EDUCATIONAL THEORY

TURNING A CITY INTO A MILIEU OF STUDY: UNIVERSITY PEDAGOGY AS "FRONTLINE"

Jan Masschelein

Laboratory for Education and Society
University of Leuven, Belgium

Abstract. In 2016 Bruno Latour delivered a lecture at Cornell University in which he responded to what he called the actual situation of disorientation and (literal) lack of common ground by offering some "hints for a neo-Humboldtian university." One hint he offered was that we should consider pedagogy as the frontline for staging an approach to societal challenges that links basic research and public engagement. Here, Jan Masschelein follows and extends upon this hint through exploring some ways to reclaim or reinvent the university as pedagogic form. Concretely, he describes the development of a course on designing educational practices that is conceived as a way to turn cities into a milieu of public and collective study. Masschelein's contribution to this symposium offers a "technical story" about physical, material experiences, one that contains some *pre*positions and *pro*positions, an example, many detours, and a few practical notes and considerations. By this means, he explores the meaning and form pedagogy takes when we do not reduce it to teaching and extension, but instead approach it as the genus and the locus of a nexus between public engagement and basic research. Masschelein concludes by proposing the "public design studio" as a pedagogic form suited to the neo-Humboldtian university.

Key Words. university pedagogy; public design studio; walking; mapping; neo-Humboldtian university

> "Le réel doit être fictionné pour être pensé."
>
> – Jacques Rancière[1]

In his October 2016 lecture at Cornell University, Bruno Latour wanted to respond to what he called the actual situation of disorientation and (literal) lack of common ground by offering some "hints for a neo-Humboldtian university," referring not so much to Wilhelm but rather to Alexander von Humboldt.[2] He criticized the modern university for its "trickle-down epistemology": that is, for taking itself to be "at the vanguard of a teaching and research process," thereby assuming that "its results — progressively through education and training, then through outreach and … extension —" would trickle down "eventually reaching the general public" and ideally lead to the construction of a shared worldview "where everybody would have become scientifically enlightened, at least able to follow, maybe to obey, the expert vanguard in important matters" (*GNW*, 9). But such trickling down, he argued, clearly does not work. We need, therefore, a "radical reorientation: what used to be called extension, outreach or *pedagogy* is no longer the last but the *first frontline* and alongside which all actions of the future

1. Jacques Rancière, *Le Partage du Sensible: Esthétique et Politique* [The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible] (Paris: La Fabrique-Éditions, 2000), 61. This epigraph can be translated as "Reality must be fictionalized to be thought out."

2. Bruno Latour, "Is Geo-logy the New Umbrella for All the Sciences? Hints for a Neo-Humboldtian University" (lecture delivered at Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, October 25, 2016), 1. This work will be cited in the text as *GNW* for all subsequent references. Latour deals with the issue of orientation along the same lines more extensively in Bruno Latour, *Où atterir? Comment s'orienter en politique?* [Where to Land? How to Move in Politics?] (Paris: La Découverte, 2017).

university will be evaluated" (*GNW*, 10, emphasis added). This does not imply that we should neglect basic research — "quite the contrary," we need "immense advances in scientific inquiry" — but it means "that the order, priority and goals have been reversed" (*GNW*, 10). According to Latour, we should (re)compose a common world while "rediscovering the old new planet," which "should create as much creative energy as during the period that has been called the 'age of discovery.'" For him, "*public* engagement" is no longer something to be "added once basic research has been completed: it is that toward which basic research is directed" (*GNW*, 10, emphasis added). Both public engagement and basic research are to be linked, he suggests, by the practices of design, performance, and data visualization. The first of the practices, design, expresses the necessity "to readjust the totality of our conditions of existence," but not by revolution. The second, performance, is related to the much-needed "sensitivity for situations" and the "(de)dramatization of issues" (*GNW*, 10). And the third, data visualization, refers to the need to handle the abundance of data now available for building a "recognizable and shareable landscape" (*GNW*, 11).

In my contribution to this symposium, I don't want to discuss Latour's hints regarding what realizing the neo-Humboldtian university entails, but rather to follow, and perhaps add to, at least some of them and to explore whether I can offer some further concrete indications to give shape to such a neo-Humboldtian university. As we just read, Latour hints that "pedagogy" is the frontline, where societal challenges are to be staged such that basic research is linked to public engagement and thus contributes to finding a common ground and composing a common world. In a way, we could understand Latour's remarks as a call to reclaim — that is, to reinvent or (re)design — the university as a pedagogic form. In what follows, I respond to this call to (re)design pedagogy by presenting a course on designing educational practices that, to make such a design possible, is conceived as an attempt to turn cities into a pedagogic form of public and collective study[3]

3. This attempt to transform a city into *a place of study* does not align with the various policy initiatives from the 1990s onward. We have found that these initiatives approach cities or urban areas as *learning environments*. There is, for example, the International Association of Educating Cities, which was founded in 1994 and, building upon an earlier OECD initiative, now comprises 494 cities in 37 countries. This association has since issued a "Charter of Educating Cities" and organizes conferences every two years (see "International Association of Educating Cities, http://www.edcities.org/en/). There is also the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities with 117 members in 41 countries. In 2015 this network published a guide that refers to the "Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities" (2013) and proposes "Key Features of Learning Cities." The following quotes provide a concise summary of what we read on the websites and in the many online documents regarding these initiatives: "Cities and regions in a globalized world cannot afford not to become learning cities and regions. It is a matter of prosperity, stability, employability and the personal development of all citizens"; "Cities are the main engines of economic growth in the modern world, and learning is one of the most important fuels of that growth. In recognition of this, many urban communities are developing innovative strategies

JAN MASSCHELEIN is Professor of Educational Philosophy and Theory in the Laboratory for Education and Society, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Andreas Vesaliusstraat 2 - bus 3761, B-3000 Leuven; e-mail <jan.masschelein@kuleuven.be>. His research interests include the public role of school and university education, pedagogic theory, and pedagogic experiments.

