INTRODUCTION

Opening Up the University

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This edited volume reflects on university access for students who have experienced displacement, what the varied responses of higher education to displaced learners can teach us about the boundaries of academic institutions, and how struggles over access for these students may lead to new openings.

In this Introduction, we offer a frame in which to think about the university in relation to the issue of access to higher education for displaced students. We prefer to use the term 'displaced students' or 'students who have experienced displacement' rather than 'refugee' or 'refugee students', as refugee is a legal term, and people are more than their legal status. When we use the term 'refugee', we recognise that it describes a lived political experience that does not require state authorisation. In what follows, we will argue that the university is a site in which the historically contingent relationship between knowledge, higher education and publics materialises and that, in its current form in Europe and elsewhere, this relationship has led to a narrowing of the university. It is narrowed by Eurocentric epistemologies and pedagogies that ignore imperial colonial histories and patriarchal occlusions; narrowed by an increasingly marketised understanding of higher education as a 'sector of the economy'; and narrowed by its focus on the individualised careers of teachers and students. As such, when thinking about the inclusion of current and future students who have experienced displacement, we need an expansive definition of 'university access' that calls for a different politics around admission. We need to understand access as part of a wider drive towards equity, which entails meaningful inclusion, representation and participation in classrooms, at decision-making levels within institutions and society at large. On the basis of the chapters in this volume and our own experiences of trying to create access to university with and for displaced students, we put forward

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three proposals which we believe may have wider transformative potential for opening up the university: the insistence on education programmes for learners (not humanitarian programmes for 'refugees'); an allowance for disruptive education (not the cultivation of safe learning); and a defunding of university management (opposing the trend spearheaded by anglophone higher education systems to overpay top administrators and thus reclaim money for teaching and learning[1]).

University access and exclusion are experienced, challenged and reworked across at least three different scales: (1) in the classroom; (2) in programmes and institutions; and (3) at the level of the wider social formation. These three scales are not discrete, but interrelated. We find thinking with these scales an analytically useful way to focus on different processes and types of questions, both in this introductory chapter and the ones that follow, as we advance the claim that struggles around the inclusion and exclusion of students who have experienced displacement are important for understanding the contemporary university.

Unfortunately, in recent years, providing access to higher education for displaced students has often been understood as a response to the proclaimed 'crisis' of refugee arrivals in Europe, leading to the conclusion that they have distinct problems requiring separate solutions. National and supranational policy changes and recommendations were introduced as part of government agendas to advance particular notions of 'refugee integration'. Casting 'refugees' as a problem requiring 'integration' legitimises education programmes as interventions aimed at addressing a condition of 'otherness', and remedying this condition by helping 'the refugee' adapt to an extant and unchanged 'Europe' (Rajaram, this volume). As such, governmental actions and sometimes non-state initiatives (such as independent programmes for access to higher education) are susceptible to reproducing certain notions of what 'refugee students' need. Moreover, the crisis-response dialectic is one that, for the most part, fails to challenge deeply embedded exclusionary structures as it operates within short-term horizons.

Education as a 'crisis response' or 'tool for integration' further ignores past and present struggles over access to university. Minority students, including students from racialised groups and students with disabilities alongside women and students from working-class backgrounds, have historically been marginalised from and in universities. Students labelled as 'asylum seekers' or 'refugees' tend also to be subjected to forms of marginalisation based on race, status, class and other factors. Obstacles to entering higher education are sometimes particular to the experiences and situations of displaced students (e.g. a lack of under-

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standing over missing or incomplete paperwork), but they can also be similar to those encountered by other marginalised social groups (e.g. being made to feel as if they do not belong). In this sense, barriers faced by displaced students reflect both the way in which particular statuses such as 'asylum seeker' and 'refugee' are perceived and operationalised within a specific context, and the broader and intersectional social hierarchies – to do with class, race, religion and gender, among others – within which universities function.

Against this, we do not wish to put forward an alternative prescriptive approach to education for displaced learners. Rather, opening up the university for us entails cultivating an openness to complex and messy social realities, challenging how these are filtered to close off the university, allying with struggles outside the university that challenge its boundaries, and finding the time and space to co-learn and co-create in classrooms, in universities and in society at large.

Some of these inclinations can be found in the grassroots initiatives that have been developed in order to further access to higher education for students who have experienced displacement. These were often brought about through the combined efforts of university academics, students and staff, and may reproduce or challenge crisis discourses. These initiatives have also been varied in their approach: they have developed different vocabularies and repertoires to discuss the reasons, motives and objectives of their work; taken formal, informal, alternative and mainstream forms; have been both buoyed and rebuffed by different politics, pedagogies and policies; and have been variously institutionalised or formalised. The initiatives have also, importantly, developed a wide range of reflections on what providing higher education to displaced students means and implies for the university at large, and questioned whether 'refugee education' differs from efforts to include other marginalised social groups. Many have also raised the urgent question of what 'opening up' the university means at a time when powerful structural dynamics change the university locally and globally in ways that often lead to further closure.

In this volume, we put in conversation actors involved in the question of access to higher education for displaced students and those engaged in rethinking the university. This is an attempt at initiating a cross-cutting conversation among groups working on the question of access to higher education for displaced students (policy, activist, learner and academic worlds) who are not in regular and sustained dialogue with each other. For instance, refugee access to higher education is often not thought in relation to pedagogic development, including

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reform of curricula and teaching, or, for example, in relation to university administrative and governance structures. We are keen to examine collectively what thinking higher education from such a perspective teaches us about the institution of the university as a whole, its complex and intersectional dynamics of inclusion and exclusion, as well as the limitations and shortcomings of its pedagogic practices.

