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UNDISCIPLINED

BY LEARNING

HOW COULD TEMPORARILY REMOVING DISCIPLINE(S) HELP DEVELOP A BETTER COLLABORATION ATTITUDE BETWEEN THEM TO TACKLE THE CHALLENGES OF OUR COMPLEX WORLD?

ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I propose a rupture in the broad discourse around inter-, trans-, and multi-disciplinarity by disengaging from the methodological trap of the self-referential academic discussion around disciplinarity. The latter is too detached, in my opinion, from the concrete experiences and existing non-disciplinary practices. Therefore, starting from my personal practice and struggles inside an interdisciplinary cultural institution, I decided to sketch an alternative approach that relies on temporarily removing disciplines to help develop a better collaboration attitude between them, not in an interdisciplinary project but by having people from different disciplines learning together. In this way, learners become aware of how people with diverse backgrounds think and grasp reality, challenging the assumptions and hierarchies that normally originate from stereotyped images of specific characters (the nerd scientist, the greedy economist, the eccentric artist...). I called this approach indisciplinarity, a concept already briefly introduced by French philosopher Jacques Rancière, that I expanded to oppose both the discipline – that students bear within a traditional teaching environment – and disciplines – the way they divide knowledge and who can contribute to it from who cannot. For my graduation project, I co-designed an indisciplinary online learning community called Make Economy Yours Again (MEYA), whose aim was to co-create a new knowledge base for developing alternative economic narratives. Participants were diverse in age, nationality, background and level of education, united only by their interest in economic activism. Through two editions of MEYA, I tested different pedagogical devices and de-disciplinarizing strategies to translate the approach of indisciplinarity into a concrete case study. The learning community became a space to practice economic change, a weekly 3-hour training session to exercise other ways of being in the current economic system, while questioning some of the assumptions and ideologies that dominate our understanding and action in a complex world.

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01.

INTRODUCTION

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The increasing complexity of our world and of the challenges we have to face no longer allows for a strictly disciplinary and reductionist approach, in which we can, for example, divide a problem into its parts, deal with those in separate disciplines and then recompose them in a solution. It is a problematic way of thinking, being and feeling because it reduces, separates and opposes. And, according to Morin (2008), the limitations of this kind of thinking are becoming more and more evident: 'first, with increasing specialisation, the big questions are simply not asked and addressed anymore; second, action in the world cannot be confined to knowledge drawn from one discipline' (p.xxvii). The organisation of knowledge in disciplines and their fragmentation and specialisation is preventing us from embracing a paradigm of complexity (Morin, 2008): 'a way of thinking that is not disembodied and abstract, but rich in feeling, intuition, and connection to the larger social and historical context' (p.xxiv). That doesn't mean per se that we should get rid of disciplines, but instead, design ways for their borders to be more permeable and for a new collaboration attitude to emerge, which is in the end the purpose of this research.

In a world full of uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity, the interactions and exchanges between different disciplines are fundamental to achieving a relational approach that is responding to the environmental, political, social, economic and technological issues we must address today (some of these challenges are presented in fig.1, an infographic by World Economic Forum). By relational (Morin, 2008), it is intended an approach that goes beyond both reductionism and holism, in which 'the description of the parts depends upon that of the whole, which depends upon that of the parts' (p. 101), in a recursive manner which highlights organisation and interrelations in the issue analysed for example.

The disciplinary (and disciplined) education systems offer limited occasions to explore the interconnectedness of the world and the issues that are affecting it. If on one hand there are countless projects in which disciplines are working together, on the other, there are fewer occasions for people from different fields to learn together. We are only partially aware of how other disciplines deal with and make sense of reality, what ways of thinking they foster and what kind of perspectives they provide. We are just making assumptions that most of the time originate from stereotyped images of specific characters (the nerd scientist, the greedy economist, the eccentric artist...), which are dividing people instead of bringing them together.

A concrete example from my experience is when an artist or designer is asked to contribute to a scientific or technology project. In many cases, the scientist/technologist pushes for the designer/artist to visualise

his/her idea, beautify it, and apply an aesthetic layer on his/her thinking. This attitude is one of the failures of an interdisciplinary project, because it defines hierarchies in the disciplines, without using the true potential of such collaborations and possibly undermining future ones, since some of the participants feel used and underestimated, instead of being involved in the thinking process.

Vice versa, if I'm looking at art institutions, the assumption is (in most cases) that art has something to teach to science, in terms of intuition and creativity in research, for example.

FIG. 1

For this reason, in my research, I'll try to take a stand neither for art and design nor for other disciplines. The purpose is to create a ground where everybody contributes equally in the process, without somebody feeling more important, intelligent and needed than somebody else. Nobody needs to teach anything to anybody, everyone is learning from each other. And this is also the premise of my graduation project, a concrete learning situation in which people from different disciplines are meeting each other (but also their different ways of thinking, doing and being) to learn together and contribute to an urgent topic they care for. An occasion not only to address an issue from multiple points of view, but also for participants to experience them directly and combine a diversity of approaches, needed to tackle societal issues: an intensive exercise in complex thinking.

FIG. 1: THE RISKS-TRENDS INTERCONNECTIONS MAP 2019 (WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM, 2019)
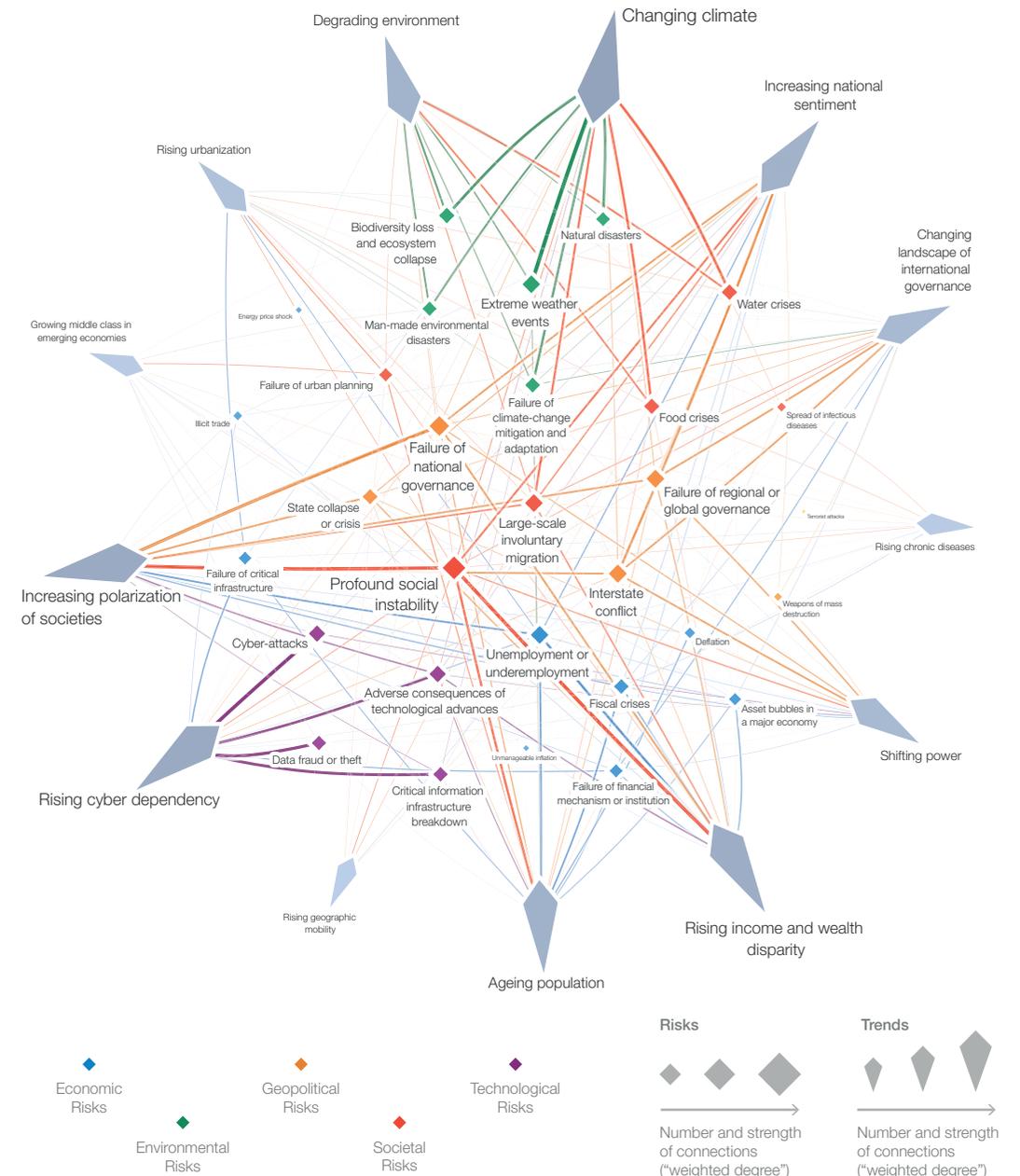
PERSONAL POSITIONING

I'm a middle man. The term describes, most of the time, a dealer or a reseller with a slightly negative connotation. I think it fits perfectly with what I do, since it outlines my practice in a very genuine and no-frills manner. You can also refer to it as a facilitator or mediator. This role takes different job titles in my case: strategic designer, curator, studio manager, art director, editor. It could be confusing for the outside world, but from my point of view, I'm just a middle man in different contexts.

I have a background in graphic and information design. I realised that the choice I made after high school was fundamental for what I do and believe now. I attended a scientific high school, I had good grades in almost all the subjects. My results made it difficult for me to choose a direction for university, I thought I could do anything. The big passion I had since I was ten was photography, but in a way, it didn't feel like something I could use for a job. I wasn't taking it seriously since it wasn't framed in a school context.

I decided to apply to the chemistry faculty: I liked chemistry, it was something I felt relaxed about, no big challenge, something I could do easily. In the back of my mind, I knew I would have suffered to specialise in something and to lose this feeling of knowing a bit of everything, of being able to connect fields and jump from one thing to another.

I felt I needed to go back to my passion for an answer or for another option at least. I started to look for photography at university, I found only art academies, those felt limiting, I needed a bigger context. Photography was a course in different design curricula, but design was something totally alien to me at that moment. I discovered that it is a field interacting with many others, about creating with and for different disciplines, and that every new project would force you to become an expert in something you would never have thought before of. I wanted to become a designer.

Unconsciously, I was choosing a path that partially allowed me not to choose one discipline, one area of topics but a medium and a creative process to interact with many, depending on the project. I was back in high school.

Maybe it felt like a long digression, but that sense of non-expertism it is still at the core of my practice today. By this term, I mean the approach to knowledge opposing the idea of disciplines as containers, created in an age of overspecialisation. Art, even more than design, has the freedom to acquire and recombine any methodology, medium, or insight from different domains, without bothering if it is appropriate or not. This attitude, when venturing into different fields, allows artistic research to create unexpected outcomes in those same fields, since its role is not institutionalised in that specific knowledge system but based on the personal stance and intrinsic motivation of the artist.

This concept is the basis of my practice as curator and design studio manager at Baltan Laboratories. This Eindhoven-based cultural institution initiates experimentation at the crossroads of art, design, science and technology.

In both roles I cover for Baltan, I coordinate different projects, including artists, designers, scientists, engineers, policymakers, and managers. Like a middle man, I take care of the relationships between these different profiles, managing expectations and reassuring all the parties that the collaboration would be beneficial for everybody in the end. It isn't easy: different ways of working, thinking, understanding and communicating are emerging. The initial tension of not acknowledging the others in their role, the feeling of being lost in expectations and not knowing what will be the outcome upfront or just experiencing the collaboration in one way, are just a few of the situations recurring in this kind of setting. In being worried about all those obstacles, different fields don't see the great value of overcoming them. It is about the chance to combine the very specific skill set and problem-solving attitude of science and technology with the holistic, contextual and problem setting approach of art and design. When this combination works, true innovation happens. In these kinds of interactions, besides facilitating them, I find myself playing different roles.

FIG. 2: AN ART-SCIENCE WORKSHOP AT BALTAN, WITH THE NEON QUOTE OF WILLIAM BLAKE (SAS SCHILTEN, 2018)

Let's take the example of an art-science project. As a non-expert, but as an amateur in science and technology with a background in design, I have the freedom of asking the obvious questions that maybe somebody around the table doesn't dare to ask, because they are afraid of judgement. In this way, factors that the scientist or the artist consider implicit are made explicit, so possible to act upon. On the other side, the artistic process can sometimes be vague in terms of outcomes, milestones and goals: by being in these kinds of processes many times, acknowledging the uncertainties and difficulties of speaking different languages, I can reassure the participants and sketch a direction. Often, in this orchestration, sense is made, and a first rough idea originates, which can align the two parties, giving them a glimpse of value, which in turn creates an initial sense of trust in the process.

So looking at the description of this example from my practice, I can deduce the different functions of my role as a middle man: facilitator and moderator, they are already aspects I touched upon; translator, by translating ideas to the language most fitting for the participants, in order to let them engage with the process and see it through sketches or language (visual metaphors); curator/art director, by taking the direction of the process not just as a neutral task but as a creative one, spanning from the creation of the concept to the overview and coordination of the whole project.

I consider my practice educational because it accelerates and condenses a learning process in the context of a project with a clear goal. The project becomes the pretext for this exchange to happen, it gives structure and pace to learning, it creates tensions that could be resolved or not. It is a very transformative journey for the different actors involved: they start it with doubts, resistance and sometimes closed-mindedness; they end it with acknowledging each other's value, learning something from another field by working with it and acquiring a fresh and challenging perspective on their own profession.

Using an educational framework looks like a good lens to see my work through, not just to focus on my practice but mostly on what effect, impact and consequences it has on the learning process of the participants of the projects I'm leading, of the audience of the events and exhibitions I'm curating, of the clients of strategy projects I'm designing.

POSITIONING TOWARDS THE RESEARCH TOPIC

The choice of this research topic derives from a few years of my practice as a 'middle man' in different interdisciplinary contexts and, before that, from an education path in which I have always felt boxed, limited and labeled for the discipline I chose (without having the choice of not choosing just one). After my

last master's, I managed to escape those boxes by establishing a practice in which art and design were my way of entering different contexts and topics. That was my step in the middle, from designer to coordinator, from making to mediating, from specialist to generalist. It felt liberating. But after more than 6 years of artistic projects in collaboration with designers, scientists, policy-makers and managers, I experienced art also as a box, a beautiful, personal, liberating and unexpected one, but still a box, a discipline. And as the other disciplines, it can also be exclusive and institutionalised, it can shut its borders to contributions from the outside, and it can be judgemental towards other fields.

After a few months of self-reflection, I arrived at the relatively simple conclusion that in the relationship between content (knowledge) and containers (disciplines) lies the reason why a real collaboration between disciplines is so hard to achieve. What if we remove those containers, even if just temporarily? What could be the implications of this removal? Would it help us bridge the gaps between disciplines?

While wondering about this removal, I cannot ignore how it could benefit the discussion and needed action on issues like our perverted relationship with nature and its consequences (climate change, the increasing extinction rate of species), the unsustainable infinite economic growth on a finite planet, the growing (social) inequality, just to name a few.

From these urgencies and the previous conclusion arises a pedagogical opportunity that I want to explore with my graduation project: create a space for learning and agency which is not discipline-based but topic/problem-posing; a safe and non-judgemental space for a learning community that voluntary gathers around a shared interest/urgency, in which learning happens without teaching but just by sharing and dealing with the content, without the mediation of the expert/teacher; a space that I didn't have but I wished in my education.

POSITIONING TOWARDS THE INTER-, TRANS-, MULTI-DISCIPLINARY DISCOURSE

In the previous pages, I deliberately started defining my personal take on disciplinarity from my educational path and current practice. I have not positioned my research in the academic discourse around the concepts of inter-, trans- and multidisciplinarity, because I find it limiting and counterproductive to some extent. Those notions are trying to capture the movements between disciplines, the transfer of methods and approaches between them or the multiple perspectives adopted to study a topic. They do that by grouping approaches under different prefixes, in a paradoxical attempt to give frame and structure to initiatives trying to question the structure and organisation of knowledge itself. In this way, inter-, trans-, and multi-disciplinarity become containers as well, meta-disciplines that label and restrict non-disciplinary experiments.

For this reason, I choose to be indisciplined and use this attitude as a moment of rupture: my research is not situated in an inter-, trans- or multi-disciplinary setting. Still, it could use strategies from all of them. It is an inter-inter/multi/transdisciplinary project, an in-between of all the three or none of them, to play with its absurdity.

I want to disengage from the methodological trap of the self-referential academic discussion around disciplinarity: I think it is too detached from the concrete experience of non-disciplinary experiments to be able to analyze their processes and dynamics. This is to say that I'm aware of the discourse, which is why I want to move away from it. I want to focus on the dynamics and effects of having people from different backgrounds learn together, rather than finding a methodological reason for them to do so or defining a very concrete methodology. Practising this pedagogical situation will help me understand which conditions and settings allow participants to free themselves from disciplinary affiliations. Theorising these situations without experiencing and trying them out could be damaging: it can lead to sterile methodological discussions and disciplinary fights, which would have the opposite effect than the desired one.

In the same way, I would like to prevent the disciplinary question from becoming a point of discussion among the participants of the pedagogical situation I'm focusing on for this research. I do not intend to stop it if it becomes relevant to the learning community, but I will not actively bring attention to it. My goal is to create a space of healing from the disciplinary fights and the power dynamics discipline(s) create(s) in a group: it is a suspended space for participants to be in a situation in which they don't have to be defined, categorized or labelled, in which learning about what we collectively care for can happen without methodological worries.

RESEARCH QUESTION

How could temporarily removing discipline(s) help develop a better collaboration attitude between them to tackle the challenges of our complex world?

Concepts are connected, and similar ideas appear in different fields simultaneously. Disciplinary boundaries are walls that don't let us experience this connection and prevent us from thinking, discussing and acting together. As Ranciere said in an interview (Baronian & Rosello, 2008), 'a discipline is always a provisional grouping, a provisional territorialisation of questions and objects that do not in and of themselves possess any specific localisation or domain' (p. 3). I'd like to try removing the disciplines, following the concepts and understanding how this could affect the disciplines themselves.

The adverb *temporarily* in the research question has the purpose of framing indisciplinarity as a safe space of temporary suspension of disciplines and of the hierarchies among them, to avoid any claim of an anarchical practice in knowledge production: what is produced through indisciplinary research will always feedback (at some point) into the related disciplinary fields, in which expertise is very much needed to develop solutions. In this way, indisciplinarity just opposes what, in disciplines, limits the process of discovery and the free movement of serendipity (Catellin & Loty, 2013). It offers another approach to questioning and ideating rather than a way of developing solutions.

SUBQUESTIONS

1. Why temporarily remove discipline(s)? (a theoretical framework of indisciplinarity)

2. How does indisciplinarity relate with the discourse on inter-, trans-,multi-disciplinarity?

3. How could an indisciplinary approach help people to learn, discuss and act on the urgent challenges of today? (reclaiming complex topics and intellectual emancipation)

4. What are the implications of removing discipline(s) in moving towards a relational approach?

5. When and for how long is an indisciplinary approach needed? (after, before or during traditional education?)

6. What kind of learning situation could be designed to temporarily remove discipline(s)?

7. In which context could indisciplinary learning happen? (inside or outside the institution?)

02.
THEORETICAL
FRAMEW
ORK

In this chapter, I will share the main conceptual and pedagogical underpinnings of my research that offer a theoretical foundation for the format proposed as the graduation project in the next chapter. It was an intense and insightful journey, where literature review mixed with experimentation, in an energising loop of practising what I have been reading and vice versa. In this process, I had the chance to exchange practices and discuss ideas with colleagues, educators, friends and each of these conversations opened new doors to unexplored territories and unexpected connections. I hope to give you a small account of what I have harvested.

INDISCIPLINARITY

The main reference around which my research is built is indisciplinarity, a concept that was roughly sketched by philosopher Jacques Rancière (Baronian & Rosello, 2008), which I took inspiration from and further elaborated through the other references below and my practice.

In my preliminary research, I got in touch with the concept of indisciplinarity, defined as an undisciplined approach that aims to transgress disciplinary boundaries, sometimes associated with the refusal of any methodology, making it an anarchical form of knowledge (Nicolescu, 2014).

In an interview with Art & Research Journal in 2008 (Baronian & Rosello, 2008), French philosopher Jacques Rancière pointed out how indiscipline is an emancipating concept because disciplines separate those considered qualified to think from those who are not, those who do science and those who are its object. So indiscipline is not just about an intellectual need for disciplines to open up, but also a concept that counteracts a political and conscious exclusion of someone from a specific thinking process, which someone becomes subordinate to. It is a methodological device to evade disciplinary specialism, segregation or hierarchisation: all elements that reproduce and reflect an institutional division of labour within the current organisation of knowledge (Miles, 2016). According to Rancière, indisciplinarity represents, on a societal level, a philosophical and political method for rethinking democracy, since the latter is based on equality, particularly the equality of intelligence between all citizens. The task of any democracy is to foster the participation of its citizens in the creation of the socio-political common world. A disciplinary approach, instead, excludes, it begins from the presumption of inequality and involves the drawing of boundaries(Rancière, 2006).

