THE GOVERNMENTALIZATION OF LEARNING AND THE ASSEMBLAGE OF A LEARNING APPARATUS

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ABSTRACT. In this essay, Maarten Simons and Jan Masschelein reconsider the concepts “educationalization” and “the grammar of schooling” in the light of the overwhelming importance of “learning” today. Doubting whether these concepts and related historical-analytical perspectives are still useful, the authors suggest the concept “learning apparatus” as a point of departure for an analysis of the “grammar of learning.” They draw on Michel Foucault’s analysis of governmentality to describe how learning has become a matter of both government and self-government. In describing the governmentalization of learning and the current assemblage of a “learning apparatus,” Simons and Masschelein indicate how the concept of learning has become disconnected from education and teaching and has instead come to refer to a kind of capital, to something for which the learner is personally responsible, to something that can and should be managed, and to something that must be employable. Finally, the authors elaborate how these discourses combine to play a crucial role in contemporary advanced liberalism that seeks to promote entrepreneurship.

OUR PRESENT EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING

The word “learning” has come to be indispensable for speaking about ourselves, others, and society. As employees in an organization, we recognize our need for the competencies necessary to do our job, and learning is regarded as a process or force to generate these competencies. Furthermore, learning is not only part of our own vocabulary to articulate what is important for us as employees; managers, too, are addressing the learning force of their employees as an important source of a company’s productivity. A reference to learning is also indispensable with regard to other domains. Our citizenship is not just perceived as a legal matter that is related to rights and obligations, but as a performance based upon particular competencies. Active citizenship and activities such as involvement and participation are regarded as necessary conditions for making democracy work, and these democratic competencies can be learned. Moreover, activities in the so-called private sphere are regarded as competency-based or requiring specific skills. A range of activities — from child-rearing, having sex, eating, or communication, to traveling and using free time — are regarded as being competency-based and in need of a prior learning process. Learning thus plays a major role in our world of experience, and we consider ourselves to be facing needs that can be addressed by learning.

The aim of this article is to analyze this overwhelming importance of “learning” today. Our point of departure is the critical attitude of what Michel Foucault labeled an “ontology of the present” and more specifically the present...
“assemblage” of an apparatus of government and self-government. Instead of describing in detail the characteristics of the particular critical attitude of an ontology of the present, we focus on the questions it allows us to ask — and, indeed, to a certain extent forces us to ask. The main question could be formulated straightforwardly as follows: who are we as people for whom learning is of major importance, who refer to learning as a way to constantly position and reposition ourselves? This question presupposes — as a kind of “theoretical and methodological decision” — that the word learning in present discourses does not refer to a kind of anthropological universal that has finally received special attention in our present society. Rather, learning is conceived as a “singular, historical experience” emerging within a particular historical context. Therefore our objective is not to reveal what learning really is about but how, at a particular moment in history, “we” have come to understand who and what we are and do in terms of learning. It is the constitution of this “we,” or this particular form of subjectivity, this particular form of self-understanding and self-government in terms of learning, that is the focus of our research. Further, our aim is to analyze how this self-understanding and subjectivity emerge within present practices and discourses. For this study we again draw on Foucault and in particular his analysis of governmentality and the so-called “studies of governmentality” developed during the past decade.

The aim of “studies of governmentality” is to analyze how a regime of government and self-government works. The point of departure is that governing people is not a matter of brute force or subtle ideology, but a rather overt and reflected


4. We would like to stress here that our main aim is to offer an analysis, and thus our discussion of the presuppositions and theoretical implications of the framework [and foremost, the research attitude] is limited. For a more detailed analysis, see, for example, Michel Foucault, Naissance de la biopolitique, Cours au Collège de France [1978–1979] [Birth of Biopolitics: Course at the Collège de France, 1978–1979] [Paris: Gallimard/Le seuil, 2004]; Michel Foucault, Sécurité, territoire, population, Cours au Collège de France [1977–1978] [Security, Territory, Population: Course at the Collège de France, 1977–1978] [Paris: Gallimard/Le seuil, 2004]; and Mitchell Dean, “Governmentality,” in Power and Rule in Modern Society [New Delhi: Sage, 1999].
form of acting upon self-government. “Acting upon self-government” implies that a particular practice of freedom and a particular form of subjectivity is presupposed and acted upon in order to achieve governmental aims. This governmental action and reflection, as well as the form of governable self-government implied, develop and change throughout history. The point of departure of our analysis is that “we,” while regarding learning today as a fundamental force to govern ourselves, play a central role in the present regime of governmentality. The formula “governmentalization of learning” points precisely at what is at stake today and what we would like to describe here: that learning has become a matter of both government and self-government — in other words, that we regard learning as that which guarantees self-government and that which at the same time renders us, and society as a whole, governable. In short, the “governmentalization of learning” implies that, inasmuch as we consider learning to be a fundamental process and govern ourselves accordingly, we are part of a particular, advanced liberal, governmental regime.

A growing body of research focuses in a similar way on these topics. Our analysis of the “governmentalization of learning,” however, will draw special attention to two issues. First, our discussion of the “governmentalization of learning” is an attempt to elaborate the concepts of “educationalization” (of society) and the “grammar of schooling” in light of the overwhelming importance of “learning” today. Given the current importance of learning, we doubt whether the “school/education-oriented” concepts of “educationalization” and the “grammar of schooling,” and the historical-analytical perspectives associated with these, are adequate for understanding the present circumstances. We will suggest that the concept “learning apparatus” is better suited to addressing these issues and may be a more productive point of departure for a (future) analysis that focuses on the “grammar of learning.” Second, we want in this study to emphasize a critical attitude toward the present. What is ultimately at stake is our present and how we live the present as learners. This attitude and concern for the present will lead us in the conclusion to point at the effects of the learning apparatus and to the question whether the experience of learning indeed results in the freedom and collective well-being that is being promised.


THE SOCIAL REGIME OF GOVERNMENT AND SELF-GOVERNMENT

In most Western countries during the twentieth century, under the labels of the so-called welfare state and public policy, a social regime of government and self-government took shape. It is necessary first to discuss some primary characteristics of this regime in order to focus on the emergence of “learning” within the current advanced liberal regime of governing. We want to stress here that the term “social” in our discussion does not refer to a particular political ideology, but to [diverse] modes of governmental reasoning that regard the entities to be governed in social terms.