— or, to Tyson Lewis's apt phrase, of "profanated learning,"[4] something what we might also call "pensive learning."[5]

The course could itself be understood (at least to some extent) as a very small and modest attempt at performing a neo-Humboldtian university — as an attempt to encounter the city and to think before, in the middle of, and with a city. Accordingly, I will not develop a systematic argument but rather offer a kind of technical story about practical experiences, one that contains some pre- and propositions, an example, many detours, and a few practical notes and considerations. My aim here is not to delineate concepts or elaborate definitions but to contribute to what Isabel Stengers calls "the (re)populating of our imaginations" and the creative (re)invention of practices that take (collective) thinking as "a work to be performed" ("*un oeuvre à faire*").[6]

that allow their citizens — young and old — to learn new skills and competencies throughout life, thereby transforming their cities into 'learning cities,'" which is related to "a need to encourage creativity at all levels of education." See Balázs Németh, "The Learning Region Initiative – a Challenging Concept for Higher Education to Promote Regional Development," *Hungarian Educational Research Journal* 4, no. 3 (2014): 46–57, http://herj.lib.unideb.hu/megjelent/index/15. Therefore, the learning city could easily be connected to the "creative city," which seeks to mobilize creativity as a driving force for sustainable growth and urban regeneration (see "Why Creativity? Why Cities?," *Creative Cities Network*, https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities/content/why-creativity-why-cities). These initiatives for "educating," "learning," and "creative" cities imply a *functionalist* approach to education that operates from an *external* perspective and involves thinking about the future in terms of a scenario, that is, a possible future. On the basis of what is (technically) possible or what is going to be possible, such a scenario envisions ways to realize in a better, faster, easier, and more effective way the relevant learning outcomes (recognized competencies, skills, creativity, and so on). A place of study, on the contrary, implies acceptance that, in a radical sense, we cannot know or imagine what could come out of it. It engages, one could say, in impossible futures.

4. Tyson Lewis, *On Study: Giorgio Agamben and Educational Potentiality* (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2013), 35.

5. It is beyond the scope of this article to elaborate extensively on the notion of study. Let me just add that if one could state that study is a kind of (profanated or pensive) learning, it is also interesting to think of the difference between study and learning, as it is clarified by Maximiliano López with reference to the French notions. In French, the word for learning is *apprendre* (from the Latin *apprehendere*), which means to capture (grasp), and the emphasis is on the one who learns, her worries and ambitions. The word for study is *étude* (from the Latin *studium*), which conveys the sense of effort and care, and the emphasis is on the matter to be studied. There is, hence, a difference, for example,. between learning a language (which one learns for travel, for trade, to communicate an idea, and so on) and studying a language (in which one is engaged because one is enchanted in a way that exceeds any utility). Study in this sense refers to a way of relating to things, to the world; it entails paying attention to these things. On the other hand, as López further indicates, *étude* also implies a material practice, since it always means insisting that studying the world starts from a certain "technique." For example, if we speak of Leonardo Da Vinci's study of horses, we refer to the sketches, the exercises, the meticulous investigation. Furthermore, the notion of study refers us to a certain place ("lieu" or "milieu") that sustains the practice, as when we refer to the film studio or the architectural studio. Maximiliano López, "Elogio del Estudio: sobre el cultivo y la transmission de un arte" (lecture presented at the Il Seminário Internacional Elogio da Escola: sobre o ofício de Professor, Juiz de Fora, Brazil, September 19–21, 2018).

6. "Nous avons … besoin d'autres histoires, non des contes de fées où tout est possible aux cœurs purs, aux âmes courageuses, ou aux bonnes volontés réunies, mais des histoires racontant comment des situations peuvent être transformées lorsque ceux qui les subissent réussissent à les penser ensemble. Non des histoires morales, mais des histoires 'techniques' … qui portent sur le penser ensemble comme

Recalling a Proposition with Prepositions

According to *Merriam-Webster*, a proposition is "something offered for consideration or acceptance."[7] To propose something is not to take a position but comes, so to speak, *before* positioning. It seems to imply an invitation or incitation to see or approach something in a certain way. It is in this sense that Maarten Simons and I have elsewhere proposed that in approaching the university, one should start from its original Latin name: *universitas studii* (or *universitas magistrorum et scholarium*), an *association* or gathering of *and* as students.[8] We suggest that this could allow us to reclaim the notion of university and to think about what is at stake under that name in a different way, a way that is explicitly pedagogical (and not sociological or economic, for example) and that could perhaps activate students' imaginative engagement with the future, a way that would allow one to get it away from an institutional understanding. Indeed, this proposition, for us, implies that the university cannot be reduced to being a sociotechnical and institutional environment: an environment understood as protecting (independent) learners and (innovative) researchers and in terms of the infrastructure and resources that facilitate effective and efficient learning and research that has impact. From a pedagogical perspective, the university does not first appear as a production machine (of learning outcomes and knowledge with impact) that has to be assessed in terms of efficiency and effectiveness, and it should not be understood primarily as a site of facilitation and protection. On the contrary, universities are to be reclaimed as fabricated, temporary, physical mi-lieus (or middle grounds) for the purpose of *complicating* (not facilitating) learning and research and of *exposing* students and scholars. They can do this by creating particular sites that we call *public pedagogic forms*,[9] which are, so to speak, traced or outlined (in a spatial, temporal, material, and ethical sense) as kinds of holes in the institution[10] and are at once heterotopic and heterochronic in Michel Foucault's

'œuvre à faire'" [We need … other stories, not fairy tales where everything is possible for pure hearts, courageous souls, or goodwill combined, but stories about how situations can be transformed when those who experience them manage to think them together. Not moral stories, but 'technical' stories … about how to do the work of thinking through together"] Isabelle Stengers, *Au Temps Des Catastrophes: Résister à la Barbarie Qui Vient* (Paris: La Découverte, 2013), 118. An English edition of this work is available: Isabelle Stengers, *In Catastrophic Times: Resisting the Coming Barbarism*, trans. Andrew Goffey (Open Humanities Press, 2015).

7. *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (online edition), s.v. "proposition," noun, accessed November 30, 2017, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/proposition.

8. Jan Masschelein and Maarten Simons, "Universitas Magistrorum et Scholarium: A Short History of Profanation," in *Curating the European University: Exposition and Public Debate*, ed. Maarten Simons, Mathias Decuypere, Joris Vlieghe, and Jan Masschelein (Leuven, Belgium: Leuven University Press, 2011), 81–88.

9. See also Jan Masschelein and Maarten Simons, *Jenseits der Exzellenz. Eine kleine Morphologie der Welt-Universität* [Beyond Excellence: A Brief Morphology of the World University] (Regensburg, Germany: Diaphanes Press, 2010).

