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Criticising Humanities Today

- Framing Debates on the Value of Humanities in EU Higher Education Policy with a Special Focus on the Bologna Process -

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Declaration

I, Lavinia Marin hereby declare that this thesis, entitled "Criticising Humanities Today - Framing Debates on the Value of Humanities in EU Higher Education with a Special Focus on the Bologna Process", submitted as partial requirement for the MA Programme Euroculture, is my own original work and expressed in my own words. Any use made within this text of works of other authors in any form (e.g. ideas, figures, texts, tables, etc.) are properly acknowledged in the text as well as in the bibliography.

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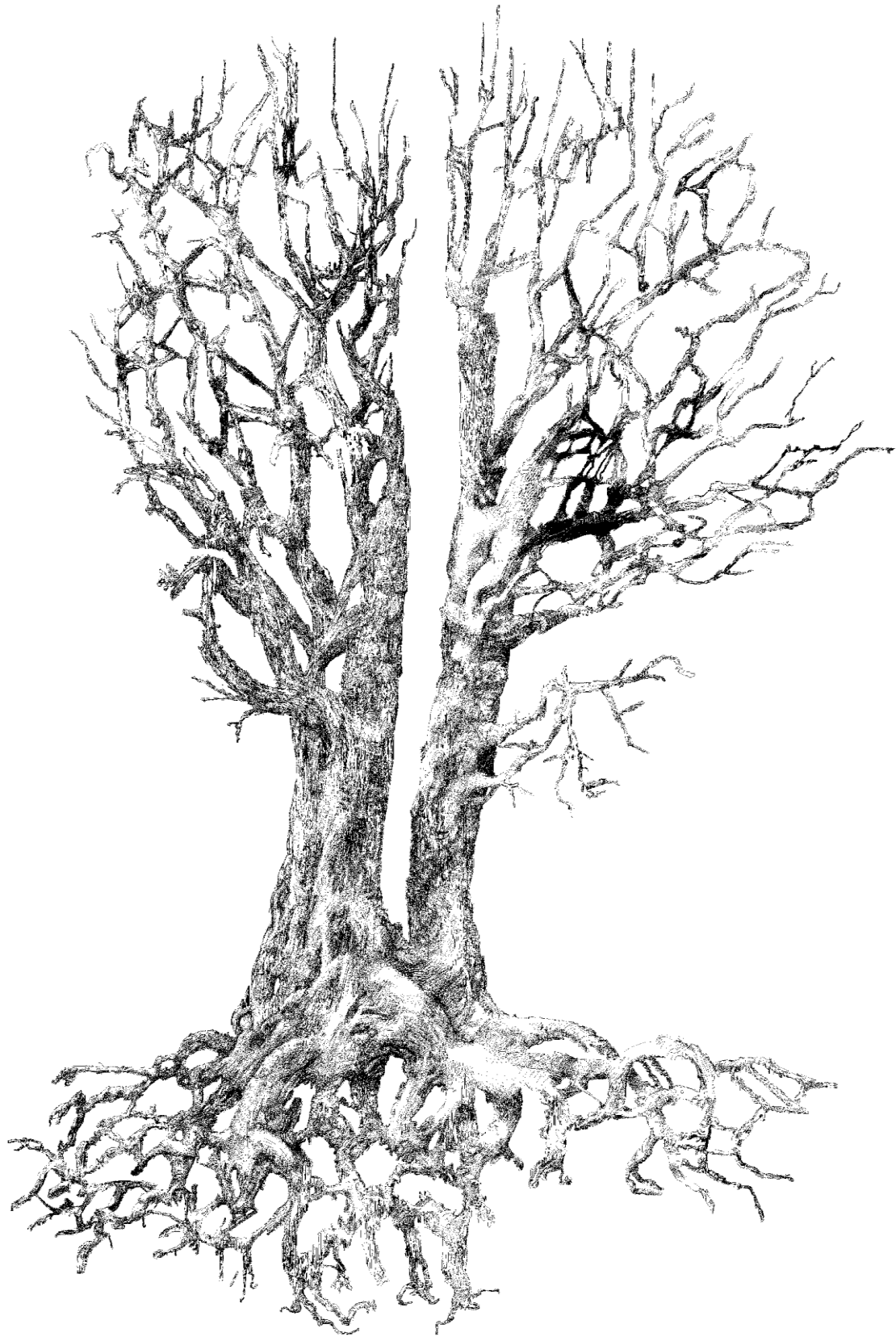
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Table of Contents

Introduction

What is education? I should suppose that education was the curriculum one had to run through in order to catch up with oneself, and he who will not pass through this curriculum is helped very little by the fact that he was born in the most enlightened age.
(Søren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, 1843)

"With all the money that we are throwing away on humanities and art - give me that money and I will build you to be a better student" - goes a saying attributed to Marvin Minsky. For hundreds of years humanities claimed to be able to build something greater than a better student, namely a better human being. This was humanities' main device of self-legitimisation, what distinguished it from the other disciplines from a practical perspective. Starting from the assumption that human character can be improved, and that we can all become better citizens, better individuals, or better moral agents, humanities claimed to do just that. However, with the advent of the 21st century, an event that would transform the public perception on education took place. It goes under the label of 'the Bologna Process' and it had specific claims about what education should aim for. Change through education received a new impetus towards an unexpected direction, far from the traditional areas of humanities. Education was now about constructing the future employee, and humanities were called together with other disciplines to reorient their discourse towards the new dominant paradigm of employability. But can humanities be used to achieve employability? Should humanities even strive towards this purpose? Is the employable student a 'better student'?

These questions all start from the common following observation: The architects of the Bologna Process assumed, albeit often implicitly or unreflectively, that that the meaning of a good life is the employee's life or 'the life in labour', and this perspective needs to be challenged as there are certainly other ways of giving meaning and purpose to a human life. From a liberal perspective, for instance, one might hold that it should be the individual's own choice how to define his/her own meaning of the good life; yet nowadays, through its discourse on education, the Bologna Process together with other higher education policies, institutions that call themselves liberal, such as the

institutions of the EU, are imposing a narrow understanding of the good life.

For centuries it has been the purpose of humanities to examine the assumptions of the mainstream conceptions about human life, and give its scholars the necessary tools to challenge these assumptions. Therefore, scholars in the humanities would perhaps be good candidates in answering the challenge posed by the Bologna Process to our understandings of education and the good life. However, humanities are now in a crisis of self-justification brought on by the Bologna Process itself. Being self-reflexive, the humanities have a long-standing experience of the 'crisis'; passing through 'crisis', as the etymology of the word[1] indicates, is a way of reinventing oneself. Yet the crisis that arose after the launch of the Bologna Process - it is often claimed - would be of a special nature, i.e. institutional: it is not epistemic, but rather a crisis for the justification of the usefulness of humanities in the new educational context centred on the employability imperative. Therefore, the main research question that this paper aims to answer is: 'In what does today's attack on humanities consist and how can humanities be defended?' In order to answer this research question, one needs first to describe how the humanities have argued for their usefulness before the Bologna Process; second, provide reasons for the claim that the Bologna Process would be a new type of attack; and third, analyse the new defences for the humanities, so as to discuss whether these are suitable.

Humanities have been criticised for their lack of 'usefulness' from ancient times, perhaps the first famous such case was the story of Thales falling into a well while looking at the sky. This story is mentioned in Plato's dialogue *Theætetus* through Socrate's voice:

> "the jest which the clever witty Thracian handmaid is said to have made about Thales, when he fell into a well as he was looking up at the stars. She said, that he was so eager to know what was going on in heaven, that he could not see what was before his feet. This is a jest which is equally applicable to all philosophers. For the philosopher is wholly unacquainted with his next-door neighbour; he is ignorant, not only of what he is doing, but he hardly knows whether he is a man or an animal; he is searching into the essence of man, and busy in enquiring what

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[1] *Crisis* comes from the ancient Greek word *Krisis*, 'decision', which comes from the verb *krinein* 'decide'. The medical sense, as used by Hippocrates or Galen, designates the turning point in a disease, after which the patient either dies or gets better. In a general sense it means a decisive point, a moment of truth before resolving an issue; it does not necessarily signify a negative transformation, as it can lead towards a positive one. Source: Online Etymology Dictionnary, found at http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=crisis

belongs to such a nature to do or suffer different from any other."[2]
The laughter of the handmaiden reverberates again and again all through the history of humanities, whenever the humanist scholars were asked to justify the usefulness of their research for the immediate needs of the community. But it must be noted that this metaphorical laughter was not an attack of the value of humanities, nor did imply that humanities should be abandoned for more useful occupations. The philosopher and the handmaiden could both inhabit peacefully the same world, even though they saw it with different eyes. Usefulness was not important for the scholar, while it was the measure of all things for the handmaidens of this world. Even though some criticism of humanities' usefulness is to be found again and again throughout history, it is this paper's working hypothesis that the Bologna Process did not mount a criticism of humanities, but an attack at an institutional level. This type of institutional attack cannot be answered with the usual arguments of inter-academic debates that were employed, for example, when the postmodernists attacked the ideal of *Bildung*. As a response to this attack, stemming from outside academia, the humanities are currently undergoing a new crisis of legitimation, which needs new types of answers if the humanities are to survive and reinvent themselves yet again.

Methodology

As stated previously, the research question 'In what does today's attack on humanities consist and how can humanities be defended?' can be addressed by pursuing three preliminary enquiries; to each enquiry we have dedicated a chapter in this paper. First, in order to describe how the humanities have argued for their usefulness before the Bologna Process, this paper shall review some of the previously employed arguments in favour of the humanities. The writings which we have taken the arguments from are grouped on the basis of a two-fold criteria: they are grouped thematically by their common perspective on the student, and they follow roughly a chronological order, which starts in the Italian Renaissance (the first time the term *studia humanitatis* is used systematically to designate a branch of disciplines), go through the German Enlightenment (focusing on the moment of the articulation of *Bildung* as a legitimising

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[2] Plato, *Theaetetus,* Penguin classics (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, New York, N.Y., U.S.A.: Penguin Books; Viking Penguin, 1987), Translated by Robin Waterfield, §§ *Theætetus* 147A.

device for the humanities), and end in the 20st century, namely in the postmodernist movement as a major criticism of the *Bildung* ideal.

Second, in order to provide reasons for the claim that the Bologna Process would be a new type of attack, not merely a criticism, this paper will analyse the texts of the Bologna ministerial *communiqués* from 1999 to 2012. These documents offer a delimited and relevant corpus of texts, because these *communiqués* are official statements that offer a privileged outlook on the aims, ideals and policy principles that inspired the Bologna Process. We shall analyse how certain key terms are used in these *communiqués:* student, graduate, education, stakeholder, society. The analysis of the documents will be looking for answers to the following questions: 1) what is the main mission of education in the EHEA vision?; 2) what are the graduates supposed to become after their studies?; 3) how are the students perceived and described? These three enquiries that guide the text analysis will help us outline an answer to the main underlying question: 'who is being educated in the Bologna Process?'

Third, an analysis of the contemporary defences of the humanities is based on a literature review of some of the most important arguments put forth in the contemporary debate, which will follow a thematic order centred on the two main strategies of defence. The first of these strategies consists in arguing for the usefulness of scholarly knowledge in general, whereas the other strategy concerns the construction of the democratic citizen that is needed for our current democratic practises.

Most scholars agree that the Bologna Process was prepared by two major shifts in Western societies: the massification of higher education and the passage toward a knowledge economy. The massification of education happened in Europe and the USA after the Second World War when, within a few years, the number of students increased exponentially. Before the war education in the universities was destined for the 2% - 3% of the population, the so-called elites. In the 1960s several European countries boasted with a percent of 20-30% of students from the relevant age population.[3] This change posed a challenge to the higher educational systems that needed to adapt quickly to a

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[3] Martin Trow, "Reflections on the Transition from Elite to Mass to Universal Access: Forms and Phases of Higher Education in Modern Societies since WWII," in *International Handbook of Higher Education*, ed. Philip G. Altbach (Springer, 2006), 243–80, 243.

high input of students and become relevant for the many, not just for the privileged few. In this context, a question that academia had not been forced to confront emerges as a crucial and most relevant question to ask: 'who is being educated?' becomes most relevant. Since the answers to this question will guide our analysis of the arguments in favour of humanities, an explanation of this choice is welcome.

Guiding Question: Who is the Subject of Education?

Anyone wishing to justify the need to include humanities in the curricula needs to answer the question: why should humanities be taught in the universities? This is a normative question, and the defenders of humanities strive for an answer that will have a normative component. In order to argue for a position claiming that 'we need the humanities in education', one needs to be clear about what the purpose of education is. Therefore, an Aristotelian distinction regarding the purpose of education can be useful. This distinction, that I will make use of in order to single out what should be the guiding question in order to make sense of the type of arguments about education that this paper deals with, was elaborated by Aristotle in his investigation into what a good human being and what a virtuous citizen would need to know in the best of republics; Aristotle's main distinction can be found in the book III of *Politics*, sections 4 and 5.

As it is well known, for Aristotle everything was understood as teleological, meaning that everything had a purpose and was striving towards it: inanimate objects, organisms, humans and societies. Education, for Aristotle, had the primary goal to teach virtue to the citizens.[4] But, depending on the type of citizens envisaged, the type of virtue changes; therefore, the education should change as well. The definition of virtuous character changed through the ages and so did the content of humanistic curricula, so as to reflect the contemporary notions of the desirable character. But what constituted the best character remained linked with what was considered desirable to find in the persons living in the state.

Following Aristotle's reasoning, one cannot educate any subject in the same way,

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[4] Richard Stalley, "Education and the State," in Anagnostopoulos, *A Companion to Aristotle*, 574.

because the difference in the purpose of education. There are two types of pupils or receivers of education in the Aristotelian *polis*: the good man (*anér agathós*) and the virtuous citizen (*spoudaíos polítes*). The good man is endowed with complete virtue, or excellence, while the citizens only have an incomplete virtue, Aristotle claims. After comparing the different functions of the people in a state with the different tasks of the types of sailors on a boat, Aristotle concludes that different types of constitutions require different types of virtues from their people:

> "in the same way, then, the citizens too, even though they are dissimilar, have the safety of the community as their task. But the community is the constitution. Hence the virtue of a citizen must be suited to his constitution. Consequently, if indeed there are several kinds of constitution, it is clear that there cannot be a single virtue that is the virtue - the complete virtue - of a good citizen."[5]

The good man has only one type of virtue, the moral virtue (or excellence), and needs only one type of education because, presumably, this perfect virtue is the same everywhere. "The good man, we say, does express a single virtue: the complete one. Evidently, then, it is possible for someone to be a good citizen without having acquired the virtue expressed by a good man."[6] In the perfect state, moral virtue is identical with civic virtue: here, the good citizen and the good man is the same individual. In the imperfect states there is no full moral virtue, but civic virtue would still be achievable for Aristotle. And civic virtue will vary with the type of constitution we are dealing with.

As pointed out by Zhu, the political purpose of education is linked only with training of the character:

> "All statesmen and law-makers must 'take civic virtue and vice (*aretès kíi kakías politikés*) into their purview', and design their educational programmes primarily to train the character (*ethos*) instead of the intellect (*dianoia*) of their citizens. For what defines a man is his reason, whereas what defines a citizen is his free and independent spirit."[7]

The citizen with an incomplete virtues is different from the good man. The citizens living in imperfect cities need to serve different purposes in different political regimes, so they will necessarily be trained for cultivating different forms of civic virtues: "For since there are several constitutions, there must also be several kinds of citizens,

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[5] Aristotle, *Politics* (Indianapolis, Ind.: Hackett Pub., 1998), Translated by C. D. C. Reeve, §§ Pol. III.4, 1276b25-30.

[6] Ibid., §§ Pol. III.4, 1276b30.

[7] R. Zhu, "Distinguishing the Public from the Private: Aristotle's Solution to Plato's Paradox,"

particularly of citizens who are being ruled."[8] As the virtues (and vices) differ from city to city and function to function, education must be necessarily adjusted to these local goals. Different political systems require different types of 'character building' through education: "the virtue of a citizen in a democracy protects the democracy, of a citizen in an oligarchy protects the oligarchy, and so on, and that the activities involved in so doing are sufficiently different that they constitute the exercise of distinct virtues."[9] As an example, civic virtue should include obedience of the law which implies learning how to be ruled, but especially in democracy, virtuous citizenship means: "a good citizen must have the knowledge and ability both to be ruled and to rule, and this is the virtue of a citizen, to know the rule of free people from both sides."[10]

Depending on the type of persons that we want to cultivate as the outcome of the educational system, free individuals or obedient citizens, the curricula will change. The virtuous citizen needs a different type of education than that of the good man, such as the study of laws which will lead to obedience for the local constitution, because his highest duty is "safeguarding the community."[11] Virtuous citizens do not challenge their laws, but strive to keep them unchanged: "Being a good citizen is aiming at the preservation of the constitution, which is presumably worth doing because it serves the common good. The common good being served may well not be the ideal good; being a good citizen may not amount to making a successful contribution to the complete virtue and happiness of all the citizens of a city."[12]

Regardless whether nowadays we would agree with all of Aristotle's assumptions about what it means to be a good citizen, the lesson to keep in mind is that his distinction between incomplete and complete virtue that operates on the basis of the criterion that establishes the subjectivity of education still is of interest today. It should be clear that educating someone for a certain skill will require a different type of education than the education one would wish to implement for educating the autonomous person, i.e. what Aristotle calls 'the good man'. If the outcomes are to be different, i.e. the intended

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History of Political Thought. 25, no. 2 (2004): 237.
    [8] Aristotle, *Politics*, §§ Pol. III.5, 1278a10-15.
    [9] Jean Roberts, "Excellences of the Citizen and of the Individual," in Anagnostopoulos, *A Companion to Aristotle*, 557–58.
    [10] Aristotle, Politics, §§ Pol. III.4, 1277b 10-15.
    [11] Jean Roberts, "Excellences of the Citizen and of the Individual," in Anagnostopoulos, *A Companion to Aristotle*, 557.

subjects of education differ, so need to be the process bringing out these outcomes. There is a functional correlation between the education chosen and the type of character, therefore the type of person that it will mould.

This distinction also helps us understand why the political intrusion in university curricula is deemed legitimate or illegitimate. It all turns on answering the question: 'whom are we educating?' If it is citizens that are supposed to contribute to the common good of their country, then politicians might perhaps be entitled to ask for certain changes in the curricula. If the subject of education is the free-thinking, rational individual, then politicians may have no business to do in educational matters. It is of course possible that in the same historical period different parties have conflicting ideas about whom should be educated.

However, the question 'whom are we educating?' has not been the focus of the literature surveyed so far. Instead, the contemporary arguments for political intervention in the university curricula revolved around the economic necessity of this intervention, traced back to the concept of a 'knowledge economy' and to the policy area 'Europe of Knowledge'.

Before showing how the question 'whom are we educating?' is being answered by contemporary educational policies, first we need to understand how and why political change in university curricula is cast as an economical necessity, rather than a choice from which a specific answer to the question 'whom are we educating?' is being offered. In order to do so two clarifications need to be made. First, a word about the nexus between knowledge and the economy is needed to provide orientation in today's policy jargon. Second, an explanation must be given concerning how different types of knowledge are cast in relation to potential economic innovation. Both are discussed in the following note.

A Terminological Note: The Various Senses of 'Knowledge'

Both in the Bologna documents and the literature that reviews these, the educational

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[12] Ibid., 564.

reform brought on by the Bologna Process is traced by most authors to the previous emergence of the policy area 'Europe of Knowledge'. The Bologna Process is cast as the necessary reform in order to achieve some of the goals previously stated in the 'Europe of Knowledge' statements:

> "A Europe of Knowledge is now widely recognised as an irreplaceable factor for social and human growth and as an indispensable component to consolidate and enrich the European citizenship, capable of giving its citizens the necessary competences to face the challenges of the new millennium, together with an awareness of shared values and belonging to a common social and cultural space."[13]

Launched in the 1997, when the European Commission issued the communication entitled *Towards a Europe of Knowledge,* the 'Europe of Knowledge' represents the EU attempt to transition successfully to the knowledge economy which is seen as imminent and unavoidable. In the debates about the policy area 'Europe of Knowledge', three buzz-words regularly appear: "knowledge economy", "knowledge society" and "learning society" - these need to be distinguished because, even if these all employ the word 'knowledge', the usage is different.

'Knowledge economy' is a concept mainly used by economists. It was popularised by a 1996 OECD document entitled *The Knowledge-Based Economy* which defined knowledge-based economies as "economies which are directly based on the production, distribution and use of knowledge and information."[14] This type of economies are often associated with investments in highly technological industries and the use of highly-skilled labour. At the centre of this type of economy is the knowledge embedded in the 'human capital', where 'human capital' represents the "productive capacity of human beings" and is, according to the definition offered by economist Ted Schultz, more valuable for the labour output than other forms of wealth.[15] Instances of productive capacity include diverse ways of creating economic wealth such as: "schooling, a computer training course, expenditures on medical care, and lectures on the virtues of punctuality and honesty"[16] because these not only increase work

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[13] European Ministers of Education, *The Bologna Declaration of 19 June 1999: Joint Declaration of the European Ministers of Education Convened in Bologna on the 19th of June 1999* (Bologna, 1999), accessed November 23, 2013, http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/pdf/bologna_declaration.pdf

[14] OECD, *The Knowledge-Based Economy: OCDE/GD(96)102* (Paris, 1996), 7.

[15] Theodore W. Schultz, "Investment in Human Capital," *The American Economic Review* 51, no. 1 (1961): 2, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1818907

[16] Gary S. Becker, *Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis, with Special Reference to*

efficiency directly, but also indirectly through enhancing life-quality.

The sociological term 'knowledge society' refers to "a society where activities and decisions across all domains of life are based on knowledge; a society, where research, focused on the discovery, acquisition, utilisation, and dissemination of knowledge is in harmony with education."[17] This concept - as it appears in policy papers - is defined as a political ideal - "an objective towards which both, nation states, regions (e.g. the EU) and the global community (as defined by UNESCO) should aim."[18] For example according to the Lisbon agenda, which was a plan of development for the EU established in 2000 and revised in 2005, the EU set for itself the goal "to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion."[19]

The term "learning society" used to mean a society where the informal education was just as important as the formal one; but nowadays the term usually refers to a society whose members are engaged in life-long learning activities.[20] This type of society is also presented in official EU legal and policy documents as a political ideal, a future normative goal towards we should aspire. "The society of the future will therefore be a learning society."[21]

The three concepts have in common of the usage of the word 'knowledge,' but the meaning of 'knowledge' differs in the three instances. This difference is based on the seminal distinction between theory and *praxis*. This distinction will play an important role further in the thesis, therefore it is necessary to take a step back and look at the philosophical roots of the distinction between theory and *praxis* that can be found in Aristotle's writings.

Education, 3rd ed (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), 15–16.
   [17] Bob Jessop, "A Cultural Political Economy of Competitiveness and Its Implications for Higher Education," in Jessop; Fairclough; Wodak, *Education and the Knowledge Based Economy in Europe*, 13.
   [18] Jussi Välimaa and David Hoffman, "Knowledge Society Discourse and Higher Education," *Higher Education* 56, no. 3 (2008): 266.
   [19] see: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/lis1_en.htm
   [20] Ibid., 269.
   [21] Commission of the European Communities, "White Paper: education and training: teaching and learning: towards the learning society," 1995, 2, accessed April 2, 2014,
http://europa.eu/documents/comm/white_papers/pdf/com95_590_en.pdf

Following in the footsteps of Aristotle, who identified three main types of knowledge, we can speak of *episteme*, *techne* and *phronêsis*. *Episteme*, sometimes narrowed down as scientific knowledge, represents what we know about the world and its structure. A central philosophical concept, *episteme* has been reconfigured several times in the history of philosophy, from knowledge about the world to knowledge about the knowledgeable subject, to knowledge as a consensus constructed by a scientific community, to a paradigm prevalent in a certain moment of scientific development. "Epistemic knowledge is universal, certain, eternal, general, non-contextual and abstract and can be assessed from the criteria true–false."[22]

Techne, also known as technical knowledge, art or craft,[23] represents the human ability to solve certain problems, manufacturing products; it is knowledge with a specific purpose, therefore it is said to be instrumental.[24] "*Techne* is more than a competence, as it both consists of an ability to carry out a procedure in practice in the form of a 'coping skill' and to give an account of the general laws and principles behind the procedure."[25]

Finally, *phronêsis* (wisdom or practical reason) represents moral or social knowledge, awareness of the norms and values that gives us the ability to interact socially.[26]

> "*Phronêsis* is the practical knowledge of ethical, social and political life. Aristotle understands *phronêsis* as a kind of action competence with a true understanding of what is good/for the best for man. It is an ability to act morally correctly on the basis of the correct deliberations. The knowledge of *phronêsis* is a part of the virtuous human's character."[27]

> "But prudence is concerned with the human things and with those about which it is possible to deliberate. [...] And prudence is not concerned with the universals alone but must also be acquainted with the particulars: it is bound up with action, and action concerns the particulars."[28]

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[22] Tone Saugstad, "Educational Theory and Practice in an Aristotelian Perspective," *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research* 46, no. 4 (2002): 379.