An indisciplinary approach is challenging to realise in a society built on hierarchies, divisions and inequality, which are systemic elements and its foundations and, therefore, difficult to get rid of. Indisciplinarity strives for a new society where those concepts are questioned and ultimately

dismantled while being based, at least in its name, on the negation of those and so linked to their existence.

For Rancière (2006), 'a discipline is always much more than an ensemble of procedures which permit the thought of a given territory of objects. It is first the constitution of this territory itself, and therefore the establishment of a certain distribution of the thinkable' (p. 8 reference). Indisciplinarity ignores the territories and distributions defined by disciplines to create 'a space without boundaries which is also a space of equality' (p.9), suggesting, therefore, a redistribution of the possible (Baronian & Rosello, 2008), 'a world open to the possibilities and capacities of all' (p.2).

But let's take a step back and look at the definition of discipline and how its meanings could help expand the one of indisciplinarity.

Discipline, definition
(from Merriam-Webster online dictionary):
1. a: control gained by enforcing obedience or order
   b: orderly or prescribed conduct or pattern of behaviour
   c: self-control
2. punishment
3. training that corrects, moulds, or perfects the mental faculties or moral character
4. a field of study
5. a rule or system of rules governing conduct or activity

It is fascinating to notice that 'field of study' is just the fourth meaning and how the connotation of control, order and obedience is very strong in all the others. In my opinion, indisciplinarity plays precisely with this ambivalent meaning by opposing both the discipline – that students bear within a traditional teaching environment – and disciplines – the way they divide knowledge and who can contribute to it and who cannot.

Discipline is highly valued in contemporary Western liberal education, it almost feels like a necessary condition for learning. It is connected with the idea that a regular effort will bring results, a needed sacrifice to master a specific skill or to memorise knowledge. In this way, discipline becomes an internalised condition, not only in the teaching environment but also outside of it: a routine to increase learning and productivity.

Zooming in the educational context, the teacher has the primary role in enforcing discipline and can be responsible for the inequality between her/his intelligence and her/his students' one. The teacher acquires her/his position of power through explanation. In his book *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, Rancière (1991) defines the teacher as an explicator: she/he is introduced to the life of a child, who learnt everything by his/her intelligence till that moment, including something very complex like the mother tongue.

Rancière's vision starts with the equalising premise that all men can understand what other men did and understood. He defines explication as the myth of pedagogy, which is dividing intelligences into two (Rancière, 1991):

'There is an inferior intelligence and a superior one. The former registers perceptions by chance, retains them, interprets and repeats them empirically, within the closed circle of habit and need. This is the intelligence of the young child and the common man. The superior intelligence knows things by reason, proceeds by method, from the simple to the complex, from the part to the whole. It is this intelligence that allows the master to transmit his knowledge by adapting it to the intellectual capacities of the student and allows him to verify that the student has satisfactorily understood what he learned. Such is the principle of explication. From this point on, for Jacotot, such will be the principle of enforced stultification.' (p.7)

According to this quote, the intelligence used when interpreting is the one not relying on the mediating intelligence of the master/teacher. This kind of intelligence is strongly activated by the will, the sense of urgency but also by the constraints of the situation: in other words, one can learn by oneself when one is motivated (by will, need or obligations/limitations).

The mastery of the teacher, according to Rancière (1991), consists 'in the command that had enclosed the students in a closed circle from which they alone could break out. By leaving his intelligence out of the picture, he had allowed their intelligence to grapple with that of the book' (p.13). But the teacher/master is present also in another way: to support the students' will with his/her own when it is not strong enough to achieve the goals set. This coincidence of wills and of the students' intelligence with the one of the studied material (book, text, image) is emancipatory rather than stultifying. From this consideration, Rancière derives his notion of the emancipatory master, for its capability of forcing the student to deal with the intelligence of the material, without his explication. Since, according to Rancière's vision, explanation is stultifying and not needed, he theorized the notion of the ignorant teacher (Rancière, 1991), as somebody who is teaching by asking questions about what he/she doesn't know. I can relate this aspect to the non-expertism of the middle man, as described in my personal positioning above and to the role of the leading learner in the learning community format that I'll introduce later in the thesis.

The principles of 'everything is in everything' and 'learn something and relate to it all the rest' introduced by Rancière in the same book could be very useful in disrupting the idea of a disciplined pedagogy. They dismiss the idea of a right method for teaching and learning, which presumes to know how to know, by proposing to start from one point of departure and follow a

defined order of steps (Rancière, 2016): 'there is no right point of departure, no right order. The whole is everywhere.' (p.29)

Furthermore, the notions of inferior intelligence and emancipatory master / ignorant teacher introduce a kind of interpretative intelligence both for the students and the teacher in the context of indisciplinary learning, since they could both find themselves in a position of non-experts in their learning environment, due to the many disciplinary backgrounds of the participants involved and of the materials studied. They have to deal with the learning/teaching materials from a very similar position, that can equalize their intelligences and flatten the power dynamics.

Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1993) offers a model of education where this equality between teacher and students finds its dimension in a pedagogical situation created around a shared issue/ urgency. The latter offers, as I mentioned above, the needed intrinsic motivation to activate the inferior intelligence. He defined this model as problem-posing education, opposite to the banking model of education. In the latter, there's no intention to make students aware and critical of the oppressor, so knowledge is transferred passively and passively received by the students-containers. The teacher creates the discipline, the students are disciplined by him/her. This kind of teacher can be identified as Rancière's stultifying master, the explicator. In problem-posing education, the educator is the student and the student is the educator: the educator is a sort of middle man, an ignorant schoolmaster, a kind of facilitator/organizer, that shares the same interests as the students. Those interests, which in my research are the intertwined environmental, political, economical and social challenges, could be labelled as Freire's generative themes, just that in this case they apply to most of humanity. According to Freire (1993), their urgent character is accelerating learning and can lead to quick action, which is something I want to achieve with my graduation project: make knowledge actionable in outputs that could promote agency besides learning.

To recap what was analysed above, through the references of Rancière and Freire, indisciplinarity aims to achieve understanding with the purpose of action, which emerges from the needs and the urgency of the inquiry, not from disciplinary boundaries (Morin, 2008): 'this in no way involves a rejection of disciplinary knowledge, but the development of knowledge that is pertinent to the inquiry for the purposes of action in the world' (p.xxvii).

COMPLEXITY AND ORGANISATION OF KNOWLEDGE

In the introduction, I mentioned how the current organisation of knowledge could not cope with the complexity we need to embrace to deal with the issues of our times. In the Western world, the key elements of this organization go back to Aristotle (his logic) and Descartes (his laws of thinking), creating the foundation for 'good thinking' then institutionalized in the university system (Morin, 2008), where knowledge is broken down in smaller disciplines and specializations, with increasingly impermeable borders that force a scholar to be either in one discipline or another. Disciplines are the containers created to organise knowledge and an indisciplinary approach basically proposes to temporarily empty them and re-arrange their content differently, to highlight connection rather than division, which is the basis, with contextualization, of complex thought (versus the reduction and disjunction of simple thought).

In the foreword to Morin's book *On Complexity* (2008), professor Alfonso Montuori introduces a list of oppositions that compare modern knowledge, organised by the scientific method, to pre-modern knowledge:

'Objective knowledge of objects in the exterior world, rather than subjective knowledge of interior moods, opinions, experiences, and so on;
Quantification, and therefore 'objective' data that could be measured as opposed to qualitative data that is 'subjective' and cannot be measured;
Reductionism, or a focus on parts rather than wholes (holism);
Determinism—or finding laws of cause and effect that determine events as opposed to chance events that cannot be predicted by laws (contingency);
Certainty, rather than uncertainty;
Absolute, rather than 'relative' knowledge;
Universal knowledge (applicable anywhere and everywhere) rather than particular, local knowledge (applicable only to certain specific settings);
One right way of looking at a situation, rather than a multiplicity of perspectives, and the search for that one right way;
Either/or thinking, borrowed from Aristotle, which rejects any form of ambiguity or paradox.' (p. xxxi)

The notion of indisciplinarity I'm proposing borrows many aspects from pre-modern knowledge, especially linked to subjectivity, against reductionism and dichotomic thinking.

I am aware that introducing these aspects can be seen as an epistemological anachronism: one might think that contemporary problems require contemporary hierarchies and knowledge specialisation. But what I want to suggest with indisciplinarity is that contemporary problems are partially derived from how modern knowledge came to be and are consequences of different fields not being aware of how their development would interfere with the planet and our existence on it.

From Enlightenment on, pre-modern knowledge was labelled as primitive, because of its spiritual component and connection with religious ideology, in the battle for intellectual freedom against authoritarianism and superstition fought by science.

'Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century science indeed was an instrument of liberation and enlightenment. It does not follow that science is bound to remain such an instrument. There is nothing inherent in science or in any other ideology that makes it essentially liberating. Ideologies can deteriorate and become stupid religions' (Feyerabend 1999 p:182).

This deterioration is evident in how scientific facts are taught at school from a very young age, in a stultifying and acritical manner. Science is excepted from criticism, becoming 'as oppressive as the ideologies it once had to fight' (Feyerabend 1999 p:182). It has found the truth in the scientific method and now follows it, losing its role as an instrument of change and liberation.

The last consideration doesn't want to sound like conservative scepticism towards science but instead like a critique of its attitude more than of the undeniable advancements it brought to society. A way of thinking that created an illusion of it being the only way to know, the only solution to the many issues humanity faces, excluding other voices and undermining different ways of grasping the reality around us that wouldn't fit into its rational grammar of the world.

The modern organisation of knowledge contributed to a deeper analysis of the world around us and a systematic effort to map the knowable and distribute part of it in different disciplines. In parallel, the educational system prepares people to deal in depth with parts of that map, according to the specialisation one chooses, and it does that not in an exclusive manner since most of the people can access education in a relatively cheap and equal way, if we look at Europe at least. It is essential to acknowledge the role and merits of modern knowledge besides its limitations. And quoting the relational approach I mentioned in the introduction, indisciplinarity aims to trigger a way to look at the map as a whole and its parts simultaneously, in a constant zoom in and zoom out, which highlights the interconnectedness of the knowable.

Indisciplinarity questions the modern organisation and formation of knowledge, the derived untouchable methodological truths and

assumptions, while opening up to pre-Enlightenment knowledge to explore how these opposite variables (from Montori's list above) could configure a de-organization of knowledge, capable of apprehending the complexity of reality. This process of de-organizing passes by the dismantling of how the current knowledge operates, through the selection of meaningful data, by separating, unifying, centralizing and arranging into hierarchies: all these operations are driven by logical principles of disjunction, reduction and abstraction that guide our perception of the world, without us being conscious of them. According to Morin (2008), these principles form the 'paradigm of simplification', firstly theorised by Descartes by separating the thinking subject and the thing being thought of. This simplification fragmented the complex fabric of reality, by repressing disorder, ambiguity, and uncertainty, leading to the belief that the resulted ordered reality produced was reality in itself.

I see indisciplinarity as an exercise in becoming aware of this simplification and how it makes us blind, in questioning the assumptions and conventions that dominate our understanding, which prevent us from dealing with the complexity around us: what we can know in the current disciplinary system concerns mostly our man-made layers of abstraction of reality, that give us the presumption of being able to control it, and not reality itself. These aspects are not just highlighted in the formats of indisciplinary practice but also part of the content produced, discussed and collectively learned. In the case of my graduation project, the content is specifically intended to create an alternative knowledge base for rehearsing economic change, also looking to non-Western and indigenous knowledge systems, for example. [1]

EMBODIED LEARNING

Contemporary Western liberal education is built on the predominance of the mind over the body and modern over pre-modern knowledge. The body could offer a territory to re/de-organize knowledge beyond logical thinking while creating an opportunity for pre-modern knowledge to be reconsidered. It is interesting to acknowledge that many Afro-Asiatic philosophies are based on the concept of the embodied mind while the body has been completely neglected by modern Western knowledge, mainly

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1   In my graduation project, Make Economy Yours Again, the goal of introducing indigenous knowledge in one of the session is to make participants aware that other knowledge systems, besides the Western one, engage with economic-related issues from very different perspectives and relationships with land. As a European, it is always complicated to engage with indigenous knowledge in a way that is not extractive or appropriative, so I preferred, instead of me talking about it in the group, to give space to an indigenous voice to guide this discussion.

because of the dichotomy with the mind, a philosophical discourse that traces its origin back to Aristotle. In the Discours de La Méthode (Descartes, 1637), Descartes describes the two as separable and distinct entities: the body as a material machine following the laws of nature and the mind as a non-physical substance, independent of the laws of nature. In the wider philosophical strand of rationalism, the concept of mind is transposed in the one of reason, as the human capacity of thinking that derives from intrinsic intellectual structures of deduction (a priori), excluding the experience mediated by the body and its senses (a posteriori) from knowledge production. Cartesian dualism has been in place for the following three centuries and has also influenced cognitive science in the 20th century.

  Neuroscience challenged rationalism, primarily through theories of embodied cognition that prove that the mind is not isolated from the body but part of its sensorimotor systems (Macedonia, 2019): cognitive processes are mediated by body-based systems. The term embodied aims to highlight

'first that cognition depends upon the kinds of experience that come from having a body with various sensorimotor capacities, and second, that these individual sensorimotor capacities are themselves embedded in a more encompassing biological, psychological and cultural context' (Varela, Thompson & Rosch 1991: pp.172-173).

  Embodied cognition theories show that just thinking of an object or person triggers the stimulation of the experience collected with that object/person, evoking sensorimotor responses (body-related activity in the brain) related to that previous experience. Brain imaging studies show, through functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging scanner, that 'simply reading action words like kick or pick activates portions of motor cortices in the brain' (Macedonia 2019: p.3). The same happens by reading words connected to sensory per-ception, they activate specific areas of the brain connected to that sensory input. Even abstract concepts are partially embodied, activating the portion of the motor cortex linked to the mouth. In this sense, a word is represented in the brain as a sensorimotor network that connects all experiences con-nected to that concept. These findings are interesting especially for embod-ied learning, because they show that motor actions connected to concepts improve 'the storage of words because motor activity engages mechanisms of procedural memory in the learning process' (Macedonia 2019: p.4). In other words, connecting movement to learning creates better anchors for the learned concepts in more areas of the brain cortex, thus reinforcing what is learned and how it is memorised.

  The body has then the capacity to learn and memorize: 'every move-ment in space and time - be it a walk, a dance, or otherwise, every gestic-ulation, every exercise of the muscles and the cells that make up the body - is possibly remembered.'

Through embodiment, the body can be contextualised (Ndikung, 2021)

> 'as a platform, stage, site, and medium of learning, a structure or organ that acquires, stores, and disseminates knowledge. This concept implies that the body, in sync with, but also independent of, the brain, has the potential to memorise and pass on/down acquired knowledge through performativity' (pp. 21-22)

If learning is defined as the comprehensive activity in which we come to know ourselves and the world around us, embodiment offers an opportunity to re-connect with having a body and to acknowledge that we engage with the world as a first-person subject of experience, as a being-in-the-world (Stolz, 2015). Embodied learning considers the learner a whole being, 'per-mitting the person to experience him or herself as a holistic and synthesised acting, feeling, thinking being-in-the world, rather than as separate physical and mental qualities that bear no relation to each other' (Stolz 2015: p.485).

  We don't just embody skills that we choose to learn deliberately but also intuitive ways of being or habitual reactions derived from our experi-ences: these include our internal narratives, how we relate with others, what actions we habitually take or don't (Starr, 2019) but also social constructs (like colonisation) or specific ideologies (like capitalism) that we are born within, which are also reinforced by education. Frantz Fanon's work on the psychology of the colonised shows how colonisation is not just a direct oppressive force but an attitude internalised (and in this sense embodied) by the colonised that regulate themselves according to it. It's interesting to borrow Gramsci's concept of hegemony (Gramsci, 1971) and common sense to see how in general, ruling ideas become hegemonic when they become common sense, a way of thinking about them that is uncritical and taken for granted. We completely embody an ideology when we are not aware of how we formulate a statement about the world, when we feel that we are just describing it as it is. In this way, ideology becomes normalised by being em-bedded in language and condensed in our emotional and physical beings, shaping how we act and think (Ng, 2018). We reproduce these ideologies 'through normalised patterns of behaviour that have developed over time and have become natural, automatic and unconscious actions and ways of being in the world'(Ng 2018: p.51). As written before, indisciplinarity could be a way to question how these ideologies are passed through education while de-organizing and decolonising[2] our knowledge system, which is often con-sidered a given. But embodied learning could expand indisciplinarity even

2 I am aware that using the terms decolonising might have required a more extensive explana-tion and references to support it, to clarify its relation with indisciplinarity. Unfortunately, for the limited time and space I can dedicate to this specific question in the context of my thesis, I decided to just touch upon these questions and acknowledge the limitations of the selection of references on this matter, which could have been more extensive and inclusive of other voices. I feel that this topic would require at least a complete section to be thoroughly addressed and just a few lines would not have been enough to do it properly.

further. Starting from the body as a dimension we all share is not just equal-ising but can open up other ways of knowing. It shows that it is possible to go beyond rational modern Western thinking and rely on our perceptions and feelings to grasp and act on the complex reality around us.

CONVIVIAL INSTITUTIONS AND ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF STUDYING

Where does indisciplinarity happen? It is counterintuitive to imagine indisciplinarity carried out in a school setting or in a formal institutional one, since those contexts would already enforce a hierarchy and power play difficult to ignore, even though the temporary suspension introduced by this approach. Could indisciplinarity be practised in a specific field? Or the nature of the approach asks for an outside position in the knowledge system, without any affiliations to a specific discipline? Is it possible to be in this position, or will this non-institution always be connoted somehow?

A possible reply to some of these questions could emerge from the work of Ivan Illich, who, in his essay Deschooling Society (1971), sketches alternatives to institutional education. His argument for the need for deschooling society starts from the premise that the school system is based on the illusion that learning is the result of teaching, which excludes all the learning that happens casually or as a by-product of other activities. From his highly critical point of view, which I don't completely share, school is a place for custodial care, selection, indoctrination and learning, 'the age-specific, teacher-related process requiring full-time attendance at an obligatory curriculum' (Illich 1971: p.13). He accuses the school system of pursuing a hidden curriculum, which

'initiates the citizen to the myth that bureaucracies guided by scientific knowledge are efficient and benevolent. Everywhere this same curriculum instils in the pupil the myth that increased production will provide a better life. And everywhere it develops the habit of self-defeating consumption of services and alienating production, the tolerance for institutional dependence, and the recognition of institutional rankings.' (Illich 1971: p.32)

Referencing Freire's approach, Illich states that education should be helping people gather around a problem they share without the teacher, acting as a platform for matchmaking: 'the most radical alternative to school would be a network or service which gave each man the same opportunity to share his current concern with others motivated by the same concern'. (Illich 1971: p.10). This setting relies on people's intelligence rather than their ignorance, the latter being implied by school education. This network would be facilitated by another kind of institution, more precarious, humbler and less

noticeable than school, which Illich defines as convivial institutions. These institutions increase the opportunity for human interactions and educate participants on action, participation and self-help. They contribute to 'relational structures [...] that enable each man to define himself by learning and by contributing to the learning of others' (Illich 1971: p.31). By doing so, they serve three educational purposes: they

'provide all who want to learn with access to available resources at any time in their lives; they empower all who want to share what they know to find those who want to learn it from them; and, finally, they furnish all who want to present an issue to the public with the opportunity to make their challenge known' (Illich 1971: p.33).

Reading these words, it is surprising how close he anticipates the idea of the internet; he also talks about learning webs. Other possible convivial institu-tions could be community centres or cultural institutions.

Besides the need for a different kind of institution, indisciplinarity would also require another way of studying. According to Meyerhoff (2019) 'modes of study are bound up with different modes of world-making—ways of making ourselves, politics, economies, communities, cultures, and so forth'. He argues 'that the education-based mode of study supplements modes of world-making that are associated with modernist, colonial, capi-talist, statist, white-supremacist, heteropatriarchal norms' (p.4). This de-scription supports Illich's idea of the hidden curriculum and looks at the effect of disciplinary and disciplined learning in forming students' percep-tions of the world. An interesting alternative way of study for indisciplinarity is the one proposed by Harney and Moten in their book *The Undercommons* (2013). They see studying as a practice consisting of getting together with others, spending time with each other, and the material to be studied. Study-ing is about learning together, and that implies that what needs to be learned is also determined together. The aim is collective self-development; it is dis-connected from credit, instrumentalism and completion; therefore, it doesn't need an endpoint. Their notion of study is possible just against or under the university.

The concepts of convivial institutions and alternative studying are pretty open and not framed in a methodological educational approach; they hint at relational learning exchanges that offer a community aspect to be further explored in practising indisciplinarity.

03.

RESEARCH

INDISCIPLINARY LEARNING

In the previous chapter, I explored a constellation of inputs that I connected to give a theoretical framework for my research question, which is handy to retrieve at this point: how could temporarily removing discipline(s) help develop a better collaboration attitude between them to tackle the challenges of our complex world?