As editors, our drive to initiate this collection comes from a desire to reflect collectively on our experiences as teachers and administrators in education programmes for displaced people in a hostile national, and at times institutional environment. We have been involved in establishing and running the Open Learning Initiative (OLIve) at Central European University (CEU) in Budapest, which started in 2016 and focuses on opening access to higher education for refugees and asylum seekers. In 2018, all OLIve activities were suspended by the university after the Hungarian government passed legislation that appeared to fiscally penalise organisations seen to be helping refugees. The programme's part-time weekend courses have since reopened as a separate private entity, while OLIve faculty restarted the full-time university preparatory programme at Bard College Berlin.

Throughout our work we have been lucky to have active, engaged and critically minded students who continually remind us of the social and pedagogical contexts that both create and restrict opportunity and within which we operate. However, because of the fraught and conflictual circumstances in which our education work operated, we have had little chance to reflect on what we do, or to learn from others who run similar (yet surprisingly different) initiatives. With this in mind, we organised the conference 'Publics, Pedagogies and Policies: Refugees and Higher Education in the 21st Century' in Budapest in March 2019. We did this with a view to inspire and question other groups and individuals who are considering creating their own interventions; to speak to policy makers, scholars and university administrators on specific points relating to the access and success of displaced students in higher education; and to suggest concrete avenues for further action within and beyond existing academic structures. We have worked hard to ensure that the voices of learners who have experienced displacement are given prominence alongside the contributions from scholars and practitioners. For the most part, the focus of this book, and this introduction, is Europe, though some chapters and our discussion take us to the USA and Australia. Despite the geographical focus, we strive to locate our discussion in relation to broader global socio-political contexts in relation to which higher education is framed.

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In what follows, we describe the contexts for the book, for the broader issue of opening up the university and for understanding issues that displaced people face when trying to access higher education. We begin by laying out the argument that universities are part of broader social contexts and that their admissions policies and pedagogic practices are reflections of social, political and economic power. We make the case that observing who gets into universities at any given time and place teaches us a lot about the dominant social and political architecture: it tells us what types of people and subjectivities are valued and perceptible and which are not. We argue that for universities to be transformative spaces, there needs to be an impetus to look beyond its imposed boundaries, and to connect our work to mobilisations against other forms of exclusion and marginalisation (from education and from social, political and economic participation) and to struggles to put forward new constellations of the relationship between knowledge, learning and publics. We end with three proposals intended to suggest ways of pushing the boundaries of the university and engaging with these broader social dynamics and struggles, and thereby encouraging transformative openings in the university.

University Borders

The question of whether universities are open or closed has limited analytical, pedagogical and political purchase. The focus should be on the university's borders, that is, the way entry to higher education is governed so that it is open and welcoming to some, imposes an obligation to adapt on more than a few, and outrightly excludes others. These borders apply not only to who is accepted to university, but also what types of knowledge production and curricula are made canonical, what types are tolerated, and what types are entirely dismissed. We see the effects of bordering practices in how value and meaning (positive and negative) are cast on students, knowledge and institutional rules.

In the sense that we refer to it here, opening up the university is a means of calling into question how higher education has been institutionalised in ways that serve larger projects of political and economic power and how this leads to the exclusion or marginalisation of certain populations from the university through pedagogic practices and institutional structures that reinforce and solidify historically contingent expressions of the relationship between knowledge production and publics.

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What we teach and learn, how we teach and are taught, and whom we teach and are taught by are questions of moral economy; they reflect how things are valued and for whose interests (Thompson 1968). This leads us to ask: what types of education programmes are legitimate in the modern university? And, as a consequence, what learners and types of learning are imaginable (or not) in a university setting? While there are differences across geographies, how universities teach, what they teach and whom they teach are matters of political, economic and cultural concern.

Two interrelated hegemonic projects – the nation-state and capitalism – have exerted considerable influence over the shaping of contemporary higher education. With the rise of the nation-state and its welfare regimes, and socialist state projects in western and eastern Europe, particularly in the period following the end of the Second World War, there emerged a belief that higher education should be accessible to larger numbers. Higher education was recast as a public good that benefits both the individual and society, with the state responsible for expanding access to the broadest spectrum of students, including those from under-represented groups. The university and the state had an entwined nation-building purpose, with the university 'set at the apex of institutions defining national identity' (Kwiek 2005: 331). This 'nationalisation' of higher education (Neave 2001; Kwiek 2005) was reflected in the development of centralised patterns of validation and the nationalisation of scholars through, for example, the introduction of civil servant status for academics in some countries, hence contributing 'to impress firmly upon the consciousness of academia its role as an emanation of the national wisdom and genius, creativity and interest' (Neave 2001: 30).

Since at least the 1980s, this project has intersected with transformations of capitalism. Under conditions of neoliberalism, the onset of financial deregulation across global markets, the denationalisation of both fixed and financial capital, and the close relationship of the governing class with the economic elite have led to a marketisation of state-building. Market thinking and logics have expanded beyond the strictly economic sphere to inform how public and non-capitalist sectors are organised and managed (Clarke and Newman 2012; Newman and Clarke 2009). The focus is increasingly on mobilising social agents that fit within the ideological and political project of neoliberalism. This interrelation has, in turn, reshaped ideas of the university in ways that institutionalise ideas about economic arrangements, including methods of value extraction and the autonomy of the market (Harvey 2016). The

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articulation of capitalist and nation- or state-building projects is strongest when the interests of each serve the other and there is sufficient control over the representation of this relationship (in what is taught in schools and universities, for example).

Neoliberal capitalism values specific character traits – individual resilience, responsibility and adaptability (Joseph 2013). This has made education institutions important as cultivators of the right type of subjects, while reproducing an intellectual agenda supportive of the neoliberal political-capitalist project. This can be clearly seen in the narrow conception of education as part of an individual life project, something that makes it very difficult to translate individual concerns into public ones (Giroux 2016), because when university education is seen as part of an individual life career project the purpose of the university narrows (Simionca 2012). Individualised and privatised pressures to succeed can come to dominate issues that might properly be of public concern. The extent and causes of this vary, but the broader lesson to be taken is that attempts to regulate the university – in this case to gear it to assist in the development of market-oriented individual life projects – may be seen as modes of controlling, organising, ordering and orienting the relationship of a 'public' to structures of rule.