The main challenge within the social regime of governing was to combine individual freedom, on the one hand, with the order and welfare of society, on the other. In order to deal with this challenge, a governmental rationality has emerged that reflects in a particular way on the aims of government, on the role of the state, and on the subjects/objects to be governed. In this rationality, society is regarded as a body with its own social regularities and social norms. The state appears here as the instance that should not only take into account individual [economic] interests, but also social interests and societal issues not directly related to individual freedom and responsibility. This social governmental rationality permitted government to identify problems as social problems and to argue, for example, for social security as a governmental technology aimed at securing both individual freedom and collective well-being. The social mode of governmental reflection thus addresses people not just as a collection of individual, juridical subjects but foremost as social citizens.

The point of departure in the social rationality of governing is that society, with its norms and regularities, is a condition for individual freedom [and thus also that social problems could endanger individual freedom]. Part of this rationality is a governmental reflection on issues concerning “socialization,” “social normality,” “social control” or “solidarity,” and various strategies to bring about social normalcy. Indeed, during the twentieth century it is no longer possible to think about freedom, autonomy, and citizenship without taking into account the social [and related economic and cultural] context. Furthermore, state government that positions itself toward society, its norms, and social citizens corresponds to a particular form of “social” self-government; to regard oneself as a citizen during the twentieth century implies seeing oneself as part of [national] society, and it implies that one has to come to look at social norms as the condition for one’s autonomy. What is asked within the social regime of governing is to discipline oneself in view of social norms. Thus, as a citizen, one should take into account what Émile Durkheim claimed during the 1920s: “Man [sic] is only man because he lives in society.”

be regarded as the principle for governing oneself as a citizen within the social regime of governing.

Part of the social rationality of governing that emerged during the twentieth century was a very specific way to reflect upon school education. This reflection was basically concerned with the role of education within society and at the level of society. Within the social rationality of governing, education thus became a governmental concern, and the national government started to think of itself as being responsible for governing the relation between “education” and “society.” Depending on the specific ideology adopted, this relation could be understood in different ways: for example, education could be seen as the reproduction of the social order and in need of governmental reform in order to reduce inequality within society, or as the necessary tool to conserve particular social and cultural values in order to secure the stability of society. Despite these ideological differences, the shared horizon for this governmental reflection was the relation between “education” and “society”: the assumption that education has a “social” dimension and that national government has the responsibility to intervene in education in view of social [and related cultural or economic] concerns. In other words, “the social” became the strategic medium for governments to translate “societal problems” [for example, inequality and workforce needs] into “educational solutions” [such as school reform and curriculum reform]. In this respect, the “governmentalization of education” in the name of the social should be regarded as a main component in the “educationalization of society.” In other words, what seems to take place during the twentieth century is a strategic linkage between the “grammar of education,” the “grammar of societal order,” and the “grammar of governing.”

In our opinion, “we,” addressed as learners, are no longer part of the social regime of government and the implied processes of educationalization and governmentalization. The rationality used to reflect upon government, the state and its role, and the domains of government has changed, as have the governmental technologies being used and the form of self-government at stake. Various authors have analyzed the characteristics of this new governmental regime that is often labeled “advanced liberal.” In this regime, as we shall argue in detail later on, individual freedom and collective well-being are rationalized in a different way, new governmental technologies are being used, and a new type of self-government is promoted. Part of this new regime [articulated in an exemplary way by Friedrich von Hayek] is that the state is no longer regarded as the central subject that should [and is able to] collect general knowledge about society, that should organize social

12. See also Ian Hunter, *Rethinking the School: Subjectivity, Bureaucracy, Criticism* [St. Leonards: Allen and Unwin, 1994].


justice in a planned manner based on “sociological knowledge,” and that should look at education as a governmental instrument to reform society.\textsuperscript{15} The disqualification of “social sovereignty” and central [social] planning, however, does not mean that rationalities and technologies of governing have become superfluous. They have changed, and “the social” no longer seems to play a major role. We shall argue that “learning” and the strategy of the learning apparatus — aimed at bringing about change and inclusion — play a major role in fulfilling the new governmental tasks. In sum, there seems to be a shift from the “governmentalization of education” and the strategic use of the grammar of education toward the “governmentalization of learning” and strategic use of the grammar of learning.

**Learning as a Fundamental Problem and Solution**

In order to describe how learning has come to play a major role in the new governmental regime, it is necessary first to draw attention to forms of problematization in which learning appears as an important issue for reflection and thought, that is, the “historically conditioned emergence of new fields of experience” related to learning.\textsuperscript{16} Hence, we will focus on the emergence of those fields of [collective] experience that involve the rationalization of problems as learning problems and regard the enhancement of learning as a solution.\textsuperscript{17} Four related fields of problems, shaped in the previous century, can be distinguished: the necessity of learning for a knowledge economy, the importance of learning in order to guarantee freedom in a changing society, the educational expertise concerning learning and instruction, and the importance of the employability of learning results.

**The Capitalization of Learning**

At the end of the 1960s there was an interest in the development of a so-called “knowledge society” and “knowledge economy.” In this economy, knowledge should function as a “central capital,” “the crucial means of production,” and the “energy of a modern society.”\textsuperscript{18} On this view, “knowledge workers” are of major importance in an economy in which many activities imply a “knowledge base.” Furthermore, proponents contend, these developments require us to look at education in a new way: education (especially universities and research institutions) should be regarded as a “knowledge industry,” the main supplier for the new demand for a sufficient “knowledge base” and useful “knowledge workers.” The following quotation nicely expresses this new problematization of education: “Education has become too important to be left to educators.... Education is far too big a cost to be accepted without


questioning. To ask whether it is fruitful investment or simply expense is a legitimate question.” 19 What is stressed here is not just that education can and should be an object of economic calculation [the economics of education], but that education as a supplier is part of the economy — that is, the knowledge economy.

Moreover, the logic of the knowledge economy — the logic of the development and technological application of knowledge — becomes the horizon for addressing the importance of “continuing education” for “knowledge workers”: “In a knowledge society, school and life can no longer be separate. They have to be linked in an organic process in which the one feeds back on the other. And this continuing education attempts to do.” 20 Continuing education is thus regarded as a solution to the need for a useful knowledge base, and economic problems are framed within an educational framework, such as the lack of adequate investment in learning through continuing education. Furthermore, and this is also related to the two other forms of problematization [discussed subsequently], learning becomes disconnected from its traditional institutional context [school education, training] and conditions [teaching]. While schooling and education have been regarded as an economic force for a long time, against the background of the knowledge society, learning itself is now regarded as a force to produce added value. As a consequence, the increased emphasis on the need to enhance productive learning spurs a reflection on its optimal conditions and effective organization [for instance, through continuing education, training, informal learning, and so on].