10. Gerald Raunig refers to "autonomous free spaces within the university," *Factories of Knowledge: Industries of Creativity (*Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2013), 51.

sense: being a real place without place (in the regular social order, a *lieu sans lieu*), being real time out of (regular) time (*temps hors temps*).[11] If these public pedagogic forms *find (a) place* — that is, if the gatherings become *situated happenings* — they turn learning and research into collective and public study and turn learners and researchers into students and scholars. They associate or bring together world (things, animals, landscapes, ideas, words, bacteria) and people, make them meet, bring them into each other's company in particular ways, so that a movement of thought emerges (thought that could not be thought by one alone). This *association* makes use of inscriptions, grammatizations,[12] or fictionalizations (visualizations, externalizations, texts, maps, images), not to represent the world, but to present it and to create temporal and sensorial conditions for *studying* the world, for giving form to "objects/subjects" of study. That was exactly the meaning of *universitas studii*, the Latin name of this invention of the Middle Ages that articulates a movement of thought and a particular way to deal with knowledge in relation to existential questions concerning the future of a common world. *Universitas* means association, gathering, assembly; and the Latin *studium* means mainly *to regard attentively* and *to devote oneself to something* (including the sense of an effort), which enables this gathering to be conceived as a particular way to exercise caution and be careful.[13] *Regard* means to consider or think of something, to pay attention to it, to be concerned about it, to respect it, to look after it, to care; and consideration does not so much concern representation, but rather presence as something beyond a matter of mere vision — something that offers itself in encounters, worries, and concerns.[14] The *universitas studii*, in this sense, takes or finds (a) place where something is made public — is actually presented to a public — and becomes an "object/subject" of study. It is crucial to note that this happens *within* and through the actual (physical) assembly of students and, therefore, that the association includes a very specific form of *commoning and of public study* that implies the presence of other students. This association is never just about the future of individuals or personal flourishing; rather, it is about the common world. It is also about practices of exposition and encounter that spatialize/materialize a particular time: *scholè* or *free time*, that is, the time separated from productive or economic time (from the *oikos* and the *polis* and society). It is

11. Michel Foucault, "Des Espaces Autres" [Of Other Spaces], in *Dits et écrits: Volume II 1976–1988*, ed. Daniel Defert, François Ewald, and Jean Lagrange (Paris: Gallimard, 2001), 1571–1581.

12. We use this notion in a broad sense as inscriptions. See Bernard Stiegler, *Taking Care of Youth and the Generations* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010); and John Tinnel, "Grammatization: Bernard Stiegler's Theory of Writing and Technology," *Computers and Composition* 37 (2015): 132–146.

13. Jan Masschelein, "Some Notes on the University as Studium," in *Reconceptualizing Study in Educational Discourse and Practice*, ed. Claudia Ruitenberg (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2017): 40–53. See also Isabelle Stengers, *Une Autre Science Est Possible. Manifeste pour un Ralentissement des Sciences* (Paris: La Découverte, 2013). An English edition of this work is available: Isabelle Stengers, *Another Science Is Possible: A Manifesto for Slow Science*, trans. Stephen Muecke (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018).

14. See Jean-Luc Nancy, *L'évidence du Film/The Evidence of Film* (Brussels: Yves Gevaert, 2001), 18.

the time of study, exercise, being exposed together, and addressing issues by distancing oneself from them in a particular way: by approaching them with attentive regard in which the primary question to consider does not concern effectiveness or efficiency but, rather, how to move on (how and what to think) when something starts to speak.[15] Hence, the *universitas studii* can be conceived as a movement of thought that crystalizes in pedagogic forms. One could use the familiar terms seminar, lecture, laboratory, workshop, or studio to name these pedagogic forms, but I propose the very general term *course*, at once in the educational sense and in the sense of a path and of travel, journey, voyage. A course, in this sense, is university in the making. It is, very generally speaking, a voyage or journey that in some way simultaneously suspends discourses and redramatizes or restages an encounter with world. Discourses (for example, the discourse of the European Commission and the European Area of Higher Education or the discourse of social and economic theories) should not be understood as merely words but as themselves ways of staging and dramatizing world, of defining and identifying the issues at stake. *Dis-* is a Latin prefix that often has a privative, negative, or reversing force (for example, disability, disbelief, dislike). From here, one possible — perhaps interesting — way to understand "discourse" is to consider it as what *halts* a course, just as "disability" means to lack ability, and to understand "course" in opposition to discourse, as that which delays or suspends *dis*course — in other words, as what keeps definitions and identifications undecided, on the move, or ongoing. Thus, the discourse itself could be considered as (part of) the frontline as well. Let me give an example of a course that might be understood as an attempt to establish a frontline while thinking very concretely *before, with*, and *through* a city, to use the prepositions that, according to Martin Savransky, explicate the adventure of encounter.[16]

An Example: Walking and Mapping Athens

The course is called "Designing Educational Practices," and it essentially entails mapping, walking, looking, listening, and conversation *exercises* in various city landscapes all over the world: post-conflict cities, cities in crisis, small and declining cities, but also booming megacities (over the last fifteen years, for example, Sarajevo, Belgrade, Tiranna, Kinshasa, Shenzhen, Chongking, Rio, Brussels, and Charleroi).[17] The aim is to design educational responses to societal challenges based on thinking the challenges through publicly and collectively (involving some basic research, knowledge, theory), as well as, in the words of

15. See Laboratory for Education and Society, ed., *Sketching a Place for Education in Times of Learning* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2018), 37–40, 55–59.

16. Martin Savransky, *The Adventure of Relevance: An Ethics of Social Inquiry* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 89.

17. For more theoretical background, see Jan Masschelein, "The Idea of Critical E-ducational Research: E-ducating the Gaze and Inviting to Go Walking," in *The Possibility/Impossibility of a New Critical Language in Education*, ed. Ilan Gur-Ze'ev (Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense, 2010), 275–292.

Isabelle Stengers, "risking a city."[18] Risk, she states, can be understood negatively, as something we want to minimize and calculate based on anticipatory scenarios of what is a priori possible. But it can also be understood positively, where the risk does not evolve out of the calculation of what is possible or out of uncertainty, but rather the situation is (actively) created as an occasion for something to happen or not (which, in a sense, is passive). It is neither about defining or establishing the facts in order to decide, nor about negating (established) knowledge; instead, it is about making the "facts" undetermined (undefined) again so that another version of the situation can emerge. In this sense, the course aims to *sensorially* "situate" thinking; it does not to assume that one is situated by one's knowledge. It is not primarily about becoming conscious or aware but about becoming attentive, about trying to enable a design that articulates and rests on creativity and imagination, which are not approached as given individual capacities, but as capacities that spring from the attempt to situate thinking through the walking and mapping exercises (which are also related to looking, listening, and conversation).

While walking and mapping exercises are very common practices,[19] here they are conceived as practices of attention, investigation, and entanglement. Let me try to indicate some particular features of these exercises with one example. In November 2013, my colleague and friend Wim Cuyvers and I went on a ten-day trip to Athens with twenty-eight master's students. The city derives its name from the goddess Athena. She was the protective goddess of the city, but also the goddess of wisdom and the arts and, more generally, of the practitioners of science. Ancient Athens, as we know, had (and still has) significant influence on the formation of Europe, not only through its art and ideas, but also because of its material inventions of forms of gathering that are still traceable in the present: the agora, democracy, the theater, the school, and the academy. Today, we associate Athens with many other issues, especially with the current challenges in Europe (such as refugees, debt, and unemployment). So, if we want to think about how to respond, it seems important also to gain insight into what it is that we want to or should respond to. We assumed that Athens would allow us to see these challenges more clearly and could help us, not just to know them better and to be more aware of them (which are certainly important aims), but to *think through* the challenges in a *situated* way. And we assumed that it is always worthwhile to go and look for oneself (even if there is much to be seen and read, or that can be seen and be read, *without* going).