[23] Richard Parry, "*Episteme* and *Techne*," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Fall 2008 (2008)

[24] Bernt Gustavsson, "What do We Mean by Lifelong Learning and Knowledge?," *International Journal of Lifelong Education* 21, no. 1 (2002): 20.

[25] Saugstad, "Educational Theory and Practice in an Aristotelian Perspective," 380.

[26] Parry, "*Episteme* and *Techne*"

[27] Saugstad, "Educational Theory and Practice in an Aristotelian Perspective," 381.

[28] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 2011),

The turn towards a service-based economy has changed the way the term "knowledge" is used in official discourse by policy makers and in the public sphere. Gustavsson notices that before the 1980s, 'knowledge' had a humanistic meaning, as it was linked to education, responsible citizens, and social welfare, while currently these connections have been replaced by economic terms such as: "'efficiency', 'quality', 'competence', 'goal-direction' and 'evaluation'."[29] Thus, when speaking about "knowledge" in the context of 'knowledge economy', authors will most likely refer to one of these two meanings: either innovation (theoretical knowledge with a market value that brings something new)[30] or *techne* (technical knowledge instrumental for getting that value out of the new ideas). *Episteme* as research will be acknowledged as an indirect source for innovation and is discussed mostly in contexts about university based research, but can also be linked to research and development divisions in corporations.

For the knowledge economy only *episteme* and *techne* will effectively matter, as *episteme* is the expert knowledge embedded in the mass of scientists and researchers whose work could lead to patents and useful inventions, while *techne* is embedded in the mass of educated workers who need to be able to work in the new technological fields discovered by scientists. *Techne* is the means through which *episteme* can be used for society's benefit. This is best referred to by a fourth term which did not exist in Aristotle's times, but is essential in the knowledge economy, namely 'innovation'. While scientific knowledge does not immediately render itself to marketable outcomes, 'innovation' is the current name given to the process that aims to turn *episteme* into something profitable, effectively creating market value.

Structure of the MA Thesis

The thesis is divided into three chapters. In chapter one we briefly sum up some of the major arguments in favour of humanities advanced before the Bologna Process. Taking into account that 'humanities' is in itself a contested concept, we offer first a working

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Translated by Robert C. Bartlett and Susan D. Collins, §§ *Nicomachean Ethics* VI.7, 1141b10-15.
[29] Gustavsson, "What do We Mean by Lifelong Learning and Knowledge?" 14.
[30] Innovation has been defined as "The process of translating an idea or invention into a good or service that creates value or for which customers will pay." Source: Business dictionary found at: http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/innovation.html

definition of humanities as the broad range of studies, methodologically different and substantially contiguous in its study of 'Man'. This definition is neutral enough (it does not to assume what it means to be human or what traits need to be cultivated through humanistic education) so as to take into account the major *topoi* that have emerged in history about the 'subject of education': (i) Thus, in order, we shall revise the arguments in favour of humanities as 'character building' for the social elites - a set of arguments developed during the Renaissance; (ii) then we look at how such arguments changed by dwelling on the idea of *Bildung* and the Humboldtian arguments in favour of humanities; (iii) and point out how these arguments were challenged by postmodernists who thought of the political mission of the university in reconfigured terms. This first chapter will give an overview of the major historical figures of the subject of education: the social elites, the Enlightened yet disembodied Man of Reason; the embodied post-modern subject.

In chapter two we describe what the Bologna Process is, outline a brief history of it, and analyse the texts of the Bologna ministerial declarations looking for clues in order to understand who is the educational subject according to the Bologna Process. We shall show that the answer to the question 'who is being educated?' that emerges from the analysis of the documents founding the Bologna Process is quite different from previous answers outlined in chapter one. Who is being educated? It is the European citizen as a mobile and employable citizen.

In the third chapter we describe and analyse two types of arguments in favour of the humanities that take into account the new requirements for 'usefulness' of education. The first one concerns the general usefulness of academic research, as the disinterested pursuit of knowledge may lead to innovation and therefore unpredictable social usefulness. The second type of argument concerns the potential of humanities to educate people into dissenting democratic citizens. Both arguments have certain problems, as we shall see. In the conclusion we sum up the major findings of the paper and will re-cast the idea of 'the usefulness of humanities' from the perspective of the guiding question: 'who is being educated?'

Chapter 1. Educating the Few: Humanities before Bologna

1.1 A Preliminary Definition of the Humanities as the General Study of 'Man'

The term 'humanities' has a long history which originates in the Italian Renaissance: '*studia humanitatis*' was understood as "a course of instruction or self-study based on the classical literature of Greco-Roman Antiquity."[31] The term '*studia humanitatis*' was first popularised by a pupil of Petrarch, Coluccio Salutati (1331 - 1406), after having discovered it in a discourse by Cicero entitled *Pro Archia*. In Cicero's discourse, the *studia humanitatis* was understood as the sum of studies intended to shape the young boys towards humanity.[32] Salutati borrowed from Cicero the idea that language was the essential trait of humans when compared to animals, therefore Salutati included in the *studia humanitatis* the disciplines centred on language: grammar, rhetoric, poetics, history and moral philosophy.[33]

Petrus Paulus Vergerius (1349-1420) and Leonardo Bruni (1370-1444) were the first Renaissance authors to extensively describe the *studia humanitatis* as a contemporary curricula. Thus, for Vergerius, humanities were identified with the liberal arts, and were meant to "attain and practice virtue and wisdom."[34] Vergerius proposed as a basic curriculum for liberal arts "ancient history, moral philosophy, and eloquence (rhetoric)."[35] For Leonardo Bruni *studia humanitatis* meant a curricula based entirely on classical Greek poets, orators, historians and moral philosophers, while leaving out logic, metaphysics, mathematics and natural philosophy. This curricula was designed explicitly as an alternative to what was being taught at that time in the universities, especially to the scholastic method of learning.[36] Both Vergerius and Bruni conceived of humanities as linked with a practical purpose, that of encouraging "moral development and self-cultivation."[37]

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[31] Cristopher J. Lucas, "*Studia Humanitatis*," in *Philosophy of Education: An Encyclopedia*, ed. J. J. Chambliss (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2013), 630–32, 630.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Rens Bod, *A New History of the Humanities: The Search for Principles and Patterns from Antiquity to the Present* (Oxford University Press, 2014), 145.
[34] Lucas, "*Studia Humanitatis*" 630.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid., 631.
[37] Ibid., 630.

The first Italian schools that focused on humanities (*Casa Giocosa,* opened in 1423, and later Guarino Guarini's school in Ferrara) were famous and attracted many students, some of them foreigners, rivalling with the contemporary universities which practised the old scholastic methods.[38] We see thus that from the very beginning, the humanities were designed in opposition to traditional modes of teaching, cast as a potentially revolutionary method. Christopher Lucas points out that by the end of the 14th century humanities came to symbolise a "cultural revolution, a protest against medieval formalism and intellectual aridity."[39]

In the 15th century humanities lost some of their revolutionary appeal after being incorporated in the main university curricula, and since then have become inextricably linked with the institution of the university. Humanities in the 16th century were already thought of as great career path-makers for public service because those who studied the lives of Roman statesmen, many believed, would acquire "practical wisdom or *prudentia*" which would later enable them to become good public servants.[40] Thus the self-cultivation and moral enhancement of the Italian Renaissance humanities student was put to use in order to form good public servants out of young rich men who would be later useful for the public good of the State.[41]

By the 18th century humanities based on classical texts were already considered arid and useless displays of erudition by the French *Encyclopédistes,* as seen for example in Diderot 's *Preliminary Discourse*, or in the article about 'College education' in the *Encyclopédie.*[42] Indeed, the risk of the erudite autoreferentiality and hence uselessness has been a constant risk accompanying the very idea of "humanities". The risk of confusing erudition and wisdom has never been overcome and it continues to haunt the contemporary debate.

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[38] Ibid., 631.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Edward Hundert, "D'Alembert's Dream and the Utility of the Humanities," *Critical Review* 15, 3-4 (2003): 462.

[42] "a young man, if he has spent his time wisely, leaves the college after ten years—among the most precious years of his life—with a very imperfect knowledge of a dead language and with precepts of rhetoric and principles of philosophy which he should endeavor to forget;" Jean R. D'Alembert and Edme-François Mallet, "College [abridged]: The Encyclopedia of Diderot & d'Alembert," (1753) 2003; Translated by Nelly S. Hoyt and Thomas Cassirer. Collaborative Translation Project, accessed July 31, 2014, http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.did2222.0000.144

During the 19ᵗʰ century, in the German cultural space humanities received a central place in Wilhelm von Humboldt's project for a free university and were promoted together with the concept of *Bildung* as the main ingredients in the education of autonomous men. At this time humanities were connected with their institutional dimension that is still the major home of humanities today: the university; or rather, the Humboldtian university, autonomous in the sense of freed from pressure of the State, the civil society and the market. This process of institutionalisation also pushed for a renewed reflection on the subject of education that humanities should focus on.

Throughout history humanities have been designated by several names: *studia humanitatis*, liberal arts, human sciences, or *Geisteswissenschaften* ('sciences of the spirit'). The plurality of names can be interpreted as showing the heterogeneous nature of the concept. As a contested concept, humanities have endured time and again crises of legitimation and identity. "Nothing seems to be more durable in the humanities than the crisis" said Martin von Spiewak.[43] Two main sites of contestation for the concept of humanities can be easily identified: first, the very definition of humanities and its scope across disciplines; second, the political and, linked to this, the educational role of humanities. While this paper will dwell mostly with issues regarding the second problem, it is worth sketching briefly the issues around the definition of humanities.

Humanities can be understood as a set of disciplines centred on the study of 'man' as opposed to natural sciences which study nature. This definition assumes a humanist outlook and a commitment to a particular understanding of what it means to be human, an emancipatory and individualistic perspective, tracing its roots to the philosophy of Pico della Mirandola in which "the conscious image of man, which is characteristic of the modern world, was born here: man exists in the act that constitutes him, he exists in the possibility of liberating himself."[44] The emancipatory outlook was understood as liberating man from religion, and then from any other forms of authority. This definition was embraced by scholars especially after the Second World War because it provided their anti-totalitarian claims with a prestigious historical precedent. "By aligning their

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[43] "Nichts ist für die Geisteswissenschaften so beständig wie das Gerede von ihrer Krise." Source: http://www.zeit.de/campus/2007/02/geisteswissenschaften-pro

[44] Eugenio Garin, *Italian Humanism: Philosophy and Civic Life in the Renaissance* (Westport,

key terms with contemporary academic accounts of Renaissance humanism, the mid-century architects of the modern humanities could simultaneously claim a distinguished intellectual pedigree while making the humanities urgently relevant to a world in turmoil."[45]

This definition of humanities as the study of the 'humanity' as an essential trait projects onto Renaissance a modern view of humanity which was a relatively recent invention, argues Paul O. Kristeller. Nowadays it is hard to argue for the unity of history, literature or philosophy, based on a shared vision of what it means to be human. Furthermore, the study of what it means to be human is not the monopoly of humanities anymore, at least since the advent of social studies.[46]

The second definition of humanities claims to go back to the real Renaissance roots of humanities. Paul O. Kristeller argues that the humanities were a set of educational practises united by a practical goal - to benefit humans - and method - the study of language and letters -, not by their object of study:

> "Humanists – that is, *humanistae*, the individuals who taught the *studia humanitatis* – were 'professional rhetoricians', and their goals were both idealistic and practical: to build students' character through liberal learning (the meaning of *paideia*) and to prepare them for a world of massively expanded literacy and immense complexity, where the skills of communication, interpretation, and negotiation of practical ethical problems were of paramount importance."[47]

As education and knowledge with a practical aim, the humanities in the Renaissance combined harmoniously the three types of knowledge: *episteme, techne* and *phronêsis* - briefly presented in the Introduction of this paper. The technical aspect of humanistic knowledge was fulfilled by the study of grammar and rhetoric. Nowadays, argues Jennifer Summit, humanities departments are divided along the *episteme* and *techne* line: philosophy, literature and history emphasise *episteme*, while communication studies and journalism the *techne*. However, during the Renaissance these were seen as "two sides of the same coin."[48]

Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1975, ©1965), 9.

[45] Jennifer Summit, "Renaissance Humanism and the Future of the Humanities," *Literature Compass* 9, no. 10 (2012): 666.

[46] Ibid., 667.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid., 670.

The main purpose of the study of humanities was, from this perspective, the individual development which was to benefit society at large.

> "For these *humanistae*, liberal learning – particularly its core activities, rhetoric, reading, and reflection on classical texts – mediates the active and the contemplative lives. Such study did not withdraw from the world but contributed to it, by producing educated individuals whose virtuous activities brought learning to life."[49]

This paper will employ a working definition of humanities as the broad range of studies, methodologically different and substantially contiguous in its study of 'Man' since it best sums up the connotations that the notion has developed historically and since it is sufficiently unspecified as to enable us to engage in the philosophical discussion about the subject of education, alas of *who* is to be "humanised", without assuming that the subject of education needs to be found in any predefined institutional arena.

During the 20th century the debates on the crisis of humanities gained momentum and became widespread in the academic circles. A milestone of this debate was Husserl's Vienna Lecture from 1935 entitled "Philosophy and the Crisis of European Man" in which Husserl blamed naturalism (or the positivist method) for "beheading philosophy" by estranging philosophers from the subjective perspective in their pursuit of objective facts.[50] The legitimation of humanities has been contested on at least two grounds: epistemic and educational. The epistemic legitimacy crisis is related to delimiting a specific domain of inquiry for humanities. This delimitation can be done either negatively, as Wilhelm Dilthey had proposed, by allocating to humanities whatever domain of inquiry falls outside the scope of natural sciences, or methodologically, as suggested by Heinrich Rickert who defined the humanities method as idiographic, not resulting in generalisable laws.[51]

The educational legitimacy crisis stems from the political and social ambitions of humanities, starting from the Renaissance, with the goal to shape the human character.

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[49] Ibid., 670–71.

[50] "There can, however, never be any improvement so long as an objectivism based on a naturalistic focusing on the environing world is not seen in all its naivete, until men recognize thoroughly the absurdity of the dualistic interpretation of the world, according to which nature and spirit are to be looked upon as realities in the same sense. In all seriousness my opinion is this: there never has nor ever will be an objective science of spirit, an objective theory of the soul." Edmund Husserl, *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), Translated by Quentin Lauer, 188.

This paper will be concerned only with the attempts to legitimise humanities as educational disciplines and leave aside the epistemological debate. The educational ideal has been contested because, as times changed, so did the ideals of the character that were to be educated, which in turn implied a change in the humanities curricula. It is still a matter of debate which disciplines can be included in the 'real humanities' and which, if any, are the impostors.[52] No matter what position one assumes in these debates, the fact that remains is that, if 'humanities' are concerned with training "Man's" character, then the question is: whose character is that exactly?

1.2 Humanities for the Social 'Elites'

Chronologically, the first intended audience for the humanistic education were the political and administrative elites such as notaries, secretaries, clerks. In Renaissance Italy, becoming a loyal public servants was linked to a humanistic education, but only a few wealthy families had the access to that kind of jobs and education. From the beginning humanities were linked with social privilege. Yet the elitism was in the end for the good of the city, as humanities build character, the administrative elite needed training in the humanities because it was assumed that good leaders would benefit everybody. "These studies were deemed foundational for adolescent males from good families who aimed to pursue the active life of the citizen or subject in the service of the state."[53]

The elites needed not study for a profession, but for leadership. This idea has its roots in the Aristotelian distinction between the life of leisure and the *banausic* occupations like crafts:

> "'*Banausic*' occupations, such as practicing a craft, may distort the natural development of mind or body, while working for a wage is seen as a form of

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[51] Andrea Staiti, "Heinrich Rickert," in Zalta, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

[52] Cultural studies have been named by some authors the 'new humanities' while others see them as usurping the name. For example, the ISCED classification from 2011 enumerated as humanities: "Religion and theology; Foreign languages and cultures: living or 'dead' languages and their literature, area studies; Native languages: current or vernacular language and its literature; other humanities: interpretation and translation, linguistics, comparative literature, history, archaeology, philosophy, ethics." UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *International Standard Classification of Education ISCED 2011* (Montreal, 2012), http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Documents/isced-2011-en.pdf, 73 However, in the ISCED classification from 2013 which is now official, the languages and literature were separated from humanities.

[53] Hundert, "D'Alembert's Dream and the Utility of the Humanities" 462.

slavery. Because he is controlled by the demands of his employer the wage-earner is not free."[54]

Aristotle had thought that education should prepare students for the life of leisure, which was a state worthy of attaining in itself, because it leads to a good life:

> "That children should be taught those useful things that are really necessary, however, is not unclear. But it is evident that they should not be taught all of them, since there is a difference between the tasks of the free and those of the unfree, and that they should share only in such useful things as will not turn them into vulgar craftsmen. (Any task, craft, or branch of learning should be considered vulgar if it renders the body or mind of free people useless for the practices and activities of virtue. That is why the crafts that put the body into a worse condition and work done for wages are called vulgar; for they debase the mind and deprive it of LEISURE. [...] Leisured activity is itself held to involve pleasure, happiness, and living blessedly. This is not available to those who are working, however, but only to those who are engaged in leisured activity."[55]

However, the Renaissance model of humanities wanted to close the gap between a life of leisure and a life of work, by combining *episteme* and *techne* in the study of humanities:

> "This synergy of knowledge and skill extends to the humanist ideal of a life that balances ''virtue and wisdom,'' the highest products of practical and theoretical knowledge. For Vergerio, these are brought together through ''liberal studies'' (14), which promote the ''two kinds of life befitting a free man, one consisting entirely in leisure and contemplation, the other in action and business'' (19). Students of the *studia humanitatis* were exhorted to see themselves as both citizens and philosophers, resolving an ancient conflict in the well-lived life (Kimball). Thus Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini could assert: ''For those men alone are perfect who strive to mingle political roles with philosophy and who procure for themselves a double good: their lives are devoted to the general benefit, and, exposed to no disturbances, are spent with the greatest tranquility in the pursuit of philosophy'' (Kallendorf 66)."[56]

The three types of knowledge were combined harmoniously in the Renaissance *studia humanitatis*, because the final goal of the studies was achieving prudence, or *phronêsis*: "This, then, is the fruit of all studies; this is the goal. Having acquired our knowledge, we must turn it to usefulness, and employ it for the common good."[57]

The idea of humanities as form fit of education for the elites has survived until our days, even though it stopped being the main source of legitimation. Sociological studies from France and the UK can be brought as examples of the survival of this practice.

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[54] Richard Stalley, "Education and the State," in Anagnostopoulos, *A Companion to Aristotle*, 569.
[55] Aristotle, Politics, §§ Pol. VIII.3, 1137b10-1138a5.
[56] Summit 670–71.
[57] Jan L. Vives, "On Education (De tradendis disciplinis): Translated by Foster Watson,"

In France the higher education system was and still is formed of two parts: the classical universities (which might have an old tradition or be newly formed), and a system that ran in parallel with it, *les grandes écoles,* which trained students in commerce, administration or engineering, but also humanities.[58] Both systems were formally considered universities, but had different social functions according to Pierre Bourdieu. Thus, the French university system was fundamentally split in two alongside the distinction university/*grandes écoles*: while universities accepted students from all social backgrounds and thus contributed to the massification of studies in France, *les grandes écoles* were highly selective in their admission process and effectively were training the future political and administrative elite of France.

Bourdieu's study has found out that throughout the 70s and 80s, the majority of political and administrative elites of France came only from the small group of *Grandes écoles*. The type of university one graduated predicted very well the social position in the future. The stratification of the higher education was partially an effect of May 1968, when the sons of the dominant classes fled the universities and relocated in the elitist *grandes écoles* where admission exam ensured exclusivity for those with cultural capital.

Cultural capital consists of many aspects such as "verbal facility, general cultural awareness, information about the school system, and educational credentials."[59] The people with more cultural capital are aware of the educational possibilities out there and know what is required of them in order to pass exams, write assignments, or speak in a certain way; these issues are alien to a first-generation student who has no cultural capital. While cultural capital is partially inherited from parents, it can also be bought with money, energy and time, and afterwards "exchanged for occupations with high status and incomes."[60] For example the children of the rising middle class in France spent money, energy, and time on preparatory courses that were designed to help them pass the harsh entrance exams of the *grandes écoles*. The preparatory track focused on

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https://archive.org/details/vivesoneducation00viveuoft, 283.

[58] Guy Neave, "Patterns," in *A History of the University in Europe*, ed. Walter Rüegg (Cambridge [etc.]: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 31–72, 59.

[59] David Swartz, *Culture & Power: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 198.

humanities because the exams consisted of essays and oral presentations that required a "mastery of linguistic style"[61] which lacked in those without cultural capital. In order to gain entrance in the *grandes écoles* which later opened the way to leadership positions in the administration and politics, humanities were the first barrier. Being at home in humanities meant that one had cultural capital, and thus was worthy to be accepted in the elite-track university.

A similar situation has been described in the UK by the sociologists Brown and Scase. Their study found that the education provided by the elite universities such as Oxford and Cambridge is emphatically non-useful and focused on the humanities, as a way to distinguish these universities from the universities frequented by the lower classes. The elitist and humanist type of education will ensure the access in the managerial and political elite of the UK.[62] "By the start of the 20th century, it was virtually impossible to aspire to a senior position in the church, the public schools, the civil service or the law without having first been at Oxbridge."[63] An example of a humanities programme marketed towards the elites is the Oxford based programme in Politics, Philosophy and Economics (PPE) which is the most sought after by future politicians: "The surest ticket to the top - for Conservative, Labour and Lib Dem politicians alike - is surely a degree in politics, philosophy and economics (PPE) at the University of Oxford."[64]

The studies by Bourdieu, Brown and Scase construe this situation as unfair and elitist, because humanities are used merely to conserve the social status of the few privileged. However this negative characterisation can be explained by the lack of *phronetic* knowledge in the humanities education. Without character building, the humanities are just the means employed by a class to maintain its privilege, while the graduates cannot justify why they are the best candidates for political and administrative positions.

The conception that the state or the Church needs to train the character through

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[60] Ibid.

[61] Ibid., 200.

[62] Phillip Brown and Richard Scase, *Higher Education and Corporate Realities: Class, Culture, and the Decline of Graduate Careers* (London, Bristol, Pa: UCL Press, 1994), 18.

[63] Lowe, R. 1990. Educating for industry: the historical role of higher education in England cited by Phillip Brown and Richard Scase, *Higher Education and Corporate Realities: Class, Culture, and the Decline of Graduate Careers* (London, Bristol, Pa: UCL Press, 1994), 26.

[64] John Kelly, "Why Does PPE Rule Britain?," BBC News Magazine, accessed August 16, 2014,

humanities was pervasive throughout history, and so the humanities were most of the times cast with an intrinsic political mission. Many times throughout history politicians saw the need to control humanities, as the humanities had a double potential: To incite revolution through their critical views on authority, but also to lead to golden path for entering the ruling classes. This conception changed however with the advent of the German Enlightenment when Kant and Wilhelm von Humboldt argued for eliminating any political intrusion in the university curricula. This change was caused by the fact that Kant and Humboldt had in mind a different answer to the question who was being educated: For them it was the autonomous individual, not the previously loyal administrative elite. This answer led in its turn to a different type of argumentation for the humanities which was based on the concept of *Bildung*. We shall see in the next section how it unfolded.