If, in the introduction, I briefly sketched what I mean by *the challenges of our complex world* (without picking a particular one), in the theoretical framework, I introduced indisciplinarity as a conceptual device to remove discipline (without using it in a particular situation). In this chapter, I'll contextualise the indisciplinary approach in a specific learning situation, connected to a more defined urgency/challenge of our times, to understand if (and how) such an approach could develop a better collaboration attitude between disciplines, regarding the identified urgency.

It might feel absurd to remove disciplines to help them collaborate, but that is achieved by shifting the focus from disciplines to the people participating in them. Focusing on learners as people, as beings-in-the-world, rather than disciplinary actors is the key to the indisciplinary approach, which aims to unify people by highlighting what they share rather than what separates them. Learning together with people from different disciplines, without labelling them, results in other ways of thinking, knowing and being in the world becoming familiar and valued, beyond the labelling of one's background. Because of the temporary dimension in which my research question is addressed, as explained in the introduction, learners will go back to their disciplinary selves at some point, bringing a renewed trust in the equal intelligence of humans and criticism towards hierarchies between disciplines. These considerations create another attitude when collaborating with people of different backgrounds and a positive starting point on the need of having interconnected ways of understanding and acting.

Before diving into the research project, I will quickly recap some of the ingredients from the theoretical framework that I will bring along defining a concrete tryout of indisciplinary learning:

> equality of intelligence, the premise upon which indisciplinarity is built
> discipline, in its double meaning of field of knowledge and powerplay in education
> explanation and its stultifying role carried by the teacher interpretative intelligence, which doesn't need explanation and the teacher as a mediator and gatekeeper of knowledge
> the emancipatory master, the one who puts the students in direct contact with the materials to be studied, waking up their innate intelligence

problem-posing education, a mode of education built
around a shared issue and urgency among participating
learners
there is no right method for teaching and learning, no right
order in which one has to learn
acknowledging different ways of studying besides the
education-based one
the need to expand the horizon beyond the Western modern
knowledge system and question its organisation against its
simplification attitude
looking at the learner as an embodied being-in-the-world
exploring different contexts and institutions for learning and
taking into account how the setting influences it

In this chapter, I will focus on defining and testing a possible learning format
for indisciplinarity: that doesn't mean it is the only possible one, but the
most fitting for the context and practice I currently have. From testing this
approach in a specific situation, I believe that I will be able to generalise
some elements of what indisciplinary learning could entail.

As anticipated above, I'd like to explore the research question
above in the format of an informal learning community and in the context
of an existing interdisciplinary cultural institution. So a kind of learning
that happens outside the traditional educational framework but is part of a
cultural offering. The audience I'd like to address is an interdisciplinary group
made of people who share an interest, need or urgency for a specific topic
(Illich, 1971). Therefore, the group could also be diverse in age, nationality,
cultural background, and level of education, which I think are valuable
dimensions to keep in mind for indisciplinarity and the topics addressed.

The main goal of the graduation project would be to develop a new
culture of collaboration between fields by making people experience it in
a temporarily indisciplinary space, where participants join as interested
actors, not as disciplined ones (disciplined both in the sense of their
background but also in how schools shaped their learning power dynamics).

CONTEXT
In the theoretical framework, I have quickly explored where could
indisciplinarity happen and found a possible answer in the model of
convivial institution proposed by Illich, that could offer an informal setting
for learning that fits with the underpinnings of indisciplinarity. This model is
wide enough to include different institutional and non-institutional bodies
that provide a platform for exchanging knowledge and meeting people with
similar interests and needs. It has a community dimension in the interactions
that such an institution would enable. I see many similarities with cultural

institutions, especially in providing all who want to learn with access to
available resources and people who want to share what they know.

Even if I have been working in culture for almost twelve years,
I've never really looked for a definition of a cultural institution: 'a cultural
institution is an organisation within a culture/subculture that works for the
preservation or promotion of culture. The term is especially used for public
and charitable organisations, but its range of meaning can be very broad.'
(Wikipedia). This definition calls for another one, that of culture, which is
interesting to consider, especially concerning knowledge: 'culture is an
umbrella term which encompasses the social behaviour, institutions, and
norms found in human societies, as well as the knowledge, beliefs, arts,
laws, customs, capabilities, and habits of the individuals in these groups'
(Wikipedia). So culture contains knowledge, it is broadly defined and less
normated than the latter: culture contributes to knowledge and vice versa.

Indisciplinarity promotes a cultural shift in a broad sense, besides
its disciplinary scope, that touches upon the current value system and
behavioural aspects of collaboration and equality of intelligence between
people and fields. It feels appropriate to test this approach in a cultural
institution, already an informal/alternative education channel publicly
available and funded. It is a space in which knowledge is produced in a
relatively free setting, without any educational body checking on the validity
of its methods. It would be interesting to explore what kind of role cultural
institutions have in lifelong learning, but it would go beyond the purpose of
this thesis. For this research, I'll limit myself to exploring an indisciplinary
learning format in the context of the cultural institution where I work.

Baltan Laboratories is a cultural lab, based in Eindhoven. It initiates
experimentation at the crossroads of art, design, science and technology,
evoking inquisitive ideas and insights by bridging the gaps between
disciplines. The lab functions as a collaborative mindset and network,
connecting curious individuals and organisations. By placing art and design
research at the core of its activities, Baltan explores the implications,
promises and pitfalls of our technological society. Baltan translates these
ideas into different outputs, including collaborations, events, workshops,
storytelling, publications and expos, creating a space for reflection, research
and experimentation. Currently, there are three main topics/trajectories:
Homo Economicus, Homo Socialis and Homo Sensorium. Under the umbrella
of the Homo Economicus, in 2017 the Economia Festival has launched: a
festival on economy, without economists. In 2020, I co-curated the second
edition of the festival, which presented unexpected and playful approaches
to looking at the foundations of our economy, establishing a fresh point of
view on the notion of value and economic growth. The focus was on how
transforming our economy could balance our relationship with nature and
explore the potential consequences of this renewed relationship, both
environmental and sociopolitical.

In March-April 2021 I worked with my colleague Marlou van der Cruijsen to set up an online learning community, as a spin-off of the Economia Festival. We used some of the festival conclusions as content inputs for the learning trajectory, intending to make them public in a different way than a traditional publication. It became clear to me that, due to the urgency of the topic and the festival's interdisciplinary legacy, this learning community could serve as a perfect occasion to test indisciplinarity in a concrete learning situation.

TEMPORALITY

It is difficult to imagine how long indisciplinary learning should take. I believe it is connected to another question: is indisciplinarity needed to subvert the current disciplinary model or just make its participants aware and critical of it? Those scenarios are radically different. As suggested in my research question, I choose to explore the second option. This avoids turning indisciplinarity in a refutable anarchic tryout that won't give justice to its emancipatory mission.

Furthermore, it is a more realistic scenario to experiment with: it can be interesting to use indisciplinary learning as a way to gather people from different backgrounds to expand each other knowledge on a shared issue rather than just theorising indisciplinarity as a drastic change in how knowledge is produced and organised. I believe this result could be achieved after extensively practising indisciplinarity in institutional education, when this approach would become part of the system it criticises. But I think this is too big of a claim and not the primary aim of this research, which is to sketch a possible practice of indisciplinarity rather than a thorough theory or methodology, which will contradict its nature.

I see indisciplinary learning as a safe space of temporary suspension of disciplines and of the hierarchies among them. But when should such an approach be introduced? Indisciplinarity is partially defined as a negation of disciplinarity; it implies that learners have been through a disciplinary education. If this is true in the conceptual definition of indisciplinarity, it is less fundamental in the practice of indisciplinary learning: the meta-discussion about disciplines and expertism is not part of the learning itself. The focus of indisciplinary learning is on practising the alternative, not discussing it. With that being said, it is not really important that a participant has been through a standard education curriculum. I believe that this approach could be introduced, with variations, at different ages and could also include people of different ages in the same learning experience.

To go back to how long is indisciplinarity needed, besides the practical elements that influence a specific format, a desirable duration of this suspension is short enough to be a break from your disciplinary self and long enough to allow participants to experience, rehearse and embody another way of being and learning. Repetition and practice are fundamental

dimensions for embodiment and to ensure the impact of such an approach is extended beyond the time of the indisciplinary trajectory. Participants need to confront the suspension with the reality of their being in the world and their role/job/study, they need to live these dimensions simultaneously for them to influence each other. I'll consider this point in the timing of my graduation project, and I'll further explore it in a section (at the end of the chapter) dedicated to the concept of rehearsing change.

IMPLICATIONS

The desired implications of indisciplinary learning consist mainly in the possible effects of practising some key aspects of indisciplinarity (as listed above) in a prolonged learning situation: the main hoped-for results are a partial reconsideration of the disciplinary divisions, especially when addressing the big questions of our society, an acknowledgement of complex thought and the interconnectedness and relationality of reality, beyond reductionism and rationalism, to name a few.

Furthermore, there are also implications in the different interactions with co-learners, for example, in being identified by your learning with others, rather than by your job/profession/role. This shift can be lived differently: it can be freeing or challenging, especially for someone having a position that usually affects the interaction and hierarchies in a group. I'd be happy if the participants started questioning the way they had been learning before and entered into a new mindset, in which learning is also caring for the ones that are sharing this experience with you.

The indisciplinary approach can also provoke complete rejection in participants who are deeply grounded in a disciplinary setting or exponents of hard sciences. This reaction could ultimately compromise the aim of such an approach: to unite rather than divide different knowledges. Therefore, in the learning community format I developed as my graduation project, the indisciplinary approach is never made explicit or mentioned; it is just applied in creating the format for people to experience it without preconceptions.

Another possible implication, which I will further elaborate on in a section later in the thesis, is related to how the intellectual emancipation promoted by indisciplinarity could encourage activism: creating a space in which it's possible to openly (re)discuss a distant and sometimes inaccessible topic like our economic system, can help learners develop agency towards changing it, in their personal life or organised in a movement.

MAKE ECONOMY YOURS AGAIN: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE FORMAT

In this section, I'll quickly introduce the Make Economy Yours Again format to give a general feeling before going in-depth with the indisciplinary learning elements I want to test in the two iterations and explaining the research methodology of my analysis. It is important to have a general skeleton of the format and then zoom in on its different elements, devices and the two iterations.

Make Economy Yours Again (MEYA) was an online learning community that gathered every week for two editions (May 27th-July 1st, 2021 and January 27th-March 17th, 2022) to co-create a new knowledge base for developing an activist toolkit about alternative economic narratives. The two groups consisted of participants from all over Europe with different backgrounds, including sociology, storytelling, art, design, architecture, business, political science, media, economy, sustainability studies, pharmacy and philosophy. The groups formed around the interest they shared for economic activism.

The learning community took on a variety of different formats. It gathered online on Zoom for three hours every week, for a month and a half in the first edition and two months in the second. Before every gathering, participants read, listened to and watched materials (essays, movies, podcasts, songs…) that concerned the topic of the session. These materials are derived from content already collected for Economia festival and some new dedicated references that facilitators researched for the two learning trajectories. They ranged from economy to indigenous knowledge, from generative somatics and art to nonviolent action. Participants were also invited to add their references through an online social network called are. na, where all the other materials and notes were also archived to be easily accessible.

The participants prepared the content before each gathering, so that the three hours of our meeting could be fully dedicated to sharing and discussing matters with the group. At least one activity was planned for each session: a workshop in which the group was divided into sub-groups in breakout rooms in Zoom to work with their peers, before being brought back to share their results with the whole group. In some of the sessions, the activity or the discussion was related to a lecture by a guest (whose contribution was either live or pre-recorded). To give a concrete example, one of the first activities of each edition addressed the diversity of backgrounds of the participants by trying to create a common working glossary of terms, specific to our group. The activity served as a means to introduce the concept of intersubjectivity and how it could be used to facilitate a dialogue between different disciplines through the use of concepts. It was also linked to one of the recurring topics of MEYA, the importance of language in (re)designing our economy.

In addition to the activities during the sessions, participants were also invited to work on assignments, either individually or in groups. In this way, they could activate the content and discussions we had during the gatherings. For example, they created manifestos to collectively formulate their visions and actions on reclaiming the economy.

The creation of a safe, non-judgemental and non-hierarchical space for shared learning started even before the group was formed, in the way the trajectory was described in the communication texts: from course to learning community, from class to gathering, from teachers and experts to leading-learners, from 'you' to 'we'. The first gathering was fundamental to establishing how we would learn together. I asked people to introduce themselves by asking them the last time they thought about the economy. I deliberately avoided asking them about their backgrounds or professions since they needed to join as participants first, so their way of doing and thinking emerged without being framed from the beginning. I told the participants that the facilitators (or leading learners) in the room were also participants: we are not experts but interested in collectively exploring the same issues. Therefore, leading learners did not explain the materials we dealt with together, but we created an understanding through exchange. We agreed to try to organically discuss without facilitators giving the floor to those who wanted to speak. If multiple people wanted to react to the same discussion item, virtually raising hands could help practically take turns. We asked them if specific personal needs should be considered so that the group could be accountable for respecting that needs in situations when they occurred. Access needs were always checked at the beginning of gatherings, since we met at 18:00 and some participants had to eat, take care of their children or were just tired after long days at work; it was important that everybody felt able to join in as much as they could, and that everybody considered these factors when interacting with others.

Check-in and check-out moments were a fundamental part of the gatherings; they were a way of landing in a virtual space that ensured enough time for shifting from the previous activity and becoming fully present with and for others. Sometimes, check-ins were performative, involving movements or sounds or just quickly checking how everybody was, depending on the available time. These were also the moments in which one of the facilitators introduced the agenda of the day, did a quick recap of the previous gathering and gave space for questions and feedback about the process of learning together.

The role of facilitators (myself and one/two colleagues) mainly concerned starting discussions around the chosen topics and ensuring everybody in the group could contribute. To create a common ground and add further content inputs (besides the one already provided by the

group), we prepared references and planned guests. It was essential to brief guests about the frame of the community and how they should present their knowledge to an already formed group to manage expectations and avoid creating situations that could affect the safe space. One of the facilitators was also responsible for taking notes so that the knowledge created during the gathering could be returned to the group later on. Another one was responsible for the practical details (e.g. arranging Google Docs, Miro boards and break-out rooms).

Finally, it is essential to acknowledge how the online dimension of the learning community influence both the learning experience and its content. Besides the usual negative aspects of online learning (reduced attention span, Zoom fatigue, difficulties in working together in a virtual space, etc.), some can support indisciplinary learning. On Zoom, each participant occupies an equal visual space, the square they inhabit with themselves and the portion of their environment the webcam allows us to see. Sometimes, people take up space differently in a physical setting, both in a practical sense and in the attention one. Body language is much more evident in shaping the dynamics inside of a group. In that sense, an online space can have the benefit of equalising participants just through its interface. Still, the auditory level can be occupied differently: some people can talk more than others or louder than others. It is then the task of the facilitators to make sure everybody gets a chance to contribute. Suppose the focus is shifted from the shared online space to the different physical ones participants occupy. In that case, the advantage of joining in online, from the couch, desk or kitchen of their houses, is pretty evident both in fostering a feeling of a safe, comfortable and intimate space of learning and in making the topics discussed daily, lived, yours (like the title of MEYA suggests). It is a challenge to practice embodied learning in a virtual space. Still, I tried to overcome the screen barrier with different activities that bring our bodies together, starting from feeling one's own body to perceive the other ones sharing this experience. The aim is to create a sense of belonging to the collective body of a community, growing session after session. Furthermore, embodiment is also intended as practising a different way of being in the world, achieved and repeated through our weekly sessions, to transform our daily perception of being (in) the economy.

Below is a general setup of each gathering, valid for MEYA #1 and #2. There are a few exceptions depending on the specific activities or guests joining the session, but in general, those described are the main moments of each gathering every Thursday evening:

18:00–18:15	Check-in and access needs
18:15–19:00	Discussion around the materials prepared for the session: questions, remarks, comments, and other references. Choosing together which aspects/parts of the materials need to be discussed.
19:00–19:15	Break
19:15–20:15	Activities (in subgroups or individually and restitution to the whole group)
20:15–20:45	Collective discussion around the activities and insights originated
20:45–21:00	Feedback on the session, check-out and brief anticipation of the next session (materials and preparations for it are sent via email the day after)

The sessions varied from MEYA #1 and #2, since the first trajectory was six-week-long while the second lasted eight weeks. In the second edition, there were two extra sessions at the beginning, one short introduction session and another one in which participants were asked to write their first draft manifesto, a working document they went back to for the whole trajectory. Although the rest of the sessions were the same, the content and guests differed in the two editions. Below are short descriptions of the common sessions in the two trajectories, as mentioned in the communication materials.

ASSUMPTIONS AND CONVENTIONS
The first session dives into the assumptions and conventions that frame our understanding of economy. We will consider the importance of language and how it is designing our economy and how it could change it. We will particularly focus on the notions of growth and nature.

EXPANDING THE HORIZON
To imagine a more equal, just and fair economy, we look at non-western and indigenous knowledge systems. If we listen, what could we learn from other perspectives? Could these be leading in reimagining our relationship with each other, with other species and with the planet? In both editions, we had a recorded talk by Tyson Yunkaporta, an academic and researcher member of the Apalech Clan in far north Queensland, Australia. He is the writer of the book Sand Talk - How Indigenous Thinking Can Save the World.

FIG. 3: WHERE PHYSICALLY THE LEARNING HAPPENS
(PICTURES FROM MEYA #2 SESSION)

INTUITION, EMOTION AND EMBODIMENT
We pretend to be rational beings, acting in a logical and efficient manner. But what about our gut feelings? Could we rely more on our bodies to feel the complexity of the world? Can intuition, emotion and feeling help us take responsibility and change our behaviour? In the first edition, we had Meredith Degyansky, a researcher who develops embodied practices to pull away from the exploitative and extractive modes of settler colonialism and capitalist modernity. In the second edition, we focus on theatre of the oppressed techniques to rehearse change with the help of theatre educator Magda Mantovani.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS
The session is about how to make knowledge actionable and how to move from thinking to doing. In the first edition, we had a talk and workshop by Igor Vamos from the Yes Men, an activist duo known for pulling off meaningful mischief to embarrass powerful corporate and government predators. In the second edition, the artistic/activist collective Fossil Free Culture joined us, bringing their experience in developing actions and facilitating a workshop to help participants define the goal of their actions and concrete objectives to reach it.

FEEDBACK SESSION
Participants can schedule a feedback moment with the leading learners during this session to discuss their plans for the action/manifesto they developed.

PRESENTATION OF THE ACTIONS
Participants present their actions based on the manifesto they developed and their learnings.

INDISCIPLINARY PEDAGOGICAL DEVICES

Through the format of the learning community, I will test a set of pedagogical devices derived from the theoretical underpinnings of my research. These devices constitute the indisciplinary learning space: how learners interact and contribute, how it is moderated, what kind of rituals and moments characterise each session, how participants and discussions are de-disciplinarized, and how learning is activated and materials studied together.

A VOCABULARY OF THE LEARNING COMMUNITY
Indisciplinarity starts with the terms that define its space. We cannot inhabit a new learning space if we keep describing it with words that belong to teaching. It is not a course, it is a learning community. There are no teachers

but leading learners who share the same intention with the other participants but are helping to facilitate and prepare each session. There are no classes but gatherings, a term that describes the coming together of a group, of a community. There are no homework or assignments, nobody is assigning anything to anyone, materials for each gathering are prepared voluntarily by the group without imposing more work than each participant is willing to put in it. There is no explanation but exchange, nobody has the right to claim or enforce a correct meaning or interpretation of a studied material. It is very hard not to fall back on the usual vocabulary, it happens all the time also among us facilitating and this shows how teaching is perceived as the assumed and only way of learning. Using a different set of words reminds us where we are and what we are trying to do together, it is already fostering an other way of being and learning in such a space.

COMMUNITY
It describes a goal rather than a starting condition. MEYA starts with a group of very diverse people that have an interest in common. It turns into a community of learners who share values, care for each other, rehearse together how to be in the world differently and therefore build relationships that could last beyond the temporality of the trajectory. Community means also providing for each other, so that learning becomes the co-responsibility of who participates, not just of who facilitates.

DE-DISCIPLINARIZING STRATEGIES
These include a few devices and activities, partially already presented above: introducing oneself without talking about what one does but who one is (through an anecdote, a fascination or personal reasons to join the group); creating a common language to align different backgrounds on shared meanings that take them into account (see for example the language-related activity of MEYA #1 in the appendix); looking at the body as a shared dimension by all participants, beyond how personal identities are formed through education and professional development (see the selected activities about embodiment from MEYA #1 and #2 in the appendix).

In the learning community, participants should try to keep roles and professional selves out of the room and join the discussion as people, as being-in-the-world, as bodies. And reminding ourselves of our physicality, of the body as the common factor that grounds our existences, is particularly powerful in discussing what looks like abstract issues regarding our economy. It allows us to trace them back to our concrete relation with the planet we live on, removing the abstractions that separated us from it. Abstractions that are created by dividing our thinking and theorizing about reality from the reality itself, as a consequence of another division, the one of body and mind, described above in the theoretical framework.

