# Managing resistance and negotiating co-design

Reflections on troublesome and elusive moments

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# Acknowledgements

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# 1: Introduction

*"But do you then have anything to write about for your project?"* Amy asked me worriedly and looks down. We were out walking. I was with a group of people I know from the project I had been involved in as a PhD student. It was very cold and the ground in the park was covered with snow. Before Amy's question, I had hesitantly asked this group of people whether they still used the smartphone app we developed during the project. It turned out they didn't – they didn't really need it, as they explained to me. I had had my doubts about whether they were using it, which was very clearly confirmed here, though I had to ask. I had partly been responsible for the development of this smartphone app, and I thought I was going to write about it and how it was a sustainable infrastructure for this community in the park. But, that seemed a bit difficult to do now.

We kept walking and the others continued to talk, while I couldn't stop thinking about Amy's question. She was worried for my project, but I thought the smartphone app was for them! I thought it was to make it easier for this community here in the park to meet and organize activities together.

My confusion and puzzlement that day didn't stop there. *"When we went home yesterday after the reception we talked about how it was very nice to see everyone again […] But also that maybe the presentations of the project were a little exaggerated,"* Amy told me. We were then gathered in a small house in the park to drink coffee after our long walk in the park. The day before we had all been to a book reception at the School of Design (KADK) It was the release of the book that was one of the outcomes of this user-driven innovation project – Senior Interaktion (Brandt et al. 2012), with a focus on designing services for senior citizens – we had all been part of. The people "the senior citizens" from the park had also been there. They were also one of the outcomes – this bi-weekly gathering in the park organized by the citizens themselves was seen as a new service concept and a success of the project.

Amy continued: *"But maybe that's just because you got money from the municipality, so you need to show them something."* I did not want to bother her with the fact that the money came from a funding program for user-driven innovation projects. At the same time, she was right – some of the stories of the successes of the project were directed at the municipality – a main partner in the project. I was

surprised and a bit taken by her direct comment – but I understood what she meant. I recalled how I, the day before, had been troubled during this reception with the presentations.

## A project participant's concerns and questions

This meeting in the park, and the book reception, took place four months after the project ended. It was a three-year long user-driven innovation project called Senior Interaktion, a project I was part of as a PhD student and a co-designer. The project was a collaboration among three main partners – the Municipality of Copenhagen, the The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, School of Design (KADK), and the IT University of Copenhagen (ITU) – and nine private companies. This meeting in the park came to play an important role in "the becoming of" this dissertation.

I entered my PhD and the Senior Interaktion project with a rather classic co-design agenda and project, but I had to make a turn after this meeting, which evolved into the PhD dissertation you are now reading. It was not only this particular meeting that made me take this turn, and the change didn't happen from one day to another but evolved over several months. It was in some ways a difficult decision to make.

However, this meeting in the park together with the book reception made me raise a lot more questions and concerns in relation to the project I had been part of. It was questions like the following. Whom is the project for? How are "ten people that continue to meet in the park after taking part in the project" a success? The concerns I had were regarding these stories of the project as a success. I mean, you probably need to tell stories like this as an outcome of a funded project, but the stories didn't resonate with what I had been part of, for several reason. It was also concerned more concretely with the generalized stories about elderlies and technology. They resonated with the discussions and assumptions we in the project group had had when initiating the project. But they didn't resonate with the people and the technology I had encountered during my participation in the project. Finally, the main concern with the meeting and the reception was the troubled feelings I experienced, which was something that resonated with feelings I had experienced several times during my participation in the project. In the following section, I will elucidate these questions and concerns – and provide a description of this sense of troublesomeness, which all influenced the way my research focus changed.

## "Black-boxing" stories and "pure and innocent" projects

The problems I encountered were first of all project stories. This meant stories as a singular telling of the project as a success with a focus on how we had tried out a new radical way of involving, and the fact that these people in the park still met on their own, confirmed the success. It was also stories of the project that concentrated on the intensions, assumptions, and plans – and not what actually happened during the project, which not only left out an important part but also raised questions of what knowledge we had gained in the project of the central objects of study – i.e. elderlies and their everyday (social) life as well as technology as support for social interaction.

At the same time these stories – and the writings in general with co-design and participatory design – described the project as a "pure co-design project." The problem for me was the fact that we – the design researchers – were the ones defining it as a co-design project but the other people in the project defined it in other ways. The "pure co-design" project descriptions didn't take into account that the project was a gathering of multiple stakeholders, political agendas, as well as multiple organizations, which enacted different versions of the project – but also influenced the collaboration in different ways.

Finally, the book reception and the meeting in the park illustrated very well what I had experienced – more unknowingly – during my participation in the project, namely how critical voices against the project wasn't heard – or didn't get to influence the project as such. Instead, the critical voices were often explained away in the project by a general explanation of a "resistance toward change" or a "resistance toward technology" among the citizens that took part. It was also explained by persuading people of the good intentions of the project e.g. that it was not just a cost-saving project for the municipality. It were critical voices and resistance that were overlooked by the "good and innocent project," which mainly focused on the relation among technology, the citizens and the co-design methods – or also referred to as "the others," (Karasti 2010). The idea of the "good and innocent" project also blurred the picture about who was doing what to whom in the project including who the project was for (cf. Suchman 2002).[1]

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[1] I'm not alone with these concerns and problems with co-design and participatory design. Other scholars within these traditions has before me raised similar issues of the neutral participatory design researchers; assumptions and concepts that are taken for granted; the "pure and innocent" co-design and participatory design project ignoring or overlooking the critical voices toward the project as well as

## Entered with a classic co-design focus

When I entered the Senior Interaktion project, it was with my educational background in social science, sociology, and interaction design. I had experience with working as a design researcher and facilitator in user involvement, co-design, and participatory design projects. I entered with a more classic co-design focus on the involvement of "non-designers" in the design process. Here I was more specifically interested in "everyday innovations" among the non-designers/senior citizens, and how to emphasize and design "with" them in the co-design process as well as reflections on how co-design encounters could be extended in time and place using e.g. social technology to "improve" participation among everyone involved.