1.3 The Enlightenment Turn: Educating the Individual through *Bildung*

Traditionally, higher education has been divided in two paths: The vocational or professional track which initiates the students into professions such as engineers, doctors, lawyers etc., and the theoretical track which has the purpose of creating a knowledgeable graduate by initiating the student into a certain culture (be it humanistic or scientific). There are two major figures in the Enlightenment who argued for *Bildung* as a necessary component of university education: Immanuel Kant (1724 - 1804) and Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767 - 1835). While the idea of education as cultivating the virtues of the student goes back to ancient times, some would argue to Epicure, this idea became central in the justification of the need for a theoretical track through the works of Wilhelm von Humboldt who popularised the idea of *Bildung* in the 19th century. In the Humboldtian university training through pure science (*Bildung durch Wissenschaft*) was opposed to the mere professional training (*Ausbildung*) of the students. This training was, according to Ash "an approach to learning, an attitude of mind, a skill and a capacity to think rather than specialised knowledge."[65]

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http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-11136511

[65] Mitchell G. Ash, "From 'Humboldt' to 'Bologna': History as Discourse in Higher Education Reform Debates in German-Speaking Europe," in Jessop; Fairclough; Wodak, *Education and the Knowledge Based Economy in Europe*, 43.

The meaning of *Bildung* is not clear-cut, which partially explains why many philosophers prefer to use the German word instead of translations. *Bildung* comes from the German verb *bilden*, which means to give shape or form, and it was initially defined in Latin as *formatio*,[66] which implied that through *Bildung* the student will form his abilities and talents.[67] Another possible linguistic source for the term *Bildung* is the noun *Bild*, which means image, so it implies that the formation of the student will follow an ideal image - this interpretation was put forth by Gadamer who thought that *Bildung* was a modern continuation of the Christian ideal of making the man become an image of God.[68]

The most important interpretation of *Bildung* however is the one that gained popularity after Wilhelm von Humboldt became minister of education (1809-1810) and founded the University of Berlin (1810) based on his philosophy of education which had the concept of *Bildung* at the core. In Humboldt's interpretation, *Bildung* was a rupture with the Christian tradition of education inherited from the Middle Ages, and a return to the classical ideal of ancient Greece. Scholars agree that the modern university which started in the Enlightenment represents a cultural shift from the scholastic university in the Middle Ages: "Rather than being the recipients of doctrinal truth, ''fallible truth'' could now be freely contested, debated and interpreted by students and scholars. And so the modern university values ''humanism'' by underlining the importance of 'the individual, free will, and values.'"[69]

For Humboldt, *Bildung* understood as 'inward cultivation' had an ultimate political purpose, that of achieving "political and social harmony" inside the state.[70] In Humboldt's interpretation, ancient Greek education was aimed at creating good citizens. Harmony in the city state was achieved not through political intervention in the private

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[66] "If we look up the term *Bildung* in the Brothers Grimm's classic Deutsches Wörterbuch (1984, pp. 22–23) we learn that the word has four meanings, which are indicated by the Latin expressions (1) *imago*, (2) *forma*, (3) *cultus animi, humanitas* and (4) *formatio, institutio*; that is, (1) image, (2) form, (3) cultivation of the soul and (4) formation." Sven E. Nordenbo, "*Bildung* and the Thinking of *Bildung*," *Journal of the Philosophy of Education* 36, no. 3 (2002): 341.

[67] Herner Saeverot, *Indirect Pedagogy: Some Lessons in Existential Education,* Educational futures v.58 (Rotterdam, Boston: SensePublishers, 2013), 77.

[68] Gadamer, *Warheit und Methode*, 1965, p.11.

[69] Claire Donovan, "Beyond the 'Postmodern University'," *The European Legacy* 18, no. 1 (2013): 27–28.

[70] David Sorkin, "Wilhelm Von Humboldt: The Theory and Practice of Self-Formation (*Bildung*), 1791-1810," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 44, no. 1 (1983): 59–60.

life, but through a similar moulding of the citizens through education as *paideia*. "Because the *polis* sought 'happiness in virtue,' it promoted the harmonious development of the individual; in aiming to 'train up temperate and energetic [*kraftvolle*] citizens,' it gave a 'higher impulse to their whole spirit and character.'"[71]

Humboldt's programme was to limit the power of the (contemporary) German state in order to increase the conditions for individual freedom, while still reaching the political goals of Enlightenment indirectly through education. The reason why he advocated for limiting State powers was that he viewed the contemporary German state incapable of achieving social harmony. Humboldt thought the state was too focused on "attending to man's well-being and his property, his ease and comfort"[72] which led to obedient and productive citizens with no energy left for politics. The political goal of the German state was to have citizens that would service the state and Humboldt devised an educational politics that achieved this goal indirectly, through *Bildung*. "Humboldt argues that persons educated to be free individuals will ultimately be better citizens than men educated to be citizens, just as science left to its own devices will be more fruitful than science supervised by the state."[73]

David Sorkin has reconstructed the three essential steps of the political and educational program of Humboldt: a) the financial responsibility for the schools was delegated to the State; b) "education should serve the person and not the citizen"[74] which implied egalitarianism, because previously the education was meant to preserve hierarchies and social status, now it was open for everyone and this was supposed to facilitate social mobility; c) the curriculum of schools was based on general education (*allgemeine Menschenbildung*) composed of mathematics, classical languages and history; only after this curriculum was mastered, specialised training was possible.[75]

It is important to notice here that humanities are cast again with a political purpose, just as in ancient Greece or Renaissance Italy, but this time the purpose is reached indirectly: First we need to educate the individual who in turn will want to serve the

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[71] Ibid., 60.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid., 64.
[74] Ibid., 62.
[75] Ibid., 62–63.

public good with his abilities. Therefore the goal of education changed during German Enlightenment from educating the citizen to educating the individual. The Humboldtian philosophy of education, and especially the point about educating the person and not the citizen, is based partially on Jean Jacques Rousseau's philosophy. From Rousseau Humboldt took the principle that the person is prior and more important than the citizen.[76] For a stronger philosophical justification of why the individual is prior to the citizen and should be the goal of education, we need to turn back to Immanuel Kant, the main inspirer for Humboldt's conception of *Bildung*.

In Kant's view, the main goal of education is to learn how to become free, or autonomous.

> "'Practical' or moral training is that which teaches a man how to live as a free being. (We call anything 'practical' which has reference to freedom.) This is the education of a personal character, of a free being, who is able to maintain himself, and to take his proper place in society, keeping at the same time a proper sense of his own individuality."[77]

Individual autonomy plays a crucial role in Kantian practical philosophy as illustrated in his works *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785) and *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788). Autonomy is understood as not being influenced by external factors when making a moral decision, taking decisions guided only by reason. In Kantian terms, autonomy is the ability to impose upon oneself the universal moral law and follow the guide of the moral law no matter how unpleasant or socially frowned the consequences might be.

For Kant autonomy as moral self-legislation is something to be desired as an end in itself, but it will also help the society if more people were to be moral, i.e. self-legislating because they will see beyond their own egotistical interests.[78] If an individual adopts the test of universability of the maxims and he asks himself each time what would happen if everybody would follow the same maxim, then he might not choose to act in accordance with his self-interest. A society where all citizens would follow their egotistical interest, like Hobbes had previously explained to be the natural

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[76] Ibid., 62.

[77] Immanuel Kant, *On Education (über Pädagogik)* (1803), Translator: Annette Churton, accessed August 4, 2014, http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/356, § 31.

[78] Sharon Rider, "Higher Heteronomy: Thinking through Modern University Education," in *Transformations in Research, Higher Education and the Academic Market*, ed. Sharon Rider, Ylva Hasselberg and Alexandra Waluszewski, Higher Education Dynamics (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2013), 171–86, 173.

state of man, would be a society in which survival would be jeopardised. The rational outcome is that maximising one's own self-interest will damage the society we live in, and ultimately ourselves. To pursue the common good is then the logical solution. Therefore, if citizens were educated to become rationally autonomous beings, they would reach the reasonable conclusion that they need to work together for the common good of the society. If people were educated for citizenship directly, then they would be forced to adhere to principles they do not understand, and ultimately their allegiance to the common good would be fake and fragile. It is therefore in the State's best interest not to interfere in education and leave the students become free and independent thinkers which will ultimately be the best citizens for the State.

Autonomy is reached by learning how to think critically on one's own, and this is the main goal of *Bildung:* "The aim of education is not to drill the student in a set of skills as in the dressage of a horse, nor to train him in specific teachings and doctrines, but to enlighten him: The point is not to teach him what to think, but how to think."[79] In this regard a curriculum that would include humanities is essential. Both Kant and Humboldt never argued against professional education, but thought of theoretical education as the main vehicle for *Bildung* and self-determination, as a prerequisite for the specialised education.

We have seen that, during the German Enlightenment, the ideal of *Bildung* changed the recipient of education: The individual who needs to be educated into freedom, understood as critical thinking. Ultimately, the free individual will be useful to the State in some way that citizens drilled into obedience cannot. The inherent tension between individual and universal is somehow "brought to an inner harmony through *Bildung*."[80] *Bildung* continues to be a central concept in philosophy of education even after two centuries because for many scholars it gives legitimation to the educational practice.[81] If education were merely a way of transmission of knowledge, then the student would not need the professor, textbooks would suffice. But educators want to be more than mere informational sources and employ *Bildung* to prove that they are changing

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[79] Ibid.
[80] Nordenbo 350.
[81] Hans-Christoph Koller, "*Bildung* and Radical Plurality: Towards a Redefinition of *Bildung* with Reference to J.-F. Lyotard," *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 35, no. 2 (2003): 155.

students for the better because the teacher is also a role-model for the student; learning the virtue is done also by following personal examples, not just by the accumulation of knowledge. The assumptions behind *Bildung* are that individual autonomy is possible and desirable, that we can guide students into achieving the status of critical thinkers, and that the notions of autonomy and individuality are universal. These very assumptions were to be challenged by the postmodernist thinkers.

Kant and Humboldt had answered that we need humanities because we need to educate men into freedom, emphasising that the goal was to educate individuals, not citizens, and the method to achieve this education was through *Bildung*. By criticising the concept of *Bildung* as a meta-narrative, the postmodernists have called into question the German Enlightenment-inspired answer and showed that the subject of education was neither universal nor free, and have instead proposed a new goal for education. Therefore in the next section I will outline the postmodernist challenge to the Humboldtian ideal of education (the autonomous individual) through the challenge of *Bildung*.

1.4 Postmodernism and the Political Engagement of the Humanities

By criticising the concept of *Bildung*, the postmodernists called into question the German Enlightenment-inspired answer to the question 'who should we educate?' and showed that the subject of education was neither universal nor free. It is important to understand the postmodernist criticism not only because it is one of the most important types of challenges faced by humanities in the 20th century, but also because it weakened humanities, leaving them in a vulnerable state for other future types of assaults.

As a vast current of thought with multiple sub-currents, postmodernism is hard to define as a unitary philosophy. François Cusset in his book *French theory:How Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, & Co. transformed the intellectual life of the United States* proposes a historical account of how postmodernism came to have an enduring influence on academic circles especially in the USA, and from there, it was transplanted back to Europe where it had not been too popular in the beginning. After the Second World War

many French intellectuals fled to the USA and gained a wide reputation by transforming the English literature departments into the central places of debate for issues that would have otherwise belonged to the philosophy or political science departments. By making claims about the centrality of the text and its interpretation as deconstruction, postmodernist thinkers managed to increase the importance of the literary studies inside academia and tried to reconquer a central role for humanities in the university after the ground had been lost during the 20th century.[82]

In spite of the fact that the meaning of the term 'postmodernism' is contested, just like that of modernism,[83] many authors agree that postmodernism, as an intellectual movement, can be broadly defined as a set of critical attitudes and practises which have in common the use of concepts such as "difference, repetition, the trace, the simulacrum, and hyperreality."[84] These concepts - which previously would have been regarded as peripheral and unimportant - are now used to undermine several traditional concepts that previously held centre stage such as "presence, identity, historical progress, epistemic certainty, and the univocity of meaning."[85]

While the term 'postmodernism' began its philosophical career only in 1979, after Lyotard published his famous book *The Postmodern Condition*,[86] the critical practises emphasised by postmodernism were employed before under the name of 'post-structuralism' by authors such as Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze or Julia Kristeva. There are broadly three phases in the development of postmodernism identified by Gerard Delanty as follows: First as an aesthetic movement in the 1970s; second, as an epistemological thesis championed by Foucault (the so-called 'post-structuralism'); third, as a theory of society and power relations, and a "political endorsement of multiculturalism" visible in the 1980s mostly in the USA.[87]

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[82] François Cusset, *French Theory: How Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, & Co. Transformed the Intellectual Life of the United States* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), Translated from French by Jeff Fort

[83] Harland G. Bloland, "Postmodernism and Higher Education," *The Journal of Higher Education*, 1995, 523.

[84] Gary Aylesworth, "Postmodernism," in Zalta, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

[85] Ibid.

[86] Ibid.

[87] Gerard Delanty, *Challenging Knowledge: The University in the Knowledge Society* (Buckingham [England], Philadelphia, PA: Society for Research into Higher Education & Open University Press, 2001), 131.

Lyotard identifies as the main feature of postmodernism the criticism of meta-narratives that are used to legitimise obsolete institutions such as the university or dominant paradigms such as metaphysical philosophy.[88] Any major philosophy such as Kantianism, German idealism or Marxism implies or contains meta-narratives, but Lyotard will focus only on two meta-narratives: "The progressive emancipation of humanity – from Christian redemption to Marxist Utopia – and that of the triumph of science."[89] For some authors postmodernism represents a sort of Counter-Enlightenment because of its fundamental anti-modern stance.[90]

Knowledge, for the postmodernist thinkers, is not only emancipatory or liberating, but used to impose dominant meanings and to justify the power of the social institutions that govern the day:

> "If a metanarrative implying a philosophy of history is used to legitimate knowledge, questions are raised concerning the validity of the institutions governing the social bond: These must be legitimated as well. Thus justice is consigned to the grand narrative in the same way as truth."[91]

Foucault would have agreed with Lyotard that knowledge is not merely an emancipating experience, yet he focused more on surveillance and disciplinary *dispositifs*, linked to knowledge.[92]

Knowledge as a linear, unitary narrative is seen as oppressive because it excludes alternative meanings, hence the postmodernists asserted that there is no Truth, but truths, no knowledge, but knowledges, and no unity of the self.[93] If the self is dissolved into multiple instances and roles, or "heterogeneous moments of subjectivity that do not cohere into an identity,"[94] then it becomes hard to understand who is the subject of education that is being formed through *Bildung*, the main legitimation narrative of the humanities. The 'end of man' or the 'death of the subject' proclaimed by

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[88] Jean François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004, 1984), Translation from the French by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi, xxiv.

[89] Christopher Butler, *Postmodernism: A Very Short Introduction,* Very short introductions (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 13.

[90] Hicks, Stephen Ronald Craig, *Explaining Postmodernism: Skepticism and Socialism from Rousseau to Foucault*, 1st ed (Phoenix, Ariz.: Scholargy Pub., 2004), 27 and Robert Samuels, *New Media, Cultural Studies, and Critical Theory After Postmodernism: Automodernity from Zizek to Laclau*, 1st ed, Education, psychoanalysis, and social transformation (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 9.

[91] Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, xxiii–xxiv.

[92] Bloland 532.

[93] Delanty, *Challenging Knowledge*, 132.

[94] Gary Aylesworth, "Postmodernism," in Zalta, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

postmodernists mean also the end of the possibility of *Bildung,* a topic explicitly attacked by Lyotard in his book *The Postmodern Condition*.

Lyotard's criticism of *Bildung* is two-fold. First he claims we should give up the idea that *Bildung* is a liberating practice. The postmodernists are highly suspicious of any discourse containing the words 'freedom', 'emancipation', 'liberation' etc. because these terms are taken not a descriptive of any given reality but as constitutive parts of a "narrative" developed in order to justify taking control of people's lives: "The State resorts to the narrative of freedom every time it assumes direct control over the training of the "people," under the name of the "nation," in order to point them down the path of progress."[95]

Second, Lyotard thinks that the knowledge pursuit is not disinterested; *Bildung* is not about "science for its own sake". There many conflicting interests at stake both in the teaching and research done in the humanities. He bases his claim on the words of Humboldt himself who had said that the science in the university should be oriented towards "the spiritual and moral training of the nation."[96] There is then an inherent tension here between the social role of the University, to train moral individuals for the nation, and the disinterested purpose of science who seeks just the truth and cannot guarantee what it will find or how exactly these findings will influence people's lives. Knowledge for knowledge's own sake needs to remain open to serendipity, to unexpected findings, it cannot claim to know in advance what will be discovered. Lyotard argues that the nation, the State and even the whole of humanity do not care about "knowledge for knowledge's sake." They finance universities only for building the character and legitimation of the nation.[97]

Lyotard thinks that *Bildung* is simply not fit for the requirements of the modern age of education, although he is not endorsing in any way this new age.
He notices that we live in an age of commodification of knowledge, in which universities have to come up with an efficient solution of transmitting this knowledge as

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[95] Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, 32.
[96] "Über die Innere und äußere Organisation der höheren wissenschaftlichen Anstalten in Berlin" (1810), in Weinstock, Heinrich (ed.), *Wilhelm von Humboldt* (Frankfurt, 1957), p. 126.
[97] Ibid.

a product.[98] The system of education, as part of the social system, has to produce only two types of skills: Those that enable the country to compete on a global market through its experts, and those skills necessary for "maintaining its internal cohesion."[99] In this context, "[t]he old principle that the acquisition of knowledge is indissociable from the training (*Bildung*) of minds, or even of individuals, is becoming obsolete and will become ever more so."[100] The skills needed for export and internal cohesion belong mostly to the graduates of the professional tracks, whom Lyotard calls the 'professional intelligentsia' and the 'technical intelligentsia'.[101] The education of the new intelligentsia employs mainly two methods: Simple reproduction and 'enhanced reproduction' which would include some "stimulation of imaginative minds."[102] In this model of mere knowledge transmission however, the role of the professor has dawned and, together with it, *Bildung* becomes obsolete: "A professor is no more competent than memory bank networks in transmitting established knowledge, no more competent than interdisciplinary teams in imagining new moves or new games."[103]

Lyotard argues that the conflict between knowledge and will has its roots in the Kantian philosophy. He translates this conflict in terms of a conflict between language games:

> "It is a conflict between a language game made of denotations answerable only to the criterion of truth, and a language game governing ethical, social, and political practice that necessarily involves decisions and obligations, in other words, utterances expected to be just rather than true and which in the final analysis lie outside the realm of scientific knowledge."[104]

Bildung is situated thus at the intersection of two language games and needs to unify them, which Lyotard thinks is impossible.

Delanty and Fuller argue that Lyotard's idea of a university as the place for political conservatism was inspired by the post-68 French government's reaction to student movements. As a member of the government commission that dealt with university reform after May 68, Lyotard had first-hand experience and understood that the new universities were created in France only as "the state's last desperate attempt at maintaining social order in a world that was quickly exceeding its control. In this

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[98] Ibid., 48.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid., 4.
[101] Ibid., 49.
[102] Ibid., 53.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid., 34.

context, the appeal to academic standards was often a disguised reactionary ideology for arresting the cross-fertilisation of ideas and the novel developments they breed."[105] For Lyotard:

> "The university was too much implicated in the control of society by the state. Thus Lyotard dismisses the entire neo-humanist tradition, such as Humboldt's vision of the integration of teaching and research.[...] For Lyotard, teaching has a counter-revolutionary function, while research can offer subversive possibilities."[106]

Lyotard asks the question why do we need institutionalised knowledge? And why do we need the academic hierarchies to institutionalise this knowledge? He sees teaching as oppressive while research is subversive, so we need to decouple them. "Teaching is rejected as a meta-narrative and research must be released in the form of a plurality of little narratives."[107]

Another point of rupture between the modern university and the Humboldtian model is the issue of university's political engagement. The idea of a university independent of any political influence originated in the Enlightenment age and is historically linked with the humanities as a discipline defining the university. Kant was among the first to advocate for a university that would keep at least one faculty untainted by politics:

> "It is absolutely essential that the learned community at the university also contain a faculty that is independent of the government's command with regard to its teachings; one that having no commands to give, is free to evaluate everything, and concerns itself with the interests of the sciences, that is, with truth: One in which reason is authorized to speak out publicly."[108]

Yet it is hard to argue against state interference in university matters when the university itself, as a state-funded institution, is politically engaged in maintaining certain social structures.

While Foucault never actually wrote about the university as an institution, some commentators[109] have pointed out that the university is a political university following the Foucaultian logic that the most political institutions are those that do not dwell

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[105] Steve Fuller, "Making the University Fit for Critical Intellectuals: Recovering from the Ravages of the Postmodern Condition," *British Educational Research Journal* 25, no. 5 (1999): 585, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1501685

[106] Delanty, *Challenging Knowledge*, 134–35.

[107] Ibid., 135.

[108] Immanuel Kant, *Religion and Rational Theology*, 1st pbk. ed, The Cambridge edition of the works of Immanuel Kant (Cambridge, New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2001), Translated from German by Allen W. Wood and George Di Giovanni, 249.

[109] Laurence, Michael. "Reconstituting the Political: Foucault and the Modern University." APSA 2009 Toronto Meeting Paper. http://ssrn.com/abstract=1450011.

explicitly with politics, but in places of hierarchical rule production and constraints, then obviously the university is an example of such a political place: "The real political task in a society such as ours is to criticise the working of institutions which appear to be both neutral and independent; violence which has always exercised itself obscurely through them will be unmasked, so that we can fight fear."[110]

Derrida claims that the university is implicitly a political institution because it favours a certain mode of thinking based on a hierarchical social structure that supports it. In the traditional dichotomy of reason vs. *praxis*, *episteme* vs. *techne*, professional vs. theoretical, the university has traditionally positioned itself on the theoretical side and conceived of its mission to pursue reason alone. Going back to Kant, Nietzsche and Heidegger, Derrida finds evidence in all three authors for the following claim: "The essential feature of academic responsibility must not be professional education."[111]

Taking as a starting point Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, Derrida points out the "profound and hierarchizing political evaluation of Metaphysics"[112] on which the university's valuation of theoretical knowledge over applied or 'professional' is based. If theoretical knowledge (*episteme*) is superior to practical knowledge (*techne*) in Aristotle's philosophy, then the man who employs *episteme* needs to be superior to the manual labourer, therefore he is cast in the role of a leader (*architekton*):

> "He commands- he is the premier or the prince- because he knows causes and principles, the "whys" and thus also the "wherefores" of things. Before the fact, and before anyone else, he answers to the principle of reason which is the first principle, the principle of principles."[113]

Derrida's next step is to identify the leader with the teacher, because the main role of the one who possesses knowledge is to impart it upon others, and this teaching position is socially superior and based on leisure:

> "Now this theoretician leader, this knower of causes who has no need of "practical" skill, is in essence a teacher. Beyond the fact of knowing causes and of possessing reason [*to logon ekhein*], he bears another mark [*semeion*] of recognition: the "capacity to teach" [*to dunasthai didaskein*]. To teach, then, and at the same time to direct, steer, organize the empirical work of the laborers. The

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[110] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge,* Routledge classics (London: Routledge, 2002), 171.

[111] Jacques Derrida, "The Principle of Reason: The University in the Eyes of Its Pupils," *Diacritics* 13, no. 3 (1983): 18; Translated from French by Catherine Porter and Edward P. Morris

[112] Ibid., 16.

[113] Ibid., 18.