More specifically, against this horizon it is possible to address learning as that which links the employee to the process of production. Not just financial, physical, and mental stimuli are required to establish this link, but also learning. It becomes possible to address the employee not only as someone who offers a knowledge base, but foremost as someone who is capable of renewing this knowledge base permanently, that is, according to the logic of the knowledge economy and the learning needs it generates. At this point learning — as the ability to renew one’s knowledge base or human capital — is regarded as a condition for economic development and productivity. In more recent discourses it is argued that for a knowledge worker, “work...is to a large extent learning” and that “while learning, value is added to the existing human capital.” 21 Learning activities are thus referred to as activities of major importance for the development of the knowledge economy, and challenges within this development could become identified as learning needs — specifically, needs for additional learning through, for example, continuing education. Both the learning process and the results of learning [knowledge] thus appear as a kind of capital. What is at stake, then, is a “capitalization of

20. Ibid., 24.
learning.” In other words, what emerges is a field of experience in which learning appears as a force to produce added value.

**BEING RESPONSIBLE TOWARD LEARNING**

For a second form of problematization, we should consider the idea of lifelong learning (“éducation permanente”), which is closely related to the concern for self-actualization and self-realization. The basic idea is that learning should not be limited to the school or other traditional institutions for education and to a particular time in people’s life. What is needed is an integrated (educational) system or infrastructure that offers opportunities for lifelong learning: “Education is a means of meeting the physical, intellectual, emotional and social needs of man. These needs are of a lifelong, continuing and permanent nature, necessitating that education be a lifelong process, not restricted to age-groups or institution.” Education, not yet disconnected from learning, is thus regarded as a way to meet needs, and these needs are related to a society that changes on a permanent basis. Here people are speaking specifically of the rapid changes on the level of knowledge and technology: “the constant evolution of our culture and the fact that knowledge acquired in the school becomes obsolescent in a short time”; “rapid and unprecedented changes based on the deliberate expansion and purposeful application of knowledge”; “the knowledge explosion.” Against this horizon, education (beyond mere schooling) is objectified as a means that allows people to learn or to meet the needs generated through changes in society. Or, to reformulate this idea: education should allow all people to face changes autonomously; it should “prepare mankind to adapt to change, the predominant characteristic of our time.” People should thus be aware of the fact that education at school is not a sufficient condition for an autonomous, adult life. Autonomy is no longer about guiding one’s life according to the norms and contents offered at school and representing what is required for individual freedom and social welfare. Regarded as self-realization and self-actualization, autonomy means being able to meet one’s needs, and since these needs are changing constantly, lifelong learning is required. As a consequence, proponents of this view argue that “the central mission of the school will be to teach the pupils to learn, to train them to assimilate new knowledge on their own.” Apart from this reconceptualization of the mission of schools, a field of experience emerges in which problems concerning individual well-being can be framed as educational or learning problems, such as the supply of an integrated educational infrastructure or the presence of the motivation and capacities necessary for learning.

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Part of this problematization of learning is the way adult education is reflected upon. During the 1920s, Eduard Lindeman stressed the importance of learning for adults and the implication for education: against the background of “education is life” and “the whole of life is learning,” he argued that the situation of the learner should be the point of departure. For that reason, education for adults cannot start from a prior curriculum. The curriculum and the teacher are secondary: “In adult education the curriculum is built around the student’s needs and interests.”

While here it is argued that the experience of adults should be used as the point of departure for organizing education, later on (and drawing upon humanistic psychology) Lindeman expressed the idea that adult learning requires an attitude of self-direction toward learning. With the ideal of self-realization as adult education’s horizon, external regulation of learning (for example, the “master” position of the teacher) becomes a problem, and learning is regarded as what could and should be managed by the adults themselves, that is, a kind of self-education. Malcolm Knowles, for example, describes self-directed learning as a process in which the learner takes the initiative (with the help of others, if needed) to make a diagnosis of the learning needs, formulate learning goals, identify human and material resources for learning, choose and implement adequate learning strategies, and evaluate learning results. Again, the changing society and the need to be able to cope with changes build the horizon for stressing the importance of self-regulation to one’s learning. Although an educational infrastructure may be important, effective learning is reflected as what should be initiated and directed by learners themselves. In short, learning becomes regarded (that is, becomes an object of thought or objectified) as a condition for individual freedom, and people are addressed as being responsible for their own learning and for regulating their learning. This could be regarded as an attitude of “responsibilization” toward learning.

**Learning as Object of (Self) Management and (Self) Expertise**

Although related to the previously described forms of problematization, the new educational and psychological expertise concerning learning processes offers a third form. First, learning is regarded as a kind of cognitive process, that is, a kind of process that is internal to someone who learns and that occurs incidentally or in a planned manner. Change is a central theme here. Change, it is argued, can be the result of learning processes. This means that to understand these processes and to get a grip on them enables one to influence change. This focus on learning is meant in part to distinguish between learning processes and the outcomes of learning. This distinction, for example, allows one to take the [desirable] learning

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27. Ibid., 6.
28. Ibid., 6.
outcomes as a point of departure, to focus on the learning processes that are required to achieve these, and to seek the necessary conditions. Instruction, then, is conceived as an external condition for learning and the characteristics of the learning process should be taken into account in order to offer effective instruction. In short, learning as such becomes a domain of expertise. Expertise based on cognitive psychology reflects upon learning as processes of cognition, transforming information into knowledge. Knowledge on this view is the output of mental processes and, as such, the result of a “construction.” Although there are different approaches to this idea of construction, the connection between construction and learning opens up the question of why this construction is needed. At this point, the notion of “environment” (and social context) is introduced, and the construction of knowledge is argued to have an instrumental or functional value. The learner is addressed as someone in an environment and social context in which knowledge is constructed on the basis of input (experiences, information, problems) and where the existing knowledge base is reconstructed in order to bring about a new equilibrium.