Politics of Access

The regulation of access to the university – who is allowed and expected in higher education – thus reflects broader socio-political shifts and ideas of the relation between authorities and publics (Cantat, this volume). Across time, different governing rationales have shaped the politics of university access (Clancy and Goastellec 2007). Before what we have referred to above as the 'nationalisation' of higher education in Europe, only members of dominant social groups were able to access universities (in most of western Europe this meant white, urban, upper-class men, while in other contexts such as the colonies it meant children of local elites). Student selection has thus long reflected which socio-political subjects are valued not only by universities but also by broader social systems, as well as the needs of rulers for administering their territories and governing their populations.

In this sense, developments over the last century have tended to enlarge and massify access in ways that have allowed the inclusion of a more diverse student body into the walls of the university. Social groups previously excluded from higher education, such as women and racialised students, are now supposed to be able to access higher ed-

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ucation on the basis of academic merit; formal barriers to entry have officially been abolished. Yet the existence of social inequalities that impact on the extent to which students may access dominant knowledge, resources and norms before entering university is not taken into account. The issue of how different social groups build different *habitus* that result in variegated social and cultural capitals, and how this determines their perceived *merit* and thus their opportunities for higher education, is often overlooked (Bourdieu 1977). Additionally, internal restructuring of higher education systems has reproduced inequality through various mechanisms, such as the development of a private education sector available only to the wealthiest social layers or institutional stratification where elite universities continue to recruit students from the most privileged social backgrounds (Cantat, this volume). The increasingly dominant neoliberal academic culture – whereby all tasks and outputs are increasingly quantified and assessed through auditing and ranking in order to classify institutions and academics in relation to one another – further accentuates this situation (Cook, this volume).

Because they are seen as spaces fostering meritocracy, contemporary universities are important ways of cultivating consent to dominant arrangements of the political and the economic, including the exclusions and marginalisations those involve. The key slogan is that those who deserve to will get in. At its most convincing, this discourse can focus attention on the procedure, the entry assessment and the individual, meritorious acquisition of credentials and qualifications that allow entry. This means that less attention may be paid to the way in which qualification acquisition is skewed against many, as well as to the way in which the collection of qualifications reinforces and authorises specific political and economic arrangements. It is in this sense that the university is an instrument of governance: education fosters life trajectories that seem to serve the economic and political interests of a ruling class (Freire 1970; hooks 1994). Instruments of governance are not of course simply repressive: the massification of the university has meant access to these 'life trajectories' (market-oriented or otherwise) for many individuals, including segments of the working classes at universities in Europe.

Questions of access and inclusion are, of course, especially relevant for displaced students. The aforementioned process of massification has meant that, to varying extents and under diverging conditions, formal access to some type of higher education is now available for (almost) all social groups in most of Europe. However, this is not the case for

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many potential students who have received or are seeking asylum. Displaced people constitute one of the few social groups that can find access to higher education blocked on the basis of their administrative status. Concretely, asylum-seeking and refugee students' access is determined in large part by national configurations and traditions: within the European Union, the possibility of studying for people holding different forms of documentation differs from one country to another. As Rosa Di Stefano and Benedetta Cassani detail in their chapter:

> The incorporation of refugees and asylum seekers into higher education is approached at different degrees across Europe and only a few countries have adopted specific strategies at national or regional level to facilitate refugee access into universities . . . As a result, in many cases support to refugees has been left to the action of individual institutions.

Beyond access policies at the national, federal or institutional levels, assessing the effective possibility for displaced students to enter university requires examining how these policies intersect with migration frameworks and welfare provision in different places of residence (Sontag 2019). For instance, in Germany, asylum seekers must reside within a particular Land to which they are assigned upon arrival, which reduces opportunity for university study. In France, many newly recognised refugees receive the RSA (*revenu de solidarité active*), which provides a (minimal) revenue for unemployed or underemployed people. Yet students are officially not eligible for the RSA, meaning that registering at university would effectively deprive prospective students with refugee status of their main and often only source of income.

Therefore, in the case of displaced students, the issue of formal access intersects not only with the racialised, gendered and classed social hierarchies that structure societies in their new countries of residence, but also with migration law and welfare systems. This often leads to these students facing situations that are not easily comprehended by the administrative structures and bureaucracies of higher education institutions, which can result in their de facto exclusion from university, even in cases where formal access would be possible. Admission procedures can thus become insurmountable obstacles for people in administrative and legal situations that do not fit within the understanding of institutions. Besides, as the literature on street-level bureaucrats has amply demonstrated regarding asylum procedures (Graham 2002; Lipsky 2010; Bhatia 2020), refugees tend to be more vulnerable to arbitrary and discretionary practices on the part of individual administrators: such prac-

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tices may work towards performing exclusion or supporting inclusion, depending on the particular person in charge of a university application (Wilson, Babaei, Dolmai and Sawa, this volume; Cantat, this volume). As we have noted, inclusion can depend on the subjective interplay and encounter between representatives of structural power and displaced people. It is largely in response to such situations that many of the initiatives described in this book arose as grassroots efforts within university structures aiming to address the specific difficulties faced by displaced students.