During the Senior Interaktion project, I explored this through some minor experiments with Facebook groups, mail-, email- and SMS-exchanges, and the development of a smart phone app. My primary role in this project, however, was as co-designer in the planning and execution of different kinds of citizen involvement and other "partner" activities. It consisted of e.g. recruitment and priming of possible participants, creating design material and artifacts for the co-design work, and facilitation of these encounters among the different partners. However, I as a PhD student in the project, also struggled quite a lot with how to intervene with my own (rather vague) research agenda. With the change I made after the Senior Interaktion project ended, I also turned "away" from this research focus.

## Disconcerting moments and a new research aim

The change of research focus I made was caused by an experience of "sitting back" with "no material" in relation to my original research focus. I couldn't find my own project and empirical material in the great number of video clips, pictures, documents, and notes I had gathered. The research focus I had entered with together with these problems I had with singular and black-boxing stories and writings of co-design kept me from writing anything. Though, more importantly the change was caused by a focus on these troublesome, frustrating, and puzzling experiences I had in the project in relation to co-design as well as citizen involvement in general. These disconcerting

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its role in "new constellation" engaging with multiple stakeholders and other's political agendas, as well as the lack of descriptive and reflective work of the project – as a way to be accountable to, and also contribute with knowledge to development of these design traditions (Markussen 1996; Shapiro 2005; Balka 2006; Pedersen 2007; Karasti 2010).

moments (cf. Verran 1999) kept interfering with my writings – or attempts to write anything. It was moments like the moments such as the ones in the park or at the book reception – and the combination. In general, it was moments I found to be troublesome, disturbing, puzzling, confusing, and worrisome – and in different ways affected me because it was moments of things that didn't fit, and uncertainties. And, they contained, or were, cracks and clashes I couldn't grasp. At the same time, I had difficulties with putting these feelings and incidents into words – or at least to start with as words in a PhD dissertation.

To make the change of research aim, I had to look "outside" the literature of co-design and participatory design[2] to be able to put these unarticulated frustrations into something that could contribute to a PhD dissertation and with that a contribution to academia.

Here especially Helen Verran (1999) and her concepts of disconcerting moments as well as Mike Michael (2011; 2012) and his concept of Anecdotes (but also the idiot and misbehavior) as a way of questioning the very doing of social scientific research helped me to make the change. These two as well as other scholars and writings (Callon 1986; Latour 1987; Bijker and Law 1992; Law 1994; Law and Hassard 1999; Mol 2002; Suchman 2002; Law 2004; Stengers 2005; Latour 2007; Stengers 2011) all within the field of Science and Technology Studies and Actor Network Theory made me able to transform these unarticulated frustrations and personal incidents into other or new questions that could form an interesting research contribution relevant to the field of co-design and participatory design – but not limited to that. Hopefully, it is also a dissertation that could be of interest for STS scholars as well as scholars – or people in general – who work with(in) projects with multiple stakeholders and/or citizen involvement.

**Research focus and aims**

In this dissertation, I work with two main research aims:

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[2] There are many before me who have combined participatory design and co-design with theoretical concepts within Science and Technology Studies or used Actor Network Theory as analyze strategy. However, it is often with a different focus than what I have here.

1) The first research focus is on resistance as part of co-design and citizen involvement. The aim is here to describe and analyze how resistance is performed in practice, especially in the meetings between citizens and the project, and how resistance is handled in the project, or not handled. The intention is here to describe and reflect upon resistance (against the co-design project) that is rarely described or discussed within co-design and participatory design, despite the strong focus on differences and controversies when bringing different people together.[3]

This research focus is central in chapter five, six, and seven, where I describe and analyze the different versions of resistance, how the resistance was troublesome in the encounter with the project, and the ideas of participation in co-design and participatory design, as well as how it was handled in these different situations. The accounts are here based on what I call "small troublesome moments," which are particularly disconcerting moments.

2) The second research focus is on the practice in a living lab and how that evolved over a longer period and as relations among design researchers, private partners, citizens, partners from the public, technology and multiple agendas. The aim is here to describe and reflect upon what is being performed in the living lab, as this rather new practice within co-design and participatory design lacks empirical descriptions (Björgvinsson, et al. 2010; Binder, et al. 2011a; Binder, et al. 2011b). In addition, the intention is to contribute to the discussion of co-design in "new" constellations of multiple partners and multiple organizations (or orderings) (cf. Balka 2006; Karasti 2010).

This research focus is central in chapters eight, nine and seven, where I describe what is coming into play in the living lab by following how "active citizens," "new technology," as well as "partnerships" are being performed in the living lab. These were all important aspects of the project, which became central in the living lab in terms of how to make what was made in the living lab sustainable beyond the project. The accounts are here based on different disconcerting moments.

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[3] Helena Karasti has in this relation also described how the focus of the PD researchers is rarely on "the self": "The focus of the PD researcher has been on the 'other' (technology and user) at the expense of concerns for the self and relationships," (Karasti 2010)

## Reading guide

This dissertation is an empirical-based dissertation that contains of four main parts.

The first part contains the introductory chapters, which include the theoretical and methodological background for this dissertation. **Chapter two** "**Senior Interaktion**" is a short introduction to a project I participated in as a PhD student. It is my experience - my disconcerting moments - of taking part in this project that constitutes the empirical material in this dissertation. The chapter also introduces the particular approach to co-design and citizen involvement that is put forward in the project. **Chapter three "The troublesome and the elusive"** is the chapter that presents the theoretical writings and concepts within STS that have shaped both my change of research aim as well as affected me in my analytical work to point my attention to interesting aspects in the empirical material. The chapter is split into two, following the two research aims and focus. The first is the focus on these small troublesome moments and resistance, where the theoretical writings and concepts of Helen Verran (1999), Michael (2011; 2012) as well as writings and concepts of ANT in general has served both as background knowledge as well as being used in the analytical work with the empirical material. The second part of the chapter is focused on the elusive and the difficulties with getting a grip on an object. Here, it is mainly the work of John Law (2004) but also other STS scholars, who's writings and concepts have helped to open up my writings and analytical work to also "see" objects as the multiple, elusive and fluid. **Chapter four "Disconcerting moments – materials and roles"** describes my role and participation in the Senior Interaktion project. The purpose of this chapter is to present the empirical material, how it was gathered and selected – as well as how it was worked with analytically to be transformed into contribution to research.