On our trip to Athens, all students *individually* walked a marathon: twenty-one kilometers from a point on the outskirts of Athens to the Acropolis and twenty-one kilometers back. These walks coursed along arbitrary paths (though these were precisely drawn on the map) and were repeated many times.

18. Isabelle Stengers, "Risquer une Ville qui Apprend" [Risking a Learning City] *Les Annales de la Recherché Urbaine* 95 (2004): 126–129.

19. For an extensive discussion, see, for example, Karen O'Rourke, *Walking and Mapping: Artists as Cartographers* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2013).

During the walks, the students made observations and registered all kinds of parameters — informal settlements, benches, abandoned buildings, graffiti, and the like, which had developed and changed over the years — in order to focus on the issue of the "public." The students talked to people, took photographs, captured smells and sounds, and shared moods. As noted, the paths were arbitrary, crossing the whole of Athens, not translating an intention to visit particular (for example, beautiful or deprived) areas, places, viewpoints, or "zones." Every night, students translated their observations into common dot maps, which covered approximately 1,200 kilometers of Athens's streets (Figure 1). Together, we extensively discussed their observations, their thoughts, and their conversations.

The walks were impressive: thousands of vacant shops and abandoned buildings (including huge Olympic stadiums, complete factories, large shopping malls, and so on), closed universities, closed hospitals, the duality of society, the very precarious situation of a large part of the population, including the situation of migrants who were scared to death, walls and streets trying to speak (massive amounts of graffiti, large demonstrations), occupations (of national broadcasting stations, public spaces, and the like), huge numbers of empty billboards (nothing to sell), violent attacks, half of all young people unemployed, and … (see Figure 2 for examples of the maps the students assembled). Of course, the students visited the Acropolis. But the Acropolis could not arrest their attention or move them. In fact, they literally and figuratively turned their back on the Parthenon and despised the bubble of happy tourist consumption in the immediate surroundings of the Acropolis. It was too different from the reality that confronted them (us) during their

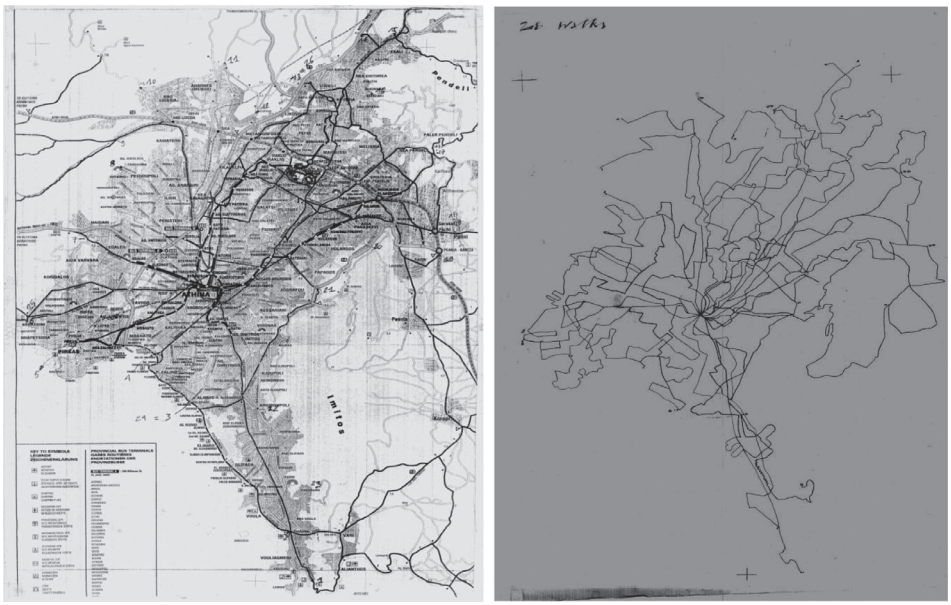

Fig. 1. Map of Athens (left) and map of the twenty-eight walks (right).

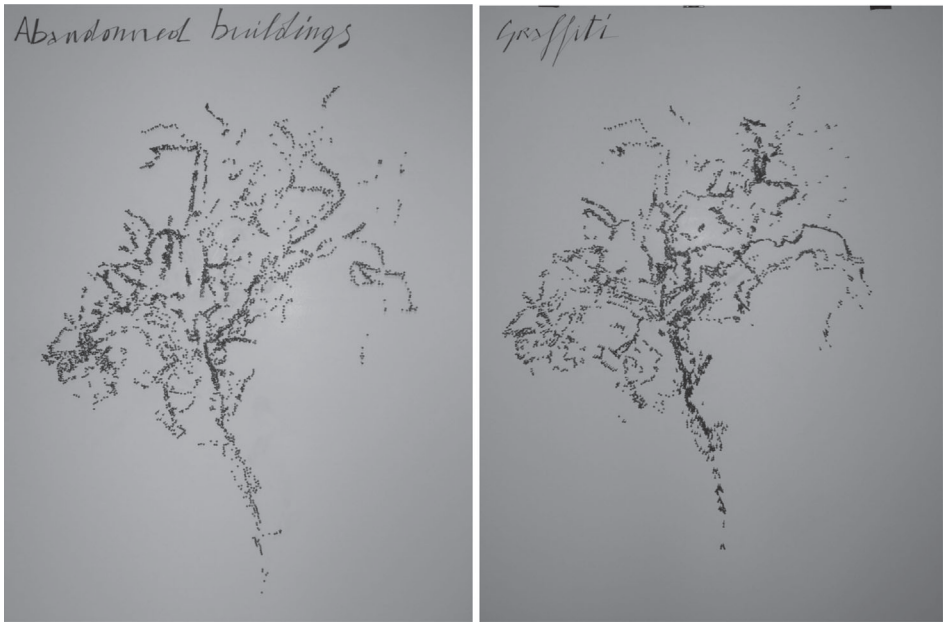

Fig. 2. Examples of dot maps based on observations along the twenty-eight walking lines.