LEADING LEARNERS
From Rancière's notion of emancipatory master and Freire's problem-posing education emerges the role of the leading learners. It literally means learners leading the learning in the sense of participants who have already been learning about the topic but don't pose themselves as experts or teachers in the community. They are the facilitators of the indisciplinary learning process. Therefore they have to be fully aware of their learner status not to replicate disciplinary dynamics in the group, such as explaining materials. They have to learn, which means they cannot repeat a session but need to prepare new study materials for each iteration, including the ones proposed by the community.

NON-EXPERTISM
Experts create hierarchies posing themselves above the others, acknowledging their privileged point of view on a matter and blocking unexpected perspectives on it. Leading learners invite external guests for some sessions but primarily for activities rather than lectures/presentations. They need to be prepared for a group which is already formed, understand its dynamics upfront and preferably join at least a gathering before the session they contribute to: it is essential to attune guests to indisciplinary learning, otherwise, the experience can be destabilising for the group.

STUDYING MATERIALS
In the theoretical framework, I have addressed through some references the importance of going beyond the education mode of study to find alternative ones that would suit indisciplinarity. In MEYA, I borrow the undercommons way of studying (Harney & Moten, 2013) and test it in our community: we stayed with the materials, we individually read them upfront and in each gathering, the first part of the session was always dedicated to unpacking them together. Each participant brought questions, remarks, comments, and other references linked to what was prepared. By sharing those questions and trying together to reply to some of them, we co-created meaning(s), instead of imposing just one point of view on how to read them (the teacher one).

The choice of materials should be varied and considerate of bringing other voices, sometimes marginalised in the economic discussion, beyond just modern western knowledge and its limited scope. Of course, materials should also come from different disciplines to show the interconnectedness of knowledge needed to tackle complex problems. It is possible to browse MEYA #2 materials divided per gathering in the are.na platform[3] , to better understand what those could include.

3   www.are.na/baltan-laboratories: MEYA #1 materials are currently archived

MODERATION
Leading learners should moderate the session as less as possible, primarily ensuring that everybody has a chance to speak and participate. They should take care of timekeeping, check-in and check-out and introducing the activities, while typically, discussion in the group is self-moderated. Each participant passes the word to another one when a round of everybody is needed, for example, during check-in.

Each gathering has a proposed schedule, but the unfolding of the session and the needs of participants are leading. If some topics and discussions are felt essential by the group and more time is needed, the schedule should adapt to the new situation and urgency. Finally, leading learners should participate in all the activities, not just guide them, to indeed be participants in the learning and not just facilitators.

CHECK-IN AND CHECK-OUT
They are the opening and closing moments of each gathering. They contribute to setting the tone and the space for learning, providing participants with a sense of acceptance, safety and non-judgement.

Check-in allows people to land in the space thoroughly and properly shift from their previous activity into the learning community. It can consist of a simple check on how people are, passing the word among participants (for example, asking how they feel in three words) or being more performative (like a body scan or a movement-based exercise). During the check-in time, the facilitator also asks if there are specific access needs for the session so that the group could be accountable to respect them. In this way, people can join to the extent they want to, without the social pressure of having to perform in the online space. This results in people feeling welcome to join even if they are not at their 100%, sometimes just as listeners or for a part of the whole session.

Check-out concludes every session with a quick recap on the gathering, practical info for the next one and feedback from participants. It is essential to give this space in each session, even if there is no urgent feedback, to underline that we are co-responsible for the process of learning. Furthermore, check-out is also helpful to provide a sense of closure for the session, giving it a clear end and a moment of reflection.

ACTIVATION STRATEGIES
The ambition of MEYA is to produce a learning experience that can support the agency of participants to practice what is learnt to make the economy theirs again. It is not about big gestures but small and personal actions that could lead people to reclaim their role in the economy and become aware of how big systems have personal implications and daily choices attached. Already discussing the economic system is a way to make it approachable and the indisciplinary approach helps in that with its emancipatory nature.

But I want to test two strategies to help, with relatively small and achievable outcomes, those learners who wish to engage in economic activism.

With the manifesto, participants are asked to put their beliefs and values on paper, to articulate how their personal visions intertwine with the discussions and content explored during the trajectory.

With the action, participants translate their manifestos into a concrete action/activation that brings their ideas into the world. The way we defined action is pretty broad to allow participants to find their way to activate the content: the essential aspect is that they do something with their ideas and shift from learning into creating, organising, and living.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS

The research methodology is based on the iterative process of the two editions in testing and evaluating the format proposed as a case of indisciplinary learning. In this section, I will describe mainly the process behind my research while, in the following one, I will go through the two iterations, focusing on the participants' groups, activation of the learning and evaluation and conclusions for each edition.

The process started in March 2021 with the first concept for a learning community originating from the conclusion of Economia festival, which I worked on with my colleague Marlou van der Cruijsen at Baltan Laboratories. The definition of Make Economy Yours Again went parallel to my preliminary research on indisciplinarity, kicked off with a research document written in the second trimester of the first year of the master's. These intertwined dimensions of research and practice already influenced each other at that early stage. In the following months, they informed a phase of literature review that allowed me to sharpen my research question and initial theoretical framework. That phase corresponded to the launch of the first edition of MEYA at the end of May 2021.

FIG. 4: VISUAL OF MEYA#1 BY GABRIELA BAKA

MEYA #1 was a tryout in which I tested different ideas, it didn't include yet a totally defined indisciplinary approach, but it offered me a playground to explore what kind of strategies were needed in such a format, test them, and critically evaluate them at the end, as a base for further developments. I collected feedback on specific activities and the recordings and notes of each gathering, materials produced by the participants, and minutes of the evaluations we did with my colleagues after each session. I also prepared a survey to send to the participants after the trajectory was over on July 1st. I wanted to use the insights from the first edition to understand if a learning community could be an appropriate format to test indisciplinarity for the graduation trajectory. Once I understood its potential, I went back to desk research and literature review in September 2021 to expand some notions to integrate into a new iteration. I analysed the feedback to pinpoint which aspects needed to be refined and changed and what was still

missing to investigate further what indisciplinary learning could look like. My colleagues were very close to my research, and I got a lot of insights, especially for the project part, through exchanging ideas and evaluating the process. Together with them, we created a small publication/zine about the first edition, published in February 2022. It was a great occasion to reflect on it and open up new interpretations of the meaning of such initiatives, both for the people participating and the institution producing them. Part of the publication's content also fed into this thesis, especially in the section about embodiment in the theoretical framework and the one about rehearsing change later in this chapter.

In November 2021, I started working on the new edition of MEYA, implementing the conclusions and further theoretical references in the structure and length of the learning community, the content of each session, and the choice of external contributors. The call for applications was launched in December 2021, and we started MEYA #2 at the end of January 2022. The same evaluation process as MEYA #1 was carried out for the second edition. The final survey for participants was adapted to reflect the questions that arose during the trajectory, and the new activities and content presented.

From the feedback and conclusions of the two editions, participants expressed the need to continue the discussions started in MEYA #1 and #2 in a less structured way and for learners of both editions to meet again and follow each other progress. For this purpose, we launched a monthly reading group called Marginalia (end of May 2022) to continue exploring the topics of MEYA and understand how the community can support each learner's projects, ideas or actions beyond the scope of the learning community.

At the end of this chapter, I will wrap up the analysis and evaluation of the iterative process, looking back at the research questions and the tested indisciplinary pedagogical devices.

THE TWO ITERATIONS:
MEYA#1 - TACTICAL TOOLS FOR ALTERNATIVE ECONOMIC NARRATIVES
MEYA#2 - A SPACE TO REHEARSE CHANGE

THE GROUP OF PARTICIPANTS
The MEYA #1 group consisted of 17 participants from all over Europe with very different backgrounds (sociology, storytelling, art, design, political science, media, economy, sustainability studies, pharmacy, philosophy...). Participants were also diverse in terms of age and level of education.

FIG. 5: PARTICIPANTS OF MEYA#1

FIG. 6: PARTICIPANTS OF MEYA#2

The MEYA #2 group consisted of 18 participants based in Europe, nine of them from the Netherlands. Their backgrounds were less diverse than in the previous edition: ten participants were from creative industries, with most designers. The average age was about 30 years old, and in terms of level of education, all participants had at least a bachelor's degree.

A SELECTION OF ACTIVITIES
In the appendix, you can find a selection of the most representative activities of the two editions, including a brief, documentation and evaluation for each activity. Because of this thesis's limited number of words, I couldn't include them here. Still, I believe they are fundamental to understanding the two iterations and the translation in practical activities of my research.

ACTIVATION OF THE LEARNING
MEYA #1
In the first session, participants were asked to share which topics they would have liked to explore in developing an action, by writing a one-page document they sent to the facilitation team. We then proposed a few sub-groups according to their selected topics and finalised them in a matchmaking session in week 2. Each group worked on a manifesto, not just a declaration of intent but a tool to put their beliefs into action. The manifesto aimed to collectively formulate the group vision by responding to the content presented in the trajectory. Starting from it, they developed an action in between the online sessions and presented it in the last gathering.
In the appendix, you can find a selection of manifestos and actions from the first edition of MEYA.

FRAME FROM A SHORT VIDEO MANIFESTO BY
ALEXANDRA ZHASMINOVA AND AUŠRA ČESNAUSKYTĖ

It just felt abstract, complex, toxic..

EXCERPT FROM LOCKED OUT, A SONG BY
VALENTINA VELLA, DEVELOPED AS AN ACTION FOR
MEYA#1 (SEE APPENDIX FOR THE FULL LYRICS)

I'm surrounded by blonde millennials and zoomers in bikinis. We're rocking the Friday night vibe. Work hard, play hard ignore the apocalypse. Our ancestors were idiots who squeeze the planet dry. But what the hell? Tough titties. They were just trying to make themselves comfortable. Luckily, Elon Musk is going to solve everything. I once applied for a job at Tesla to fulfil my Dutch unemployment benefit obligations. I wouldn't ever work there or ideally anywhere. Fuck work. And fuck the planet. I guess. When Elon Musk takes us to a shiny new planet, perhaps I get a studio under 730 euros, so I'll finally be able to apply for huurtoeslag. I will enjoy unobstructed views on Martian lava fields. I'll get really thin and my skin will look amazing.

MEYA #2
Participation was more irregular than in MEYA #1: a core group of ten participants joined more frequently, and the rest, for different reasons, came every now and then or watched the recordings of each session. This discontinuity affected the sense of community and the activation of the learning in action, which was an individual effort in this edition. If on one side, I thought making the action a personal 'assignment' would grant it a local and contextualised dimension, on the other side, the lack of a group with which to collaborate and discuss resulted in a very few attempts of activation. Those were merely initial ideas or learnings that participants incorporated into their existing projects.

The first ideas included: an online survey distributed through QR codes stickers in the city of Turin to trigger the reclaiming of the democratic essence of the economy among 'ordinary' people; a campaign to show how much energy websites consume by hacking important websites and show a graphic overlay on their homepages to quantify it.

The learnings of MEYA #2 were activated in previous projects of participants, such as: an urban project in a social housing neighbourhood in Amsterdam, which tries to understand what people find necessary in that area, starting from their stories of interaction with the natural environment; a climate fiction novel in the process of being written by one participant, who shared an excerpt from it, a poem entitled *Fossilised*, reproduced in the next page.

FOSSILISED
BY SARA NEGRI

The pipe is dangling
at the back of the car,
a loose belt,
jolting.
What a roaring flow
of dead dinosaurs
and lost ferns.
They were looked for
and dug
and exposed
and processed
and shipped
and compressed
and refined,
just for me
to Move.

Suddenly,
I look down
at those legs
attached to me.

And I feel their power.

MEYA #1: EVALUATION AND CONCLUSIONS
Shortly after the conclusion of the learning community, I sent a survey to the participants for feedback on the overall 1.5 months trajectory, focusing on their expectations, what they missed, duration, workload and final assignment. Here below is a quick summary of the survey, which you can find it in the appendix with all the questions and the replies anonymised.

In general, the format of the community met the expectations of the participants, partially because a few of them didn't know what to expect but were triggered by the open call. Most people thought the exchange in the group worked and the quantity (and quality) of the materials to be prepared was appropriate in terms of workload.

The speakers and the selection of different materials (readings, podcasts, movies) were appreciated, especially because participants were exposed to concepts they didn't have the chance to meet before. The safe space (or, as somebody referred to it, the atmosphere) was another highly valued aspect of the learning community, together with the organic facilitation by the leading learners of the Baltan team. Also, the diversity of the group, both in terms of background and age, was considered important for questioning the economic system.

More communication between participants outside the weekly gathering was missed by some people, despite the work in subgroups during the sessions and the final manifesto assignment. Organic learning without a precise structure and expert knowledge of economics was challenging for some participants, especially when dealing with the manifesto assignment. The latter was perceived as an end goal, instead of an occasion to activate the knowledge generated in the community. The transition from learning to activating was critical for many participants because it was considered too abrupt and not guided enough. Also, there was not enough time to work on their group manifesto.

The duration of the trajectory was adequate for most of the participants, while a few of them pointed out that a bit more time would have allowed them to go deeper into the topic. There were few suggestions in the replies to have some sort of continuation for the gatherings after the end of the trajectory, even if sporadic and irregular.

Regarding the manifesto, besides what was already mentioned above, there were some comments about the need to better understand the format itself. Still, most of the participants found it helpful to articulate their position on the topic and as a first attempt to introduce economic activism in their lives. Participants appreciated that the assignment was not imposed but depended on people's time and willingness to do it: it was a pretext to take further what was discussed in the trajectory but not its objective.

After each learning community session, we reserved some time with the other leading learners to revise what happened and reflect on what worked and what did not. It's nice to see that many considerations that emerged in the team were very close to the feedback we got from participants. I implemented most of the points in the design of the second edition of Make Economy Yours Again. Here are a few remarks that emerged in our evaluation sessions:

If we invite speakers, we should have them join at least one gathering before the one they are contributing to, to understand better the group dynamics and the kind of learning space we are co-creating. By bringing in specific expertise, there's a risk of disrupting the indisciplinary and non-hierarchical space on which the community is based. Use more of the internal knowledge of the group.

Divide the manifesto into smaller tasks, and through accumulation, participants can eventually compose the final outcome.

Ask each participant at the beginning if there's already a specific interest/idea they want to work on. Use this first idea as something they keep editing during the trajectory, refining their question and their positioning towards it.

Hybrid edition: consider having an off/online edition, for example, a physical gathering for the kick-off and the conclusion.

Dedicate a specific session to the manifesto format, with some examples and better framing of it in the context of our learning community. It's not the final goal of the trajectory but a voluntary exercise.

After MEYA #1, I worked with the other leading learners on a zine to wrap up the first edition of Make Economy Yours Again. It's a zine in the format of a 50x70 cm poster that presents on one side four short essays focusing on the content, format, learnings of the first community and on the other, quotes and excerpts from the outcomes of the participants. It was a nice occasion to report on what happened and actively reflect on the first edition, while opening up this first experiment to the general audience and promoting the next edition.

Besides the content, the publication's design (developed with Alice Zani) is a visual way to think about and translate what we did. It is about creating a visual language, atmosphere, and our learning community's first immediate impression. In general, the visual world of MEYA acts as a magnet that attracts participants that resonate with it, through the communication channels we used to launch the open call. It contributes to constituting the community in a genuinely sensorial way.
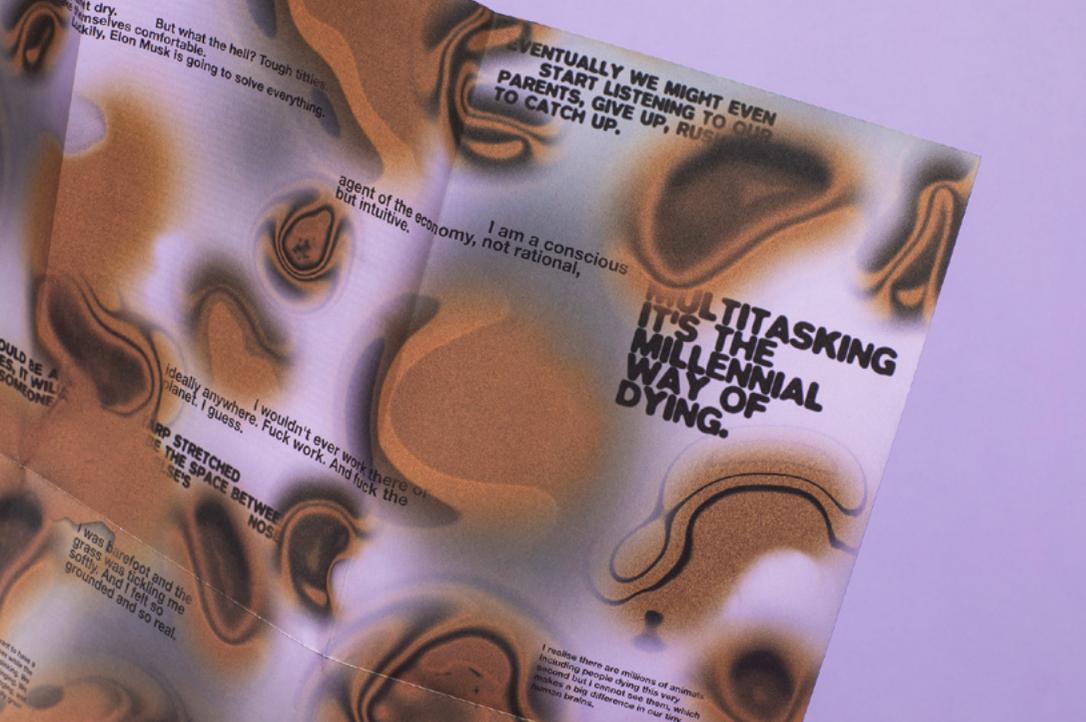
FIG. 7: POSTER SIDE OF MEYA ZINE (PICTURE BY BARBARA MEDO)

MAIN CHANGES IN THE SECOND EDITION

The second edition of MEYA was quite different from the first one, even if the topics remained more or less the same. An other group and period (this time in winter) affected the atmosphere and the energy of the experience. There was a core of people joining every gathering, while the remaining were more irregular. This aspect partially influenced the continuity of the shared learning, but I will explain this more extensively in the evaluation part.

Compared to the first edition, activities took up much more space in the sessions, allowing me to test more strategies from my theoretical research. Also, the trajectory lasted two weeks more (from six to eight weeks), so there was a bit more time to include new activities. Before starting the sessions (week 0 in the table of contents below), we had an introductory meeting to explain the overall approach and allow participants to discuss it and propose adaptations. In this meeting, we also invited them to send their references so that we can already include them from the first session on.

The manifesto changed its purpose and became individual: participants had to write a quick draft of it in around one hour during the first session. I found it essential to kick start their personal reflection from the first week before all the new ideas from the learning trajectory would influence them. In this way, I believe they can be more critical about what they learn and use these new inputs to challenge or reinforce their beliefs. The manifesto became a working document, a chaos file or a diary to go back to after each session. It was personal, we never asked them to share it

with us, but it functioned more as a starting point for their actions.

Actions became the primary assignment and also individual. The intention was to give the action a local and specific context, something that participants could develop in their cities with the community/movement they are part of. In the previous edition, people worked in groups, with participants thousands of kilometres away from each other, which prevented actions from becoming contextualised and concretely affecting their local dimensions.

Finally, also the content was updated: not only new activities but also new materials and references. The initial idea was to re-use the content of the previous edition, but I felt that I needed to learn new things and share my learning with the group, to be a leading learner. Otherwise, the risk is of becoming a teacher and repeating the lesson, which is far from my intention and the approach I am proposing.

FIG. 8: STILL FROM INSTAGRAM VIDEO POST LAUNCHING MEYA#2 (BY ALICE ZANI)

MEYA #2: EVALUATION AND CONCLUSIONS
As in the first edition, a week after the closing of MEYA #2, I sent participants an evaluation survey similar to the one prepared for the first edition but adapted to new content and challenges we encountered in the second one. I'll summarise the replies in the following paragraphs, while you can find them all in the appendix.

The learning community met the expectation of the participants, who particularly enjoyed the wide range of materials proposed, the topics addressed, the activities and the 'chilled' format (how a participant defined it). Some participants missed a general commitment of the whole group since the attendance of one-third of them was pretty discontinuous, as previously mentioned. Linked to this situation, one learner pointed out that even if she enjoyed the freedom and relaxed atmosphere of being allowed to participate as much as one wished, this could also become a disadvantage for fully participating people. One fundamental aspect of MEYA is learning from each other, and in this situation, this exchange might feel just one way. That became evident in the last gathering, where just four action ideas were presented, and only six participants showed up (excluding my colleague and me), which felt a bit disrespectful according to the person sharing the feedback.

As highlighted in the group description, most of the people were from a creative industries background, and one participant touched upon this aspect, saying that she missed a bit of variety. Another feedback was about the lack of time to get to know the other participants (partially connected to the attendance issue), while somebody else proposed to have a few physical sessions, so a hybrid format on/offline.

Regarding the workload before each session, some participants found the materials to be prepared a bit much in some of the sessions. One participant suggested prioritising them as a possible solution so people know what not to miss when they don't have time to read them all.