> theoretician-teacher or "architect" is a leader because he is on the side of the *arché*, of beginning and commanding. "[114]

Derrida's conclusion is that the hierarchy of knowledge that puts *episteme* on top of *techne* needs a social structure to instantiate it and that implicitly the university endorses the social and political system that recognises its underlying values: "Desiring to remove the university from 'useful' programs and from professional ends, one may always, willingly or not, find oneself serving unrecognized ends, reconstituting powers of caste, class, or corporation."[115]

We have seen so far that several postmodernists have unmasked the political engagement of the university incompatible with the Humboldtian model. Some postmodernist thinkers have embraced this political engagement and even pleaded for more social relevance of the curricula, especially in the humanities, by including the perspectives of the neglected (minorities, lower classes etc.). Next we shall look at cultural studies and post-colonial studies, the most controversial new disciplines that were created in the wake of postmodernism, in order to see how this political engagement is argued for.

What has happened with humanities in academia after the postmodernist attack can be labelled as a radical transformation. The humanities nowadays are very different from the subjects taught in the 50s. Several attempts to re-name humanities have been made. The expression 'new humanities' was coined in 1991,[116] and was meant to designate humanities without humanism, what was left after the denying of the humanist roots. Humanism's main premise was that there is such a thing as a universal human nature and it needs to be studied through the study of culture. The postmodern humanities deny that a 'universal human nature' exists.[117]

The new humanities have been partially identified with cultural studies and minority studies. Several authors see cultural studies as inhabiting and transforming their 'host' disciplines, the humanities.[118] 'Cultural studies', as a denomination for a new way of

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[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Patrick Fuery and Nick Mansfield, *Cultural Studies and Critical Theory*, 2nd ed (Melbourne, Australia, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), xi.
[117] Ibid., 5.
[118] Donald Morton, "Transforming Theory: Cultural Studies and the Public Humanities," in

making humanities, was a term invented by Richard Hoggart in 1964 when he founded the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies institute in Birmingham. Cultural studies focus on previously ignored issues such as gender, ethnicity or post-colonialism,[119] and usually want to bring to surface the peripheral perspectives of 'the other.' Cultural studies have become the dominant paradigm nowadays to such an extent that, in a new European university, the newly founded English departments are always called "department of communication, or of cultural or textual studies."[120]

As a tentative definition, cultural studies constitute "an interdisciplinary study of all those cultural practices through which society makes sense of itself,"[121] the key word being here 'interdisciplinary.' The new humanities have several distinctive features: These do not make a distinction between high and low culture (or between the 'canon' and the 'popular' culture), challenge old disciplines with new methods of study (usually 'critical theory'), and have an implicit, sometimes even explicit, political engagement.[122]

We have seen that Kant and Humboldt had pleaded for the non-interference of the state in university life, some second generation postmodernists want a larger role for the university in society and politics. Ideally, if critical theory ideas were disseminated and the educated public would be aware of meta-narratives, then this should lead to a more responsible political life. However, this is not a direct consequence of the first-generation postmodernist thinkers, later postmodernist reinterpreted their thought in this direction.

According to François Cusset, cultural studies, although originating from the UK, gained their real popularity in the USA during the 1980s. In the UK cultural studies were focused on mass culture as a way to understand battles for cultural hegemony between social classes. However, in the USA the focus was shifted towards

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Post-theory, Culture, Criticism, ed. Ivan Callus and Stefan Herbrechter, Critical Studies (Amsterdam, Netherlands) v. 23 (Amsterdam, New York, NY: Rodopi, 2004), 25–47, 26.
[119] Fuery and Mansfield, Cultural Studies and Critical Theory, xv.
[120] Ibid., xi.
[121] Morton 26.
[122] Ibid., 27.

communities because social class did not matter so much in the USA.[123]

> "Whereas the British consider one or several cultures as an extension of a social battlefield, their American counterparts-who are more often trained in literary fields than in sociological or historical ones-attach greater importance to the rise of pop culture and its mass appeal as a new entity, whose social implications interest them less than the invention of specific codes and the 'creativity' of its recipients."[124]

Together with cultural studies, minority studies and post-colonial studies boomed in the USA, focusing on the so-called politics of identity. After reading the main critical theorists which had mainly dealt with literary or textual studies, a political conclusion emerged: Objectivity was redefined as "subjectivity of the white male"[125] and minorities were encouraged to make their voices heard in the classroom as well as the professors chose a more inclusive curriculum, with previously marginalised authors.

This movement was not without its critics. For Bill Readings, this turn signals the death of culture as the guiding principle in the academia:

> "Cultural Studies, that is, arise when culture ceases to be the immanent principle in terms of which knowledge within the University is organized, and instead becomes one object among others. Women's Studies, Gay and Lesbian Studies, and Postcolonial Studies arise when the abstract notion of "citizen" ceases to be an adequate and exhaustive description of the subject, when the apparent blankness and universality of the subject of the state is able to be perceived as the repository of privileged markers of maleness, heterosexuality, and whiteness."[126]

But the culture is not the main purpose of university education anymore, argue Stanley Aronowitz and Henry Giroux, in their 1991 book about critical pedagogy, *Postmodern education*. They argue that, if culture is so embedded with power relations, these need to be unmasked and new alternatives proposed. Politics is a higher stake here than culture, for Aronowitz and Giroux.

> "For example, in an American literature class it would seem appropriate to use not only texts that have played major roles in shaping the history of American literature, but also those texts that have been ignored or suppressed because they have been written from an oppositional stance, or because they were authored by writers whose work is not legitimated by a dominant Eurocentric tradition. What

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[123] Cusset, *French Theory*, 133–34.
[124] Ibid., 134.
[125] Ibid., 131
[126] Bill Readings, *The University in Ruins* (Cambridge, Mass. [u.a.]: Harvard Univ. Press, 1996), 87–88.

we are arguing for here is a deliberate attempt to decenter the American literature curriculum by allowing a number of voices to be read, heard, and used. This approach to reading and writing literature should be seen as part of a broader attempt to develop pedagogically a politics of difference that articulates with issues of race, class, gender, ethnicity, and sexual preference from a position of empowerment rather than from a position of deficit and subordination."[127]

So education is meant to empower and give a voice to previously oppressed minorities. They trace some of their concepts to Foucault and his concept of counter-memory which they interpret as "an attempt to rewrite the language of resistance in terms that connect human beings within forms of remembrance that dignify public life, while at the same time allowing people to speak from their particular histories and voices."[128]

Other authors argue that the empowerment of minorities through education is however useless. François Cusset argues that the actual minorities had little contact with the academic life and their political struggles had less progressive but more urgent demands. The academic discourse about oppression was "simply not readable for the actual victims of sexual or ethnic oppression."[129] From a Marxist perspective, reducing the political struggle to voice and discourse of *difference* meant that the only possible battle was that inside the academic world and that actual social movements were useless:

> "If signs are all that remain, and social prob-lems can be resolved in text, then the only possible political gesture is one of reappropriation, shifting meaning, and innovatively combining existing signs - which takes us far from the concrete historical forces on which Marxism is based."[130]

Cusset argues that the real political battle ground was to fight against capitalism, but the critical theorists missed this opportunity.

Cultural studies use a different valuing system to select what needs to be taught. The most common example is how English literature is currently taught. Before postmodernism, the texts to be taught and analysed were selected because they belonged to the so-called 'canon.' The canonical texts (usually including authors such as Shakespeare, Milton, Byron, etc.) were thought to be the apex of refined taste and perfection of language. But these texts, argue the postmodernists, were selected only

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[127] Stanley Aronowitz and Henry A. Giroux, *Postmodern Education: Politics, Culture, and Social Criticism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 101.
[128] Ibid., 124.
[129] Cusset, *French Theory*, 158.

because these rendered a privileged perspective on society (the dominant classes, the white, the male, the heterosexual) which was normalised because no other competing perspective was present to challenge.[131] Nowadays the texts selected for study are chosen based on their representativity of all marginalised perspectives, and for their political significance.

Several critics of the postmodernist approach point out that this new practice is not really liberating, it is merely replacing an old hypocrisy with a new one, that of political correctness. On this interpretation, only minorities have voice in the curriculum, while previous privileged perspectives are now relegated to a minority position:

> "What they hope for is a kind of conformity to a set of "progressive" values and a consensus on a victimhood interpretation of history in general, and of modern America in particular. They do not want, for example, a representation of fascist, racist, Catholic, conservative, or other diverse opinions. Diversity is defined in terms of group representation, provided the groups are politically correct.[…] In other words, it doesn't count as multicultural if it is Irish or Jewish, because they are perceived as part of the dominant culture."[132]

Critics like Searle point out that the previous purpose of the humanistic education was to liberate the individual from the "accidents of his or her upbringing" through the contact with the universal culture.[133] Contrary to this, nowadays the celebrating of diversity essentialises the background of the student who is now identified with it:

> "[o]ur ideal originally was to emphasize the individual within the universal. Now neither the universal nor the individual is emphasized. Rather, you as an individual derive your identity not from your individual efforts at self-definition, but rather from the group to which you belong. And, consequently, you are representative of your group. You cannot escape having identity through ethnicity, by the way."[134]

Once the critical theory was institutionalised in academia, this posed a problem for their status of counter-hegemonic criticism. Anne Chalard-Fillaudeau and Gérard Raulet are asking how can one criticise the state if one participates in its institutionally sanctioned ways of knowledge such as journals, publishing houses, research centres.[135]

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[130] Ibid., 155.
[131] Morton 27–28.
[132] John R. Searle, "Politics and the Humanities," *Academic Questions* 12, no. 4 (1999): 51–53.
[133] Ibid., 49.
[134] Ibid., 50.
[135] "Aujourd'hui, après le tournant culturel des années quatre-vingt-dix, à savoir le fait que les humanités font de la culture un champ d'investigation privilégié, les Cultural Studies maintiennent leur spécificité et leur légitimité à travers leur posture engagée : elles continuent de représenter un moment critique du et dans le champ académique, se caractérisant par la recherche d'une contre-hégémonie. Institutionnalisation qui est en elle-même problématique : on peut en effet se demander si elles réalisent

Whether or not the critical thinking turn in education was a betrayal or a continuation of the original first-generation postmodernist thinkers is not the concern of this paper. It is important however to notice that postmodernism as a politically engaged philosophy pleaded for giving a voice for minorities and those previously excluded. In this sense postmodernism in humanities supports the view that education is for citizenship, but asks to redefine citizenship in a more inclusive way. However, this criticism of the old humanities is done from inside the academia, the debate stays confined to university and journals. Critical theory tried to change the educational system, but it did so by speaking from lecture halls or from journals to other academics. Humanities partially changed after embracing cultural studies, minority studies, identity politics discourse. But in the same institutions old departments of history, philosophy and literature continued to exist and debate in the same language, on the same level with the postmodernists. In the next chapter we shall see what a different kind of criticism was to come at the end of the 90s with the Bologna Process, an extra-academic criticism that was going to change the game in town.

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pleinement leur fonction critique dans la mesure où elles sont institutionnalisées en pseudo-appareil idéologique d'État par le biais de publications universitaires, de départements de recherche, etc. Reste qu'elles ont désormais à réfléchir les phénomènes de mondialisation et de substitution du management au politique et qu'elles se trouvent en cela confrontées à un défi de taille : repenser leur rapport au normatif et, au-delà, le normatif lui-même." Anne Chalard-Fillaudeau and Gérard Raulet, "Pour une critique des «sciences de la culture»," *L'Homme et la société* 149, no. 3 (2003), http://www.cairn.info/article.php?ID_ARTICLE=LHS_149_0003#s1n2

Chapter 2. Educating the Many: The Bologna Process as Paradigm Change

2.1 The Bologna Process: A Short Introduction

A brief definition of what Bologna Process (BP) stands for would include the following aspects: It is a voluntary intergovernmental policy that aims to standardise study programmes and degrees[136] in order to facilitate mobility of students and teaching staff; this policy is made through regular ministerial meetings - usually scheduled every two years: "The Bologna process refers to this intergovernmental arrangement of nearly all European countries, both EU and non-EU members, plus the European Commission, which meet more or less regularly to discuss the actions agreed upon."[137] The initial goal of the process was to create a European Area of Higher Education by 2010 and now, once the EHEA has been created, to further expand this area. The EHEA is comprised of 46 European countries, not all of them members of the EU. The word 'Europe' in the EHEA does not designate the continent Europe, nor the EU. The EHEA is roughly coincidental with the Council of Europe[138] since the criterion for inclusion in the Bologna Process is the previous signing of the European Cultural Convention and all members of the Council of Europe have signed it.

The Bologna lines of action have changed during the last 15 years, mostly by adding new goals to the previous ones or by shifting priorities. As of 2009 the latest goals for the next decade, as stated in the BFUG plan, were the following: "Social dimension: equitable access and completion; lifelong learning; employability; student-centred learning and the teaching mission of higher education; education, research and innovation; international openness; mobility; data collection; multidimensional transparency tools; funding."[139]

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[136] Julia Horstschräer and Maresa Sprietsma, "The Effects of the Bologna Process on College Enrollment and Drop-out Rates: Discussion Paper No. 10-018," ZEW Discussion Papers, accessed March 11, 2014, ftp://ftp.zew.de/pub/zew-docs/dp/dp10018.pdf, 22.

[137] Bob Reinalda and Ewa Kulesza, *The Bologna Process: Harmonizing Europe's Higher Education, Including the Essential Original Texts* (Opladen: Budrich, 2005), 9.

[138] Only two members of the Council of Europe are not members of the Bologna Process: Monaco and San Marino. Two other countries are member of the Bologna Process but are not members of the Council: Kazakhstan and the Holy See.

[139] "BFUG Work Plan 2009-2012," accessed March 8, 2014,

While the BP is an intergovernmental process, its effects take place simultaneously at three levels of governance: Supranational, national and university level, which makes it a complex and dynamic process.[140] The main actors that play a part in it are the 46 signatory countries which are not all members of the EU and the EU Commission. Other consultative members are the Council of Europe, UNESCO, European Centre for Higher Education, European University Association, European Association of Institutions in Higher Education, European Students' Union, European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, Education International Pan-European Structure and BUSINESSEUROPE.[141]

The BP uses the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) as the main way to implement its policies. OMC is an intergovernmental method of so-called soft law in which the states agree on a line of action and then implement it under the surveillance of the Commission, but there are no sanctions in case of failure. The main force of OMC is the "peer pressure" that is generated by other member states. The OMC takes soft law measures "which are binding on the Member States in varying degrees but which never take the form of directives, regulations or decisions."[142]

The OMC was an instrument introduced by the EU in 2000 at the Lisbon Summit and the initial purpose was to "designed to promote a European problem-solving approach in the field of employment" but, as Sabrina Regent has shown, since then it has expanded to other more sensitive policy areas which were previously of national competence such as "the fight against poverty and social exclusion, as well as pensions, immigration, education and youth issues."[143] It is interesting to notice that the BP is using an instrument of soft-law designed and promoted by the EU, even though the BP includes non-EU members and it positions itself as an autonomous process from the

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http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/Bologna/actionlines/documents/Bologna_work_plan_2009-2012_07-02-2010.pdf
    [140] Beverly Barrett, "Comparative Regional Perspectives: the Bologna Process and Higher Education Attainment" Jean Monnet/Robert Schuman Paper Series Vol 13 No. 11 (August 2013) (unpublished manuscript, November 2, 2013), http://www.as.miami.edu/eucenter/papers/Barrett_ComparativeRegionsBolognaProcess.pdf, 4.
    [141] See the complete list of members here: http://www.ehea.info/members.aspx
    [142] http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/glossary/open_method_coordination_en.htm
    [143] Sabrina Regent, "The Open Method of Coordination: A New Supranational Form of Governance?," *European Law Journal* 9, no. 2 (2003): 190.

EU, while collaborating tightly with it.

The OMC emphasises the voluntary nature of the steps agreed on by the participating countries. However, some authors claim that countries joined the BP because of the fear of being left out. "In the Bologna Process, several countries are policy-makers and most others are policy-takers. Even though most countries are policy-takers, there is willingness to be part of the Bologna Process since it is better to be part of the group than left out of the group, given the participation of most countries in Europe."[144] This means that countries that do not comply may incur in social but not strictly speaking legal sanctions. According to Regent, OMC is an effective method of enforcement because it "provides a soft framework for hard law interventions and has its own methods of sanctioning. It is flexible enough to be adapted to complex realities, but, at the same time, establishes a follow-up system that significantly limits the scope for circumvention."[145]

The lines of action are decided every two years by the ministerial conferences and then implemented by every country at its own pace. But since there is no permanent presidency or board to supervise the BP, the managing tasks are transferred each two years to the next country that organises the ministerial conference.

> "Its organizational basis, compared to the Commission on the one hand and the member states and other Bologna countries on the other, remains fragile. There is no permanent secretariat of any size or scale. Nor did the signatory states embark upon building up a (semi-) permanent administration with an executive capacity to support the pursuit of the process."[146]

The BP was prepared by several historical precedents of European programmes aimed at promoting mobility for students and university staff. The first example is the Erasmus Programme (European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students) which was launched in 1987 with the support of the European Commission; its initial aim was to promote student and teacher mobility between European universities for at least a semester and maximum an academic year. Already from the launch of the programme, a practical problem arose: How to recognise the different

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[144] Barrett, 6.
[145] Regent 191.
[146] Guy Neave and Peter Maassen, "The Bologna Process: An Intergovernmental Policy Perspective," in *University Dynamics and European Integration*, ed. Peter Maassen and Johan P. Olsen, 1. ed, Higher Education Dynamics 19 (Berlin [u.a.]: Springer, 2007), 135–53, 137.

study programmes and transfer the grades acquired outside in the home university system? The 87/327/EEC Council decision recommended the use of ECTS (European Community Course Credit Transfer System) in the participating universities and allocated some funds for the universities willing to implement this system.

The Erasmus Programme was very popular among students and soon the need for degree and course recognition among the participating universities grew stronger. In this context the Lisbon Recognition Convention was adopted in 1997. The Lisbon Convention was initiated by the Council of Europe and UNESCO and is signed by 55 states up to date, some of which are not members of the Council of Europe. The Lisbon Convention provided the formal framework for joint degrees and inter-university programmes, and some authors stress that this is "the only legal document within the Bologna Process."[147] In the same time there were several regional initiatives among EU states for promoting student and teacher mobility: "Nordplus (Nordic countries, 1988), Pushing Back the Borders (the Netherlands, Flemish Community of Belgium and three German Länder, 1991), Ceepus (Central European Exchange Programme for University Studies, 1993) etc."[148]

Following the fall of the Berlin wall, the TEMPUS programme[149] was launched in 1990 in order to facilitate cooperation of Western European countries with the new neighbours from Eastern and Central Europe. TEMPUS was also a programme of mobility for students and teachers but with the specific aim to have East-West exchanges, rather than in any other direction. Its main purpose was to modernise the old Eastern educational systems and bring them up to date with the rest of Europe.

Even though, in the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, article 126 specifically excluded "any harmonization of the laws and regulations of the Member States"[150] with regard to

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[147] Pavel Zgaga, *Looking Out: The Bologna Process in a Global Setting* (Oslo, Norway, 2006), http://www.see-educoop.net/education_in/pdf/06%20Bologna_Global_final_report.pdf, 18.

[148] Pavel Zgaga, *Higher Education in Transition: Reconsiderations on Higher Education in Europe at the Turn of Millennium,* Monographs on Journal of research in teacher education 2007 (Umeå: Umeå University, 2007), 21–22.

[149] "Tempus is the European Union's programme which supports the modernisation of higher education in the Partner Countries of Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Western Balkans and the Mediterranean region, mainly through university cooperation projects." Source: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/tempus/index_en.php

[150] European Union, "Treaty on European Union (TEU)," Official Journal C 191, accessed March 13, 2014, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/en/treaties/dat/11992M/htm/11992M.html

education, thus leaving education again within the exclusive competence of the member states, at the same time the Maastricht Treaty called for the promotion of a "European dimension" in education and the "development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member States"[151] again through mobility and degree recognition. This could explain why the Bologna Process was developed as an intergovernmental policy area and not an EU policy area.

The BP was created within the favourable circumstances of increasing mobility and gradual standardisation of academic degrees. In a way the first Bologna agreement did not add anything new or revolutionary to its historical precedents. However, if we relate it to the Maastricht Treaty, the BP looks like an extension to the Treaty because the Bologna Process started creating policies in an area where the EU had stopped abruptly. According to Guy Neave, "the EU member states that signed the [Bologna] Declaration were prepared to yield on the principle of harmonization, at least in an intergovernmental setting."[152]

It is hard, in effect, to separate Bologna from other educational integration processes such as the Lisbon Process because reforms from one side are responding to policies relating to or originating within other processes; sometimes these policies "intersect, cross and meld."[153] But one could say that the BP together with the Lisbon Recognition Convention, TEMPUS, and Erasmus Mundus form a conglomerate of programmes that strongly promote internationalisation of European higher education institutions through mobility.

In this favourable internationalising context outlined above, the BP added its own interpretation of what it means to be an international university. Thus the BP focused mostly on student and staff mobility, and saw mobility as "a main tool of internationalisation."[154]. In the beginning the BP gave a mostly cultural reading of what it meant to internationalise, thus distancing itself from the economic or social aspects that were the focus of Lisbon 2000. Neave claims that because of this cultural focus, BP

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[151] Ibid.
[152] Neave and Maassen 140.
[153] Ibid., 135.
[154] EACEA, "The European Higher Education Area in 2012: Bologna Process Implementation Report," 151.

was subordinating itself to the "central vision of Europe as a cultural entity."[155] Only in 2003, with the *Berlin Communiqué*, the BP included the economic dimension when referring to university's role in the knowledge economy.[156] This added complexity to the way the BP works. In the following section we shall see in more detail some of the BP mechanisms.

2.2 The Bologna *Communiqués*

On the 19th of June 1999, in Bologna, 29 European ministers of education gathered to sign the Bologna Declaration that was going to set in motion a process of educational reform throughout Europe, the so-called Bologna Process (BP). The declaration stated several general goals such as: Making the European higher education more competitive internationally, promoting mobility for students and teachers, co-operation in Quality Assurance and promoting a certain "European dimension in higher education". The specific steps outlined in the declaration were the following: 1) introduction of the diploma supplement as a way to recognise studies outside the national system; 2) division of university studies in two cycles, undergraduate and graduate; 3) implementing a system of credits that would facilitate student mobility.[157]

This historical declaration was prepared by three previous meetings. In 1988 the University of Bologna was celebrating its 900th anniversary, making it effectively the oldest European university still functioning. On this occasion 388 vice-chancellors of universities from eighty countries signed the *Magna Charta Universitatum Europaeum*, a document in which they stated the need for creating stronger bonds and cooperation among European universities.[158] In April 1997 the Council of Europe together with UNESCO elaborated the *Lisbon Convention* in which they established a legal framework for the recognition of studies among the signatory countries; 55 states have signed the Lisbon Convention until now.[159] In May 1998 the four ministers of education from France, Germany, Italy and the UK issued the *Sorbonne Declaration* in Paris in which they called for further steps in the harmonisation of the European education, and

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[155] Neave and Maassen 140.
[156] Ibid., 143.
[157] European Ministers of Education, The Bologna Declaration of 19 June 1999
[158] European Universities delegates, *Magna Charta Universitatu*m

for the creation of a European Higher Education Area.

These three previous steps led to the adoption of the Bologna Declaration in 1999 which was envisioned to be a long process, signposted every two years with meetings between the ministers of education and other stakeholders. These meetings usually resulted in official *communiqués* and declarations titled after their signing place: *Communiqué of Prague* in 2001, the *Berlin Communiqué* in 2003, *Bergen Communiqué* in 2005, *London Communiqué* in 2007, *Leuven Communiqué* in 2009, *Budapest-Vienna Declaration* in 2010, and the *Bucharest Communiqué* in 2012. The following ministerial conference will take place in 2015, in Yerevan, Armenia.