(our) walks. As a result, this iconic site had become vacant of (defined) meaning itself, empty, "abandoned." This reality did not only confront them (us) in a very *existential* way with what a crisis means, but also caused them (us) to think in an equally existential way about Europe and to experience a particular kind of association with Athens. Was this city a magnifying glass for Europe's general condition? Based on the observations and the maps, the students decided that they would take a photograph of each abandoned building they had seen during their walks. There were thousands of them, and all the students revisited and photographed each one in more or less the same way. They put the photos in a montage that, together with the dotted maps and other material (films, recorded interviews, collected objects), was used in a four-day public workshop and exposition we held after returning to Leuven, Belgium. The project centered on the theme of "emptiness/abandon" (in various guises: social, economic, existential, material, and so on) among other issues. The intent of the exposition was to offer a common object of study for the workshop participants, which included (Greek) students, economists, journalists, artists, and activists. This event resulted in the design of an educational traveling practice through Europe that would allow people to *encounter* and engage with "Europe" in a way that differs from that offered by the existing European Erasmus program.[20] I cannot provide a more detailed account of the Athens course itself

20. The European Erasmus exchange program (now known as Erasmus+) intends to offer higher education students the opportunity to pursue a part of their education program at another institution, hence travelling outside their "home institution" in order to promote better knowledge and awareness

here, but let me try to articulate how I think one could understand the course as part of shaping a "neo-Humboldtian university." In order to do that, though, we must first make some detours.

Detours

Let us go to the 2016 Architecture Biennale in Venice and listen to curator Alejandro Aravena, who proposed "Reporting from the Front" as the biennale theme. In his presentation of this theme, he referred to Bruce Chatwin, who encountered an archeologist in the desert standing on an aluminum stair:

> It was Maria Reiche studying the Nazca lines. Standing on the ground, the stones did not make any sense; they were just random gravel. But from the height of the stair those stones became a bird, a jaguar, a tree or a flower. We would like the Biennale Architettura 2016 to offer a new point of view like the one Maria Reiche has on the ladder. Given the complexity and variety of challenges that architecture has to respond to, REPORTING FROM THE FRONT will be about listening to those that were able to gain some perspective and consequently are in the position to share some knowledge and experiences with those of us standing on the ground.[21]

In this way Aravena suggests that we need "a point of view" or perspective, that we need to look from a certain height in order to see patterns in the complexity and to "gain some knowledge and experience," and that this will enable us to better address (that is, to design better responses to) the societal challenges (the social, political, economic, environmental, technological issues) that face us today. One could doubt, however, whether standing alone on a ladder (which is, in a way, a classical image of research and "theory" as the activity of the spectator at a distance, looking for coherence in a systematic and rational manner) is indeed the best way to start to address the challenges and respond to them. And there is, of course, another ladder that Sherry Arnstein proposed at the end of the 1960s and that is still very much in use today in various guises: the consultation ladder,[22] which is conceived as offering the possibility for "stakeholders" to raise their voices and participate. Although I agree that those concerned (human and nonhuman) should be involved and that we need some distance to design responses to the challenges, I think these practices should be *complemented* by another kind of distance and involvement, one that is not related to going up or down on ladders, but to going through the middle.

---

of "Europe." Looking at the most popular destinations (see http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/education/library/statistics/2014/erasmus-receiving-institutions_en.pdf) and taking the map of Athens as folio for Europe, the students understood the actual program as mainly organizing visits to the "acropolises" of Europe. Hence, starting from their own insights, they tried to design a different kind of study-travel program that might disclose another "Europe."

21. See Biennale Architettura 2016, Fifteenth Annual Architecture Exhibition (Venice, Italy, May 28–November 27, 2016), http://www.labiennale.org/en/architecture/2016/biennale-architettura-2016-reporting-front.

22. Sherry R. Arnstein, "A Ladder of Citizen Participation," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 35, no. 4 (1969): 216–224. See also "Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation," *The Citizen's Handbook*, http://www.citizenshandbook.org/arnsteinsladder.html (accessed August 14, 2016).

Let me therefore take the reader now to Mount Athos and to the cinema in the company of Roland Barthes. In his 1977 course at the *Collège de France*, with the theme "How to live together?,"[23] Barthes introduced at one point the notion of claustrophilia in reference to the monks that enclose, or seclude, themselves. He explains that this is form of seeking "enclosure" does not derive from anxiety, a need for protection or control, or the intention to contain; rather, its starting point is the desire to devote oneself,[24] that is, to put oneself at disposal or to be disposed so that one can "receive" something — can be touched, one might say. Barthes uses the term *se déprotéger*, meaning to undo one's protection, to get rid of protection.[25] Thus, according to Barthes, in order to be receptive, there is a need for limits, certain kinds of enclosure, discomfort, diet that are (maybe paradoxically) ways of "de-protecting." Barthes is not looking for a general receptivity, however; he is looking for a specific form of receptivity that is not equivalent to obedience. That is why in "Leaving the Movie Theater," another of his brilliant writings on film and cinema, Barthes asks how one can distance oneself from being caught and captivated by the power of the spectacle (that is, the combination of image and discourse), how to keep from being totally enthralled by what is shown and presented.[26] Of course, a film could be made in such a way that it interrupts its own power to bewitch spectators (I will come back to this point later). In addition, we have the vigilance of the critical, highly trained, and well-informed spectator who knows about the ideologies and illusions that movies offer (one who can read the images and understand the words in their "true" sense). But this kind of spectator is always already *armed* —protected, as it were — and therefore reads or understands (knows) even before she sees and listens, before she thinks. However, according to Barthes, there is another way to regard film, where we are less armed, more disposed or exposed, while still being at some distance, but not at the distance of the indifferent, critical spectator. And Barthes states that this other distance, which he calls an "amorous distance," is enabled by complicating the relation between the spectator and the film through a situation: the site of the cinema. It looks, he says, as if this spectator has two bodies at the same time: one body that gazes, lost in the image, captivated, and another body that does not fetishize the image, but exceeds it due to this body's relation to "the texture of the sound, the hall, darkness, the obscure mass of other bodies, the rays of light, the entering, leaving."[27] Therefore, *to take off* (*décoller* in French, which literally means to undo or get rid of the glue) *without being away* (or absent) requires that

23. In French, "*Comment vivre ensemble*?" One could also translate this as "How to associate?"

24. Recall that this is a second important meaning of "study": to devote oneself to something.

25. Roland Barthes, *How to Live Together: Novelistic Simulations of Some Everyday Spaces — Notes for a Lecture Course and Seminar at the Collège de France (1976–1977)*, text established, annotated, and introduced by Claude Coste, trans. Kate Briggs (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 57–63.

26. Roland Barthes, "En Sortant du Cinema" [Leaving the Movie Theater] in *Le Bruissement de la Langue: Essais Critiques IV* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1984), 407–412.

