpose, are primary feelings involving the entertainment of propositions" (1978, p. 188). In a certain way, a proposition is an invitation to entertain one way of thinking about something rather than another. In this context, it means that I will accept Whitehead's invitation and feel how it affects the thinking with regards to the research question.

Ruminations of Common Sense

In order to understand Whitehead's notion of adventure, it might be relevant to bring to the fore his commitment to the idea that thought should not exclude anything (Debaise & Stengers, 2017). Stengers (2017b) explains this commitment by referring to Whitehead's interpretation of Socrates' activities on the agora. She argues that in *Modes of thought*, Whitehead goes back to the streets of Ancient Athens to witness the conversations between Socrates and the inhabitants of the polis in order to reinterpret the role of the philosopher. Whitehead, she explains, claims that there are different beginnings of philosophy to be distinguished based on the multiple interpretations that are possible of what he calls Socrates' attitude towards ignorance. It is possible to encounter, for instance, Socrates, master of the aporia, who does not pretend to have an answer to the questions he raises, but who only wants to confront his interlocutors with the difficulty, if not impossibility, of formulating a response. Secondly, we encounter Socrates, master of Plato, for whom the aporia paves the way for a learning process during which the Athenians discover a knowledge that transcends the divergent responses that they have suggested earlier. It is the Socrates who, armed with his knowledge of the Good, pacifies all discords in the progressive realization of the ideal state. Finally, we encounter Socrates, the martyr, who has been condemned for poisoning the public peace and corrupting the youth.

Whitehead wonders about the question which attitude it is possible to adopt in the streets of Athens, and he praises Socrates' conversations as what Stengers (2017b) in a comment on *Modes of thought* calls a *practice of assemblage*. She explains that the Whiteheadian Socrates does not exclude anything from thinking. The different responses that he receives, no matter how divergent or partial, should not be disqualified, or reduced in order to evidence the interlocutor's ignorance. The Whiteheadian Socrates listens to the question of Lysimachus, relays the issue to Nicias, whose answer elicits the dissenting opinion of Laches, consults Melesias' feeling about the topic, and keeps on complicating the discussion. His attitude is not one towards ignorance, but rather towards a *landscape of diverging lines of thought* which he has activated and which he aims to transform instead of to pass judgement on. "If he does not step forward as an arbitrator, judging and excluding, the question of

divergence can become a matter of collective concern, that is to say become a dimension of what, with Whitehead, we can call common sense" (Ibid., p. 10).[92]

Hence, the Whiteheadian Socrates does not interrogate his interlocutors *in spite of* their responses, but is *in need of* these responses to think and to make thinking a collective affair. He encounters citizens who were already thinking long before his arrival at the agora. Think we must. This Socrates is engaged in and situated by a common sense that ruminates and that was already ruminating long before his arrival. The Whiteheadian Socrates adopts an affirmative stance with regards to the diverging lines of thoughts he encounters and constantly complicates the conversation. "The many become one, and are increased by one" (Whitehead, 1978, p. 21). Instead of extracting, the gesture of critique, the Whiteheadian Socrates *adds* to what is already ruminating. In other words, Socrates does not step forward as the one who claims to know, not even as the one who knows that he does not know, but rather as the one who engages with the ruminations of common sense. More precisely, the Whiteheadian Socrates encourages the inhabitants of Athens to articulate their thoughts around an issue of collective concern, a question that makes common sense ruminate (e.g. virtue, bravery, justice), and forces time and again the participants in the discussion to go further in giving their reasons.

As such, the ruminations of common sense are taken up in an adventure that transforms the terms which had been mobilized to articulate the positions of the participants with regards to the problem that gathers them. Whereas a critical attitude would *purify* the scene of reasoning, a speculative attitude, the attitude the Whiteheadian Socrates adopts, *densifies* the scene by continuously adding to the ruminations of common sense. This means that the Whiteheadian Socrates does not extract certain positions from a debate by means of debunking or criticizing. Rather, he aims to articulate specific diverging lines of thought while complicating the reasons uttered by his interlocutors. In doing so, the people Socrates' encounters on the agora start to relate in a different way to the reasons they gave in the discussion and what they were talking about becomes truly a cause for thinking.

In short, Whitehead (1978) proposes to understand thinking, which cannot exclude anything according to him, as a "welding of imagination and common sense" (p. 17), This means to endorse what we have called a speculative relation towards common sense, instead of a critical.[93] Thinking, in this sense, does not satisfy the ruminations of common sense, but

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[92] "S'il ne se pose pas comme arbitre, jugeant et excluant, la question de la divergence peut devenir matière à préoccupation collective, c'est-à-dire devenir une dimension de ce que, avec Whitehead, on peut appeler le sens commun".

[93] In the original text, Whitehead, writing as a philosopher, refers to philosophy as the welding of imagination and common sense. For my argument, however, which does not relate to a disciplinary

rather adds to it in a way that transforms the problem that makes common sense ruminate. His gesture is a speculative one. Whereas the critical gesture extracts by cutting away what is deceitful or illusionary, the speculative gesture adds by welding, a metallurgic operation, the possible to the problems that make common sense ruminate.

It is important to underscore that speculation, in this context, certainly does not refer to the rationalities associated with financial speculation in view of future accumulation of credit, on the one hand, or the calculation of probabilities as part of security management procedures, on the other hand. It should rather be associated with a struggle against the probabilities that would make any future manageable in advance. It means to open up a possibility of a future that is not a mere extension of the present or of what presents itself as inevitable in the future. Rather, "speculating demands the active taking of risks that enable an exploration of the plurality of the present" (Savransky, Wilkie, & Rosengarten, 2017, p. 8). As such, speculation takes as its point of departure what is already there in the present, the ruminations of common sense, but seeks to open up the possibility of transforming what makes common sense ruminate into a cause for thinking instead of a cause for judgement ('Laches is wrong and Nicias is right') or for indifference ('Both Laches and Nicias are right considered from their respective perspectives'). Judgement and indifference are two positions that do not require to take risk.

Stengers (2015b) defines Whitehead's speculative gesture as "a gesture that bets on the possibility of conferring on that which brings us together the power to make us think together" (p. 5).[94] It is a risky gesture that wagers on the possibility to create a 'we' that is engaged in a collective process of thinking. It is clear that Whitehead refuses to understand thinking as revolutionary. Rather, according to him, the process of thinking is *adventurous*. Welding imagination and common sense requires a common sense that is capable of ruminating, of objecting, that is recalcitrant:

> The Whiteheadian adventure does not aim at awakening, leaving the cave. It is itself
> a dream, a storytelling: to learn 'inside' the Platonic cave, together with those who live
> and argue within it. Not in the hope that the false appearances will gradually yield their

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discussion among philosophers, I have broadened the understanding of the term philosophy to include also other forms of thinking that take place at a university. Exchanging the term 'philosophy' with its strong disciplinary connotations, for the more general term 'thinking' allows to avoid a discipline-internal discussion of a discipline that is not mine and to argue for the relevance of this proposition as an ingredient of an educational study of the university. As such, my aim is to speculatively extend the scope of this proposition to bear on an educational problem.

[94] "un geste pariant sur la possibilité de conférer à ce qui nous réunit le pouvoir de nous faire penser ensemble".

secrets, but in the hope that these 'appearances', if they are appreciated in their affirmative importance, might be articulated into fabulous contrasts (Stengers, 2011e, p. 516).

As such, Whitehead's notion of adventure denotes a future-oriented transformative process. Savransky (2016) reminds us of the fact that the concept of adventure, despite its more romantic connotations, derives etymologically from the Latin *adventurus*, "which signals an exposure to that which is about to happen, that is, an investment in the possibility of an event, where the latter becomes associated with a sense of difference that matters" (p. 40). An adventure in the Whiteheadian sense opens up a middle space, in between a problematic situation that makes the common sense ruminate, and the possible transformation of this problematic situation.

Now, how can such a transformation be effectuated? How can diverging lines of thoughts eventually entangle in the presence of a possible convergence? How can something be given the power to make us think, collectively, engaged in and situated by the problem that concerns us? In the course of this chapter I will argue that it requires specific arts of composition, problematization, and attention that allow to gather around a problematic situation. First, however, it is necessary to inquire the specific meaning of the notion of 'home' within Whitehead's proposition concerning the university and what it might entail with regards to the relation between university and society. This brings us to the question of habitation.

Modes of Habitation

In calling the university a 'home of adventures', Whitehead gives a straightforward proposition concerning what is inside the university, namely adventures. What Whitehead precisely means with the notion of adventures has been the topic of the previous section. The question remains how the university relates to its outside, a question which is particularly relevant in the context of this dissertation. With the terminology introduced by Whitehead, more specifically the notion of home, he seems to put forward the relation between university and world as a way of inhabiting. Firstly, the implications of this way of framing in terms of inhabiting will be unpacked. Secondly, Dewey's thinking on habits and habitats will be brought to bear on this way of framing the relation between university and world in order to discern an educational dimension to it. Lastly, the intrusion of Gaia, Stengers' way of conceptualizing our current global predicament, will be linked to the question concerning the relation between the

university and the world. Haraway's concepts of sympoiesis and response-ability will prove to be helpful tools in reinterpreting the ways in which the university is entangled in the world, its way of inhabiting after the intrusion of Gaia. I start, however, with the university's way of inhabiting. Therefore it might be relevant to dwell on the notions of habit and habitat.

In *The cosmopolitical proposal*, Stengers (2005c) argues that the question of habit and habitat are strongly interrelated and that it is impossible to come to terms with one side of the problem without immediately taking into account the other. The *etho-ecological perspective*[95], as she calls it, affirms

> the inseparability of *ethos*, the way of behaving peculiar to a being, and *oikos*, the habitat of that being and the way in which that habitat satisfies or opposes the demands associated with the ethos or affords opportunities for an original ethos to risk itself (Ibid., p. 997).

Stengers explains that the inseparabitlity of *ethos* and *oikos* does not equal their dependence. No habit is entirely contingent on its habitat, and no habitat can transform in any predictable way the habits it engenders. Stengers makes clear that "the environment proposes but that the being disposes, gives or refuses to give that proposal an ethological significance" (Ibid., p. 997). She adds, however, that an ethos never contains in itself its own meanings, let alone that it can master its own reasons. The question what a being is capable of is subject to the highest unpredictability. If we are to follow Whitehead's proposition that the university is the home of adventures, we need to take into account the inseparability of habit and habitat, and inquire how the university as a habitat possibly transforms the habit of thought by giving something the power to make us think, which means in this case, as the quote above makes clear, that this something that is made present in the environment affords an ethos the possibility to risk itself, to become engaged in a Whiteheadian adventure. An adventure, as argued in the previous section, cannot take place outside a landscape of diverging opinions in which those engaged in the adventure put their reasons at risk in the presence of a problematic situation that has acquired the power to initiate the adventure. To understand the

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[95] Implicitly the question of ethology is always already taken up in the ecological perspective. For instance, in von Uexküll's study of the tick that has gained general recognition due to Heidegger's analysis of the text in his thinking about boredom, he investigates how environmental features such as temperature and smell trigger specific behavioral traits of the tick (Buchanan, 2008; Heidegger, 1995). Stengers' way of phrasing the issue as etho-ecological instead of merely ecological, however, makes the ethological bearing of an ecological point of view explicit. Besides, the ethological question is at the background of Haeckel's definition of ecology as the study of a living being in its environment discussed at the end of Chapter One.

university accordingly implies to affirm that the adventures for which the university provides a home refer neither solely to the formation of the self, nor exclusively to the creation of a world, but rather that it allows for a mode of habitation, which requires to take the inseparability of habit and habitat as a point of departure.

Thinking in terms of habitation, as Whitehead proposes to do, forces to investigate the possible connections between a relation to the self and a relation to the world, or maybe better, to conceive of both self and world as two opposite exaggerations of what was kept together in a mode of habitation. It means to conjoin "the mutation of the habits that animate certain ways of response with the constraints and possibilities of transformation that their respective habitats may provide" (Savransky, 2016, p. 211). Taking up *modes of habitation* as a central theme allows to avoid two distinct but complementary dangers that could emerge as a consequence of overemphasizing either of the two dimensions of habitation – habit or habitat.

The first danger is to reframe habitation to a question of habits, of modes of individual behavior in a world that is unquestioned or even forgotten. In this context one could think of Foucault's later work on ethics, subjectivity and truth in which he focuses on *technologies of the self*, practices of self-problematization and self-formation dating back to the Greco-Roman period, which he understands as "exercises of self on the self by which one attempts to develop and transform oneself" (Foucault, 1997, p. 282). Endorsing such a strong focus on the self, and more particularly on a conception of the self as an ethical substance to be worked on and ultimately transformed, risks to reduce the problem of ethology to a problem of ethics by forgetting the connection between self and world (cf. Foucault, 1990, 1992, 2001).[96]

The second danger is to reduce habitation to a question of habitats, of designs of environments that would produce specific kinds of subjectivities and ways of living one's life. Exemplary in this context is Sloterdijk's theory of the *anthropogenic island* in which he analyzes architectural designs from the question of how they allow for a specific type of human being to come into existence. He defines modern architecture as "the medium in which the explication of the human sojourn in manmade interiors processually articulates itself" (Sloterdijk, 2016, p. 469). His study of the apartment is a case in point of how he treats the built environment as a methodological entry point to inquire our contemporary condition. "Dwelling itself and the production of its containers becomes a spelling-out of all the dimensions of components that are joined in primal coalescence on the anthropogenic island"

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[96] From an historical point of view, Pierre Hadot (1995) has made a similar remark by claiming that the exercises of the self that Foucault discusses always imply an insertion of the self in a social or even cosmic order, and that they hence are never purely exercises of the self on the self: "In my view, the feeling of belonging to a whole is an essential element: belonging, that is, both to the whole constituted by the human community, and to that constituted by the cosmic whole" (p. 208).

(p. 470). Hence, Sloterdijk's overemphasis on habitats as production sites of human becoming risks to reduce the problem of ecology to a problem of – in a Sloterdijkian turn of phrase – ecologistics by understanding the world as a repository for anthropogenic resources (cf. Sloterdijk 2004, 2009).

It needs no argumentation that both approaches have their worth for the questions they seek to address, of subjectivity and anthropogenesis respectively, but in order to come to an ecological understanding of the university and moreover one that does justice to Whitehead's proposition to think the university as a home of adventure it will be necessary to take another route. What the theme of habitation requires is to omit both dangers by taking the risk of going through the middle. This means to think the university as a current flowing between the banks of self and world, habit and habitat, and study practices as techniques to navigate the midstream. Habitation makes it possible to conceive of the thinking that is generated within the university as situated relative to a problematic situation, and emerging from a real adventurous engagement with the world that opens the question how to transform our relations with this problematic situation that acquired to power to elicit thinking.

In the foregoing paragraphs, the concept of *mode of habitation* has been proposed in order to conceive of the relation between the university and the world. It has been argued that understanding the university as a home, as Whitehead has encouraged us to do, means to grasp it in terms of habitation, in which habit and habitat are conjoined. At this point, it might be interesting to bring in John Dewey's thinking on the educational implications of the embeddedness of the human being within an environment, since it allows to foreground also the educational bearing of Whitehead's proposition. Dewey (1916) begins with assuring that the environment denotes something more than the surroundings which encompass the human being. Rather, it denotes "the specific *continuity* of the surroundings with his [the human being] own active tendencies" (Ibid., p. 11). Hence, Dewey affirms that the individual and his environment are both part of the same lively milieu, both participate in a process of what Donna Haraway (2016), inspired by Lynn Margulis, would call *symbiogenesis*, a becoming-with of the world and the human being that is part of it. "The things with which a man *varies* are his genuine environment" (Ibid., p. 11). For Dewey, man and environment are strongly interrelated and co-dependent. The activities of an astronomer, as he explains, "vary with the stars at which he gazes or about which he calculates" (Ibid., p. 11). Likewise, the relics, inscriptions, and ruins that an archaeologist finds, constitute his environment and allow him to forge a connection with the epoch of his concern. A habit, consequently, is defined as "an ability to use natural conditions as means to ends. It is an active control of the environment

through control of the organs of action" (Ibid., p. 46). It determines the way a living being goes about in his environment.

According to Dewey this process of mediation that takes place between a living being and its environment confirms to the definition of education as "consisting in the acquisition of those habits that effect an adjustment of an individual and his environment" (Ibid., p. 47). He underscores that a distinction is to be made between passive habits, ways of doing that are wrought within the organism, and active habits, ways of doing in which the individual takes control over his environment. He gathers the passive habits under the denominator of *habituation* which he defines as "our adjustment to an environment which at the time we are not concerned with modifying". It is the way we get used to our surroundings – clothing, house, city, etc. – by making use of what they afford in our daily lives. "We get used to things by *first* using them" (Ibid., p. 47). The active habits are part of a process of what Dewey calls *adaptation*, which he defines as "quite as much adaptation *of* the environment to our own activities as of our activities *to* the environment" (Ibid., p. 47). With this concept he stresses the fact that individual and environment are both engaged in the aforementioned process of symbiogenesis and that each part effects transformations in the other.

Dewey summarizes: "the environment consists of those conditions that promote or hinder, stimulate or inhibit, the *characteristic* activities of a living being" (Ibid., p. 11). In other words, the individual and his environment, including his relations with fellow human beings which Dewey calls the social environment, are different parts of a lively, organic whole. He gives the example of water which provides an environment for a fish, since "it is necessary to the fish's activities – to its life" (Ibid., pp. 11-12). He goes on to explain that the north pole is "a significant element in the environment of an arctic explorer, whether he succeeds in reaching it or not, because it defines his activities, makes them what they distinctively are" (Ibid., p. 12). But what if, like today, water becomes increasingly polluted due to human waste? What will be the 'characteristic activities' of the fish? What should the arctic explorer do as the prospect of a summer without a north pole becomes every year more likely? The ecological transformations we witness today bring Dewey's understanding of the environment as those conditions that make the 'characteristic activities' of a living being possible or impossible in crisis.

The intrusion of Gaia, as described in Chapter Two, does not demand us to explain what the characteristic activities of a living being are, but rather requires us to ask *what a living being is capable of*. Stengers (2017b) gives the example of amaranth: Faced with its probable eradication due to the massive use of Round up on soils destined for the production of genetically modified soja, the amaranth had to adapt itself to its new lethal living conditions, and has become capable of surviving in an environment that was designed for its

extermination. "The possibility that an amaranth becomes tolerant of *Round up* is therefore an 'adaptation' that its population has been capable of at the moment the environment had become lethal. The science *made in* Monsanto has neglected what the aim of survival made the people of amaranths capable of" (Ibid., p. 123).[97] Of course, this is not an intentional behavior on the part of the amaranth as active subject. Rather, the amaranth has become a site where an accidental event could take place, an event however, that imposes upon us the task of what Stengers (2017b) calls together with Haraway (2008) *response ability*, "the ability to respond for and to respond to, that is, to be interrogated by that which our intentions would justify the sacrifice of" (p. 128).[98] It means to acquire a taste for the question of how the ways we go about in the world affect this world and our modes of living within it. It raises the question of habitation, that henceforth can no longer be understood as a process of adaptation, albeit mutual and co-dependent, but rather as a process of *sympoiesis*, a thoughtful and inventive making-with that engages multiple beings in a transformative and adventurous process of becoming.

It is important to demarcate sympoiesis from two other concepts with which it might be mistaken. It differs from – as already mentioned –, symbiogenesis. Whereas the latter grasps how different parts of the world conceived as an organic and dynamic whole develop together, mutually interdependent, the former foregrounds and makes explicit the active part we can play in the process due to interventions that are always local, precarious, and partial. Neither should it be mistaken for autopoiesis, a concept used to describe self-producing autonomous units with centrally controlled, homeostatic and predictable spatiotemporal boundaries. Sympoiesis, in contrast, as the term was coined in the MA thesis of Beth Dempster, denotes "collectively-producing systems [that] do not have self- defined spatial or temporal boundaries. Information and control are distributed among components. The systems are evolutionary and have the potential for surprising change" (Dempster, 1998, p. v).

In short, the intrusion of Gaia requires us to think about our modes of habitation on a planet that is severely damaged by capitalist extraction and exploitation of its resources.[99] Via

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[97] "La possibilité qu'une amarante devienne tolérante au *Round up* correspond donc à une 'adaptation' dont sa population a été capable lorsque le milieu est devenu létal. La science *made in* Monsanto a négligé ce dont la visée de survivre rendait capable le peuple des amarantes".

[98] "capacité à répondre pour et de répondre à, c'est-à-dire à se laisser interroger par, ce dont nos intentions justifient le sacrifice".

[99] In that sense, it confronts us with what we could call with William James a *genuine option*. In *The will to believe*, James (2000) draws three contrasts between two kinds of options: living versus dead, forced versus avoidable, and momentous versus trivial. Whereas a living option is an option which we can relate to, that makes sense to us, and evokes a willingness to act, a dead option is one of the kind that pertains to improbable moral dilemma's that merely attempt to place an interlocutor in difficulty. Some options, moreover, can be avoided. For instance, the choice between going outside with our without umbrella can be avoided by just staying inside. It is not an option that obliges to choose. Another option

Whitehead's proposition to understand the university as a home of adventure it has been argued that the university possibly constitutes a different mode of habitation, one that is linked with Haraway's idea of response ability and the processes of sympoiesis it necessitates. The question that today is forced upon us is not what we could do with the world and the possibilities it offers us, but rather what the world asks from us and how our response – always a response *for* and a response *to* – might affect the issue.

Taking Whitehead's proposition concerning the university as a home of adventures as a point of departure, it is possible to return to the research question of how to situate study in the relation between university and society and to formulate a proposition in response to the one formulated by Whitehead, of which the consequences will have to be investigated in the remainder of the dissertation.

Matters of Study

Guided by the research question "How to situate study in the relation between university and society?", compelled by Stengers' ecology of practices which provides a powerful alternative to an institutional understanding of the university, and affected by Whitehead's proposition concerning the university as a home of adventures, I put forward the following proposition of which the different components will be inquired:

Proposition: Study practices enact a relation between the university and the world by convoking matters of study via the arts of composition, problematization, and attention.

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that does not oblige to choose, according to James, is the choice between accepting a theory as true, or rejecting it as false, for if this theory does not make a difference to us, the demand that the theory be accepted or rejected will be answered with this indifference. A forced option, on the contrary, cannot be avoided. The example James gives is of the kind of "Either accept this truth or go without it" (p. 199). A forced option leaves no standing place outside of the alternative. Lastly, a momentous option corresponds with a chance to be seized. It is an option that will produce a difference in the world and that cannot be reversed, otherwise it would be a trivial option. James defines a genuine option as an option that is at once living, forced, and momentous. It is a real alternative that obliges the one to whom it is posed to act, by consent or refusal. As such, it is an engaging option and the response which it will have elicited makes a difference. It is, moreover, an option that cannot be decided based on intellectual grounds, as James makes clear, but in its engaging force requires our passional nature to decide. Stengers (2009) explains that a genuine option "poses the question of its efficacy, its possible power of breaking through indifference and of engaging and obliging one to choose" (p. 10).

Defining study practices requires an explanation of the three components of the proposition. In this section, I will explain the concept of matters of study by distinguishing it from matters of fact, matters of concern, and matters of care. Thereafter, I will argue that study practices require arts of composition, problematization, and attention that are related to the convocation of a matter of study. This will be the topic of the fourth section. In the last section I will focus on the enactment of a relation between university and world via the notion of commons and empowerment. Before going into more detail, however, it might be relevant to couple back to the scientific practices of Chapter Three and shed light on how they relate to the study practices of the current chapter.

What a university seems to foster is not only the experimental invention of factishes by means of scientific practices, but also, and here it differs from the laboratories and research units of private companies, what Stengers (2010) calls the *acculturation* of these factishes via study practices. Acculturation, here, refers to the ways in which these factishes relate to the world, how they can be received by the world, how they possibly respond to a problematic situation that makes common sense ruminate. In this respect, Stengers' example of GMOs might be elucidating. The invention of GMOs, for instance, is in and of itself not a response to the situation it attempts to address (e.g. world hunger). It depends on the entire network of laboratories, patents, market mechanisms, and aid agencies that will determine how GMOs will be used. Acculturation, then, means taking care of the consequences that the invention of GMOs entails and slowing down around social injustices or environmental impairments that can be called into being due to its existence. Describing study practices as such practices of acculturation of scientific factishes is perhaps a bit limiting and makes, moreover, study practices secondary to scientific practices. It might be interesting to develop a concept of study practices in its own right.

Now, what are study practices and in what sense do they relate to and differ from the scientific practices of the previous chapter? In Chapter Three, I have claimed, with Stengers (2006a), that what scientific practices share, irrespective of their different requirements and obligations, is that they are driven by the question "*Comment apprendre du nouveau?*" – How to learn something new? The question how to learn something new, seems to be a point of convergence for all scientific practices, an issue that every scientific practice has to deal with. Consequently and in contrast to Stengers' understanding of scientific practices, I argue that what makes *study practices* converge, irrespective of the diversity of their requirements and obligations, is the question "*Comment apprendre de nouveau?*" – How to learn anew? How to

transform the relationships we entertain with the world we inhabit in a thoughtful and inventive way?

As such, study practices do not want to find something new in the world, they are in first instance not interested in the production of new knowledge contents, but are rather concerned with addressing problematic situations. This means that they adventurously engage with the issues that make common sense ruminate in a way that transforms the terms in which the issue is understood. As such, the university emerges at the point where two questions intersect and intertwine: "Comment apprendre du/de nouveau? How to learn something new and how to learn anew?"

Invoking the concept of learning in educational discussions means to take a risk. Two reasons can be discerned why it involves a risk. Firstly, formulating critiques of the concept of learning and how it is deployed within policy discourses has become quite successful within the field of educational theory. It has been argued, for instance, that a too strong focus on the concept of learning limits our understanding of educational phenomena to include only the individual acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competencies, thereby forgetting about the educational role of the teacher or the importance of the subject matter. Moreover, it has been argued that the focus on learning plays into the hands of neoliberal policies that seek to transform societal issues (e.g. unemployment) into individual problems (e.g. employability). The concept of learning seems to have been instrumentalized for political or economic aims (Biesta, 2006, 2013, 2015, Simons & Masschelein, 2008a, 2008b).

The second reason why using the concept of learning seems to imply a risk concerns not so much its narrowing down within political or economic discourses, but rather its widening up in philosophical arguments. In an analysis of the relations between philosophy and education Masschelein and Simons (2016) argue that in the work of what they call the learning philosophers – the examples given include Latour ('learning curves'), Habermas ('learning processes'), and Sloterdijk ('learning') – the concept of learning is stretched to that extent that it merely denotes processes of change or transformation in a very general sense. They claim that it has lost its precise educational meaning when it starts to denote only change or transformation. In this case, the concept of learning seems to be instrumentalized for the social, political, or ethical project of a particular philosophical theory.

As such, learning has become a suspicious concept in the eyes of many philosophers of education. The more it is instrumentalized for sociopolitical purposes (cf. the learning society), the more eager philosophers of education have been to do away with it. However, learning seems to be an important concept for Stengers (*apprendre, apprentissage*), although again it runs the risk to become a notion that is too general and hence to lose its educational meaning

(in that sense Stengers could perhaps be called a 'learning philosopher'). Nevertheless, I think it is relevant to retain 'learning' here. Taking the risk of using the notion might provide an interesting opportunity to reclaim the concept of learning in view of the damages that have been done due to its instrumentalization in policy discourses[100].

In doing so, I do not think that in fact Stengers' work is educational through and through just because she uses the concept of learning. Neither do I think that in her work the concept of learning could be easily exchanged for notions such as change or transformation (although these connotations are present as well). Rather, my attempt will be to make the notion of learning interesting from an educational point of view by conceptualizing it in relation to study. Hence, I will not argue that in fact learning and studying are two altogether different phenomena, neither that they denote the same phenomenon but rather that they require each other. This means that a conception of learning that could be interesting from an educational point of view would require to include an aspect of study, as well as that study could benefit from a collaboration with learning in order to become a worldmaking transformative process.

I want to argue that what appears in the university, due to its study practices, is a *matter of study*. What is being invented/discovered/produced is given the power to slow down reasoning; it is being studied. Hence, we could say that in a university there is no invention without study. The something new that is discovered, acquires the power to make us think about how we can learn how to live with it. As such, the university provides a home for those who are due to this new factish required to give a response, for those who will engage in a thoughtful and inventive process of sympoiesis that will make it possible to inherit from the event of learning something new. Inheriting means in this context to learn anew, to begin again to find ways to make a world with the newly discovered factish (cf. Stengers (2010)).

Matters of study has been put forward as an important notion to conceive of the specificity of the processes of learning taking place at universities. In order to get a better grasp of this notion, it is helpful to delimit it from other matters, in concreto matters of fact, matters of concern, and matters of care. I start with the first. Galilean science as described in the previous

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[100] Instrumentalization comes forward as something that many philosophers of education seem to take issue with. The question here is, I think, not so much to be *against* instrumentalization and to be *for* a genuine, internalist educational account. Turning educational concepts into instruments to help develop a social, political, or ethical (maybe even an economic!) project can be a challenging thing to do (and some philosophers have done an excellent job in this), and according to me, educational theory has in its fear for learning borrowed many conceptual instruments from other disciplines, not in the least from philosophy (e.g. techniques of the self, suspension, profanation, subjectification). Considering the retooling of concepts into instruments for other purposes, to play other melodies than the ones the instruments were intended for, the question, from a pragmatic point of view, can only be whether the music is good or bad, whether it makes us think or not. In that sense, a case can be made to retain Stengers' concept of learning and to investigate the consequences using this concept can have from an educational point of view.

chapter produces what Latour (2008) has proposed to call *matters of fact*. Via the threefold conferral of power the experimental achievement is claimed to be able to speak for itself, in order to silence rivalling interpretations. The style in which is talked about such matters of fact installs a division between those who know and those who believe. In one corner, we find the scientists armed with data and who know about what they speak. Throughout the years, they have gained enough expertise to utter scientifically sound statements. In the other corner, we find the ignorant public, including pseudo-scientists. They are believed to be the most dangerous in case they hold strong beliefs that contest scientific evidence. In the end, nevertheless, they will be forced to surrender for the matters of fact, or else risk to be expelled from the citadel of rational conversation (Latour, 2004, 2008; Stengers, 2000).