The second part of the dissertation is also the first analytical part, which follows the first research aim with focus on resistance in co-design and participatory design. **Chapter five "Disconcerting moments – materials and roles"** contains the description of four troublesome moments of resistance I experienced as facilitator and as being a person "in front" of the project. I stay close to the descriptions of these small troublesome moments and ask how resistance is coming into being. In the

analysis, the concept of the idiot (Stengers 2005; Michael 2011) is used to inquire about the resistance and more importantly why it becomes troublesome. **Chapter six "Small troublesome moments: Resistance as idiotic"** continues with these small troublesome moments, here with the objective of exploring why what the idiot makes visible challenges the interpretation of participation in co-design and participatory design. I here analyze and discuss these descriptions of participation: as direct and genuine; meaningful and relevant; as well as participation on equal footing in relation to these four moments of resistance and with Michel Callon's (1989) steps of translation. **Chapter seven "Conflicts and controversies: Managing the resistance"** continues with these four troublesome moments but now with a question of how the resistance is handled. Here, I discuss this way of handling the resistance in relation to the strong focus on differences and controversies within participatory design and co-design as well as with the use of Annemarie Mol (2002). This discussion is focused on what implication it has for co-design and participatory design when the resistance is not confronted but instead worked around in an attempt to keep the "co-design meeting" going.

The third part of the dissertation is also the second analytical part, which follows the second research aim with focus on how to describe the practice of a living lab. **Chapter eight "Active citizens and new radical involvement"** starts with the question of what "active citizens" are and where they are. In this chapter, I follow how active citizens are enacted as one of the central things in the living lab. The chapter contains five different accounts; the first is based on the project application to describe how active citizens are performing, and the rest is based on four different disconcerting moments from the park. I end the chapter by questioning the complexity of active and passive with the use of Law's description of the "pleasure of passivity". **Chapter nine "New technology – and a new social practice"** starts with the question what is "new technology" – and where is it? In this chapter, I follow how "new technology" is being enacted as a central part of the living lab. The description of the technology is first based on the project's articulation of different concepts before entering the meetings in the park. In the "actual" living lab, the enactment of "new technology" is found and described through four different moments. In the end of the chapter, I discuss the design researchers attempts to implement a new

technology – and a new social practice with the use of the concepts of artful integration as well as artful infrastructuring by Suchman (2002) as well as Karasti and Syrjänen (2004). **Chapter ten "Partnerships – and co-design in multiple organizations"** is again a question of what it is and where it is, but now with a focus on "public-private partnerships." In this chapter, I describe the relation among the different partakers (partners) in the living lab through different moments of partnerships. I end this chapter with a discussion of the collaboration in the living lab among these different partakers including the question of whether this kind of collaboration means that co-design becomes extreme co-design or that co-design is dissolved.

The fourth and last part of this dissertation contains the discussion and the conclusion of the arguments of the dissertation. **Chapter eleven "Event, commitment and "common projects""** constitutes a final discussion of this dissertation by first of all summing up the main issues and questions raised throughout the dissertation. I here question the elusiveness of these project constellations and collaborations, which I have defined as "just pretending" and "just leaving" – and discuss this in relation to a commitment to a common project and the concept of the event here following the work of Stengers. **Chapter twelve "Conclusion"** sums up the arguments of this dissertation.

**Definitions of (some) words**

      **Co-design and participatory design:** I do not distinguish particularly between these two traditions. I find them to be mostly overlapping in relation to how these design traditions are present in this dissertation. I though mainly refer to the Scandinavian tradition of participatory design and co-design in this text.

      **Project:** When addressing or describing the work of the project – the work of the people involved in the project – or just the project in general, I use this overall term, which of course refers to the Senior Interaktion project. It is though rather problematic in the sense that the project was difficult to understand as one unit, because it was gatherings of multiple agendas, concepts, and actors – and it was

enacted differently in different places over time – and sometimes at the same time. I though use it here for simplifying reasons.

**Project group:** When this term is used, it refers to the project leader and other project members from the Municipality of Copenhagen as well as the design researchers from the two research institutes (see chapter two).

**Non-designers:** I use this term to describe or address the people who are unfamiliar with the design work when coming to these co-design meetings. It can be the citizens (and the users) as well as the partners and other stakeholders.

**Citizens, senior citizens, and elderlies:** I use these terms for the group of people who took part in the project, and who was characterized as people who were retired and citizens of Copenhagen Municipality. Both the term citizens and the term elderlies invites for a more nuance description as well as discussions of what it means to be "elderly" and to be a "citizen" for that matter. I abstain from these discussions in this dissertation – and again use these expressions for simplistic reasons – and for lack of better expressions.

All the names for the different people present in this text are fictive, but the author is familiar with their real names.

# 2: Senior Interaktion

In this chapter, I will introduce the overall project Senior Interaktion, in which I took part during my PhD. This introduction also includes a presentation of the particular approach to co-design and participatory design that was central for this project.

The Senior Interaktion project was a three-year long project, which was founded by the program of user-driven innovation. It was based in Copenhagen and took place from September 2009 to October 2012. The main partners of the project were the Health and Care department of Copenhagen Municipality, the IT University of Copenhagen (ITU), as well as The Royal College of Fine Arts - the School of Design (KADK). Besides the main partners, there were nine partners from different private companies. The municipality was the project leader for the whole project.