Within this field of problematization where learning is objectified as a process of construction within an environment, it is possible to focus on the abilities of the learner to get a grip on these processes: metacognition — or knowledge about one’s own cognition — and active regulation of one’s own learning processes. The learner is thus someone who can and should become aware of the learning processes and who should relate in an active, regulating way to these processes. Learners should become the “managers” of their own learning, for example, by developing their own learning strategy, monitoring the process, and evaluating the results. In short, the expertise concerning learning presupposes that learners themselves can and should become the real experts. Thomas Shuell’s well-known definition articulates these ideas very well: “Learning is an active, constructive, and social process where the learner strategically manages available cognitive, physical, and social resources to create new knowledge by interacting with


34. Habermas’s perspective (drawing upon Piaget) — often used to reflect on learning and more specifically on collective learning processes — could also be located within this field of problematization. See, for example, Delanty, “Citizenship as a Learning Process.” Equilibrium in Habermas’s perspective is consensus (“Verständigung”), presupposed within communicative rationality and involving learning processes.


information in the environment and integrating it with information already stored in memory." The result of this form of problematization is that learning comes to be seen as a fundamental process for coping with our environment and that the very "management" or "regulation" of this fundamental process can and should be learned. Against this background, instruction is problematized in terms of "stimulation" and "facilitation" and the construction of a "learning environment" that allows learners to learn. At this point it is important to stress that there is a new field of expertise about learning that reflects upon learning as a fundamental process of knowledge construction in an environment and that regards the learner as someone who can and should become able to manage this process (as well as its input and output) in an environment in a proactive way. Thus what is at stake is the emergence of a kind of "managerial" attitude toward learning: learning appears as a process of construction that could and should be managed, and this first and foremost by learners themselves.

THE EMPLOYABILITY OF LEARNING RESULTS

In the early 1990s, against the horizon of the description of the economy as a knowledge economy and of society as a dynamic, permanently changing environment, the problem of employability takes shape. There is a concern not only for improving the actual performance of employees but also regarding their "potential" (for the future). The assumption is that this potential, which is connected to the "talents," learning capacity, and change motivation of people, defines whether they are employable and will remain employable. Hence, employability becomes a central issue in the development of active labor policies. In this context the notions of competencies and "competence management" appear; educational management and policy are no longer about "functions" but about "competencies," that is, the whole of knowledge, capacities, and attitudes that are employable with regard to an efficient, flexible (and learning-based) adaptation to changing conditions. Parallel to these developments, the goal and method of education and training are being recoded in terms of competencies. Indeed, given the aim of permanent employability, competency-based and competency-oriented teaching and learning become major concerns. The competency-based curriculum could be regarded as an "open matrix" to adapt education quickly to the requirements of the labor market: competencies are both the outcome of learning and the input for the labor market and society as such. Competencies refer in fact to the intersection between schools [and learning] and the requirement of employability — that is, they represent employable learning results. From a managerial and educational/instructional viewpoint, not just professional labor but also life as such is regarded as a competency-based performance.


It is important to stress once again that in this form of problematization, the employability of learning is not only the concern of the labor market, but foremost of the learner him- or herself. The lifelong learner today has to ask whether he or she possesses the necessary competencies or “employable learning results” in order to live a “successful” life. Against the horizon of employability, the lifelong learner is the one who assumes that everything that is valuable (for education and society) can be expressed in [the language of] competencies, and that competencies express all that is valuable.

**Learning and the Present Regime of Government and Self-Government**

The term “learning” of course has long been used. What is new about its contemporary use is that the term, disconnected from issues of education and schooling, is part of discourses that regard learning as a kind of capital, as something for which the learner him- or herself is responsible, as something that can and should be managed [and is an object of expertise], and as something that is employable. These new forms of problematization emerged during the twentieth century, to a certain extent independently from each other, and each with their own further internal developments and modifications that we will not discuss here. The point we want to make is that these initial forms of problematization are being combined today and have become part of our present governmental regime that seeks to promote entrepreneurship [instead of social normalcy]. In order to describe some chief characteristics of the new governmental regime, we will begin by taking a look at how people are addressed today as “learners.” We draw these examples from the Belgian/Flemish and European context.

In the profiles [official guidelines for teacher education institutions] for experienced and beginning teachers in Flanders, teaching is regarded as an activity based upon competencies. In order to guarantee the employability of teachers, the government has identified and disseminated a set of basic competencies. However, the government also stresses that in order to remain a professional, it is important for teachers to take care of their ongoing professional development. For this professional development or lifelong learning, teachers should have “capacities for self-direction.” Teachers thus are addressed as individuals who should be prepared to reflect on their professionalism as something that requires an ongoing learning process. Teachers should regard their learning and the competencies generated during self-directed learning processes as a kind of capital or added value for their professionalism as well as for the productivity of the school and the educational system in general. In sum, teachers are asked to acknowledge that they are responsible for managing their own learning in order to be and remain professionals.

40. Ibid., 1 (our translation).
As citizens, too, people are addressed as learners. The guiding idea is this: the good learner is a good citizen. In identifying problems in society as demonstrating a “democratic deficit” and as caused by an erosion of civil society, “active citizenship” is regarded in Europe as what can and should reinforce democracy. Active citizenship refers here to a variety of ways of becoming socially responsible in order to actively contribute to the democratic construction of society. Moreover, active citizens operate or could operate in different domains or in different environments, such as new social movements in civil society, family care in the private sphere, jobs with a social dimension in the work domain, or membership in a political party in the political domain. The basic assumption is that active citizenship can be learned and, by extension, that the learning of citizenship should be supported by government and enforced by an educational infrastructure in order to guarantee a democratic construction of society. Citizenship is thus regarded as the outcome of a prior learning process, and people are addressed as in need of particular competencies (biographical, participative, moral, and critical competencies) in order to be active citizens. Here, too, one is addressed as a responsible subject who must take charge of managing one’s learning process in order to develop the competencies needed for “civic” employability and for the construction of society (or collective learning). These competencies are indeed regarded as the human and social/cultural capital that is required in a democratic society today.

Furthermore, companies or private and public organizations, too, are objectified (or reflected upon) as having a learning force that they should develop and manage. A learning organization is defined as “an organization with a conscious policy to enlarge its learning capacity at all levels and on a permanent basis in order to optimize its effectiveness.” An organization thus has a “collective brain function” and can and should develop this function through “mobilizing the mental and creative capacities” of the employees. According to the current discourse,

45. See, for example, Delanty, “Citizenship as a Learning Process,” 603. According to Delanty we should distinguish between “disciplinary citizenship” and “cultural citizenship.” The former is mainly individualistic, related to formal education and promoted by neo-liberal policies. He uses the expression “governmentalization of learning” to refer to this narrow form of citizenship. As an alternative, he suggests that we look at citizenship on a cultural level as combining both individual and collective learning. Although we cannot discuss this in detail here, in our opinion his conception of “governmentalization” is rather limited. For us, governmentalization involves a particular form of self-government, and we doubt whether practices of “cultural citizenship” indeed imply nondisciplinary effects and whether they are located outside the form of government and self-government we describe here.
47. Ibid., 4 (our translation).
the learning organization is not just an organization that is able to adapt to changes in the environment; additionally, it should learn to manage its learning in a proactive way. Organizations are thus asked to focus not only on "survival learning" or "adaptive learning," but foremost on "generative learning": "learning that enhances the capacity to create."48 Along these same lines, it is further argued that good managers should come to understand that their role is to a large extent an educative role — that is, they should offer learning opportunities or a learning network that combines the empowerment of individuals and the company.49 School organizations in Flanders are addressed in a similar way: "a school as a learning organization has the capacity to develop new knowledge, expertise, and skills on a permanent basis in order to deal continuously with changing conditions."50 In short, companies and organizations are asked to become aware that in order to deal in a proactive, responsible way with the changing environment outside, they have to mobilize and manage their learning force(s).