27. Ibid., 411.

the relation between spectacle and spectator be complicated by a situation that creates an amorous (not critical) distance. And the situation is in some sense one of "vacation" — one's self is suspended (at a distance also). In the cinema, there is a certain anonymity that is not, however, without population. The cinema is a place of disposal and distance, a place where, nesting in the chairs, I am enclosed; such a place creates (or at least helps to create) the conditions necessary for a certain kind of love and thought/thinking and imagination to work. It is important to see that this is totally different from watching the same film *at home*. At home, there is no darkness, no anonymity of the many; the space is known, familiar: the objects we know, the furniture we know, the space is dressed, we *are condemned to the family*, as Barthes puts it.[28]

Let us next briefly visit the archipelago of the Greek islands with Michel Serres, who suggests that we understand the ancient Greek stories or myths as that which connects dis-connected places that constitute interruptions.[29] The stories recall the "course" that passes over the original disjunctions; they serve as a bridge across the crevasses, a vehicle that implies a wild topology full of obstacles but that also allows for *encounter*. But then this wild topology gets replaced by geometric grids, and the encounters stop; eventually, the wild topology completely disappears. Transportation and displacement without obstacles has replaced the course (journey) along islands and the geometric discourse leaves no play for such journeys. In response, one could think of reinstalling the ruptures between the places, disturbing and cutting through the discourse while departing on a course that interrupts the geometrical and functional (zone) maps.

Let us now take a third detour to have a look at the "one-way street" of Walter Benjamin, where he observes that

> The power of a country road is different when one is walking along it from when one is flying over it by airplane. In the same way, the power of a text when it is read is different from the power it has when it is copied out. The airplane passenger sees only how the road pushes through the landscape, how it unfolds according to the same laws as the terrain surrounding it. Only he who walks the road on foot learns the power it commands, and of how, from the very scenery that for the flier is only the unfurled plain, it calls forth distances, belvederes, clearings, prospects at each of its turns like a commander deploying soldiers at a front. Only the copied text thus commands the soul of him who is occupied with it, whereas the mere reader never discovers the new aspects of his inner self that are opened by the text, that road cut through the interior jungle forever closing behind it: because the reader follows the movement of his mind in the free flight of daydreaming, whereas the copier submits it to command.[30]

Benjamin makes clear that there is a difference between walking a road and flying over it, one that is similar to the difference between copying a text by hand and

28. Ibid., 409.

29. Michel Serres, "Discours et Parcours," in *Hermes IV: La distribution* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1977), 197–210.

30. Walter Benjamin, "One-Way Street," in *One-Way Street and Other Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott and Kingsley Shorter (London: NLB, 1979), 51. For an extensive reading of this passage, see Masschelein, "The Idea of Critical E-ducational Research."

reading (understanding) it. Copying works differently than reading, its power is different. Benjamin is not saying that the gaze we have on the road differs according to a change in vantage point or perspective (the viewpoint down in the street versus that up in the air), and he is not referring to the difference between an objective viewpoint, on the one hand, and a subjective, lived, and engaged viewpoint, on the other. He is referring to a difference in the activity itself, to different ways of relating to the world, *relating to the present, to what is present*. This difference is a difference in power, in the *effect* of that activity on ourselves and on what is revealed. The one who flies, Benjamin says, only "sees," but the one who walks the road "learns of the power it commands" — that is, the person on foot "experiences" how some given "cuts through" even our daydreams. It is being or getting attentive or exposing oneself. To be attentive is not to be captivated by an intention, a project, a vision, a perspective, or imagination. Attention is lack of intention. Attention entails the suspension of judgment and implies a kind of waiting (in French, attention relates also to *attendre*, to wait).

Let us go back to the cinema, this time with Jacques Rancière and Pedro Costa. Costa has made several movies in which migrants from a former Portuguese colony (Cabo Verde) are center stage. Rancière states that there are two ways in which we can speak (use words) about a movie: The first is to start from the (declared or assumed) intention of the maker and to compare what is made (seen) with what was intended. The second is to forget all this and to confront the images oneself and then to imagine for oneself the fable presented by the association or train of shots.[31] This second way can be connected to what Rancière makes the ignorant schoolmaster say: that it is always about seeing, about saying (that is, to describe) what you see and to expose what you think about it.[32] One should be attentive, which means, in the words of Henri Bergson, to try to think what you see and not to see what you think[33] (since seeing what you think means, in effect, simply recognizing what we already know — for example, the poverty of the migrant, or the racism of society — which are already concepts). Costa's films are made to help us see; they often feature tableaus that are illuminated as if by a torch in a cave — the light is not so bright as to threaten the characters' existence. The characters need a certain protection against the light (of social science, cinema, spectator), and in Costa's movies it is as if the light comes from those who are "actors." In particular, the lighting suggests a suspension (but not abandonment) of the context and background. What there is to see cannot be reduced to its context or past. Costa's movies also do not try to affect us in a predefined way, and they are not about naming the events and interactions depicted before we have seen them for ourselves. It is cinema that closes doors and that *needs* closed

31. Jacques Rancière, *Chroniques des Temps Consensuels* [Chronicles of Consensual Times] (Paris: Le Seuil, 2005), 37.

32. Jacques Rancière, *Le Mâitre Ignorant* [The Ignorant Schoolmaster] (Paris: Fayard, 1987).

33. Henri Bergson, *Le Rire: Essai sur la Signification du Comique* [Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic] (Paris: Editions Alcan, 1924), 78.

doors.[34] It closes doors in the sense that it does not offer the spectator a reflection that she can easily recognize (because something has to be sold to a consumer, or because the spectator has to be made conscious of the troubles that arise from poverty). This cinema does not immediately offer the keys to its spectators, either; it resists the spectator who immediately wants to enter, install herself, and appropriate the space. It is not about being seduced, but also not about maintaining the stance of an indifferent, outsider spectator. To achieve this requires effort, and that is why somebody has to stay at the door, to keep it closed. This is, according to Rancière, where the ignorant schoolmaster is.[35] It is not about being elitist, but about regard and attention, about the right distance, about disclosing a world and confirming that we can see. Some things are shown to us, some-ones are presented, something is said, but there are always already so many images and words that occupy this presentation, so many associations and connections between words and images that have instilled in us specific ways of looking, of naming what we see, and of seeing what we talk about, that our seeing almost reflexively becomes re-cognition. I do know this, I have already seen it, I know already what we can call it, I have read it — the certainties of the place, the map of the places, and the trajectories that are called "reality."[36] The point (again, following Bergson) is to look *again*, to give time, and the way the film is made and the situation is arranged can help to raise questions: Who are these characters? Who is speaking? Do they speak in their own name, or do they speak as migrant, worker, black? Is it Costa? Are they the subjects of anthropology, sociology, psychology, the types and characters from a story, or are they singular beings who speak, who defy the logic of identification? And if we cannot identify them, what do we do, how can we relate to them?

Finally, let me take the reader for a last brief detour to the archives of the labor movement where Rancière went to study the lives and voices of workers and encountered Jacotot, the ignorant schoolmaster, and Gauny, the carpenter who was a poet at night. Rancière called Jacotot and Gauny two figures of the impossible.[37] From them, he learned that there is nothing to be understood — nothing "behind" or "under" or "beyond" — but only things to be said or written about the world, as he clarifies in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*. He also learned that speaking and writing are always aesthetic or poetic, and hence always about giving form and producing accounts that dramatize (or "stage") the world, that

34. See Pedro Costa, "A Closed Door That Leaves Us Guessing" (text of a seminar given in Tokyo in 2004), published by *Rouge* (2005), http://www.rouge.com.au/10/costa_seminar.html.