Latour (2008) proposes to render the web from which the matter of fact emerged – in the case of Galilean science the sociotechnical apparatus that made it possible for the fact to be corroborated and to acquire the status of evidence – explicit. "A matter of concern is what happens to a matter of fact when you add to it its whole scenography, much like you would do by shifting your attention from the stage to the whole machinery of the theatre" (Ibid., p. 39). Describing something as a *matter of concern*, instead of as a matter of fact, means to pay tribute to the process of becoming of which the thing is the result. In contrast to the matter of fact, which gives an objectified version of the thing, cut loose from its sociotechnical entanglements, the matter of concern renders the thing as a lively gathering. This does not only mean that, as already said, its production process is made present, but also that different actors are gathered for whom this thing is of concern.

As such, the matter of concern gathers in two different ways. On the one hand, it gathers the sociotechnical assemblage that made it possible for it to come into being: the machines, scientists, policy regulations, and budgets to which it owes its existence. On the other hand, it gathers those who are concerned, the people who will have to inherit the event of its production, those who will receive it and will have to make a world with it.[101] Latour invokes here concept of the Parliament of Things, an assembly that gathers representatives around something, an issue of concern. It gathers them, more specifically, not as experts, but as representatives of, for instance, the industry, the people, the planet, or the state. They represent something in relation to that which is of concern.

Thirdly, the notion of *matter of care*, as conceived by María Puig de la Bellacasa (2017), adds a layer to the notion of matter of concern. Although concern and care are strongly related,

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[101] In this context, Latour refers to Heideggers musings on the etymology of the Old German *Ding*, which not only denoted the thing as gathering of the fourfold (heaven and earth, mortals and divinities) – the first gathering of the matter of concern –, but also as a form of assembly, of gathering in order to discuss (Heidegger, 1971; Latour, 2005a).

speaking in terms of care renders, as she argues, the active engagements more explicit: "One can make oneself concerned, but 'to care' contains a notion of *doing* that concern lacks" (Ibid., p. 42). It intensifies the interrelatedness between the different participants by foregrounding the fact that our actions are always already embedded in this web and should therefore be subject to ethical reflection, always situated by the specific problem at hand. Whereas the matter of concern is foremost a notion that explains how things are constructed and how they gather a concerned public, matter of care is a notion that more explicitly addresses our participation in the possible becomings of these constructions. Thinking with care, as Puig de la Bellacasa (2012) explains, underscores "those *doings* needed to create, hold together and sustain life's essential heterogeneity" (p. 198). Intensifying matters of concern to bring them to bear upon an ethical discussion – Puig de la Bellacasa (2017) understands the stakes of her work as "a speculative commitment to think about how things could be different if they generated care" (p. 60) –, is indeed an interesting move to render these processes of sympoiesis more visible and prone to ethical consideration.

From an educational point of view however, it is arguable that this question of what to do with this something new that has come to the world, this pharmakon-factish, is not only a matter of ethical consideration, hence thinking with care, but also and foremost something that needs to be studied, that has to be given the power to make us think. In short, whereas a matter of fact can be used as a bat to shoo away the irrational ideologues, or to persuade the doubters, a matter of concern visualizes the ontogenesis of what was hitherto a matter of fact, thereby enabling a political discussion in which the fact itself can participate. A matter of care, subsequently, intensifies the matter of concern in the sense that it foregrounds our doings with regards to the matter at hand, that it is in fact precarious and therefore in need of care. A matter of study, at last, is also an intensification of the matter of concern. However, not in the sense that it foregrounds the active maintenance of the construction, but rather that what is of concern is given the power to make us think, instead of only becoming susceptible to political discussion or ethical consideration.

More concretely, this means that within the assembly of students something, a matter of study, needs to be made present that turns them into a thinking public. It is possible to think in this respect – slightly foreshadowing what I will present in Part Three – of maps, photographs, comparisons, written accounts, conceptual schemes, or drawings around which the students can gather and make them think about the problematic situation that requires response. The presence of such a matter of study slows down the discussion between the students because it allows for asking questions such as "Where do you see it?", "Why do you say that?", "How do you draw these relations?", making the students time and again return to

the matter of study and inhibiting that their discussion becomes an exchange of opinions. Opinions, however, can be raised within such a conversation around a matter of study but because they will have to be brought into a relation with this matter of study, these opinions themselves will undergo transformations that cannot be controlled by any one that is part of the gathering because the students will start to think about and relate to these opinions in a different way.

Important to emphasize is the fact that the aforementioned matters of study (e.g. maps, photographs, drawings) are generated within and by the assembly of students in relation to the situation that requires response. With Stengers (2005c), it could be argued that this generative process is a practice of convocation, a kind of magic. Not, however, the magic associated with the occult or dark arts, but rather the magic of neopaganist, ecofeminist, activist, Californian witches who have taken the risk of calling themselves witches and their practice magic. Stengers (2005c) explains that in this context magic needs to be understood as "the art of triggering events where a 'becoming able to' is at stake" (p. 1002). Hence, it does not address human beings in the way they perform their 'characteristic activities', as we have called this with Dewey, but rather as being capable, this means not only prone to adapt to changes in the environment but engaged in a situated process of sympoiesis that transforms the milieu and its inhabitants, a learning process.

Magic is a practice of convocation, the ritual makes something present. The efficacy of the ritual lies however not in the fact that an answer is given to a question, a problem resolved, due to the manifestation and intervention of a Godess who judges – the map or drawing is not a 'matter of fact', cannot be used to persuade. Its efficacy is rather "that of a presence that transforms each protagonist's relations with his or her own knowledge, hopes, fears and memories, and allows the whole to generate what each other would have been unable to produce separately" (Ibid., p. 1002). This process of 'becoming-able-to' is hence a collective process, moreover a process that takes place in the presence of something which is not the spokesperson or representative that can confirm or refute, a judge. The Godess is present as a cause, but a cause that only exists in the effects that She produces when present, since She transforms the stakes that have been put up. Magic catalyzes "a regime of thought and feeling that bestows the power on that around which there is a gathering to become a cause for thinking" (Ibid., p. 1002). Translating this to study practices, this means that matters of study catalyze a regime of thought and feeling that give the problematic situation around which the students gather the power to make them think, and by convoking matters of study (e.g. making maps, writing stories, drawing sketches, schematizing conceptual frameworks) make present a cause for thinking.

Consequently, this means to exchange the Dingpolitik that Latour related to the Parliament of Things for a thinkpedagogy, or maybe more precisely a *pedagogy of study*, an educational practice that activates thought – not mere persuasion, discussion, or consideration – around a matter of study. In other words, it is proposed to add to the epistemological term of matters of fact, the political term of matters of concern, and the ethical term of matters of care, the educational term of matters of study. This means to do justice to the fact that the problematic situation around which the university gathers cannot be given a response based on scientific expertise, nor based on purely political or ethical arguments, but that the question itself has to be given the power to gather a public of people who study around it, an association of students.

As such, the university as a home of adventures seems not to refer back to political solutions of times long gone to deal with the problems of the present, nor is it likely that it proposes easy quick-fixes that can take away the problem, but gathers a public of students to inquire the problematic situation, to *stay with the trouble*, in the words of Donna Haraway (2016):

> In urgent times, many of us are tempted to address trouble in terms of making an imagined future safe, of stopping something from happening that looms in the future, of clearing away the present and past in order to make futures for coming generations. Staying with the trouble does not require such a relationship to times called the future. In fact, staying with the trouble requires learning to be truly present, not as a vanishing pivot between awful or edenic pasts and apocalyptic or salvific futures, but as mortal critters entwined in myriad unfinished configurations of places, times, matters, meanings (p. 1.)

In short, matters of study might have the potential to slow down the ways in which response-ability is exercised, the ways in which troubles of the present are given a response. In the next section, it will be explained that the convocation of matters of study requires a threefold art, namely of composition, of problematization, and of attention.

Composition, Problematization, Attention

Characteristic for the practices of modern sciences, as argued in Chapter Three, was the experimental apparatus that allowed to enforce a break between experimenter and

experimental achievement, and that hence conferred, ultimately, to the experimenter the power to speak in the name of the experimental achievement. Stengers (2017b) contrasts this experimental apparatus predicated on a break between experimenter and experimental achievement, with what she calls an *apparatus of activation* of which the achievement is always generative, and which I would like to associate with the pedagogy of study of the university. This means that the apparatus of activation transforms divergent experiences into a javelin projected beyond the limits that define these divergences, that it initiates a Whiteheadian adventure. She argues that the efficacy of an apparatus is always to induce and deploy ways of affecting and being affected, of doing and undergoing. The experimental apparatus, for instance, attributes all power to the scientists who hence can impose his interpretation of the experimental achievement onto his opponents who hold other rivalling opinions.[102] The apparatus of activation, on the contrary, gathers those who are concerned by a transformation in the middle voice that it seeks to activate.

Conceiving of study practices as practices of the middle voice forces us to consider our relation towards what we study as neither active nor passive. Studying in the active voice would mean that our relation is one of appropriation, that we, as students, make the matter of study our own, that we acquire control over it so we can put it to use in our jobs and everyday lives. As such, it is arguable that the modern sciences in the current culture of academic capitalism study in the active voice, by appropriating what is studied via patents and publications. Studying in the passive voice, on the contrary, would imply that our relation is one of pure exposition, that a matter of study is disclosed before our eyes so that we can attend to it, and that it can begin to command us.

Studying in the middle voice, however, requires to let oneself be affected in order to affect, to let oneself be touched in order to touch. It ties together the becoming of the world with the becoming of a collective of students. Moreover, it makes it possible to conceive of learning processes as adventures that engage a collective of students around a problematic situation that will not only transform this situation but also the students that have accepted to become affected by it. The middle voice, according to Stengers (2017b) opens the following questions: How does this situation concern us? What does this situation ask from us? How can we respond to what the situation demands? Posed in such a way, moreover, that the response given can never be general nor generalizable, that there is no criterion with which the legitimacy of the response can be evaluated. Besides, it requires of those who come together

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[102] Stengers however, contends that this division of power is fallacious. She argues that the experimental achievement is dependent on a process of negotiation between experimenter and factish (Stengers, 2006a). See also Chapter Three.

that what will emerge from their assembly will not belong to any one of them in person. It induces "a transformation that will remain relative to the event of 'the acceptance of being touched by'" (Ibid., p. 68).[103] This implies that the apparatus of activation makes it possible to become collectively affected by something, to slow down reasoning and study, always in the middle voice.

The convocation of matters of study seems to be then an obligatory passage point if this learning process is not just a process of transformation or change (learning in the broad sense), but becomes a real educational event, an event where "'a becoming able to' is at stake", to speak with Stengers (2005b, p. 1002). What is of importance is not so much that the problematic situation has been transformed or that the hopes, fears, dreams, and doubts of the collective of students have been transformed, but rather that given this problematic situation that has been given the power to make a collective of students think by means of the convocation of matters of study, has triggered the event of a *becoming able to*, to give a response that is not motivated by political opinions or economic interests, but comes forth from the event of study itself.

With Stengers, it can be argued that the style of matters of study requires a threefold art. Together the art of composition, the art of problematization, and the art of attention make up the apparatus of activation. In this paragraph, I clarify how these arts play a role in convoking a matter of study. It is important to make clear from the outset that the three arts presuppose each other in order to convoke a matter of study. Leave one out and the apparatus breaks down. Mutually combined however, they reinforce each other and instigate the apparatus of activation.

The first art, of *composition*, has to do with the way in which people are brought together around something, and what kind of role they can assume in this gathering. Stengers describes the slow and often repetitive palaver as a thought-provoking practice to think about what it means to speak in an assembly. She argues that the palaver in no way resembles the democratic debate as we know it. Whereas the democratic debate should be open to all citizens, the palaver summons the elders. Stengers explains that assuming the role of elder puts a constraint on what can be said and how it can be said. Since the word of the elder cannot be contradicted, she should extract from her experience those syntaxes, rhythms, and ways of saying that elicit contradiction, that put forward an intentional I that defends its reasons. On the contrary, speaking like an elder brings about an impersonal experience that transforms the speaking subject into an elder. Every speech act should express a thought that

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[103] "une transformation qui restera relative à l'évènement d'un 's'être laissé toucher par'".

does not contest the question around which the elders gather. The assumption is that the question has the power to gather, since there is hesitation, divergence, and risk for conflict. In spite of the presence of a matter at risk, the palaver is characterized by a specific kind of trust.

People do not gather because an agreement has to be made – which makes every participant responsible –, but rather because an agreement will produce itself. Such trust transforms the listening habits of those involved. They no longer listen for clues that can help them construct a counter-argument, or for clues that will unveil the intentions of the interlocutor. Hence, the efficacy of the composition is not due to the goodwill or tolerance of some of the participants with regards to their more persuasive associates. Rather, the slow and repetitive composition is generative. It produces a mutual sensibility concerning the reasons of all who will be affected by the decision until the decision will be taken – and the impersonal is important here. The decision is not taken by someone, not even by the collective, but it will have produced itself: "the decision to be made is made without anyone being able to appropriate it, without anybody else being able to guarantee that it is the best possible decision. The decision will have received 'its' reasons" (Stengers, 2017b, p. 41).[104] It is clear that the habits of speech that are fostered within such a composition are different from those that are typical for the matter of fact – 'science has proven that…, and thus…'.

The art of composition fosters a mutual sensibility and readiness to be affected by a question. It brings people together in a way that undoes both personal intentions and general solutions, in order to make them susceptible for a sympoietic process of interdependent co-becoming. It is a composition without composer, and definitely without transcendent position from which it is possible to evaluate what has been composed.

Secondly, the art of *problematization* has to do with how something is made present within the composition, namely as a matter of study. It involves the question how something – a situation, a cause – can make us think, how it can be transformed into a question in order to suspend the 'and thus' of rational debate and slow down reasoning, to make study possible. "The problematization does not go back to the most general but confers on the situation, always this or that situation, the power to question what seemed to be self-evident" (Ibid., p. 51).[105] Stengers argues that Leibniz' moral advice – "Dic cur hic? Respice finem", "Say why here? Consider the end" – is of relevance in relation to the art of problematization. What is at stake in this question is not the response that will be given, but rather the affective and existential transformation it induces, which she describes as an enlargement of the

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[104] "la décision à prendre soit prise, sans que nul ne puisse s'approprier, sans que nul non plus ne puisse garantir qu'elle est la meilleure possible. La décision a reçu 'ses' raisons".

[105] "La problématisation ne remonte pas vers le plus général mais confère à la situation, toujours telle ou telle situation, le pouvoir de mettre en cause ce qui, pourtant, semble aller de soi".

imagination. This means to take into account all the dimensions a response to a problem might play into, to take care of the consequences, and imagine what a response might imply for the ones that are excluded from the gathering of students.

For Leibniz, indeed, no one can respond truthfully to the question "Dic cur hic?", except for God of course, but He does not respond to such a question. Nobody has access to the truth of His reasons. Hence, nobody has access to the 'why', or can define 'the end'. At the moment Adam ate the apple, he could not give any reason for doing this. He did not have any end in mind with this action. Because, according to the Leibnizian system, it is the world chosen by God that conspires in his act. And the end of this act, moreover, belongs to no one but God since the divine calculation of the best of all possible worlds had already determined that Adam would eat the apple. "The question *Dic cur hic* aims to have the efficacy to problematize the general reasons by making the 'here' [hic] come to matter - suspend your action, let yourself be affected by the 'this', that is to say by *this* world" (Ibid., p. 51).[106] Thus, Leibniz' dictum problematizes general reasons that could be invoked in a discussion, in order to make the situation and our relation towards it truly problematic. This means that general reasons – 'growth is the only solution' – do not count in the conversation. The only reasons that can be taken up are those that come forth from and engage with the situation, henceforth a problematic situation.

It is a matter of, to take up again a concept encountered before, response-ability, of being able, given this specific situation, to respond. This response, moreover, is always a response *for* and *to*. It is a response *for* because it takes place in the presence of the problem it engages with. It is never a response informed by general reasons, but always specific reasons. Hence, it is a response *to*, always situated by the problem it addresses. It requires to ward off all transcendent reasons that could be given, and engage with all the divergent dimensions the problem plays into, to effectuate a transformation that takes up these reasons in an always local, situated, precarious, and partial response.

The art of *attention* is the third and final art that makes up the apparatus of activation. Moreover, it is arguable that the presence of this art transforms the apparatus of activation in a truly educational invention. A combination of only the arts of composition and problematization would engender the coming into being of a Parliament of Things, an assembly around matters of concern. The fact, however, that also the art of attention is practiced, ensures that what appears due to the working of the apparatus of activation, is not only a matter of concern, something which we can have a discussion about that cannot be

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[106] "La question *Dic cur hic* a pour efficace recherchée de problématiser les raisons générales en faisant importer le 'ici' – suspens ton action, laisse-toi affecter par le 'ceci', c'est-à-dire par *ce* monde".

reduced to arguments of the kind as 'sciences proves that… and thus', or 'as evidence shows… and thus', but that it is empowered to become a matter of study, in the sense that we are not only summoned to give our reasons, but are also required to slow down reasoning, to study. Stengers (2017b) defines the art of attention as follows:

> The art of attention is an art of the middle voice, a tentacular art because it is about letting oneself being touched, and to give what touches us the power to make us feel and think, but always 'here', never 'off the ground' (p. 197).[107]

It is important to note that Stengers emphasizes that the art of attention is a relational one, tentacular in her words.[108] It is impossible to be attentive in general. Attention is rather something that is elicited because something requires our attention, because something obligates us to think. This something is what she calls a common cause.

Referring to the commoners who shared and grazed the pastures of medieval England, but also to the user movements of people who take illegal drugs, Stengers (2015a) understands the commons as empowering those who were initially defined as self-interested users to contest this tragic diagnosis and to confer on the common – correspondingly defined as endangered by annihilating utilization –, "the power to gather them, to cause them to think, that is to say, to resist this definition, and produce propositions that it would otherwise have rendered unthinkable. In brief to learn again the art of paying attention" (p. 88). Stengers conceives of this tentacular art – in the middle voice – as a back and forth between touching and being touched, giving hold and seizing hold, empowering and being empowered. For Stengers, the art of attention is intimately linked with the question of the commons. Therefore, the last section of this chapter deals with the commons, which, moreover, allows to return to the first section that dealt with common sense.

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[107] "L'art de l'attention est un art de la voix moyenne, un art tentaculaire car il s'agit de se laisser toucher, et de conférer à ce qui nous touche le pouvoir de nous faire sentir et penser, mais toujours 'ici', jamais 'hors sol'".

[108] Haraway (2016) clarifies that tentacle comes from the Latin *tentaculum*, which means 'feeler', and that *tentare*, the Latin verb from which it is derived, means 'to feel' and 'to try'. Conceiving of the art of attention as tentacular foregrounds the fact that it is a mix of touch and try. It is reminiscent of someone who is blindfolded and suddenly has to trust on his haptic senses in order to find his way. As such the art of attention is perhaps rather practiced with the hands, than with the eyes. Moreover, it is a risky art since one never knows what one will touch or where it will bring you since destinations at a distance are literally out of sight. It requires to stay with the trouble.

Making Common I

At the end of this chapter, I return to the issue of the relation between university and society where the chapter has started with, by means of the theme of the commons. This chapter has set out with Whitehead's proposition concerning the university as a home of adventure. I have explained what Whitehead might have meant with his notion of adventure, namely that it requires to engage with what makes common sense ruminate, whether it be the question if children can learn to be brave by means of battle exercises in war armor, or the question how we can deal with nuclear waste. It asks for an interweaving and complicating of the diverging lines of thought that are always already ruminating in the landscape of common sense, in order to make a transformation possible that engages these different perspectives, without imposition of a transcendental rule or order, but rather as situated by something that makes the people gathered think, a matter of study:

> The entanglements between partial and therefore divergent perspectives are made in a tentacular way, by reciprocal affections, without dramatic moments where the agreement would be imposed at the same time as its reasons. No drama here, because the reasons are those that the situation itself has received, due to the constraints associated with the apparatus which hence has had the power to make 'common sense'" (Stengers, 2017b, p. 199-200).[109]

Stengers argues that such processes can already be witnessed today in response to what is called the commons.[110] Referring to Bollier (2014), she makes clear that commons necessitate practices in the middle voice where commons and commoners are engaged in a sympoietic tentacular process of commoning. "There is no commons without commoning" (Ibid., p. 176). In order to speak of a commons, therefore, it is a necessary requirement that there are other people with whom to be collectively situated and engaged by this common. They are obligated by this common, in the same sense as the scientific practitioner who is obligated by what she seeks to research. It initiates and requires processes of commoning,

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[109] "Les entre-infléchissements entre perspectives partiales et donc divergentes se font sur un mode tentaculaire, par affections réciproques, sans moments dramatiques où l'accord s'imposerait en même temps que ses raisons. Pas de drame ici, car les raisons sont la situation elle-même telle qu'elle a reçu, grâce aux contraintes associées au dispositif, le pouvoir de faire 'sens commun'".

[110] As argued in Chapter 1, the work of economist Elinor Ostrom has put the commons again on the research agenda. Not only in economy, but also in fields such as geography, urban planning, political theory, and law there is a renewed attention for the commons (cf. Capra & Mattei, 2015; De Angelis & Stavrides, 2010; Gutwirth & Stengers, 2016; Harvey, 2012; Hilal & Petti, 2013; Linebaugh, 2008; Ostrom, 1990; Peters, Gietzen, & Ondercin, 2012).

collective deliberation about the terms of use of the common, a mode of thoughtful and inventive habitation around and with what is common. As such, commons and commoners are always already entangled in a collective process of commoning. The three terms of commons, commoners and commoning presuppose each other. Via processes of commoning common sense is transformed into a common sensibility, something that can affect us, make us feel and make us think, collectively, around a common cause.

As such, when students generate matters of study with regards to a problematic situation that makes common sense ruminate, the diverging dimensions of common sense are taken up in a processes of commoning, of making common sense. This means that common sense is transformed, taken up in an adventure in the Whiteheadian sense. Matters of study operate as common causes which means that they set these adventures in motion and grant them an educational dimension which means that not only the ruminations of common sense of the commoners, the students are transformed but also that the problematic situation which made common sense ruminate in the first instance is being transformed.

It could be argued that matters of study, common causes, come into being when scientists and students meet, which is to say at the point where scientific practice and study practice collide, and where the apparatus of activation "*achieves the transformation of a problematic situation into a cause for collective thinking*" (Stengers, 2015a, p. 137).[111] It is also this point that Bollier (2014) underscores when he claims that the commons "is about honoring the new and diverse types of knowledge that are collectively constructed by commoners themselves, in their own specific circumstances" (p. 154).

This means that the scientific practices of Chapter Three and the study practices of this chapter are not mutually exclusive. Rather, it could be argued that what is learned within scientific practices – be reminded that their driving question is "How to learn something new?" – requires to learn again how to inhabit a shared world, a learning process that transforms the relations people have towards one another, towards the world they inhabit, and towards the problematic situation that they have given the power to make the think.

Thinking, in this understanding, is always dependent upon a cause for thinking, a cause that is common and thus constitutes a specific *technology of belonging*, a way of bringing together people by that what obligates them and makes them think. Stengers (2005b), however, emphasizes that a technology of belonging is not the same as a technology of causes. She stresses that "causes are causes for those who are obliged to think by them. Those do indeed belong and the cause does not belong to them" (Ibid., p. 191). The cause

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[111] Emphasis in original.

cannot be appropriated to become a reason for an individual action, but rather requires to think together. Hence, common causes are questions around which scientific practices and study practices can converge. Moreover, Stengers (2004b) writes that:

> To belong here is not to be assigned an identity, it is to become, in this case to become capable of what one would not be capable of otherwise: to participate in a collective decision, to resist the dynamics that take the participants hostage, to not accept wearily or for the good of the group, and to be up to the field, for that which one has been engaged in" (p. 61).[112]

As such, it can be argued that the question of the commons and of belonging via processes of commoning is related to empowerment.

Starhawk (1982) explains that a practice of empowerment generates power-from-within.[113] It can be associated with the empowerment that the dispossessed experience when they seize hold again over what was enclosed, when they reclaim what was expropriated. It is important to emphasizes that the empowering relation between commons and commoners is never an instrumental relation. The commons is not a means to the end of the empowerment of the dispossessed who then will become again commoners. It is rather due to the sympoietic process of commoning that the commoners can become commoners and the commons can become commons. This means that the making common of what was enclosed initiates a learning process that requires the commoners to think about the terms of use of the commons. Hence, it becomes a cause for thinking.

To conclude this chapter, it is important to note that the meaning of the terms 'university' and 'society' has changed in between the research question and the proposition. In the research question, 'university' seemed to refer to an institution for higher education and academic research, and 'society' to the social structure in which this institution is implicated. For the proposition, firstly, the term 'society' had perhaps too strong structural connotations. 'World', on the contrary, seemed to be a more appropriate term to denote that which makes

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[112] "Appartenir, ici, ce n'est pas se voir assigner une identité, c'est devenir, en l'occurence devenir capable de ce dont on serait incapable sinon: participer à une décision collective, résister aux dynamiques qui prennent les participants en otages, ne pas accepter par lassitude ou pour le bien due groupe, et être à la hauteur, sur le terrain, de ce à quoi on s'est engagé"

[113] It is clear that the notion of empowerment as it is conceived by Starhawk denotes entirely different processes than the ones that are sanctioned as 'empowerment' by neoliberal policies. Whereas these policies generally understand empowerment as getting grip again on one's own life in order to become productive in an economic order focused on growth, Starhawk's notion of empowerment denotes processes of collectively being affected by something by giving this something the power to make feel and make think.

people think. In the proposition, secondly, 'university' no longer refers to the institution, comprising different faculties and research units, but rather to the public that has been assembled around something that makes them think, a *universitas* in the medieval sense.

In that respect, the verb that ties 'world' to 'university' seems to be of importance. From the point of view of an ecology of practices, 'university' and 'society' are not two entities that can be considered as given and between which the relationship has to be drawn. Rather, study practices *enact* such a relationship in that they call into being at the same time a world, something that makes people think, as well as a university, a thinking public.

In the course of this chapter my argument has been that the university, as a home of adventures, and thus as a specific mode of habitation, makes it possible to slow down reasoning around things that make common sense ruminate. This is effectuated by means of its study practices that instigate the apparatus of activation that transforms these common causes into matters of study. This process, the pedagogy of study of the university, requires, as is made clear, a threefold art: of composition, problematization, and attention.

Relay

The aim of this second part has been to develop an understanding of the university that ties together an ecological approach and a focus on practices. Stengers' work has been proven to be very helpful in this regard. In the third chapter, I have presented the key concepts and ideas of Stengers' ecology of scientific practices. The aim of the fourth chapter has been to expand Stengers' ecology of practices to include study practices as well. Whitehead's proposition concerning the university as a home of adventures has been taken as an interesting point of departure. Via Whitehead's proposition I have suggested to conceive of study practices as enacting a relation between university and world by means of the convocation of matters of study via the arts of composition, problematization, and attention.

In the course of the foregoing chapter the different components of this proposition have been elucidated. Besides, I have related it to the question of learning, a notion that seems to be essential to Stengers' understanding of practices. Indeed, she argues that what makes scientific practices converge is the question "How to learn something new?" Inspired by Stengers, I have proposed to understand study practices as converging around the question "How to learn anew?" Given the risks associated with the concept of learning – an either to narrow or too broad understanding – it has been proposed to conceive of learning as associated with matters of study. Matters of study transform learning processes into collective processes where a becoming-able-to is at stake, a becoming-able-to, moreover, that slows down the process.

As such, on a conceptual level, scientific practices cannot be easily separated from study practices. From a more critical point of view, it can perhaps even be claimed that the attempt to make a strong separation between scientific practices and study practices can be conceived as a way to domesticate these practices. Assuming a strong separation between the two risks to turn scientific practices into practices of knowledge creation on the one hand, and study practices into practices of knowledge dissemination (or learning in the narrow sense) on the other hand. If, however, something is given the power to make scientists and students think, both become interchangeable as well as their respective practices. On a practical level, then, this understanding of scientific and study practices would require to resist the cut between the two kinds of practices.

Whereas the foregoing part has investigated study practices on a conceptual level, the following part will come up with a concrete example of a study practice in order to flesh out the concept. Together with Campus in Camps, a Palestinian experimental university in Dheisheh Refugee Camp, the concept of study practices will be developed further. In this regard, the distinction made in Chapter Three between requirements and obligations to investigate respectively how people engaged in a practice think and what makes them think will prove to be a helpful tool to analyze the study practice of Campus in Camps. The concepts elaborated in Chapter Four, at their turn, will make it possible come to a conceptual understanding of the study practice of Campus in Camps.

Part Three

Campus in Camps

Chapter Five
University in Exile

How to Inhabit Your Enemy's House?

One early morning in April 2006, the inhabitants of Beit Sahour, a small municipality in the eastern outskirts of Bethlehem, witnessed the evacuation of the military outpost of Oush Grab – The Crow's Nest – that marked the border between the city of Bethlehem and the desert.[114] The withdrawal of the Israeli army was the last act in a long struggle of Palestinian activists against the oppressive presence of the base. Continued opposition against The Crow's Nest by the local community and the concurrent refashioning of the military geographical organization in the area led to the sudden abandonment of the base. The morning after the evacuation people from Bethlehem overran the outpost, smashing windows, walls, and doors with iron bars. At the same time, others tried to salvage everything of even the least worth. Doors, furniture, and electric plugs were removed from the buildings. The water tower in the center of the base partially collapsed due to the removal of steel reinforcement bars.

It marked the end of the long life of the site as a military outpost. Its location in the borderlands between town and desert, as well as the distinct topography of the hill had made it an excellent lookout for centuries. Before its occupation by the Israeli military, The Crow's Nest was manned by the Jordan Legion who took it over from the British troops during the

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[114] See Figure 10.

Figure 10: Oush Grab/The Crow's Nest.

Arab Revolt of 1936 until 1939. Some believe that it served as an Ottoman outpost, and even that it was first used for military purposes by a Roman legion.