## New services, technology, and social interaction

The main purpose of the project was to design new services for the senior citizens that could support and optimize sociality among them. This aim were based on a former project (The Good Senior Life), which the Copenhagen Municipality was involved in, in which the conclusion was that "a good social life" is important for well-being and life quality among elderlies. In the project application, this became the philosophy of the project:

> …*seniors get to be more self-sufficient when they have a meaningful everyday and are part of social networks. The project explores how existent private and public services can be developed, so they support social networks and create experiences in everyday lives within exercise, meals, and [cultural] experiences.* (Senior Interaktion, project application, April 2009)

The focus on the social life was not only a way to create well-being and increased life quality but also to make more senior citizens self-sufficient. The quote points to the main concerns of the project, which had to do with self-sufficiency - and active - senior citizens; private-public partnerships; and a focus on social networks as part of the services. The development of new services also included a strong focus on "new technology" in the project. I will unfold these aspects in the following discussion and start with the last: the focus on social networks and communities.

The design of new services aimed at rethinking how the municipality delivered services to the citizens. The idea was to go from what was called a vertical model of one-to-one delivery to a horizontal model, in which the municipality (together with private companies) delivered service to a community of seniors citizens. Within this community, the citizens could then help and support each other, something that could create a platform for more interaction among the citizens themselves and hopefully less with the public sector. It was also described as "*the service offers can benefit from the ability to coordinate across and stimulate the capacity to self-sufficiency. There is a latent resource in the local networks*" (Senior Interaktion, project application, April 2009).

This leads to the next point – the active citizens – in the quote above. The model was based on ideas to go from passive recipients to active citizens who create and maintain their own services, and the role of the service providers then became to stimulate and support this. To make elderlies more active or more elderlies active was articulated as a way to increase well-being and self-sufficiency, but at the same time to reduce costs and the number of employees needed, which was formulated as the following in the project application: "*A good life quality creates self-sufficiency, which relieves the care system economically, and in the number of 'hands' needed*" (Senior Interaktion, project application, April 2009).

Furthermore, the project aimed at exploring the relation of how the design of new services could benefit from collaboration between the public sector and private companies. This was also a central part of applying funding for the program of user-driven innovation. In the project, there were nine different companies involved as partners. They were chosen to cover the aspect of exercise, meals, or cultural activities, which were themes for different kinds of social interaction in the project. Besides the central concerns of rethinking how to deliver services, producing active citizens, reducing costs, and the number of "hands" needed, as well as creating private-public partnerships, two other important elements in the project were the development of welfare technology as well as involvement of citizens during the design process.

Technology was seen as a way to support social interaction among the senior citizens and was central for the concepts of the project especially the design researchers. This will be further described and unfolded in chapters five and nine.

## Co-design and citizen involvement

The project worked with different ways of involving the citizens based on co-design and participatory design, and more specifically, it followed the way of working by the researchers at the co-design research cluster at KADK (named CODE). In the following section, I will describe this way of working with co-design in the project, which related rather directly to the approach of co-design of CODE. This approach includes the ideas of creating a design lab, a focus on design as a collaborative inquiry, as well as a performative perspective and the idea of "rehearsing the future." This way of doing co-design is though inspired by (but also inspires) and developed in relation to the field of co-design and participatory design in general.

First, there is the design lab. The design lab is not so much a specific place as it is a metaphoric design space. At the same time, it follows the idea of the laboratory as a controlled environment for experiments, where the researchers have their different methods, and tools, but also a principle for measurements. The design lab provides a space for exploring, trying out, and experimenting without being directly exposed to the "real" world and the struggles and obstacles that follow with that (Binder 2007; Binder and Brandt 2008; Halse, et al. 2010; Binder, et al. 2011a). It gives an opportunity to imagine possibilities in a protected environment as it is described (Binder 2007).

The design lab can be described by different principles. First is the collaboration, which means you design with the people you are designing for. This is not necessarily "just" the immediate potential user but it can be, as in the case of the Senior Interaktion project, citizens, project partners, stakeholders, and other actors relevant to the project. They are all involved "directly" in the process, which means they are all invited to workshops or other encounters arranged by the design researchers. The aim of the encounters is to involve different people directly in the inquiry and exploration of the existing everyday situation and in what is being designed. On the other hand, it is a way of initiating new networks of private partners, public institutions, and citizens. The last is also referred to in recent participatory design and co-design literature as infrastructuring, which is about connecting different human and non-human actors to create possibilities for new "things" to emerge (Björgvinsson, et al. 2010, Binder, et al. 2011b).

A second principle of the design lab is the focus on design as research i.e. as a collaborative inquiry and not necessarily design in the traditional way of creating devices and products. This means that what is essential for the design researchers is mainly the process, the inquiries, and explorations, the methods of the collaboration, as well as how to put drafts into circulation in these collaborations; this includes design interventions and experiments. This last item refers to an ideological principle of the design researchers to have a stake in the collaboration. They are not "just" facilitating the meetings but bring something into the collaboration as part of the inquiry and exploration (Binder and Brandt 2008; Binder, et al. 2011a). It can be concepts and visions in the shape of props, prototypes, or other artifacts and design devices.

This leads to the last principle of the design lab, which is "rehearsing the future." It has a performance perspective to it. Rehearsing the future is central for the encounters with the other "design partners." The idea of rehearsing refers to try out different possibilities and at the same time be able to sort and adjust in relation to what works and what does not. The performance perspective also means that these collaborative encounters often are based on some sort of creation of scenarios or stories of the future, which all the different "design partners" are invited to be involved in (Halse 2008; Halse, et al. 2010)

I have tried to focus on the main part of the CODE co-design approach that was central in the Senior Interaktion project and not necessarily to tell the whole story. Throughout the dissertation, there will be further descriptions of the way the design researchers worked in the project. At the same time, I have to recall that the project was a setup of three different main partners, a big group of private partners, a funding application to a user-driven innovation program, and other important entities that in different ways defined and influenced the process and the way of working.