Most of the people found useful the action 'assignment' to apply the knowledge built during the weeks. It was a bit surprising to read this since basically no one really developed an action, as written above. There were different suggestions for fostering a better activation: working in groups; proposing a practical group action or a collective action that can be done individually in different cities; extending the trajectory of MEYA with a few more meetings spread over a timespan of two/three months, for the people who want to carry out an action that requires more time.

The balance between content and activation felt appropriate and helped learners consider actions that they wouldn't have thought of at the beginning. Most participants had a smooth transition between the two phases, but time was too short, according to a few of them, to plan an action properly.

As leading learners, my colleague and I identified more or less the same issue that already resulted in specific questions in the survey. I'll go one by one in the following paragraphs.

Commitment is a crucial factor for this space to feel like a community and for the learning to happen in a relational setting. For this reason, there must be at least a core of people participating in most of the gatherings. This aspect is dependent on the group of participants, we didn't have any issues with it in the previous edition. I'm a bit sceptical about introducing ways to force people to participate, like a minimum mandatory presence, since this is not in the nature of the kind of learning we want to create. But I think this aspect could be highlighted in the open call and during the gatherings.

Regarding the lack of variety of backgrounds, we also didn't have this problem in the first edition. Still, I think it can be solved by distributing and communicating the open call for participants through different channels that target specific fields outside the creative industries, for example, through universities. Unfortunately, the context of a cultural institution active in the art and design fields connotates in some way the kind of people who get in touch with the initiative, but that can be compensated with a dedicated communication plan as just described.

We received a few comments about the workload. For the next iteration, I would reduce the proposed materials. I'm not fond of prioritising the readings, meaning that I have to decide what is more important and less, a decision that doesn't belong to the role of a leading learner. In general, the materials proposed are not mandatory or strictly necessary for the discussion during the gatherings. Also, people who didn't have time to go through them can still actively join the session.

The learning activation was even more problematic than in the first edition, as already mentioned both in the feedback and in a previous section of this chapter. The shifting from group to individual assignment was the main issue because the motivation of each participant was not enough to pull it off. On the other hand, the group dimension experimented in the previous edition affected the concreteness and situatedness of the action, which remained mainly abstract or very personal. In the next edition, if I still consider the activation a fundamental part of such a format, I will try to change the program and alternate between content gathering and activation gathering, meaning that either the content has to be reduced or the trajectory prolonged. Following one of the suggestions above, participants could work in groups to ideate and plan a collective action, and then execute it in their local contexts.

HOW CAN A LEARNING COMMUNITY BECOME A SPACE TO REHEARSE CHANGE?

In the previous sections, I explained the format of the learning community and how its practical and pedagogical aspects help establish a safe, non-judgemental and non-hierarchical space for shared learning. But how could such a space become a space to rehearse change?

I can reply to this question starting from my personal experience and that of the other participants during the trajectory. In those six/eight weeks, it felt like we had a weekly three-hour holiday, not only from the systems we are part of but from the way those systems are usually discussed. The space we created allowed for different conversations to emerge, conversations that did not start from a solid and abstract knowledge of our economy, but from a lived, intuitive and experience-based one, derived from the effects that the current economic system has on our lives, bodies, happiness, on how we feel connected to the ground we are walking on, on how we are (not) taking care of each other, just to name a few examples.

If, on the one hand, these different conversations were supported by the references and materials provided, on the other hand, the features of the learning space provided a fertile ground for these ideas to grow and motivate participants to reclaim their role as agents rather than patients of the economic system. It is okay if you are not an expert, you do not have to be one to learn.

MEYA is a space for change because it is a very different learning space from the ones we have all experienced. When did you have the occasion to learn together with people of different ages, disciplines, and countries and without a teacher? Of course, it is not just about these factors, but the learnings produced in this setting would be pretty different from a traditional learning situation. Furthermore, inhabiting that space, even for three hours a week and online, offers a glimpse of how we could be together, care about and respect each other, discuss and embody alternative approaches, economic and otherwise, despite all our differences.

It is a weekly training session, like going to the gym or running, but here we are exercising different kinds of movements: as physical motions, how our body moves but also as organisations (political movements or artistic movements for example), how we are moving together towards a goal. Here are some of the movements and ways of being we rehearse in MEYA: the way we listen to each other, the way we do not exclude, the way we go beyond the stereotypes associated with what you do or where you come from, the way we do not judge others, the way we are accountable for respecting each other's needs, the way we could live together, the way we are concerned with the issues of our times, the way we stay with the trouble and do not avoid it, the way we become a community, the way we share with and care for the human and non-human other, the way we see happiness in our connection with each other and the planet we live in.

Feeling how different these ways could be triggers the need for change, because it provides the opportunity to temporarily experience a better reality while still being in the current one. Anticipating the positive aspects of change is key to achieving it, rather than just imagining obstacles or adverse outcomes that tend to block action or slow it down.

The repetition of this feeling grounds the need for change in the daily thinking and doing; it blends it with what upsets us in our current situation and makes it less bearable, or the thought of it avoidable. We become constantly aware (or at least weekly with MEYA) of what we cannot stand anymore, which is the best incentive for changing it.

We learn by repetition, we learn through our bodies more than we think, even if we primarily allocate this function to our brains. For example, when we learn to swim, drive, ride a bike or play a musical instrument, the role of practice and repetition in making those skills second nature is evident. This is what embodiment is about: having competencies and ways of being deeply ingrained in our muscles and nervous system quickly available to us with almost no thought (Starr, 2019). We do not only embody physical knowledge, but habits, emotional patterns and reactions too, and in some ways, the systems we belong to, like Capitalism.

Make Economy Yours Again, through a two-month practice and repetition of other ways of being in the current economic system, is trying to reveal how structures of capitalism are stuck inside of us and how we could, individually and collectively, unfold these structures to transform them systemically.

RESEARCH CONCLUSION

It's now time to look back at the two iterations to evaluate how effective indisciplinary learning was in the concrete format proposed, in connection with my research question. In the next chapter, I'll try to generalise elements of a broader indisciplinary learning approach, zooming out from the learning community format.

How could temporarily removing discipline(s) help develop a better collaboration attitude between them to tackle the challenges of our complex world?

Going back to my research question, in Make Economy Yours Again, I worked on how to remove discipline(s) temporarily. I did it by creating a community in which people from different backgrounds could be together, learning together, and going beyond their disciplinary identities in this equalising dimension. This part of the research question was achieved in my

case study not by developing a collaboration attitude between disciplines but between people from different disciplines. And I feel this is an exciting shift, acknowledging that addressing a discipline is quite an impossible task: what is a discipline? It is an abstract territorialisation of knowledge, not a clearly defined target group of generally addressable people. This is an important conclusion of my research, going back to a personal level, considering people as being-in-the-world before being-in-their-disciplines to achieve a mind shift.

Looking at the second part of the question, I cannot claim to have developed a collaboration attitude that participants will carry on after the end of my learning community. I'm only sure that it happened during the learning community. Still, at this moment, it is difficult to predict the long term effects of this experience on the participants' attitudes toward working with other fields. In the two learning communities, we tackle specifically the challenges of the current economic system: we didn't solve them, of course, we dealt with them every week, we made them part of our daily lives. We created communities that were able to cope together, that found comfort, hope, and agency in that three-hour window every week to deal with those issues or at least think it is possible to do something about them. We didn't have solutions, but we practised together different ways of being in the world that may not apply to everybody. Still, they were collective, and with collective, I mean those seventeen people in each learning community.

Finally, I want to go back to indisciplinary learning and quickly recap and evaluate the indisciplinary pedagogical devices I tested during MEYA #1 and MEYA #2. Most of them were already addressed in-depth in each edition evaluation. Still, I think it is helpful to have an overview of them considering both editions before moving to the broader conclusion of this thesis:

A vocabulary of the learning community: it was a helpful device to constantly remind us that we were inhabiting a different learning space from the ones we are used to.
Community: as introduced above, it is more a goal than a starting condition. We perceived a true community in MEYA #1, while in MEYA #2, it was more challenging to feel it that way because attendance was more discontinuous. Besides the two specific situations, I think that community is an essential aspect of this approach because it is a primary condition of peer-learning in the proposed format.
De-disciplinarizing strategies: I think they worked well in MEYA #1, while in MEYA #2, although they were effective in the first sessions, later on, the participants' backgrounds became more evident because there were more participants from the same field.
Leading learners: we managed to stick to this role in both editions, even if sometimes the participants were asking us to be more teachers than learners.
Non-expertism: after our first guest speaker in the third session of MEYA #1, we acknowledged how problematic it is to bring in an external person to give a talk in the non-expert framework we had for the trajectory and for the learning dynamics in the community. For this reason, in the second edition, we mostly invited guests for activities, and we worked together with them to prepare the session, to make them aware of the context in which they were contributing.
Studying materials: the co-curated selection and variety of studying materials were one of the most appreciated aspects of the two learning communities.
Moderation: as leading learners, we actively intervened very few times in the two editions to ensure everybody had the space to contribute. The discussions were always respectful and considerate of our shared responsibility in moderating the room.
Check-in and check-out: they were indeed the only fixed moments of the sessions, becoming almost unavoidable rituals. They were fundamental in establishing the safe and relaxed atmosphere of the learning communities.
Activation strategies: the ambition of activating the learning during the learning community itself was not fully achieved in both iterations. This is an aspect to critically examine and understand how fundamental it is for indisciplinary learning, especially if activation is intended in a short-term way, like in the case of the action.

04.

CONCLUSION

GENERAL ELEMENTS OF INDISCIPLINARY LEARNING

Looking back at the research, I will now try to induce some elements of indisciplinary learning that could be widely applicable in other contexts besides the format proposed. I have to acknowledge that the context is crucial, and each indisciplinary learning space requires its own specific devices according to the situation, duration and people joining. However, still, it is a pretty flexible and adaptable approach.

Suppose I reduce indisciplinarity to its core goal, beyond my research question. In that case, I'd say it's a way to open up knowledge, to become aware of some of the assumptions and ideologies that shape our understanding and action in the world, especially the hegemonic ones that become natural, automatic, unconscious and apparently unquestionable. And how is it doing so? By de-organizing knowledge, temporarily dismantling how it operates to reveal that we are not really touching the complexity of reality, but just scraping the layers of abstractions that we put on it to feel in control. I guess what I just wrote can sound abstract as well, so I will try to use a metaphor that I already presented in the introduction.

Let's consider the current Western knowledge system like a series of shelves full of boxes: there are labelled boxes, each containing knowledge of different disciplines, and there are boxes with people, also marked by their background. Indisciplinarity takes these two kinds of boxes and throws their contents temporarily on the ground, mixing them. This mix of people and concepts creates new knowledge and awareness of how different ways of thinking can engage together when not labelled and divided. But indisciplinarity is a temporary approach: at some point, it is time for indisciplinary participants to put knowledges and themselves back in the boxes. And this is the crucial moment in which indisciplinarity reveals its goal: people start to realise that the

knowledge they created doesn't fit just in one box. Where should they put it? But they also find themselves belonging to a box, which they might feel reductive when finally becoming conscious of their label. They can either resist the label or get back in the box, at least with the awareness that there are boxes and shelves out there that they would have never found out if they hadn't gotten out of theirs. Finally, they will understand how those boxes have separated them from others, reinforcing judgement and prejudice towards people from other fields.

These realisations are the main results of this approach, acknowledging the organisation of knowledge (the shelves) and its limitations while still using it because of its role in the systems we are part of. Reality is not just a simplified arrangement of what we know, there is a lot more that we cannot grasp and organise because of its complexity. The shelves make us feel in control, but it will be pretentious to think that we can put everything into boxes and create categories for everything that exists. As long as people become aware that reality is not just the shelves but also the mess around it, then indisciplinarity would have accomplished a big part of its mission.

So coming back to the purpose of this section, while keeping the metaphor just explained: what are the tactics that allow indisciplinarity to temporarily throw all the boxes on the ground and create a fertile mix of their content? Which of those tactics could work in different learning situations, regardless of their specificity?

While reflecting on my research, I realised that these tactics could be based on removing the following structures and attitudes both in education and in the Western knowledge system:

the defining elements of a traditional teaching-based mode of learning and their vocabulary;
field-related criteria for selecting the study materials;
the performance of expertise/roles and its

consequences in group dynamics;
the presumption of the inequality of intelligence on which education and our society at large are built;
the extrinsic motivation for learning;
the one-way passive relationship teacher-students;
the judgment and hierarchies created by how disciplines divide who can contribute to a specific knowledge from who cannot;
the predominance of the mind over the body in learning;
the unquestionability of internalised ideologies, social constructs and knowledge from particular fields (mostly hard sciences) ;
the arrogance of how much we think we know;
the logic of progressiveness that considers

BEYOND THE GRADUATION PROJECT: NEXT STEPS

It is a conclusion that doesn't end the MEYA project or my exploration of indisciplinarity but is a stepping stone to a fundamental phase of my research. In the following months, I will use this thesis as a starting point and reference to understand how indisciplinarity can be translated into different outputs, formats and programs. Here, I want to give a small account of current developments.

For the MEYA trajectory, a new spin-off series of events originated, as introduced before: Marginalia, a monthly reading group along the thematic lines of MEYA for previous participants and a general audience interested in getting a feeling of the topics discussed in MEYA. Marginalia are marks made in the margins of a book or other document. Scribbles, comments, annotations, critiques, doodles, or illuminations. One is usually alone in the margins of the book - it is a personal and intimate space. With the Marginalia reading

group, I would like to experiment with collectively populating the margins of a text. What happens when we occupy that space together?

Another direction I'm exploring is how to embed indisciplinarity as part of institutional higher education. It could be challenging to introduce a suspension of discipline and disciplines inside a disciplinary context. An indisciplinary module has the potential to be even more transformative for students because of the contrast between the suspension and business as usual, introducing criticality towards the institutional mode of education but also creating awareness of each student's motivation for learning. I feel that designing such a module requires a really sensitive and careful approach in dialogue with the institution, for it to become an occasion to promote healthy criticism and stimulate a constructive discussion about our current education system. We are currently experimenting at Baltan with condensed 1-day workshops that include some of the strategies and topics developed at MEYA. For example, we recently gave one at Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem in the course of data design, trying to challenge the assumption around measuring and quantitative analysis as a way to understand the world objectively. The workshop was entitled I measure, therefore I know, therefore I understand, therefore am I?

Finally, I'm working with my colleague Marlou van Der Cruijsen to transform Baltan Laboratories into an indisciplinary institution or, at least, with an indisciplinary vision. This process started in spring 2021 with the team trying to develop a new vision and direction for the organisation. Since then, more and more projects and funding applications were focused on indisciplinarity, but still, the approach is not embedded in its identity, positioning and vision.

As a cultural institution, Baltan has always been identified as a lab experimenting at the crossroads of art, science, design and technology. In the first years of Baltan,

art and technology were the primary focus, together with media art. This legacy still influences how people look at Baltan, even if we have been evolving in different directions. We feel now is the moment to adapt Baltan identity to the reality of what Baltan is actually doing, recognising where we come from but moving forward to be meaningful and contemporary to the renewed cultural landscape.

For a few years, we have progressively moved away from a technology/media-based discussion and critique in art and design to a focus on societal challenges and how art and design could contribute to those. There are new urgencies, and we feel that Baltan has to reply to those, using its interdisciplinary experience to facilitate collaboration between different fields, not only with science and technology. For example, in the last six years, social innovation (Age of Wonderland) and economy (Economia Festival, Make Economy Yours Again, Co-Emerging Economies) have become the primary topics of our cultural program.

Moving to an indisciplinary approach would mean for Baltan not to exclusively identify with the fields mentioned above to be free to adapt to the urgent topics we want to address.

PERSONAL CONCLUSION

It is challenging to conclude in a few words almost one year and half of studying, reflecting, discussing, practising, telling and living indisciplinarity. It was a transformative experience that helped and still helps question my work, myself and my understanding of education. I was genuinely surprised a few times, especially in the preliminary phase of my research, engaging with the theory and references that shaped the indisciplinary approach: I felt a lot of assumptions and preconceptions I had about education crumbled down, opening up refreshing and caring alternative scenarios for learning, which I didn't think possible. But even before

working on the thesis, at the beginning of this master's programme, I started to look back on my education and how it shaped me as a person and as a practitioner, as you can read in the introduction. These two years created a space for reflection, a self-questioning attitude that I believe can be summarised as ongoing research on the how, both for myself and for what I do:

'An obvious solution is to preoccupy ourselves not with what we do, but how we do it. The how is the hallmark of our individuality; it is an inquiry into the process of acting. If we look at how we do things, we might find an alternate way of doing them, in other words, have some free choice. For if we have no alternative, we have no choice at all' (Feldenkrais, 1981: p.xii)

A few weeks before writing this section, I recorded a podcast[4] with Marleen van Bergeijk, about Make Economy Yours Again. After introducing me, she asked me to tell an aspect of what I do that is common in all my roles she just mentioned. I suddenly realised, like an epiphany, that most of my work is about creating time and space for reflection for others to get out of their everyday concerns, with the purpose of (re)thinking about broader issues. This consideration applies to my consultancy work for companies and my role as a cultural producer and educator.
      Please see this personal conclusion as a way to close the circle with my personal positioning at the beginning of the thesis. Actually, it feels more like the opening of a new one.

EVENTUALLY WE MIGHT EVEN START LISTENING TO OUR PARENTS, GIVE UP, RUS TO CATCH UP.

I am a conscious

agent of the economy, not rational, but intuitive.

MULTITASKING IT'S THE MILLENNIAL WAY OF DYING.

05.

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All these quotes are emerging from the different meetings happening during MEYA 2021

It's not the deer that crosses the road, it's the road that crosses the forest.

HOME COULD BE A
BETWEEN TREES, IT WIL
YOUR NOSE AND SOMEONE

My thoughts
are filled with positivity
and my life is plentiful
with abundance.

I will not perceive my relationships

06.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

an actually afford isn't

things suck a bit more.

MY
THOUGHTS
ARE FILLED
WITH
POSITIVITY
AND
MY LIFE IS
PLENTIFUL
WITH
ABUNDANCE.

A capitalistic system
which generates
detachments, leaving us
aliens to each other, our
surroundings and even

APPENDIX

INDEX

A SELECTION OF ACTIVITIES FROM MEFA #1

WEEK 1: CREATING A COMMON WORKING GLOSSARY

The activity addressed the diversity of backgrounds of the participants, by trying to create a common working glossary of terms specific to our group. One of the gathering topics (in which the activity was included) was the importance of language in (re)designing our economy. Inspired by an anecdote by Mieke Bal (2002), the activity also offered a pretext to introduce the concept of intersubjectivity and how it could facilitate a dialogue between different disciplines through the use of concepts.

FORMAT/TIMELINE

1. Choose together which terms to define (growth, nature... max 8) [5 mins]
2. Ask participants to write down their definition of the terms in the Zoom chat, thinking from their disciplinary background [15 mins]
3. Read the definitions of one concept. How are they different? By reading others' definitions, are they challenging your personal assumptions? [5 mins for reading + 5 mins to discuss]
4. Which terms do we want to keep for the group to use later, in exploring new alternative economic narratives? Choose max 4 (chosen terms: growth, ownership, trust, value) [3 mins]
5. 4x Break-out rooms: pre-select people by background/ bio with the aim to have groups as diverse as possible (3-4 people per group): each subgroup works on 1 word trying to create one definition out of the ones written by the others: it doesn't have to be similar to the standard definition of the word, it can also be a desirable definition, something that works for this group and for the purpose of our learning community. Changing the economy starts with changing its language [15-20 mins]
6. Each group presents their definition [3 min x 4 groups=12 mins]

The main goal was to stimulate a discussion on the multiplicity of definitions and interpretations of economic concepts and how to use it to open up new ways of understanding the economy and acting on it. With this exercise, I managed to put into practice one of my pedagogical underpinnings, the intersubjectivity of concepts. I realised how

concepts like growth, ownership, trust and value are open enough to be used as devices to imagine different economies, just by tweaking their definitions. They provided a compelling and accessible starting point to kick off the reflection on alternative economic narratives since this one was the first activity we did with the group.

DOCUMENTATION
The working google docs of the 4 groups were collected and made available for everybody. Here below, you can find a quote from each definition.

GROWTH: **"society's main obsession with having/accumulating/ producing/consuming more, on a system but also individual level. An arbitrarily set goal for economies to be perceived as thriving. Infinite growth on a finite planet. Exponential increases for some, gradual decreases for others."**

TRUST: **"a feeling of letting go."**

VALUE: **"an assessment method not based on the inherent qualities of an object but on how the market decides to price it. It also applies to humans, when we place our value on external things like our career, professional achievements and wealth."**

OWNERSHIP: **"I'm gonna build a wall that is just enormous, insurmountable, impenetrable, it will keep all of you out so I can enjoy my beautiful shiny things, choke on my abundance, swim in it, while you starve in your sad pond of nothingness."**

FIG. I: CREATING INTERSUBJECTIVE DEFINITIONS IN SUB-GROUPS

SELF-EVALUATION, FEEDBACK AND POSSIBLE FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS
The activity was executed according to the plan. One practical aspect that could be improved is the second step: people were asked to post their definitions in the Zoom chat, term by term, and it was a bit of a tedious process. I've looked a few days before into alternatives like Mentimeter (an interactive presentation software), through which I could have sent a form to the participants, which they could have filled with all the definitions at once. Unfortunately, I had reached the limits of the free subscription, and for budget reasons, I had to come up with a plan B using the Zoom chat.