Confronted with the evacuated military base, desolate and destitute, Alessandro Petti, Sandi Hilal and Eyal Weizman (2013) claim to have experienced "the most radical condition of architecture – the very moment that power has been unplugged: the old uses are gone, and new uses not yet defined" (p. 13). Already shortly after the raid, Palestinian government officials and some representatives of NGOs advocated the view that the base must be defended by a police force in order to avoid further vandalism. Petti, Hilal, and Weizman, on the contrary, opposed this perspective and suggested 'to stay with the trouble', and to start to think about other possibilities for use than the two that had already begun to actualize themselves, namely destruction and reuse. This initiated a thinking process around the issue of decolonization and more specifically the question "how people might live with and in ruins" (Ibid., p. 21).

As the two obvious courses of action – destruction and reuse – show, decolonization can all too quickly be understood in terms of a revolution or a solution. A revolution, firstly, depends indeed on a definitive moment, an excess of violence that would annihilate the forces of oppression instantaneously. Petti et al. (2013) understand destruction as a way to spatially articulate a liberation from an architecture that is experienced as an instrument of domination and control. Such a conception of decolonization voices Fanon's warning that the physical

Figure 11: Sara Pellegrini, *Return to nature. Transformation of the militiary base of Oush Grab*, 2008.

and territorial organization of an erstwhile colonial world order can harbor new oppressive regimes, and that it hence should be destroyed. "To destroy the colonial world means nothing less than demolishing the colonist's city, burying it deep within the earth or banishing it from the territory" (Fanon, 2004, p. 7).

Against this violent conception of decolonization, Petti et al. (2013) argue that such destructive acts have never allowed for returning to an edenic past, or for creating a blank slate on which to build a new state. Rather, destruction generates desolation and long-lasting environmental damage. For instance, when the Israeli troops evacuated the Gaza settlements in 2005 and destroyed three thousand houses, it did not scour the territory and create a tabula rasa, but rather produced more than a million ton of toxic rubble that poisons the ground and the water.

A solution, the second option they wish to omit, is bound by a fixed end state. It abates the problem by proposing a quick-fix. In this case, a simple solution would be to reuse the infrastructure of Oush Grab and to arm it with a police force that would prevent further deterioration. Petti et al. (2013) explain that this was a tried and tested recipe in the past by

postcolonial governments. They reused the infrastructure built by their colonial predecessors for their own practical administrative needs. The repossession, however, reproduced the colonial power relations. New financial elites inhabited the colonial villas, while the political elites took up residence in the palaces. The government reused evacuated military and police infrastructures as well as prisons for the same purposes, which recreated similar social and spatial hierarchies. These precedents caution against an unproblematized reuse of Israeli colonial architecture. "Reusing the evacuated structures of Israel's domination in the same way as the occupiers did – the settlements as Palestinian suburbs and the military bases for Palestinian security needs – would mean reproducing their inherent alienation and violence" (Petti et al., 2013). The insufficiency of both the past-oriented destruction and future-oriented reuse to stay with the trouble, and to give the situation the power to think, urged Petti, Hilal, and Weizman to reconsider decolonization itself.

As opposed to a revolution or a solution, destruction or reuse, Petti et al. (2013) propose to understand decolonization as a *long-term transformative process*: "It is an ongoing practice of deactivation and reorientation understood both in its presence and its endlessness" (Ibid., p. 18). It is a work that cannot be completed and that needs to be taken up time and again. This necessitates to consider it also as a process that is situated by a specific problem, a now and here, a present that needs to be given the power to make those involved think. In the case of Oush Grab, this transformative process was initiated by organizing tours through the site, planting olive trees in its environs to disallow its functionality as an outpost to surveil the region, and to use the watchtowers for bird-watching – The Crow's Nest constitutes a bottleneck in the migratory routes of amongst others cranes, storks, eagles, swallows, and wheatears.[115]

Consequently, the Beit Sahour municipality was encouraged to continue the transformation of the site by means of picnic places, playgrounds for children, a bar, and an open garden for events in order to repopulate The Crow's Nest. This made it possible to initiate new uses of the site, to decolonize it, and to open it up to the people. Although the future of Oush Grab remained contested – as has proven the tense processes of appropriation and re-appropriation after Jewish colonists tried to establish a new settlement on the site from the 15th of May 2008 onwards –, it gave nevertheless new impetus to the ideas around decolonization and its correlated question *how to live with and in ruins*.

In 2007, Petti, Hilal, and Weizman decided to found the Decolonizing Architecture Art Residency (DAAR) which aims to be a place for "conceptual speculations and pragmatic spatial interventions, discourse and collective learning".[116] This was a way to give a more

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[115] See Figure 11.

[116] http://www.decolonizing.ps/site/about/

Figure 12: Dheisheh Refugee Camp in 1952.

sustainable character to the small-scale projects and initiatives taking place at Oush Grab and to give them a bearing on political discussions about the future of Palestine and the dealing with the colonial heritage. Around the same time, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), where Hilal is director of the Camp Improvement Program, wanted to start a project around the representation of camps and refugees together with the Refugee Camp Communities of Southern West Bank (RCC-SWB). This gave the occasion to think about an educational project that could engage more inhabitants of Dheisheh Refugee Camp[117], next to Beit Sahour, in similar activities as the ones by DAAR. From his experience as a lecturer teaching students from refugee camps at Al Quds Bard University (AQBU) and as an architect at DAAR, Petti had become "convinced that the camp is the right place for the campus: a truly engaged and committed university" (Petti, 2013, pp. 20-21). In a reflection on the startup of Campus in Camps, the name of the project, he writes:

> In conversation with Al Quds Bard students from refugee camps, I have realized that their narrations, ideas and discourses could have flourish [sic.] in a protected space such as the university but they needed to be grounded in context and connected with

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[117] Dheisheh is a refugee camp established after the Nakba in 1948. See Figure 12 and 13.

Figure 13: Dheisheh Refugee Camp in 2012.

> the community. And reciprocally, the university moving in camps could have opened its doors to other forms of knowledge, to experimental forms of communal learning able to combine critical reflection with action (Ibid., p. 21).

Campus in Camps, which will be central in this last part, emerged as such out of a question from the UNRWA and the RCC-SWB. Besides, it allowed to give an educational dimension to the activities taking place at DAAR. Lastly, based on the teaching experiences at AQBU, it made it possible to engage inhabitants of the camp in study practices that concerned and took place amidst their very living conditions.[118] Taking up the challenge of thinking decolonization through practices in the camp, Campus in Camps inherited from DAAR's ambition of which the story at the beginning of the chapter gave a sample. The first complete term of the project lasted for two years. In the course of this chapter, the focus will be on Campus in Camps as a university, an ecology of study practices.

Focusing on the specific study practices of Campus in Camps allows for an understanding of the work of Campus in Camps outside of the framework of decolonization, or perhaps more precisely, allows for raising the question how decolonization actually takes place, how the abstract concept of decolonization articulates itself in specific practices. This means that in Chapter Five and Chapter Six attention will be paid to how this long-term transformative process that Petti et al. (2013) propose as an alternative to destruction and reuse can be understood.

Although the paradigm of decolonization offers a unique and interesting perspective on the relations between Israel and Palestine (Busbridge, 2018; Weizman, 2007), it has become

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[118] In order to complete the network of persons and organizations that gave rise to Campus in Camps, two last actors worth mentioning are the GIZ, the German Society for International Cooperation, which funded the project and the Al-Feniq Cultural Center in Dheisheh Refugee Camp, which hosted its activities.

a somewhat slippery term since it has become widely used in critical theories. Tuck and Yang (2012), for instance, have argued that due to the easy adoption of the concept and tactic of decolonization within educational discourses and practices (e.g. the increasing number of calls to decolonize schools, the curriculum, methodology, etc.), the notion has become a metaphor in that it makes it possible to produce agreement between often contradictory decolonial strategies and objectives. Therefore, it risks to hollow out radical anti-colonial critiques and become "an empty signifier to be filled by any track towards liberation" (p. 7).

In response to this critique of decolonization, Pelin Tan (2017b) has brought in that in spite of the metaphorical quality of the concept of decolonization, it still has a strong emancipatory power in that it raises the question concerning the colonial nature of curricula, research methods, and collaborations. According to her, decolonization "not only means resisting territorial occupation and violence, but also transforming institutions, cultural products, approaches and values. Moreover, in the context of pedagogy, 'decolonization' basically signifies a non-institutional education where knowledge is produced and shared collectively" (p. 85) (cf. Tan, 2017a). In the course of this and the more particularly the next chapter, attention will be paid to how Campus in Camps constitutes such an educational practice for the collective production of knowledge.

It Matters What University We Study to Study the University With

At first sight, the choice to discuss Campus in Camps in order to flesh out the ecology of study practices conceptualized in Part Two may seem to be highly arbitrary, and even a bit odd. Why would it be relevant to study a university that in almost no sense resembles the institutions we know best as universities? Campus in Camps indeed does not offer degrees. There are no admission criteria for prospective students. It does not have an extensive research program of which the results are published in the most cited academic journals. It does not strive for excellence, and it does not seek to attract the interest of the industry or other big funding bodies. Its website may have a more fancy design than those of other universities, but you will not find information there about the different faculties, research

Figure 14: Seminar in the Al-Feniq Cultural Center.

centers, or curricula, simply because it does not have any. Nevertheless, it is a place where the question how to learn something new and above all the question how to learn anew converge, and hence, it confirms to the understanding of a university suggested in the previous chapter. It is a home of adventures where the production of new, situated knowledges coincides with a communal learning process that seeks to engage this knowledge in responding to the questions the camp condition urges.[119]

Making Campus in Camps central in the final chapters does not imply the promise to unveil the essence of a university – an essence that would not be possible anymore to recover from the often described as degenerated and corrupted institutions that call themselves universities today. It rather wagers on the possibility that this university can be given the power to make us think about the university. This implies, however, not that it needs argumentation why Campus in Camps is a True University, instead of an NGO, an artistic collective, a political pressure group, or a community organization, but that it is assumed that as a university it is an interesting, remarkable, or important one, and that it is therefore worthwhile to take a closer look at their activities from the point of view of the ecology of study practices.[120]

The choice for Campus in Camps is, hence, absolutely not arbitrary, but rather comes from a commitment to the idea that writing about is always writing with, and hence, that it is important to carefully consider what to write about. In the words of Haraway (2016), who took inspiration from Marilyn Strathern's definition of anthropology as the study of relations with relations, this sounds as follows:

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[119] For a few impressions of the work of Campus in Camps, see Figure 14, 15, 16, and 17.

[120] This contrast between the true on the one hand, and the interesting, remarkable, or important on the other comes from Deleuze and Guattari (1994). "Philosphy does not consist in knowing and is not inspired by truth. Rather, it is categories like Interesting, Remarkable, or Important that determine success or failure" (p. 82).

> It matters what matters we use to think other matters with; it matters what stories we tell to tell other stories with; it matters what knots knot knots, what thoughts think thoughts, what descriptions describe descriptions, what ties tie ties. It matters what stories make worlds, what worlds make stories (p. 12).

Relaying this line of thought to the topic of this dissertation, it can be argued that *it matters what university we study to study the university with*. Besides this argumentation for the specific place of Campus in Camps in this dissertation – a wager on an interesting, remarkable, or important university to study the university with –, there are three additional reasons for choosing this university.

The first reason concerns the politics of naming that is being displayed. Campus in Camps is a university by choice, not by habit. In spite of its lack of institutional paraphernalia, strong organizational structure, and well-founded idea that would situate it within a tradition, it *chooses* to understand its activities as pertaining to a university. This implies that their conception of a university refers almost solely to its *practice* which makes it particularly interesting in a discussion on the educational bearing of the ecology of practices. Moreover, as Stengers (2015a) argues: "To name is not to say what is true but to confer on what is named the power to make us feel and think in the mode that the name calls for" (p. 43). This means that naming needs to be understood here as a pragmatic operation which implies that its truth-value does not lie in the correspondence between name and reality, but rather in its efficacy to make us think in a particular way, rather than another, for instance, the way names such as NGO or community organization would call for.[121]

Figure 15: Fieldwork exercise in Dheisheh.

Moreover, the fact that they themselves claim the name university to grasp their practice, demonstrates that there is also a process of reclaiming at work here. Indeed, by appropriating the notion of university they do not only propose a understand the experimental program as a university, but they also imbue the notion of university itself with new meanings.

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[121] Besides, Campus in Camps was a way to establish an educational program outside of the logic of the NGO that many of the participants were vigilant about as there are many NGOs in the region that they perceived as serving only the interests of a rather limited group of inhabitants of the camp.

The second reason concerns the materiality of the responses given to the camp condition, the concrete interventions in the spatial structure of the camp. Haraway (2000a) explains that materiality and semioticity constitute one another and that they cannot be separated, that there is no pure materiality that does not already have meaning, or that there is pure meaning apart from a material substrate. In the figures she discusses in her work, such as for instance cyborgs, dogs, and Oncomouse™, matter and meaning are always already imploded.[122]

In this sense, Campus in Camps is just such a *figure* of the university, a literal metaphor of how the university relates via study practices to the world it inhabits, an allegory of the camp only insofar it concerns a real campus and a real

Figure 16: Making notes on a map during fieldwork.

camp. As such, this chapter does not aim to clarify the preceding chapters with an *example* of a university, because "[F]igures are not representations or didactic illustrations, but rather material-semiotic nodes or knots in which diverse bodies and meanings coshape one another" (Haraway, 2008, p. 4). Hence, Campus in Camps does not represent an idea of a university, which would unbind its material practice from the meaning it would represent. Recounting its story, presenting it as a figure, is not to aimed at making recognize the university, but at making think about the university, *with* a university.

The last reason is of a more practical nature. It has to do with the fact that Campus in Camps is a small-scale and well-documented university. The fact that it is ideational, institutional, and organizational rather weak, makes it possible to attend more carefully to its educational practice. On the website, one can find information on the publications part of *The*

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[122] In an interview she explains that she finds the distinction between the figural and the literal, or matter and meaning, rather absurd, and she refers to her own catholic upbringing where she witnessed constantly this implosion of matter and meaning, for instance in the wine as the blood of Christ during the Eucharist: "My inability to separate the figural and the literal comes straight out of a Catholic relationship to the Eucharist. I told you I have a very Catholic sensibility as a theorist even though I am opposed to Catholicism and have lost my faith and developed this elaborate criticism. The fundamental sensibility about the literal nature of metaphor and the physical quality of symbolization – all this comes from Catholicism. But the point is that this sensibility – the meaning of the menagerie I live with and in – gives me a menagerie where the literal and the figurative, the factual and the narrative, the scientific and the religious and the literary, are always imploded" (Haraway, 2000b, p. 141).

Figure 17: Presentation during seminar.

Collective Dictionary, The Initiatives, the teaching cycles, as well as reflections on the different activities. The analyses in the remainder of the chapter will be largely based on this information.[123] It is important to underscore in this respect that the publications made by Campus in Camps are not conceived of as external to their practice, as a kind of report that is only made after the practice has taken place. The assumption is that the publications are part and parcel of the practice of Campus in Camps and that because of the fact that they express the way in which the participants[124] understand their practice, it provides also consistency to the practice.

At this point it might be relevant to give a general sketch of the temporal structure of the program in order to situate the series of publications that will be analyzed in this and the next chapter. According to Bianca Elzenbaumer (2018), one of the project activators, the program, once it took off, has had four phases. The first eight months of the program were dedicated to a process they called unlearning. This phase involved a series of seminars in which the participants questioned the concepts with which they usually tended to understand their lives from the point of view of their everyday experiences. A common thread in the discussions was the need for new narratives about the camp that make it possible to notice the inventive ways of self-organization and political practice that take place (cf. Franceschini & Guerrini, 2017).

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[123] Worth mentioning is perhaps that I have been in contact with Alessandro Petti and Isshaq Al-Barbary since September 2015 and that before my request to do fieldwork was declined we had regular conversations via Skype to prepare the fieldwork. Also, Isshaq traveled once to Leuven to give a workshop to the students of the course *Lab: design of educational practices* which I was co-tutoring at that time (together with Jan Masschelein and Indra Versmesse). When it had become clear that I would not be able to go to Dheisheh for fieldwork, our contact weakened. Isshaq, however, was always prepared to give additional information via text messages or to have a conversation via Skype. With Silvia Franceschini, who worked for her PhD in architecture and design around Campus in Camps during the same time span, I exchanged information and discussed about the program. Together with her I met Diego Segatto, who was together with Bianca Elzenbaumer one of the project activators of Campus in Camps, in June 2017 in Bologna. In August 2018 I traveled to Dheisheh where I had conversations with Aysar Al-Saifi, who participated in the program and is involved in the organization of other educational activities in Dheisheh.

[124] The publications of Campus in Camps refer consistently to 'participants'. Therefore, I have taken over this term to refer to the people who are engaged in its activities, instead of terms such as practitioners or students (terms that would perhaps fit more nicely into my own conceptual framework).

In a second phase six project activators joined the group that would help the participants in giving concrete shape to the social and spatial interventions in the camp they intended to do. The challenge at this point was to combine the theoretical work that had been done in the course of the seminars with concrete actions on the ground. A problem that they encountered was that most of the project proposals either were still heavily informed by the interests of international aid agencies (e.g. the proposal for roof gardens by someone who had no interest in gardening), or were almost purely imaginative and unattainable (e.g. the proposal to set up a water park). Confronted with this situation, they decided to delay the formulation of project proposals, and instead focus longer on the language (Elzenbaumer, 2018).

This announced the coming into being of the third phase in which they created *The Collective Dictionary*. This phase, however, was not only characterized by an increased focus on language by means of the elaboration of a shared vocabulary, but also by a shift in pedagogical approach. The first phases mainly consisted of discussions and seminars within the four white walls of the Al-Feniq Cultural Center. In the third phase, they decided to go outside and started to walk through the camps while discussing, observing, mapping, taking photographs, and thinking about new concepts. These attempts to situate their thinking by concrete situations encountered in the camps resulted in a series of publications on concepts, *The Collective Dictionary* (cf. Feldman, 2016). This dictionary will be the focus of discussion in the third section.

In the fourth phase, lastly, the project activators gradually withdrew leaving the participants space to develop their own project proposals that this time were more grounded in the reality of the camp that they had studied in the previous phase. Reports on different project proposals can be read in *The Initiatives* which will be the discussed in the fourth section (Elzenbaumer, 2018).

Starting from Stengers' conception of a practice as a holding together of requirements and obligations, the following three sections of the current chapter aim to grasp the obligation of the study practice of Campus in Camps. This means that this chapter aims to uncover *what* makes the participants of Campus in Camps think. In the next chapter then I will shed light on the requirements of the practice of Campus in Camps, the things that seem important for them to do in order to speak of a study practice, in other words, *how* they think. The following two sections analyze respectively *The Collective Dictionary* and *The Initiatives*. The last section, finally, concludes this chapter with a presentation of *The Concrete Tent* in which it seems that the different concerns of this university are gathered.

Right of Return or Life in Exile

In the first year, the participants of Campus in Camps focused on the establishment of a common language and approach to understand and discuss the contemporary condition of Palestinian refugee camps. *The Collective Dictionary* is a series of publications that contains definitions of concepts they deem necessary to think about the challenges of living in a refugee camp, more specifically the improvement of living conditions without normalizing the exceptionality of the camp.[125]

In small groups, the participants conducted interviews, wrote reflections on personal experiences, undertook excursions, did photographic investigations and document analyses in order to get a better grasp – which means here more grounded in the everyday experiences of the inhabitants of the Palestinian camps – of their living conditions. Next to the work in the smaller groups, guests were invited to participate in the biweekly plenary discussions. Some guests followed the program for more than a month, while other gave a seminar to the participants or a public lecture.[126] As such, new input could be provided on the different topics of interest that emerged from the interactions between the participants and the sociopolitical context at large. Teaching cycles on citizenship, refugee studies, humanitarianism, gender, mapping, and research methodologies were organized. Many of these events were open to the public in order to reinforce the connection between the participants of Campus in Camps and the other inhabitants of the camp on the one hand, but, on the other hand, also between the inhabitants of the camp and the students of Al-Quds Bard University (Petti, 2013, 2018).

At the end of the first year, the participants published *The Collective Dictionary*. In every of the eleven booklets, each more or less between 40 and 100 pages, one key concept is scrutinized. The different entries are:

    i.   Citizenship;

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[125] The educational philosophy that informed this practice comes from Munir Fasheh, a Palestinian mathematician and pedagogue, who collaborated with Campus in Camps. Taking issue with colonial knowledges that are detached from but imposed on people, he emphasizes the importance of knowledge that is grounded in personal experiences people have with the world (cf. Fasheh, 1990, 2014).

[126] In the order to give the reader an impression of the intellectual background of the program, a list of the different teaching cycles, seminars, and lectures can be found in Appendix A. As my focus is on study practices of the university next to the lecture and the seminar, I have excluded the teaching cycles, seminars, and lectures from my analysis. Besides, good reports or recordings of all lectures and seminars cannot be found, since these publications mainly aim to present the work and discussions of the participants themselves. What is interesting, however, about these lectures and seminars is that often quite well-known academics were invited (critical geographer David Harvey is probably the most well-known of them), which gave the program in its totality more visibility in academia and connected local questions and concerns with more global intellectual debates.

ii.   Common$_1$;

iii.   Common$_2$;

iv.   Knowledge;

v.   Ownership;

vi.   Participation;

vii.   Relation;

viii.   Responsibility;

ix.   Sustainability;

x.   Vision;

xi.   Well-being.

On the notion of common, two booklets were prepared that both deal with this notion from another angle. Whereas *Common$_1$* mainly discusses the importance of practices of care in order to preserve the commons as commons, *Common$_2$* relates the notion of the commons with the right of return in order to rethink the Palestinian struggle.

Throughout the different publications becomes clear how much the common sense of the camp ruminates about the right of return. In almost all booklets there are references to this right and how it is possible to shed a different light on the right of return by reinterpreting it through the different understandings of what for instance citizenship or ownership possibly means in the context of the camp. It is this distinction between *the right of return* on the one hand and the *experience of living together* in the camp on the other, that will be clarified further in this section based on fragments from *The Collective Dictionary*. In the following paragraphs, this series of publications will be read from an interest in the existing contradiction between the strong claim of the right to return on the one hand and the positive reflections on the communal life in the camp on the other.

The understanding of the right of return as the right of an individual to return to his past private house can be read most strongly in the booklet *Vision*. In the process leading to this publication, the participants were asked to reflect about the lives of the camp inhabitants in 2040. It

Figure 18: Map from the booklet *Vision*.

was one of the first exercises, taking place in March and April of 2012, aimed at making an inventory of the different views that were held vis-à-vis the right of return. As such, it differs from the other booklets that were the result of a group work on a concept, and that were finished almost a year later, in January 2013. The booklet contains an array of perspectives on the reality of refugees in 2040. Each participant individually expressed his ideas on the right of return through a narrative, a simulation of a guided tour, a proposal, a declaration, or a media conference.

Some of the contributions seem to assume an effectuated right of return. People will have returned to their original villages, leaving the camp behind as a ghost town.[127] One of the participants even proposed to transform the desolate camp into a museum that testifies of life under the occupation. Some others express a mix of on the one hand a deep despair concerning the possibility of returning, and on the other hand the hope that return will be effectuated. "In 28 years, I expect the camp will be as it is now, but with more buildings and an increased population. […] However, I hope there will be no camp in 28 years. I hope that we will be back, back to our destroyed villages" (Al-Laham et al., 2013, p. 47).

Another contribution that endorses a pessimistic stance towards the possibility of return, underscores the ongoing engagement and struggle of the inhabitants of the camp in claiming the right of return. A vision is sketched in which the camp conditions have been so much improved that the exceptionality of the camp has been normalized. Nonetheless, the camp dwellers still hold on to their right of return:

> Despite the development of the camp, and despite all its strong social relations, our young generation is still insisting on the idea of return. All this development will not change the fact of our catastrophe and the beginning of the camp. We still remember our lives in the tents. We still remember the cold of winter and the heat of summer, our bad educational situation. I insist that we will never lose our right of return even if we achieve all the possible development of life (Al-Laham et al., 2013, p. 54).

In some of the later entries in the dictionary, similar sentiments can be noticed.

In *Citizenship*, for instance, one of the participants explains the importance of the land and the sense of belonging it elicits in order to understand what it means for a Palestinian to be a citizen: "The portion of the refugees who live in West Bank refugee camps define themselves as 'temporary residents'. They are waiting to return to the land which their roots

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[127] For an image in which the camp is erased from the map, see Figure 18.

belong to it [sic.]" (Al-Assi, Odeh, & Ramadan, 2013, p. 36). In another booklet, *Knowledge*, a participant argues why the experiences and memories of the older refugees in the camp are so valuable. She explains that the later generations of refugees have no experience of life before the Nakba, and that hence, the stories told by the first-generation refugees are the only access they get to this knowledge: "I found out how much the people love and hold on to their land, their stories, and their houses, so I found the first generation of refugees the most important source of knowledge in the camp" (Abu Aker, Hamouz, Al-Jaffari, Al-Laham, & Al-Turshan, 2013, p. 28).

In short, it could be argued that the first project of *Vision* has shown how much the participants seemed to hold on to the right of return at that time. Moreover, due to the divergence of opinions on the matter – some assuming the impossibility of return, others predicting the consequences of an effectuated return –, it is possible to say, in the idiom of Chapter Four, that the right of return makes common sense ruminate, that it is an issue with no easy solution.

The publications after *Vision*, on the contrary, and here it is important to mention that they were written in the course and after what Elzenbaumer (2018) has called the third phase in which they did fieldwork exercises, render in general a more positive view on the life in the camp. Instead of starting from the not-yet of the right of return, the participants attempted to grasp the specificity of the camp condition and the social relations it fosters.

In *Common_1*, for instance, a participant compares the life in Doha, a small village next to Dheisheh where wealthier refugees can buy a plot of land or an apartment, with the life in Dheisheh. From her life in Doha, she has learned that the city misses the common traditions and habits because there were no original Dohan people. All residents are new and do not know each other very well. She praises the strong social relations in Dheisheh and the common culture they have built throughout the years: "It may be familiar to you that life in a city would be better than in a refugee camp, but to me, because of the camp's social relations, I prefer the camp. Perhaps that is strange to you" (Abu Alia, Al-Assi, Al-Barbary, Hamouz, & Odeh, 2013, p. 43).

Other participants agree with this positive appreciation of the strong social fabric of the camp. In *Participation*, one of them writes: "Sharing is a precious concept that is represented is [sic.] every small detail of our daily lives. We share all that can serve our community and our world" (Hamouz, Al-Jaffari, Al-Turshan, Pellegrini, & Racco, 2013, p. 23).

In almost all publications, the notion of *Mujaarawah* – a verb that can be translated as 'neighboring' – is used to grasp the social commitment to the camp community. The verb expresses the practices of sharing that take place between the different inhabitants of the

camp. It includes not only the sharing of food or materials, but most importantly of knowledge and experiences. One of the participants writes about how the recipe of maftoul, a traditional Palestinian dish, is shared through collective practices: "Even maftoul itself is a knowledge transferred between the generations. We learned how to make maftoul from our parents, and they learned that from their parents and so on" (Abu Aker et al., 2013, p. 18).

Next to the social ties in the camp and the practices through which knowledge and experiences are shared, also the infrastructure of the camp is conceived of as a shared space. Because, the architecture of the camp was never intended to last long, houses are very close to each other which creates a network of tiny alleys throughout the camp. One of the participants explains that the built environment of the camp is experienced as one living milieu, instead of as a concatenation of individual houses, and that the walls constitute the collective consciousness of the camp:

> For us and for the other inhabitants of the camp, the walls are neither public nor private property. Many people consider them common. The paintings tell our stories of refugeehood and daily life to visitors of the camps. They are part of a process of communal participation, creating collective emotions (Al-Homouz et al., 2013, p. 15).

In short, whereas the publication of *Vision* expresses the desire to return and all the dreams, hopes, fears, and doubts that are related to it, it could be argued that the publications written while doing fieldwork in the camp try to come to terms with the ways of living together as they are practiced at that time. In contrast to *Vision*, these publications are situated by the camp and emerge from a very concrete and specific way of engaging with the camp.

Based on this analysis, there seems to be a tension within *The Collective Dictionary* between, on the one hand, the accounts that forcefully claim the right of return and, on the other hand, the accounts that try to come to terms in an affirmative way with the actual experiences of living together in the camp. At some points, a certain concern or question is raised by means of which this contradiction is granted a very powerful presence.

In *Responsibility*, for instance, following statement can be read: "This point came out of our talks with the community group we met: their biggest concern was how we were going to do something in the camp without changing its exceptionality through normalizing it" (Abu Aker, Al-Assi, Al-Laham, & Odeh, 2013, p. 39). Affirming the camp as a convivial space with strong solidarity bonds seems to involve the risk of undermining its meaning as a temporary location of precarity and exclusion, and hence its claim to return.

In *Participation* it is formulated as the following question: "Is it historically acceptable to think about the public space of a temporary camp?" (Hamouz et al., 2013, p. 28). Creating a public space in a camp seems to be understood as a strongly political act that risks to normalize the camp and to turn it into a city, which would ultimately delegitimize the right of return. This debate echoes within all publication of *The Collective Dictionary*.

At some points, however, the right of return is reconceived through the lens of the camp as a site of living together. It is at these points that both the right of return and the camp experience are affirmed and taken up in an adventure that transforms both terms. The camp condition is conceived there neither as precarious, nor as normal, but rather as a site for collective experimentation in living together. Moreover, this allowed to think about both the right of return and the camp condition via different words and propositions.

In *Relation*, for instance, the right of return is understood as the possibility to roam around freely in the region around the camps of Arroub and Dheisheh:

> It is a proposal for a *right to return* [sic.] to the land, to move through a natural space and to live in health. The way its green areas are used and shaped by the people provides a vision of a sustainable setting, a way of looking forward to the eventual end of military occupation (Khannah, Guidi, Jawabreh, Racco, & Segatto, 2013, p. 37).