## The three years: the activities of the project

The project was a three-year long project. In the project application and initial planning, it was split into three phases each approximately one year. In "reality" the project's **first year** contained interviews with the private partners, senior citizens, and different people working within the public sector with a focus on senior citizens. The first year ended with a series of three workshops where the design researchers (and

the project leader from the municipality) planned and invited the private partners, senior citizens, as well as employees from the public sector to take part in the first step of designing new services. The three workshops took place in a culture house and was based on the ideas of involving these different people in inquiring about the existing everyday life of the senior citizens, and together with the different partners "imagine possibilities for the future."

During the **second year,** three so called living labs were planned and initiated. It though ended with only two living labs because the invitation to the last was turned down by the citizens who it was based on. One of the living labs was based in an apartment building for elderlies in the area of Copenhagen with a focus on how visibility of everyday activities in the buildings could support and optimize interaction among the people living there. The other living lab, which will be explained further in chapters eight, nine, and ten, was based in a big urban park in the area of Copenhagen. Here the focus was on outdoor activities and how to support citizens in meeting and planning activities on their own in a more flexible manner (compared to the traditional activities and activity centers for senior citizens). In the **final year,** the work in the two living labs continued with the focus to make it "stable" enough to continue beyond the completion of the project.

This description of the Senior Interaktion project is now followed by a longer chapter describing the theoretical writings and concepts that are used in the analytical work in this dissertation.

# 3: The troublesome and the elusive

After this introduction to the Senior Interaktion project and the method of co-design and citizen involvement, I will return to the problems and frustrations I had, based on my experience with taking part in this project. Here I will describe the theoretical components that have taken part in shaping the change I made to the research aim and questions as well as how these different theoretical writings and concepts have pointed my attention to specific aspects of the empirical material. In other words this chapter is a presentation of the theoretical writings and concepts within STS I have used in the analytical work in this dissertation.

The chapter is split into two main themes based on the aforementioned problems I had struggled with: "The small troublesome moments," as well as "The elusive." It is these two themes that structure this chapter – but also the whole dissertation as such. Chapter five, six, and seven are concerned with the small troublesome moments, and chapter eight, nine, and ten are concerned with the elusive. I will describe and elucidate both themes in the chapter with the focus on describing the theoretical foundation for the dissertation.

This first part is concerned with small troublesome moments. These were moments I experienced as taking part in the project in a period of a series of workshops with the focus on co-design and citizen involvement. These moments were at first mostly about failed facilitation, troublesome participants, and problematic workshop situations. But, at the same time, they (had) affected me and in that sense "kept haunting" me: What was going on here? Why were they troublesome? And could they – and if so, how could they – be the material for a PhD dissertation and something that could contribute to research and academia?

The second part is concerned with how to follow and describe something that is very difficult to get a grip on. It frames the second part of this dissertation and raises the problem of not being able to characterize a defined object, which made me raise the question of what is it and where is it? This concern follows from the last period in the project, in which I took part in what was articulated as a living lab. I thought I could write about it as a defined and maybe also as a definite object. Though, as I continually attempted to get a grip on an object to follow, it rebounded in my writing.

The difference between these two problems was that they concerned different topics and questions. The first – the small troublesome moments – became the questions of how to describe and expand the resistance these moments contained and why it is important to talk about the resistance in relation to co-design and citizen involvement.

The second problem had to do with questions of what was it and where was it. These ontological questions became the problem concerning what I was following and describing, what was done, and what was coming into being in the living lab. But, it also raised the question of whether these methodological problems also were signs of problems or difficulties in the real world – "in the park."

As mentioned, this chapter is split into two parts – these two problems and what theoretical foundations I unfold and analyze these problems and topics with. It is therefore both a description of what and how different writings and scholars have affected me to be able to address these problems and going from unarticulated frustration to articulated methodological and ontological questions and relevant topics. I will also give a description and unfolding of the theoretical foundations I used in the analytical work of the empirical material to see and make things visible. In other words, the presented theory here is not only brought in to address a specific topic, but more importantly because they resonated with – and made me able to talk about – the problems I was struggling with in constructive ways.

What theories (writings and scholars) are brought in follow these two main concerns – and therefore how it – more or less – takes part in the dissertation i.e. either in relation to the first part – or to the second. I write "more or less" here as all the theoretical components shaped and still shape the way I work and have written this dissertation, which also makes this split of the these writings a bit too categorical at times.

The first part that follows here concerning the small troublesome moments involves a presentation of the writings of the STS scholars, Helen Verran (1999), Mike Michael (2011; 2012), as well as a broader introduction to ANT. These writings have affected me to keep these moments, describe and expand them as important contributions, as well as, challenge what is otherwise taken for granted or overlooked as "naturally" occurring.

# Small troublesome moments

The first theme here is what I have defined as "small troublesome moments." It was moments I experienced as facilitator (in workshops) and "a front" person in the project during a period when the project held a series of co-design workshops involving citizens, private partners, and employees from the public sector. There was a resistance in these moments – and a clash with the expected participation, both my own and co-design in general, which placed me in situations, in which how to continue was complicated and unclear. It was moments that were filled with frustration, awkwardness, passivity and/or anxiety but also nervous laughter and speed talking to keep the good atmosphere or try to get through it in some way or another.

These small troublesome moments all contained some kind of resistance from the citizens the project tried to involve. It was a resistance that somehow disrupted my facilitation and the group work – and was difficult to handle. But, it was also a resistance that wasn't kept in the project in a way so it got to influence it – the resistance was either explained away or sanitized in discussions, reporting (workshops outcomes), and writings. This was, among other things, because of my own immediate blindness to the importance of these moments to be more than my own frustrations.