The Purposes of Higher Education

Opening up the university in a more radical sense therefore requires moving beyond individualising approaches and rethinking the relations between knowledge, higher education and publics. One key way to approach these relations is to call into question and expand the purposes of higher education. For us, to open up the university is to reflect on the democratic possibilities that rethinking the purposes of the university can bring. This means parsing out 'the university' into its components and reconsidering the articulations of the moral to the political and the economic (Thompson 1968; Clarke and Newman 2012). Opening up the university in the sense that we understand it here is a project of radical democracy centred on the understanding that the control of knowledge production and learning in universities is fundamental to the durability and dominance of political and economic architectures (Kmak and Björklund 2021).

In an expansive understanding of opening up the university, inclusion goes beyond formal access to the university: it is also about the possibility for those within the university to be represented through the knowledges that are taught and valued, to participate through classroom practices that cultivate horizontality and embrace differences, and to be included via reflexive approaches that contest the exclusionary dynamics that persist within the university. This requires us to acknowledge the tension between the idea of the university as a space of learning and knowledge-making whose boundaries are not pre-set and the capacity of the state and market to make higher education a constitutive part of hegemonic projects. The pressure to translate dominant hegemonic moral economies (Thompson 1968 into the site of the university operates at multiple levels: it feeds into and from wider processes of social formation, forms institutional structures and shapes classroom experiences.

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At the scale of the wider social formation, closures emanate from the exclusion or marginalisation of the social presence of subaltern groups. These groups have been institutionally misrepresented or made outrightly invisible in the curation of social reality. Consequently, they have been overlooked in the articulation of legitimate knowledge and in the moral economy of social, political and economic institutions and arrangements. Put another way, the experiences of large groups of people have been devalued or disregarded in ways that allow a particular situated knowledge to be presented as universal. This rendition of social reality on the basis of dominant knowledge produces epistemological hierarchies whereby relations of power (and the positions of privilege that ensue) are naturalised. This critique is not new; it has been made by a number of feminist, Marxist and postcolonial scholars. The derogation or delegitimation of other ways of knowing and other experiences is the building block of an instrumentalising and universalising mode of knowing, which is 'European' to postcolonial scholars, bourgeois to Marxist thinking, and patriarchal or phallocentric to feminist theory (Dussel 1993; Tuhiwai Smith 1999; McClintock 1995). Despite these longstanding critiques, it is remarkable how occlusions continue to come to light.

Addressing this requires moving away from the obvious binary – the excluded versus the included – and towards an account of the intersectional and multidimensional nature of power and its repressions. Intersectional feminist theory has pointed to the ways in which marginalisation and repression occur in multiple ways, with class, gender and race intertwining (Crenshaw 1991). Other social features such as religious belief, sexual orientation or perceived physical ability, for instance, also play a role. The capacity of dominant forms of power to parse out the multidimensionality of the oppression on which it relies and concede gains to specific groups on the basis of their race, gender or class is an important means of maintaining control. In the university, the consequence is the validation of curricula within which a number of people do not see their experiences or find a basis for articulating their knowledge, or, if it is referenced, it is often through a tokenistic nod or the incorporation of classes on feminist or postcolonial thinking within a wider syllabus that reinforces the canon. All this produces higher education institutions that regulate access through the demand that people – including postcolonial migrants displaced by imperial violence, and from whom knowledge, artefacts, objects and more have been appropriated – adapt to dominant ways of thinking and knowing and of academic practice.

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Struggles against such large-scale forces may seem daunting or, for some, not best-addressed through thinking at the scale of the institution. When it comes to challenging such closures, such as with the call for 'decolonising the university' (Bhambra, Gebrial and Nişancıoğlu 2018), we want to emphasise that the university is but one site in which this form of repressive power and knowledge plays out, and probably not even the most important. As such, the university is not necessarily a privileged place for anti-imperialist practices, for intersectional interventions into the production of power or the production and dissemination of decolonial knowledges (hooks 1994; Freire 1970). Furthermore, it is important to highlight how the increased individualisation and marketisation of higher education leads to valuing (including in a monetary sense) Western higher education over other forms of knowledge.

Expensive programmes are actively marketed at students from outside Europe with the promise of elite advancement. However, perhaps the most telling consequence is that what underpins and legitimises these knowledge claims – a belief that mastery of this way of thinking will lead to attainable progress and a capacity to know and understand social and natural reality in ever greater depth – is concealed. One result is a goal- or destination-oriented learning and education system that propels the student forward: education is judged by this endpoint rather than the means towards that goal (and the violences and silencing that are a part of the process) (Azoulay 2019). Overall, this contributes to a university system that appears daunting for many groups, including many displaced people. The sense of comfort and certainty in their aims and purposes, and of the inherent superiority of their knowledge claims, has led to Western universities naturalising entry criteria, curricula and pedagogic practices that either obstruct access or make it dependent on the adequate performance, or mimicry, of pre-existing norms and beliefs about knowledge.

To push back against this at the level of the institution or programme is to strive to create a different form of learning environment, one with less certainty about what it will do to students and where it will take them. Ingold (2018), drawing heavily on John Dewey (1916), argues that education should not be instilling knowledge (a 'stilling in') but rather an intellectual discovery (a 'leading out'), similar to Freire's (1970) argument against an education system where students passively 'bank-in' received knowledge. Beginning from the point that we are all different (through experience, education or otherwise), Ingold calls for an education based on communication, where teachers and students alike attempt to find the possibility of an accord by working with

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and through difference. On an institutional level, this flies against the dominant forms of programme design we see in most European universities in which codified sets of knowledge are to be acquired. This links back to the intersectional and postcolonial critique which points to how dominant knowledge denies the legitimacy of other ways of knowing (Lorde 1984). This confines 'alternative' forms of knowing to 'informal' spaces, ultimately enforcing boundaries around the university, and preventing its engagement with other struggles around the relation of learning, knowledge and publics.