In *Common₂*, one of the participants recalls a journey outside the camp to contrast how the younger generation understands the right of return with the conception the older generations hold:

> When my refugee friends had the chance to go to the occupied territory of forty-eight, their priority was to see the Mediterranean Sea rather than the villages of their origins. Such an act explains and reinterprets the third generation's notion of returning to the common, while reflecting the spirit and idea of the evolving culture within refugee communities in the refugee camps (Al-Saifi & Al-Barbary, 2013a, pp. 17-18).

Such accounts shed a different light on the right of return. It is no longer understood as a future return to a past individual home, but rather turns the present experiences of the camp into an ingredient in the collective imagination of future possibilities.[128] Ilana Feldman (2016), who

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[128] Despite the fact that the booklets *Sustainability* and *Well-being* were not mentioned in the foregoing paragraphs, the same tension between the right of return and the camp experience can be read in these publications. For the sake of completeness, the references are included in this footnote (Abu Aker, Al-Jaffari, Al-Laham, & Segatto, 2013; Al-Saifi & Al-Barbary, 2013c).

was engaged in some of the activities of Campus in Camps, writes in a reflection that creation of The Collective Dictionary required an engagement with the actual spaces and places of the camp. By means of interviews, walks, photographic exercises, and the writing of texts, the participants started to situate their thinking in relation to the actual camp as a place of living together. She argues that because of these activities participants were able to establish a different relationship towards the places that were familiar to them. Moreover, she writes, that probably it is "from this new vantage point, this new embodied perspective on the camp, that they were able to first produce new kinds of definitions of familiar terms and then embark on initiatives that engaged these spaces in new ways" (p. 421). It is these initiatives that Feldman mentions that will be analyzed in the next section in order to get a better grip on Campus in Camps' obligation.

Creation, Relation, Representation

The second year of the program focused on knowledge creation through specific activities such as gatherings, walks, events, and urban actions, that more directly engaged with the camp condition. Informed by the reflections and discussions that took place while working on the dictionary, *The Initiatives* aimed to intervene in the spatial ordering of the camp without normalizing its exceptional status or blending it into the fabric of neighboring cities (Petti, 2013, 2016). The participants selected nine sites within the camps and their immediate surroundings to investigate this place and to inquire how these sites constitute what they have called an *urbanity of exile*. The very existence of these so-called common places – a desolate pool, the small alleys, the pedestrian bridge between Dheisheh and Doha – begets according to them new spatial and social formations that allow to conceive of the camp beyond its crystallized image as a locus of marginalization, poverty, and political subjugation.

In June 2013, the participants published nine booklets, one for every site, each around 80 pages. Each booklet follows more or less the same structure. In the first part, the participants present the site with photographs, maps, descriptions, and a short history of its use. The second part displays the research process. The participants offer an account of the activities they have undertaken – including interviews, focus groups, urban action, document analyses, fieldwork, walking exercises, and photography – in order to grasp the current state and ways of use of the different sites. The third part reflects on the entire research process and suggests interventions that could possibly allow to excavate new future uses of the sites.

The different initiatives are named:

i.   The Garden. Making place (in Dheisheh);

ii.   The Square. Learning in the common space (in Fawwar);

iii.   The Bridge. Challenging perception (between Dheisheh and Doha);

iv.   The Pool. Re-activating connections (between Arroub and Solomon's Pool);

v.   The Suburb. Transgressing boundaries (next to Dheisheh);

vi.   The Pathways. Reframing narration (in Dheisheh);

vii.   The Stadium. Sustaining relations (next to Arroub);

viii.   The Municipality. Experiments in urbanity (in Doha);

ix.   The Unbuilt. Regenerating spaces (in Dheisheh).

It can be argued that throughout *The Initiatives* the contradiction between the right of return and the camp experience, encountered in the previous section, reemerges in three different ways. It shows itself in three problems that all run throughout the different initiatives.[129] The first problem concerns the issue of public space within the camp. Since the camp is built according to the most pressing social and spatial needs, public space is almost absent. Nevertheless, there are some sites and places where people gather. Due to the risk of normalizing the exceptionality of the camp and hence undermining the claim of return, however, public space is a highly contested issue within the camp.

The second problem has to do with the meaning of the refugee status in relation to the camp. Increasingly, inhabitants of Dheisheh move, provided that they have the means, to the direct environs of the camp, most notably the Qatar-sponsored village of Doha. This raises the issue what it means to be a refugee when you live in a city, instead of a camp. Moreover, it requires to reflect on what the right of return could mean when refugees start to dwell in such more ordinary places, which again risks to normalize the exceptionality of the camp.

The last problem concerns the issue of representation. This problem has a very strong presence as an aspect in both foregoing problems – how to represent respectively the camp and the refugee beyond exceptionality and normality–, but also gets a significance of its own in the initiative that deals with the narratives about the Nakba and Palestinian resistance that are told in the camp or made present via graffiti. Although the problems of public space in the camp, the meaning of the refugee status, and representation are highly interconnected, it can be argued that in every initiative one of them prevails over the other two. In the remainder of

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[129] Again, I adopt the term 'initiatives' because the participants refer consistently to initiatives to denote those activities that aim to intervene in the social and spatial context of the camp (instead of terms such as experiment, or intervention).

this section, the different initiatives will be presented from the perspective of the problem they deal with.

First, the problem of *the creation of public space* in the camp will be discussed. In *The Garden*, the participants elaborated a proposal to redesign the outdated and overgrown garden next to the Al-Feniq center. They wanted to create an inviting place where different kinds of activities can be organized. Therefore the participants, first of all, proposed to move the entrance and perforate the walls in order to increase accessibility and visibility. Besides, their proposal comprises a playground, an open-air cinema, a space for seminars, and a barbecue. This should attract different people from different ages to the garden. Thirdly, they propose to install a system of shadings of which the colors can be changed easily. In this way the screens do not only provide sun protection, but can also announce upcoming events. Each type of event – movie screening, reading seminar, discussion, etc. – would have its own color. Fourthly, small spatial interventions such as a climbing wall aim to increase the interaction with the space of the garden. Lastly, and this point is the least elaborate, they were thinking about a safekeeping and maintenance system that avoids camera's, locked gates, and payed personnel.

Overall, they understand this initiative as a challenge to "the assumption that upgrading implies normalization or permanence. Improving living conditions in the camp is not undermining the struggle for the right of return, rather it reaffirms refugees' capabilities in envisioning and realizing" (Abu Aker, Al-Assi, Al-Saifi, & Odeh, 2013, pp. 50-51). In this statement becomes very clear how building in a camp is an act with strong political connotations, and that hence requires careful consideration. In this case, the design of *The Garden* attempts to avoid both a normalization of the camp condition on the one hand, and a neglect of the need for public space in the camp on the other.

Not so much the design, as well the use of public space was central to the initiative of *The Square*. In 2007, the UNRWA Camp Improvement Program started the conversation about the creation of a public square in Fawwar, a refugee camp with a rather conservative reputation. At that time, especially the women of the camp raised questions about the creation

Figure 19: Sheep in the Solomon's pool.

of such a place because they presumed they would be the last to benefit from such a project. It instigated a discussion about the presence of women in public spaces, and more generally the uses of such a square. Many questions were raised:

> What activities would be acceptable in such a place, who would take care of the space, which community members should be using it, what should be the role of women in this space, and finally what should the space look like and what would be its impact on the surrounding context? (Hamouz & Al-Turshan, 2013, p. 17).

In the course of this initiative, the participants organized a collective cooking workshop followed by an English class in the square. On an early morning, the women of the camp assembled to clean the square and to install the cooking equipment. Afterwards, they proclaimed that through these small actions they regained a sense of ownership over the square. During the day they prepared the traditional Palestinian dish maftoul. Afterwards there was an English language class, since the women expressed the desire to learn this language. In the booklet that was published after this intervention the concerns that were raised before the event were put next to the reflections uttered afterwards. It is argued that the square cannot be open or public in itself, but rather that through shared and collective practices it needs to be made open or public. Hence, rather than a state of affairs, the public square is an achievement to be obtained, time and again.

The following two initiatives both deal with the reactivation of abandoned spaces related to the camp of Arroub. *The Pool* concerns the Solomon's pool. In the Roman era, this was an important node in the water supply network for Jerusalem. In 2012, it was a desolate site that during the winter gathered water that would not evaporate until the summer, and that throughout the whole year gathered garbage from passers-by. According to the participants, the pool looked like a swamp for the most time of the year.[130] Nevertheless, because of its

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[130] See Figure 19.

Figure 20: Unbuilt space in Dheisheh.

historical importance it was deemed an interesting site to reactivate as a node between different camps. Throughout the booklet, the spatiotemporal network in which the pool is embedded is explored. Both its historical value as well as the aqueducts that situate it in a long-gone water supply network, are brought to the fore.

The participants reclaimed the pool by cleaning it, increasing its accessibility by building a small bridge, and organizing a few activities there. In this way, they aim to draw attention to this forgotten site. "We started cleaning and collecting garbage to bring attention and a sense of concern to the space." (Khannah & Al-Homouz, 2013, p. 40). In the end, they put forward the proposal to reuse the pool as a collective fish farm for the camp. The stakes of *The Stadium* are similar. This initiative was however limited to a fieldwork around the site in order to explore how it is used and a conversation between the women who used the stadium for sports on the one hand and the women of Fawwar on the other hand. It resulted in three very general reflections on the idea of sustainability in connection to social relationships, places, and materials. There were however, no specific interventions or proposals for reuse or redesign (Al-Jaffari, 2013).

The last initiative in which the issue of public space in the camp is central is *The Unbuilt*. In the course of this initiative, the participants investigated the history of land possession in the West Bank and the emergence of the camps. Often it is not clear who owns the land, and notwithstanding UNRWA's rules, land is continuously being sold, swapped, and passed along, which makes it even more unclear who owns which piece of land. This initiative aimed at mapping the so-called 'camp common' which is understood in a double sense. On the one hand, it denotes the open spaces in the camp or the debris of devastated buildings.[131] On the other hand, the participants use this concept to describe what is called in the previous section

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[131] See Figure 20.

the camp experience, namely this strong social fabric that is both beginning and end of practices of sharing and *Mujaarawah*. "Open spaces can be considered a body or material, while the social relations, or well-being, are the soul – both of them reinforce and build each other to create the common" (Abu Aker, Al-Barbary, Al-Laham, & Al-Saifi, 2013, p. 35). The participants mapped all the unbuilt spaces in the camp and attempted to trace their genealogy of possession. The booklet contains a map and a series of photographs of these places.

In short, it has been argued that the first problem in which the contradiction between right of return and camp experience emerges is that of the creation of public space. Public space is a highly debated topic in Dheisheh and many of the participants held quite diverging opinions on the matter, ranging from a plea for the creation of public space in order to have places to hang out and meet to a complete refusal of public space since it is believed that the presence of public space in a camp would ultimately undermine the right of return. It is possible to discern two strategies deployed by the participants to work around this problem, namely the formulation of design proposals to refurbish destitute unbuilt spaces, and the reclaiming of such spaces via an experimentation with different ways of using the space.

The second problem, next, concerns the question of *the relation between refugees living inside and outside the camp*. Due to the increasing outflow of Palestinian refugees who go to live in the neighboring city of Doha, and the urban sprawl around the confines of Dheisheh, the participants were intrigued by how this affected the sense of belonging of the refugees who no longer live in Dheisheh.

In *The Bridge*, they investigated the meaning of the desolate pedestrian bridge between Dheisheh and Doha.[132] Initially, the bridge was built by the inhabitants of the camp and Doha with the aim that children could safely cross the street while going to school. As such, the participants understand it as an example of the resilience of refugees and their capacity to accommodate their own needs. Moreover, they see it as a symptom of how the culture of the camp infects its neighboring areas:

> The importance and reality of building bridges and connecting camps with the surrounding areas, like the case of Dheisheh and Doha, led to opening new perspectives to influence and combine the existing cultures of cities and villages with those that exist in the refugee camps (Al-Saifi & Al-Barbary, 2013b, p. 27).

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[132] See Figure 21.

Figure 21: Pedestrian bridge between Dheisheh and Doha.

By 2012, however, the bridge was not used anymore, and had instead become a garbage belt. In order to reactivate the use of the bridge, and to open it up to new uses, the participants proposed some activities that could take place. "We decided to use the bridge to reinforce the relations between the families of the camp and Doha city through social activities that focus on reviving the social meaning of the bridge" (Al-Saifi & Al-Barbary, 2013b, p. 66). Instead of using the bridge, as a way to cross the street, they intend to make it a meeting place between the camp and the city, where exhibitions, public events, Ramadan activities, or a market can be organized. In doing so, it could also become a meeting space between the camp and the city where refugees living in Dheisheh and Doha could meet.

More than proposing any real interventions, *The Suburb* presents a long reflection on the move of refugees to Khalid Cave Mountain, next to Dheisheh.[133] Based on an historical overview of the uses of the mountain, a problematization of land ownership in the camp, and interviews with people who moved to the suburb, this publication aims to bring to the fore the continuities and discontinuities in the sense of belonging to the camp in the people who decided to live outside it. One of the interviewees proclaims: "I believe that the place where I am living does not have anything to do with my refugee status. I can keep my status as refugee no matter where I live" (Abu Aker & Al-Laham, 2013, pp. 72-73). Via such statements the issue

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[133] See Figure 22. In the center of the picture, the shape of Dheisheh can be discerned. Below Dheisheh is the empty plot where in 2012 the suburb started to emerge. Doha is situated left of Dheisheh, on the other side of the road. See Figure 23, for an aerial photograph of the region in 2016.

Figure 22: Aerial view of Khalid Cave Mountain, 1996.

of what it means to be a refugee is taken away from the realm of law – where it is a question of legal documents and passports – to the realm of experience.

The Municipality has a similar structure and investigates the same topics. It takes its lead, however, from the city of Doha. Again, Doha is first historically situated and interviews were conducted in order to inquire about the people's relations towards the camp. An often-heard remark was that the inhabitants of Doha have a stronger affinity with the social fabric that had the opportunity to organically grow inside the camp since they have lived there for so long. The publication describes how people who live in Doha spend much of their time in Dheisheh and how the majority of the social life in the area still occurs in Dheisheh, instead of Doha. In spite of the fact that the inhabitants of Doha no longer live in a camp, the camp remains an important ingredient in the way they conceive of themselves and situate themselves in a broader network of relations: "What caught my attention during this research is that the refugees in this city are still linking themselves to the camp. They continually present themselves as a refugees from this or that camp and they live in Doha" (Al-Assi, 2013, p. 59).

In short, in the second problem of the relation between refugees living outside the camp and refugees living inside the camp, the contradiction between right of return and camp experience comes to the fore as a question of identity and belonging. The initiatives undertaken voice the concern of the possibility of a shared refugee identity given the fact that some refugees already partially obtained a certain kind of return, or a least were able to leave the camp and live in Doha. The participants scrutinized this issue not only in relation to official

Figure 23: Aerial view of Khalid Cave Mountain, 2016

legal documents that grant an identification (e.g. passport, land ownership), but also and most importantly in relation to shared spaces that help to give shape to a common sense of belonging to the camp in spite of physical and legal borders.

The last problem, the *representation of the camp and refugees*, spans in a certain way all initiatives. Nevertheless, it becomes an issue of its own in *The Pathways*. This publication investigates and presents the drawings that were made on the walls that make up the small alleys of the camp.[134] The central concern here is how to tell stories about and make images of the camp and the refugees, without normalizing the exceptionality of the situation. The booklet begins with a reflection on the role of graffiti in the coming into being of a camp consciousness:

> Graffiti itself creates a cultural climate through paintings and words that mix life's bitter realities in the camp with the dream or future vision that is an awareness of future generations of refugees and the striving to create an acceptable present for the future (Al-Saifi & Odeh, 2013, pp. 15-17).

Throughout the remainder of the publication, different representational strategies for raising a collective consciousness of the camp condition are presented. In general, the participants are

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[134] See Figure 24.

Figure 24: Graffiti on the walls of Dheisheh.

quite critical of the capacity of social media to represent what happens inside the camp. They propose to focus more on what they call Nakbaliterature, the stories that were told by their parents and grandparents, and collective reading and writing exercises.

In short, in this last problem the contradiction that drives the activities of Campus in Camps resurfaces as a matter of representation. Questions dealt with in this problem were how to represent refugees beyond the binary opposition of victimization and normalization, or repression and agency? How to do justice to all kinds of small-scale engagements and forms of self-organization that take shape within the camp without normalizing its exceptionality? Referring to the graffiti on the walls of the camp and the stories that are told by the older generations, participants developed different narratives to tell about their experiences in the camp.

In the next section, which will be the last of this chapter, it will be explained how these three problems, emerging from the contradiction between the right of return on the one hand and the camp experience on the other, come together in the construction of *The Concrete Tent*. This will allow to shed light on the obligation of Campus in Camps, that which makes them engage in study.

Turning Contradictions into Contrasts

The construction of *The Concrete Tent* constitutes an important moment in the activities of Campus in Camps. It is the result of the collective thinking process that started off in 2011. The tent gathers the different problems that surfaced throughout *The Initiatives*, and materializes the contrast between right of return and the refugee experience that has been articulated in *The Collective Dictionary*. It is nevertheless not the final product of Campus in Camps, nor is it a 'solution' to the three problems. *The Concrete Tent* proposes on the one hand a representation of both the camp condition and the refugee experience. At the same time, it offers a place to think together, to continue the conversation concerning the camp and its inhabitants. Before clarifying further how the tent relates to the problems of the second year and the contrast of the first year, the construction history of the tent will be recounted.

In the course of the initiative of *The Unbuilt*, the participants of Campus in Camps mapped all unbuilt areas within Dheisheh refugee camp. They selected a few plots that could be used for organizing events for the inhabitants of the camp. After discussions with the owners and neighbors of the site that was called *The Three Shelters*, the participants decided to choose this place for a new construction that could serve as such a gathering space. The plot consists of three original structures that were built by the UNRWA in the 1950s. The structures comprise three rooms, one communal toilet, and a water reservoir. In the discussions about the new uses of this site, it was brought up that these shelters should not be destroyed because they narrate the history of the camp. Moreover, it was argued that instead of an understanding of the camp as exceptional, they impose an understanding of the camp as historical.[135]

In contrast to for instance Agamben (2005, 2011), who conceives of the camp as the materialization of the sudden eruption of violence in the heart of the modern nation state, the counter-image of the sovereign decision, it is argued that the camp is not so much a temporary exceptionality to be redeemed, but rather an evolving process of finding ways of living together in exile:

> What appeared to us as a historical heritage in need to be preserved was not just the architecture of the three shelters, it was also the immaterial culture and the meaning of communal life that people experienced when living in these structures (Petti, 2015, p. 2).

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[135] See Figure 25.

Figure 25: Presentation at *The Three Shelters* plot.

In the design plans for the site, the shelters remain present as a way to honor the heritage of the camp. On the rubble around them a concrete platform would be made on which gatherings could take place. In the course of the design process, in which also the neighbors and the owners were involved, the first activities such as film screenings and discussions were already organized. Then, however, after two weeks of work at the site, one of the members of the family who owns the plot prevented the laborers from working. In spite of the initial agreement to open up the site for two years for collective use, he decided to sell the land. In a single night all the shelters were demolished.

In his opening speech for *The Concrete Tent*, Petti (2015) recollects the frustration and disappointment that could be felt among the participants and the other people involved at that moment. Nevertheless, he argues that it also created a sense of awareness of the importance of preserving the camp and its history. Ultimately, it allowed for a different way of thinking about the camp which was expressed in the desire to represent the camp no longer as "a place without history, but rather as a place full of stories that can be narrated through its urban fabric" (Ibid., p. 3). The historical importance of *life in exile* was finally recognized:

> Claiming that life in exile is historically meaningful is a way to understand refugeehood not only as a passive production of an absolute form of state violence, but also as a way to recognize refugees as subjects of history, as makers of history and not simply victims of it. Claiming the camp as a heritage site is a way to avoid the trap of being stuck either in the commemoration of the past or in the projection into an abstract messianic future that is constantly postponed and presented as salvation. This perspective offers instead the possibility for the camp to be an historical political subject of the present, and to see the achievements of the present not as an

Figure 26: *The Concrete Tent.*

impediment to the right of return, but on the contrary as a step toward it (Ibid., pp. 3-4).

The discussion and conversations right after the demolition of the shelters gave new impetus to the desire to design a new gathering space in Dheisheh. The participants decided to select a plot of land in the garden of the Al-Feniq center to construct *The Concrete Tent* as a gathering space for communal learning, a place to host cultural activities, a working area, and an open space for social meetings.[136]

The Concrete Tent brings the three problems connected to the contradiction between the right of return and the refugee experience discussed in the previous sections together. In Stengers' idiom as presented in the third chapter, it can be argued that *life in exile* is the obligation that activates the study practices of Campus in Camps. Life in exile is that what is investigated and what requires response-ability. It is what makes common sense ruminate and oscillate between on the one hand the struggle for the right of return and on the other hand the affirmation of the camp experience. Moreover, life in exile is what makes the participants of Campus in Camps hesitate before the three problems outlined above, and that can be summarized as follows:

A. How to create public space in the camp without normalizing its exceptionality?
B. How to relate to the camp as a refugee living outside its borders?
C. How to represent the camp?

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[136] See Figure 26 and 27.

Figure 27: *The Concrete Tent.*

In contrast to the camp which comes back in all three of the problems, life in exile is absent from them. However, more than the camp in itself, it is the fact that people have been living in exile for decades that constitutes the obligation of the practice of Campus in Camps. This means that in spite of the fact that the camp is the concrete material condition that connects the problems of creation, relation, and representation, life in exile is what makes hesitate and think. It can be argued that the camp condition itself is too strongly connected with the right of return, which makes it easier to recognize it as an exceptionality and the refugee as its victim. The focus on the camp and its injustices as it is present in the publication *Vision* seemed to divide the participants in two fronts: those who forcefully claim the right of return versus those who pay tribute to the strong social fabric of the camp. This opposition has been called the contradiction between the right of return and the camp experience.

Imagining the future of the camp during group discussions, however, did not seem to be a fruitful approach as the discussions continually revolved around this contradiction. It was only by studying the camp that the participants gained an insight in what started to make them think, namely life in exile. It is by means of the fieldwork exercises that a reciprocal capture came into being between the practitioners, the participants, on the one hand, and the obligation of life in exile, on the other hand. As such it can be argued that the camp could only be the stake of a public debate or a political action, but, as such, it could never become something that could make the participants think as everyone had his or her reasons to argue

for or against one of the sides of the contradiction. It is only due to the study practice they started to do that the camp, and more precisely the fact that there is life in exile, that the camp could become an active participant in the discussions, that it could start to object, and that the participants could not do otherwise than hesitate.

The obligation of life in exile allowed to activate the camp as a matter of study that made the inhabitants of the camp think ('what is this place we are living in?'), instead of recognize ('the camp is unjust and should be abolished!'). In doing so, it became possible to start to think about the camp – more specifically around the three aforementioned questions which all have a relation to the camp – and not to recognize it in terms of either victimization or normalization. It made it, in other words, possible to turn the contradiction into a contrast by affirming both contradictory terms and transforming them in the course of the adventure of study.

In sum, it has been argued that a problem of creation, relation, and representation – stemming from the contradiction between the right of return and the camp experience – can be discerned that converge around the obligation of life in exile. Whereas the foregoing chapter aimed to shed a light on the obligation of the practice of Campus in Camps – *what* makes them think –, the next chapter will elucidate the requirements of their practice – *how* they are made to think.

Chapter Six
Studying within Ruins

The aim of the previous chapter was to introduce Campus in Camps, to explain their role in this dissertation, to present their work, and to bring to the fore the obligation of their practice, namely life in exile. Such an obligation comes to the fore throughout practices that have to meet very strict requirements to pass the test as study practices. In this chapter, the different requirements that constrain the study practices of Campus in Camps will be clarified. In Chapter Three, we have seen that Stengers (2005a), drawing on Latour, distinguishes four requirements of scientific practices, more precisely the formation of alliances with state or industrial power, the achievement of academic recognition, the mobilization of the world (i.c. relevant technological instruments as well as interested and motivated collaborators), and the production of a public representation of the field. Throughout a reading of the reports on Campus in Camps' activities and projects, I have discerned four requirements that seem inevitable to understand their practice as a study practice. In short, the participants seem to be required to:

    i.   Make stories;
    ii.   Make comparisons;
    iii.   Make maps;
    iv.   Make terms of use.

Like the scientist has to meet the four requirements of scientific practices in order 'to learn something new' – the most general description of the aim of scientific practices as we have seen –, the student, at least in Campus in Camps, has to make stories, make comparisons, make maps, and make terms of use in order 'to learn anew' – the most general description of the aim of study practices as argued in Part Two. In this chapter the focus lies on these four requirements of the study practices of Campus in Camps. It is obvious that the four requirements that come to the fore within Campus in Camps cannot be generalized to all study practices. Nevertheless, they give an insight in the ways of working in study practices more in general, although it is possible that other study practices are guided by altogether different requirements.

The four requirements have been discerned based on a reading of the reports of the study practices of Campus in Camps as they can be found in both *The Collective Dictionary* and *The Initiatives*. Each of the first four sections of this chapter presents one of the four requirements of study practices. For every requirement, a presentation of a study activity will guide the elaboration of the requirement central in that section. The requirement, however, is not limited to that study activity only. The study activity as described in every section illustrates a requirement that can be encountered in most – nearly all – other study activities of Campus in Camps. Finally, the last section of this chapter summarizes how the requirements of this chapter and obligation of the previous chapter come together in the study practices of Campus in Camps.

Taking Care of Our Abstractions

The first requirement is the requirement to *make stories.*[137] This requirement shows itself in all publications contained in *The Collective Dictionary*. This dictionary aimed to elaborate concepts that were deemed indispensable when thinking about the camp dwellers' life in Dheisheh, such as participation, ownership, and well-being. The publication *Vision* is an exception since it is aimed at the imagination of possible futures, instead of the study of a concept. In this section, the focus will be on the booklet *Knowledge*. This publication contains seven reflections on the concept of knowledge and how knowledge relates to experience. The aim of the publication is to gather people around the concept of knowledge in order to bring together different perspectives and standpoints vis-à-vis this notion. These different takes on

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[137] See Figure 28.

Figure 28: Gathering of participants.

the question of knowledge are brought to the fore in the form of stories. As such, textbook definitions of knowledge are contrasted with stories about everyday experiences.[138]

"The things of which the story tells," Ingold (2007) argues, "do not so much exist as occur; each is a moment of ongoing activity" (p. 90). Whereas a definition obscures the world from which the concept emerged, a story recounts and relates it to the different experiences "that paved the way for it, that presently concur with it and that follow it into the world" (p. 90). Therefore, in opposition to decontextualized definitions, situated stories give an insight in specific occurrences that are gathered by a concept. Storytelling recounts the experiences and events in which a specific concept came to matter. Not only do stories weave together different experienced events, they also allow to share this storied knowledge. Telling a story is like laying out a path through a landscape and inviting those who listen to follow, to point their attention to what can be noticed along the way, so that it can come to matter in their

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[138] In other publications of *The Collective Dictionary*, also diagrams, interviews, and pictures were used to contrast with the text book definition of the concept at hand.

thinking. In short, stories recount past events and pave the way for future experiences. Again, "it matters what stories make worlds, what worlds make stories" (Haraway, 2016, p. 12).

In the making of this storied dictionary, two ways of writing are deployed, namely dramatization and fabulation. Using four stories from the publication *Knowledge*, each way of writing will be discussed. First, there are the stories in which the central concept is *dramatized*. To dramatize a concept means to hesitate to use a concept to explain a situation, it requires on the contrary that the concept itself becomes explained through an inquiry into the situations in which it comes to matter. Dramatization forbids holding on to any general definition of a concept, and necessitates to situate the concept in the contexts in which it is relevant and upon which it exerts its force (Debaise, 2016). Foregrounding the force concepts exert on the way we experience situations, underscores the fact that concepts do not simply represent phenomena 'out there', but that they actively intervene in our experience of the situations they render intelligible. Intelligible needs to be understood here as graspable in the specific way the concept calls for, rather than another.

In the case of knowledge, it means to repel all general definitions elicited by the question "What is knowledge?". Instead, this way of writing requires to unfold the drama of knowledge. The "What is?"-question is exchanged for a manifold of questions such as "Who wants knowledge?", "How much knowledge?", "Why does she want knowledge and how does she want it?", "And where and when?". Whereas the first question – "What is knowledge?" – demands an answer that would uncover the essence of knowledge, and that hence would fit nicely into a textbook defining knowledge, the other questions allow to situate the concept of knowledge within the drama in which it comes to matter (Debaise, 2016; Deleuze, 2004). This means that attention is paid to the experiences that are retained within the concept and those that are excluded. Two dramatizations of the concept of knowledge will make things more clear.

Dramatization as a way of writing can be discerned, for instance, in the section *Academic knowledge*, where a participant critically reflects on the notion of development. He argues that the knowledge generated in view of development purposes often maintains and enlarges existing inequalities. Moreover, it is said that the banner of development obscures the way academic knowledge plays a role in and even accelerates this process. The example given are GMOs. The knowledge produced in relation to GMOs is often legitimized in view of a solution to the hunger problem. Genetically modifying crops would allow to intensify the production, so the harvest can feed more people. However, this 'development' runs the risk of making small farmers dependent on big companies that have a patent on the seeds of the genetically modified crops. In this sense, the patent functions as a way to privatize and

commodify academic knowledge. As such, it plays a crucial role in enhancing inequality, because it dispossesses small farmers from their ability to grow their own produce. Instead of asking the general question what knowledge would be, the participant reflects on the question who benefits from knowledge in this particular case: Who wants the knowledge concerning genetic modification? And in what form, as patented or public knowledge? In which way does the discourse of development mobilize funding organizations, while obfuscating hidden motivations?

In a second move, he opposes the patented knowledge with the knowledge his grandfather acquired in the orchard. Although he did not posses any degree or certificate in agriculture, he cultivated and planted trees during his entire life. The knowledge he acquired throughout his labor is shared among co-workers and grows in relation to the trees, the seasons, nutrients, and so on. The participant argues that conceiving of knowledge as a private property decouples people from the knowledge that grows via sharing and experience. He concludes that of course there is nothing against the concept of knowledge, but in the way he dramatizes this notion, he foregrounds the importance to understand it as something that is never universal or value-free, but always in someone's interest and emerging amidst specific activities (Al-Laham, 2013a). Dramatization sketches out the network in which a concept can come to matter. Moreover, it investigates for whom this concept potentially comes to matter and in what way.