The main goal of the activity was to reflect on the multiplicity of interpretations of economic concepts and how one single definition of a concept doesn't exist, because it depends on who is defining it and his/ her own background. I think that the activity related well to the nature of the group and to what they were interested in exploring, as stated by some of them at the beginning of the learning community, specifically connected to the language issue in the economy. The exercise in sub-groups, in which they had to distil one definition of one of the chosen concepts from the 17 definitions given by other participants, made them aware of how it could be difficult to come up with a shared meaning

(an intersubjective meaning) just even for a group of 17 people. I can consider the overall goal reached, even if some participants thought they failed the exercise in their sub-group, because they didn't manage to create one common definition for the assigned term. As emerged from some of the feedback I collected, they felt there was not enough time to work on the definition and to discuss it with everybody afterwards.

Starting from the last point of the previous paragraph, I think in a future version of this activity I have to better clarify that the goal of the exercise is not to come up with a "perfect" definition of the assigned term, but to use the exercise as a pretext to discuss it and its multiple definitions. In this way, expectations can be better managed, and participants won't feel like they are failing the purpose of the activity. Also, I'd dedicate more time both to the exercise and the following sharing in the whole group, since participants thought there wasn't enough time to discuss with other sub-groups.

WEEK 2: ATTUNEMENT

In week 2, we did an attunement inspired by one of my references on generative somatics (Starr, 2019) as a check-in for the second gathering. The topic of the session was embodiment as a way to reveal how structures of capitalism are stuck inside of us and how we could, individually and collectively, unfold these structures in order to transform them systemically. The guest of the session was Meredith Degyansky, who contributed with a presentation, discussion and exercise to explore feeling and sensing practices that might allow us to make the economy ours again.

The purpose of the attunement exercise was to centre participants in the space, to become present to themselves and the other people in the room and finally to remember to have a body, as silly it might sound, especially during an online session about embodiment. It is fundamental to re-activate attention and feeling for listening to your body, independently from an online session's main visual and auditory inputs.

FORMAT/TIMELINE

1. Stand or sit wherever you are.
2. Place your feet hip-width apart and, if you are standing, keep your knees soft.
3. Close your eyes.
4. Inhale deeply through your nose. Hold your breath for a count of four, and then exhale slowly through your mouth, for a count of eight.
5. Breathing normally, become aware of the connection between your feet and the floor, the earth beneath you.
6. Gently correct your posture and slowly lift your chin so that the top of your head feels energetically connected to the sky. Sense that connection.
7. Relax your forehead, relax your eyes, your jaw, your ears. Relax the muscles at the back of your neck.
8. Inhale, and stretch your arms over your head. On the exhale, lower your arms to your side.
9. Continue breathing normally. If you are right-handed, place your right hand approximately five centimetres just below your navel. If you are left-handed, place your left hand approximately five centimetres below your navel. Spread your fingers. This part of your body is where 72,000 nerve endings come together and where your physical and emotional bodies meet.
10. Visualise your navel as a root that travels up your spine to the top of your head and as a root that travels down your legs into your feet. Hold that image.
11. Bring your attention to the place of contact between your hand and the centre of your body beneath it. Inhale deeply through your nose, and hold your breath for a count of four. Exhale slowly through your mouth to a count of eight. Do this once more. Inhale deeply through your nose, and hold your breath for a count of four. Exhale slowly through your mouth to a count of eight.
12. Continue breathing normally and begin to imagine your navel root extending beyond your own body and into the centre of our shared zoom space. As it intertwines with the roots of others, imagine a root system that sustains the life of a stand of trees in a forest. Hold that image.
13. Now imagine your navel root connecting to the people you bring with you into this zoom room but who are not here in person—people who have shaped your beliefs and value systems, people who directly and indirectly

have enabled you to be present in this moment. Visualise those people.

14. Continue breathing normally and bring your attention to the energies of the people here with you in this zoom room.

15. Now bring your attention to the energies of the entire room you are in.

16. Now bring your attention back to yourself and your energy. Continue breathing normally.

17. Know that this attunement is always available to you. May you carry your ability to be present with yourself and with others throughout the day.

18. Let's close the attunement with one more breath. Keeping your eyes open, inhale deeply through your nose, hold your breath for a count of four, and exhale slowly through your mouth for a count of eight

The exercise was followed by a short presentation and an embodied practice guided by Meredith Degyansky. She led us through a scan of our bodies tracing through our tensions, memories, sensations, feelings, and affects to get to the underbelly of where all of these embodied ways of being, thinking, and doing come from. The loose goal was to locate where and how structures of capitalism and settler colonialism are stuck inside of us and how we might unsettle them. The embodied practice is available on YouTube at this link[1].

DOCUMENTATION
The activity was recorded on Zoom and the audio (you can listen to it at this link[2]) and the written script were extracted and then shared with participants to redo the exercise in other settings.

SELF-EVALUATION, FEEDBACK AND POSSIBLE FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS
The activity effectively created the proper attention and sensory reflection needed for the session's topic. All the participants appreciated it, and therefore, we re-used it for another session in MEYA#2

1   www.youtube.com/watch?v=JXCnfs53vqs&t=142s
2   www.dropbox.com/s/iwnwl63zjkuvp4c/Attunement%20by%20Meredith%20Degyansky%20
-%20c%27%C3%A9%20versione%20scritta%20sul%20drive.mov?dl=0

FIG. II: PARTICIPANTS DURING THE ATTUNEMENT EXERCISE

WEEK 4: A GUIDED BRAINSTORM FOR ACTIVISTIC ACTIONS

In week 4, we had Igor Vamos of The Yes Men as a guest. He did a historical overview of activistic actions from Jesus to Greta Thunberg and their practices to inspire participants with many examples for developing their actions.

FORMAT/TIMELINE

1. Presentation by Igor Vamos [30 min]

2. Brainstorm in breakout rooms: come up with a newspaper headline that we would like to see in 4-5 years. Generate a lot of them and build quality in the last 5 minutes [20 min]

3. Sharing the headlines in the plenary [10 minutes]

4. Back in breakout rooms: write the story for the headline you chose, focusing on the steps to get there. Then, develop a symbolic action that could guide somebody who wasn't part of that story to think about that narrative. [20 minutes]

5. Present your symbolic actions to the whole group

DOCUMENTATION
Each group worked on google drive. The plenary session was recorded and one of the facilitators took notes of it, then shared them with everybody. Here are a few examples of the headlines produced by the different groups:

GROUP 1

complete housing for social housing all over the Netherlands: every homeless gets a home and no empty houses
work and labour: everybody gets 1000 euro/month, while limiting the number of things owned
make the dutch healthcare public again with more stress on the mental care

GROUP 2

cars are not allowed to enter all European cities
covid started to talk
decrease of the human population

GROUP 3

Jeff Bezos pays his taxes
researches suggest people have become kinder
the Olympics budget is reinvested in local communities
asylum seekers, welcome!
 universal basic income is accepted worldwide
inefficiency Nobel prize for economics

**SELF-EVALUATION, FEEDBACK
AND POSSIBLE FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS**
The presentation and first part of the workshop (headlines) effectively generated topics for developing a symbolic action. The second part about the story and action was a bit more complicated because for participants. It wasn't clear enough what was expected from them and, therefore, it was tough for them to come up with an action that would fit their headline. So I would keep the first exercise but change the second part, maybe removing the story and thinking about how to move from title to action.

A SELECTION OF ACTIVITIES FROM MEYA #2

WEEK 1: MANIFESTO

As described above in the introduction to the second edition, we had participants working on their manifesto from the first session. Before the gathering, they read very different manifestos (from Futurism, Occupy, No School, among the others) to explore different styles and tones of voice they could use to write their own. We provided them with a short brief for the exercise, derived and adapted from the teaching tools of *Training for Exploitation* book (Precarious Workers Brigade, 2017).

BRIEF
[DURATION: 60 MINS]

A manifesto is a declaration of ideals and intentions that calls for urgent change and proposes radical new solutions. Manifestos often address broad political or social objectives. They typically blend an incendiary critique of what's wrong with a set of captivating, straight-to-the-heart alternatives. They see artistic practice and experience as inextricable from the material conditions.

Spend some time briefly revisiting the manifestos you read. Get a feel for the language they use and their expressed desires.
Write a manifesto about your ideal economy: it can be very personal, or you can use it to start a movement.

You might want to consider:
What are your core principles and how will they shake up and improve on the current status quo? What is your utopian vision for the future and how can it be achieved? Dealing with this question might lead you into an important conversation about why what you do matters. Remember, the manifesto genre encourages bold, direct and unapologetic expression. It largely strives to be clear and enticing to a wide range of people.

DOCUMENTATION
We didn't ask them to share their manifesto with everybody, the purpose was to use it as a tool for them to articulate their beliefs, a working document to be used during the whole trajectory. Participants just posted some quotes from what they wrote in the chat, just for the others to get a feeling and discuss the exercise.

Here below are a few selected quotes from participants' manifestos.

'Economy is nothing - Current economy is dominated by power and status. What if the proudest status thinkable was needing nothing and using as little as possible?
Economy is rich. As a human participating in society. Let us be human. Let us experience the richness of being a human. Creation over consumption. Let us put our fundamental values first and let these flow as valuta. '

'Manifesto of the 7th generation:
I will feel empathy for my descendants;
I will feel empathy for their descendants;
I will feel empathy for their descendants;
I will feel empathy for their descendants;
I will feel empathy for their descendants;
I will feel empathy for their descendants;
And I will feel empathy for their descendants.'

'We are but ants
in a breathing nest
as old as time
and gracious still.'

SELF-EVALUATION, FEEDBACK AND POSSIBLE FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS
Participants liked the exercise and the discussion afterwards. It is interesting to highlight how manifestos and thinking about values and beliefs connect people with their identities, with what they are and not what they do. It is another strategy to de-disciplinarizing the discussion about the economy. It is difficult to say how effective the manifesto was as a tool/activity because it remained their personal working document, which was never shared with everybody. But leading-learners are not teachers who give assignments, so we proposed it as a suggestion to keep their personal reflection going parallel to what we were learning together during the eight weeks.

WEEK 3: THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED

In week 3, we focused the embodiment session on exploring different exercises from the theatre of the oppressed, an approach developed by Augusto Boal in the 1970s in Brasil and later in Europe, very close to the pedagogy of Paulo Freire, with whom Boal was a friend and frequently exchanged about education and theatre. I will not go in-depth with explaining the theatre of the oppressed approach. Still, I hope from the description of the activities below will be clear why and how this method is linked with embodiment and the concept of rehearsing change, which is central to the second edition of MEYA #2. Before the gathering, participants had the opportunity to prepare different materials about embodiment and an essay on Boal's methodology.
          The session resulted from an exchange I had for a few months with Magda Mantovani, a theatre trainer focusing on community theatre in Italy.

FORMAT/TIMELINE

WARM-UP EXERCISE: BALANCE OF THE BODY WITH OBJECTS [10 MIN]
          Goal: get out of the pre-established body and mental patterns and create a playful atmosphere

          By choosing a random object available, everyone experiences all the positions and body structures with which this object can be kept in balance, using all the possible relationships between the thing and one's body. Try to use your hands as little as possible. When you think you have experienced all the possibilities, you can try another object.

IMAGE THEATRE [50 MIN]
          Goal: embodying definitions to gather the feedback/interpretation of fellow participants

In the previous gathering, participants worked in pairs to create a desirable glossary of some concepts (see the activity in week 1 of MEYA #1, it was repeated in MEYA #2). Through the image theatre, the definitions will be embodied by their creators both as a way to feel them and as a medium for a non-verbal exchange with the observers. Using the body as a fundamental shared dimension between participants dissuades a possible disciplinary discussion around the definitions. Participants will be asked to create a static body image for each definition. Body images must not be understood but felt using memory and the power of imagination. This method is based on the multiple interpretations of the observer, which sees an image and expresses the feelings and representations aroused by it. The authors of the image can thus grasp new meanings and decide to include them in their definition, which is then shared with everybody.

10 min: Each couple prepares a static body image of their definition in a break-out room, that then they'll perform together or separately (1 image can be built with 2 bodies or 1).

5 min x word: each couple will represent their static body images in the main zoom room (max 2 min per image). The other participants will turn their cameras off and give feedback/interpretation of the image (3 min). They can devise a title for each image, insert it in a real concrete context, and bring personal memories and references. The facilitator can ask the couple for a possible dynamisation, such as adding a repetitive movement to the static image or quickly improvising an opposite image to the one proposed.

10 min: Each couple goes back to their definition and possibly re-works it / better it with the interpretations and feedback given.

2 min x word: each couple presents their written definitions. This is the first time the compiled written definitions are shared with the whole group.

[15 MIN BREAK]

FORUM THEATRE [50 MIN + 25 MIN FINAL DISCUSSION]

Goal: simulate a situation of "oppression", of conflict between opposing interests, to speculate a solution.

Scenario for the situation:
Intergenerational discussion in a family, raised by a situation linked to a behaviour of one family member which we feel is not "right" for our desired economy. Each group member has to take a role in the scene: the oppressed, the one who wants to convince the oppressor to change her/his behaviour, the oppressor, who doesn't want to change it, and the remaining participants can become supporters of one of the two main roles. The scene has to stop when the conflict escalates to a level that doesn't seem solvable to the group (scene duration: 2-3 minutes max).

20 min: participants are divided into groups of four-five people in break-out rooms to prepare the scene. In each room, a facilitator is present for questions or doubts.

30 min: Go back to the whole group with the camera turned off. Each group will present its scene: act the scene (2 min), the audience discusses it to find a way to solve the conflict (5 min), and one audience member replaces the oppressed to solve the situation of oppression, which is re-enacted with her/him in it (3 min).

25 min: final discussion: how to apply these techniques, are they useful?

DOCUMENTATION
The session was recorded via Zoom, and I'll include below a few excerpts/transcripts of body images and the scene prepared for the forum theatre exercise. Especially for this session, it makes sense to watch the video to understand better what happened and how. You can find the full video at this link[3]. Here on the right are a few selected body images and and in the next page, the description of one of the scenes prepared by participants for the forum theatre exercise, based on the scenario proposed (intergenerational discussion).

FIG. III: BODY IMAGE: TOMORROW

FIG. IV: BODY IMAGE: VALUE

FIG. V: BODY IMAGE: EQUALITY

FIG. VI: PARTICIPANTS ACTING THEIR SCENE FOR THE FORUM THEATRE EXERCISE

In this forum theatre scene, we have a family(mother, two sisters and one brother) at dinner at home, joined by a friend (Jaykishan) of one of the daughters, Katie. While Jaykishan is at the restroom, Katie asks her mother if her friend Jaykishan could rent one of her empty apartments since he is looking for a new place. He cannot afford to pay the whole rent, so Katie asks her mum if he can rent it at her mortgage cost. The mum seems a bit hesitant, she wants to be realistic. The son Daniele is supportive of this idea, he knows him, while the other sister Kasia is against it, since the plan was to rent it out at full price to pay the mortgage as soon as possible and buy a nice house in the south of Spain for all the family. The mother accuses Katie of asking her to do charity and of being a radical left-wing. Jaykishan comes back to the table. The conversation becomes heated; the mother points out that Katie's question made his friend uncomfortable and asks Katie why she is not hosting him at her place. Katie says that Jaykishan needs his own space because he is an artist. The mum is not impressed by his ambitions since she thinks he would never make money in that way. Finally, Jaykishan can explain his situation: he came to Europe from India to study, and most landlords prefer European tenants since it is more difficult for him to prove that he can afford the rent. He is hopeful to be able to pay the mortgage fee of the mother's apartment. Since they made a lot of money by renting apartments, Katie feels they should help somebody in a less fortunate position. The mother concluded with a rant about being careful with money: having it doesn't mean they have to waste it.

The audience identified the oppressed with Jaykishan and indirectly also Katie. The oppressor was clearly the mother. The oppressed was substituted by another participant. She took the role of Katie.

In the second take, Katie tells her mother that the rental price of the apartment is too high and nobody can afford it. She proposed that her mother host her friend for three months to test if he is a good tenant, but the mother rebuts that Katie should host him in her 80 square meter apartment in Amsterdam. The conversation goes in a loop and the new

arguments do not convince the mother of Katie.

So, unfortunately, the situation was not solved even after the second iteration with a new actor.

SELF-EVALUATION, FEEDBACK AND POSSIBLE FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS

The participants positively received the exercises. We reflected with the group on how embodying the definitions and the conflict situations create additional layers of meaning and empathy. Through image theatre, we memorised the desired definitions, we made them real, and we felt them. One of the participants shared a nice anecdote. She represented the word *tomorrow* with her arms carrying a heavy package and had to keep that pose for a few minutes while participants were giving feedback. She started to feel the burden of the word, which connected with its abstract meaning, which will make her remember it even more effectively. Also, adding a movement to the static pose (the dynamisation I mentioned above) added another dimension for her.

The forum theatre was particularly interesting for embodying perspectives very far from the ones of the participants. We discussed how difficult it is to put yourself in somebody else shoes, especially because of the polarisation around dividing topics (vaccination, diet, political beliefs) and the tendency to spend time with like-minded people. Having to act the roles of people with very different opinions made them realise that there is a person behind that opinion/role and acknowledge the perception gap: what a person thinks, what you think they think, what they think you think.

On a personal level, it was a challenging but fruitful session, thanks to the collaboration with Magda. We prepared it in a few meetings, trying to understand how to bring the approach of the theatre of the oppressed online. I'm looking forward to occasions (for example, the Graduation Symposium) in which I can test part of this session in real life, including those aspects that weren't possible online. For instance, in image theatre, people should be preparing the body images without talking but by "sculpting" it, directly moving the body of one of the creators/actors.

WEEK 4: DRAW THE TALK

We watched together Tyson Junkaporta's talk, pre-recorded for MEYA. Tyson is an academic, an art critic, and a researcher who belongs to the Apalech Clan in far north Queensland, author of *Sand Talk: How Indigenous Thinking Can Save the World*. In his book, each chapter includes some "sand talk", an Aboriginal custom of drawing images on the ground to convey knowledge through symbols. Inspired by this practice, we asked participants to grab a pen and paper and make visual notes from the lecture, not using words. We wanted to activate another kind of listening that, through the movement of the pen, could translate what was heard and record it visually. It didn't have to be a literal translation, it could be a symbolic one or more of a doodle, in which your hand is writing automatically, by itself in some way, without the brain intervening in making sense. An intuitive and emotional response, in which the hand is connected to the hears without passing through the brain. The movement and the context (the paper, what is already drawn on it, the pen, its stroke and its friction on paper) guided the drawing, not thinking about drawing.

Quoting one of my references about embodiment (Stolz, 2015): 'skilful action has a 'world-to-mind' direction and thus we do not experience our intentions as causing our bodily movements: rather, in skilful coping we experience the situation as drawing the movements out of us' (p. 484). The quote relates more to trained actions (for example, dancing), not precisely to the one proposed in this activity. Still, it is a fascinating concept to elaborate further in similar exercises.

DOCUMENTATION

Participants sent me their drawings via email, and I shared them on Zoom, asking everyone to describe their experience of the exercise. They tended to explain what they drew, even if nobody told them to do so. This could be demonstrative of the human interpretative and explanatory attitude activated by sense-making. Here below is a selection of some of the collected drawings.

SELF-EVALUATION, FEEDBACK AND POSSIBLE FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS

We had different reactions to the exercise: most people tried to represent what they listened to almost in a diagrammatic way, and others drew in a very abstract and immediate way. It showed how difficult it is sometimes for human beings to avoid making sense, to interpret what is heard logically and literally translate it, and to let the muscles do the work without the rational dimension taking the lead. It was an experiment, and I think it was successful in concluding what was just

written. We didn't have a clear goal or something to prove.