At the same time, it also included some moments that are rarely discussed in co-design and participatory design, referring to failed facilitation, troublesome participants, critical voices among the participants toward the project, etc., to describe it briefly, which was rather disconcerting to me. I couldn't figure out whether it was because other co-design researchers didn't experience moments like this, or if it was because they were nothing to talk about, and it was considered a natural occurring part of doing co-design and participatory design. In other words, it seemed as if they were insignificant for the description and discussion of co-design and participatory design. For a long time, I instead placed them as examples of failed facilitation, as naive research mistakes, or personal shortcomings as well as stories of troublesome participants who didn't follow the consensual way of doing things in relation to these meetings.

However, the small troublesome moments kept haunting me and interfering with my early attempts at writing a dissertation of how the project involves elderlies

as co-designers with a focus on "everyday innovation." This persuaded me to make the change to my research aim and questions. These moments made visible that there were some other accounts to write – something that was more important. It felt as if it were outside what was "normally" addressed within the literature of co-design and participatory design. But the writings of STS-scholars, especially Helen Verran (1999) and Mike Michael (2011; 2012), helped me to dwell upon these moments as important to keep and as significant contributions, which is the (short) story of how these troublesome moments became central as one part of my research aim and question.

It is though one thing to understand how these moments were important to keep. However, there was still a question of how to write accounts and analyze small moments that were rather personal. At the same time, I also saw how they could easily be written as very critical and not very constructive accounts of the project in relation to my own frustration – something that wasn't particularly interesting for an academic discussion. The question was how to go from unarticulated frustration and troublesomeness to research questions. This is a question that would open the field of writing to me as well as contribute to a relevant and interesting discussion of concerns and issues of co-design and citizen involvement, which was what these moments pointed at.

They were rather small moments in comparison to the whole project, which made me raise questions of how they could be important, significant, as well as used as "the truth" of the project. I felt I had to tell the whole story of the project to answer these questions. But, what is the "whole story" of the project? What is the truth? In the following section, I will unfold the writings of Verran (1999) and Michael (2011; 2012) but also writings within the field of Actor-Network-Theory (ANT) (Callon 1986; Latour 1987; Bijker and Law 1992; Law 1994; Law and Hassard 1999; Latour 2007) and how these writings and scholars take part in shaping the analysis in the first part of the dissertation. I will also try to address my concerns of how to write accounts of small moments to contribute to a broader discussion including these essential questions of "truth" and "the whole story." These writings have caused me to keep, describe, and expand these moments and point my attention to resistance as well as questions of participation and controversies in relation to co-design and citizen involvement.

## Disconcerting moments

Disconcerting moments is Verran (1999) term, which she describes in the chapter "Staying true to the laughter in Nigerian classrooms," from the book Actor Network Theory and after (Law and Hassard 1999). Verran is one of the STS-scholars, whose writings have played an important role in my work here and it is especially her description of "disconcerting moments" that resonates with my own troublesomeness. Verran put words to the troublesome but also expressed how to see the troublesome as something important and as a contribution.

In this chapter, Verran (1999) writes accounts of the work as a teacher in Nigeria. She uses the "disconcertment" as a placeholder for moments that are difficult to handle analytically but at the same time important to keep and expand. These moments are disconcerting to the researcher and filled with tension between differences and/or anxious laughter, which is *"The sort of laughter that grows from seeing a certainty disrupted to become a different sort of certainty"* (Verran 1999, 140).

Verran (1999) tells the story of her own experiences with teaching student teachers in Nigeria. This is in relation to a lecture about quantifying or metrics and teaching the kids about length. In it, she experiences what she calls disconcerting moments or disconcertment. Here she planned a lecture with the student teacher. When it is brought into the classroom, some of the teachers decide to follow the jointly planned lecture while others use an alternative method, the Yoruba'en way. When the lectures are discussed among all the student teachers and Verran, it is described by one of the Yoruba'en teachers as "the same," which results in a laugh by everyone. This moment is disconcerting to Verran. The alternative lecture is to her both the same and different, and it is difficult to say where it is the same and where it is different. As she describes, she felts like she saw "length" and at the same time "saw through" it (Verran 1999, 140). But what also makes it disconcerting to Verran (1999) is that she seems to be the only one who notices.

What is going on here is a meeting between different knowledge traditions. But, what Verran tries to argue for with her concept is to keep the disconcertment and not try to explain it away. She describes the problem in the following way:

> *It is difficult to write this story in a way that accurately captures the subtle and complex relations that surrounded my participation and the*

*participation[s] of the student teachers and their pupils. And how the power relations are rendered is important. Dealing with them in my narrative comes down to the problem of stopping myself from producing 'yet another defensive appropriation of the unfamiliar by means of an "explanation", instead of creating another quite different mode of relation to disconcert[ment] adequate to late twentieth century patterning of identities and alterities … The vertiginous cultural interspace effected by reflection makes many of us desperate to fill it with meaning, thereby defusing disconcert[ment]' (Taussig 1993). For me, keeping that disconcertment is important. It is a link to how, working in the complex negotiating arenas of Nigerian classrooms, we can tell in/foresightful stories and understand how truths that these stories evoke, came to be.* (Verran 1999, 140–141)

Verran's text is a critique of attempts to explain moments like this by approaches of either being a Universalist or a relativist. The first is problematized by a focus on institutional power relations, which will only see failure in this story. The Western teacher failed to come through with her way of teaching. The problem with the second is that it also creates *"an almost equally orthodox story of powerful Yoruba resistance and Western impotence"* (Verran 1999, 141). Here the focus will be on how the Yoruba teachers rule out the Western teacher's attempt to dictate how to teach. In both cases, the disconcertment – this meeting of different knowledge traditions, which create a *vertiginous* interspace described in the quote above – is explained away with a focus on power relations as something either in favor of the powerful Western teacher or the Yoruba teachers. What Verran argues for is a way of telling stories that goes beyond critique and the moral question of right or wrong, and at the same time to avoid taking sides.