Another, less elaborate, dramatization of knowledge can be read in the reflection *Source of value*. One of the participants wrote on his experiences while working as a project coordinator. He recounts that he had acquired knowledge by executing the tasks and performing the roles his job required him to do. He explains that at the moment of writing, he is studying at the university in order to finish his bachelor's degree. He contrasts these two experiences, learning by doing a job versus learning in order to get a degree, in order to question the relation between knowledge on the one hand, and degrees and certificates that would testify of the knowledge someone is supposed to have acquired during his education on the other hand. It is argued that it is easy to make a distinction between educated and uneducated people, at least when this distinction is based on the acquisition of a degree or certificate. A distinction between people based on their knowledge, however, is, according to the participant, impossible to make. He argues that knowledge grows through experience, and that, hence, degrees and certificates cannot appropriately reflect someone's knowledge. The concept of knowledge is investigated in the concrete drama of its institutional recognition by means of degrees and certificates. It raises the question to whose advantage it is to be able

to claim to 'have knowledge', and who is, in this case, dispossessed of her knowledge because it is not recognized in official documents (Abu Aker, 2013).

In short, dramatization makes attentive to how specific practices are sanctioned, while others remain barely recognized. It draws attention to mechanisms that not only include specific experiences in our understanding of a concept, but also exclude others from such an understanding. It is possible, however, to discern a second way of writing in the stories that participants made.

The second way of writing, *fabulation*, addresses the question that the style of dramatization omitted, viz. "What is knowledge?". Fabulating about what knowledge is, however, is not the same as defining it. In her writings on speculative fabulation, Haraway explains that wild facts inhabit fables. Whereas definitions domesticate meanings, fables shelter a wild bunch of experiences and events without settling them into a coherent system. Fables do not gain their efficacy from convincing correspondences between concept and reality, but rather from the imaginative power of their construction and the way in which they bring all kinds of real and imagined critters in correspondence (Haraway & Terranova, 2016). Taking the relay from Haraway, Martha Kenney (2013) calls such stories that allow to gather a manifold of agents in ways that makes us notice, fables of attention. She writes that "fables are powerful pedagogical vectors; but their power is not dependent on their grip on reality. Put another way, a fable is a case study that asks to be trusted, not believed. Fables are not about ontological claims but practical creativity, their capacity to make new relations" (p. 17).

In contradistinction to airborne concepts, fables are multi-agential muddles that situate events in relation toward one another. The aim is however not so much to stabilize the events within a History that acquires the power to explain the succession of events in a progressivist mode, but rather to tell different kinds of stories that allow to notice different kinds of things. In *The Collective Dictionary*, the reader will not find any coherent theory of the concept of knowledge in the contributions adopting a more fabulatory approach, let alone a domesticating definition. They rather take the shape of stories that bring together and reflect on experiences participants have underwent and that they deem relevant in order to think about knowledge. Gropingly, these contributions articulate aspects of the notion of knowledge based on the everyday experiences of the participants.

In the contribution *Even a toy is a source*, for instance, the participant writes about an experience he had as an adolescent. He was standing with a man on a balcony and they were watching the man's daughter who was playing with a small toy car in the street in front of the building. Beside the street was a garden full of sand and big stones. When the girl wanted to drive her car in the sand, the participant started to shout at her that it is not possible to drive

the car there because the wheels would get stuck. The man said to him that when the girl would drive the car in the sand, she would discover herself that it is not easily done and that it is better for the car to stay on smoother ground. He explained that after trying she would get to know it herself, based on this personal experience. The participant goes on to contrast learning from experience with the transmission of what he calls pre-packaged knowledge. Whereas the transmission of pre-packaged knowledge assumes that knowledge can be contained in bits and piece and can be exchanged between one person and another, learning from experience assumes that knowledge grows amidst particular situations, making it inherently a shared good. The participant fabulates a conception of knowledge which foregrounds the relation with everyday experiences. According to this conception, knowledge cannot be transmitted in packages from one person to the other. It is rather grown in the relationship between the person and his environment, including other human beings, toys, stones, and so on (Al-Laham, 2013b).[139]

In another contribution, *We are the ones who build our knowledge*, two participants fabulate that it is impossible to think knowledge as either theoretical, or practical, but that it needs to be thought of as an action. Moreover, an action that is shared and hence, through which knowledge is shared. They situate their argument in the experiences they had during a project in the course of which they interviewed different women on their educational background. They found that almost none of them held an academic certificate but were nevertheless very knowledgeable about many things – the examples given include for instance sewing and designing clothes. This kind of knowledge, which is to be found in specific skills and activities, remains however often barely recognized as a valuable source of knowledge. The participants argue that it is hard or even impossible to confine knowledge in certificates and degrees that make it into an individual property.

They fabulate a conception of knowledge as collective action in which also other persons can participate. Initiated, and hence partaking in a specific shared experience – of sewing, of cooking, of speaking a foreign language – knowledge can be shared. As such, knowledge cannot be appropriated by individuals and commodified by means of degrees and certificates.

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[139] As a reflection on this fabulation, however, it can be noted that it seems rather difficult to discern knowledge that was transmitted from knowledge that is grown. The father's injunction not to explain his daughter what she should or should not do – and why – is recollected here as a so-called 'personal experience'. However, it is not clear why the participant remembers it as his own learning experience, and not as an attempt of the father to transmit his own pre-packaged learning theory. This shows the ambivalence of knowledge as something learned via personal experiences. One could ask to what extent the transmission of knowledge in for instance a classroom setting is really a delivery of pre-packaged knowledge in return for money, and correlatively, to what extent it can be understood as a making present of knowledge contents in relation to which pupils learn via experience?

On the contrary, it needs to be understood as embedded in concrete actions that can be performed collectively (Al-Turshan & Hamouz, 2013). Fabulating a concept of knowledge means in this case to embed it within the concrete activities in which it is used and shared.

To summarize, the first requirement of study practices calls for storytelling that allows to relate abstract concepts to everyday experiences. Storytelling situates concepts inside the events, experiences, and relations that make up the fabric of the concept. It is a way of bringing together and passing on wild facts without domesticating them inside definitions. Stories can make us think about the way a specific concept can be used to explain or justify a situation, or they can lure our feelings towards other ways of experiencing an event.

The first way of storytelling practiced in Campus in Camps dramatizes the concept. This means that the concept is shown in the concrete situations in which it is used. Moreover, dramatization inquires in whose benefit it is to use a certain understanding of a concept (e.g. knowledge as individual property that can be exchanged) rather than another. Dramatization lays bare the multiple and dispersed meanings and interests that were covered up under the guise of one and the same concept. Its aim, however, is not merely denunciatory. More than a method of general deconstruction of all concepts, it is way of telling specific stories about specific concepts. Dramatization does not aim to arrive at a truthful understanding of what a concept really is, but rather at an insight into how the concept *works*. This means that it inquires how a concept is used to sanction specific practices, whereas others are rendered as inappropriate.

The second way of writing deploys a more speculative approach to the concept. Based on personal experiences, participants fabulated alternative understandings of the concepts that are relevant to their lives, such as knowledge, citizenship, or well-being. Fabulation aims to bring different experiences, events and relations together in more or less coherent stories that provide always partial descriptions of the concept at hand. Warding off anything that could sound like a concluding event of a progressive History, fabulatory stories stage a diversity of actors enmeshed in a here-and-now muddle populated with wild facts.

Storytelling, by either dramatization or fabulation, hence plays a key role in the making of the dictionary. The concern to take care of the concepts we use to describe our experiences on the one hand, and the concern for the lure for experience that concepts constitute – the way in which they allow us to become affected by a question or an issue – resonate with Whitehead's caution to *take care of our abstractions*.[140] Stengers (2008) explains that:

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[140] There is a shift here from the more commonsensical notion of concept as it used to describe what is contained in *The Collective Dictionary*, to the more technical term of abstraction that plays an important role in the philosophy of Whitehead. A detailed discussion of the specific similarities and differences between concepts and abstractions is worthy of a dissertation on its own, but in the context of this

> For Whitehead, abstractions as such were never the enemy. We cannot think without abstractions; they cause us to think, they lure our feelings and affects. But our duty is to take care of our abstractions, never to bow down in front of what they are doing to us (p. 50).

It is important to make clear that abstractions are not a purely intellectual affair. Stengers (2017b) argues that Whitehead is not interested in 'abstract thought' as such, but that abstraction for him is a necessary ingredient in thinking. Moreover, not only thinking, but also perception requires abstraction because it makes recognition possible.

An event, the most concrete fact, for instance a bird singing his song in the early morning, can be named, but as soon as we talk about it, we use more abstract terms to refer to the actual singing. Stengers (2011e) explains that it is due to our abstraction of the bird's song that we can recognize the bird singing. As such, abstraction makes recognition possible and vice versa. We recognize the bird's song although we barely have words to describe it. Abstractions make it possible to draw attention to events that otherwise could have remained barely noticed. Of the bird's song, it is possible to say "Did you hear it? There it is again!", drawing attention to the song, even without recourse to any abstract name. Whitehead (1964) explains the relation between abstraction and recognition as follows: "Recognition and abstraction essentially involve each other. Each of them exhibits an entity for knowledge which is less than the concrete fact, but is a real factor in that fact" (p. 189).

Abstractions therefore do not inhabit the realm of abstract thought – which is of little interest to Whitehead –, but are crucial ingredients in the happening of the event. They are part and parcel of the ways in which we experience the event and sensitize us to what we can be aware of in perception. Abstractions seem to have a double efficacy. First, they allow to render intelligible and communicate experiences. Abstractions, however, not only 'catch' events by naming them, they also – and this is their second efficacy – lure our feelings and affects, make a specific experience of an event possible. Consequently, we cannot be against abstractions as if we would have a more true experience without them, it is rather due to

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dissertation it would take us too far (especially too far from the practices of Campus in Camps). It could be argued however that whereas all concepts are abstractions, not every abstraction is a concept. Concepts are hence a subset of the set of abstractions, more specifically they denote those abstractions that can be put in words and hence be communicated. The example of the bird further on in this paragraph would be an example of an experience of which there is abstraction (one can recognize the singing of the bird), but no concept (although one can recognize it, it cannot be put in words).

abstractions that we can experience what happens in this way, rather than another. And therefore it is important to take care of them, to the ways in which they lure our experience.

In *The Collective Dictionary*, the participants engage in a process of taking care of the abstractions that are at play in their experience of the camp by means of both dramatic and fabulatory storytelling.[141] As such, *The Collective Dictionary* can be understood as a way of overcoming what Whitehead (1938) has called "The Fallacy of the Perfect Dictionary" (p. 235). This term indicates the belief that we know and have coined all the fundamental ideas that can be applied to our experience, and that these ideas can be explicitly expressed in human language. The participants' dictionary, on the contrary, demonstrates the internal differences of the various concepts. It makes clear how the concepts cover up a multiplicity of experiences that can henceforth affect us in a particular way rather than another. Moreover, the participants' attempt was to question these concepts from the point of view of experiences that were until then neglected by the concept, in order to transform its efficacy, to lure our feelings through other conceptions of knowledge, ownership, participation, responsibility, or one of the other concepts of *The Collective Dictionary*. Making a dictionary with stories allows to take care of our abstractions. At least, however, if we refuse any understanding of the dictionary as containing an exhaustive set of universally applicable definitions.

In order to omit The Fallacy of the Perfect Dictionary and inspired by what SF-writer Ursula K. Le Guin calls The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction, it is proposed to think about *The Collective Dictionary* as a carrier bag of concepts for living together in the camp. Stories, according to Le Guin, are carrier bags that are used for collecting, carrying, and telling the stuff of living. Containing not only wild facts and messy descriptions, but also remote memories and high hopes, it is often said of stories that they blind us for the present. Instead of seeing storytelling as deceit and disguise, however, Le Guin (1989a) asks to understand the story as "an active encounter with the environment by means of posing options and alternatives, and an enlargement of present reality by connecting it to the unverifiable past and the unpredictable future" (pp. 44-45). Stories do not distract from 'what is really happening', but draw our attention to specific ingredients pertaining to the construction of lived reality. Even more, they contribute to further construction work.

Stories are carrier bags for clashing points of view without pacifying conflicts. Again in the words of Le Guin (1989b):

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[141] In the context of the Palestinian camps, anthropologists have at many occassions argued that it is of great importance which notions are used to describe situations since they play an important role in the shaping of public perceptions and humanitarian policies (cf. Feldman, 2012, 2014; Peteet, 2016).

Conflict, competition, stress, struggle, etc. within the narrative conceived as carrier bag/belly/box/house/medicine bundle, may be seen as necessary elements of a whole which itself cannot be characterized either as conflict or as harmony, since its purpose is neither resolution nor stasis but continuing process (p. 169).

Stories do not aim to settle conflicts once and for all, nor do they aim to explain events so they can no longer make us think. They rather collect a manifold of experiences and events in order to make us pay attention to what is happening. Wild facts tumble into stories, as stories tumble into concepts, as concepts tumble into the dictionary. Making a dictionary means thinking with abstractions. This requires storytelling to become attentive to the ways in which these abstractions lure our experience. Therefore, storytelling in either the dramatic or the fabulatory mode makes it possible to take care of the abstractions with which we experience the world and can be discerned as the first requirement of the study practice of Campus in Camps.

Comparison as Concern

The second requirement for the study practice of Campus in Camps is the requirement to make a comparison. This section is based on the material that can be found in the publications *Common₁* and *The Municipality*, belonging to *The Collective Dictionary* and *The Initiatives* respectively. The aim of these projects was to compare the city of Doha with the camp of Dheisheh, and to investigate what it means to move from the camp to the city as a refugee (cf. the second problem discerned in Chapter Five). The two publications make use of interviews and photographs in order to construct a *rapport* between Dheisheh and Doha.

Before discussing two different ways of making a comparison between the city and the camp, it is necessary to explain how a comparison can be understood as a rapport, an notion already encountered in Chapter Three. Therefore it is important to distinguish rapport from relation. The two should not be confused. In comparison to the notion of relation, the term rapport renders the constructed nature of the relation explicit. Because of the perhaps unduly use of the notion of relation in social theory, it has become the default position to conceive of human beings as always already embedded in social and technological networks of relations. As such, it is argued that the relations are constitutive of those – human and other-than-human critters such as cats, molecules, or djinns – who become in their interweaving. Le Guin (2017) renders this perspective as follows:

In this view, we humans appear as particularly lively, intense, aware nodes of relation in an infinite network of connections, simple or complicated, direct or hidden, strong or delicate, temporary or very long-lasting. A web of connections, infinite but locally fragile, with and among everything – all beings – including what we generally class as things, objects (p. 15).

All beings are related among and with one another in an endless network of relations. Together with human beings, objects and things are part of this continuously forming and deforming web.

Thingification is what Karen Barad (2003) has called the turning of relations into things, entities, or relata, a view that, she argues, has enormously infected the way in which we perceive and understand the world. Instead of arguing that everything is always related – which would imply that there are first things and that the relations between them are only secondary –, Barad (2007) goes a step further by claiming that "relata do not preexist relations" (p. 140). It is within this and out of this web of relations that relata – entities, objects, humans, etc. – emerge. Inspired by Bohrian quantum physics and Butlerian performativity theory, she works towards a relational ontology that understands the world as a bundle of relations that produce things. She places relations before the relata that are usually seen as constituting the relation, by claiming that it is not the relata who interact – establish a relation –, but that it is in the intra-actions of phenomena that things emerge (cf. Barad, 2017). First come the relations, only afterwards the relata.

In opposition to the notion of relation which has become a commonplace in social theory, the notion of *rapport* underscores the fact that the relation is not always already there, that it does not always preexist relata, but that it can be and needs to be constructed. Moreover, it makes explicit the work that has to be done in order to create a relation; or, in the case of this requirement, to make a comparison. In the words of Stengers (2011b):

Both *logos* and the Latin *ratio* are an etymological source for terms such as *reason* and *account* but also *proportion*, which signifies an operation of comparison. The French word *rapport* has inherited this constellation of meanings, while its usual translation, 'relation', has lost it. Everything may be described as related, but not everything entertains 'rapports' (pp. 48-49).

Starting from, but going further then the tendency of seeing everything as always already related, the notion of rapport makes us pay attention to how these relations are made. The

notion of rapport, for instance, underscores the constructed nature of relations in experimental settings. In the third chapter, it was argued that Galileo needed to set up the experimental apparatus of the inclined plane in order to put the height of the starting point of the ball in relation with its point of impact on the ground. In Stengers' French becomes more clear that this was a 'mettre en rapport' of two variables, instead of a demonstration of a relation that was always already there. Whereas Galileo took advantage of the experimental achievement to silence his rivals by claiming that the discussion *why* bodies fall is nonsense and that we should limit ourselves to inquire *how* bodies fall, the question is now whether it is possible to inherit the achievement of a rapport in a different way, in a way that it can make us think.

In the next paragraphs, two ways of making a comparison will be presented and discussed. Whereas the first is based on indicators, the second makes use of photographs. In *Common$_1$*, we find two contributions that explicitly deal with the relation between Dheisheh and Doha. The first, *Does residence matter when defining the Palestinian refugee identity?*, reports on an interview one of the participants conducted with his father on the growth of Dheisheh and the foundation of Doha in the 1970s.[142] Inspired by the story of his father, the participant went on to investigate the relation between Dheisheh and Doha and attempted to create a rapport between the two areas of residence. He compared the two from the point of view of nine indicators: housing, streets, interrelationships, organizations (NGOs), public space, water, electricity, education & schools, and healthcare. For housing, for instance, it is written that in Doha houses are neatly spread which leaves room for gardens, whereas in Dheisheh the houses are very close to one another and that the camp cannot hold population growth. In the case of public space, the privatized or surveilled parks in Doha are put next to the narrow streets of Dheisheh. For each of the indicators, Dheisheh and Doha are compared in a few lines followed by a small comment. Besides, this comment is often evaluative. For the housing indicator, for instance, the participant writes that he would prefer to live in Doha because it has more open space between the houses and people do not live as close to one another as they do in Dheisheh. However, the case is not always settled in favor of Doha. In relation to the indicators of organizations and health care, the participant argues that Dheisheh is better equipped than Doha, which means in this context that there are more NGOs and that it has a hospital (Abu Alia, 2013).

Two issues can be raised concerning the comparison based on indicators. The first issue has to do with the neutrality of the indicators. There is no rationale for the choice for these rather than other indicators. At first sight, they seem quite arbitrary. Nevertheless, it could be

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[142] In 2012, when *The Collective Dictionary* was published, approximately 11 000 people lived in Doha.

called into question whether they not already take the assumption of a fully equipped city for granted. It is not sure whether the choice for these indicators can provide an interesting perspective – one that can make us think – on the mode of living together of the camp, as opposed to the city.

This issue immediately relates to the second issue which has to do with the comments. After the often very short descriptions of both Dheisheh and Doha – sometimes not longer than three lines – the participant all too easily jumps to conclusions. In comparing the electricity in Dheisheh with Doha, he writes that the electricity of Dheisheh is for free but that it is rather weak, whereas the people of Doha pay for constant and powerful electricity. He concludes that it is therefore more preferable to live in Doha, because energy supply is warranted. The question would be to what extent such judgement already endorses the city condition as a default position. This would imply that the camp is only evaluated from the point of view of the city. Moreover because the comparison is based on indicators that favor the city instead of the camp, it can be called an unfair competition, a race that the camp has already lost before it even began. Judging the camp from the perspective of the city makes us recognize an anomaly or exception, but it does not give the camp the power to make us think.

In the contribution that follows, *Visual investigation Dheisheh/Doha*, a second attempt is made to make a comparison between the camp and the city. By means of photographs the participants have made some comparisons between Dheisheh and Doha. The contribution contains fourteen pictures in total, most of them are arranged two by two. The first image is a wide camera shot taken from the middle of the street that separates the camp from the city.[143] This style of exhibiting a strong contrast between Dheisheh and Doha is sustained throughout the other pictures. The remainder of the pictures is always presented two by two. Whereas on the left side a view of Dheisheh is shown, the right pictures show Doha. The first set contrasts

Figure 29: Main entrace of Dheisheh and Doha.

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[143] See Figure 29.

Figure 30: Dheisheh and Doha, respectively left and right.

the main entrances of the two areas.[144] In the second set a picture of Doha taken from Dheisheh is put next to a picture of Dheisheh taken from Doha. Thereafter follow two wide shots that portray an empty space in Dheisheh and Doha.[145] Another set follows with empty space in both areas. The last comparative couple contains pictures of the street in Dheisheh and Doha[146], and the last two pictures are from respectively a gated park and a gated football field, both in Doha (Brave New Alps, 2013).

What is striking when looking at these pictures is the difference that is demonstrated between Dheisheh and Doha. The pictures of Dheisheh give the impression of a crowded, disorderly, dirty, overgrown town, cluttered with informal dwellings heaped up next to small alleys. Doha, on the contrary, is represented as an empty, orderly, tidy settlement, that seems to be constructed according to a strict and fixed housing scheme with big lanes and where public and private are nicely separated. In the previous paragraph, two concerns were raised in relation to comparison, namely the concern not to judge or evaluate from a seemingly external point of view and the concern not to conduct the comparison within the terms of one of the compared.

The question is now how this different way of comparing Dheisheh and Doha passes this double test. In relation to the first concern, it can be argued that the visual representation seems to suspend the judgement that was made all too quickly in the course of the comparison via indicators. The comments under the pictures are very limited (e.g. 'Street in Dheisheh') and merely aim to name what is shown, rather than to evaluate or pass judgement on. Nowhere can be read that it would be preferable to live in Dheisheh, rather than Doha, or the other way around. The aim of the series is not to compare Dheisheh and Doha from the point of view of a normal or ideal city, but rather draws out the differences between the two. This brings us to the second concern: to what extent is the comparison conducted in the terms of

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[144] See Figure 30.
[145] See Figure 31.
[146] See Figure 32.

Figure 31: Empty space in Dheisheh and Doha.

only one of the compared parties? In this regard, it is arguable that both areas get the chance to present themselves on their own terms. The pictures do not seduce the beholder to judge one of the sides from the point of view of the other. Neither the left, nor the right side seems appealing in the sense that the beholder would be inclined to make his preference where to live clear as was done in the comparison via indicators. Both sides convey an uncanny feeling which allows the beholder to retain some distance towards both the camp and the city.

In sum, whereas the pictures of Dheisheh give the impression of a labyrinthine urban jungle, the pictures of Doha transfer a feeling of a cold and sterile lifelessness. Dheisheh looks like an impenetrable network of alleys that are overgrown with plants and cluttered with dirt, a hotchpotch in which even a cat would not be able to find its kittens. Doha, on the contrary, resembles an anonymous, modernist Siedlung. The pictures seem to depict desolate dwellings that look like they have been deserted after the shattering of every dream of progress. As such, it can indeed be argued that the camera refuses to make its preference clear. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the camera would constitute some kind of neutral standpoint that allows both the camp and the city to present themselves in their own idiom. Of course, the camera takes images from both areas and only registers what is there to be seen, but by the specific way of arranging the images and the specific shots that were taken, it could be argued that the camera is used as a rhetorical device. The camera functions as a tool of exaggeration that reinforces the differences between Dheisheh and Doha. As such, it seems that the comparison via pictures allowed to let both Dheisheh and Doha present themselves

Figure 32: Street in Dheisheh and Doha.

on their own terms, although these terms were exaggerated by the use of the camera and the way of arranging them in oppositional pairs.

A rapport has been created between a camp and a city that were always already related. This rapport made it possible to make a comparison between Dheisheh and Doha. This was, however, not a comparison that allowed to judge which of the two was more preferable to live in, but rather one that made the participants think about the always-already-there relation between Dheisheh and Doha. As such, it can not only be claimed that the rapport made a comparison possible, but also, and more importantly, that the comparison made a rapport possible. The comparison allowed to rethink and recreate the relationship between the camp and the city on the one hand, and the relationship between the Dheisheh/Doha agglomeration and its inhabitants on both sides of the border that separates the camp from the city on the other hand. In short, the construction of a rapport between Dheisheh and Doha in the form of a comparison allowed to create a rapport between the issue of the relation between camp and city on the one hand and the thinking public that gathered around this issue – made present via the photographs –, on the other hand.

Now, what measure can be used in order to gauge the efficacy of the comparison that has been made? It can be argued that the efficacy of the comparison is relevant from the point of view of study practices in so far as it concerns the efficacy to make us think – as opposed to the efficacy of the Galilean rapport that could silence his rivals. Stengers (2011b) explains that:

> 'Learning from' requires encountering, and encountering may indeed imply comparison, but there is no comparison if the encountered others are defined as unable to understand the point of the comparison. We are returned here to the Latin etymology of 'comparison': *compar* designates those who regard each other as equals

– that is, as able to agree, which means also able to disagree, object, negotiate, and contest (p. 63).

She argues that there is only one rule to be respected in order for comparison to be relevant, and that is that a rapport is constructed between terms in their 'full force', and without 'foul play' that weakens one while ensuring the position of the other. Hence, the terms of the comparison can neither be imposed from above, as neutral, nor can they come from one of the parties because this would require that the other party would describe itself in the terms of the other. In sum, comparisons involve a challenge. If they are to have an efficacy in terms of making a public think, the rapport cannot be constructed on a so-called neutral terrain, nor on the terrain of one of the compared parties. It is rather in the *border zone*, where each party presents itself in its own terms, in its divergence, that friction can arise. Friction being in this case the capacity to disagree, object, negotiate, or contest – in short, to compare.

In a commentary on Stengers' reflections on comparison, Helen Verran (2011) draws the argument a bit further. Rephrasing Stengers' analysis of Galileo's threefold conferral of power as a *framing triplet* she asks what it means that the constructed rapport between height of departure and point of impact authorized claiming that what is measured lends itself to measurement. It is namely only in the case of this rapport, testifying of a specific kind of motion between specific kinds of bodies, without any internal source of motion (as opposed to a car or a horse), in an ideally frictionless manner (as opposed to an avalanche), that the fall of Galilean bodies made sense (Verran, 2001, 2014). Nevertheless, the framing triplet made it possible for Galileo to withdraw from the experimental setting to let it speak for itself. As such, the rapport did not only demonstrate *how* bodies fall, but became also – as we have seen – a weapon that could fend off theologians and philosophers who were contemplating the question *why* bodies fall – a question that the experimental apparatus had shown to be nonsensical.

The apparatus did not only testify of a natural phenomenon, but also, and most importantly, proved to be a horrifying participant in a polemic. That is why Verran (2011) calls the experimental achievement a *participant-comparison*. She draws attention to the fact that the comparison does not represent a state of affairs, but calls one into being. Moreover, the comparison participates in the way we think and argue about what is compared. In the case of the Galilean experimental achievement, the participant-comparison denounced the so-called irrational – be reminded that *ratio* besides reason also means proportion or rapport – arguments of the philosophicotheologically inclined audience. Verran's notion of participant-comparison allows to ask the question to what extent the series of photographs could be

understood as such a participant-comparison in the discussion about the relation between Dheisheh and Doha.

It seems that the pictures have managed rather well to present both the camp and the city in their divergence, without reducing one to the other. Moreover, they made the participants capable of starting to think about the relation between Dheisheh and Doha as two diverging but interweaving entities. As such, the comparison participated in the discussions that took place about the specificity of the camp in relation to the city. In the booklet *The Municipality*, for instance, this relation is scrutinized by means of interviews and testimonies in order to get a better grasp on the different senses of belonging of both the inhabitants of Dheisheh and Doha. One of the participants declares: "What caught my attention during this research is that the refugees in this city are still linking themselves to the camp. They continually present themselves from this or that camp and they live in Doha" (Al-Assi, 2013, p. 59).

Drawing out the divergence between the city and the camp, each in their own terms, with full force, without foul play, by means of a translation into a visual idiom allowed to get a sense of where and how the two intermingle, for instance in the construction of a collective refugee identity. Besides, in *The Municipality*, we find an image that imitates the style of the first picture of the series. It is again a wide shot of both Dheisheh and Doha on opposite sides of the street.[147] Below is indicated that on the left hand side is Doha, whereas on the right hand side we see Dheisheh. However, in contrast to the first picture, this image does not allow to make a clear distinction between the camp and the city based on the picture alone. The beholder needs the additional information that is given below in order to discern the two, and even then, each side of the street seems to mirror the other. The sharp contrast demonstrated in the series in *Common₁* did not participate in a way that silenced – such as the rapport constructed by Galileo –, but rather in a way that initiated a learning process concerning the question what

Figure 33: Doha and Dheisheh on both sides of the street.

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[147] See Figure 33.

it means to be a refugee when living in a city, instead of a camp. The contradiction between camp and city evoked in the initial comparison was transformed into a contrast. The comparison required to attend to the specific ways in which camp and city diverge, but also to the alliances that come into being between the inhabitants of the camp and those of the city.

Milieu, Milieu

As a third requirement, students need to *make maps*. In the process of mapping, elements from the environment are retained, selected and ultimately assembled on a two-dimensional plane. In this section follows an inquiry into how it is possible to make a map, and how this relates to the study of the milieu, understood in this context as an environment. Milieu is a very ambiguous notion of which the precise meaning cannot be pinned down straightforwardly. Drawing on the different meanings that will be distinguished, this section inquires how it is possible to study a milieu and which role maps can play herein. Moreover, it will be shown how in the process of mapping the different meanings of milieu entangle. The publication that will guide this section is *The Unbuilt*. The aim of this publication was to make an inventory of the unbuilt spaces within Dheisheh in order to discern sites for possible interventions. In the first paragraphs of this section, however, the different understandings of the notion of milieu will be sketched out in order to lay out the complexity of this concept to get a sense of what it could mean to study an environment by means of mapping.