Another example is the way in which policy and policy makers look at society. Politicians in Flanders and the Netherlands claim that government “will have to pay a good deal of attention to the development of learning and also to people’s capacity for self-learning” and that people should understand that the “learning society” refers to a “very concrete reality.”51 Stimulating lifelong learning and offering facilities for learning indeed become governmental strategies for ensuring “lifetime employability” [and a flexible labor market] as well as for encouraging individual self-realization — “to become what you want.”52 The role of policy makers in fostering an attitude toward learning that emphasizes intrinsic motivation contributes in a fundamental way to the evolution of a learning society.53 In the discourses on the European Union, for instance, it is argued that all citizens should be aware that this “will to learn” is not only a condition for their individual and collective well-being inside their state or inside the European Union; it is also

required to remain competitive as “Europeans” within an international environment. According to these discourses, when we are able to appropriate and manage our individual and collective learning force, we have access to the human and social capital necessary to construct and reconstruct our society.

These examples clarify an interpellation at different places and levels that encourages us to see ourselves as having a learning force and as being responsible for using and managing this force to construct and reconstruct the human (and social) capital required for our individual well-being, as well as the well-being of the collective. This interpellation is accompanied by the idea that the “individual’s place in relation to fellow citizens will increasingly be determined by the capacity to learn” and that this “relative position, which could be called the ‘learning relationship,’ will become an increasingly dominant feature in the structure of our societies.”

For a final example that articulates this fundamental importance of learning in the way we have come to think and speak about ourselves, we can look at how problems in society are now dealt with as learning problems. An unemployed person, for example, is today not just regarded as someone who is in need of an income, but he or she is foremost addressed as someone in need of additional learning. This viewpoint is clearly expressed by Anthony Giddens in his proposals for new social democratic policies: “the guideline is that, when possible, investment in human capital should have priority over offering immediate economic support.” Indeed, poverty, and many other forms of exclusion, are defined in terms of the lack of adequate human capital, whether as a result of irresponsibility toward one’s learning force or of not being able to manage one’s own learning. In all these cases, so we can read, investment in human capital is required. Although this line of thinking presents the government as responsible for offering education infrastructures and learning opportunities and for stimulating learning, learning itself is framed as the task and responsibility of individuals themselves. Therefore, the point of departure for governmental reflections is no longer social (in-)equality and “post-factum redistribution” (as was the case for a lot of public policies developed within the social regime of governing), but inclusion and exclusion. And inclusion and exclusion thus are problematized not in “social” terms, but in terms of “learning.” Inclusion in an environment (a labor environment, but also a local community, an educational environment, a leisure environment, a consumption environment) is not simply the result of having the adequate social position or financial capital, but is above all a matter of possessing the competencies required and of effective prior learning.

54. Ibid., 2.
In our opinion, these examples enable us to describe more generally the new governmental regime of which we are part. While “the social,” “social norms,” and “socialization” previously played a strategic role in the government’s social regime, “inclusion,” “capital,” and “learning” seem to be the strategic components nowadays. Being part of society is no longer about being socialized and developing a social, normalized relation to the self. Instead it is an ongoing task of managing one’s learning process in order to produce human capital and to be able to use social capital (or relations of trust) in order to be included.57 Within this governmental rationality, the state is no longer a “welfare” state but a “managing” state. Government in the name of “inclusion,” for example, addresses society as a complex of human and social capital in need of investment; it addresses fellow citizens as responsible learners and offers a learning infrastructure for enabling and facilitating learning. It identifies problems as being related to a lack of adequate human and social capital and attributes this lack to learning problems.

While the “social citizen” refers to the form of self-government in the social regime, the figure of the “entrepreneurial citizen” or “entrepreneur of the self” refers to the form of self-government promoted and stimulated today.58 Entrepreneurship here is about using resources to produce a commodity that meets needs and offers an income. But entrepreneurship, as economists have pointed out, is not just a mechanical process of allocation and production. It also involves an “element of alertness” — that is, a speculative, creative, or innovative attitude to see opportunities in a competitive environment.59 Entrepreneurship is a risky business. But risk is not, as in the social regime, to be prevented, but instead is the condition for profit — a kind of “stimulating principle.”60 Identifying actual self-government as “entrepreneurship” means that people are required to look at themselves as operating within an environment and having certain needs that they can satisfy

57. See, for example, Edwards, “Mobilizing Lifelong Learning,” 353–365.
through creatively producing goods. Even consumption could be regarded as an entrepreneurial act, since what is produced is satisfaction.\(^{61}\)

People are thus regarded as being responsible for (managing) the production of their own well-being. In other words, the entrepreneur of the self is aware that the self is the result of a calculated investment and that the “success” of the self is not guaranteed as such but depends on whether it meets needs. These could be the needs of a particular environment [a calculated investment in human capital through education or self-organized and self-directed learning] or the needs of oneself as a consumer [a calculated investment in human capital to meet the need of self-realization]. While “social citizens” submit themselves to the social tribunal [and its social “laws”) in order to be free, a submission to the “permanent economic tribunal” is a condition for entrepreneurial freedom or self-government.\(^{62}\) However, economic in this expression should not be understood in opposition to the “social.” Economic refers to the characteristics of entrepreneurship [needs, calculation, production, alertness, risk]. Furthermore, against the background of entrepreneurship as a mode of self-government, social relations are recoded as the result of entrepreneurship, or reflected on as enabling entrepreneurship: relations toward one’s friends and loved ones, relations of trust and networks with colleagues, are regarded as the result of investments and as useful for personal happiness, social effectiveness, and the well-being of nations.\(^{63}\) Moreover, for the entrepreneur of the self, inclusion is a necessity since inclusion in an environment enables one to find resources that produce satisfaction or to employ one’s human capital in order to generate an income. Thus, according to Colin Gordon,

> the idea of one’s life as the enterprise of oneself implies that there is a sense in which one remains always continuously employed in [at least] that one enterprise, and that is part of the continuous business of living to make adequate provision for the preservation, reproduction and reconstruction of one’s own human capital.\(^{64}\)

At this point, we could argue that it is the figure of entrepreneurship that incorporates the problematization of learning as a form of [employable] capital, as a responsibility, and as a domain of management: for entrepreneurial self-government [of professionals, citizens, employees, organizations, societies] or autonomy according to the “nomos” of the permanent economic tribunal, learning is a process aimed at producing human capital or adding value to the self [and for oneself as a consumer or for others].