The activity could have the potential to be further explored as a strategy to challenge the rational way of thinking described in the theoretical framework and to show participants how it also dominates our capacity to express feelings or sensations through creative sensorimotor gestures. It can be interesting to try to iterate the exercise a few times, with different instructions that allow the drawing to shift from figurative to abstract. I will test further this exercise in a future edition or maybe in a dedicated workshop in the coming future.
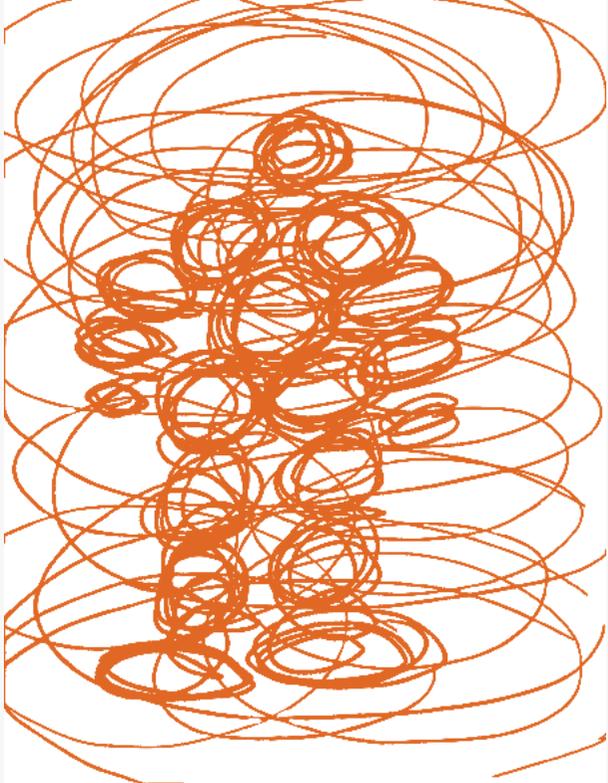

FIG. VII: DRAWING THE TALK #1

FIG. VIII DRAWING THE TALK #2

FIG. IX: DRAWING THE TALK #3
FIG. X: DRAWING THE TALK #4

SELECTED MANIFESTOS AND ACTIONS FROM MEYA #1

GROUP 1 (VALENTINA VELLA, JOLANDE BOSCH, TERESA FELDMANN)

MANIFESTO

We (our group) long for a paradigm shift while being mindful the proposed transition cannot be treated as a mere technicality. Shaped and raised by capitalist patriarchy, we need a space for collectively coming to terms with our neoliberal histories, so that profound healing and recovery can take place. For example, recognising the basic undercurrents of unpaid care and gift economies happening against all odds where intrinsic value can still be experienced. Or perhaps we need to redefine the concept of "work" altogether? If we attempt to deconstruct the economic system into its essential components then it all comes down to (1) production and flows of energy, (2) how to store that energy (which includes food, tools, and cultural artifacts), and (3) social relations. We can intervene at any and all of these levels, defamiliarise them to our own and our readers' eyes, and propose a new and exciting way of thinking about them for our post-capitalist society.

ACTION 1: PANICARE – PUSH A BUTTON, ACTIVATE A COMMUNITY OF CARE

Imagine yourself in a state of debilitating panic about your housing situation, your legal rights, your access to psychical help, benefits or otherwise and having a panic button to push. After you push that button, an army of strangers is mobilized to fight for your cause, to care about your situation, to help you make good decisions instead of poor ones, to open up perspectives for a better future. To care, actively, through organized civil action. The button activates contact with a letter-writer, with someone with a legal background, with someone who doesn't mind making a few phone-calls in your behalf, with someone who has been through a similar ordeal and found a way out, with someone who is just good at listening. In short to a community of care forming around you, moving your panic into action and inclusion.

Our project derives from the issue of housing, or to put it more specifically the panic of finding nowhere affordable to live and feel safe. In order to arrive

at the suggestions we have developed, the concept of a Panicare button, which has a much broader scope, we need to start by introducing some relevant insights into inequality and the experience of powerlessness in anxious situations, in order to explain the ideas behind this civil action concept.

Inequality is on the rise and studies show that poverty creates poverty and wealth creates wealth. Even in countries such as the Netherlands where there are relatively strong traditions in regard to social security, this is becoming more and more urgent (Walsum, 2021). Poverty appears to take people hostage and destabilizes peoples thinking about value. It causes people to stop planning ahead financially and take out expensive loans, their focus on mere survival enabling 'clumsy decision-making' (Waterval, 2019 after Shar et al, 2015). Psychologist Eldar Shafir and behavioural economist Sendhil Mullaithan relate this to the large burden deprivation holds on your brain capacity. If you keep stressing about making ends meet, you have less 'space on your hard-drive' for rational decision-making (Shar et al, 2014 & 2018). This can have long term consequences and can result in people ending up in the 'poverty trap'. In a definition provided by the India Times Economics section the poverty trap is said to be 'caused by a lack of capital and credit to people', and that 'it can be broken by planned investments in the economy and providing people the means to earn and be employed' (Indiantimes.com, n.d.). The previously mentioned studies suggest however, that pumping money into the system is only half the solution, for it is not just a lack of capital and credit in financial sense. Taking the (financial) stress away surely helps, but there is also the issue of valuing peoples contributions, making them feel included and treating them well as contrary to ill-treatment by organizations and services (ATD Fourth World & Oxford Univ., 2019). In short there is a need to actually care about people, not just buy them out.

David C. Korten describes in his 'Agenda for a new Economy' what people really want and see as wealth (in contrast to what Wall Street wants), which he sums it up as:

> *Real wealth has intrinsic, as contrasted to exchange, value. Life, not money, is the measure of real- wealth value. The most important forms are beyond price and are unavailable for market purchase. These include healthy, happy children, loving families, caring communities, and a beautiful, healthy, natural environment. Real wealth also includes all the many things of intrinsic artistic, spiritual, or utilitarian value essential to maintaining the various forms of living wealth. These may or may not have a market price. They include healthful food, fertile land, pure water, clean air, caring relationships and loving parents, education, health care, fulfilling opportunities for service, and time for meditation and spiritual reflection.* (Korten, D.C., 2010, p.8)

Recurrent themes within these wants and needs are care and community. Care does not only come up in debates about changing the conditions of long term poverty, but also in relation to planetary action for instance. Governmental action is important, but it has a tendency to shift problems around as people search for cheaper and less regulated options abroad and out of sight. What has to change are the values people hold in general: they need to acknowledge and care about the consequences of their actions for others and for the environment. This is not merely up to the government. Governments can help by prioritizing certain values in their policies, making it easier for people to opt in their favor. However it would also at best not be left up to the people who are in situations of debilitating deprivation. People in a situation of wealth are much better suited up for this. The 'wealthy' here are people that lead the lives Korten describes as desired; that have health, care, a social safety-net, that are in caring communities etc. Anyone who has the requisite space in their minds and lives to make good value judgements. Changing the world is up to the people who are doing ok, that have a surplus. In terms of actual care, the strongest shoulders should also carry the heaviest load, and this cannot be limited to tax payments.

Upon discussing the topic of social housing, as one of us is about to be without a place to live shortly and it is consuming all her thoughts. She mentions it to be 'exhausting', even though there are people giving her advice like 'make a call-out movie', 'stalk the housing association daily' etc. she feels overwhelmed and not up for the task of pleading her case and 'begging', as she calls it. This is where the insights on the debilitating nature of the poverty trap as described above comes into thought. All of us have had difficulties, past or present, concerning finding or maintaining housing and although the right to adequate housing is universal and communicated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948, via UN.com), this is in the current housing climate a difficult challenge. It is also not a right that can be individually enforced in court, only organized action helps (Bongenaar, 2020). Such civil organization is not expected to (sufficiently) come from the people who are in that situation. Rather it needs to come from everyone else. Thomas Rousseau (2015), when discussing the occurrence of sickness from poverty and poverty from sickness everywhere in the world, argues that issues like this can only be fought through structural solidarity. This is where the idea hatched to ask for civic action via a panic button of sorts. The list of 198 methods of nonviolent action by the Albert Einstein Institution forms part of our initial enquiry into what types of actions could be used by the civil community around the panicked and we will be initially recruiting amongst our peers at MEYA to start with this specific case to see what such actions can lead to. We imagine this concept to have a potential reach worth investigating further, as it addresses many of the hidden dimensions of poverty and gating further, as it addresses many of the hidden dimensions of poverty and

contributes to a much healthier future of human wealth in the broader sense.

Consider the button pushed and the troops on their way.

ACTION 2: THE NEED FOR UNIVERSAL HOUSING IN THE NL: A TRUE STORY (BY TERESA FELDMANN)

I'm going to tell you a true story.

I moved to the Netherlands three years ago, as a Master student, blissfully unaware of the housing crisis in the country. Despite the first signs, I was still acting in disbelief until I checked into a hostel in Den Haag. I was assigned to an oppressively stuffy windowless room—more akin to a prison cell— with eight other occupants crammed in on triple bunk beds. With nothing arranged, I was to stay there for an indefinite period of time. I had a breakdown.

That night I realised that seemingly everybody else in that hostel were students in the exact same situation as I was. We laughed bitterly at our misfortune of choosing the NL to study in and this sense of solidarity was somewhat mood lifting. We congregated in the tiny dirty kitchen where some thirty people needed to cook daily to feed themselves on a tight budget. It was gross.

My school administration was superbly inept and detached, so I was on my own to figure out everything. The next morning I escaped the nightmare hostel at 9am sharp. I walked for hours from *makelaar* to *makelaar*, asking for vacancies that would accept an international student as a tenant. No such vacancies, I was informed. With a paralysing sense of homelessness taking over me, I weighed: should I just pack my bags and leave this country?

Yet I was persistent enough to find one agent who agreed to take me for a viewing. I went together with another student from the hostel. The two-bedroom apartment was overpriced. But they didn't require proof of income, or a guarantor, or any other documents. School was about to start, we needed a home NOW... So we took it. We signed a contract neither of us could afford.

Then I met Awa. I don't actually know her name. Our paths crossed at the central library in Den Haag where many homeless people spend time. A young Black girl approached me and said: "*Vrouw*, where can I find a

room?" I'm blonde and a white-Dutch-passing person so people tend to ask me things. I said that I don't know and as a foreigner I'm in the same boat as she is. She needed someone to talk to, so I listened to her story. It appeared we're in very different boats.

Awa's family had migrated to the Netherlands from West Africa. She had lived in social housing with her parents and siblings. But there were problems, and her parents were abusive to her. At some point the police intervened, separating Awa from the rest of the family. From then on she was alone, there was no home to return to.

However Awa did have an extended family member living down south in Maastricht, in a spacious house. She got in touch with him. He offered a deal: she can live there for free but she must sleep with him whenever he wants to. Let me repeat it: a 19-year-old girl must prostitute her body in exchange for a shelter. She did not accept to prostitute her body. So the municipality placed Awa in a homeless shelter, for an indefinite period of time. She felt so unsafe sleeping next to unknown men.

When I met her, Awa was on her way to see her case worker at the city council. The official kept telling her to be *patient*. The waiting lists for housing are long, as we know. "But please, can you do something for me, can you put a word out for me? I can't take it much longer at the shelter..!" All that fell to deaf ears. Not surprising when the system, designed to create scarcity for the many, is locking us in an individualised defence mode. I, too, am constantly concerned with my own bare necessities. If I manage to make ends meet this month, I worry whether I'm going to be homeless if the wind changes. I'm in a rather sketchy boat weathering this storm. But Awa didn't even have a boat.

ACTION 3: LOCKED OUT (SONG LYRICS BY VALENTINA VELLA, **link to listen**[4])

I guess I'm still too young to have to worry about dying suddenly behind the locked door but there could totally happen to random opening that saved and six feet under.

The smell will reach the neighbours. Eventually they will come through the wind or like i thought who would have to come in that day. When I locked myself out of my apartment in Rome. I walked up and down the street 16 times so people getting in and out of parking spots I started counting dogs 1,2,3,4, 20, 33.

4   www.dropbox.com/s/wbycghunxn50z4u/4_locked-out-by-valentina-vella-mp3.mp3?dl=0

I gave the finger to a guy on his scooter because I can call a random driver a dickhead I don't care but he can scream that she's a dickhead, like all women. Knocked on my watch. I wanted to punch him in the face I got so angry I felt like I was five again. When I didn't want to get dressed and my father would use the belt on me that did not turn out to be a brilliant idea like many of his like fathering me. And yet, I did my breathing exercises twice on my **Fitbit** a day trying to slow down my heart - waiting, waiting, waiting.

I study all the products for sale in every store, I studied all the balconies of all the apartments and a woman's eating sunflower seeds at a window, she was happy and 100 years old. If this woman is content eating seeds in the sun she must know something I don't, I didn't get the memo. The screen just solve every single thing, brings me to tears.I don't understand how if it's all I've ever known was not life that much cooler. To have memories of the vast and changing sea of non existence, is this how madness begins?

But I'm not in Rome anymore. I'm in Utrecht now, moving from sublet to sublet, enjoying the weirdly subtropical summer while remembering that the seats will be the harbinger of death. I pull off by swimming in the canal someone rotting bicycles and supermarket cards. Look at ads of rooms for sublet, but I can't afford anything. I got here late to can complain. It's the law of "I'm faster than you and I got the last chair". It's fair. I've been told, it's not personal.

I'm surrounded by blonde millennials and zoomers in bikinis. We're rocking the Friday night vibe. Work hard, play hard ignore the apocalypse. Our ancestors were idiots who squeeze the planet dry. But what the hell? Tough titties. They were just trying to make themselves comfortable. Luckily, Elon Musk is going to solve everything. I once applied for a job at Tesla to fulfil my Dutch unemployment benefit obligations. I wouldn't ever work there or ideally anywhere. Fuck work. And fuck the planet. I guess. When Elon Musk takes us to a shiny new planet, perhaps I get a studio under 730 euros, so I'll finally be able to apply for huurtoeslag. I will enjoy unobstructed views on Martian lava fields. I'll get really thin and my skin will look amazing.

In case you didn't know, milk is really bad for you. I know this for a fact. I've been told by a guy in Wales. So is gluten and coffee. Those are the real enemies, those impersonal agents of acne. This is a protest against those dietary choices that are making you less appealing to the opposite sex. You want to have a lot of sex while the ship is sinking. We will be singing, We will be singing, and having really great orgasms.

Multitasking it's the millennial way of dying. Technically, I'm an ex-ennial but the six months or something, we're even worse, so insecure. Because

we're fucked like the younger generations. But on top of that we're getting old. Eventually we might even start listening to our parents, give up, rush to catch up. We accept the office job. We move to a random city in a random country because why not? Personally, I was out of my own bad ideas.

Welcome home. That warm feeling of having finally arrived after full day of randomly typing things on your keyboard and nodding at the boss. Take your shoes off. Stare at your empty fridge. The mattress is so soft. Why is the neighbour screaming? Am I going to be alone forever? But not usually the mattress isn't even comfortable and you have a Dutch roommate who leaves passive aggressive notes on th§e trash can written in the VOICE OF THE TRASH CAN in red marker. That is when she doesn't active aggressively mentioned that your French lover is ugly.

If the world was a plush toy, if you could squeeze it in your arms. Home could be a tarp stretched between trees, it will be the space between your nose and someone else's nose. We wouldn't make it together anywhere. A home, a home you can actually afford isn't going to save you, but without it, things suck a bit more. That little guy in your brain looking for comfort and shelter won't shut the fuck up until you're safe. And good luck with that. So all day long it goes "ccichicicihcichcicichcici..". And in instead of writing songs or being kind to strangers or pigeons, or coming up with a new political idea that can save us all. We listen to that "ccichicicihcichcicichcici.." because there's no space for anything else. We're scared hyperactive on Adderall and slash or coffee, emotionally unavailable but always DTF.

Home is where you're used to this shit is, Home is where you can cry non stop for two hours, Home is where you make Thai curry but without coconut milk because it's some obscure that Charley and Albert Heijn close early.

I probably shouldn't have spent all the insurance money I got from losing seven teeth in a freaky accident when I was 19 to ride a horse across America and make a film about it. I should have bought a house right? Like my mother wanted me to. I guess I have been seduced for a second by the shiny, empty genocidal promises of the American Dream, artist edition. My house, if I had one, could store my empty fridge. But then I guess I wouldn't know what it feels like to sleep under a tarp stretched across trees in the Hilo wilderness in New Mexico.

I just came back from Berlin or a walk too much and tried to feel creative again. But where I mostly cried myself to sleep every night. And now I'm finally back to my nine square metres room. No living room privileges where I sleep on a camping thing on the floor, which I've actually started to like it's comforting. You can't fall off the bed, which I used to do a lot as a kid and

break my bones. As soon as I got back I locked myself out like I did in Rome when I moved back home from America. So I resigned myself to getting to know my new neighbourhood really well. Five hours to go until my room-mate comes back. So I figured I'd get strawberries and ice cream from Il Mulino. I sit on the bench along the canal. All of a sudden I hear a flapping noise. I stopped eating my strawberries. Sound doesn't stop. So when I look down, I see a pigeon in the canal. The walls are vertical. So the pigeon has no way to get out. He isn't moving now, conserving energy, trying to keep his head above water. Eyes open wide. Sorry for arbitrarily deciding it's a boy, "il piccione" we say in Italian. So I find a long wooden stick, I try to attract his attention but the pigeon swims past me, frantic, soaked. I think the pigeon is going to die. I wonder if I should just watch the pigeon die. I realise there are millions of animals including people dying this very second but I cannot see them which makes a big difference in our tiny human brains. So I'm feeling helpless and sad and stupid. But then all of a sudden, Deus Ex Machina, three old Dutch men on a boat approaches. They've seen us, they have a bucket. They fish the bird out with the bucket. They handed me the bucket with the bird inside. They want the bucket back please. So I grabbed the pigeon, it was shivering. And I started looking for a good place. I walked for a while and then I find the church with a garden next to it. I hide him in a bush where I hope he recovers and get dry and fly away. Or maybe he really liked it there, in the bush. Make it his home. Maybe accept Jesus as his saviour for our struggle until my roommate gets home.

GROUP 2 (ALEXANDRA ZHASMINOVA, AUŠRA ČESNAUSKYTĖ)

MANIFESTO

In the times of economic abstractions taking over, we live in the invisible loops of detachments. Unified landscapes and standardised lifestyles as a consequence are distorting the relations with our families, our communities and our lands that host and nurture human beings. Somehow, those extreme levels of abstractions are blurring the understanding of the scale we are functioning at.

One of the main economic abstractions, money, has become the only intermediary for exchange, which is recognised all around the globe. Money turned numbers into the universal language of value that measures everything including our senses and feelings. The essential moments

of care, trust, and love are also becoming a part of the service sector and getting monetised rapidly.

We are slowly becoming aliens, millions and billions of strangers. Strangers in our surroundings, strangers for each other.

Where do you think this avalanche of mental breakdowns, which is rolling through the big and successful cities all around the world, is coming from? Don't you feel shivering?

We run, run and run somewhere and at the same time nowhere...
We run and run, and run, and run...
... our offices, our routines... our commitments... sometimes let us forget about us actually running....

We are here to act instead of theorizing.

We seek an Economy, which is capable of generating personal connections and nourishing its growth.

We believe that our Economy should generate attachments and praise the moment of togetherness. Either with humans or other lively organisms. Thus starting the process of anti-alienation.

We believe our economy should recognise the human body as a tool to connect with any surroundings. Our senses and intuition have to play a role in looking for moments of exchange.

We strive to generate new modes of attachments, connections, and exchange that would prepare the grounds for unlearning, throwing away, deconstructing, and rebuilding the term of economy.

ACTION: SHORT VIDEO MANIFESTO
(SCRIPT, YOU CAN SEE THE VIDEO **at this link**[5])

Last weeks we were drifting through and blending our thoughts on ecology, nature, communities, relation to land... trying to crystallize the act of resistance to the capitalistic world...

How do we make this...
Current economy...
ours again...?
What is it exactly?

It just felt abstract, complex, toxic..
Monetizing and unifying everything around us...

A system which generates detachments, Leaving us aliens to each other, our surroundings and even ourselves...

And I kept drowning in my messy thoughts,
while feeling lost in the scale of the whole world...

Lost in abstractions...
Just incapable to act on it anyhow...

Yesterday my mom came back from the forest and brought me wild berries
And ate it together with my grandma while having a small talk...
I was barefoot and the grass was tickling me softly
And I felt so grounded and so real
so capable of giving small things back...

The real world is full of connections and moments of exchange...

Our human nature, our bodies, our eternal need of togetherness are bringing
us many flows of things, without us, even noticing.

The randomness of events keeps bringing to us as well as taking away our minds, efforts, time, goods, love and care!

It just felt abstract, complex, toxic..

FIG. XI: FRAME FROM THE SHORT VIDEO MANIFESTO

The real economy is floating in the air and has no numbers!

The real economy can be found in simple moments of everyday life and can be explained through simple acts or intensity of feeling.

The real economy is full of feelings!

The economy is ours!
And you are the part of my economy right now,
With your eyes running through these views and your words, you will give me back,
Or the words which will go somewhere else, for someone else...
And I...
I will give you a small glimpse of light

GROUP 3 (OLGA POPESCU)

The last selected manifesto/action is not made by a group, but by just one person, who mixed manifesto and action in a unique outcome: positive affirmations to read every morning to start the day with a different economic awareness (sorted by categories: self, time and money, habits, Earth, society). She also proposed journaling prompts, questions to use your journal as a pretext to reflect on the impact of economy on oneself and society.

**MANIFESTO/ACTION 1:
HEALTHY ECONOMY AFFIRMATIONS**

Self

I am a conscious agent of the economy, not rational, but intuitive.
I seek to be not to have.
I do not perceive my self-value only based on my achievements or my paycheck.
My spirit exists outside of the confinement of my financial capabilities.
I do not see myself as a noun – teacher, writer, manager etc. – but as a verb – doing, living, trying, learning etc.
My aspiration is to have a profession that brings positive value for everyone.
I do not apologize for how I want to live my life and for wanting to have autonomy over it.
Sometimes simply surviving is doing enough.
I define for myself what successful means.
I acknowledge my own self-worth; my spirit is thriving.
My thoughts are filled with positivity and my life is plentiful with abundance.
I deserve to be employed and paid well for my time, efforts, and ideas. Each day, I am closer to finding the perfect work environment for me.
I am looking for recognition for my efforts inward.
I will not be defensive when someone questions my beliefs, but in turn will establish an open dialogue.
I forgive the people and the situations who have brought me injustice in the past and peacefully detach from them.