At first glance, the meaning of the concept of milieu seems to be constantly oscillating between two poles: "Le mot 'milieu' en français signifie à la fois l'entre et l'entour, le centre et l'environnement, le *medium* et *l'Umwelt*, *le mi-lieu* et *le milieu*" (Petit, 2017, p. 11). On the one hand, the milieu seems to be that what surrounds a center and forms an environment for it. On the other hand, the milieu seems to be what is in the middle, or in between, and is as such what is at the center of attention. Both understandings of milieu, middle and surrounding, can be found in in the concept of *Umwelt*. Reacting against the mechanistic biology of his time and interested in how animals perceive their environments, the Estonian biologist Jakob von Uexküll (1957) argued that the animal cannot be treated as a machinic assemblage of sensory and motor organs, since this would leave out what he called the subject that uses these organs as tools of perception and action. "All that a subject perceives becomes his *perceptual world* and all that he does, his *effector world*. Perceptual and effector worlds together form a closed unit, the *Umwelt*" (p. 6). This understanding of milieu implies that the animal is caught up in a species-specific bubble of sensory data which it perceives and reacts to. In this conception, the animal, for instance a tick, is at the center and the milieu is what encloses it, what elicits

specific behaviors such as letting itself drop due to the olfactory experience of butyric acid which emanates from the sebaceous follicles of mammals (cf. Agamben, 2004; Buchanan, 2008; Heidegger, 1995).

The notion of *Umwelt*, for von Uexküll, integrates both the animal as perceiving and acting subject and the environment in which it is situated. *Umwelt* should hence not be confused with the environment as such or as the habitat in which different species cohabit – as Petit did in abovementioned quote in which he draws a too stark contrast between *medium* as middle and *Umwelt* as surrounding. Von Uexküll calls the environment in itself the *Umgebung*, as opposed to the species-specific *Umwelt*. The notion of *Umwelt* merges and splits at the same time the *Innenwelt* of the animal and the surrounding *Umgebung* (cf. Ingold, 2000). As such, this bipolar concept gathers the two contrasting understandings of milieu that opened this paragraph.

Michel Serres (1990), however, warns for such an all too dichotomized understanding of milieu since it exaggerates the two poles of the concept, middle and environment. He argues that every middle is an environment for another middle. As such, middle and environment are always expressed relatively towards something else – middle or environment – and should hence not be absolutized. In the words of Georges Canguilhem (2001) the milieu can be called "a pure system of relations without supports" (p. 11). Understanding the milieu in this way, as a system of relations without a center around which the system would be organized, prevents from exaggerating the importance of the middle as a point of orientation. The milieu lacks indeed any orientation. It is an ever-emergent system of interdependent relations.

Deleuze and Guattari's definition of milieu summarizes the different aspects of the notion of milieu that we have discerned so far rather well. Deleuze and Guattari (2004) write that:

> Every milieu is vibratory, in other words, a block of space-time constituted by the periodic repetition of the component. Thus the living thing has an exterior milieu of materials, an interior milieu of composing elements and composed substances, an intermediary milieu of membranes and limits, and an annexed milieu of energy sources and actions-perceptions (p. 345).

In this understanding, the 'living thing' comes to the fore as an evasive permeable structure that emerges in a 'block of space-time', continuously traversed by elements – cells, bacteria – that are interchangeably on the inside, on the outside or at the border. The milieu lacks every point of orientation. It cannot be perceived from a center, because this center would be a part of the environment from another point of view. The 'living thing' is, in the somewhat more visual idiom of Tim Ingold (2011), a "knot in in a tissue of knots, whose constituent strands, as

they become tied up with other strands, in other knots, comprise the meshwork" (p. 70). As such, the milieu is a meshwork of interdependent relations that is generative of always new connections, or knots.

Brian Massumi (2004) complicates things a bit further by adding yet another meaning, namely that of the milieu as *medium*: "In French, milieu means 'surroundings', 'medium' (as in chemistry), and 'middle'" (p. xvii). The meaning that Massumi adds to the two discerned before refers to the way particles react with and in the medium in the course of chemical processes. The medium does not only provide a background against which – or environment within which – a reaction takes place, it moreover actively enables this reaction. Drawing on James Gibson's psychology of perception, Ingold elaborates a similar understanding of medium as that what affords perception and action. It is not what we perceive or what we act upon, but rather what we perceive *in* and what we act *with* (cf. Gibson, 1986; Ingold, 2015). He argues that the sky, for instance, is not an object of perception. It is indeed not so much what we see, as what we see *in.* The sky is hence not illuminated. It is luminosity itself. The light of the sky is not what is perceived, it is rather what affords perception. Ingold (2011) makes a similar argument for sound and feeling as he made for light:

> The sight, hearing and touch of things are grounded in the experience, respectively, of light, sound and feeling. And if the former force us to attend to the surfaces of things, the latter, by contrast, redirect our attention to the medium in which things take shape and in which they may also be dissolved (p. 129).

The milieu, here understood as medium, is what affords something to happen. In relation to the chemical understanding proposed by Massumi, it can be argued that the medium that can be found in the chemists' laboratory is also that which affords a reaction to take place.

The different meanings discerned so far concern the milieu as middle, environment, and medium. It needs to be stressed that these understandings are deeply interwoven. It has been argued, for instance, that every middle is part of the environment of another middle. The question is now how these different meanings can help us to understand the activity of making maps in Campus in Camps?

In *The Unbuilt*, the participants have made a map of Dheisheh, in order to get an overview of the different unbuilt spaces. Their concern was what one of the participants has called 'the forum of the camp'. This term is defined as "the place in which people used to talk, to plan, to demonstrate, and to organize social and political practices freely and without being restricted

Figure 34: Map of Dheisheh with unbuilt plots in black.

by a certain vision or agenda but rather the vision that they decided to adapt" (Abu Aker, Al-Barbary, et al., 2013, p. 22).

The participants tracked the history of the forum of Dheisheh from the street as a locus of demonstration during the first years after the establishment of the camp onwards, in order to get a sense of the meaning of the concept of 'forum of the camp' and in order to discern actual problems related to the NGO-ization of the so-called forum. They argue that the second phase of the forum, after the street, was the youth center that was built in 1969 in order to host social, cultural and political activities and discussions. The youth center could perform this role as forum until the first Intifada in 1987. At that occasion it was shut down by the Israeli military because it was perceived as a stronghold of Palestinian political activism. The participants argue that the forum, as a site of debate, then moved to the prison in which many of the young inhabitants of the camp were locked up. Because of the huge amount of confined Palestinians the discussions and debates continued in the prison. The aftermath of the first Intifada saw an enormous increase in the presence of NGOs in the camps due to the Oslo accords. The participants argue that at that moment the NGOs tried to give shape to the forum but that they failed because of several reasons. Due to the fact that there are so many NGOs, each with its own political affiliation and criteria of access, they cannot perform the role played by the forum,

namely to offer one free space of open debate in which different voices can be heard regardless of political affiliation.

The investigations conducted in the course of this activity were aimed at surveying potential sites to recreate such a forum. The unbuilt plots that were found, were photographed and together with the map they constitute the materials of this publication that led in the end to the construction of *The Concrete Tent*. The map delineates the territory of Dheisheh. The participants have indicated the different plots of land on it. Some plots are colored black, fifteen in total. These are the unbuilt areas. As such, the map demonstrates where the unbuilt spaces can be found, how big they are and how they are situated in relation to one another.[148] By means of pictures, the reader gets an impression of what these sites look like. The publication contains a series of fifteen pictures, one for every plot.[149]

It can be argued that in the process of mapping and photographing the camp, the different meanings of the notion of milieu entangle. It is by drawing a map and taking pictures of Dheisheh that the camp as environment is visualized and becomes something that the participants can behold. In other words, it can be claimed that the camp as environment becomes a middle around which people gather. As such, the camp is a milieu in a double sense. On the one hand, it is the environment in which people live from day to day. On the other hand, it is the middle that brings people together and makes them ask questions about the future of the camp. In this case, the discussion revolves around the question how a forum of the camp can be created by means of the regeneration of unbuilt spaces. And even the third meaning of milieu, namely medium, can be discerned in the activity of mapmaking. The map as medium indeed affords the participants to gather around an issue of concern – what they have called the forum of the camp – in a way that they make the camp present in their conversation. The map makes it possible not only to discuss *about* the camp, but it makes the camp-as-map a participant in the discussion. It becomes something to think *with*.

Now, how does the milieu as middle relate to the multiplicity of relations that make up the milieu as environment? David Turnbull (1996) argues that maps not only function as spatial representations. Maps also, and most importantly, create a social space in which the map can be operative in the process of administration or government. He writes that "maps connect heterogeneous and disparate entities, events, locations, and phenomena, enabling us to see patterns that are not otherwise visible" (p. 7). Maps allow people to make sense of the world they inhabit. By underscoring the social space that maps disclose, Turnbull makes attentive to the way in which maps allow to 'grasp' reality in the sense that it is not only understood, but

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[148] See Figure 34.
[149] See Figure 35.

Figure 35: Unbuilt spaces in Dheisheh, plot n° 1 (above) and n° 8 (below).

also can be administered and governed. As such, the map is not to be localized outside the reality of the camp, but is an important operator in its becoming (cf. Latour, 1986; Turnbull, 1989).

In the processphilosophical language of Whitehead (1978), it can be argued that "the novel entity," the map, "is at once the togetherness of the 'many' which it finds, and also it is one among the disjunctive 'many' which it leaves; it is a novel entity, disjunctively among the many entities which it synthesizes" (p. 21). The 'many' of the milieu as environment are synthesized, drawn together, into the 'one' of the milieu as middle, the novel entity of the map. The mapping of the milieu, however, does not entail a redoubling. The 'novel entity' of the map draws together the 'many entities' of the camp as a living environment. This means that it offers a spatial representation of the camp. In the words of Turnbull quoted above, it connects heterogeneous and disparate entities, events, locations, and phenomena. Most importantly, however, it is situated 'disjunctively among' the many entities which it leaves. This refers to the fact that mapping is never a neutral activity and that the map does not grant its beholder a so-called objective point of view – a view from nowhere from which it is possible to go everywhere. Maps are situated representations that form an active ingredient in the becoming of the camp. With Ingold (2000), it could be argued that the map is "not forged in the ascent from a myopic, local perspective to a panoptic, global one, but in the passage from place to place, and in histories of movement and changing horizons along the way" (p. 227). At this

point, a fourth understanding of the milieu comes in, namely the milieu as point of passage. It is possible to argue that the map as representation of the camp is not located outside it. It is rather a point of passage that opens up new future possibilities.

Retaking this issue of passage in the visual idiom of the knot and the meshwork introduced before, it can be argued that just like the meshwork is drawn together by and in the knot, the camp is drawn together by and in the map. Different strands come near and entangle in the creation of the knot. Neither the map, nor the knot, however, are end points in the process of respectively mapping, or tying. Rather they are points of passage that force to slow down on the way to a future still unforeseen:

> Knots are places where many lines of becoming are drawn tightly together. Yet every line overtakes the knot in which it is tied. Its end is always loose, somewhere beyond the knot, where it is groping towards an entanglement with other lines, in other knots (Ingold, 2013, p. 132).

At this point, the fourth understanding of the milieu comes in. The notion milieu denotes not only the environment that surrounds us, the middle that we can attend to, and the medium that affords us capacity to perceive and act. It is also a place of *passage*, of indeterminacy and hence present-oriented possibility. It is the place where past and future grope together and entangle, a passage point where the direction is still unknown and topic of debate.

As passage point it is reminiscent of the middle of the river that Serres' swimmer crosses. Serres (1997) sketches the image of a swimmer who crosses a broad river that floats between two banks. The movement of the swimmer, however, cannot be defined as going from point A to a point B already known beforehand. When he reaches the middle of the river, where he cannot touch ground anymore, he loses sense of direction, which opens up the possibility to go in every direction. Likewise, the map allows for "learning in this blank middle that has no direction from which to find all directions" (Serres, 1997, p. 7). The map constitutes a passage through the middle. It is important to give a more positive rendering of what Turnbull has termed the social space of the map. He is definitely right in arguing that maps do not only represent reality, but actively shape it in the practices of administration and government that they afford. It would, however, be limiting to curb our understanding of the social space of the map to such an all too critical and political perspective. With Stengers, it is possible to conceive of this social space not only as an arena of subjugation, but also, and most importantly, as a forum where it is possible to think about the future of the camp *with* the camp, made present as map. In this case, it made it possible to discern possibilities for reinstalling a place to

discuss and debate within the infrastructure of Dheisheh. Moreover, it made it possible to raise the question what it means to create such a place within a refugee camp.

In conclusion, to understand the map as 'disjunctively among' the entities of the camp which the map synthesizes – as we did based on the quote by Whitehead –, decelerates the speed with which ever more and ever new relations come into being within the generative meshwork of the camp. It makes it possible to slow down around the camp as map, as a middle around which people gather in their discussion about the creation of a future forum of the camp. To situate this map among the other entities underscores the fact that the map does not allow to reach a point outside the camp, an Archimedean point that due to its exteriority would allow to pass judgement. The fact that the map is 'among' other entities requires to understand it as a new knot in the meshwork of the camp. A knot that should not merely be understood as a political operator aimed at administering and governing the camp, but can also be conceived of as a pedagogical artifice that allows to slow down. It is here, in the transformation of the milieu as environment into the milieu as middle – a new knot in the meshwork –, that it is possible to discern this fourth understanding of milieu, viz. the milieu as a site of possibility and indetermination. With the making of stories, comparisons, and maps, three requirements of the study practice of Campus in Camps have been discussed. The next section focuses on the fourth and last requirement, more precisely the importance of use.

Making Common II

The fourth and last requirement for study practices in Campus in Camps is the requirement to make terms of use. Making terms of use for the sites under scrutiny, for instance the Arroub Pools, the Fawwar square, or the Al-Feniq garden, seems to be an integral part of the study practices of Campus in Camps. In this section the investigations conducted during the preparations for the publication of *The Square* are taken as a starting point to think about practices of use and the possibility of common use. In the course of this initiative the participants investigated the meaning of public space in the camp in relation to a specific square commissioned by UNRWA.[150] Via an action approach they experimented with different ways of using this space. The challenge was to find a way of gathering in this open space that was until then in principle public, but in practice barely used.

As a preliminary comment on the concept of use, it is important to note that the term use does not define in this context an instrumental or intentional relation between a subject that

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[150] See Figure 36.

makes use of an object being used. In line with the argumentation laid out in the fourth section of Chapter Four, it can be claimed that use is a practice of the middle voice, an action in which both agent and patient become indistinguishable, or are rather generated through the activity of use. Take for instance the example of drinking coffee. From experience we have learned that not every sip of coffee is the result of a fully intentional act – taking in caffeine in order to stay awake, getting warm when it is cold outside – on behalf of a fully conscious subject, but that it is rather in the activity of drinking coffee that the coffee lets itself be drunk while the drinker accepts becoming the subject of the action of drinking. Use is the name of the reciprocal agreement between two parties that henceforth will become known as object and subject, or in this case coffee and drinker. Agamben (2016) describes this process as follows:

> Every use is first of all use of self: to enter in a relation of use with something, I must be affected by it, constitute myself as one who makes use of it. Human being and world are, in use, in a relationship of absolute and reciprocal immanence; in the using of something, it is the very being of the one using that is first of all at stake (p. 30).

An important characteristic of use seems to be the fact that the components that use brings together find themselves in a relationship of interdependency towards one another. All components are thoroughly enmeshed with each other in the course of the activity of use which makes that one depends on the other as long as the activity of use takes place. From the moment one of the components disappears, use becomes impossible. In the context of the aforementioned example one could think of the situation when you run out of coffee and hence can no longer commit yourself to the activity of drinking which until then constituted you as a drinker. Now, how does this conception of use as processual and interdependent relate to what has been called the requirement to make terms of use?

In the context of the initiative of *The Square*, the participants tried to think about the meaning of public space within a camp in relation to the public square that was constructed in Fawwar in 2007. Fawwar has the reputation of being a rather conservative camp in which women are often assigned the role of staying at home and taking care for the household. Hence, most of the women were very skeptical about the establishment of the square when the UNRWA came up with this idea. The women argued that they would have no right to the square because women did not not feel authorized to be present in public spaces. The experience that an external authority (i.c. UNRWA) cannot make a public space via the construction of a square instigated a learning process around the question what it means that a space is public, how the presence of the square normalizes or legitimizes the camp, and

Figure 36: The Al-Qassas square in Fawwar, commissioned by UNRWA.

how such a place can be used so it is not just 'made free' by an external authority, but taken in hands as a commons by a community of people who henceforth become commoners?

After a discussion in the Women's Center that helped to articulate the unease the women felt in relation to the square, they decided to research which new uses would be possible by means of *using* the square, instead of taking the feeling of exclusion as a critical point from which it is possible to denounce the publicness of the square. The action they organized on the 19th of December 2012 consisted of three activities: cleaning, cooking, and an English class. In the early morning the women started to clean the square. At first sight, this seems to be a banal act, but it is noteworthy that it acquired a specific political importance in the course of the Egyptian revolt. The day after President Mubarak was forced to step down, protesters began cleaning the Tahrir Square. The alienated 'public' space, a space installed by and associated with the fallen regime, was reappropriated by the people (Hilal & Petti, 2013).

Inspired by this gesture of care, the women cleaned the square in Fawwar in order to regain a sense of ownership over the place, to feel at ease in a place where they felt until then that they did not belong to. Before noon, they started the preparations for making Maftoul, a traditional Palestinian dish.[151] In the discussions prior to that day, the women had expressed a strong desire to learn English. Therefore, the cooking exercise served as a step-up to the English class that was organized later that day in the square. Cleaning, cooking, and learning English were three activities that helped the women to regain ownership over a place of which they had been alienated due to its 'publicness' (Hamouz & Al-Turshan, 2013). This peculiar relation between space and use was expressed by one of the participants: "Open spaces can be considered a body or material, while the social relations, or well-being, are the soul – both

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[151] See Figure 37.

Figure 37: Preparations for the event.

of them reinforce and build each other to create the common" (Abu Aker, Al-Barbary, et al., 2013, p. 35).

It is in the use of the square as a commons, that the community that gathers there constitutes itself as a community of commoners, as people dependent on and affected by this common space. In addition, it is also in the use of the square as commons, that the space is taken care of, and is regenerated by new possibilities of common use that were initiated by the participants. In adopting an action approach to the questions that instigated this activity, the women did not so much inquire what public space is in general, or who they are in relation to this public space that they do not feel to have access to. The requirement to make terms of use forced to reformulate these questions in a speculative-pragmatic mode: What is this square where we do not feel to belong to capable of, and correlatively, what are we capable of in making use of the square?[152]

What emerged around the public square in Fawwar can be understood as a *culture of use*. In her work with Tobie Nathan, Stengers coined this term in order to grasp what it means that people gather in order to discuss and debate about the possible uses of a what she calls a *pharmakon*, a force of which the efficacy is unstable and dependent upon how it is used. The examples include not only drugs and medicines, but also rabs, djinns, and mlouks –

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[152] See Figure 38.

Figure 38: Learning English in the square.

divinities that can exert force over the lifes of the people who honor them, or devour those who refuse to do so. Nathan (2012) discerns three phases in the coming into being of a culture of use. First of all, there is the appearance of a force of which the efficacy is ambivalent, capable of both fostering and ruining, curing and poisoning. In a second phase, a collective concerned by this force constitutes itself in order to investigate the modalities of control over this force. The third and concluding phase coincides with instituting a culture of use. This means to give shape to a continuous process of learning how to use this force. Nathan refers in this context to the appearance of Dionysius in Ancient Greece, but it is also possible to think it in relation to the appearance of a public square in contemporary Palestine.

The public square commissioned by UNRWA constituted a new force in the camp, one that moreover could easily be converted into a threat – 'the camp is a living environment like any other, since there are even public squares'. Therefore, it was necessary to think about possible uses of this force. A collective concerned by the force of the public square, the women of Fawwar, gathered in order to learn what it means that this square is a public square, and moreover, they learned that its publicness is never granted, but needs to be achieved. Concerned with the possibility of a shared use of the space, and vigilant about an understanding of public as 'for anyone' – from previous experiences, they had learned indeed that they were practically excluded from such an 'anyone' –, they experimented with different activities that allowed to reclaim the square, partially appropriate it through use. Stengers (2012) explains that:

> The culture of uses, and not just uses justified by a diagnosis or aiming at an end, is a problem of collective interest, which requires a collective knowledge. This can be

called a collective expertise in the old sense where the expertise referred first of all to a knowledge derived from experience and cultivated in its relationship with experience (p. 199).[153]

In relation to cultures of use, Stengers underscores two aspects. In the first place, it is about collectives. She does not write about individuals that acquire insight in how something can be used, but about collectives that produce knowledge in relation to the pharmacological force – a drug, a djinn, a square – around which they gather. This knowledge, and this is the second aspect, is experiential. It cannot be derived from a general rule or a faraway objective, but should be related to experiences of use. This requires an experimental investigation of how this force can be used. It suspends every moral consensus – 'it is prohibited to use drugs', 'djinns should be averted', 'the construction of a public square normalizes the exceptionality of the camp' –, and opens the way for a *technical consensus*, the construction of an apparatus, a way of gathering around a matter of study, that allows to become collectively affected by something, to give something the power to make us think (cf. Stengers & Ralet, 1991). This refers to another meaning of consensus as that what everyone agrees on, as unanimity. It refers to the etymological meaning of consensus in which we find *con-*, meaning 'together', and *-sensus*, from *sentire*, meaning 'to feel'. Consensus denotes the experience of collectively being affected by something. It does not mean to think the same, but *to think together*. A consensus, moreover, can never be taken for granted, but needs to be achieved. This achievement, Stengers argues, is a technical operation – therefore it is a technical consensus – that requires the invention of a way of gathering around something that is being convoked so that it can collectively affect us, make us think.

Having started from Agamben's definition of use and the example of coffee, the study activity of the women of Fawwar as we have tried to grasp it through the lens of Nathan and Stengers, now necessitates a slight modification of the concept of use. What is made present even more than the interdependency between who uses and what is used, is the generativity of the process. Here, the example of the coffee fails greatly, since the use of coffee is always an extractive use. After the last sip, the relation dissolves. The use of the square on the contrary is not extractive, but generative (cf. Capra & Mattei, 2015). It generates new relationships between the people and the square, new activities that can be performed there (such as learning English), new social bonds between the people that have gathered. Gutwirth

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[153] "La culture des usages, et non des utilisations justifiées par un diagnostic ou visant une fin, est un problème d'intérêt collectif, qui requiert un savoir collectif, ce que l'on peut appeler une expertise collective au vieux sens où l'expertise désignait d'abord un savoir issu de l'expérience et cultivé dans ses rapports avec l'expérience".

and Stengers (2016) explain that: "Generative defines in a transversal way a capacity to beget, to engender, or to generate. It needs to be distinguished from a reproduction of the same by the same, and from a manufacture for which an intentional agent would be responsible" (p. 336, fn97).[154] The use of the square as commons allows for the coming into being of new relationships between people and the square, for the emergence of a sense of belonging. The process does not extract the potential of the square to the full, neither does it exclude other possible uses, it rather activates the space in a way that it is no longer public in the sense of commissioned by an external authority, 'for anyone', but rather that it is *made* public, that the use of the square gathers a public. As such, it is possible to broaden Agamben's claim that every use is first of and foremost use of self to include also the level of the collective. It is groups of people that initiate common use and that in their relation to that which gathers them constitute themselves as a collectivity of commoners affected by what makes them think, in this case the possible uses of public space in the camp.

Returning to the requirement with which this section began, namely the making of terms of use, it is possible to ask the question how the making of terms of use relates to the process of use itself. As we have seen in the activities of the women of Fawwar, there were a few discussion sessions before the event took place, but in all there was not that much reflection on terms of use beforehand. With Ingold (2000) it is possible to argue that "making arises within the process of use, rather than use disclosing what is, ideally if not materially, ready-made (p. 354). Terms of use for the square are generated within the process of using the square, making it a public square. In order to meet the fourth requirement, it is hence necessary to experiment with different possible uses. Moreover, it should be noted that the requirement to make terms of use in no way coincides with a prescription for future use. Since the use is common and generative, there is always something that escapes every possible definition of the use that can or could be made. Common use – using something as commons, not as private property – generates not only the commons – the square as space made public – and the commoners – the women as belonging to the square, as gathered in the square. It generates also, and maybe most importantly, commoning – future processes of use of the public square. There is indeed 'no commons without commoning' (Bollier, 2014; De Angelis & Stavrides, 2010; Linebaugh, 2008).

In short, a threefold generativity discloses itself in the course of the process of use. Use is first and foremost generative of what is being used. At first sight, this might sound counter-

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[154] "Génératif définit de manière transversale une capacité de faire naître, faire émerger, engendrer, à distinguer d'une reproduction du même par le même ou d'une fabrication dont un agent intentionnel serait responsable".

intuitive as use is often conceived as extractive. But, what is meant is that use does not necessarily entail extraction, but that it can also foster care. Cleaning the square allowed the participants to gain a sense of belonging to it. It is by cleaning, taking care, that they made the plaza a commons. Secondly, use is generative of the community that uses. It is by using that the participants got used to the square and that they became capable of making common use of it. Finally, use is generative of the terms of use by which the association of users makes use of what is being used. Such terms of use can however never be formulated in general, for once and for all, but are subject to continuous careful reconsideration. Due to the prevalence of the notion of use in the aforementioned sentences, it has probably become redundant to stress that use is a highly interdependent affair, and that it is impossible to discern what comes first – commons, commoners, or commoning – as they all emerge through use.

In the aftermath of the event, the women started to raise questions about what other kind of activities could be organized in the square and how they could keep it open for other people that possibly might be interested in the activities. Agamben (2016) conceives of use as a mode of habitation in a similar sense as was outlined in Chapter Four. He explains that "every use is a polar gesture: on the one hand, appropriation and habit; on the other, loss and expropriation. To use […] means to oscillate unceasingly between a homeland and an exile: to inhabit" (p. 87). Making use of the square, making it common means to inhabit it in the sense that the women regain a sense of belonging to the square that nevertheless does not exclude other people, but rather, on the contrary opens the possibility of engaging them in this collective process of use, otherwise known as commoning.

Thinking With Artifices

The aim of the chapters of the third part was to further elaborate the pedagogy of study that was tentatively formulated in the course of the fourth chapter. In this part, the question of the possibility of an ecology of study practices was relayed to the experimental university Campus in Camps. Adopting Stengers' ecology of practices, this university has been grasped in terms of the requirements and obligations its study practices bring into play. The focus of the fifth chapter was the obligation of Campus in Camps. The notion of obligation has been used as the name for what makes the people engaged in a practice, scientific or study, think or hesitate. It is what prevents them from jumping to conclusions and instead stay with the trouble. Therefore, it needs to be carefully distinguished from the notion of occasion. In the case of Campus in Camps, the camp itself has been the occasion to engage in study practices,

but it was not what made the participants think. All too quickly the camp can be invoked in order to call guilty and claim innocence. What emerged, rather, while studying the camp and what made the participants think was the fact that people already live there for decades and that a genuine sociality emerged that they tried to grasp in words such as common. What made the participants of Campus in Camp think and hesitate was not the camp itself, but rather life in exile as has been argued in Chapter Five.

Whereas the fifth chapter was centered around the question of *what* made the participants of Campus in Camps think, the sixth chapter was focused on the question of *how* they were required to think, what they had to do in order to make their thinking study. In this context, four requirements were distinguished that thinking had to meet in order to pass the test as study, namely making stories, making comparisons, making maps, and making terms of use. Here, it is important to distinguish requirements from results. This means to resist the temptation to conceive of stories, comparisons, maps, and terms of use as the results or the traces of the process of thinking, of what remains when study has done its job. Instead, conceiving of it as requirements for thinking makes clear that it is not what comes after thinking, or what is generated in the process of thinking, but rather that it constrains thinking by making the achievement of study possible.

Indeed, as argued in the third chapter, requirements and obligations are not so much conditions for thoughts, but rather *constraints on thinking*. They do not facilitate thought or make it possible, but rather constrain thinking in order for it to become study. It means to assume that thinking happens always and everywhere, and that there is hence no necessity for a university that would create the conditions for thought or where it would be possible to learn to think. Think we must. In line with Dewey (1958) it is possible to argue that it is perhaps more precise to say 'it thinks' rather than 'I think'. Thinking, in this view, is like a raging storm that sweeps by and that absorbs everyone and everything it overblows. Thinking is not an activity to be done on behalf of an intentional subject that chooses to think, it is rather what one gets caught up in, like one gets caught up in the storm. It is not to play with thoughts, but rather to be put at play by thinking. Practices, however, tame the whims and fancies of capricious thinking by steering thought in the direction of obligations and submit it to requirements. That is why it has been argued that practices do not shape the conditions for thinking, but rather constrain thinking.

At this moment, it is important to pay attention to how *thinking* comes to the fore in the work of Stengers and to relay it to Campus in Camps in order to see how her understanding of thinking works in an educational context. The phrase 'make us think' seems to run like a refrain throughout Stengers' work. At no point, however, it is made clear what it exactly means

to think. The issue of what it means to think, moreover, seems to be all the more urgent as Stengers' refrain 'make us think' seems to run counter to the refrain of this dissertation, 'think we must'. Therefore, the challenge will be to specify what the thinking of 'make us think' entails in order not to contradict the thinking of 'think we must'. In other words, it will be a matter of experimenting with refrains, of trying to weld 'makes us think' with 'think we must', and in this respect the study practice of Campus in Camps will prove to be very helpful tool.

Based on the activities with which thinking is allied and from which it is separated, it is possible to guess what thinking could mean according to Stengers. Beginning with the verbs that thinking is contrasted to, knowing, judging and recognizing seem to be the most prevalent. The notion of thinking seems to function as an operator to turn the modern contradiction between those who know – or those who claim to know – and those who believe – or those whose attachments are denounced as illusions by the ones who know –, into a contrast between diverging practices that all are attached to what makes them think – be it the neutrino or the Virgin. As such, thinking is opposed to *knowing*. Whereas the one who knows can only recognize not-knowing, the one who thinks can encounter others who think, others who are, like herself, attached via practices to what makes her hesitate and think. Hence, thinking is also opposed to *recognizing* because the one who recognizes can only recognize what she already knows. Ultimately, thinking is opposed to *judging*. This relates back to the modern contradiction Stengers reacted against. However, instead of criticizing those who know because of their contempt for those who believe, Stengers chose to develop the framework of the ecology of practices that allowed to confront practices in their diverging requirements and obligations, instead of a perspective that, again, would provide a position from which it is possible to judge.