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64. Gordon, “Governmental Rationality: An Introduction,” 44.
However, we should be careful to look at “entrepreneurship” not in empirical, anthropological, or [strict] economic [and antisocial] terms, nor as kind of ideal-type.\(^{65}\) Instead, it refers to a kind of self-government within a particular governmental regime. This means that within entrepreneurship, three dimensions come together.

First, on the level of governmental rationality, entrepreneurship has an \textit{epistemological} dimension — that is, the domains to be governed and government itself can be thought of and problematized in terms of the presence or absence of entrepreneurship, in terms of investment in human capital and the presence of a “will to learn.” The main characteristic of this governmental rationality is therefore a kind of “economization of the social.”\(^{66}\) This formula articulates that the main horizon for governmental reflection is no longer social but economic. Again, this could lead to misunderstandings. This formula does not refer to the “colonization” of the social by the economic.\(^{67}\) The idea of colonization is part of [and born within] the social regime of government since it presupposes that the social and economic refer to two separate domains. Economization, on the contrary, refers to entrepreneurial government, both in the sense that government [the state, for example] calculates the costs and possible income of its own governmental acts [as investments — for instance, its obsession with efficiency and effectiveness] and that it looks at the domain of government as consisting of entrepreneurial subjects in a [market] environment.

Second, since entrepreneurship is part of a governmental rationality, it also has a \textit{strategic} dimension. The state is thought of as an “enabling” and “facilitating” entity that should use governmental technologies and procedures [for example, marketization and enabling choice] to stimulate, enforce, or bring about entrepreneurship.\(^{68}\) At a more general level, entrepreneurship is of strategic importance since it allows the connection of individual freedom and collective well-being through the combination of inclusion, capital, and learning. However, this epistemo-strategic dimension of entrepreneurship also brings an ethical dimension to the fore. 

\textit{Ethical} refers to the particular form of self-government or the way to practice freedom that implies the formation of a particular subjectivity [and of a particular self as object of thought]. This self-government can be described by identifying four components.\(^{69}\) The material or [moral] “substance” of this form of self-government is human [and social] capital, and, more particularly, knowledge or competencies.

\(^{65}\) Ulrich Bröckling, “Gendering the Enterprising Self: Subjectification Programs and Gendering Differences in Guides to Success” [lecture delivered to the international symposium “Welcome to the Revolution,” at the College of Design and Art in Zurich, Switzerland, November 9–11, 2001], 3.


\(^{67}\) See, for example, Jürgen Habermas, \textit{Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns} [Theory of Communicative Action] (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1981), 182 and 293.

\(^{68}\) See Rose, “Governing ‘Advanced’ Liberal Democracies”; and Dean, “Governmentality.”

The “mode of subjection” of the entrepreneurial practice of freedom is the “permanent economic tribunal”: people should develop a managerial attitude of calculation toward this material or substance and should, for example, find out which competencies are required or could become functional, which competencies they want/should invest in, and so on. This substance and mode of subjection thus brings us to the “work upon the self” that is needed: one is asked to invest in human capital, to learn or to add value to the self, and to find paths toward productive inclusion. Finally, this work upon the self has a particular teleology: the aim is the production of satisfaction of one’s own needs or the needs of others (by means of permanently looking for a suitable market position in life and investing in social relations).

Due to the combination of these dimensions, entrepreneurship (and the entrepreneur of the self, in particular) refers to the governable form of freedom in the present regime of government. In other words, submitting ourselves to a permanent economic tribunal (including the “law,” which obliges us to consider our life and to dream our future as a matter of choice) is our present condition of freedom; at the same time, doing so renders us governable because governmental technologies make use of this particular form of freedom to govern. Hence, government is not opposed to freedom, but operates through freedom.

**The Business Ethics of Self-Mobilization and the Strategy of the Learning Apparatus**

As explained earlier, the aim of our analysis is not to know what learning essentially is about or whether it indeed is a fundamental process for human beings. Instead, taking the widespread use of the word “learning” today as point of departure, our study aims at finding out what kind of subject experiences learning as a fundamental process and based on which forms of problematization: how do we have to conceive of ourselves and our activities, and how do we have to relate to ourselves, for “learning” to become such a dominant word in our vocabulary? It is the entrepreneurial self, and its managerial, calculating, and speculative attitude toward life, that conceives it this way. The entrepreneurial self experiences learning as the force to guarantee a momentary emancipation in environments through delivering useful competencies. Learning, therefore, is experienced as a force to deal with the “mancipium” or the hold of the environment (such as limited resources or needs). Hence, for the entrepreneurial self, living and learning become indistinguishable. David Kolb articulates this entrepreneurial space of thought very well:

Human beings are unique among all living organisms in that their primary adaptive specialization lies not in some particular physical form or skill or fit in an ecological niche, but rather in identification with the process of adaptation itself — in the process of learning. We are thus the learning species, and our survival depends on our ability to adapt not only in the reactive sense of fitting into the physical and social world but in the proactive sense of creating and shaping those worlds.  

In our view, this quotation articulates not only the experience of the entrepreneurial self, but indicates also that the entrepreneurial self regards learning as a process of “proactive” adaptation. From the perspective of entrepreneurship, however, to be adapted is not a state that is acquired once and for all but a momentary condition, that is, adaptation represents a momentary equilibrium between human beings and their environments. In order to understand the strategy of the learning apparatus, it is necessary to focus in more detail on this idea of adaptation, in particular, the ethics of self-mobilization and capitalization of life that is required for permanent adaptation.

As argued, the horizon for governmental reflection today is that individuals move around in environments (and networks) rather than having a social, normalized position in society.\textsuperscript{71} For survival in an environment with limited resources, entrepreneurship is required to generate and employ (human) capital that can deliver incomes. This means that environments or networks require people to mobilize skills, knowledge, or competencies.\textsuperscript{72} Mobilization can be understood as bringing something (a potentiality) into a condition whereby it becomes employable.\textsuperscript{73} Within modern disciplinarian settings (that means well-defined and hierarchically organized spaces with clear borders) as well, there is a kind of mobilization: in a factory, for example, employees are positioned in such a way that their labor can be used. The mobilization related to environments and networks is different, however. Typical for the movement of the entrepreneurial self in environments is the self-mobilization of knowledge and skills, or to use one of Peter Sloterdijk’s expressions, “self-actualization aimed at having a stake.”\textsuperscript{74} To live an entrepreneurial life is not about having a position (in a normal, socialized structure), but is about moving around in different environments or networks in order to remain employed in the “continuous business of living.” Moving in an environment (whether the environment of the family or the family network, the working environment, the environment for leisure, the cultural environment, or any other) requires that one possess a set of skills and knowledge or competencies.