On a classroom level, this necessitates that students and teachers are open to changing their views and understandings as they engage in communication and, consequently, such a learning can be a transformative experience for all. Fundamentally, and thinking explicitly about displaced learners, this means a radical acceptance of difference. However, 'difference' is often appropriated by universities through a rhetoric of 'multiculturalism', occluding the histories of conflict and animosity through which 'difference' and hierarchies of knowledge have arisen and privileging the most visible markers of difference (e.g. race or ethnicity). As such, transforming classrooms into communicative spaces requires an awareness of social hierarchies that bleed into the university and the classroom and that can clamp down on expression, often of those who speak differently and who reference subaltern histories, identities, cultures or ways of knowing (Freire 1970; hooks 1994). Individuals are not isolated actors but are the subjects of global and local histories of conflict and antagonism that have institutionalised material opportunity and discursive authority for some and subjugation for others. Democratic education, education for democracy, would then be centred on an awareness of the historical constitution of inequality and how individuals represent broader populations who occupy different positions in a social formation.

And yet, even as we hold these desires for difference-embracing universities close to our hearts when we design programmes with and for displaced learners, we are reminded of why, for many, education is an instrument to remake one's life in a new and often hostile country. We can discuss radical, critical social theory until we are blue in the face, but it does not help those labelled 'refugees' to find a better job in the short term, to feel self-worth in the vulnerable years following arrival in a new country, or to feel as if their horizons have opened up. This is, in part, a question of time – of slow-moving academics and academic structures, and the urgent immediacy of students' desire to learn, and sometimes to use that learning instrumentally. This does not entail a

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rejection of a desire for transformation, but rather means that wider projects of fostering inclusion and difference must run concurrently with the expressed needs of those students enrolled, or with the potential to enrol, in education programmes. To some extent, we must live with the tensions and contradictions this produces.

Making Openings Transformative

Our quest to foster transformative openings in the university is based on an understanding of how universities and higher education are part of broader social dynamics. We thus strive to move away from the bourgeois, patriarchal and imperial-tinged self-representation of the university as an isolated and expansive centre of knowledge production. Rather, we acknowledge the social imbrication of the university and assert that its transformation must be allied to the struggle against other practices of power, inequality and injustice in society. People in universities have often been reticent in forming transformative alliances beyond the institution, but we assert that it is folly to pursue transformative change solely from 'inside' the university; indeed, there is no 'inside' within the university in splendid isolation from an 'outside'. Borders between inside and outside are akin to a Moebius strip: processes, relations and connections interweave and cross-connect between 'inside' and 'outside' in ways that make dichotomies analytically, socially and politically problematic (Bigo and Walker 2007).

We welcome practical proposals that universities along with regional, national and supra-national higher education areas could implement to better allow students who have experienced displacement to access universities in an equitable way. These include help with processing paperwork (especially around admissions), better coordination with local social service agencies, flexible solutions to accreditation hurdles (e.g. around transfer of credits from previous study), an understanding of the need for help with living costs (Fourier et al. 2017; Streitwieser and Unangst 2018), proactively reaching out to such groups with information about any non-traditional entry routes, offering specialised advice and guidance for these potential students, and creating taster or bridging courses for displaced learners (Hannah 1999).

However, moving beyond these suggestions, we argue that opening up the university is about questioning the narrowing of the purpose of higher education to the pursuit of individualised and privatised life projects. It is about considering the diversity of publics whose access to the production of learning and knowledge can transform democratic

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relations. What would things look like if the university were to step away from its role as an instrument of governance, a conduit to manufacture consent of 'a public' to hegemonic projects of state and capital? How may we encourage the university in the sense defended by Giroux (2016), as a site crucial in producing a public space of dissension and critique vital for democracy? With this in mind, we offer three proposals, fleshed out below, that could lead to a transformative opening up of the university.

Proposal one: reconceptualise initiatives for displaced learners so they are seen not as humanitarian programmes by (or even for!) universities, but rather as educational, intellectual initiatives built on foundations of solidarity and respect. *Create education programmes for learners!*

Proposal two: create difference-embracing learning environments within which those who have experienced displacement do not feel the need to integrate, be grateful or perform the 'good refugee', but rather classrooms and institutions from within which learners can challenge, destabilise and disrupt the academic status quo. *Allow for disruptive education!*

Proposal three: recognise that programmes for displaced learners have real material costs that must be secured for longer than a typical project cycle and that most university managers, while multiplying themselves and their salaries, are unwilling or unable to fund transformative academic programmes. *Defund the university management!*

Create Education Programmes for Learners

We need academic programmes for humans, and not humanitarian programmes for universities. It would be unfair to suggest that some within universities only create 'refugee programmes' to feel good about themselves or to promote an institution. While certainly this might be the case – and indeed we came across such attitudes in our experience of helping run programmes for displaced learners – such extremes are part of a much deeper-rooted sense of helping the needy foreign other, especially in European cultures and pointing to the imperial and colonial nature of benevolent help (Gilbert and Tiffin 2008; Malkki 1996). It is also a way of domesticating difference, bringing 'diversity' into the university in ways that shear it of its broader social and political contexts (hooks 1994). Education programmes for learners in our sense place

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emphasis on the social worlds of would-be students, bringing these into the classroom, and placing them in conversation and in opposition to restrictive and destination-driven education systems.

Erin Goheen Glanville's chapter in this volume can provide us with a useful starting point to rethink the stories we ask or do not ask of displaced learners and, related to this, the stories universities like to tell about themselves. The dominant ways of demanding stories of displaced learners, we argue, are ways of containing social contexts and controlling potential disruption. Thinking about how to teach the 'refugee story' as it appears in literature, Glanville rails against an imaginative 'humanitarian ethnography', in which the readers behave as anthropologists uncovering the 'refugee experience' or 'refugee culture' and quickly search for solutions to the problems faced by refugees. She argues:

> Many students arrive in a classroom already primed to commit humanitarian ethnography against stories. In addition to overriding the lifeworld of the story, this can be an alienating and diminishing experience for students with correlative experiences. Reading refugee stories as imaginative humanitarian ethnography layers the complexity of global politics, onto a personal sense of responsibility to strangers, onto the emotional impact of reading about violence, onto assumptions about human rights and equality, onto a growing knowledge of migration in unmanageable scope. Discussions then about what should be done can turn to despair and short circuit more nuanced analysis.