More interesting perhaps are the activities that Stengers relates to thinking, instead of the ones she separates it from. Here we find first of all *feeling*. This underscores that thinking is not a purely cognitive capacity, but rather that it has a strong affective component. Thoughts can be felt according to Stengers, they are lures for feeling. As such, they incite imagination and action, also related to this affective component of thinking. Thinking activates a sense of the possible and makes its insistence felt. This makes that those caught up in thinking acquire a capacity to imagine and act. Hence, Stengers argues that thinking is a way of *testing*, of seeing how for instance a proposition works when it is uttered, what kind of feelings and affects it elicits in the people who hear it. Thirdly, thinking relates to *learning*. Learning, for Stengers, means a collective process around something that has gathered different people but of whom no one can claim to know. Therefore, it is required to think. Since learning is opposed to knowing, it is while thinking impossible to say 'and thus'. It means never to jump to

conclusions, and instead always to hesitate, to check whether all dimensions of the problem were taken into account, whether everyone and everything that may be affected by the decision of the 'and thus' has been listened to. Thinking suspends every 'and thus', every judgement based on knowledge, and initiates a learning process around a problematic situation.

Lastly, thinking is related to *paying attention*, and it will be argued that the notion of attention will be able to transform the contradiction between 'make us think' and 'think we must' into a contrast. According to Stengers, paying attention means to take care of the consequences of a decision that is risked being taken. It is, however, important to note that this is not limited to scrutinizing the probable, but that it also entails activating the possible. Hence, on the one hand, it means to attend to those who will be affected by the decision and in what way. On the other hand, it means to attend to the possible that makes its insistence felt. As such, it is the capacity to feel the lure of the possible that has become numbed by the widespread logic that 'there is no alternative', a logic that requires a position of knowing and judging, and that hence prevents thinking. When Stengers argues that something 'makes us think', this means first and foremost that it requires us to pay attention, not to shut our eyes for consequences or possibilities. Therefore, it is possible to argue that our capacity to think – think we must –, to feel the insistence of the possible, a possible that requires attention, is often numbed by anesthetizing policies and discourses that claim to know that 'we do not have an option', and that hence practices that 'make us think' are required to activate our sense for the possible, that constrain thinking by means of their requirements and obligations and hence force us to pay attention.

At this point, it could be argued that the study practice of Campus in Camps has been a test in this experiment with refrains. In spite of having always already been able to think, engaging in study practices that forced the participants to pay attention to what is happing to the camp, made it possible that a reciprocal capture between the camp dwellers and life in exile, between practitioners and obligation could come into being. Returning to the four requirements expounded in the course of this chapter, it is possible to argue that what we have witnessed is what is possible to call with Stengers a *thinking with artifices*. The aim of the study practices of Campus in Camps was to slow down thinking, avoid hasty conclusions, and make the participants hesitate. This allowed to generate a way of thinking about the camp that refrained from foregrounding either its exceptionality, or its probable normalization. Instead, the participants discussed what life in exile could mean for them, developed a language to grasp their experiences, and engaged in initiatives that tried to execute social and spatial interventions in the camp. In order to think according to the requirements of the study

practices of Campus in Camps, it was necessary for the participants to think with stories, to think with comparisons, to think with maps, and to think with common use.

In short, and referring to Stengers (2017b) it can be argued that they were required to think with artifices,

> whose effectiveness is to force the divergent reasons to express themselves in a way that asserts that each one needs others to become what it aims to be, namely an adequate reason for the problematic situation itself. This means that the situation becomes able to resist arguments claiming to impose themselves by disqualifying others. It is thus not a question, as in the experimental art, to purify the scene of proof but to densify it, to give consistency to the interdependency of the reasons of which none can avail of the capacity to define 'the problem' (p. 45).[155]

The efficacy of artifices is that they give the problem the chance to pose itself in its own terms, that they give a situation the power to gather a thinking public. As such, it can be argued that it is possible to discern three features of an artifice.

First, there is a *social feature*. Artifices bring together people in a specific way in which they need to adopt a role. Stengers (2015a) gives the example of citizen juries where ordinary citizens are recruited to pass judgement on a case. Their way of gathering and the role they assume, prevents them from taking a decision based on personal tastes or convictions, but rather requires them to speak as a representative of the people and to decide accordingly. In the case of Campus in Camps, the participants assume the role of students, which means that they are required to slow down around what they are thinking about. It involves that the participants do not call guilty or claim innocence, but that they engage in study practices to map the condition they live in and try to think through what is actually happening. This feature is most strongly present in the activity on the square in Fawwar.

Second, there is a *technical feature*. Artifices are not only about bringing people together in a certain way rather than another, but require them to produce something around which they can think. In the previous section, it has been shown that participants need, for instance, to write stories, take photographs, and make maps in order to generate a common cause for

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[155] "dont l'efficace est de forcer les raisons divergentes à s'exprimer sur un mode qui affirme que chacune a besoin des autres pour devenir elle-même ce qu'elle vise à être, une raison adequate à la situation devenue elle-même problématique, devenue capable de resister aux arguments prétendant s'imposer en disqualifiant les autres. Il ne s'agit pas, comme dans l'art experimental, de purifier la scène de la preuve mais de la densifier, de donner consistence à l'interdépendance des raisons dont aucune ne peut se prévaloir de la capacité de définir 'le problème'".

thinking. As such, the creation of artifices requires a certain technical capacity. This feature is demonstrated in the writing of stories and the making of maps.

The third feature of the artifice is a *material feature*. This relates to the second feature, in that the aim of technical production of for instance maps and stories is not an end in itself. On the contrary, what is produced is study material. In the case of Campus in Camps it is used to gather a public and engage them in a discussion about an issue based on the material (e.g. pictures, maps) that they have worked on. Salient examples of this feature are the comparative pictures of Dheisheh and Doha.

In sum, the artifice functions as an assemblage that is at once social, technical, and material, an apparatus of activation as it has been called in the fourth chapter, to give something, in the case of Campus in Camps life in exile, the power to gather a thinking public. Artifices initiate a collective learning process by means of the experimental convocation of something that makes the people who gather around it think. In an interview with Bordeleau, Stengers (2011) makes clear that "the artifice complicates the process, slows it down, welcomes all doubts and objections, and even actively incites them, while also transforming them and listening in a different mode" (p. 27). In that sense, it could be argued that the artifice disrupts the conversation in which everyone gives his or her reasons, in which everyone comes together to come to a rational agreement, instead the artifice forces to go slower, to stop for a moment the exchange of reasonable arguments, to hesitate, and hence, to give something the power to make them think. Therefore, thinking with artifices does not offer any theoretical guarantees. It is not warranted that making maps, for instance, could work for another problem through which other people are affected. Thinking with artifices is a pragmatic challenge comparable to the recipes of the alchemists or the rituals of the witches encountered in Chapter Four. Its efficacy has to be verified by the "Is that true?", "Are you sure?", "Why do you claim that?", questions that are posed when something is given the power to slow down reasoning because its existence cannot be neglected anymore. Hence, it requires practices that instigate the apparatus of activation by generating artifices to think with.

Conclusion

Conclusion
Another University Is Possible

World and University

The aim of this dissertation has been to reconsider the relation between university and society from an educational point of view. It has been explained that the debate over this relation has been dominated by two major positions. These two positions make up the ruminations of common sense toward which this dissertation is situated. Together they turn the relation between university and society into the problematic situation I have tried to engage with. The two positions constitute two poles in a more variegated landscape of diverging opinions that I have sought to activate and transform by studying the problematic situation of the relation between university and society. Before summarizing my argument, these two positions will be briefly outlined.

First, there is the call for more *autonomy*. This position is often embraced by scientists and scholars who argue that academic research is valuable in and of itself and that the public should not meddle with scientific issues. It is assumed that academics have the best insight in to what might be important to research, and how, and that the scientists should be unhindered in their search for knowledge. Moreover, it is argued that the free and disinterested pursuit of knowledge for knowledge's sake benefits not only the university and the academics, but also, and most importantly, society. Indeed, too much interference by society – and hence the public and power – in the university might corrupt the scientific process. This position is not only taken by biomedical and exact sciences, but also by scholars in the social sciences

and the humanities, as the latter often feel threatened by what can be discerned as the second dominant position in the debate.

Second is the call for more *instrumentalization*. This call is not always an open and explicit one, but is voiced via policy measures that reconstruct the university in the image of a producer and provider of useful knowledge. In this conception, which has been actualized increasingly since the postwar era, the university emerges as an institution that creates commodifiable expertise (e.g. patents) and that disseminates its knowledge via course modules (e.g. educational credits). Arguments in favor of this position include mainly financial and economic claims, for instance the contention that universities should be held accountable in view of the substantial investments made in them on behalf of the society. Therefore, universities should produce expertise that proves its worth in its capacity to sell and solve. The knowledge produced should thus either be easily marketable, or be able to eliminate a problem. Besides, the education of the students is mainly understood as preparation for the labor market.

Although both positions obviously have strong implications for the university as an educational setting, neither of the positions seems to take the university as a site for education seriously. Whereas the first position does not seem to bother about education as long as academic freedom is granted, the second position seems to endorse a conception of education as a goal-oriented activity, more precisely the awarding of (preferably useful) diplomas. In this dissertation it has been proposed to take study as a starting point to investigate the relation between university and society in order to come to an educational understanding thereof. Study is a concept that has been rediscovered in recent years in educational theory and philosophy (cf. Lewis, 2013; Ruitenberg, 2017). Not only does it bear the promise of a different narrative with which to understand the educational activity of the university as opposed to learning (e.g. active learning, service learning) – or, as argued in Chapter Four, a perhaps more interesting conception of learning –, but also it seems to have its own particularity and specificity in relation to the practices of the university (cf. *universitas studii*).

A focus on the problem of the relation between university and society, and an interest in the concept of study as an educational way into this problem led to the formulation of the following research question:

How to situate study in the relation between university and society?

The ways in which the relation between university and society has been problematized was the starting point for the literature review.

In this literature review, it has been argued that in general two main approaches can be discerned in the scientific and academic discourses on the topic. On the one hand, there are texts that propose a certain idea of the university. Texts pertaining to this strand of literature include Kant's *The conflict of the faculties*, Humboldt's *On the spirit and organizational framework of intellectual institutions in Berlin*, and Newman's lectures *The idea of a university*. This approach is distinguished by the way it sketches a general framework for the university and its relation to societal institutions in philosophical terms. In doing so, authors writing from this perspective, which has been called the transcendental-philosophical approach, tend to understand the *university as an idea*.

On the other hand, we find texts that analyze and critique trends and developments in the higher education sector in the age of academic capitalism. Texts pertaining to this strand of literature include Kerr's *The uses of the university*, and the works of Slaughter, Leslie, Rhoades, Jessop, Hoffman, and others. This approach provides an analytical framework with which it is possible to understand the entrepreneurial behaviors of the university in relation to the tightening of its relationships with state and industry. Authors writing from this perspective, which has been called the critical-sociological approach, tend to understand the *university as an organization*.

I have argued that both approaches seem to hinge on an institutional understanding of the university, although what the *university as institution* means depends on the approach adopted. For the transcendental-philosophical approach, the institution of the university seems to function mainly as a way to put flesh on the bone of the idea of the university that is brought forward in philosophical terms. Explaining how the relation between the different faculties should be conceived (e.g. Kant), or proposing how the university can relate to other intellectual institutions such as the school and the academy (e.g. Humboldt) is a way of articulating the idea of the university. For the critical-sociological approach, by contrast, the institution of the university seems to indicate mainly a zero-degree for the process of its increasing capitalization in the knowledge economy. Analyzing how different commercial and other-than-commercial organizations have nested themselves around the university allows these theorists to criticize how these organizations have enforced transformations in the institutional value framework of the university.

Furthermore, next to this reliance on the university as institution, both approaches seem to share a forgetfulness about the medieval university. Neither of the two perspectives makes reference to the *universitas magistrorum et scolarium* of the 12th century. This forgetfulness inspired an excursus on the emergence of the first universities in the Middle Ages in order to retrieve another way of looking at the relation between university and society.

This excursus on the medieval university has shown us, first, that from its inception onwards, the university was entangled with societal issues through and through, not only in the sense that the university was influenced by the society in which it took shape, or that there was a societal imprint on the working of a university, but most importantly, in the sense that the university provided a place and time to engage with societal issues via texts, and to study these societal issues. One example is the process of urbanization that occurred in medieval Italy, which put forward the question of how to live together outside the hierarchical order of feudalism and inside the more egalitarian order of the emerging city-states. Due to the presence of translations of, for instance, the *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, an important document in Byzantine law written under Emperor Iustinian, people could gather around these texts and study them.

This brings us to the second thing we learned from the medieval university; namely, the precise meaning of the word *universitas*. It does not denote merely an idea of universality of knowledge or a universality of humankind. Rather, its literal translation is that of both association and guild. It has been argued that it is important to retain the two different meanings. The translation of *association* stresses the fact that the collective aspect is an indispensable feature of the university. Study cannot be done alone, but relies on the presence of other people, masters and students, who gather around the same text. At this point, the second meaning, of *guild*, comes in. The way in which the students come together around the text is not just to discuss the text, or to exchange opinions on it, but to deal in a technical way with what has become material for study. The notion of guild brings to the fore that studying is a technical way of dealing with materials. Together, the social, material, and technical features of the *universitas magistrorum et scolarium* emphasize that it should not be understood as just a gathering of people, but as a *practice*.

Returning to our first lesson from the Middle Ages – the intertwinement of the university and societal issues – we proposed to adopt an ecological approach. Such an approach is characterized by the features of interdependency, generativity, and a concern for matters of living and dying on a shared planet. It has been demonstrated that an ecological approach has already been elaborated in relation to the university. Whereas Ron Barnett has proposed the *ecological university* as an idea of the university for our current times, Susan Wright has placed herself in the tradition of academic capitalism by scrutinizing the interrelations between different commercial or other-than-commercial organizations and the *university in a knowledge ecology*.

At that point I discerned a gap in the literature on the university. Both the transcendental-philosophical as well as the critical-sociological tradition have received an ecological

interpretation in the work of both Ron Barnett and Susan Wright, but neither of them focus particularly on the *practices of a university*. An interesting path to take seemed to be to tie the ecological approach to the understanding of the university as a practice – the second lesson from the 12th century. Therefore, and borrowing from Isabelle Stengers, I have proposed to understand the university from the point of view of an ecology of practices. This point of view promises to give way to a theoretical account that is situated by and engaged with practices. Moreover, and here the ecological aspect comes in, it makes it possible to understand how practices engage with other practices, how they maintain their border, and how they draw from and give back to their environment. Inquiring into the university from the point of view of study practices allows for an account that is *immanent*, rather than transcendental, that is *affirmative*, rather than critical, and that is, most importantly, *educational* rather than philosophical or sociological.

On the basis of Stengers' ecology of practices and the study practices of the Palestinian experimental university Campus in Camps I have tried to give way to a third possibility outside the dominant positions of the plea for more academic freedom on the one hand, and the tendency of instrumentalization on the other hand. Slowing down the marches of both the scientists and scholars claiming "More money! More autonomy!" and the public officials demanding "More output! More accountability!", I propose the slogan "Make a university!".

But, what could making a university mean? In the remainder of this conclusion I will outline some introductory notes on an ecology of study practices.

The Adventure of Study

Throughout this dissertation, the concept of study practice has been elaborated in relation to both the theoretical work of Isabelle Stengers on the philosophy of Whitehead (Part Two) and the Palestinian experimental university Campus in Camps (Part Three). Zigzagging through my thoughts on Whitehead's proposition concerning the university on the one hand, and my analysis of the activities of Campus in Camps on the other hand, will make it possible to propose a concept of study practice situated by a particular practice. Indeed, *it matters what university we study to study the university with*. Let us, however, take Whitehead's proposition on the university as a starting point for our zigzagging movement.

On the occasion of the inauguration of the Harvard Business School in 1929, Whitehead gave the address *Universities and their function*. He started his speech by proposing to understand the university as a 'home of adventures'. The aim of the fourth chapter of this

dissertation was to grasp Whitehead's enigmatic message. This entailed, first, inquiring into what his notion of adventure could mean. It has been argued that Whitehead, who endorses a conception of thinking as a speculative gesture that welds the possible to problems that make common sense ruminate, understands the adventure as just such a speculative operation. The point of departure for every adventure is the landscape of conflicting opinions concerning a problematic situation, the *ruminations of common sense*. To initiate an adventure means, however, not to denounce these opinions in order to unveil the truth – as if there would be something more true than the hopes, fears, dreams, and doubts that are related to a situation that is perceived as problematic – but to activate this landscape of diverging opinions in a way that makes something present, so this landscape of often contradictory claims can be transformed into a fabulous scenery of contrasting shades.

The *right of return*, the right to go back to the houses and territories from which the Palestinians were expelled from after the Nakba in 1948, is what makes the common sense of Dheisheh Refugee Camp in the West Bank ruminate. It is the landscape of diverging and conflicting opinions on this matter that Alessandro Petti and Sandi Hilal activated with the *Back to the future* seminar, the first activity of Campus in Camps in 2012. During this seminar the participants were encouraged to envisage the future of the camp in 2040. It appeared that there were many different and conflicting ways of envisaging the future of Dheisheh. Some wrote on the continued struggle of the people that still were living in the camp, while others dreamed about a formal possibility of return and the camp turning into a museum, still others reported on a civil war that would take place, during which the Palestinians acquired their right of return. It is clear that the right of return kept the participants captivated; it was the right of return that made common sense ruminate.

At that time, the question was how to allow for another way of relating to the right of return. How to begin to think about inhabiting the camp and being a refugee in a different way than the ones that were so dividing? How to give the camp itself the power to make the participants think instead of giving their opinions on the right of return? This does not mean that these opinions and the divides they laid bare were not important, but rather that they should be transformed somehow in order to become able to relate to the camp and each other in a different way. It is at that point that the participants realized that, via their discussions, time and again the same conflicting opinions arose, and that somehow the camp itself had to become a vital ingredient in their conversation, that it could no longer remain something to think and talk *about*, but that it had to become something to think and talk *with*. It is at that point that they realized that the camp had to be activated as a problematic situation in one

way or another and that engaging in study practices, such as walking exercises, mapping exercises, photographic exercises, and interviews, could be a relevant path to follow.

Drawing on Stengers' work on Whitehead, I have proposed to define a study practice as an *apparatus of activation*, as opposed to the experimental apparatus that in the form of Galileo's inclined plane gave way to the coming into being of modern science. Whereas the experimental apparatus is aimed at purifying the scene of proof, at taking away everything that might complicate the interpretation of the result in order for the phenomenon 'to speak for itself', the apparatus of activation is aimed at giving something the power to gather people and make them think about what gathers them. The apparatus of activation induces a process of what has been called a 'thinking with artifices' due to which matters of study come into being. It requires arts of composition, problematization, and attention.

For the participants of Campus in Camps, instigating an apparatus of activation meant, first, that they started to create study materials in and about the camp. Fieldwork exercises have proven to be a very efficacious means for the participants to situate themselves in relation to the camp and to think in the presence of the camp. *Thinking with artifices*, or studying, had for them most of all to do with telling stories about the past, present, and future of the camp, with comparing the camp of Dheisheh and the city of Doha via photographs, with mapping their immediate environment, and with experimenting with new possible uses of forsaken sites. Storytelling, comparing, mapping, and using have been the names for the artifices with which the participants made it possible to make the camp a vital ingredient in their reflections and discussions. Via their study practices they engaged with the ruminations of common sense and initiated an adventure that took up these ruminations in a learning process that took place in the presence of the camp.

As such, it can be argued that the apparatus of activation instigated by the participants of Campus in Camps had a threefold efficacy. First of all, it allowed for the *convocation of matters of study*. Due to the outcomes of the fieldwork exercises participants had something to study. This means that something (e.g. a story, a picture, a map) could become a vital ingredient in their discussion in the sense that it could make them digress from the opinions that they were usually prone to defend, but that it instead made them hesitate. Second, the apparatus of activation made it possible that a *reciprocal capture* between practitioners and obligations came into being. In this case, the practitioners are obviously the participants of Campus in Camps. The obligation, that which makes the practitioners think and hesitate and that which makes the practice come to matter to the practitioner, was not so much the camp, as argued, but the fact that people have been living in the camp for decades. Life in exile, therefore, more than the camp itself, has been the name given to what makes the practitioners of Campus in

Camps hesitate and think. Third, the efficacy of the apparatus of activation is that it takes up the hopes, fears, dreams, and doubts that make common sense ruminate in a *transformative process* by which none of the terms with which the participants conceived of their situation go unchanged.

In short, *study practices* instigate what could be called with Stengers, an apparatus of activation. Due to processes of thinking with artifices such as stories, maps, and pictures, an assemblage with social, technical, and material features comes into being that activates a problematic situation. The social feature denotes the fact that studying cannot be done in isolation. It is always a process of taking turns in a conversation. Moreover, this conversation comes forth out of a concern or a care for the matter at stake, but at the same time the conversation transforms the attitudes of concern and care, because the matter at stake is studied. Here the technical and material features come in. Study is a technical dealing with the world in a way that it transforms the world in study materials so that it becomes a matter of study. In doing so, study practices initiate learning processes that transform not only the world but also those who have become affected by this world, who have exposed themselves to it, who have studied it.

To conclude this section, and taking the relay from Stengers (2008) who took the relay from Marx and his *Eleventh Thesis on Feuerbach*, it could be argued that the wager of engaging in study practices is to change the world, not just to understand it. At least, that is, if the world, if *this* world, is given the power to change *us*, to force *our* thinking, and become affected by *it*. As such, study practices are practices of empowerment in which a problematic situation is given the power to make the people who have gathered around it think. In that way, the arts of composition, problematization, and attention are indispensable in transforming the world into a matter of study and a cause for thinking. Moreover, the empowerment of a problematic situation in turn becomes empowering for the people who have gathered around it; they become capable of learning anew, of establishing new ways of relating to what has been given the power to make them think, of response-ability.

University, Science and Study

Zigzagging through the theoretical argument on study practices on the one hand, and the analysis of the reports on the study practice of Campus in Camps on the other hand, the aim of the previous section was to propose a concept of study practices. The university, however, understood as an ecology of practices, does not merely harbor study practices. Scientific

practices also claim their place in the ecology of the university. Indeed, going back to the times of Humboldt's modern research university, it is clear that the university had two tasks to fulfill. As opposed to the academies, which were only concerned with *Wissenschaft*, and the schools, which focused only on *Bildung*, the university had to concern itself with both *Wissenschaft* and *Bildung* (1809/2018). Besides, the contemporary university of excellence as scrutinized by Slaughter, Leslie, Rhoades, and others also seems to be predominantly inhabited by profitable scientific practices, whereas study practices are increasingly deployed according to the needs of the labor market and the wants of the student-consumer (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

The question, then, is what grants the university its unity if it is conceptualized as an ecology of scientific and study practices? The question of the *unity of the university* is, however, not a new question that is particular to its conception as an ecology of practices. It can be argued that the question of the unity of the university goes back to the seminal texts of both the transcendental-philosophical and critical-sociological approaches discerned in the literature review. Indeed, Kant (1789/2018) already thought about the relation between the faculty of philosophy on the one hand, and the faculties of theology, law, and medicine on the other hand. He argued for a parliament of faculties in which the right benches would be taken by the professional disciplines, the higher faculties, and in which Reason could assume its task in the opposition seated on the left benches, the lower faculty. But Kerr (1963/2018) was also concerned about the unity of the university, which he described as increasingly becoming a multiversity, "a series of individual faculty entrepreneurs held together by a common grievance over parking" (p. 470).

More in general terms, it seems as if at different points in history, the unity of the university has been threatened by some kind of struggle. The conflict of the faculties was already mentioned, but one could think as well of C. P. Snow's Two Cultures, or the Science Wars that gave impetus to Stengers' philosophy of science. Against this background, Stengers' call for diplomacy seems all the more relevant, especially in universities where academics of both the natural-scientific and the humanistic-scholarly persuasion often live in close proximity. As such, Stengers' cosmopolitical proposal is a valuable intervention in the debate, one that activates a possibility of peace when war is more probable and that encourages scientists to present themselves in terms of the requirements and obligations of their practice, instead of in terms of the nature of the truth claims they pretend to be able to make. In the course of this dissertation, however, I have tried to put forward the concept of study practices which could be taken as a starting point to formulate a slightly different response to the question of the unity of the university in the light of struggle.

This section aims to shed light on the question of the unity of the university, a question that concerned thinkers from Kant to Kerr, in light of the conception of the university as an ecology of practices brought forward in the dissertation. First, however, I will discuss how, in line with Stengers, I conceive of a practice in general terms. Thereafter I will conceptualize the relation between scientific practices and study practices in order to come to a response to the question of what grants the unity of the university.

It has been argued that Stengers' conception of practice can be considered as constructivist, speculative, and pragmatic. First, her *constructivist* rendering of practices allows for an understanding of a practice, such as conducting experiments in physics, as a specific, temporary, and local holding together of different human and other-than-human actors. The experiment, for instance, brings together technical equipment, scientific hypotheses, postgraduate students, and professors in the pursuit of a possible discovery. The expectation of this possible discovery, moreover, plays a vital role in the assembling of the experimental situation, for instance via its capacity to raise funds and attract colleagues.

This aspect of the possible brings us to the second feature of Stengers' practice theory; namely, that it is *speculative*. This implies the commitment to understand practices in terms of what they make their practitioners capable of. This means that practices enable people to think in this way rather than another. For instance, the experiment enables the physicist to let her reasoning be objected by the outcome of the experiment. Besides, in the case of experimental success, it allows her to speak in the name of what she has discovered. Moreover, endorsing a speculative conception of practice means that the possible is always a vital ingredient of every practice, that every practice needs to be understood as being on a trajectory of transformation, that no practice can be conceived of as finished.

Finally, the third feature of Stengers' concept of practice is that it is *pragmatic*. This relates to the unfinished nature of practices referred to above. Because the possible is inevitably present in practices, it is, according to Stengers, a matter of paying attention to the possible and to make it affect transformations. This relates to an understanding of pragmatism as care for the consequences (instead of the more commonsensical identity of pragmatism as having an interest in what a practice 'yields'). Pragmatism, here, means to pay attention to the fact that no practice is good or bad in and of itself, but that it always depends on the milieu in which it tries to survive. This pharmacological quality of practices necessitates the care for the consequences that Stengers associates with pragmatism.

Apart from these three rather general characterizations of Stengers' practice theory, it is of particular importance to emphasize that practices, according to Stengers, always and inevitably constrain thinking. Moreover, the extent to which a practice manages to constrain

thinking makes up its efficacy. Stengers discerns two *constraints* within practices, namely their requirements and obligations. Whereas the notion of *obligation* denotes *what* makes practitioners do something, what makes them hesitate and think, the notion of *requirement* denotes *how* practitioners are supposed to think, the activities that they should undertake in order to be recognized as part of a practice. Practices, according to Stengers, can engage in a civilized dialogue with each other on the condition that they manage to present themselves in terms of their requirements and obligations. Differentiating requirements and obligations will allow for describing both scientific practices and study practices.

With regards to the obligations, it can be argued that in principle anything can be an obligation of a practice. For instance, the Virgin Mary can incite people to engage in the religious practice of a pilgrimage, just like the neutrino can incite people to engage in the scientific practice of an experiment. As such, the obligations do not say much about the nature and consistency of practices. Obligations denote the *what* of a practice, not the *how*. For the *how* of a practice, it is important to inquire into the requirements. Based on the writings of Latour (1999) on the scientific practices of Pierre Joliot-Curie in *Pandora's Hope*, Stengers (2005) discerns four requirements for scientific practices. This means that there are four things practitioners need to do in order for the practice to pass the test as scientific.

First of all, scientists have to create alliances with the state or industrial organization in order to receive financial means. Second, scientists need to move into their respective scientific fields in order to achieve academic recognition for their work. This means that they offer reassurance that not only they, but also the international disciplinary community, agree upon the scientific character of their work. The third requirement is called the mobilization of the world. This requirement entails that scientists come to terms with the social and technological preconditions of their practice. Most notably this includes the recruitment of young talented researchers to conduct experiments, but also the acquisition of technical equipment (e.g. devices, substances). Finally, the production of a public representation of the field is the fourth requirement. This means that the scientists have to be able to give the broader public an insight into the relevance of their field. Together these four requirements give consistency to the diversity of scientific practices by constraining how the practitioners engage in scientific practices.

Based on an analysis of the study practice of Campus in Camps, I have discerned four requirements that seem to be of importance for their practice. Generalizing these four requirements to make them count for each and every study practice is obviously something that must be done with care (if it can be done at all). Therefore it may be more appropriate to bring them forward as the requirements of the study practices of Campus in Camps, with the

possibility that they might be helpful in understanding other study practices as well. The requirements that I have discerned include, first, the making of stories. Storytelling seems to be important to situate concepts in the everyday experiences, events, and relations that make up their fabric. It plays a key role in the process that the participants often refer to as a 'decolonization of the mind'. This means to take a distance from the often alienating frameworks with which they understand their situation and returning to the sphere of the everyday. The second requirement has to do with the making of comparisons. The example here was the photographic exercise in which participants took pictures of Doha, the city, and the Dheisheh, the camp. This series of pictures helped to draw out similarities and differences between the camp and the city and initiated a debate on the relation to the camp of refugees who live in the city nowadays. The third requirement concerns the making of maps. Mapping exercises can turn the environment into a middle, a map, something around which people can gather and that slows down their deliberations because it can intervene in them. The fourth and last requirement has to do with experimentation in using something; in the case of Campus in Camps, a public square. This requirement puts forward that study has also to do with the question of how something can be used and what consequences this use might entail, for what are commonly known as user and used, respectively.