I also read Verran's text as a critique of ANT in which she argues that an ANT analysis would either have followed "the Western teacher's" attempt at translating the Yoruba teacher into her way of teaching metrics and length, where the Yoruba teacher failed, or the other way around, where it is "the Yoruba teacher" and his work with enrolling other actors that is being followed, to be able to argue for that version of the lecture as the right one.

Instead, Verran argues for paying attention to what is being co-constituted or what is being evoked in collective acting. With her project, she also puts emphasis on

telling and handling these stories and the actors they follow with responsibility and not betray the participants:

> *To tell either of these stories [the two foundationist explanations] would betray participants in the episode in unacceptable ways. In explaining away the disconcertment, the above explanations foreclose and legislate. They fail to recognize Yoruba classrooms as characterized by a complex and subversive dance of mimesis and alterity in classroom routines, generating new ways to go on, and re-generating old ways of going-on together. In contrast to these two 'foundationist[s]' explanations I want to keep the puzzlement of sameness and difference we can see in Mr. Ojo's lesson; to privilege the disconcertment. It seems to me that this way we can tell stories which have a chance of articulating how the truths they tell came to be and, of understanding how this might be done responsibly.* (Verran 1999, 142)

Verran continues with what disconcertment can do; it can *"alert us to [the fact] that here is an occasion for telling stories [that] might generate new possibilities for answering more questions of how to live"* (Verran 1999, 136).

To sum up, the disconcertment is a placeholder for moments of puzzlement and analytical difficulties. These moments are stories of both sameness and differences – disruptions and connections. Here Verran (1999) argues to keep this tension alive instead of explaining it away with Western universalism or relativism. What seems to be important for Verran in her work is to keep this vertiginous cultural interspace in the encounter of different knowledge traditions – or the Western and the Yoruba'en teacher, which also include avoiding this to be a moral question of right or wrong as well as to refrain from taking sides.

I didn't follow Verran's project all the way – and especially this last part of keeping the vertiginous cultural interspace as it falls out of the frame of my focus. Furthermore, Verran argues to avoid taking sides. Even with a strong wish of doing so, I found it often very difficult in practice. It is not that I wanted to tell the story of the evil and powerful design researchers or private partners against the weak elderlies. My aim was to also make the voices of the citizens visible (and heard) in the accounts of co-design and citizen involvement, which can have a cause, an unbalance of "side taking" in the accounts and analytical work.

What I "take" from Verran is the description of these disconcerting moments, which first of all made me follow the sense of troublesomeness, disconcertment, and/or puzzlement I had experienced while taking part in this workshop-period. The concept affected me in terms of paying attention to my own bodily tensions as well as the personal experiences in these moments – not to be self-indulgent but instead to understand how the disconcertment and puzzlement was containing something important.

It both help me to gather these moments as the material for the first part of this dissertation but also to "open" the descriptions of these troublesome moments – and to go beyond a moral question of right and wrong. Instead, my purpose became to "just" describe what is coming into being in these moments in a way in which I also try to keep the differences.

In chapter five, I therefore ask how resistance is coming into being and where Verran's notion of disconcerting moments have helped me to pay attention to and describe my own sense of troublesomeness. Furthermore, it has affected me to avoid explaining away the resistance and falling into the trap of seeing them as "just" resistance toward change – or technology for that matter, which is a focus that otherwise keeps us from "seeing" what is taking place.

And finally, Verran's notion of disconcerting moments made me trust and also be comfortable with these "small" moments as something that points to a much broader and greater discussion regarding the project as such, co-design, as well as citizen involvement.


## Anecdotes, Idiot, and Misbehavior

The next part of this chapter introduces the work of Michael (2011; 2012) and how it has in the same way (though not addressing the same issues) as Verran (1999) played an important role in the process-related work with these small troublesome moments. But, Verran and Michael also do different things, which I will return to later in the following section.

In relation to Michael (2011; 2012), it is both his use of Anecdotes as well as the Idiot and Misbehavior that have played a central role in my work with these small troublesome moments. In the book chapter, "Anecdote" he describes how an anecdote is a story of a personal incident, a disturbance, something that is out of the ordinary,

or where things go wrong. The difference though between the anecdote and a narrative is that the first is for telling – or demanding to be told, as Michael (2012) describes it or the other way around *"… such narratives become anecdotes by virtue of their telling, because they are deliberately sent out into the world"* (Michael 2012, 25). The author is affected by the incident/episode – and when put into circulation, anecdotes also come to give particular interpretations of this episode, which is shaped by the author and shapes the author. Michael (2012) uses anecdotalization to describe the "irritant" character of the anecdote, which affects the author – and at the same time describes how anecdotes come to mark events (transitions) in what the author – or more relevant – the researcher becomes.

Even though Michael has two different projects with these two texts, there are some similarities between Anecdotes (Michael 2012) and the article, "'What Are We Busy Doing?' Engaging the Idiot," (Michael 2011). In both texts, he describes different examples of these incidents or of this misbehavior, which encompasses different situations of involving lay people in interviews, focus group interviews, or public engagement events, where they are not acting as expected by the researchers but instead using the situation for something else or do something totally different. Either way, this misbehavior or irritant is characterized as "no data" or is difficult to grasp within the frame of the event and often is sanitized in the analytical or political work of the researchers. He here uses both the idiot (a term he borrows from Stengers (2005)) and the anecdotalization to pay attention to this misbehavior, and to question the very doing of science.

In the article (with the idiot) where the concern is misbehavior in public engagement events, this question comes close to the work in this dissertation in relation to describing the resistance in these workshops of citizen involvement. Michael (2011) here uses the idiot as a heuristic to inquire "what are we busy doing?" in relation to these ways to engage the public and enact citizenship. Here he argues that the idiot often gets to transform the event, but since the misbehavior overspills the frame, it doesn't get to transform or challenge the overall project.