In almost each ministerial meeting the number of signatories increased and several new lines of action were added. In Prague, 2001, there were three new lines of action added to the previous six, while the European Commission received the "special status of an additional full member." Several structures were created such as a Bologna Follow Up Group (BFUG) with the task of supervising the implementation of the action plan during the years between the conferences, a Bologna Preparatory Group (BGP) which was in charge of preparing the next ministerial meeting, and a BFUG Board - all these structures grant only temporary membership, there is no one who is a permanent member of any structure.[160] In 2003, in Berlin, three intermediate priorities were defined for the nine initial action lines: Quality assurance, the two-cycle degree system, and the recognition of degrees and periods of study; also a tenth action line concerning doctoral studies was added.[161] For the first time, in London, in 2007, the goal of social inclusion was added and it was cast as a priority for the next two years together with increasing the student mobility. In Leuven, 2009, while reiterating the previously stated goals, the ministers stressed the need for student-centred learning outcomes. In 2010 the anniversary conference held in Vienna and Budapest celebrated the completion of the European Higher Education Area - which had been the initial goal in 1999. The future conferences were meant to strengthen and expand this area.[162]

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[159] http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/ChercheSig.asp?NT=165&CM=8&CL=ENG
[160] Reinalda and Kulesza, *The Bologna Process,* 25–26.
[161] Ibid., 28–29.
[162] Europa.eu, "The Bologna Process: Setting up the European Higher Education Area," 2010, accessed March 8, 2014,

The Bologna Process was a disruptive event for higher education in Europe. But in order to understand the changes that the process brought about, a look at how the policy was developed and what were its guiding principles is necessary. Starting from 1999, when the BP was initiated, ministers of education from the signatory countries together with several other consultative members meet every two years and issue a *communiqué*. The *communiqués* issued after each ministerial conference are the most appropriate case study for a textual analysis because these constitute the official position of the ministers, representing signatory countries, and give a relatively accurate picture of the evolution of the EHEA policy every two years. As pointed out by many authors, the BP is a "moving target"[163] because new goals are added after each ministerial conference and some key terms are redefined or emphasised differently. The *communiqués* are not legal documents and look very much like press statements with the message 'We, the ministers of education, want to reach these goals.' Therefore, these documents are representative not of what actually is going on in the policy and implementation cycle, but of the aims and purposes that are supposed to guide the political and administrative action of implementing the policy. Sometimes, the *communiqués* also include short summaries of the results achieved so far, acknowledgements of the other stakeholders' points of view and organisational statements about what will follow next.

The analysis of the documents will be looking for the following themes: 1) what is the main mission of education in the EHEA vision; 2) what are the graduates supposed to become after their studies; 3) how are the students described. These three themes will help us outline an answer to the main question: Who is being educated in the Bologna Process?

A Prehistory of the Bologna Process: Magna Charta and Sorbonne

In 1988, with the occasion of the 900th anniversary of the University of Bologna, 380 vice-Chancellors of European universities signed the *Magna Charta Universitatum* in which they reaffirmed the Humboldtian ideals of the university as an entity independent from political and ideological interventions, having as main role to produce culture and

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http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/lifelong_learning/c11088_en.htm

[163] Barbara M. Kehm, "The Future of the Bologna Process - The Bologna Process of the Future," *European Journal of Education* 45, no. 4 (2010): 529.

independent research: "To meet the needs of the world around it, its research and teaching must be morally and intellectually independent of all political authority and intellectually independent of all political authority and economic power."[164]

They also re-stated the Humboldtian principle of the inseparability of teaching from research: "Teaching and research in universities must be inseparable if their tuition is not to lag behind changing needs, the demands of society, and advances in scientific knowledge."[165] The document states that universities have a duty to serve society, while the society needs to finance the universities because this is an investment in the very future of society. It is worth emphasising here that *Magna Charta* has a universalistic message, it mentions society in general, and does not concern itself with allegiances towards a certain state or region. The university should serve humankind in general. This is important to keep in mind because the future BP documents will have a strong focus on Europe, promoting a sort of regional patriotism. The "European humanist tradition" appears once in the text and is used to argue that the university vocation "transcends geographical and political frontiers"[166] and therefore the objective of university education should be "universal knowledge." Education is conceived to fulfil a generational and cultural purpose: "Universities must give future generations education and training that will teach them, and through them others, to respect the great harmonies of their natural environment and of life itself."[167] In order to achieve its purpose, the university needs autonomy conceived as: a) freedom to choose what it researches and teaches; b) freedom of recruiting its staff; c) freedom of students, and d) free exchange of information and documents among universities, also teacher and student exchanges.

We must keep in mind that the *Magna Charta* was not signed by politicians, but by university vice-chancellors. The document does bring up the needs of the society, but these are addressed by activities that the university has always been doing, namely independent research and research-based teaching. The duty of the university towards society is construed as the mission to discover and disseminate knowledge; this mission, it is claimed, cannot be fulfilled unless society recognises the political autonomy of the

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[164] European Universities delegates, *Magna Charta Universitatu*m
[165] Ibid.
[166] Ibid.

university.

Ten years later, in 1998, the *Sorbonne Declaration* was signed by the four ministers of education from France, the UK, Germany and Italy. A radical change of discourse is already visible in this declaration. The document starts by mentioning the policy-area 'Europe of Knowledge' and construes the mission of the university to be the following: To "strengthen and build upon the intellectual, cultural, social and technical dimensions of our continent."[168] The Sorbonne declaration appears to be a narrow-scope document that aims to create a framework between the four countries in order to facilitate international mobility of students. However, its meaning is most obvious when read in parallel with the Commission's Communication entitled *Towards a Europe of Knowledge,* issued one year earlier, in 1997, through which the policy area 'Europe of Knowledge' was launched.

The Communication starts with a prevision about the future: As they are entering the 'knowledge society,' this inevitable transition requires certain measures from the EU member countries. The focus of these measures is on education, research and innovation:

> "Real wealth creation will henceforth be linked to the production and dissemination of knowledge and will depend first and foremost on our efforts in the field of research, education and training and on our capacity to promote innovation. This is why we must fashion a veritable 'Europe of knowledge'."[169]

In the field of education, three educational areas must be developed: Knowledge, citizenship and competence. It is important to cite here how the Commission defines the citizenship and competence areas, because these definitions will be used almost verbatim in the next Bologna documents. Thus, education for citizenship will focus on promoting the EU values:

> "The sharing of common values, and the development of a sense of belonging to a common social and cultural area. It must encourage a broader-based understanding of citizenship, founded on active solidarity and on mutual

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[167] Ibid.

[168] Claude Allègre et al., "Sorbonne Declaration: (Joint Declaration on Harmonisation of the Architecture of the European Higher Education System) by the four Ministers in charge for France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom. Paris, the Sorbonne, May 25 1998," accessed November 23, 2013, http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/pdf/Sorbonne_declaration.pdf

[169] Commission of the European Communities, "Towards a Europe of Knowledge: Commission Communication," 51997DC0563 (1997): 1, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:51997DC0563

understanding of the cultural diversities that constitute Europe's originality and richness."[170]

Competence-based education is linked with employability, and its necessity is explained by the changing nature of the jobs which will require flexibility and life-long learning:

> "Developing employability through the acquisition of competencies made necessary through changes in work and its organisation. This means that it is necessary to promote on a lifelong basis creativity, flexibility, adaptability, the ability to 'learn to learn' and to solve problems. These are the conditions we must meet in order to overcome the now-rapid obsolescence of skills. Activities must be developed which help towards anticipating needs and towards the evolution of job profiles."[171]

Finally, the Commission encourages six types of action, among which we quote mobility, virtual mobility (online learning), and the creation of cooperation networks among universities. The legal basis of this policy-area was to be found in the Articles 126 and 127 of the Treaty establishing the European Community (TEC) which were concerned with the recognition of professional diplomas.

Responding to the Commission's request to create cooperation networks in the field of education, four EU members (France, the UK, Germany and Italy) signed the *Sorbonne Declaration* which must be read as an implementation of the Commission's requests through the European Area of Higher Education. The EHEA was created to be "in the benefit "of Europe, of its students, and more generally of its citizens."[172] While the declaration speaks of Europe, the continent, it is clearly referring to EU citizens through its reference to the 'Europe of Knowledge' policy area; furthermore, legally speaking, there is no such thing as a 'European citizen' unless it is taken as a short-hand for 'EU citizens'.

The *Sorbonne Declaration* mentions the duty of the university towards society, and this duty is not knowledge spreading, but helping students "to seek and find their own area of excellence."[173] This area of excellence could mean anything, including research. But the ending directs the reader into a narrower understanding of 'excellence', namely employability: "We hereby commit ourselves to encouraging a common frame of

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[170] Ibid., 3
[171] Ibid.
[172] Allègre et al.
[173] Ibid.

reference, aimed at improving external recognition and facilitating student mobility as well as employability"[174]

In contrast with the *Magna Charta*, which conceived of universities as united by their disinterested pursuit of knowledge and education, in the *Sorbonne Declaration* universities are united by their Europeanity and the need to serve the citizens of the EU. The document ends with a 'call to arms' for other states to join:

> "We call on other Member States of the Union and other European countries to join us in this objective and on all European Universities to consolidate Europe's standing in the world through continuously improved and updated education for its citizens."[175]

The Bologna Declaration of 1999

After the *Sorbonne Declaration,* several ministers of education from other countries were offended that they had not been included in the harmonisation process for mobility and employability, therefore a year later the *Bologna Declaration* was drafted to include more members. There is a radical shift in discourse visible between the Bologna *Magna Charta* of 1988 and the *Bologna Declaration* of 1999. One of the reasons is the identity of the drafters: The *Bologna Declaration* was a political document signed by ministers of education, while the *Magna Charta* was a statement issued by universities and signed by vice-chancellors. In spite of the difference in vision, the *Bologna Declaration* mentions the *Magna Charta* and uses it as a legitimation device because, in a document about the mission of the universities, the absence of the university's voice would have been considered inappropriate. The reference to the *Magna Charta* fills this void and is taken to be the *ersatz* representative of the universities:

> "European higher education institutions, for their part, have accepted the challenge and taken up a main role in constructing the European area of higher education, also in the wake of the fundamental principles laid down in the Bologna Magna Charta Universitatum of 1988. This is of the highest importance, given that Universities' independence and autonomy ensure that higher education and research systems continuously adapt to changing needs, society's demands and advances in scientific knowledge."[176]

The idea of a common European higher education area is taken from the *Sorbonne Declaration* while the principles of political autonomy and independence from the

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[174] Ibid.
[175] Ibid.

Magna Charta are now seen as instrumental for the changing needs of society. While in the *Magna Charta* society's needs were not specified, these remain unspecified in the *Bologna Declaration* but they are to be read as the needs already mentioned in the *Sorbonne Declaration* and the Commission Communication, i.e the needs of a 'Europe of Knowledge' to have educated, employable, competent citizens. The *Bologna Declaration* mentions the policy area 'Europe of Knowledge' and also introduces the idea of competitivity for the first time, as borrowed from the Commission's document.

The ministers motivate the "objective of increasing the international competitiveness of the European system of higher education"[177] by appealing to the idea of civilisation's vitality: "The vitality and efficiency of any civilisation can be measured by the appeal that its culture has for other countries."[178] The idea that a civilisation has vitality or life, much like a biological organism, and that it can decay or even die, has been proposed by historian Oswald Spengler[179] in his book *Decline of the West: Perspectives of World History* (1919). The idea of a living civilisation implies the possibility of death as a veiled threat that must be overcome. This foreshadows the discourse based on threats and risks that will be omnipresent later in the Bologna documents. The idea that a civilisation spreads through its culture might be loosely based on another historian's major work, Samuel Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order (1997)*[180] where he proposed the theory that conflicts between civilisations happen at cultural level. One conclusion would be that, if a civilisation wants to encroach on other parts of the world, it must first promote its culture. The idea of "efficiency" of a civilisation is however new, also the goal of measuring this efficiency. It foreshadows the focus on measurements and quality frameworks that will become the hallmark of the Bologna Process. Competitivity is here introduced as a desirable objective, but in the later documents it will be construed as a threat.

At this initial point of the process, the main goal of the EHEA is presented as the promoting of student and teacher mobility. The document outlines the ways in which

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[176] European Ministers of Education, *The Bologna Declaration* of 19 June 1999
[177] Ibid.
[178] Ibid.
[179] Although he used the concept "culture" for what we understand today to be "civilisation."
[180] Although Huntington's book appeared only two years before the Bologna Declaration, it was immensely popular and it is conceivable that the drafters of the Bologna Declaration had heard some of the ideas which were discussed in intellectual circles at that time.

the widespread mobility will be achieved through the EHEA construction:

-"Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees" (this was already established in the Lisbon convention);

- "Adoption of a system essentially based on two main cycles, undergraduate and graduate" (it was already in place everywhere, but the way they will do it later will be new, by shortening the duration of undergraduate studies, the famous 3-2-3 system);

- "Establishment of a system of credits - such as in the ECTS system - as a proper means of promoting the most widespread student mobility" (the ECTS was already in place, promoted by the Lisbon convention);

-"Promotion of mobility by overcoming obstacles to the effective exercise of free movement" (this is a new objective);

-"Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance with a view to developing comparable criteria and methodologies" (this is new and will play an important part later);

- "Promotion of the necessary European dimensions in higher education" (this is new but the 'European dimension' is undefined). This particular point is a clash with the *Magna Charta* which was universalistic and conceived the duty of university as towards the humanity as a whole.

If we separate only the new additions of the *Bologna Declaration* to the EU discourse on higher education, and if we exclude the advancements already brought by the previous mobility agreements and the Lisbon convention, we are left only with the European dimension and the quality assurance. These aspects will gain more weight with every following *communiqué* and will become independent goals, but in the 1999 moment they were subordinated to the mobility goal.

Prague Communiqué (2001)

In 1999 the ministers had decided to create the EHEA on their own, as national representatives, assuming to be spoke-persons for the universities also. Soon afterwards, the student representatives held two meetings at European level where they asked to be involved in the BP and acknowledged as stakeholders. Therefore the *Prague Communiqué* introduced three new stakeholders: The students (represented by their

unions EUA and ESIB), the EU Commission and the higher education institutions.

> "Ministers also took note of the constructive assistance of the European Commission. [...] They supported the idea that higher education should be considered a public good and is and will remain a public responsibility (regulations etc.), and that students are full members of the higher education community."[181]

The *Prague Communiqué* adds three new lines of action to the previous six: Lifelong learning, involvement of the universities and students as partners, and promotion the attractiveness of the EHEA on an international level.

The subjects of education are the citizens - who need recognition of degrees in order to be mobile and employed across borders, therefore the universities need to implement all the ECTS system. The ECTS and mutually recognised diplomas will "facilitate students' access to the European labour market and enhance the compatibility, attractiveness and competitiveness of European higher education."[182]

The *Berlin Communiqué* (2003)

In 2003, three intermediate priorities were defined for the nine initial action lines: Quality assurance, the two-cycle degree system, and the recognition of degrees and periods of study; also a tenth action line concerning doctoral studies was added.[183]

Competitivity was linked with the social mission, as to make it clearer that the competition is not among the citizens themselves, but that all are competing together as a continent.

> "The need to increase competitiveness must be balanced with the objective of improving the social characteristics of the European Higher Education Area, aiming at strengthening social cohesion and reducing social and gender inequalities both at national and at European level."[184]

For the first time the ministers stated that education has multiple purposes, not just

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[181] European Ministers of Education, "Towards the European Higher Education Area: Communiqué of the Meeting of European Ministers in Charge of Higher Education in Prague on May 19th 2001," 2001
[182] Ibid.
[183] Reinalda and Kulesza, *The Bologna Process*, 28–29.
[184] European Ministers of Education, "Realising the European Higher Education Area: *Communiqué* of the Conference of Ministers Responsible for Higher Education in Berlin on 19 September 2003," 2003

employability for the labour market, as there are also individual and academic needs: "First and second cycle degrees should have different orientations and various profiles in order to accommodate a diversity of individual, academic and labour market needs."[185] However, in the future documents education will be consistently linked only with employability and lifelong learning.

The *Bergen Communiqué* (2005)

At the beginning of every *communiqué* the ministers re-iterate the commitment of the universities as if to remind that they have the support of the university, in almost a ritualistic fashion. The *Bergen Communiqué* makes no exception: "We welcome the clear commitment of higher education institutions across Europe to the Process"[186] A consensus is constructed through this phrase which does not reflect the diversity of opinions on Bologna, as the critical voices coming from the university did not lack. Ruth Keeling thinks the discursive shift in higher education policies grants more autonomy to universities from the state, and this might be one of the reasons why universities have adopted the new language. "By adopting and contributing to this hybridised research-Bologna policy discourse, universities are able to redefine their missions positively, representing themselves as the 'powerhouses' of the new Europe"[187]

The list of stakeholders increases now with the social partners - unspecified, but needed to accomplish the social inclusion goal:

> "Furthermore, there is a need for greater dialogue, involving Governments, institutions and social partners, to increase the employability of graduates with bachelor qualifications, including in appropriate posts within the public service."[188]

The Commission, as one of the stakeholders, seems to gain more and more importance.

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[185] Ibid.

[186] European Ministers of Education, "The European Higher Education Area - Achieving the Goals. Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, Bergen, 19-20 May 2005," 2005

[187] Ruth Keeling, "The Bologna Process and the Lisbon Research Agenda: the European Commission's Expanding Role in Higher Education Discourse," *European Journal of Education* 41, no. 2 (2006): 214.

[188] European Ministers of Education, *Bergen Communiqué*

In the last two *communiqués* the EU Commission was acknowledged - as an interested party - but now it is needed and its consultative services are requested: "We ask the European Commission fully to consult all parties to the Bologna Process as work progresses."[189]

Doctoral studies, usually considered as leading to a strictly academic path, are now aligned with the goal of employability. Doctoral students need to be employable as well, perhaps as to fulfil their role in the innovation economy: "We urge universities to ensure that their doctoral programmes promote interdisciplinary training and the development of transferable skills, thus meeting the needs of the wider employment market."[190]

European education needs to be attractive for international students, as to make it more competitive:

> "The European Higher Education Area must be open and should be attractive to other parts of the world. Our contribution to achieving education for all should be based on the principle of sustainable development and be in accordance with the ongoing international work on developing guidelines for quality provision of cross-border higher education."[191]

The idea that Europe's economy and competitiveness hangs on its education, taken from the '*Towards a Europe of Knowledge*' communication is re-iterated here: "As higher education is situated at the crossroads of research, education and innovation, it is also the key to Europe's competitiveness."[192] The cultural heritage is linked with the knowledge society in an unexplained way: "We must cherish our rich heritage and cultural diversity in contributing to a knowledge-based society."[193]

The *London Communiqué* (2007)

In the 2007 *communiqué* one can find a list of all the purposes that higher education institutions should aim for, according to the Bologna vision. These purposes start with citizenship, and include employment, innovation and increasing the knowledge base. The latter should be read as synonymous with increasing the human capital:

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[189] Ibid.
[190] Ibid.
[191] Ibid.
[192] Ibid.

> "Our aim is to ensure that our HEIs [higher education institutions] have the necessary resources to continue to fulfil their full range of purposes. Those purposes include: preparing students for life as active citizens in a democratic society; preparing students for their future careers and enabling their personal development; creating and maintaining a broad, advanced knowledge base; and stimulating research and innovation."[194]

Student- centred education appears for the first time in the *London Communiqué*: "A significant outcome of the process will be a move towards student-centred higher education and away from teacher driven provision."[195] All the *communiqués* re-iterate the 'Europe of Knowledge' goals, namely competitivity and attractivity of Europe linked to employability and mobility, which implies that 'Europe of Knowledge' is the main goal of the EHEA.

The employers are added to the previous list of stakeholders: "Governments and HEIs will need to communicate more with employers and other stakeholders on the rationale for their reforms."[196] Higher education is now cast in the role of smoothing out social problems and solving inequalities.

> "Higher education should play a strong role in fostering social cohesion, reducing inequalities and raising the level of knowledge, skills and competences in society. Policy should therefore aim to maximise the potential of individuals in terms of their personal development and their contribution to a sustainable and democratic knowledge-based society."[197]

Andreas Fejes has argued that the idea behind this is that, if people are enabled to become more employable through education, the authorities do not need to pursue other reforms, for example by regulating the labour market. In the end, if the employable graduate did not find a job, it must be her fault, the State did everything it could by providing education. This marks a "shift from a social state to an enabling state, where the state should make it possible for the citizen to make active choices."[198]

The *Leuven Communiqué* (2009)

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[193] Ibid.

[194] European Ministers of Education, "*London Communiqué*: Towards the European Higher Education Area: Responding to Challenges in a Globalised World," 2007, 1–2.

[195] Ibid., 2.

[196] Ibid., 6.

[197] Ibid., 5.

[198] Andreas Fejes, "Discourses on Employability: Constituting the Responsible Citizen," *Studies in Continuing Education* 32, no. 2 (2010): 100.

A recurring and interesting aspect is that the future challenges of society are mentioned in every *communiqué* as a justification for the BP, but these challenges are not described; until the *Leuven Communiqué,* where the future challenges are finally spelt-out: The ageing population, the digital revolution, globalisation and the economic crisis.

> "Faced with the challenge of an ageing population Europe can only succeed in this endeavour if it maximises the talents and capacities of all its citizens and fully engages in lifelong learning as well as in widening participation in higher education […] the major challenge and the ensuing opportunities of globalisation and accelerated technological developments with new providers, new learners and new types of learning."[199]

Higher education is presented as the solution to get out of the economic crisis:

> "Our societies currently face the consequences of a global financial and economic crisis. In order to bring about sustainable economic recovery and development, a dynamic and flexible European higher education will strive for innovation on the basis of the integration between education and research at all levels."[200]

In 2009 the purposes of education, besides employability, now include social cohesion and a cultural development: "Various missions of higher education, ranging from teaching and research to community service and engagement in social cohesion and cultural development."[201] The social cohesion mission is linked to the citizenship aim of education: "Student-centred learning and mobility will help students develop the competences they need in a changing labour market and will empower them to become active and responsible citizens."[202] Mobility is also brought on board to contribute to the creation of the respectful and multicultural European citizen:

> "Mobility is important for personal development and employability, it fosters respect for diversity and a capacity to deal with other cultures. It encourages linguistic pluralism, thus underpinning the multilingual tradition of the European Higher Education Area and it increases cooperation and competition between higher education institutions."[203]

The *Budapest-Vienna Declaration* (2010)

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[199] European Ministers of Education, "The Bologna Process 2020 - The European Higher Education Area in the New Decade: *Communiqué* of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve, 28-29 April 2009," 2009, 1.
[200] Ibid.
[201] Ibid., 2.
[202] Ibid., 1.
[203] Ibid., 4.

In 2010 the quality assurance agencies are added to the list of stakeholders which keeps growing:

> "In a unique partnership between public authorities, higher education institutions, students and staff, together with employers, quality assurance agencies, international organisations and European institutions, we have engaged in a series of reforms to build a European Higher Education Area based on trust, cooperation and respect for the diversity of cultures, languages, and higher education systems."[204]

For the first time some critical voices are mentioned, but the ministers attribute the critique to a lack in communication, because it seems people have not received the right explanations:

> "Recent protests in some countries, partly directed against developments and measures not related to the Bologna Process, have reminded us that some of the Bologna aims and reforms have not been properly implemented and explained. We acknowledge and will listen to the critical voices raised among staff and students."[205]

The *Bucharest Communiqué* (2012)

This *communiqué* is the lengthiest and the most troubled by the financial crisis.

Education is presented again as the solution to an economic crisis:

> "Europe is undergoing an economic and financial crisis with damaging societal effects. Within the field of higher education, the crisis is affecting the availability of adequate funding and making graduates' job prospects more uncertain. Higher education is an important part of the solution to our current difficulties. Strong and accountable higher education systems provide the foundations for thriving knowledge societies. Higher education should be at the heart of our efforts to overcome the crisis – now more than ever."[206]

This *communiqué* presents the concept of Competence Based Education and Training (CBET) as the assumed orthodoxy among educational practises, while singling out the entrepreneurial potential of these skills:

> "Today's graduates need to combine transversal, multidisciplinary and innovation skills and competences with up-to-date subject-specific knowledge so as to be able to contribute to the wider needs of society and the labour market. We aim to enhance the employability and personal and professional development of

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[204] European Ministers of Education, "Budapest-Vienna Declaration on the European Higher Education Area," 2010.

[205] Ibid.