Telling one's story does not end with the asylum process; it becomes an ingrained and readable part of the person to be deployed as they negotiate and justify access in society. The well-meaning charity worker, humanitarian volunteer or caring teacher who asks for a story does not, of course, ask for a story in the same way as an officer deciding on the fate of an asylum claim, but the stories are nevertheless often asked for and dutifully performed. As one student who was enrolled in two different OLIve programmes in Budapest put it, 'I know one type of white person and another type of white person and what story I need to give to this one and which one to that one'.

In their introduction to *Mistrusting Refugees* (1995: 1), Daniel and Knudsen write: 'from its inception the experience of a refugee puts trust on trial. The refugee mistrusts and is mistrusted'. The authors argue that trust is a 'habitus', a culturally constituted social world. People are displaced because one social world becomes un-constituted, and the

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process of understanding and entering into another – differently constituted – social world is difficult, not least because displaced people can be reduced to people who tell stories about themselves, to be validated by those in positions of power. This is not to suggest that the experiences of people who have experienced displacement should not be taken into account in university programmes. We suggest, though, that rather than focusing on desperate stories, programmes should be aware of social contexts common to displaced people. Programmes might include trauma-related counselling, or classes on understanding often impenetrable higher education systems. One particular pertinent area is digital literacy because, as Israel Princewill Esenowo argues in this volume, 'while digital exclusion is a broad problem affecting different social groups, displaced learners are confronted with particular forms of digital exclusion, rooted in global and local inequalities in access to and use of digital technology'.

Importantly, these issues – and many others that might arise – relate to the special educational or bureaucratic needs of learners due to particular constellations of marginalities, which may or may not relate to the learners having experienced displacement (they may also relate to gendered, classed or other marginalities); they do not require educators to have the full details of hardships and turmoil experienced either in the students' home countries or on their journeys. Other stories, stories that university management and communications teams often feel the need to tell, are those relating how they 'helped refugees' and, in these instances, programmes or initiatives can shift from being 'for the refugees' to being for the institution. It is, of course, often a game those running programmes for displaced learners have to play: keep the university administration happy enough by allowing them to proudly display their civic credentials, but maintain the integrity of programmes and initiatives as places of education not humanitarianism.

One potential way of overcoming pulls towards paternalistic othering is to build relationships of solidarity (Cantat, this volume). For a start, this involves recognising that many people – to greater or lesser degrees depending on a multitude of circumstances – may find themselves or their families in variously vulnerable, marginalised or excluded positions vis-à-vis education. We must also accept that solidarity may create uncomfortable and unforeseen circumstances that need to be worked through, and thus may take more time and effort than top-down 'gifts' of education to 'the needy'. However, as Leyla Safta-Zecheria reminds us in her chapter in this volume, finding the opportunity for solidarity is increasingly complex as academic freedom comes under attack from

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regimes who see higher education as a threat to their authority (as we witness in Hungary, Turkey, India and elsewhere). This increases the vulnerability of academics, and while this potentially increases the scope for politicisation and thus solidarity, it also curtails their ability to act both inside and outside the classroom.

Allow for Disruptive Education

We need to shake the image of the 'good refugee' with her meek, mild and grateful presence from the minds of those running, approving or planning to set up 'refugee education' programmes or initiatives. This paternalistic view of displaced learners not only removes the dignity of actual or potential students, but it also intellectually limits the growth of learners as it can pre-define what they should learn and what they should do with that knowledge.

Moreover, as Kolar Aparna, Olivier Kramsch and Oumar Kande note in their chapter in this volume, it is as the *subject* of research, holders of authentic experience to be mined by the non-migrant researcher, that displaced people are visible in universities, not as students or scholars (see also Wilson, Babaei, Dolmai and Sawa, this volume). As they argue, 'this desire to see the Other at arm's length while operating within institutions that deny relations of knowledge production on an equal footing produces a partial inclusion (i.e. we want to see you and hear you as different and therefore cannot accept you as Us (those who study you))'.

There are, however, ways in which universities can create learning environments open to difference. This is vital if we are to consider not only whose right to be in the classroom, university or country is recognised, but also whose critique is valued, and, building on this, who can turn specific and local critiques into more general critiques of their education environment and society. For example, as Klára Trencsényi and Jeremy Braverman (this volume) argue from their experience running a participatory filmmaking course in Hungary, not only can such courses offer the chance to learn a creative skill, but also 'lay the foundation for a documentary film that would challenge the majority Hungarian (and European) society's view on refugees . . . [becoming potentially] conscious producers of their own image in the mainstream media'.

Dangerous learners armed with critical thinking skills are constrained by the injunction to express themselves in specific ways. As Victoria Wilson, Homeira Babaei, Merna Dolmai and Suhail Sawa argue in this

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volume, language plays a role 'as a means to exercise agency, participate in society, and to build meaningful careers that meet their aspirations and abilities' and yet many state-run and private programmes fail to teach anything more than basic communication, with students' voices left unheard (see also Baker and Dantas 2018). One way in which universities could reduce the importance of this barrier and help realise the potential of their learners would be to develop flexible approaches to learning with and through the diversity of students' skills, experience, knowledge and potential. Rachel Burke (this volume), in making the case for recognising and responding to linguistic strengths of students who have experienced displacement, suggests that such a 'reimagining of linguistic practices' within higher education provides an opportunity to 'transform "mainstream" instructional practices in higher education . . . [because] genuinely engaging with the specific yet wide-ranging language/literacy resources of students with refugee and asylum seeker experiences provides an opportunity to better acknowledge and value all diverse linguistic repertoires. . .'.