It has already been explained that the requirements for scientific practices that Stengers discerns based on Latour's work are situated on a more abstract level than the requirements for study practices that I have discerned based on an analysis of Campus in Camps. Going to a more abstract level, it could perhaps be argued that the requirements of study practices more generally have to do with gathering (bringing people together in a certain manner), observing (being in the presence of that which is to be studied), materializing (generating material objects in the course of the process of study that are not only the result of study, but are part of the practice of study itself), and experimenting (trying out new ways of relating towards things and the situation they find themselves in). Analysis of a greater variety of study practices is necessary, however, to corroborate this more abstract distinction. Therefore, it is formulated only as an hypothesis at this point.

Nevertheless, it sets an interesting way of thinking in motion as these requirements seem to be of still another nature than the requirements that Stengers and Latour have formulated. In the course of the dissertation, I took their requirements of scientific practices, that are perhaps more sociological in nature, as a point of departure to think about the requirements of study practices. The question, then, is whether it is possible to, mutatis mutandis, look at scientific practices from the point of view of study practices. Indeed, gathering, observing, materializing, and experimenting seem to be processes that are relevant for scientific practices

as well, and hence, the commonalities between scientific practices and study practices might be larger than their differences.

After comparison of the requirements of scientific practices and study practices, the question regarding the unity of the university remains. This is not an easy question, as the focus on practices brings the landscape of the university forward as being very dispersed and fragmented. Not only is it indeed impossible to postulate an umbrella science that would keep all practices together (e.g. philosophy, literature, logic) under the rubric of the university. But also, it would be strange to invoke a metaphysical force that would explain the existence of the university as a unified whole (e.g. *amor sciendi*, *Wille zur Macht*) when particular practices seem to prevail over the institution of the university as a whole.

Returning to the two general questions that guide scientific practices and study practices respectively might give way to an insight into the unity of the university. Focusing on the questions around which scientific practices and study practices converge, in spite of their mutual differences, makes it possible to relate to the issue of unity without taking recourse to a strong framework that would risk being exclusive of certain practices. Putting forward a question makes practices for which *this* question matters converge. Claiming that this question matters to them, however, does not mean that they would answer the question in the same way. The question is something that relates to them, and over which they can, while relating, diverge, hold other opinions and convictions. It has been argued that the question that makes scientific practices converge is "How to learn something new?". It is assumed that this question matters to all scientific practices, although representatives of different practices would respond in a different way. The question that makes study practices converge is "How to learn anew?". It has been argued that this question matters to all study practices. This means that study always has to do with ceasing to take a certain situation for granted and inquiring into how the situation concerns us and how we can learn again in relation to this situation.

As such, it is possible to discern two diverging lines: one that holds scientific practices together, another that holds study practices together. University could be the name of the point of intersection of these two diverging lines, the point where scientists and students, those who are concerned with learning something new and those who are concerned with learning anew, meet. What practitioners from both groups share, however, seems to be a *concern for the new*. For scientists this is more related to the discovery or invention of something new, whereas for students this has to do with finding new ways of relating to a situation. Hence, it could be argued that both scientific practices and study practices are oriented towards the future. Moreover, that their shared aim, and consequently the aim of the university, is the *creation of the future*.

This concern for the new and orientation toward the future is something that Whitehead (1938) already associated with the university, when he wrote in *Modes of thought* that:

> The task of the university is the creation of the future, so far as rational thought, and civilized modes of appreciation, can affect the issue. The future is big with every possibility of achievement and of tragedy (p. 171).

It is in this shared orientation towards the new that the two conceptions of learning, the one associated with scientific practices and the one associated with study practices, entangle. Learning anew – to begin to relate to something in a new way – seems to go hand in hand with the experience of learning something new. It could be argued that the participants of Campus in Camps learned about life in exile as something new via study, and hence became capable of learning anew, establishing a new way of relating to life in exile.Here again, study practices do not seem to be that different from scientific practices as we might have thought beforehand. Postulating the three tasks of the university – research, teaching, and service – hence, seems to fall short in trying to grasp the way in which questions of learning something new, learning anew, and being engaged in worldly issues often converge within study practices.

Arguing that the university is oriented towards the future, however, does not mean that it is able to control what is to come in any determined way. In his apparently innocuous proposition, Whitehead does not relate the future to growth, accumulation, or any predefined outcome. Rather, the future seems to come with radical uncertainty, as it is impossible to know how 'rational thought, and civilized modes of appreciation' can affect the future (Ibid., p. 171). A condition of radical uncertainty, moreover, that is only aggravated by the event of the intrusion of Gaia.

At this point, it might be relevant to emphasize some of the limitations of the conception of the university as an ecology of study practices. By now, the reader will have noticed that the research is heavily biased by the research interests and background of both myself and the author who has been the main source of theoretical inspiration. Due to Stengers' interest in chemistry and theoretical physics, the understanding of scientific practices as elaborated in Chapter Three is mostly applicable to the natural sciences of that kind. One could ask to what extent for instance, neurology or geology would fit into such understanding (e.g. factishes). However, the question whether these disciplines (or linguistics, or biology, or economics, or etc.) are scientific or not is perhaps not the most interesting. More relevant perhaps, is to ask the question how scientific practices pertaining to these disciplines would respond to the

question "How to learn something new?", or to ask them to present themselves in terms of their requirements and obligations.

A similar argument can be made for study practices. The conception of study practices brought forward in this dissertation bears witness to the author's interest in fields of study that have often called themselves action sciences or design sciences, more particularly pedagogy and planning. These are disciplines where the possibility of making thought creative of the future seems always to be at stake. This bias limits to a certain extent the applicability of the concept of study practices and it is important to be nuanced at this point. Claiming that the university can be understood as an ecology of study practices risks to obscure the fact that this ecology is inhabited by a myriad of other-than-study practices, most notably perhaps scientific practices and lecturing practices. What I was interested in was to investigate how we can think about the university from the point of view of study practices, and I do not want to claim that all practices of the university are therefore study practices (not even that all educational practices of the university are study practices).

Here again, the question is for which practices the question "How to learn anew?" matters and in what way? And maybe, there will be practices coming from other fields than the design and action sciences, for which this question matters, formulating maybe other requirements and obligations than the ones that can be expected based on this dissertation. Perhaps such a dialogue between study practices in terms of their requirements and obligations might be more interesting than a criterium that could be used to define or recognize study practices. To a certain extent, these questions operate as such a criterium, but not in the sense that they allow to judge from an external position, but rather that they will solicit a response from certain practices and will leave others indifferent.

A Final Contrast

Returning to the research question, it can be summarized that this dissertation has made an attempt to situate study in the relation between university and society by invoking the ecology of practices. Therefore, the concept of study practices has been coined to give an insight into the process of how, via study, the world enters the university by means of the convocation of matters of study, and how the university enters the world in effectuating transformations of common sense and exercising response-ability. The university as a whole, then, has been conceived of as an ecology study practices, including scientific practices. It has been argued that what both practices share, and what might, therefore, be called the unifying principle

behind the university, is an orientation towards the future, a future that comes with radical uncertainty. It is an unknown who will inhabit the times called the future, and in what kind of coexistences. But it is this unknown that the university engenders and takes care of via its study practices, and their associated forms of "rational thought, and civilized modes of appreciation" (Ibid., p. 171).

So far so good, but at this point the reader will object: "Not too fast! You have taken in hand the pattern of the university as institution and then, by playing it to Stengers and Campus in Camps you have drawn out a pattern in which the university emerges as a bundle of practices. You have left the game! You have been disloyal to what has been held out by Kant, Kerr, and the authors that came in their wake by starting to play with people who seem to be not sincerely interested in the university in the first place, who even despise the university!" Betrayal is a serious accusation, but the reader is probably right to make the accusation. Indeed, the game of cat's cradle cannot be played without any kind of betrayal: taking in hand what has been held out unavoidably implies betraying the one who has held it out, transforming the pattern in an unforeseen and – from the point of view of the one who held out – maybe undesirable way.

The reader's objection puts forward a challenge; namely, to play back the pattern to the authors that have conceived of the university from an institutional point of view, the authors that I have betrayed in the first place. This is indeed a challenge, as it implies the unavoidable betrayal of the ones I enjoyed playing with so much. Overall, this poses not too much of a problem in the case of Campus in Camps, as they are not really opposed to the university. Endorsing a minimal understanding of the university as "a place for public assembly" (Petti, 2013, p. 28), the university as institution is, from their point of view, more a question than a problem. It is a question in the sense that institutionalizing their practice or reinforcing their embeddedness in institutional infrastructures might entail a series of consequences (e.g. accreditation, enrollment, student fees, curriculum) that they will have to think about whether they are willing to accept.

In the case of Stengers, on the contrary, the conception of the university as institution poses a real problem, as she is extremely critical of the ways in which universities have organized the massive sale of scientific expertise and the acceleration of the scientific process. On various occasions, she has spoken up against the new role universities have adopted in the globalized knowledge economy (cf. Despret & Stengers, 2011; Stengers, 2013b, 2015a, 2018; Stengers & Bordeleau, 2011; Stengers, Manning, & Massumi, 2009), and there is no doubt that she makes a strong case in doing so. However, as Stengers is a person who fled from chemistry to philosophy – a discipline for which the university is perhaps

the very last refuge –, who wrote a truly magnificent book based on her teachings on the philosophy of Whitehead, and who talks with enthusiasm and passion about her philosophical workshops with students, it is clear that despite her disrespect, the university has been an important context in which Stengers' thinking could unfold. Hence, it is perhaps a matter of *not* forgetting the university, *not* being too quick in leaving it, but instead, of paying attention to the possible that perhaps still insists in its interstices.

Indeed, the university as institution might still hold some promises. First of all, and this is perhaps the most important promise, an institutionalized university could to a certain extent grant sustainability to study practices. In the case of Campus in Camps, for instance, it has been quite a difficult task to keep activities and discussions going after some of the initiators withdrew from the program. A stronger institutional infrastructure might make it easier to relay questions, conceptual tools, and methodologies from one generation of students to the other. This would perhaps allow the program to maintain a strong focus, hence creating continuity as practitioners who have had leading roles leave and new members join.

Another advantage, and here I take inspiration from the medieval university, is that perhaps contrary to what could be expected, a stronger institutional setting could allow for a more democratic governance of the university. In relation to the emergence of the university in the 12th century, it has been argued that the University of Paris, which had a stronger institutional framework, was generally governed in a more democratic way than the student-led University of Bologna, where often a small group of students took charge and could appoint doctors at their will. Of course, this possibly more democratic feature of weak institutionalization should be dealt with with care. A too strong institutionalization could lead to forms of domination and exclusion that far exceed those of the perhaps too weak institutionalized University of Bologna.

A third advantage that can be discerned, although again it should be dealt with with care, is that today there exists an enormous global network of universities whose existence may be due to their institutional infrastructures. This network of existing universities is an enormous container of resources, both in terms of human and social capital. It makes it possible to access large libraries of books relatively easily, but also to meet and co-operate with people who work on interesting topics from all over the world. Hence, it would be a very undesirable option to leave this network because of its flaws. The question rather seems to be how this network can be used in order to rethink the institutional universities that make up its nodes.

Given these advantages, it seems all the more relevant not to leave the game that scholars have been playing in the wake of Kant and Kerr, to pay attention to the possible that inhabits the interstices of the university as institution, and instead, once again, one last time,

to transform a contradiction, between practice and institution, into a contrast. This requires that we reconceive of the institution of the university from the perspective of the ecology of practices on the one hand, and to reinforce possibly sustainable features of practices on the other hand.

First of all, reconceiving of the university from the point of view of the ecology of practices implies the need to come up with a slightly different understanding of what an institution is. From the perspective of the ecology of practices, an institution is not a neutral backdrop before which practices play their game, nor is it some kind of mould that shapes the practices that are situated inside it. It requires rather that we see the institution as a habitat in which a variety of practices live and move and have their being. Among the practices that inhabit the university it is possible to discern scientific practices and study practices, as has been done in the course of this dissertation, but also administrative, governmental, and leisure practices. Examples of practices inhabiting the university ecology include not only laboratory work, article writing, conducting experiments, discussing texts, and doing fieldwork, but also accounting practices, faculty board meetings, sports events, and student councils.

It is important to emphasize that understanding the institution of the university as a habitat for these practices does not mean that it is an empty and neutral container in which practices can be stored. A habitat only comes into being due to the predative, parasitic, or symbiotic relations between species, or in this case, practices. Examples of these relations include the ways in which governmental practices make claims on scientific practices via benchmarking procedures or policy measures, or how administrative practices force study practices into the mould of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). No habitat exists in and of itself, but only by means of and via the multiple and various kinds of entanglements between its inhabitants.

Second, it is possible to argue that within the conception of practice put forward there are already germs for a more durable sustenance of practices. More specifically, the requirements seem to grant some degree of duration to practices. Indeed, it has been explained that whereas obligations make practitioners diverge, requirements allow for continuation because they make it possible to initiate novices into the practice. Engaging together in study practices makes it possible for new people to become apprentices, to learn from and with those who already have some experience in studying, in spite of the fact that each new problematic situation will demand to be dealt with in its own manner.

A focus on practices, in short, does not make the institutional understanding of the university superfluous, nor should it be read as a plea for a dismantling of the university as institution. Rather, it requires that we rethink how the institutional infrastructure of the

university can be reconceived, and, from the point of view of the ecology of practices, this would mean to reconceive it as a habitat for all kinds of practices that entertain more or less symbiotic relations towards each other. As such, it is clear that inquiring into the university from the point of view of the ecology of practices does not require that we do away with the institution, but rather that we conceive of the institution as a habitat in which a myriad of different practices coexist.

Resist, Reclaim, Relay

"Slow down a bit!" At this point, the reader, feeling the end of the text coming nearer, will call me to order again: "These introductory notes on an ecology of study practices are all very nice and fine from a theoretical point of view, but why don't you say anything about the main title of the dissertation, namely what it practically requires to *make* a university?! This could perhaps be an elegant way to reconcile with Stengers and Campus in Camps after the betrayal of the previous section, as they are both more interested in practical experiments than in theoretical speculation?"

Yet again, the reader is sharp in seeing through my astute attempt to leave her behind with some theoretical reflections but without any indications for concrete action. But her question, the question of what can be done, seems the hardest question, especially since it falls entirely outside the scope of this dissertation. Indeed, my aim was not to solve a problem, to formulate advice, or to propose a reconstruction. Rather, my aim was to slow down around the question of the university and give it power to make us think. Think we must!

Nevertheless, I will do my best to take a first step toward an answer by briefly outlining three principles of action that can be summarized as: resist, reclaim, relay. For the first, *resisting*, three meanings can be discerned. In the first place, it means to resist the university's way of capitalizing on knowledge practices – science and study – by always trying to install disconnections. This is done by separating knower (e.g. expert, professor) and known (e.g. patent, course content), and uncoupling knowledge from that which is known about (e.g. population, situation). These are disconnections, separations, and uncouplings that are essential for commodifying knowledge as 'expertise' that can be sold to present and future 'professionals'. It means to resist university policies that play into the hands of an increasing capitalization of knowledge.

Second, resisting means to acknowledge that more money or more autonomy will not save the university. More money will only result in the call for more output and more autonomy

risks decoupling the university from the worldly problems that it could concern itself with. It means to resist playing the goose with the golden eggs and instead come to terms with the non-innocent ways in which the university plays its role in the world.

Third, resisting means to resist the temptation to give in to cynicism, to resist the lure of the academy of misery with its complaints and its grievances. This means to recognize that, overall, most of the European universities are still resourceful sites where appropriate tools can be found to study. And to study means to resist, it means to organize, problematize, scrutinize in spite of the many attempts to capitalize on study. Resistance requires study, and to study means to engage in joyful practices that connect with and transform the ruminations of common sense. In the words of Stengers (2010):

> To resist a likely future in the present is to gamble that the present still provides substance for resistance, that it is populated by practices that remain vital even if none of them has escaped the generalized parasitism that implicates them all (p. 10).

In the previous section, some of the advantages of the university as institution have been highlighted. The great advantage of a practice point of view, however, is that at the level of practices things can be done fairly easily. As such, practices are powerful loci of resistance, and, hence, an important work to be done is reclaiming the practices of the university.

Reclaiming is the second principle of action suggested before. Although reclaiming might at first evoke a sense of rediscovery of something old and authentic that has been forgotten, it is important to clarify that it does not imply such a conservative-restorative operation. It is not about going back to the past, but about inventing manners of inheriting the past such that it can come to matter here, now, and for the future. Within the field of ecology, reclaiming designates processes of renewing and restoring degraded, damaged, or destroyed ecosystems and habitats in the environment by means of active human intervention and action. The aim of reclaiming is not to restore the land to how it was before, but rather to render it again capable of fostering life.

In a similar way, reclaiming the practices of the university does not mean to do again in the same way what has been done before, but about inventing ways of engaging in study practices that resist the current kinds of parasitism. It means to experiment with the artifices that might be of use in giving *this* situation – always *this* situation – the power to make us think. As such, reclaiming is not so much past-oriented, as it is future-oriented. Reclaiming study practices means not so much to consolidate a certain image of the university (e.g. as a public institution for the production and transmission of knowledge), but rather to give shape again

to an image of the university by means of engagement in study practices that are situated by that which requires response-ability.

Lastly, and this relates to practices as sites of resistance, reclaiming, which seems to be by definition situated on the level of practices, is always, or at least most of the time, a joyful activity. Reclaiming practices excites the feeling that things can be done otherwise and that there are many other people who are willing to become engaged together in study practices. Reclaiming means to become sensitive to the insistence of the possible, and to become a witness of its progressive actualization. As opposed to the sadness of complaining, which always foregrounds the bad and the ugly, the joy of reclaiming takes actual situations including the possible that inhabit their interstices as a starting point for collective creation.

The last principle concerns not only the question of what can be done, but also the strange question of how this dissertation can be concluded. The task at hand is indeed not so much one of concluding, but rather one of *relaying*. What matters is above all *not* to conclude, *not* to formulate any 'and thus' that would follow logically from the argument of the dissertation, the patterns and ideas that have been elaborated, knowing that every 'and thus' marks a cut in the process of thinking that will have made this 'and thus' possible. Relaying means holding out. What is held out here is not so much a blueprint for a university to come, or for an ecology of study practices that has already started to actualize itself. Such knowledge would indeed be of the kind of the 'and thus', of the 'conclusion'.

Instead, relaying means to trust in the creative uncertainty of the encounter, that what has been held out will be taken in to new hands that will draw out new patterns, new transformations, new ways of reclaiming. Emphasizing the creative uncertainty that accompanies every relay, foregrounds the fact that what has been held out comes without any theoretical guarantee, without any security that it will work in whatever situation. Rather, what has been held out comes always with a pragmatic challenge, namely the challenge to take it in hand, to perform the necessary transformations that will make it work, that will give *this* situation *here* the power to make *us* think.

Relaying a conclusion that is not of the kind of 'now we know that … and thus', but rather of the kind of 'given this situation, it is possible to' poses a pragmatic challenge for pedagogical action. It demands, namely, that we weld the possible to the questions that transform a situation into a problem, that, in this case, transform the university into an ecology that requires reclaiming, and for which the practices that still inhabit this ecology provide a thousand possible entry points, a thousand different initial impulses to give very precise and concrete meaning to the far too vague and too general words that served as the empty title of this

conclusion namely that, indeed, another university is possible. The pattern is in your hands. Think we must.

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Appendix A

Cycles, seminars, and lectures at Campus in Camps

This overview is based on *Campus in Camps. A university in exile* by Alessandro Petti (2013).

The House of Wisdom M. Fasheh February – June 2012 *Cycle*	in the House of Wisdom, the stress is on what the participant searches for in one's life. Research refers to what may deepen and clarify one's search. since we agree in our discussions that knowledge is action, then the backbone of their learning are the projects that participants decide to work on, built on what is abundant and on sources of strength in people and community, and in harmony with pluralism and well-being.
International law and human rights T. Hamam February – April 2012 *Cycle*	The cycle tackled some of the core issues for Palestinians such as refugees, prisoners, Jerusalem, and territory. Working from publicly available government documents, the participants took part in a simulation exercise that allowed them to examine these topics from various positions. The participants were then tasked with developing their own vision on how these important questions should be addressed. While taking into account various constraints, the participants were encouraged to think outside the box and challenge conventional wisdom.
Culture and representation A. Khalifah July 2012 *Cycle*	The purpose of the cycle is to introduce the concepts of culture and representation. it aims to explore the relationship between culture and representation by discussing how culture constructs shared meanings, i.e. how culture constructs patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting through using language and visual images.
Political life and humanitarian assistance I. Feldman July 4, 2012 *Lecture*	Part of what I seek to understand is what happens as humanitarianism moves from crisis response to a condition of life. Humanitarian practice clearly shifts from disaster relief – provision of food, clothing, emergency shelter – to efforts that look more like social service work and development projects. How are people and communities shaped by this transformation and by living – long-term – in a humanitarian condition?

B Making a university

Agri-culture and resistance V. Sansour August – September 2012 *Cycle*	The cycle explores the relationship between agricultural practices, food production, and political power. a combination of readings and fieldwork will provide a framework in which participants can critically look at all the ways in which communities find independence through means of food production and food security. as we explore different readings including the work of Michael Perelman on the economic, social, and environmental costs of the current global trend in agricultural systems, we will be exploring the concept of agriculture and liberation more specifically in the Palestinian context.
The UNRWA Camp Improvement Program S. Hilal September – October 2012 *Cycle*	Refugee communities are involved in the planning and design process to ensure that new facilities meet their needs. While unRWa does not administer the camps, it does have a clear interest in improving the conditions of Palestine refugees living in them. A new program was launched in 2006 that focused on a improving the camps' physical and social environment through a participatory, community-driven planning approach, rather than relief.
Reclaiming the political H. Toukan July 29, 2012 *Seminar*	The seminar aims to converse with some of the conceptualizations related to the politics of aesthetics, the public performance of affect and the politics of cultural production. it aims to do so by considering the potentials held within possibly already existing radical emancipatory practices underwritten by the specific social and political realities related to visual production in Dheisheh Camp.
Conflict transformation G. Kramer, W. Graf, O. Karsh, & T. Ernstbrunner April – June 2012 *Cycle*	During the cycle, participants get acquainted with an approach to conflict transformation, which has been developed over the last decade by the trainers. The approach isbound by a theory of generalized complexity, which bridges social-psychological interactionism with realist-systemic theory and cultural hermeneutics. it goes beyond the post-modern cultural turn towards a "soft" universalism, which is informed by post-modern critiques of universalism but also goes beyond it. This practical model for conflict transformation attempts to answer the challenge by applying the epistemological and methodological approaches mentioned to the concept of basic human needs, which can serve as the frame of reference for "soft universalism".

Power and language D. McKenzie, T. Rahmeh, T. Piltzecker, & I. Simon February – December 2012 *Cycle*	The five week course is an exploration of arabic and English texts to see the impact of facing the text in two different languages. a four-week intensive English workshop that aims to bolster project participants' critical inquiry in English. Through writing, reading and speaking practice, participants should master essential rhetorical skills.

Mapping modern Palestine L. Quiquivix July 9, 2012 *Lecture*	We will critically examine the Palestinian adoption of the template after the Nakba, looking first at the various ways Palestinian refugees appropriated the map as a popular logo to rally a liberation movement around, and next at how the Oslo 'peace process' sparked the Palestinian cartographic spirit to grow in force and causing the map to evolve from a popular icon toward a scientific, state-building tool. We trace how, as such cartography grows in importance, the refugee question becomes increasingly sidelined from the 'peace process.'

Context as field, relations as tools B. Catanzaro July 20, 2012 *Lecture*	Throughout the past ten years, i have been questioning the very potential of the art practice as response to specific contexts and the ultimate possibility of its unfolding in reality as an enduring shift, beyond the presence of the author. intangible values of time, relations and mutual trust are some of the threads that, in retrospective, i can trace as light motive to my personal experience, as well as honestly recognize the inner drive that leads you to embark in a long term project.

Navigating the dialectics of desire and disaster B. Abbas & R. Abou-Rhame August 6, 2012 *Lecture*	Critically 'reading' the transformation of the PLO into an 'authority' and eventually a 'security' regime and with it the birth of new political discourses and desires largely centered on consumption; seemingly 'beyond' but always brushing up against the outer limits of occupation, its increasingly dystopian wider environment. "The Zone", by evoking both the phantasmagoria of the dream-world and the dystopia of the catastrophe, reflects this state of being, full of surrealism, absurdity and a growing sense of the uncanny.

Palestinian civil society: What went wrong? T. Dana September 22, 2012 *Lecture*	In this lecture we will discuss critical dimensions of palestinian civil society's structural transformation as well as the implications and consequences of this process on the ground. The lecture sheds light on the transformative trajectory of palestinian civil society throughout the last century. in particular, we will compare between structural differences of the contradictory versions of palestinian civil society in both pre and post Oslo periods.

D Making a university

Voluntary primitivism F. D. Scott November 5, 2012 *Lecture*	This lecture will address the Open Land communes which emerged in northern California during the late 1960s, focusing in particular on the escalating "code wars" that their attempts to abandon private property rights, normative forms of life, and other trappings of modernity and capitalism elicited from the state. What, it will ask, might have motivated this portion of the american back- to-the-land movement to open their land to anyone who wished to settle?
Three stories from a camp K. Bshara November 24, 2012 *Lecture*	In the lecture will be narrated three stories from a refugee camp to complicate our understanding of resilience, resistance, and the gender component of exile. my claim is that there is a discontinuity and fragmentation of our understanding of the refugee camp (the life and the space); there is a subtle resistance driven by hope manifested in the everyday practices; and there is a hidden but important gender quality of the resistance, in which female refugees occupy a different subject position than male refugees.
Culture and collective work S. Abdelnour March 23, 2013 *Lecture*	How does culture and identity influence community and collective work? Is it possible for NGOs to play a supportive role in their construction? Samer Abdelnour explored these issues using the case study of the Hadaadeen (blacksmiths), who now reside in El-Fashir, North Darfur. The blacksmiths are amongst Darfur's most discriminated castes. Historically, their socio-cultural distinction has rendered them unable to engage as regular members of society. Yet today the blacksmiths have managed—through a long-running partnership with NGO practical action—to gain some degree of economic and political recognition. Rather than conceive of their poverty as economic alone, practical action recognized identity to be the root of their social isolation.
Prefiguring the state M. Herz April 4, 2013 *Lecture*	The Western Sahara, occupied by Morocco in 1975 is one of the world's last remaining colonies. The fleeing population – the Sahrawis – established refugee camps across the border in Algeria, and have lived there ever since. How is life organized in the refugee camps located in one of the remotest and inhospitable areas of our planet? How do the refugees live, how do they move through the camps, in what spaces do they work or learn, and how do they go about activities of leisure and recreation?

A constitution for a non-state E. Dabed April 27, 2013 *Lecture*	During the "Palestinian constitutional process" significant political and social dimensions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict – i.e. the nature of the actors' power relations, their conception of the Oslo process, the role that they attributed to the PA – were spelled out in legal- institutional terms and mirrored in the political structure of PA. It is in this sense that the constitutional order can be understood as a sort of "metaphoric representation" of Palestinian politics.
The history of philosophy of science C. K. Raju April 29, 2013 *Lecture*	As we have begun to problematize the origins of political, philosophical and social thought, can we also dismantle common beliefs about the origins of maths and science? How has the history of the development of maths and science been falsified by Europe? How did the interaction between African, Indian, Persian and Arab-Islamic civilizations create another approach to the maths and science?
Autobiography of a city M. Jabali March 2012 *Seminar*	"Autobiography of a city" is a project that operated in Jaffa since 2000, addressing the urgent need to reveal the Palestinian history of the city by enabling the Palestinian population to take an active role in the process. The project is an attempt to examine the ways in which urban-communal memory and consciousness are being shaped via the use of artistic and documentary tools and thrush the direct and wide involvement of the community members.
Idea of return R. Salih April 2012 *Seminar*	Debates on rights, democracy, dignity and pluralism seem to suffer from a chronic methodological nationalism, which perpetuates the idea that people seek and fight for rights exclusively in their national territory, the natural and main place for self-determination, so that those who are at the margins of nation-states or excluded from their own territorial nations come to be twice marginalised and their plague made even more invisible.
Camps of knowledge D. Segatto February – May 2012 *Cycle*	Camps of Knowledge aims to rise awareness on the participants starting from direct experiences inside other refugee camps looking at common and different aspects of everyday life and environmental settings, built by UNRWA Improvement Department and the inhabitants from the exodus in 1948 to nowadays, both as a source of proposals and possibilities for future cultural and urban transformations. such framework had a significant result in Back to the Future, a seminar of imagination and freedom where the participants presented their imageries and perspective about the future in the camps, through different ideas and different forms of tale.

Global-scape of camps and the politics of neutrality M. Agier & T. Keenan May 2012 *Seminar*	The seminar will start with Michel Agier presenting comparative studies on refugees, camps and humanitarian politics followed by Thomas Keenan critical reflection on humanitarian action as an "apolitical or neutral gesture". The participants to the seminar will be invited then to discuss some key concepts, notions and theories related to the production of the politics of humanitarian and refugeehood spaces.
Pragmatism and politics of funding and resource mobilization M. Kocache July 2012 *Seminar*	This three day seminar is designed to shed light on the various structural and institutional frameworks of charitable giving, aid and philanthropy in an interactive forum of knowledge transfer, debate and critical analysis. Through lecture, group presentations and discussions, the seminar's aim is to empower participants with fundamental knowledge about the function, the role, the opportunities as well as the politics that lie behind the various processes of resource mobilization and distribution. What are the local, regional and global trends?
Deconstructing citizenship S. Chaleshtoori November 2012 *Seminar*	For the most part, nation-states use the citizenship framework as the primary organizing relation between the state and its constituents, or citizens. Traditional readings of citizenship depict it as the intersection of identity and law, where both a national belonging and a constitutionally recognized membership in a state are articulated. Citizenship is conventionally conceived of as a mechanism of civic incorporation within a state; a form of social membership used as a basis for claim- making with which comes access to rights, privileges, and freedoms allocated and protected by state institutions.
Placing Antigone J. Champlin December 2012 *Seminar*	The seminar undertakes a reading of Antigone that asks after her place. Who's side is she on – if she has a side? What kind of demand or cry for justice can come from one without a home base? How does the drama situate her? How does she define herself and her position? These questions will lead us to investigate how reading Antigone in Palestine in the 21st century changes the points of view offered by German, French, and American interpretations.