Theodore Schultz expresses this entrepreneurial way of thinking very well when he claims that “laborers have become capitalists not from a diffusion of the ownership of corporation stocks, as folklore would have it, but from the acquisition of knowledge and skills that have economic value.”\textsuperscript{75} However, we should add here that “economic value” for the entrepreneurial self is to be understood in a broad sense. It is not only expressed in financial terms [as what is valued in the environment of the labor market], but it applies to everything that enables the

\textsuperscript{71} For an illustration of the disciplinary challenges of new spatiotemporal orderings, see Edwards, “Mobilizing Lifelong Learning,” 359ff.
\textsuperscript{72} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{73} Peter Sloterdijk, Eurotaoïsm. Over de kritiek van de politieke kinetiek [Eurotaoism: On the Political Criticism of the Kinetics], trans. W. Hansen (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij De Arbeiderspers, 1991), 42–43.
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid., 43.
production of satisfaction of whatever needs in whatever environment. In short, the "capitalization" of one's life or the acquisition of human capital is not only needed to enter the labor environment but to enter the environments of life as such. The implication is that the entrepreneurial self — as a capitalist in the particular sense of approaching his or her knowledge, competencies, and relationships as capital that he or she has to manage — is moving around in order either to find an adequate environment in which to employ this human capital or to acquire the competencies that are required. Thus self-mobilization refers not only to the responsibility of the entrepreneurial self to mobilize its human capital, but also to the responsibility to capitalize one's life in such a way that it has economic value (in the sense just indicated).

Furthermore, in order to become or to remain employed in these environments of life, a continuous renewal of one's human capital may be required. The self-mobilization and the ongoing capitalization of life require the fundamental disposition to renew one's human capital: in other words, a willingness and preparedness to learn. For the entrepreneurial self, this decision to learn is similar to an act of investment — to be precise, an investment in human capital that is expected to offer an income or return. Furthermore, learning as investment is always a risky business since the needs and requirements of environments could be unstable, and it is not possible to predict the exact value of human capital. To be sure, although speculation is part of an entrepreneurial life, investing in human capital through learning remains a calculated risk. Learning as a well thought-out investment and as a responsible capitalization and mobilization of life is the main prerequisite for the "ongoing business of life." In short, this "business ethics" is a kind of "adaptation ethics" based upon the following maxim: do what you want, but take care that your human capital is adapted.

It is important to stress at this point that this "business ethics" (this responsibility toward a capitalization of the self, toward self-mobilization and learning as investment) is actually being shaped through specific procedures and instruments. An illustration is the "portfolio." A portfolio is a kind of "wallet" that includes all knowledge, skills, and attitudes that can be "employed" or mobilized." To use a portfolio implies that one is reflecting upon the self in terms of "economic value," that is, identifying and classifying one's stock of human capital that could offer access to environments. Furthermore, for the entrepreneurial self it could be necessary to accredit human capital or competencies through assessment or through proof of accreditation from the learning environment in which one has acquired one's human capital. A portfolio also allows one to become sensitive to the need for additional learning and to opportunities for additional investment. More generally speaking, this wallet containing human capital can function as a kind of passport to obtain access to different environments and, moreover, to the business

76. Rose, Powers of Freedom, 162.
of life itself. The Europass-program of the European Union and the proposal to develop a single framework for the transparency of qualifications and competencies exemplify this function.\textsuperscript{78} This instrument (an electronic portfolio) requires that people maintain an ongoing documentation and marketization of the self and that they formalize their learning. At the same time these kinds of instruments offer strategic data allowing (educational) policy to govern learning processes and to assess the learning force of the population.

These illustrations help to explain how the learning, entrepreneurial self (and its “ethics of adaptation”) is a governable subject, a fact which is of strategic importance for advanced liberal government. For this kind of government, citizens who experience learning as a fundamental force of adaptation have a strategic meaning because they guarantee that human capital will be adapted. Within this governmental rationality, the state is no longer conceived as an agency that should correct, change, or adapt in the name of society and social normalcy and in the name of social needs [and by using the school system]. Instead, the policy of change and adaptation is delegated to each entrepreneurial individual [or community, or organization] separately. And the role of the state is to offer the infrastructure for self-mobilization and opportunities for investment in human capital. Thus, it is the entrepreneurial self who should him- or herself have a “policy of change and adaptation” and who is able to do so by managing in a responsible, calculating, proactive way his or her learning force. Change and adaptation is guaranteed if and as long as everyone manages their own learning force in order to generate the adapted stock of capital. Within the advanced liberal regime of government, the strategic role of learning is to secure adaptation. And, as a consequence, the presence as well as absence of a kind of “will to learn(ing)” could become of major importance in this regime of government.

At this point, we can introduce the concept of the “learning apparatus.”\textsuperscript{79} This concept does not refer to an apparatus that is created, implemented, or imposed by the state or another actor in order to organize learning. The point of departure is rather that the emergence of our present experience of learning is shaped within discourses that circulate in many specific locales and throughout rather simple instruments such as the portfolio. What we notice, however, is that these different and dispersed components become interconnected and are assembled in a kind of strategic complex. As a strategic complex [and assemblage], the “learning apparatus” embodies a kind of intention, for it seeks to secure adaptation. However, this intention does not precede the apparatus and is not rooted in the decision of a sovereign political agency (the state, a politician, the economy, or the like).

\textsuperscript{78} Vandenbroucke, \textit{Onderwijs en vorming}, 111.

The state has not invented this apparatus in order to secure adaptation. Instead, the “power of the state” is an outcome of dispersed practices and discourses that seek to promote entrepreneurship and the capitalization of life through learning. What we see therefore is not the “étatization” or domination of society and the learning potential of citizens by the state, but a kind of “governamentalization of the state” in the name of learning. Drawing upon a multitude of locales and practices that stimulate entrepreneurship, the state is able to define its role for example in terms of promoting learning and investing in human capital. Hence, the state can “translate” all types of policy challenges (for example, unemployment, democratic participation, or health care) into learning problems and seek to use components of the learning apparatus to offer solutions (such as training, citizenship education, or programs about risk prevention).