[206] European Ministers of Education, "*Bucharest Communiqué*: Making the Most of Our Potential: Consolidating the European Higher Education Area," 47 (2012): 1.

graduates throughout their careers. We will achieve this by improving cooperation between employers, students and higher education institutions, especially in the development of study programmes that help increase the innovation, entrepreneurial and research potential of graduates."[207]

This is the only *communiqué* which might remind the reader of one of the guiding features of the idea of *Bildung*, i.e. the critical thinking, yet this is cast as just another skill for employability, a component of the entrepreneurial personality construction:

> "Higher education should be an open process in which students develop intellectual independence and personal self-assuredness alongside disciplinary knowledge and skills. Through the pursuit of academic learning and research, students should acquire the ability confidently to assess situations and ground their actions in critical thought."[208]

2.3 The Subject of Education after Bologna: The Employable European Citizen

In this section we want to describe who is the subject of education according to the Bologna *communiqués* and what it entails for higher education policies. We shall argue that the educational subject of BP is the European citizen defined in a narrow understanding as the mobile and employable European.

The year 2014 marked the anniversary of 15 years since the Bologna Process was put in motion, a process which some authors characterise as "possibly the deepest and most far reaching higher education reform process since World War II."[209] On this occasion, the former German minister of education, Edelgard Bulmahn, one of the signatories of the Bologna Declaration in 1999, declared in a press statement what had been the Bologna vision:

> "We had a vision: Europe should not only be an economic space, not only a labour market, not only a political entity, but rather a cultural, social and a strong scientific unit. And so the Bologna Process was born."[210]

This declaration might remind some of Jean Monnet's words about the EU: "If I had to do it again, I would begin with culture." In 1992 the Treaty of Maastricht included for

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[207] Ibid., 2

[208] Ibid.

[209] Kehm 530.

[210] ""Wir hatten eine Vision", sagt Edelgard Bulmahn, die damals als Bildungsministerin für Deutschland dabei war: "Europa sollte nicht nur Wirtschaftsraum, nicht nur Arbeitsmarkt, nicht nur eine politische Einheit sein, sondern eben auch eine kulturelle, eine soziale und eine starke wissenschaftliche Einheit bilden." Den Weg dahin, so die Idee der Minister, könnte ein einheitlicher europäischer Hochschulraum ebnen. Der Bologna-Prozess war geboren." (source http://www.dw.de/bologna-reform-wir-hatten-eine-vision/a-17710016)

the first time culture as one of the unifying forces in European integration.

> "The Community shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore."[211]

In the same Treaty educational mobility is explicitly promoted with terms that will later be borrowed by the Bologna treaties:

> "Community action shall be aimed at:
> - developing the European dimension in education, particularly through the teaching and dissemination of the languages of the Member States;
>
> - encouraging mobility of students and teachers, *inter alia* by encouraging the academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study;
>
> - promoting co-operation between educational establishments;"[212]

It is hard to explain the Bologna impetus for mobility through educational standardisation as a sudden process, without reading it against the general EU incentive to further European unification through culture and education. These processes need to be taken together as two faces of the same coin.

There is at least one reference to European citizenship in each of the Bologna Process *communiqués*. Already in 1998, in the *Sorbonne Declaration,* the beneficiaries of the educational mobility were the citizens of Europe:

> "We call on other Member States of the Union and other European countries to join us in this objective and on all European Universities to consolidate Europe's standing in the world through continuously improved and updated education for its citizens."[213]

All through the *Bologna Declaration* of 1999 the European Higher Education Area is justified because it will make European citizens more mobile and, as a consequence, more employable: "The creation of the European area of higher education as a key way to promote citizens' mobility and employability and the Continent's overall development."[214] The intended subject of education is not the generic individual, as it was the case in the *Bildung* paradigm, nor the citizen of the European state - because the rights and duties of the citizenship differ across the states - but a generic European citizen which is in need of a definition.

European citizenship is not defined explicitly in any of the *communiqués*, but it can be

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[211] European Union, TEU, §§ Art. 128.
[212] Ibid., §§ Art. 126.
[213] Allègre et al.
[214] European Ministers of Education, *The Bologna Declaration* of 19 June 1999

reconstructed from the attributes that always follow it closely in all the declarations. Thus, the European citizen is mobile, active, employable, knows at least two European languages, and has a European identity (i.e. belongs to the common cultural space of Europe and shares certain cultural values). Through a discourse analysis Andreas Fejes has reconstructed the European citizens from the BP declarations as:

> "One who is mobile, flexible and shows respect for diversity. […]Such an idea constructs a 'cultural subject' with specific European values. It is intertwined with an idea that there are cultural differences within Europe that should be respected."[215]

Throughout the *communiqués,* European citizenship consistently appears in the same phrases as employability and student mobility, as if these two were linked from the policymakers' perspective.

> "As first laid down in the Bologna declaration, the rationale behind the Bologna process has been to promote European citizens' lasting employability and the international competitiveness of the European higher education system."[216]

If we take the Bologna *communiqués* at face value, mobility was the main reason to create the EHEA. Mobility of students can be linked with two other features: Constructing the cultural European identity and worker's mobility. The goal of the Erasmus programme - a programme focused solely on student mobility - was to further the European integration through the creation of European citizens. When the EU was created with the purpose "to lay the foundations of an ever-closer union among the peoples of Europe,"[217] it can be understood that a close union is not possible without a promotion of the common European values and this can be done efficiently through mobility of the students. The *Bologna Declaration* implies that there are some shared European values of the citizens and constructs the Europe of Knowledge as a vehicle to share these values even more:

> "A Europe of Knowledge is now widely recognised as an irreplaceable factor for social and human growth and as an indispensable component to consolidate and enrich the European citizenship, capable of giving its citizens the necessary competences to face the challenges of the new millennium, together with an awareness of shared values and belonging to a common social and cultural space."[218]

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[215] Andreas Fejes, "European Citizens under Construction: The Bologna Process Analysed From a Governmentality Perspective," *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 40, no. 4 (2008): 524–26.

[216] BFUGB8 5 final, "Towards the European Higher Education Area – Bologna Process," accessed July 18, 2014, http://www.aic.lv/ace/ace_disk/Bologna/Bergen_conf/EHEA_beyond2010.pdf, 1.

[217] European Union, "Treaty establishing the European Economic Community: Treaty of Rome," http://ec.europa.eu/archives/emu_history/documents/treaties/rometreaty2.pdf, 2.

[218] European Ministers of Education, The Bologna Declaration of 19 June 1999, *The Bologna*

In the *Berlin Communiqué* the ministers had stressed the need to study abroad as a pre-condition for a 'full' European identity:

> "the necessity of ensuring a substantial period of study abroad in joint degree programmes as well as proper provision for linguistic diversity and language learning, so that students may achieve their full potential for European identity, citizenship and employability."[219]

European citizenship was construed as a potential that needed education to be fully reached. If employability is a key feature of the European citizen, we can conclude that the intended outcome of education, after the BP, is the active European citizen, i.e. someone who can support himself/herself. This definition of the European citizen as employee or self-employed entails the exclusion of certain categories of people who cannot work: Foreigners, children, pensioners, the disabled. Effectively only the able-bodied employable citizens or the entrepreneurial self-employed count for the future Europe of Knowledge.

Jonna Johansson thinks that student mobility foreshadows workers' mobility which is needed to construct the common market. Mobile students have acquired certain features that will prepare them for being good mobile workers: They speak foreign languages and are used to living away from their families for a long time.[220]

> "The Ministers "stress the necessity of ensuring a substantial period of study abroad in joint degree programmes as well as proper provision for linguistic diversity and language learning, so that students may achieve their full potential for European identity, citizenship and employability."[221]

Fejes argues that the concept of employability became mainstream only in the last 20 to 30 years, simultaneously with the creation of EHEA, and replaced the discourses about workforce. If previously the state was responsible for the employment of its citizens, nowadays, after the shift towards employability, the citizen is responsible for finding his/her own work. If work is not to be found, this is because of the lack of employability, i.e. employable skills. "This kind of discourse positions the citizen as responsible for her/his own employment, and less emphasis is placed on structural

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Declaration

[219] European Ministers of Education, *Berlin Communiqué*, 6.

[220] Jonna Johansson, "Learning to Be(come) a Good European: A Critical Analysis of the Official European Union Discourse on European Identity and Higher Education" http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/263986638, 4.

[221] European Ministers of Education, *Berlin Communiqué* 6.

inequalities and problems in the labour market."[222] Johansson also notices that the

employability discourse replaced the initial focus on employment in the EU: "In the

beginning of European cooperation, after the signing of the Treaty of Rome in 1957,

mobility was mainly linked to employment but later on we see how employment,

education and mobility become linked."[223] Fejes argues that the focus on employability

is not merely a European issue, it is a global trend traceable in the global newspeak

which he designates as the 'planetspeak'. This omnipresent discourse makes

employability seem something 'natural' and desirable.[224]

Marie-Pierre Moreau thinks that the discursive shift towards employability means that

now the blame for unemployment will rest solely on the shoulders of the citizens. If the

EU or the state does whatever it can do to enable the citizen to get a good education, i.e.

become employable, then its mission is over. The duty of the state will be then reduced

to ensuring a good education, while being relieved of responsibility towards regulating

the labour market. "This policy discourse constructs employability as matter of

individual attributes and responsibility, with scarce reference to structured opportunities

in the education and labour markets."[225]

In the Bologna documents employability is defined as a set of *skills and competences*.

The EHEA is supposed to provide "the learners with the opportunity to acquire

knowledge, skills and competences furthering their careers and lives as democratic

citizens as well as their personal development."[226] The skills are frequently referred to

as transferable while the competences are used to define the learning outcomes. The

skills and competences are not merely desirable, but necessary in achieving an 'active

citizenship' in Europe:

> "Learning for active citizenship includes access to the skills and competencies that
> young people will need for effective economic participation under conditions of
> technological modernisation, economic globalisation, and, very concretely,
> transnational European labour markets. At the same time, the social and
> communicative competencies that are both part of new demands and which flow
> from changing work and study contexts are themselves of critical importance for

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[222] Fejes 89.

[223] Johansson, 207.

[224] Fejes 92.

[225] Marie-Pierre Moreau and Carole Leathwood, "Graduates' Employment and the Discourse of
Employability: A Critical Analysis," *Journal of Education and Work* 19, no. 4 (2006): 309.

[226] European Ministers of Education, *Budapest-Vienna Declaration*

living in culturally, ethnically and linguistically plural worlds. These competencies are not simply desirable for some, they are becoming essential for all."[227]

One of the main targets of BP was to institute a common framework for quality assurance that would make possible the equivalence of degrees, which would allow some sort of comparison between the diverse systems of education in Europe. The common ground for quality evaluations was found in the learning outcomes and competences:

> "We adopt the overarching framework for qualifications in the EHEA, comprising three cycles (including, within national contexts, the possibility of intermediate qualifications), generic descriptors for each cycle based on learning outcomes and competences, and credit ranges in the first and second cycles."[228]

Learning outcomes are what the student should know and be able to do at the end of an educational cycle, module or course. Learning outcomes are statements, "explicit assertions about the outcomes of learning - the results of learning."[229] The standardisation of learning outcomes was in itself another project developed all around the globe. So far there have been several projects in this direction: The Dublin descriptors (European Project), the Tuning project (specifically linked with the BP), the DeSeCo Project (sponsored by OECD) etc. Taking as an example the Dublin descriptors - the most famous project - which defines the learning outcomes at the end of each of the three cycles, one can notice the prevalence of abilities to do something over theoretical knowledge. Knowledge itself is defined as capacities and competences to understand something, then communicate and apply this knowledge.[230]

In what way was the BP a change in the paradigm of higher education? From a process focused on theoretical knowledge (*episteme*), and creating 'cultivated men' as an outcome (be they the elites, the citizens or the 'man of reason'), higher education is now reconfigured to produce European citizens which have the abilities to do something, to apply knowledge, to solve problems, to communicate, to lead, to perform. This should

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[227] Commission of the European Communities, *Learning for Active Citizenship: A Significant Challenge in Building a Europe of Knowledge*, http://www2.cedefop.europa.eu/etv/Upload/ETVNews/uploadNews/citizenship-en.html

[228] European Ministers of Education, *Bergen Communiqué* 2.

[229] Stephen Adam, "Learning Outcomes Current Developments in Europe: Update on the Issues and Applications of Learning Outcomes Associated with the Bologna Process: Bologna Seminar," accessed August 19, 2014, www.ehea.info/Uploads/Seminars/Edinburgh_Feb08_Adams.pdf, 4.

[230] See http://ecahe.eu/w/index.php/Dublin_Descriptors for a detailed presentation of the Dublin description.

remind us of the Aristotelian meaning of craft (*techne*), which implied competence to do something while aided by knowledge.

> "*Techne* is a practical knowledge, which attaches itself to a competence in making, producing and manufacturing. […] *Techne* is more than a competence, as it both consists of an ability to carry out a procedure in practice in the form of a 'coping skill' and to give an account of the general laws and principles behind the procedure."[231]

Insofar as the learning outcomes cannot be reduced to problem-solving competences, but also require the knowledge of the topic, then the university knowledge defined by the Dublin descriptors fits mostly with the definition of *techne*.

The Bologna graduates will go through an education based on producing competences and skills. At the end they should have some knowledge that they can apply to solve certain problems, and also some transferable skills that make them employable even if the labour market changes its demands. Some of these skills are required only to function in the European multicultural world such as language training or intercultural competences, while other skills are specifically for the labour market, such as digital or entrepreneurial skills. In the end the sum of all skills and competences should make the European citizen fit to work in any country in the EU:

> "Learning for active citizenship includes access to the skills and competencies that young people will need for effective economic participation under conditions of technological modernisation, economic globalisation, and, very concretely, transnational European labour markets. At the same time, the social and communicative competencies that are both part of new demands and which flow from changing work and study contexts are themselves of critical importance for living in culturally, ethnically and linguistically plural worlds. These competencies are not simply desirable for some, they are becoming essential for all."[232]

There is a duality in the official EU discourse about skills. On one hand the universities need to deliver graduates that have the skills that the European labour market demands right now. On the other hand the EU officials admit that any skill is perishable or can become obsolete, so in the end everybody will need retraining through life-long learning. Nowadays the most desirable skills are the digital and entrepreneurial skills, but nobody knows how the labour market will change in the future.

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[231] Saugstad 380.

[232] Commission of the European Communities, "Learning for Active Citizenship: A Significant Challenge in Building a Europe of Knowledge"

"There was consensus on the need for comprehensive change to curricula and learning methods and for […] the inclusion of transversal and transferable skills and of fundamental notions of economics and of technology in curricula at all levels of qualification. Curricula should be "T-shaped": rooted in the specific academic discipline while at the same time interacting and cooperating with partners in other disciplines and sectors;"[233]

The ideal European graduate is the competent citizen, possessing skills that will solve current problems, and the capacity to re-train as many times as necessary. This is not the 'cultivated man', not the 'specialist' type of man as identified by Weber,[234] but the flexible professional. Anne Seller argues that the 'specialist type' such as a doctor or an engineer implies adopting a certain worldview and a set of values. This cannot be reduced to skills or competences not learnt overnight:

"But think of what is involved in learning to be a doctor, or lawyer, or accountant. Implicit is not simply a set of skills: how to remove an appendix, diagnose diabetes, but an entire way of understanding the world (consider the categories of diseased and healthy for example), an epistemology, a set of values - one learns to *be* a doctor, not to *do* doctoring, and I think any attempt to do less would not only be irresponsible (to both student and wider community) but dishonest. It is almost an Aristotelian point: in teaching skills, you develop the virtues implicit in practising those skills. And, one might add, you induct into a whole set of social relations, impart a metaphysics. Yet it is precisely an invitation to buy itemized skills, without such induction, which the market model of higher education offers."[235]

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[233] Commission of the European Communities, "A new partnership for the modernisation of universities: the EU Forum for University Business Dialogue: Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions," {SEC(2009) 423 (2009): 4, accessed April 26, 2014, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52009DC0158

[234] "Expressed in slogan-like fashion, the 'cultivated man,' rather than the 'specialist,' has been the end sought by education and has formed the basis of social esteem in such various systems as the feudal, theocratic, and patrimonial structures of dominion: in the English notable administration, in the old Chinese patrimonial bureaucracy, as well as under the rule of demagogues in the so-called Hellenic democracy. The term 'cultivated man' is used here in a completely value-neutral sense; it is understood to mean solely that the goal of education consists in the quality of a man's bearing in life which was considered 'cultivated,' rather than in a specialized training for expertness. The 'cultivated' personality formed the educational ideal, which was stamped by the structure of domination and by the social condition for membership in the ruling stratum. Such education aimed at a chivalrous or an ascetic type; or, at a literary type, as in China; a gymnastic-humanist type, as in Hellas; or it aimed at a conventional type, as in the case of the Anglo-Saxon gentleman. The qualification of the ruling stratum as such rested upon the possession of 'more' cultural quality (in the absolutely changeable, value-neutral sense in which we use the term here), rather than upon 'more' expert knowledge. Special military, theological, and juridical ability was of course intensely practiced; but the point of gravity in Hellenic, in medieval, as well as in Chinese education, has rested upon educational elements that were entirely different from what was 'useful' in one's specialty." Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), Translated, edited, and with an introduction by H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, 242–43.

Cultivation versus specialisation reflects the division of knowledge in the universities which runs deep between the professional and the theoretical, between *techne* and *episteme*.

[235] Anne Seller, "Whose Knowledge? Whose Postmodernism?," in *The End of Knowledge in Higher Education*, ed. Ronald Barnett and Anne Griffin, Institute of Education series (London, Herndon, VA: Cassell, 1997), 85–98, 96.

In privileging *techne* over *episteme,* the competence based model of education did not privilege the specialist over the cultivated man, but both were discarded for the flexible professional. The flexible professional is the sum of his or her skills, but these skills are not fixed, and can be gained or lost all through her life, making the person continually (self-)employable. The labour market keeps changing and, as a consequence, students need to continuously learn and develop new competences:

> "Lifelong learning is one of the important factors in meeting the needs of a changing labour market, and higher education institutions play a central role in transferring knowledge and strengthening regional development, including by the continuous development of competences and reinforcement of knowledge alliances."[236]

The changing labour market is the threat that must be overcome, while the employee or self-employed status is presented as the reward. The useful education defined as education for employability has many justifications in the BP documents, but the main container for all these reasons is the threat of the insecure and unpredictable future. We can only be sure about one thing regarding the future: That it will be insecure for workers. This type of discourse is based on risks and threats and some authors think that this risk is manufactured.

> "The narratives of threat contain an idea of risk. If certain measures are not taken, there is a risk that something bad will happen. These narratives are projections of the present on the future—someone writes about a future that does not exist as natural and real. It is written as a fact and some measures will have to be taken to avoid this risk. The future is constructed as a technique for governing and the result is that what is in the unknown future is seen as a fact and a truth."[237]

It is possible to link the goal of employability to a perceived threat of the technological revolution. As the digital and technological revolution is unfolding, many jobs become obsolete and people need to retrain their skills if they want to get another job. But how can anyone know what jobs will be required in 10 or even 5 years from now on? How can anyone predict what skills will be needed and, on the basis of this prediction, discourage the teaching of any other 'useless' skills?

Luciano Floridi argues that, if we assume that technological revolution is coming and that probably most of the jobs will be outsourced to robots, we need to re-think our attitude towards unemployment. More specifically, we need to change how we feel

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[236] European Ministers of Education, *Bucharest Communiqué* 2.

about technological unemployment, first defined by Keynes as the "unemployment due to our discovery of means of economising the use of labour outrunning the pace at which we can find new uses for labour."[238] This is not such a bleak future, on the contrary, it might imply solving of many of our economic problems, because:

> "[t]echnological unemployment is what we have been planning all along, by relying on animals, other humans, science, technology, capital and compound interest. We have been trying to make ourselves redundant since time unmemorable so that we may be leisurely occupied."[239]

If technological unemployment can be coupled with solving the resource problem, then people will need to work only a few hours a week in the future:

> "In the long run, next century or next millennium, technological unemployment will turn into leisure occupation only if we will succeed in decoupling unemployment from the lack of income, the consequent social unrest and the related erosion of personal dignity, insofar as having a paid job is still seen in our present culture as synonymous with having a role in society. Call this the 'resource problem'."[240]

Whether we want it or not, the life of the future will be a life of leisure and contemplation for many people, not just for the elites, as in Aristotle's times. If we assume this to be the case (again, if the resource problem will be fixed by then, for instance by introducing a minimal income for every citizen or similar redistributive devices), what future perspective does the BP offer for us? If the BP continues on this track, the obsession with employment will not cease and people will be discouraged to find a meaning for their lives outside work. The life of leisure and contemplation will be impossible for the people educated towards employability because they will not have the general knowledge of the cultivated man, the interest in theoretical problems, the imagination and the empathy cultivated through humanities. At this point we can conclude that the BP is making a bet on how the future of employment will look and is placing all the stakes on this bet. One such stake is the future of European higher education. The Bologna vision of the future is not informed by any predictions; it is just a form of wishful thinking that someday we will counteract technological unemployment through the massification of higher education. On this type of wishful

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[237] Fejes 520.
[238] John Maynard Keynes, "Economic Possibilities for our Grandchildren," 1930 cited in Luciano Floridi, "Technological Unemployment, Leisure Occupation, and the Human Project," *Philosophy & Technology* 27, no. 2 (2014): 144.
[239] Ibid., 146.
[240] Ibid., 147.

thinking hangs the fate of the humanities in many universities.

In this chapter we argued that the policy makers involved in the BP have a different idea about who is the subject of education then both the traditional Enlightenment-inspired Humboldtian (universal 'man', able to live anywhere) and the postmodernist (the embedded social 'subject' that can never be 'universal' but whose identity is dictated by contextual, social circumstances, and who is always 'object to power' no matter in what regime he or she lives). Even though sometimes the BP pays lip-service to Humboldtian ideals, it generally promotes a very different idea of 'who is being educated'. The institutional setting of the BP shows this, through its involvement of so many parties in the club of 'stakeholders': Business, civil society, lobbyists, local, national and supranational politicians, owners of educational establishments, public officials etc. - these are all 'stakeholders'. They would not be stakeholders if the purpose of education were 'free knowledge' or to educate the 'man' in general.

The Bologna Process radically parted ways with the traditional Humboldtian vision of the university as a place of independent research and teaching, and proposed a new role of the university as a socially engaged and responsible institution that delivers employable graduates. This parting of ways is reflected in the Bologna ministerial *communiqués* as the textual analysis has shown. If education is to be only instrumental for the purpose of furthering employability, then this should pose a special problem for theoretical disciplines, including humanities, that never articulated themselves as directly useful for society. Any study directed towards *episteme* is in principle not leading to immediate employment, therefore humanities are 'useless' in principle. The irony of humanities' fate is striking. Once humanities were deemed the most appropriate education for citizenship, now the humanities are the least useful education for European citizenship. This change was triggered by the transforming definition of citizenship. The reasons why European citizenship should be defined thus, as employability and mobility, are never explained in the policy papers. We are left with the discourse of threats and risks as a provisional justification, and the gloomy predictions about the future. But if the humanities want to reclaim their historical role as education for citizenship, a turn towards knowledge as *phronêsis* might be the only unexplored option. We shall see describe this in the next chapter.

Chapter 3. Useful for Everyone? Post-Bologna Strategies for Defending the Humanities

The BP was not the only higher education policy to promote a discourse based on 'usefulness' of education. All over the world higher education is asked to account for the public funds it spends by giving some explanation in terms of public usefulness. Most of the time this usefulness is construed as market value, employability, skills for life, increasing the competitivity of a society through its human capital. Can humanities prove that they are needed even in times of usefulness-oriented thinking? In this chapter we will look at the new arguments in favour of maintaining an important role of humanities with the university that have been put forward by several thinkers in the wake of the Bologna Process. There are at least two different types of strategies for responding to the new challenge faced by the humanities. One of them focuses on knowledge understood primarily as *episteme*, while the other focuses on knowledge understood primarily as *phronêsis*.