What would it mean to open up the university and classroom in a way in which the end point is unclear and in which the teacher and students together explore and learn and grow as they move in and through topics, methods, research and ideas? Rubina Jasani, Jack López, Yamusu Nyang, Angie D., Dudu Mango, Rudo Mwoyoweshumba and Shamim Afhsan detail in their chapter a project they realised built on both 'self-advocacy activism' and 'pedagogy of peer ethnographic practice'. By allowing the agenda to be driven by the participants/students and not the academics (and thus the dominant narratives within their discipline), the two anthropologists in the project found the process to be 'chaotic' in a way that was not unlike the students' lives, but pushed themselves to let go of academic perfectionism and unpack the surprises that came their way. They argue that, 'through embracing the immediacy of the present in the classroom we see how teaching and learning are both constantly taking place and under revision. This immediacy and exchange of world knowledge in the few hours a month we had to work together forces an intense practice of critical thinking unconstrained by academic norms'. Such a move also destabilises hierarchies of expertise. It requires validation of knowledge and expertise gained outside the university.

In a similar vein, Mwenza Blell, Josie McLellan, Richard Pettigrew and Tom Sperlinger explore in their chapter the designing of curricula with (rather than for) 'refugee students'. This means recognising the knowledge of such students, including those knowledges developed

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through their experiences of mobility and survival, rather than starting from the position of recognising what the students are 'lacking' and thus must be taught. While such student-centred freedom might be possible in courses and programmes that take place outside the formal constraints of the university – as it allows pedagogical, financial and structural freedom – it becomes much more difficult to institute on a wider level. Indeed, they ask, 'How can institutions create capacity to respond to the intersections of race, gender and class, which are often experienced at their most acute by students themselves (or those unable to become students)? How can they enable, rather than constraining, their teaching staff who have the "will" to undertake such work?'. This is a core concern of this volume: how might universities become open to the complex social worlds outside?

Luisa Bunescu argues in this volume that teachers should be given both the opportunities and incentives to learn about how they understand the classroom, the learning environment and their role within it. More specifically, in relation to students with refugee or asylum seeker backgrounds, she suggests this means a rethinking of 'inclusion' and 'citizenship' beyond their formal senses, so that teachers understand how inclusion and citizenship are enacted, enclosed and reflected upon in an educational setting.

However, universities do not, for the most part, allow for expensive, non-prestige-granting, labour-intensive programmes to function in ways that live up to their promise. As Ian M. Cook argues in this volume, universities and individual scholars are trapped within performative and quantifiable displays of prestige, with programmes for displaced learners struggling to assert value. Bluntly put, within the logic of countable prestige, why should institutions or scholars 'waste' their time on programmes for learners who have experienced displacement when that work does not translate into something usable for tenure promotions, job applications or university rankings?

Defund the Management

In some Western/Global North institutions, especially in the anglophone sphere, university management has become an increasingly elite collection of individuals, paid such high amounts that their salaries are often the focus of student protest or newspaper headlines. While this is not necessarily the case (yet) in many European public higher education systems, the tendency is nonetheless becoming evident in different national contexts, for example with the expansion of private provision

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and the spread of neoliberal management practices. The growth of an administrative and essentially non-productive class occupying elite and highly paid positions is not unique to the university and speaks to wider trends in the global economy oriented towards the service sector and the consequent cultivation and the (over) valuation of skills and rationalities to do with management and administration (Graeber 2018a). Depressingly, as Ginsberg (2011) notes, these newly emerging managers have little experience as faculty, and see the expansion of their administrative power and control as key to wresting control of the university away from scholars. As Shore and Wright (2017: 8) argue, 'today, rather than being treated as core members of a professional community, academics are constantly being told by managers and senior administrators what "the university" expects of them, as if they were somehow peripheral or subordinate to "the university"'. The impact of this is felt differently depending on positionality within the university. OLIve at CEU, where the three of us have worked, relies principally on the work of short-term and precariously contracted staff to direct education programmes and supervise students, while only those seen as 'valuable assets' by the university management (i.e. those with a permanent or tenure track contract) were regularly invited to strategic university-level discussions about the programme or the university. Making faculty 'assets' is also problematic in another sense: teachers (and students) become 'assets' (valued capital) only if the university operates in a market-oriented fashion, assessing and instrumentalising the value of its held capital (see Cook, this volume).

University administration seems to take on an end in itself: a powerful class has instituted itself across universities and bears resemblance to an elite takeover of a complex socially embedded institution for its own enrichment. Certainly, with the amount spent on administration in universities, often disproportionate to anything else in the budget, the impression is of a university existing not to further learning and education (much less transform these) but to legitimise bullshit jobs (Graeber 2018b). Budget decisions are made by this administrative class by and large, and the consequence is that there is a tendency for funds to be spent on narrow initiatives (or on large salaries) meaningful to a class of administrators (who often come from the corporate world). Those that are not read as inherently important, such as specialised programmes for displaced learners, as well as precarious staff members within the institution, struggle and fight on a regular basis not just for funding but also for visibility. More generally, system-wide development and initiatives are often disavowed in favour of top-heavy growth.

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At a bare minimum, university leaders should be able to uphold academic freedom in its most simply understood liberal formation – freedom from state interference or outside political pressure. However, as Aura Lounasmaa, Erica Masserano, Michelle Harewood and Jessica Oddy argue in this volume, in the UK context, university leadership has consistently failed to shield students from the hostile anti-migrant political environment. In the UK, university staff must report on international students, as the state wants to ensure students really are studying at the university and not 'abusing' their visa. The authors note that 'the same university may be policing the immigration status of its students and staff and providing support for those caught in the immigration system. . .'. In Hungary, anti-migration legislation in 2018 resulted in CEU leadership choosing to close its refugee education programme and a refugee-related research project, as they were scared that a new tax on organisations being seen to help migrants would be applied (meanwhile nearly all civil society organisations who would also fall under the law continued their operations and are yet to pay any tax at all).