In a similar way, this apparatus to secure adaptation through learning should not be regarded as the logical outcome of an original “will to learn.” Instead this “will” is part of the apparatus and its strategy. It is the entrepreneurial self in its quest to deal with the challenges posed by particular environments who wants to learn. More precisely, this willingness to learn is both effect and instrument of the present governmental regime and its strategy to secure adaptation. It is an effect since the regime asks that entrepreneurial selves be prepared and able to learn, but, at the same time, it is an instrument because this “will” is used to secure adaptation within society as a whole. In short, within the learning apparatus, its particular space of thought, and its procedures and instruments for self-observation and documentation, our experience of learning is being shaped as a fundamental force.

CONCLUDING REMARKS: LEARNING TO BE FREE OR FREEING OURSELVES FROM LEARNING?

The aim of this article has been to answer the following question: for whom — that is, for which kind of subject — does learning appear as a fundamental force to position and reposition oneself in society? We have tried to show that it is the entrepreneurial self (specifically, “we” as entrepreneurial selves) who experiences it as such and that the historical condition which has given rise to this experience of learning (as a form of capital, as something that should be managed, and as something that is our responsibility) is a particular space of thought and a particular governmental configuration. Moreover, throughout the article we have tried to give a voice to a critical concern that Foucault formulated as follows: “People know what they do, they frequently know why they do what they do; but what they don’t know is what what they do does.” With regard to the latter, we have demonstrated that our present experience of learning cannot be disconnected from a governamentalization of learning: learning is both a force of adaptation for entrepreneurial self-govern-ment and an instrument to secure the adaptation or added value of capital within society. Thus entrepreneurship and the related experience of learning refer to a

80. See also Rose, “Governing ‘Advanced’ Liberal Democracies,” 43.
governable form of freedom or self-government. We want to conclude with two comments on what the governmentalization of learning “does.”

Our first comment concerns areas in need of further analysis. To briefly recap the thrust of our first argument: we indicated that the “educationalization of society” (and the assemblage of a school apparatus, with its strategies for bringing about social normalcy) was linked up with the “governmentalization of education.” This strategic linkage is articulated very clearly in the ability to frame problems in society as educational problems — that is, problems to which schools have to respond, thus extending the school grammar. Our further analysis develops the thesis on educationalization in a specific direction by arguing that the current “governmentalization of learning” is linked to the assemblage of the “learning apparatus” and its strategy to secure adaptation. Relying on the strategy of the learning apparatus, and the business ethics of the lifelong learner, it is possible to frame all sorts of problems as learning problems and to regard learning (and issues such as investment, motivation, and the like) as the solution. This analysis points us toward at least two issues meritng additional exploration.

First, we need to analyze in more detail the strategy of the learning apparatus, and what could be called the “grammar of learning,” by focusing on how this differs from the “grammar of schooling.” In line with this elaboration, it will be interesting to delve further into how school education (and the grammar of schooling) is recoding and reassembling itself in view of the learning apparatus. Indeed, the fact that “learning how to learn” and employability are major concerns for regular school education is an indication that a recoding is taking place. Second, the “governmentalization of learning” is clearly linked to the “individualization” and “de-socialization” of problems. Unemployment for instance is no longer regarded as a structural, social problem (and in need of structural reforms), but foremost as an individual, learning problem (and connected to a need for reinvestment in human capital, for instance). In view of that, it could be interesting not just to judge (and criticize) the mechanisms of the current advanced liberal regime of governing against criteria derived from the past social regime of governing. Instead, future research can focus on the ongoing governmentalization of education/learning, both in the past and today, and can take this tendency toward governmentalization as a point of departure for rethinking the possible link between education/learning and government, as well as between education/learning and society.

The second and final comment is linked with the rhetoric of freedom and liberation that surrounds learning today. We want to stress once again at this point that looking at learning and the liberation of our learning (from the state, from institutions, from the dominance of the teacher, from the impact of economy, and so on) as a condition for our freedom and autonomy implies that we forget that this learning and the way in which we conceive it are from the very beginning both effect and instrument of the current governmental regime. In this regime we are addressed as subjects that are situated in an environment to which we have to adapt proactively and creatively in order to satisfy our needs — that is, a regime in which we are (interpellated to be) entrepreneurial selves. By way of conclusion,
therefore, we find it necessary to point out the irony of the learning apparatus within this governmental regime: it makes us believe that its purpose is to secure our freedom. Accordingly, we do not think that what is needed today is a liberation of learning (from the state, from the economy, from ideology), nor yet another distinction between learning with an emancipatory potential and learning with a disciplinary potential. Rather, we find it necessary to free ourselves from learning itself, specifically from the experience of learning as the fundamental force that is necessary for our freedom and for collective well-being.

Perhaps this act of “liberation” — that is, a transformation of the relation of the self to the self — points toward another idea and practice of education (beyond learning or learning to learn). Although we will not elaborate this in detail here, our cartography of the learning apparatus and its strategy could be regarded as such an alternative educational practice. It is an attempt to introduce “a critical attitude towards those things that are given to our present experience as if they were timeless, natural, unquestionable” and “to enhance the contestability of regimes” that seek to govern us. And, as Foucault explained, such an approach draws attention to what is familiar (our current experience of learning) and exactly what is often invisible due to this familiarity. In line with this, we hope our critical rereading of “what is being said and written” today brings about the kind of defamiliarization that is at the same time a kind of de-subjectification: pulling oneself free of oneself. What we have in mind is an educational practice that works as an essay or — as the French word essayer or “to try” indicates — a careful attempt to modify one’s mode of being in the present, in other words, an attempt to “live the present otherwise.” The attempt to transform the self (“I, as a learner”) through writing and reading about what is all too familiar (for example, learning) could be regarded as an educational practice itself. Thus perhaps this is what “e-ducation” or “e-ducere” beyond learning could be about: to be led out of oneself, which today could mean to liberate ourselves from our obsession with learning.

82. For this idea, we draw upon the concluding remarks in Foucault, Histoire de la sexualité 1. La volonté de savoir.
83. For an example of this approach, see Chioncel and Jansen, The Implications of the Research for Central and Eastern European Policy Design on Active Citizenship and Governance.
84. For this idea, see Gert J.J. Biesta, Beyond Learning: Democratic Education for a Human Future (Boulder, Colorado: Paradigm, 2006).
89. For an elaboration of this point, see Masschelein and Simons, “An Adequate Education for a Globalized World,” 565–584.