The first strategy consists in *not* accepting the challenge or refusing the claim it is based on as such. One possible way to construe a defence for the role of humanities in a public debate dominated by the proclaimed value of 'usefulness' is to claim the following:

A) Humanities do not need to be useful: Requiring them to be useful misses the essence of what humanities really stand for;

Another possible strategy consists in accepting the challenge and thus assuming that indeed any topic in order to gain entry-rights into universities as public funded institutions need to be 'useful' yet casting this usefulness in a different way than the way it is prevailingly used. In other words, this strategy consists in admitting that 'usefulness' is a guiding value for discriminating between what should be taught at university and what should not, but at the same time redefining the 'usefulness' of humanities. This strategy is at the core of the following claim:

B) Humanities are necessary for individuals to become citizens in a contemporary democracy.

We shall explore both strategies in the following two sections.

3.1. In the Name of Science

In this section we shall review the argument that humanities have intrinsic value and should be pursued 'for their own sake'. This type of defence removes the immediate need for external justifications so it should render humanities invulnerable to demands for usefulness from the politicians of the day, while it acknowledges that in the long term humanities can be useful. However, this type of defence strategy, aimed at keeping the humanities' place within the university, does have problems of its own. Let us examine several of them.

The argument for the intrinsic value of humanities brings forth the following claim: Humanities are a legitimate form of knowledge, just as the natural sciences. If any science is valuable as an end in itself, then humanities should be considered valuable in themselves. In other words, humanities are not useless at all. In the end humanities may lead to innovation and discoveries, but this can be achieved only after we have accepted humanities as a distinct area of knowledge which is valuable in itself as a quest for knowledge. Innovation is not achieved after pressures from authorities to respond to the urgent needs of the day. This type of defence has two meanings, one negative and one positive, as identified by Helen Small: Negatively it signifies a "resistance to requirements for demonstrated practical or instrumental value," and positively "a way of speaking about value that refers us back to the object itself and offers to free us from the charge of mere subjectivism."[241]

One well-known formulation of this type of defence was put forth by John Henry Newman in his book *The Idea of a University*:

> "I am asked what is the end of University Education, and of the Liberal or Philosophical Knowledge which I conceive it to impart: I answer, that what I have already said has been sufficient to show that it has a very tangible, real, and sufficient end, though the end cannot be divided from that knowledge itself. Knowledge is capable of being its own end. Such is the constitution of the human mind, that any kind of knowledge, if it be really such, is its own reward. And if this is true of all knowledge, it is true also of that special Philosophy."[242]

This idea has a long pedigree: The mathematician David Hilbert had claimed that the most useful achievements of science were owed not to the 'practically-minded folks',

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[241] Helen H. Small, *Value of the Humanities* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 151.
[242] John H. Newman, "The Idea of a University," accessed August 19, 2014, http://www.newmanreader.org/works/idea/discourse5.html, 103.

but to those who pursued science for its own sake, the 'disinterested fools':

> "With astonishing sharpness, the great mathematician Poincaré once attacked
> Tolstoy, who had suggested that pursuing "science for science's sake" is foolish.
> The achievements of industry, for example, would never have seen the light of
> day had the practical-minded existed alone and had not these advances been
> pursued by disinterested fools. The glory of the human spirit, so said the famous
> Königsberg mathematician Jacobi, is the single purpose of all science."[243]

The slogan of knowledge for knowledge's sake was coined by Hilbert in the same
lecture: "We must know, we will know". This slogan encompasses the general
significance of the intrinsic value argument, that we have a duty to pursue knowledge
until there is nothing left to discover anymore.

This type of justification places humanities on the same level as all other sciences and
should work in the same way for any university discipline:

> "It is tremendously important to recognize and resist the pressure placed upon
> scientists, scholars, and teachers to justify their labor solely in terms of immediate
> instrumentality, either as technological payoff or as bureaucratic efficiency in
> credentializing masses of university students. In fact, I would argue that this is
> indeed a common ground of the sciences and the humanities in their institutional
> relations because it is no more obvious that studying the migratory patterns of
> monarch butterflies has some technological payoff than studying the development
> of the sonnet in sixteenth-century England. Knowledge should be defended for its
> own sake, not solely for its instrumental benefits, because it is the object of a
> human desire, the desire to know, a desire that ought not to be frustrated any more
> than any other human desire."[244]

In order for this argument to work, we need to accept first the epistemic legitimacy of
humanistic knowledge. There are numerous arguments in favour of this position,
perhaps the most famous were developed by Wilhelm Dilthey and Heinrich Rickert.
Dilthey had argued that the 'the human sciences' (*Geisteswissenschaften*), comprised of
humanities and social sciences, had a specific method (the abstract methodology, as
opposed to the analytic one found in natural sciences) and an object of study (cultural
systems and human interactions) that made them independent disciplines from the
natural sciences.[245] For Rickert, the *Geisteswissenschaften* were the 'sciences of

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[243] David Hilbert's Radio Address, 8 September 1930, at the yearly meeting of the Society of
German Natural Scientists and Physicians (Gesellschaft der Deutschen Naturforscher und Ärzte) Source:
http://www.maa.org/publications/periodicals/convergence/david-hilberts-radio-address-english-translatio
n#sthash.TXR5ncpN.dpuf

[244] John Guillory, "Critical Response II The Name of Science, the Name of Politics," *Critical
Inquiry* 29, no. 3 (2003): 537.

[245] Rudolf Makkreel, "Wilhelm Dilthey," in Zalta, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

culture' and were distinguished by dealing with value-related objects, while the natural sciences dealt with value-free objects.[246]

If we were to accept humanities as a distinct and legitimate epistemic field, several questions arise. While it is clear for most that mathematics and physics will lead to some sort of usefulness for society in the long term, it is not clear how humanities will do so. Especially since, if we identify humanistic knowledge with *episteme*, as this argument aims to, all previous practical justifications of humanities through character training and socially usefulness are lost. The key argument here seems to be pointing at innovation. While scientific knowledge does not immediately render itself to marketable outcomes, 'innovation' is the current name given to the process that aims to turn *episteme* into something profitable, effectively creating market value. While the term 'innovation' has been previously used in economic contexts, for example by Adam Smith, the author who popularised this use was Bo-Åke Lundwall in a booklet from 1985 about product innovation. There he defined innovation as "the result of collisions between technical opportunity and user needs."[247]

Sharon Rider has argued that scientific research is useful in the end for society but only if it is not forced to follow certain narrow and immediate conceptions of usefulness, related to the demands of the day. She argues that we cannot tell scientists what to discover and then expect specific results, because scientific discovery does not function like project management. Most of the technological and useful discoveries of our times were made possible because someone at some point in history pursued a certain idea just for the sake of knowledge. Rider illustrates this idea by mentioning the discovery of formalisation by Frege, Russell, and Hilbert, which led to the invention of algorithms and then informatics.[248] The order is this, argues Rider: First the theoretical breakthrough is achieved through basic research, and then we can find useful applications for it. The electricity was not discovered because it was useful, rather useful applications were found afterwards. "Strategy models benefit neither innovative scientific thinking nor social needs. Basic research, on the other hand, unencumbered by

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[246] Andrea Staiti, "Heinrich Rickert," in Zalta, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*
[247] Bengt-Åke Lundvall, *Product Innovation and User-Producer Interaction* no. 31 ([Aalborg]: Aalborg University Press, 1985), 4.
[248] Sharon Rider, "The Future of the European University: Liberal Democracy or Authoritarian Capitalism?," *Culture Unbound: Journal of Current Cultural Research* 1 (2009): 100.

managerialism, is a necessary prerequisite for all technical developments, applications and innovations."[249]

Since so many useful applications can be traced back to philosophy (for example the Newtonian classical mechanics started as a form of natural philosophy), then we cannot dismiss any academic discipline that might appear useless. One reason for extending this logic to any academic discipline that might appear useless is to claim that we need to support them all because we cannot predict which one will lead to the next revolutionary innovation, even if this innovation might happen far away in the future. "Just as nobody can foretell when and in what context the next great scientific breakthrough will occur, nobody can say for certain what society will be like or will need in fifty or a hundred or two hundred years."[250] This argument can be extended even to those academic disciplines which are designated with a German term as *Orchideenwissenschaften* ('orchid studies'), pointing at the narrowly specialised and apparently useless studies. Until several decades ago, the study of the Hanseatic League (a commercial confederation of cities from the 13th to 17th century) would have been an example of an 'orchid study'. However, with the advent of the EU and its need for historical legitimation, the Hanseatic League is currently presented as a historical precedent of a commercial union taking place in Europe, hence for the EU. From an 'orchid study', the topic rose in importance until nowadays is one of the well-funded topics from the humanities. The study of the Hanseatic League has not led to any innovation, but it is 'useful' nowadays in ways unforeseen 50 years ago. One cannot predict the future usefulness for society of any of our current 'orchid studies'.

This argument however does not help us understand why the humanities should be kept in the university. Historically, the place of humanities has been in the university, but should it be, in the light of the argument from intrinsic value? Because if humanities legitimise themselves as areas of research, why do we need to teach humanities in the university? Why not relocate humanities in small research centres independent from the academia?

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[249] Ibid., 99.
[250] Ibid., 89.

A positive answer to this question assumes that the link between teaching and research is unbreakable, in the Humboldtian tradition. Steve Fuller has brought forth a contemporary argument for this link. His main thesis is that universities dwell in the 'creative destruction of social capital'. Social capital is defined as "the comparative advantage that a group or network enjoys by virtue of its collective capacity to act on a form of knowledge."[251] Following the idea of Nico Stehr who argued that knowledge is not an endless resource, but rather a positional good that gives an advantage to its owners, this would mean that academics, as researchers, have access to more knowledge than the rest of the population and could use this resource to gain certain social advantages, including social capital. However, this is not the case in our society, argues Fuller, because the universities as institutions were designed to creatively destruct through teaching the social capital gained through research:

> "On the one hand, research emerges from networks of particular scientists, investors and other stakeholders who are tempted to restrict the flow of benefits to themselves. On the other hand, the university's commitment to education compels that such knowledge be taught to people far removed from this social capital base, who may in turn take what they learn in directions that erase whatever advantage the original network enjoyed. All of this is to the good: it contributes to the overall enlightenment of society, while spurring on the formation of new networks of innovation."[252]

The concept of creative destruction of social capital had been put forth by Habermas as a way to warn against creating a monopoly of knowledge that would be detrimental for deliberative democracy.[253] Fuller's argument concerns the knowledge produced in the universities in general, it does not specify the humanities. If we were to use it for our purpose, we would then need to assume that humanities are a highly specialised type of knowledge that would not be accessible to the general public, just as mathematics or physics are. Otherwise there would be no peril of accumulation of social capital from the humanities researchers detrimental to the general public.

If humanities research produces valuable and specialised knowledge, then humanities need to be taught in the universities because new generations of researchers need to be created continuously. As Richard Rorty once said, "somebody's got to read these

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[251] Steve Fuller, *The Sociology of Intellectual Life: The Career of the Mind in and Around the Academy* (Los Angeles, London: SAGE, 2009), 4.

[252] Ibid., 34.

[253] Jesper Eckhardt Larsen, "The Wider Impacts of Universities: Habermas on Learning Processes and Universities," no. 8 (2013); Nordicum-Mediterraneum, accessed May 20, 2014, http://nome.unak.is/nm-marzo-2012/vol-8-no-2-2013/58-conference-paper/414-the-wider-impacts-of-uni

difficult books, and it takes a lot of time."[254] The specialised pursuit of knowledge

demands a long training in order to develop the research abilities associated with each

discipline. Rider argues along this line that the development of knowledge in the

disciplines is a continuously evolving process that cannot be started or stopped at will:

> "The university has a mission to support and maintain different scientific
> traditions, to keep different ways of seeing, studying and understanding our
> common world alive.[...] The disciplines manifest a way of thinking that has taken
> generations of scholars and scientists to evolve."[255]

It would follow that, from this perspective, the subject of humanities education should

be the scholar or the professor.

If we agree that humanities' place is in the university, that research needs to be coupled

with teaching, and that it is useful for the entire society to treat humanities as an end in

itself, we are still left with the question concerning the practical issue of funding. I.

How many 'orchid studies' should be funded? How many student places should be

granted for each discipline? How many research centres? The argument for the intrinsic

value of humanities does not give us an answer to these concerns because it is

under-determined from the start. It is an argument for humanities as *episteme*, and thus

ignores the *techne* component of humanistic knowledge (for example the rhetoric and

communication skills embedded in communication studies) or the *phronetic* knowledge,

what we presented in chapter 1 as the character building. Without acknowledging these

two components of humanistic knowledge, the argument for the intrinsic value of

humanities does not pose a strong opposition to the Bologna concern for 'usefulness'.

Another problem is that this type of argument cannot be extended to save those

humanities that are immediately useful nowadays, namely the ones focused on the *techne*

aspect of knowledge: journalism, translation studies, rethorics, etc. These types of

studies are protected by the 'usefulness' mindset of Bologna policies, but cannot

compete with the 'long-term usefulness' of potentially any humanities based on

episteme because research is not their strong suit.

The notion of 'usefulness', as used in the intrinsic value argument, projects in the future

an uncertain usefulness for the entire society, which will benefit from the innovation

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[254] Richard Rorty, "A Talent for Bricolage: An Interview with Richard Rorty by Joshua Knobe,"
The Dualist, accessed August 15, 2014,
http://www.scienzepostmoderne.org/DiversiAutori/Rorty/TalentForBricolage.html

and discoveries of basic research, effectively asking society to place a bet on an unpredictable future. If society would be willing to place its bet on this uncertain future that might require innovation stemming from basic research, it could be done on minimal investment in teaching. Even if an increase of funding in research centres seems to be the best option for achieving future innovation, one cannot justify the massification of studies in the humanities based only on these grounds. If the outcomes of humanistic studies are only researchers and professors, as the intrinsic value argument would have it, then how many researchers are too many? How much funding should be allocated for something that is possibly useful, and how much to the studies that deliver right now employable graduates in the humanities? The argument of the intrinsic values of humanities is underdetermined in its current formulation and cannot be used for any practical decision making, rendering it useless for the BP policy makers. Let us see next whether there is another argument that would redefine 'usefulness' while making its positive effects visible in a shorter time-frame.

3.2 Humanities as Citizenry Education for All

In her 2006 book entitled *Not for Profit. Why Democracy Needs the Humanities,* Martha Nussbaum offers a contemporary argument for the usefulness of humanities. Her argument is important because it can be presented as an alternative to the 'usefulness' as employability perspective, and also to the 'usefulness' as innovation.

Nussbaum's main point is that we need to educate citizens for the contemporary democratic liberal constitutions and this education is best done through arts and humanities. A secondary point is that humanities are essential in education all through the ages of schooling, not just in the university. But the university is the place where critical thinking and Socratic education will develop the capacities for full democratic citizenship in the students. Pupils and high-schoolers need humanities and arts in order to develop a certain sensibility towards otherness, a general disposition towards empathy and tolerance (this idea is based on Rousseau's educational principles found in *Emile*). But, as they become adults, students need the common core of liberal arts in order to develop their capacities for full citizenship in a democracy. While education

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[255] Rider 101.

has a larger role in helping people lead meaningful lives, the core of the argument in this book focuses on the role of education in preparing citizens for democracy.[256]

Nussbaum argues that the best type of education in a democracy (assumed to be the desirable constitution for anyone nowadays) is education for dissent. Producing "a culture of individual dissent"[257] should make people's lives better. One of the reasons is that group conformity and peer pressure will lead people to do horrible things that they would have otherwise objected to as individuals (the experiments of Stanley Milgram, Solomon Asch, and Philip Zimbardo are used as examples of how easily people can be persuaded to do things against their own judgement).[258]

If democracies are to promote the rights to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness"[259] as they claim, then they need to try to cultivate the following abilities in their citizens: Thinking independently of tradition, recognition in other human beings of their equals and treating them as ends, with empathy, being critical about politicians, imagining what it is like to be someone else, thinking about the general good of the nation and humankind.[260] The list is open-ended and it has been refined by Nussbaum in several writings over the years. Its philosophical roots lay in the capability approach.

The capability approach was developed by Martha Nussbaum together with Amartya Sen and it is based on the idea that the language of capabilities is much more appropriate for debating the political aims of a society than the language of utility, the language of resources distribution, or the human rights language. According to this approach, the main question politicians should ask is "What is A actually able to do and to be?"[261] So the question is not what A wants to do, which might be biased because A does not see herself as a human being with full rights (as is the case of widows in India), or what satisfaction does A get from a certain policy (because rich people require very sophisticated levels of stimulation while poor people might be content with the bare minimum), but what could A do if she wanted to? People may never fully employ their

[256] Martha C. Nussbaum, *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, op. 2010), 9.

[257] Ibid., 53–54.

[258] Ibid., 40–42.

[259] Quoted from the USA constitution

[260] Ibid., 25–26.

[261] Martha C. Nussbaum, "Capabilities and Human Rights," *Fordham Law Review* 66 (1997): 285.

capability to do something, but this should be because they chose not to, and not because they were constrained. "A person with plenty of food can always choose to fast; a person who has access to subsidized university education can always decide to do something else instead. By making opportunities available, government enhances, and does not remove, choice."[262] An advantage of this approach is the focus on the individual lives, in contrast to the utilitarian approach which looked at the sum of total happiness in a society, a quantitative approach that ignored that many might be miserable while few very happy.

Contrary to Sen's capability approach, which had left the list of capabilities up to future political debates, Martha Nussbaum thinks that making the list of basic human capabilities to be developed is the philosopher's task, and that such a list would not be culturally biased:

> "The basic point of the account is the same: to put forward something that people from many different traditions, with many different fuller conceptions of the good, can agree on as the necessary basis for pursuing their good life."[263]

In the article from 1997 the open-ended list of human capabilities universally needed was the following: Life, bodily health, bodily integrity, senses, imagination and thought, emotions, practical reason, friendship, respect, living with other species, political control over ones' environment and material control.[264] In *Not for Profit* the list is much more specific and needs to be quoted in full:

> "What lessons does this analysis suggest as we ask what schools can and should do to produce citizens in and for a healthy democracy?
> ° Develop students' capacity to see the world from the view-point of other people, particularly those whom their society tends to portray as lesser, as "mere objects"
> ° Teach attitudes toward human weakness and helplessness that suggest that weakness is not shameful and the need for others not unmanly; teach children not to be ashamed of need and incompleteness but to see these as occasions for cooperation and reciprocity
> ° Develop the capacity for genuine concern for others, both near and distant
> ° Undermine the tendency to shrink from minorities of various kinds in disgust, thinking of them as "lower" and "contaminating"
> ° Teach real and true things about other groups (racial, religious, and sexual minorities; people with disabilities), so as to counter stereotypes and the disgust that often goes with them
> ° Promote accountability by treating each child as a responsible agent;
> ° Vigorously promote critical thinking, the skill and courage it requires to raise a

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[262] Martha C. Nussbaum, "Human Functioning and Social Justice In Defense of Aristotelian Essentialism," *Political theory* 20, no. 2 (1992): 225.

[263] Nussbaum 286.

[264] Ibid., 287–88.

dissenting voice."[265]

If the governments would adopt the capability approach, then the authorities would have a clear target for their policies: Reaching a basic level of human capability for all the citizens.

Both the capability approach and the list of capabilities have their roots in Aristotelian philosophy. For Aristotle everything had a purpose or an end, and for human beings this was 'living well' or reaching happiness (*eudaimonia*).[266] Living well cannot be done if people do not use their capabilities. Nussbaum distinguishes between basic bodily capabilities and more sophisticated, social and emotional capabilities. From the list of capabilities, two stand out as most important: Practical reason and being in a community, because these make us distinctly human - as pointed out by Aristotle.[267] In Aristotle's view, *phronêsis* or practical reason is what makes us distinctly human, and Nussbaum's conclusion from this is that governments should actively encourage the development of practical reason in their citizens. Education then should be about the third and most neglected form of knowledge so far, *phronêsis.* The other capability that makes us humans is living in a political community and, consequently, striving for a common good.[268] The social aspect of humanity is very important for Aristotle because otherwise he would need to define humans as self-sufficient, egotistical, lonely beings.

The list of capabilities is based on Aristotelian virtue ethics, a conception according to which human nature is composed of certain features and without any of these features there would be no humanity, let alone virtuous humanity. Martha Nussbaum's list is meant to establish the minimal level of capabilities that people should have, in order not to exclude anyone from humanity.

> "the list does not derive from any extrahistorical metaphysical conception, or rely on the truth of any form of metaphysical realism. As I have said, its guiding intuition is that we do recognize as human, people who do not share our own metaphysical and religious ideas; it aims to get at the root of those recognitions. It does so by conducting an inquiry that is, frankly, both evaluative and internal to human history. Furthermore, the conception does not even demand universal actual agreement among human beings in order to play the moral and political

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[265] Nussbaum, *Not for Profit*, 45.
[266] Richard Kraut, "Aristotle's Ethics," in Zalta, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*
[267] Nussbaum 222–23.
[268] Séverine Deneulin, "Recovering Nussbaum's Aristotelian Roots," *Revista Cultura Económica*, 81/82 (2011): 33.

role that we want it to play."[269]

The next argumentative step for Nussbaum is to connect some features of the list of capabilities with arts and humanities education:

> "These abilities are associated with the humanities and the arts: the ability to think critically; the ability to transcend local loyalties and to approach world problems as a "citizen of the world"; and, finally, the ability to imagine sympathetically the predicament of another person"[270]

Nussbaum argues that the Socratic education, which is best practised in philosophy classes, leads to critical thinking, while the arts make students more empathetic and understanding towards those different from themselves, therefore any genuine democracy needs the humanities and arts. A common core of disciplines should be taught to everyone, from the first day of school, no matter the indented career path.

A second line of argument is that not only democracies need the humanities, but also business, because the truly innovative and creative people have a liberal arts background.[271] But Nussbaum does not develop this argument throughout the book, because citizenship and democracy are far more important than the perspective of corporate profit.

Anticipating criticism, Nussbaum admits that humanistic education for all will not lead with certainty to morality, but that the lack of it will probably lead to undesirable results. "Knowledge is no guarantee of good behavior, but ignorance is a virtual guarantee of bad behavior."[272] For the moment this is the best chance we have for constructing a democracy based on the principle of capabilities.

> "Colleges cannot convey the type of learning that produces global citizens unless they have a liberal arts structure: that is, a set of general education courses for all students outside the requirements of the major subject."[273]

At this point it is worth mentioning that, while the capability approach may *prima facie* look similar to the Bologna focus on skills and competences, it is in fact wider and more inclusive. The competencies approach (CBET) had intended to prepare the student for employability, therefore all the skills and competences were instrumental for this

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[269] Nussbaum 223.
[270] Nussbaum, *Not for Profit,* 7.
[271] Ibid., 10.
[272] Ibid., 81.
[273] Ibid., 93.

purpose. The competences are not valuable in themselves, therefore these can be dropped and replaced as the time passes and the labour market changes its demands; the list of competences cannot be fixed or settled once and for all. The capabilities are all needed in order to attain the good life, one cannot lose one without losing some essential aspect of autonomous life. Therefore, even if both competences and capabilities are instrumental, the

list of capabilities when taken together are sufficient and each necessary in order to make a good life; while competences are neither necessary nor sufficient to make a good life.[274]

Several authors have emphasised further differences between the competences and the capabilities approach. The place of individual freedom and autonomy differs radically in the two approaches. While in the capabilities approach the individual sets for herself the desired goals and the meaning of the good life, in the CBET approach the desirable life is linked with employability and keeping the social status quo. Therefore the competences do not allow for changing the political system, or for an agonistic notion of citizenship.[275] Sen has argued that the individual's autonomy can be defined by how much (s)he can change her/his environment. From this prspective, the CBET approach does not emphasise autonomy. The capability approach is inspired by the Aristotelian virtue ethics, while the competence approach has its roots in utilitarianism.[276]

The argument in favour of humanities for democratic citizenship was not without its criticisms. The most frequent criticism met by Nussbaum's project was linked to the political and historical bias of her list. Colm Kelly thinks that the list of capabilities to be developed through education is based on certain political sensibilities and that other political orientations might lead to a different list.[277] If we lived in ancient Athens, we would add other types of capabilities on the list, and so would Renaissance or Enlightenment intellectuals. This argument misses the Aristotelian virtue ethicist argument that grounded the list. Just by reading the list of capabilities, without looking

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[274] J. F. Lozano et al., "Competencies in Higher Education: A Critical Analysis from the Capabilities Approach," *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 46, no. 1 (2012): 139.
[275] Ibid., 140.
[276] Ibid.
[277] Colm Kelly, "Derrida in the University, or the Liberal Arts in Deconstruction," *Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 42, no. 2 (2012): 50.

at its grounding, one might think this is a postmodern list with sensitivity towards minorities. It certainly looks politically correct and multicultural. Such an uncharitable reading was put forth by Bruce Thornton[278] who reads into Nussbaum's plea for humanities just a pandering to the fashion of the day in academia, namely multiculturalism and diversity, the "dominant orthodoxy on campus."[279] But this is not the case: Nussbaum is not a postmodernist thinker, if anything she rejects clearly the cultural relativism associated with postmodernists.[280] It can be argued that modern sensibilities and capabilities are more complex than the ancients' and it is possible to construct a list of universal capabilities which define humanity at this point in time, while knowing that probably in the future this list will need further corrections as humanity develops its sensitivity and empathy. It is worth pointing out again that Nussbaum was the first to admit that the list is open-ended.