35. See also Goele Cornelissen, "The Public Role of Teaching: 'To Keep the Door Closed,'" in *Rancière, Public Education, and the Taming of Democracy*, ed. Maarten Simons and Jan Masschelein (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 15–30.

36. See Jacques Rancière, *Courts Voyages au Pays du Peuple* [Short Voyages to the Land of the People] (Paris: Le Seuil, 1990).

37. Jacques Rancière, *La Nuit des Prolétaires: Archives du Rêve Ouvrier* [Nights of Labor: The Workers Dream in Nineteenth Century France] (Paris: Fayard, 1981).

performatively constitute "the world." They are fundamentally acts of solitude that no community, no craft, no knowledge can guarantee. Rancière states that he was trying to be faithful to "an impossible" and to invent forms of knowing that preserved the memory of his voyage into the archives *as a voyage*, that is, as "a singular traverse … of the multiple ways in which words are woven together with things and knowledges (*savoirs*), the multiple ways in which words are woven together with things and acts," woven together with bodies.[38]

Back to Athens: Some Practical Notes

Now, let me try to articulate how I think the detours help to understand the Athens course in terms of performing university as pedagogic form. I suggest that what we did in Athens complicates the discourse (of the crisis in Europe and of science, and even the narratives of so-called local people) and the images (on the Internet) that captivate us; it does this through a course, which is at once a site and a journey (or, maybe better, which is creating a site through but also for the journey), that brings a collective of people and things (including words) together to encounter the city and "to regard attentively." The Athens course implies a public methodology that does not define in advance what should and what should not be taken into account.

Clearly, there is much to know about Athens — its history and its present — and we wanted to approach the city in such a way that we could come to a certain opinion of what is happening today and could "situate" our thinking in order to design (create) an educational practice. Our assumption was that perhaps Athens could let us see something and could say something to us that we do not yet know or cannot yet imagine (or that we would at least like to test), something that would make us think. Today, we can see Athens, in meticulous detail, through images, films, and photos that are available on the Internet. These offer projections related to a range of intentions we might have in traveling to Athens: to go for a tourist trip, for a friendly visit, for business, to find work, or even with the laudable intention to help. It has been said that we can be so full of our good intentions that when we (think we) see an open mouth, we immediately want to put some food in it. We do not take the time to suspend our good intentions for a moment, to try to hear what the mouth might whisper or attempt to say to us, to listen as the mouth perhaps objects to our action. We should not think that this issue is easily solved simply by asking the mouth what it wants through interviews, questionnaires, needs assessments, participation strategies — the ladder of participation — which are "our" strategies always already imposing on the other a position predefined by us, by our projects or projections — and whom we blame when she or he or it can't say anything or refuses to do so (labeling this one "the idiot," to use Isabelle Stengers's term[39]). The question is, where is "Athens" in all this? That is, how can we

38. Jacques Rancière, "La Poétique du Savoir" [The Poetics of Knowledge], *Multitudes* 11–12 (1994), http://www.multitudes.net/la-poetique-du-savoir/ (my translation).

39. Isabelle Stengers, "The Cosmopolitical Proposal," in *Making Things Public: Atmospheres of Democracy*, ed. Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 994–1003.

experience Athens in the strong sense, as something that can make us see, that can become an object that speaks to us, and that can contribute to but also, crucially, object to (or, more precisely, contradict) our projections and our understandings, can cut off or interrupt our intentions and imaginings (including our daydreams) and become the "object" of our "attention" and regard? Put differently, how do we transform Athens into, not a learning city, but a "university"? How do we turn Athens into an object of study and make it speak, not an object of (re)cognition but of encounter? How do we learn not to see what we think, but to think what we see; to be vigilant and cautious about our concepts and abstractions;[40] to think and to let new thoughts emerge? How, in Rancière's words, do we come to make new connections, stage the world differently, weave words, things, acts, and bodies together in a way that holds the journey in memory? How do we regard and look?

In order to create a field of attention and regard as journey , we used a protocol that had been developed over several years to carry out specific exercises. This protocol contains some principles or rules and also requires a certain discipline of mind and body. First, it is important to emphasize that we drew the lines along which we walked arbitrarily (that is, we did not draw them according to what one would want to see or to "visit") and also that the same students individually walked along these same lines over and over again. The arbitrariness of the path is a very simple but essential element of our way of doing, which is not a method, as traditionally understood, but instead a discipline that has no predefined outcome. The aim is to cut through or get rid of *intentions* (both of the city and of the one who walks) and thus allow *attention* to emerge. The practice of walking along arbitrary lines is part of the attempt to "free" Athens (what there is to see and to hear) from being directly enclosed by economic, touristic, cognitive, and political projects, with their particular ends, as well as to free the learners and researchers from being captured in productive time. Our way of doing suspends the regular order and gives "free time"; under these conditions, *students* emerge because study *happens*. If method means, as Barthes suggests, *a protocol to get to an end, to obtain a (predefined or projected) result*, our way is something very different; it is a *protocol of exposition* or of *undergoing* that also avoids the tricks of chance, which seem often to lead one, even when randomly strolling, precisely where all kinds of "power" (the attracting power of the lights or of websites, for example) aim to take us. Ours is a protocol of meeting or of the adventure of encounter,[41] one could say.

---

40. This is the way in which Isabelle Stengers phrases one of Alfred North Whitehead's concerns regarding abstract thinking without denying the crucial need for it. Isabelle Stengers, "Another Science Is Possible! A Plea for Slow Science" (inaugural lecture of 2011–2012 Willy Calewaert Chair, Vrije Universiteit Brussels, December 13, 2011), 6, https://threerottenpotatoes.files.wordpress.com/2011/06/stengers2011_pleaslowscience.pdf.

41. Martin Savransky, *The Adventure of Relevance: An Ethics of Social Inquiry* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 89.

The arbitrary lines outline a site. They confine and limit, which is, as we learned from Barthes, a way to "de-protect" (students often ask why they have to walk along these lines when there is so much to see, so much *they want* to see, elsewhere in the city). Walking in this way is to trace lines that do not translate a predefined meaning or program; they do not delineate a zone, but instead cut through established boundaries. It results in maps, in a cartography, that can make something present. Walking the lines alone is a way to keep students feeling uncomfortable (and attentive), to prevent them from immediately feeling at home and appropriating the space. Moreover, while the students certainly talk to many people, their purpose is not only about collecting narratives but about arriving at dots on a map, making the city present through taking a (physical) walk and through visualization. It is a materialization of a temporal stream — that is, grammatization — that interrupts the narrative. In this sense, the walk is decontextualizing. The maps are constituted only by dots, with every dot representing a point along the lines where one of the parameters was found. Our maps do not indicate functional zones so that they can complicate the discourse of geometric or functional maps. Such maps ignore interruptions and breaks while our maps, in contrast, articulate interstices that could result in new connections or associations and another story, another staging. Making dotted maps by taking the students on a physical walk as a journey, trying to shape "a time outside time" and a "place without place," could be seen as a way to get to the two bodies of Barthes and their amorous distance.