Running a university is political work. As Ester Gallo, Barbara Poggio and Paola Bodio argue (this volume), the politics of a particular university's locality is of central importance when it comes to setting up and running programmes for displaced learners because 'universities do not operate in a vacuum but have been integral to the history, socio-economic development and cultural outlook of local urban environments . . . [thus] the opening of universities to displaced students constitutes a process that goes beyond the physical and intangible borders of academic institutions to reflect their broader embeddedness'.

If, as is often the case, university leaderships fail to protect students and staff from even these very clear breaches of academic freedom, how might they respond to more insidious and harder-to-counteract enclosures on freedom, such as those from market forces? As Mariya P. Ivancheva argues in this volume, the marketisation of higher education in the UK has confined freedoms related to teaching, research and service. She writes that 'academics become less free in their pursuit of knowledge, tied by requirements of fundraising and publication peer-reviews that disadvantage "controversial", "daring" or even interdisciplinary ideas and research. Research and teaching are pitted against each other while done by two reserve armies: researchers "lucky" to have publications under the publish-or-perish ideal; and teaching-only faculty invisible and fearful of losing even their insecure low wages. Research, teaching and service are put to serve businesses and prioritise profit to scholarship'. In marketised systems where everything is

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collated and measured through ever deepening circles of competition (between individuals and between institutions), running programmes for displaced learners becomes increasingly difficult for staff as their labour in these programmes is not 'worth' enough according to the matrices set up by state bodies and enforced by university leadership. A concrete example of how university management fails refugee education programmes by blocking teacher continuity is given by Mwenza Blell in her co-authored piece in this volume. She reflects on how she was only allowed to teach within an education programme for displaced learners because she faced a period of underemployment. Once her hours increased, her line manager refused to allow her to continue in the programme, even when she volunteered to do it in her own time.

Education programmes for vulnerable communities do cost money, and there is little use in pretending they do not (Danny, Santina and Grossman 2008). As such, we must further fight the costing of access programmes when the cheaper option of online teaching is growing apace across higher education, in part (but only in part) due to the pandemic (Ivancheva 2020). Research has shown how online courses for displaced learners face significant challenges, including low completion rates, questioning online education as a 'solution' for 'refugee students' (Halkic and Arnold 2019). Another facet of increased marketisation of higher education is the cycles of grant writing and funding applications that render many different academic practices precarious, and often access programmes are no different. Against this, we argue management should adopt longer-term perspectives for refugee education programmes that use evidence-based approaches when evaluating and developing initiatives (Streitwieser et al. 2019).

The problem for university leadership when they, on the one hand, treat pioneering access programmes as secondary and thus liable to be costed against other priorities and, on the other hand, are paid extortionate salaries, is that it is possible to work out how many education programmes an institution could run for the cost of one rector or vice-chancellor. Or, if we take the market logic to its stupefying extreme (as, for instance, the UK higher education sector does year on year), then we could imagine how many programmes we could run for displaced learners if we hired a rector only half as good as the one we have.

Opening Up This Book

Opening up the university is not a matter of cutting new doors in an abstract edifice. Rather, it is to understand the historical-cultural contexts

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that account for the emergence of a specific relationship between learning, knowledge and publics at a specific time and place and to work on reinvigorating such relationships in the face of dominant projects. The 'university' is the point of analysis that arises from this relationship and one that guides this collection of chapters.

Opening up the university is also a process. 'Opening' is distinct from 'openness', which is a static moral category that ignores the attempted closures pushed through actors working within the paradigms of hegemonic projects and the histories and politics of attempted openings, false openings and empty gestures. It is vital to challenge claims of openness by liberal institutions that engage in a series of closures through processes of marketisation, patronising humanitarianism, elitism, exceptionalism, and self-aggrandising claims about their role in society. It is our hope that this volume does this through both concrete case studies and wide reflexive pieces.

Opening up the university is also to focus on the tensions between the university as a space of learning and public engagement and the cultivation of higher education as a project of the state and market seeking to entrench their authority and mythos and reproduce functionaries. By thinking through this constellation from the perspective of students who experienced displacement and too often fall in the gaps of higher education systems, the chapters, taken together, speak both to the specificities of refugees' access to the university and make broader points about the embeddedness of the university in socio-political contexts that shape and regulate entry and content.

This is done, across three parts. Part I, Academic Displacements, sets some of the key contexts within which programmes or initiatives for displaced students take place: policy landscapes, struggles for academic freedom, attempts at solidarity. Part II, Re-learning Teaching, hones in on how working with and for students who have experienced displacement pushes educators and associated bodies to rethink their pedagogical practice in new and often exciting ways. Finally, Part III, Debordering the University, explores the limits of the contemporary university and the linkages made beyond it. Some of the chapters focus more on the wider social formation (1, 2, 4, 10, 17, 18), some more on the institutions of higher education (3, 5, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16) and some more on the classroom (6, 7, 8, 9, 12), but together we think they provide an important starting point for an ongoing struggle to open up the university and foster the access and success of displaced learners.

We refuse any claim to completeness and aim instead to foster conversation and critical debate. In reading these chapters together, we

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hope it will engender thoughts of what it might mean to co-create a university that does not know its future; to build a university that welcomes the dangerous, unmanageable and learner-centric intellectual and educational promise contained within such a non-destination-orientated approach to higher education; and to be part of a university unafraid of what lies beyond its borders.

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Note

1. In many national contexts, university management are not disproportionately paid. However, we believe this is an increasingly global trend linked to the neoliberalisation of higher education.

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