Another objection to Nussbaum's approach was put forth by Stanley Fish who thinks that the university curricula is not designed for a hierarchy of disciplines - and a hierarchy seems to be required if we accept that humanities have a special mission to maintain democracy. Fish thinks that all disciplines in the university should enjoy equal status, because each one studies a different facet of reality through the lens of a different methodology.[281] Helen Small also subscribes to a modified version of this argument. She points out that a good argument in favour of humanities must be not diminish the importance of the other disciplines or forms of knowledge. Even though not entirely convincing, Small thinks that by associating 'mostly' humanities with critical thinking, Nussbaum implicitly diminishes any other form of critical thinking that might appear in political or social sciences, for example.[282]

Stanley Fish thinks that the duty of university teaching is only to "introduce students to bodies of material new to them and equip those same students with the appropriate (to

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[278] He is criticising an earlier book of Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity*, which is an earlier version of the same argument in favour of humanities.

[279] Bruce S. Thornton, "Cultivating Sophistry," in *Bonfire of the Humanities: Rescuing the Classics in an Impoverished Age*, ed. Victor D. Hanson, John Heath and Bruce S. Thornton (Wilmington, Del.: ISI Books, 2001), 3–28, 3.

[280] See her 1992 article "Human Functioning and Social Justice: In Defense of Aristotelian Essentialism" which starts and ends with a powerful criticism of ethical relativism.

[281] Stanley Fish, *Save the World on Your Own Time* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, USA, 2008), 168.

[282] Small, *Value of the Humanities*, 129.

the discipline) analytical and research skills."[283] Anything more would turn the professor into a priest or therapist.

> "But who gave […] any other teacher employed by a college or university the authority first to decide what the world and his students need in the way of moral improvement, and second to turn his classroom into a social/ ethical laboratory? Isn't that straight indoctrination?"[284]

> "The only advocacy that should go on in the classroom is the advocacy of what James Murphy has identified as the intellectual virtues -- "thoroughness, perseverance, intellectual honesty" -- all components of the cardinal academic virtue of being "conscientious in the pursuit of truth" […] teachers should teach their subjects. They should not teach peace or war or freedom or obedience or diversity or uniformity or nationalism or antinationalism or any other agenda that might properly be taught by a political leader or a talk-show host. Of course they can and should teach about such topics -- something very different from urging them as commitments -- when they are part of the history or philosophy or literature or sociology that is being studied."[285]

One can find a similar argument in Weber's *Science as a Vocation* lecture, where Weber argued that science should not be used for any political ideal:

> "Now we cannot provide a university teacher with scientific proof of where his duty lies. All we can demand of him is the intellectual rectitude to realize that we are dealing with two entirely heterogeneous problems. On the one hand, we have the establishing of factual knowledge, the determining of mathematical or logical relations or the internal structure of cultural values. On the other, we have answers to questions about the value of culture and its individual products, and in addition, questions about how we should act in the civilized community and in political organizations. If he then asks why he cannot deal with both sets of problems in the lecture room, we should answer that the prophet and the demagogue have no place at the lectern."[286]

Stanely Fish's argument is not targeted at Nussbaum specifically, but at all the campus activists that wanted to turn the university in a force that would move society in the 'right' direction. Nussbaum does not militate for activism in the university, although the reasons why she promotes critical thinking are politically motivated. But the exercise of critical thinking should remain neutral in the end, because otherwise the capability approach would not allow for autonomy (understood as setting one's own goals) of the students.

[283] Fish, *Save the World on Your Own Time*, 168–69.
[284] Ibid., 171.
[285] Stanley Fish, "Save the World on Your Own Time," 2003; The Chronicle of Higher Education, accessed August 15, 2014, http://chronicle.com/article/Save-the-World-on-Your-Own/45335
[286] Max Weber, *The Vocation Lectures* (Indianapolis, Ind. [u.a.]: Hackett Publ, 2004), Translated by David Owen and Tracy B. Strong, 20.

Helen Small points out that the strength of Nussbaum's argument is also its biggest weakness. Whereas the classical defences for the political relevance of humanities were useful only for the political elites and bureaucrats who had access to this type of education, Nussbaum thinks that all citizens need humanities because all citizens participate politically in a democracy. Small asks how we are going to achieve this. Nussbaum's goal requires that 100% of citizens, not 40% of the age-relevant population,[287] should enter the university and study humanities. The fact of the matter is that still only few people get an education in humanities, points out Small, so the democratic education ideal should be exchanged in favour of Mills' more realistic democratic leadership of "the instructed few."[288] Helen Small's argument starts from the current situation and extends it to show how improbable change is. Nevertheless, Nussbaum's argument was normative, she pointed out what we should strive for in a democracy, even if we cannot achieve it perfectly.

A question which is not addressed in Nussbaum's book is why should humanistic education continue beyond high-school? How are humanities linked to university anymore? If certain capabilities can be developed in all pupils, what are the advanced university courses adding to the high-school curriculum based on humanities? And, if the common university core has some mandatory courses in humanities (as the USA universities already do), why should anyone choose a major in humanities except for becoming a professor? Will the graduates in humanities have more advanced capabilities of citizenship than their social sciences colleagues or any other professionalised graduate? And, since there are so few humanities majors, are they more fit to be elected as political representatives?

Another related problem is the central pedagogical role of the Socratic education in this approach. Emulating Socratic method means trying to institutionalise a type of education that was anti-institutional at its core. Helen Small argues that there is a "stark conflict between the isolated agitant role of the Socratic Philosopher and the institutionalized and professionalized function of the modern academic."[289] Questioning authority of received knowledge, as Socrates did in Athens, will inevitably lead to

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[287] This percent is the EU target for the year 2020 in the Europe 2020 Project.
[288] Small, *Value of the Humanities*, 133.
[289] Ibid., 139.

questioning the authority of the professor. Another problem is that the people capable of Socratic education need to have certain personal qualities such as charisma. It is hard to imagine a Socratic educator in every university, let alone every humanities class. Furthermore, Socratic education for critical thinking and education for artistic empathy can be done anywhere: in a garden, in a forest, in a marketplace, and probably would do better without grades and diplomas because these focus the student's attention on the grade as a result, rather than on the process of learning. What is missing from Nussbaum's argument is the link between humanities and the university.

This concern arises from the contemporary decoupling of teaching from research which is not addressed at all in Nussbaum's book. Humanities are praised for their educational virtues, while research is never addressed. Teaching seems to be severed from the public policymakers' perspective too. Inside the EU, the Lisbon Research Agenda deals exclusively with the research, while the Bologna Process deals with teaching. The criteria for evaluating excellence are different for both processes: Researchers are graded on their 'impact' (usually understood as number and rank of publications), while faculties are evaluated by the employability of their graduates. In the chapter 1 of *Not for Profit,* Nussbaum describes how bleak the situation of humanities is nowadays and she mentions the underfunding of research, but an argument why research should be paired with teaching never appears in the book. It is hard to construct one from a perspective focused on *phronêsis*, when research is usually associated with *episteme*. Humboldt had defended research coupled with teaching because developing the intellect was a necessary component of *Bildung*, in order to achieve truly autonomous human beings. But Humboldt did not want politics in the university or a politically steered curricula. Nussbaum saves the public usefulness of humanities, but loses research and the university as a host institution for the humanities in the process.
It is time to summarise our options in the next section.

3.3 The Subject of Education: Individuals, Citizens or Elites

We have seen so far that arguing for the value of humanities can be done in different ways and that the strategy changes along with the intended subject of education. Following Aristotle's distinction between the education for the good man (what we

could construct as the Enlightenment disembodied 'man', not linked to any particular political regime) and the virtuous citizen, we were led to understand that different types of citizenship require different types of education because different virtues need to be developed. Educating people for moral excellence differs from educating them to obtain obedient citizens and it also differs from education for dissenting citizenship. If education is instrumental for the State, the ideal of citizenship promoted by the State will be essential in spelling out who needs to be educated.

The arguments for humanities reviewed so far do not spell out who is being educated and what should (s)he become after the university education. Because of this misunderstanding, arguments for humanities develop into parallel discourses. Without taking first a stand on the issue of who is being educated, the risk is that we can never reach a conclusion. A related issue is what type of knowledge is promoted through the study of humanities. Starting from the Aristotelian tripartite division of knowledge, *episteme, techne* and *phronêsis* have each been emphasised as being essential for the humanities, sometimes all three together, but most of the times only one type of knowledge was deemed essential. A third issue regards the notion of citizenship. We have seen that, at some point, citizenship was involved in almost all the justifications of humanities, but the idea of citizenship differed greatly across the justification models. Let us revise next what were the options we have outlined so far.

A) Who is being educated? The political and administrative elites

Starting from the Renaissance, when the term *studia humanitatis* began to be used, the humanities were the disciplines that could build the character of the pupils in order to make them worthy of a public office. The students of humanities all came from good families and were supposed to become the future administrative elites, such as notaries, secretaries, clerks. The humanistic education was not accessible to the poor because the public functions were not open for them. "These studies were deemed foundational for adolescent males from good families who aimed to pursue the active life of the citizen or subject in the service of the state."[290]

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[290] Hundert 462.

In order to mould the character of the student into a virtuous and obedient citizen, the humanities appealed to all three types of knowledge: *episteme* (in the study of ancient history), *techne* (in the study of rhetoric), and *phronêsis* (through the study of moral philosophy). Jennifer Summit argues that in the Renaissance it was the only period in history when the three types of knowledge blended harmoniously to define the humanities.[291] This harmony was lost when in the 20th and 21th century the elite training remained a goal for humanities, but the *phronetic* part of knowledge was forgotten, argues Summit.

A study by Pierre Bourdieu has shown that in the 20th century France *les grandes écoles* were highly selective in their admission process and effectively were training the future political and administrative elite of France. The humanities were a barrier in the form of an entrance exam in the *grandes écoles* that ensured that only those with the cultural or social capital could get in and also graduate. A similar situation has been described in the UK by the sociologists Brown and Scase. Their study found that the education provided by the elite universities such as Oxford and Cambridge is emphatically non-useful and focused on the humanities, as a way to distinguish these universities from the other universities where the labour class can enter. This type of education will ensure the access in the managerial and political elite of the UK.[292]

The sociological studies by Bourdieu, Brown and Scase construe this situation as unfair and elitist, because humanities are used merely to conserve the social status of the few privileged. However this negative characterisation can be explained by the lack of *phronetic* knowledge in the humanities education. Without character building, the humanities are just the means employed by a class to keep its status, and the graduates cannot justify why they are the best candidates for political and administrative positions.

B) Who is being educated? 'Man' as such

The second goal of education was 'Man', understood as a universal category, and this was proposed by several Enlightenment thinkers, most famously by Wilhelm von Humboldt and Immanuel Kant. This was almost a democratic movement because Humboldt aimed to give a chance to bright young men to enter the elite through merit

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[291] Summit 670–71.
[292] Brown and Scase, *Higher Education and Corporate Realities*, 18.

alone. These candidates needed first to be educated into freedom and autonomy, through *Bildung*. After becoming autonomous individuals, the free citizens would serve the state in a better way than they could have done it if they were trained into obedience. *Bildung* as training through pure science was opposed to professional training, and it was cast as the prerequisite before any specialisation took place. If the graduate would not go any further into specialisation, he would still remain a 'cultivated man'.

We find again the divergence between *episteme* and *techne* at the core of the educational project, while the superiority of *episteme* comes as a presupposition. The education through *Bildung* is intended for any individual endowed with reason, so it is not fit for the political goals of a particular state. The outcome of education after the Humboldtian vision is the cultivated individual who will obey his own internal universal moral law, a perfect citizen for every possible state. This type of education focused on *episteme* with the goal of achieving *phronêsis* neglected emphatically *techne*. General culture was the precondition for any specialised knowledge.

'Man' understood as a universal subject of education implied that anyone could be educated into humanities because everyone deserved to be autonomous. However in reality the recipients of education were only the white Christian males of some fortune. As seen from the postmodernists' criticism of *Bildung*, humanistic education in the Enlightenment was just another meta-narrative used to legitimise certain social structures. By being emphatically apolitical, humanistic education was in effect serving the political system at that time, whichever it happened to be.

C) Who is being educated? The European Employable Citizen

Recent changes in European educational policies, most obviously present in the Bologna Process, but which started in the 80s, cannot be in agreement with the previous educational ideals. The reforms in education came out after the massification of education. A mass-system of higher education cannot claim to produce elites anymore, nor 'cultivated men'. After the Bologna Process the subject of education is nowadays the European citizen defined in a narrow way as the active, mobile and employable worker. Employability is given by a set of skills and competences that are not fixed and vary with the demands of the labour market. The Bologna Process changed the

paradigm of higher education by requiring it to be 'useful' and this was measured in how well an institution provides its graduates with employable skills. In the opposition between theoretical and vocational, between *episteme* and *techne*, the BP took the side of *techne* because at least the vocational education promised to be useful.

After the massification of education and the new imperatives of usefulness, *episteme* and *techne* were forced to coexist and compete for the same resources inside the university. This competition had no precedent. Now the humanities had to be defended against other disciplines not on epistemic grounds, but on grounds of usefulness. Education cannot claim to pursue the ideal of fostering the 'cultivated man' when society explicitly asks for specialists, employable European citizens.

The classical and modern defences of humanities have their problems, but so does the attack staged by the BP on the humanities. The BP cannot justify why the general goal of a useful education needs to be translated into employability, which is just assumed to be a desirable state for any graduate. Who should decide in general what is useful and what is not? Does usefulness in the short term count as much as the usefulness in the long term? Because, as Sharon Rider has shown, theoretical discoveries may become extremely useful through their applications in the far away future, discouraging the specialisation in certain narrow areas of science or humanities, the so-called 'orchid studies', may deprive humanity of innovative discoveries in the long term.

Another problem with the BP is its narrow vision on citizenship which excludes many categories of people. Disabled, pensioners, children, immigrants - all these persons are not 'active European citizens' fit for the 'Europe of Knowledge.' Anyone living on social benefits is not a full citizen, but a burden for the Europe of Knowledge. When the BP policy-makers speak of social inclusion, they intend the right of all to have an education that will lead to employability. A larger discourse of social inclusion, by considering those not (self-)employed in the classical sense such as housewives, caretakers, freelancers, and NGO volunteers as equally valuable citizens is not to be found; nor is the meaningful life outside employment or self-employment even mentioned as a possibility. The exclusionary aspect of the educational policies is not addressed in the literature analysed so far, therefore the notion of citizenship that emerges from the textual analysis of the Bologna Process related documents deserves

further study and should constitute a future direction of research.

A common problem with the justifications of humanities provided so far was that they were based on a hierarchical understanding of knowledge and disciplines. Humanities needed to be taught in the academia because humanities were better than the mere vocational disciplines, usually because *episteme* was conceived as more valuable than *techne*. Being a cultivated man was better than being a mere specialist. This was the logic of the humanistic disciplines: 'better than'. Once the BP changed the discourse on higher education and technical knowledge was presented as more valuable, humanities were left without justification. They could not turn back to *Bildung*, or to the elitist character training. A new type of argument is needed.

There were philosophers who thought that humanities need not justify themselves in terms of utility. But what they failed to understand was that the criticism of humanities coming from the BP inspired policies was not a theoretical criticism. This issue could not be settled inside academia anymore, through long debates in scholarly journals. These were not the 60's culture wars brought back to life, these were the 'usefulness wars' and the debate needed to include all the stakeholders in higher education: students, parents, employers, politicians.

D) Who is being educated? The dissenting citizen

The dispute between *episteme* and *techne* may be transcended by getting out of this dichotomy and choosing a third option: practical wisdom, or *phronêsis*. This was the strategy employed by Martha Nussbaum who argued that humanities are useful now more than ever, that humanistic education should not deliver employable graduates, but something more important: citizens fit for democracy. This defence of humanities manages to save the teaching of humanities, but not research. *Episteme* is sacrificed so that *phronêsis* may triumph. After Nussbaum's defence of the humanities it is not clear why the humanities belong to the university more than in any other institutional space, such as the *Agora*.

This argument in favour of the humanities does have an advantage over the arguments listed in the first chapter: It includes policy makers as recipients of the message, it is not

just another intellectual debate among scholars, but aimed at the world outside academia which actually funds the humanities. It accepts the current point of view focused on usefulness, but it redefines usefulness not as a measure of utilitarian total satisfaction, neither as the wealth of the nation, but as democratic citizenship. As an argument for democratic citizenship based on creating capabilities, it embraces a pluralistic definition of citizenship, compatible with agonistic citizenship. Its main advantage is that it leaves to the students the open option of dissenting and thus affirming their agency against the state. It is also an argument that does not pay lip service to the idea of multiple stakeholders. In the BP there are many stakeholders, but most of them are silent: The students, the parents, the universities, have no say in what should be the goal of education or just choose not to exercise their right of dissent; by implementing these policies, the universities implicitly approve these policies. According to Nussbaum's capability approach, each individual needs to set her own goals and values, with no interference from the policy makers. Nussbaum's account of citizenship is more democratic than the Bologna notion of the 'active and mobile citizen' and it includes a more comprehensive notion of usefulness, because usefulness needs to be judged on an individual basis by looking at how many capabilities were fostered in each individual. Since we live in a globalised world in which we inadvertently influence other's lives, Nussbaum pleads for the notion of 'global citizenship' or 'citizens of the world'. Education for democratic citizenship means education for all, and this implies a truly democratic 'usefulness for all'. 'All' in this context must be understood as all people on earth. We cannot plead for humanistic education in the USA without understanding that people in India need just as much this education, as well as the Europeans.

Nussbaum's proposal is so far the only competitor for the BP policies in the real life because it plays on the same level as the BP the 'usefulness' game, even though its playing field is not the university ground. As a normative justification of 'usefulness', Nussbaum's proposal has certain advantages, such as inclusion, and is better grounded in a philosophical theory. In contrast, the BP has utilitarian assumptions which are never explicitly stated or argued for. It remains a direction of further study to what extent the humanities can be linked back to the institutional setting of universities in this account. But as a response to the current attack on humanities, Nussbaum's argument seems to be the most resilient so far.

Conclusions

Socrates once said that "the unexamined life is not worth living."[293] For centuries it has been the purpose of humanities to examine the assumptions of the mainstream conceptions about the human life, and give people the necessary tools to examine their own lives. If anyone could answer the challenge posed by the Bologna Process to our understandings of education and the good life, then humanities should be the best candidates. However, humanities are now in a crisis of self-justification intensified by the Bologna Process. Humanities have always experienced a status of crisis; it is their way of reinventing themselves, yet the crisis that arose after the launch of the Bologna Process is of a special nature, institutional and educational.

In our society there are many conflicting images about education in the humanities. First there are those who believe that humanities will lead nowhere and are just a waste of time and resources for both students and taxpayers. In the end, "university students focusing on the humanities may end up, at least in their parents' nightmares, as dog-walkers for those majoring in computer science."[294] Second, there is an image of defiance or indifference, promoted by those who value humanities for their eye-opening character; these people argue that the meaning of the 'good life' should not be dictated by policy-makers, that one should choose whether to be employable or not. Ultimately the relation between employment and one's self-image should be self-decided because a valuable life is not necessarily focused on (self-)employment.

Writer Alain de Botton recently noticed that our collective imagination is haunted by the shame of not having or not gaining enough money:

> "Money has in many ways replaced sex as a focus of shame. The ability to make money and be financially independent has been raised into a primary marker of whether someone deserves to count as an acceptable human being. The shame of failing financially is so great that a number of people every year will prefer to kill themselves than call out for help (the current financial crisis has seen a characteristic and expected rise in the suicide rate across the developed world)."[295]

It can be argued that, in our times, employment is another locus of shame. The shame

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[293] Plato, *The Apology*, 38a.

[294] Nicholas Kristof, "Don't Dismiss the Humanities," accessed August 22, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/14/opinion/nicholas-kristof-dont-dismiss-the-humanities.html

[295] Alain de Botton, "The Philosophers' Mail," accessed August 24, 2014, http://thephilosophersmail.com/190314-capitalism-jagger.php

bestowed upon the unemployed can be seen in the way politicians speak of 'welfare tourism' or the burden of ageing population, and in the way people usually regard the homeless and the beggars as the pariah of our streets. If being unemployed is a shameful position, then the politician's concern for employability can gain legitimacy in the public eyes.

We have seen that there are several arguments why employability should not be the main interpretation for 'usefulness' in education. Some authors argue that the focus on employability is a good excuse for European governments to give up on regulating the labour market, and instead transfer the responsibility on the citizens' shoulders. If being employed is construed as having employable skills, then the state can only invest in training those skills and, after the education is over, if there are still unemployed people, it means it is their fault they were unemployable. A current debate concerns whether the labour market is too regulated or unregulated; this debate should benefit from taking into account the construction of 'employability' through the educational policies in the BP. Others have argued that by constructing the set of employable skills as a response to the demands of today's labour market, this leaves the future employees incapable of meeting the changed demands in tomorrow's labour market. Some argue that the labour market's demands cannot be predicted in principle, and therefore people should construct their life around life-long learning, discarding old skills and gaining new ones as they age. However, this model is oblivious to the fact that a future of the labour market may be dominated by automation, as argued by Luciano Floridi. Employment in sectors of the economy that we today think of as important may not be where the jobs will be created tomorrow. What will it mean in the future for people to have a fulfilling and purposeful life when employment will be reduced to just a few hours a week? We need to remain open to the possibility that the good life of the future will not be the (self-)employed life, the active and mobile model proposed now by the EU. People will need to be active in other fields, not strictly related to bread-winning. Other capacities will need to be used in order to make use of one's time, and these capacities are now dropped from education in order to construct the employable European citizen.

The Bologna ideal of education is more perishable than what first meets the eye. It is connected with a certain view of what it means to be employable, of what the future labour market's needs will be, and its time dimension is quite narrow. In order to face

the challenges of the future labour markets, as BP had claimed it prepares its students to do, one needs a wider understanding of what it means to have a good life. One way of defending the humanities is to claim that it is equivalent to defending a plurality of educational purposes, the right to build one's life based on an education that is not submitted to the political goals of the day, ultimately the right to have a dissenting voice and a different perspective on life.

The main finding of this study was to show that, before deciding what type of education society needs, we need to understand who we are educating through our universities. Taking a stance on "who should we educate?" is prior to being able to judge educational policies. This decision requires a previous justification that requires arguments taken from the field of social justice: Who needs to be educated and who has the right to be educated? Furthermore, we have seen that all answers we have examined to the question underlying educational policies, i.e. 'who is being educated?', were linked at some level with the citizenship issue. By defining who is a full citizen, an answer to the question who had the right to a humanistic education was implicitly answered. Nussbaum's project to universalise the definition of democratic citizenship would ensure a basis for providing humanistic education for all. Such a line of arguing would provide humanities to the well-regarded status they had starting from the Renaissance times, but this time not as a device for exclusion, but inclusion for all. We have tried to show that, by defending the humanities, one defends the idea of a plurality of educational purposes, the right to build one's life based on an education that is not submitted to the political goals of the day, ultimately the right to have a dissenting voice and a different perspective on life. By defending humanities, one defends the true 'usefulness' of education, namely its potential for constructing democratic citizenship for all.

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