I do not seek to own a property, but a home.
My eyebags are a clear statement of the hustling culture we live in.
My body is not just a force for labour.
I do not wish to acquire skills that are only good on my CV.
I am not the collection of universities I went to, grades, career decisions, companies I've worked for – but much more than that. And so are other people.
My efforts are being supported by the universe; my dreams manifest into reality before my eyes.
Today I am brimming with energy to do what I desire not what I am fed to believe I should be doing.
I am trying to be aware of the ways I have been programmed to think.
I am allowed to change my opinion, my views, my life trajectory.

Time & Money

Greediness is not a characteristic that defines me.
I will no more draw fulfilment from monetary gains but from the gratitude I receive.
I do not exist to be productive but constructive, I will not use my time efficiently, but fruitfully.
My time is not monetizable.
I will distance myself from a 9-to-5 hustle lifestyle.
I am not working toward accumulating more, but experiencing more of what life has to offer.
I deserve time for myself when I am not contributing to the development of the society but to my own inner balance.
Material things are not a reward for my hard work.

Habits

I will first and foremost take care of my own health, mental stability, and physiological needs.
Rest is as much of a need as drinking water is.
I should not feel guilty for needing time off.
I will not let myself reach complete exhaustion or burnout.
In this attention economy I am always careful to direct my attention towards things that matter.
I am not losing sleep and meals over work.
I avoid YouTube videos or self-help books that teach me how to become more productive or thrive in this economy.
I partake in the financial system consciously, demanding transparency for where my money goes (banks, pension funds, etc).
I do not engage with any type of media surrounding the financial sector.
I consume only content that feeds my sensibility and knowledge.
I will be an active voice of condemning injustices but will also leave space for those that need to be heard.
I will delete LinkedIn and not partake in opportunistic networking.
I deserve time for myself when I am not contributingtothedevelopmentofthesocietybuttomy own inner balance.
Material things are not a reward for my hard work.

Earth

The Earth is my home, I will respect and cherish it.
I am actively trying to preserve the finite resources of this Earth.
Soil, water, air, all the elements support the ecosystem I live in.
I live in a delicate ecosystem that suffers due to my actions.
A tree will value nothing in this economy until you can convert it into wood.

It's not the deer that crosses the road, it's the road that crosses the forest.
It is also my responsibility to delay the increasing risks of abrupt and irreversible changes in nature.
My lifestyle will be mindful of the Earth's planetary boundaries.

Society

I feel connected to my humanity, bound to all other people, we are all a living organism, one big sea of energy. Therefore, it is difficult for me to accept income and living standard inequality.
I do not believe the market is self-regulating.
We will lead with compassion and integrity and distance ourselves from a class system.
I do not see the utility of billionaires to the society I live in.
Universal healthcare and affordable housing are basic human rights.
There should be no development without sustainability and intersectionality.
My ideal economy does not seek infinite growth, but infinite care.
I am not in a competition with anyone to accrue more wealth.
I will help others discover how they internalised capitalism and overcome it.
I believe in the power of the society to mend past mistakes and create a better future.
I will not perceive my relationships with others as transactional in nature.
I do not impose capitalistic expectations on the people around me (family, partner, friends).
I will not accept exploitation around me and in the value chains that I partake in.
It is not my duty to bring value to shareholders, but to the society.
I will try not to perpetuate the injustice embedded in the capitalistic system that we live in.
There are not pre-defined skills of the future.
I am motivated to act by feelings of empathy, sympathy, and the good feeling that doing the right thing brings.

Individual actions can matter, but only if they are used to instil systemic changes.
I do not judge people around me in terms of their professional background, history, or capabilities (but maybe only those that do harm).
I empower those around me that are least empowered.
I seek people around me who aspire to do good, not to have hefty bank accounts.
The first question I will ask someone new will not be "So what do you do for a living?"
I have the power to change the future with what I envision now.

EVALUATION SURVEY MEYA #1

How did you find out about the learning community?

    I was following Baltan on the IG and saw the ad there (x2)

    Via my subscription to We Are Public

    I was following Baltan projects for quite a while and got to see about this course on social media.

    From my previous engagement with Baltan.

    On Facebook

    If I can remember correctly, I think the event was advertised via e-mail to the Green Office I was part of (Green Office VU Amsterdam) and when I saw the premise of your event and communityI was immediately drawn to it

Did the learning community meet your expectations?

    I thought that the study materials were very interesting and offered a range of non-trivial ideas, however, I did lack the time and definitive structure for working on the "manifesto"

    I didn't really have any expectations going into this, except to say that it sounded interesting and might be fun to join in. Now, after the experience, I would say yes, the learning community met my expectation of what an inclusive and welcoming online community would be. (x3)

    Definitely yes. I was really enjoying the inspiring sources that you shared with us and it was nice to see the exchange of thoughts that it sparked between us. I know that it is not easy to keep busy people fully focused on the course for so long, but I think with well sorted (quality and quantity - wise) sources and a few very inspiring people that you invited, you managed to keep everyone curious.

    The beginning was quite exciting but I feel like it lost some energy in the end.

    Yes, it truly did, but I also know it could be so much more fulfilling in person!

What did you like about the program?

    I liked the speakers and reading

    The structure of the program and getting to know the whole group, especially when we could break away into smaller groups and engage with one another. Creating an online space for a community, learning together felt inclusive and a great way to bounce ideas off one another.

    Great inputs in terms of content. The readings, podcasts, and Tyson's lecture were really enriching. The exchange of thought between everyone during the meetings was fruitful too. The atmosphere during the course was very uplifting. I think it was

very crucial to have you 4 as a team to naturally react, shift, guide conversation and show support and enthusiasm during the classes.

I enjoyed the safe space we've created, commitment, and all the interesting inputs from Baltan and participants as well. And I liked to hear fresh ideas about topics in exploring myself. It does help to move on

I thought the topics (e.g. indigenous thinking, embodiment, tricksters) were very well chosen, and I thoroughly enjoyed the reading/listening/watching materials. Some of these are feeding into my other projects now. I also really liked our whole group, lovely people.

Some of the texts/presentations were very thought provoking.

I liked the interesting resources you have given us (beautifully crafted stories which probably I wouldn't have read myself without nudging), I liked how careful you were with the atmosphere created in the group (taking time to check in, check out, hear us out etc.), I enjoyed a lot the speakers invited (especially the Yes Men onewhichI think about very very often), I appreciated a lot the diversity of the group (at least professional and age diversity) and for giving us the opportunity to question the biggest thing that influences our life (the economic system) at least for 2 hours every week. I also enjoyed flicking through the book you've sent us and I will definitely give it a more in depth read when I finally have time to slow down! I think the event was a success also because you can clearly see how you 4 were a very close and tight team, working word to sum up this programme is "wholesome"

Did you miss anything during the program?

    I missed more communication and exchange with other participants. I don't think I had a chance to talk to everyone from the learning community

    I don't feel like I missed anything during the program. All the materials were easily available online and the Zoom meetings were an excellent way to discuss and question our thoughts on the topic of economy.

    Bit better understanding on what we are aiming for in the end of the course as a group and what we could produce together.

    Bit more attention on the group dynamics. Maybe getting to know each other through *making* could have helped us achieve it. Maybe we could have had some small tasks we could prepare during the week and discuss it during the class? I would suggest starting doing things slowly together on week 3, because with the lecture about intuition the pace of learning started slowing

down. By gradually shifting the attention on making something together you could have given more layers to the course dynamics and helped us unfold more collectively generated manifestos. The end was very open to do what we want, what I really appreciate and feel comfortable with, but the work process together with the group members that I didn't have enough time to engage with was a bit messy.

Hmmm... I wouldnt say so. I miss that it doesn't continue now. Maybesome bi-monthly activities /events would be fine?

Sometimes I missed things being more structured. Occasionally there were awkward silences during the zoom meetings and I felt that the team lacked strategies on how to fill these. I thought we had fabulous energy/synergy during the first session, but then, class after class, it gradually diminished. How to keep people engaged?

I wish there had been some more technical learning (perhaps actual economists could have been invited, from different sides of the political spectrum). It's fine to come up with our own definitions of things, but learning to speak the language of the oppressors can be quite valuable, politically

Was the duration (6 weeks) of the program right for you? Would you have liked it to take longer or shorter?

I would leave it the same length but add more intensity. Say, two meetings per week instead of one for a month and a half

Yes, the duration of the program was the perfect amount of time for me. It might have also had something to do with the timing of it, with the pandemic.

I think the duration is really perfect if the course will remain the same structure, with the same proportion of attention for the content and the group dynamics. Maybe you could have given 2 weeks for making so there could have been a little gap for execution of our ideas.

If you aim to become a platform which starts a community and maybe even host creative collaborations which might last longer than the course, it would make sense to think of extending the duration.

The duration was fine. I wouldn't mind if it was longer. But surely I'd like it to have some sort of continuation, even if sporadic and irregular.

I think it's a pretty good length. It doesn't allow going too deep though, but with longer programmes there would surely be commitment issues.

It was fine but perhaps a longer duration would work better if we

are executed to write a manifesto.

I think the duration was just right but the timing maybe could've been a bit better, since it went into summer and in June we students usually have exams.

Was the number of readings and work on the manifesto outside of the gathering fine for you? Should it be more or less?

I think the amount of readings was optimal, however, I would leave more time for group work on the manifesto (x3)

I was pleased with the amount of homework and the diverse formats it came in. Contributions from other group members were also insightful. Work on the manifesto outside of the gatherings was also fine for me. Since we didn't have any homework on top of that, there was some more time to catch up on extra readings. I think this was just enough although I'd enjoy more brain food now when the course is over.

The number of readings was good, I could've taken even more but I'm a voracious reader anyway. The manifesto work was actually self-organised, and therefore really depended on the people and their schedules and how seriously they took the assignment. But I'm glad that Baltan said they have 'no expectations' about the manifesto, this took off some of the pressure.

I think it was the perfect ratio! I also liked that there weren't only readings, but also podcasts and videos. And good to note is thatI liked sooo much how Ar.ena works and looks, I think it's the perfect tool to use and distance ourselves from Google products.

What did you think of the manifesto assignment? Was it a useful way to apply the knowledge built during the weeks?

We did not have a chance to apply everything that we could. I think the work on the manifesto needed more structure that we could follow throughout the study period.

I loved the manifesto assignment, as it really put experiential learning into practice. It definitely helped and challenged me to apply the knowledge I had learnt over the six weeks.

The knowledge that I got during the course really influenced the final outcomes and was crucial to make me think. Manifesto is a great format to showcase our position! Maybe it could be useful to talk about the manifesto as a format itself (maybe I have missed it and you already did)- how crazy it could be.

I think assignment was a good way to motivate us to get tangible outputs. With our groups we had difficulties with formulating our

thoughts and I guess this bit of push helped it a bit (although we didn't manage fully anyway)

I was a little doubtful of the necessity of this assignment. Perhaps a manifesto would suit a programme that's longer? And I'm not sure if I actually applied the knowledge in this assignment. It could be that the knowledge gathered from the sessions and readings was simply too new and unprocessed that I couldn't put it into use yet. I also think the word 'manifesto' is rather polarising. In the end I'm glad though that we made something out of it, raw and sketchy as it may be.

I think it was helpful but I would have also liked to keep learning from invited guests until the very end. Perhaps the program needs to be longer shifting into manifesto work felt a bit traumatic and sudden.

I think it was nice but still quite fuzzy defined. It took me a long time to understand what a manifesto should be but when I met with you to present the idea, I was welcomed with such great enthusiasm that it made me believe a bit more in my idea. I also really appreciated your feedback and I would like to see some tea bags with healthy economy affirmations! What could be good is to have more clearly structured "homework" for every week, so that by the end we can put together the manifesto more easily.

Do you have any other comments or information you would like to share?

Just that I think what you are all doing at Baltan Laboratories is what the world needs: Openness, curiosity, and willingness to challenge the status quo.

I'm really looking forward to the next thing you guys come up with. keep me updated :)also, as i said already, it would be nice if we could form some sort of lets-meet-online-once-in-month-or-two dynamic with some sort of loose agenda. I'd really enjoy that

The idea of organising a learning community is great and really worthwhile. So thank you for doing this!

I am sorry I was not able to attend the last event and left everything quite abruptly, but MEYA has been a great experience for meand I learnt how to put things into perspective and that there areother people that thinkalong the same lines as me! This gives me hope!

EVALUATION SURVEY MEYA #2

How did you find out about the learning community?

    I don't remember! But I think I saw an ad on instagram

    I was already working with Baltan as a resident :)

    Instagram / Linkedin / invitation

    my mentor Koen Snoeckx

    Lorenzo Gerbi

    instagram

Did the learning community meet your expectations?

    I didn't have many expectations going in, but I certainly enjoyed

    Yes, the learning comunity was very active

    Definitely the material was amazing

    Yes and No

    Yes (x2)

What did you like about the program?

    I really enjoyed learning about indigenous knowledge and collective mapping and how that relates to alternative economies, I also liked some of the lectures about collective problem solving through theatre

    I liked the wide range of materials proposed (not only book chapters) and the discussion

    The readings and topics were great, the in-session activities were helpful and fun

    The readings and curated subjects I found super interesting.

    The wide range of knowledge imputs, the chilled format

    the subject was of my interest

Did you miss anything during the program?

    I wish I could have been more involved but because of my time zone was unable to attend momst of the lectures, but did manage to do the homework and catch up on all the readings which I found to be very well curated as I mentioned before

    I would have liked more of an opportunity to get to know the other participants. I think there were some opportunities for collaboration that were missed because we didn't get to speak to each other much.

    I missed a bit of variety. Most of the people taking part in the meetings were representative of a single type of category, I.e. dutch designers or such.

    Even thought the online dimension was making the all thing

work, I would like to image how it could be to have few session live

A better hierarchy when it comes to what to read/listen/watch for the next meeting

A kind of general commitment of the whole group. Will get back to that later.

Was the workload adequate?

    Some of the readings were quite long only since I have other heavy workloads it would sometimes be difficult, other than that I think the workload was exactly right

    Yes, but again, I would have liked to be guided more on what to prioritise

    I think so, though sometimes the readings were a bit much

    Overall yes, at times there was too much to read

    Fine (x2)

What did you think of the action assignment? Was it a useful way to apply the knowledge built during the weeks?

    I think it but the planning time was just too short. Also, I think a more successful way to approach would be to have participants form groups and work on an action together. They don't have to be in the same place, but producing an action takes a team and more creative ideas can come out of collaborations, particularly when participants come from different contexts and with different skills.

    I really liked it, it gave me some time to talk with people outside my normal bubble of "alternative minds" and propose my idea with new perspectives focused on this work. I got some interesting feedback and it has led to a much deeper discussion about creating a citizen science app which I think is incredibly exciting.

    Yes, having a final aim was very helpful in redirecting everything back to reality. Nevertheless, many actions at the end tended to be a bit too ambitious and abstract. Maybe also proposing a practical group-action, like meeting and collecting garbage all together (or a similar), could help even more in this sense.

    yes, it was. the idea of the action naturally came up to me during the meetings, I did not have to sit for long and think of an idea. I was very happy to have this freedom of going for something that came out without stress. Just the opposite of what happened during my master thesis for example

Yes although it happened in the worst time for me for personal reason and i could not really do it. i think i would have paired up with someone but at the same time it was difficult online
Yes

How did you experience the division between the 'content' part and the activation assignments (both within the gatherings and outside of the gatherings)?

Honestly, because I was so seldom able to attend at the moment I was normally catching up on the readings and videos shared as the week went along and am only going to be able to start catching up on the recorded sessions soon, so it for me was a large vacuum of the lectures and videos, and the one class I did attend in the end brought it all together for me which was the presentation with the objectices, goals and tactics. I really enjoyed that process and I think the flow chart Fossil Free Futures presented is going to be useful for me in for proposals of this nature

I did not quite notice it, I perceived everything as an ongoing conversation that at some point ended with an idea of next step action. like many conversations do, like when you discuss what you want to eat for dinner and at the end you go to do grocery shopping. But I could also imagine and appriciate very much an endless coversation that is all about sharing new bits of knowledge.

If you also mean the little break outs and assignments during the gatherings, I think they are very useful and give an extra dimension / depth to the conference being online / looking at a screen. Also in small break out groups there is an opportunity to become more personal and get to know each other better.

I felt that the different contents helped in enriching our vision and, by that, we ended up picking actions that we wouldn't have thought of at the beginning. Or, at least, we considered also different aspects.

it was coherent, the only time I think was not really on point was when we watched together an old video lecture and I felt we could have done it before and use the time to do some stuff together

I felt the content took up too much time and left us little time for activation assignments

Do you have any other comments, remarks, or suggestions you would like to share?

Coming back to the commitment part I mentioned before: I really like the space and freedom you offer to participants, but I experienced one disadvantage as well. About the last meetup: There were only 9 people, 3 of Baltan which I consider as hosts, 3 participants sharing, 3 not sharing and lot's of absent participants. Thing is when you share it is really nice and helpful if others also share. I would have really liked to see or listen to more projects of other participants. I was not very well prepared for sharing (which made me feel extra vulnerable possibly) but it was kind of a lonely experience. It actually felt kind of extractive, as if the non sharing participants "consume" instead of participate (or only look back the video). About the MEYA meetings in general: Maybe this is something to improve and to keep this in mind for the next MEYA: how to balance between "non obliged' and 'not participating'. This also applies to participants who only listen in and are busy doing something else at the same time or only look back on video. Just telling you this from my experience. Just see what is helpful or useful.

Love this course! Again, wish I could have been there more often but the course itself was super interesting. Really well curated works and lectures. I would include maybe something on biomimicry or non-human economies such as what my own project is inspired by which is the mycelium trade network of information and nutrients. I think that understanding natural models outside of human made ones is also a really interesting practice in this deep work of going back to a fairer and more authentic way of being together.

I found it really cool that people were expected not to mention their profession/titles and behave all as equals. Yet, at times some participants tended to stand out a bit too much, maybe because of the leading role they are used to play at their workplace. This was a bit annoying.

I had a great time! The sessions were fun and engaging and the other participants interesting, but again I wish I had had more time to connect with everyone.

let's try to make it live on a certain level, if possible. even thought this creates some logistic limitations

<3

We see a challenge in activating the content outside of the learning community - for example with the action assignment - do you have suggestions for other ways to do this?

Perhaps a collective action assigment? that can be done individually in each bioregion and then assembled or analysed together digitally. I also think that just having time has helped, for me, I was very busy during the time of the course, unexpectedly, and couldn't focus on finishing my assignment at the time. But as I said, I am in the process of forming a proposal for an interactive/open sourse platform that creates tangible action for climate refugees and habitat conservation and it's largely due to thinking and talking about this "mycelium economy" and ideas of a "borderless world" as far as natural habitats and earthly gifts go and how that can be applicable, accessible and changemaking in a tangible way.

Depending on the kind of action idea, would be nice to introduce two options from the very beginning: 1) the participants can come up with ideas that require more time, and in this case they can access some more meetings, like two or three, spread in a time span of a few months, to follow up a bit more; 2) the participants can come up with ideas that require less preparation and are more immediate in their activation. If it is a choice that is known from the beginning maybe ppl panic less when it comes to the last couple of meetings?

I think combining everyday work with an external task is hard but stimulating. I imagine that the physical dimension might help as well as making things together in pairs, for example. But still this create other limitations and challenges.

I think small groups would help push it forward, plus starting planning earlier

Can you write a short testimonial for us, that we can use in promoting the future editions of MEYA?

Make Back the Economy was a fantastic course. The facilitators were engaging and the guest speakers really inspiring. I really loved all of the themes, lectures and videos for the course, they were amazingly curated and really allowed for a deeper understanding and connection to the topics covered each week and gave a greater context of the work we are taking on individually and collectively to create more sustainable, equitable and harmonious alternatives to the status quo.

Participating in the MEYA program gave me the space to think about things I often want to, but don't have the time for, in my daily life. By carving out time each week and going on a collective learning journey with others, I had the motivation to sit with my personal feelings about our current economic situation in a more productive way.

MEYA has been for me at the same time a safe space and a gate to new and exciting inputs. It combines an idea of a never-ending learning process and a social-collective moment, which for me are two fundamental ingredients to recharge, pull through difficult moments, and be happy to wake up in the morning.

Do you think that money is the proper mean to recognize the value of things? All things? What's the price of a crutch when you need to walk? We can stop for a moment. We can stop and discuss about the weight of concepts like heritage, community and future. At the end, you decide.

MEYA offers a different perspective on apparently fixed issues such as economy, living together in our society and our relation with daily life. Participating in this community showed me some "cracks where the light comes in" and where one can actually make a difference.

MEYA is a great opportunity to claim your time and to rethink what this actually means.