Moreover, it is important to underline that the maps and the photograph series developed for our workshop were made collectively — every student depended on all the others in the group to construct the final map and to put together the series (significantly, the process of photographing and construction was itself a way to make Athens a common concern). Our project was not about an individual journey to find one's identity or to contribute to personal flourishing; rather, it was about gathering together to disclose the world, regard the world, and hopefully to initiate a movement of thought (the emerging audience or public) that could yield an image and a response (the design of an educational practice, for example, Erasmus). It could be seen as a way simultaneously to arrive at a distance and also to establish an *existential* relationship, an affective entanglement and public engagement.

A Neo-Humboldtian University?

As I mentioned at the outset, I wanted to follow Latour's call for designing neo-Humboldtian universities in order to assist in creating the conditions for designing responses to societal challenges. I also agree with his view that, in order to realize this aim, "pedagogy" must be one of the issues at the frontline. I translated "pedagogy at the frontline" as meaning the need to reclaim universities as pedagogic forms, that is, as artificial milieus that create conditions for regarding attentively and that can make us think because an "object" of study emerges. It is not just about discovering patterns, but also about being vigilant regarding our abstractions, conceptions, and ideas by organizing the possibility of objections, so that we can be contradicted and questioned as well as affected and entangled.

This requires not so much the distance of standing on a ladder or of flying over, or the abolishment of distance by means of dealing with so-called "real world" problems via life projects, service learning, or problem-oriented learning (despite the good intentions and important learning experiences such approaches no doubt entail). Whereas the ladder of Aravena or the airplane in the sky offer perhaps "'too much distance," directly looking for solutions to problems might mean being too captured by the relations (by the desire to help, to solve problems) or ending up merely with "stories" or "images" (with too much narration, or "too much love," one could say). I previously suggested, following Barthes, that in order to arrive at an *amorous distance* that might allow for a more thoughtful response to societal challenges, we have to complicate the relations (of learning and research) by means of a particular situation. In other words, we need a pedagogic form that allows for public and collective study, implying not only a cognitive, but also a sensory, poetic, and existential relationship to some-thing. Complicating learning and research can bring us some theory in a different way than the one on the ladder, or the one on the ground: the one from and through the middle. It has often been remarked that *theoria* refers to the theater and the spectators in the theater. However, it is important to remember that, in the Orphic version, *theoria* "implied an emotional involvement, whereas [in] the Pythagorean replacement [it] did not." And in "another sense as well, *theoria* seems to have suggested more than the isolated gaze of a subject at an object. According to Wlad Godzich, the word designates a plural collective of public figures, who as a group provided certain knowledge for the polis. As such, *theoria* was the opposite of the individual perception known as *aesthesis*."[42] Maybe that is what designing to address societal challenges also needs in order to *complement* the algorithms of big data and the rational or participatory (over)views from the ladders: this kind of theory that starts from an issue — for example, the crisis in Athens — by looking for assistance to work through the issue by visualizing it and making it discussable in particular ways, to give the issue and those involved with it the power to make us think, to be considered. Theory provided by an association of bodies and things, physically gathered in a confined space to study — that is, provided by these gatherings of students who constitute the university, not as institution but as pedagogic form, and who can ensure that design is not at first a "project" (translating intentions or resulting from creative brainstorms), but a thoughtful response that emerges out of a movement of public and collective study (performing attention).

The purpose of the example (albeit limited in scope) I offer here, together with the short (technical) story that accompanies it has been to explore what it could mean to, as Latour suggested, conceive and approach pedagogy as the frontline of future universities aiming to address societal challenges and to respond to the actual situation of disorientation. Pedagogy, here, is not reduced to teaching and

42. Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vison in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 30.

extension but is the genus and the locus of the nexus between public engagement and basic research.[43] And taking a last detour to visit the design studio course as practiced today in many architectural education programs, where one would discover a number of similarities with or translations of the practices and principles that I have tried to sketch,[44] and simultaneously see the vast movement of pedagogical experimentation related to university education worldwide,[45] one could perhaps start to discern the creation (the constitution or taking shape) of a crucial new pedagogic form. I propose to call it, preliminarily, the "public design studio," of which the features, the architecture, the practices involved, and the technologies have to be further articulated, of course, based on the results of many experiments with this form. One could conceive it as becoming a "typical" or characteristic pedagogic form of the neo-Humboldtian university, situated at the level of the lecture, the seminar, the laboratory, or the workshop currently used in the classic Humboldtian university and that it would complement these forms, if not replace them. If this makes sense, one could suggest that university programs of a neo-Humboldtian university would all have to include a "public design studio" and that the example outlined here might indeed contain elements to be replicated or translated within university programs in all fields.

43. Johan De Walsche, "Genus, Locus, Nexus: An Inquiry into the Nature of Research in Architectural Design Education" (PhD dissertation, University of Antwerp, 2018).

44. Ibid.

45. See, for example, Hans Schildermans, "Making University Today: Introductory Notes on an Ecology of Study Practices" (PhD dissertation, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 2018).

I FIRST PRESENTED a preliminary sketch for this paper at the EAAE/ARCC Conference *Architectural Research addressing Societal Challenges* at the Faculty of Architecture, Lisbon University, in June 2016. The first written version was presented, in German, at the Conference *Visuelle Assoziation*' in the Warburg-Haus in Hamburg in September 2016, and as a *Ringvorlesung* at the Institut für Allgemeine Erziehungswisschaften, Johan Wolfgang Goethe University, Frankfurt am Main, the following December. The paper has continued to evolve with presentations to the conference *Professional and Cultural Identity in a Changing Sociopolitical Reality* at the Alqasemi College of Education in Baqa al-Gharbiyye, Israel in April 2017 and the Salon group in Brussels in June 2017. In September 2018 a French version was presented as a seminar at the University of Juiz de Fora, Brazil. The paper has been thoroughly revised for each occasion. I would like to thank the audience on every occasion of its presentation, including the reviewers and editors of the final paper, for the very helpful comments and suggestions, without which it would never have progressed in the way it has. Finally and crucially, I want to thank the students and assistants who participated in and co-shaped over the years the course that offered the substance for the paper and, especially, also Wim Cuyvers, Jorge Larossa, Maarten Simons, and Walter Kohan who, at various times and locations, have strongly contributed to elaborating and performing the practice on which the paper rests and reflects.