Michael (2011; 2012) follows as mentioned the same line of thought as Verran (1999) by attending to disconcerting moments – or a misbehavior as Michael (2011) defines it – that is puzzling and/or disturbing. It is again about something – here the idiotic or an irritant – that disturbs but also transforms the researchers. There is

though some difference between Verran and Michael also in the way I have been affected by them and use them in the dissertation. There are some differences in the way they describe and work with these moments or incidents. Michael argues for paying attention to the irritant, idiot, and misbehavior, which I find to be a misbehavior that is very clearly *a misbehavior* in relation to the event where it happens. It is, in other words, very visible as misbehavior not only to Michael but also to other people and/or researchers. And even though Michael also writes about personal incidents, I think there still is a difference in the bodily tension and sensitivity of Verrans disconcertment[4] that is more difficult to grasp. With this sensitivity Verran's concept gives me a way to put my own troublesomeness and disconcertment into words. Michael's work has though affected me in other ways, which I will elucidate in the following section.

As with Verran, Michael's work has also affected me and taken part in the change of my research aim and questions. With the concept of the anecdote and Michael's descriptions of his own experience with doing social science, I found that he addressed very similar issues that I had been struggle with – among others, the sense of sitting back with "no data" – and how to handle that in constructive ways. In his work (both texts), he helped me in terms of working with the material to interrogate the very doing of co-design and citizen involvement. In chapter five – but also six and seven - I more concretely use the concept of the idiot to pay attention to the troublesomeness and the resistance – to describe how the resistance is coming into being but more importantly why the resistance becomes troublesome. Here I also make a more thorough presentation of the character – the idiot – based on the work of Stengers (2005). The idiot here both challenges what is taken for granted in these meetings of co-design and citizen involvement as well as raises the question of what we are busy doing, which is about challenging the overall frame of the project and ways of working.

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[4] A very relevant question here is how would people know that it was something they had to keep in the project - as I argue for - if they didn't experience the same troublesomeness as I did. But there is a difference in the "resistance" these moments contain, which I think everyone who was a part of this moment, must have noticed, and the troublesomeness, which the resistance was (to me), and at the same time was disconcerting e.g. because it was not really noticed by others, and subsequently not allowed to influence the project.

## Actor-network, black boxes, and translation

The writings of ANT have also been important for the work in this dissertation as a starting point for the change of my research aim. ANT maybe comes a bit "late" here as both Verran and Michael relate to and build upon the work of ANT scholars, Verran though also with a critique of this analytical approach[5]. Verran's and Michael's work have made it possible to see these small troublesome moments in a way that has made me keep and dwell with them as well as to formulate some constructive questions and topics. They have had a great process-related importance. ANT has to a greater extent been employed to affect me as well as point my attention to some particular issues (not to create misunderstandings; Verran but especially Michael has as well).

In relation to the small troublesome moments, I have struggled with what I found to be reduced or singular project stories, the "neutralizing" of the role of the design researchers, as well as – or including – blurring the questions of what the project was doing and whom it was for, with articulation of "putting the citizens at the center," "designing with the citizens," as well as "the citizens as the everyday innovators." These are discourses that created this story of "the good project," which is very difficult to argue with – or against. It was all different black boxing descriptions or stories that blocked my analytical work and writing. The writings of Latour and Law especially have helped me to open up these black boxing descriptions, to see interesting aspects in the empirical material in relation to these moments of resistance, participation, and controversies – which also include challenging what is being taken for granted in the meetings of co-design and citizen involvement.

In the following section, I will give a historical background of ANT followed by a description of some of the central concepts of ANT, which is the principle of symmetry (generalized symmetry) including the focus on non-humans, translations, and word scripting (inscripting/descripting). I here focus on these concepts that are being used in my analytical work especially in chapters five, six, and seven of these small troublesome moments, and the resistance and participation including the

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[5] Although the analytical approach works with a principle of general symmetry of using the same language for all actors and networks, Verran (1999) still argues that there is to some extent taking sides when it is the "great and powerful" actor's work that is described by the ANT scholars.

presence of non-human actors in the co-design meetings, where the resistance took place.

ANT was introduced by Latour, Callon, Akrich, and Law and it followed from "laboratory studies" done in the 1970s initiated by Latour and Woolgar (Latour and Woolgar 1986). In these studies, Latour and Woolgar showed how scientific knowledge was being made. They showed how the production of knowledge was not just a question of test results (the right facts) but also of social circumstances. What became central here was the unfinished knowledge and the presence of controversies – elements of the production of scientific facts that weren't part of the final result or output of the laboratory. Here the notion of a black box was introduced to describe how scientific facts are handled. The word black box is here described by Latour as *"used by cyberneticians whenever a piece of machinery or a set of commands is too complex. In its place, they draw a little box about which they need to know nothing but its input and output"* (Latour 1987, 2–3). In other words, the black box is described as something that covers the process between the input and the output or what happens in the laboratory. The scientific fact – that survives the laboratories – is a black box that is (almost) closed and no longer up for negotiation. When a scientist or actor in general wants to build a network, he/she *"… tries to make these black boxes containing the discussions she/he wants to leave out and instead creates truisms that actors start to take for granted"* (Bruun Jensen, et al. 2007, 82–83).

These studies of the scientific knowledge production were attempts at opening up the black boxes of scientific knowledge, which was/is otherwise presented as these closed facts. What the studies showed, and that is also what ANT continued to be occupied with, was how researchers were creating networks of alliances to support their results, which could then be presented as these scientific facts, which were not negotiable.

ANT was developed as a response to science but also sociology and the way researchers within these research fields used either nature or society as the cause for their findings. What the ANT scholars instead describe is how science is constructing "nature" like sociology is constructing "society." Nature is not just out there, but is shaped through the work of the researchers. The same goes for gender, class etc., which are predetermined phenomena made up by sociologists and not something out there to be found. Latour also describes this in his more recent book of an

introduction to ANT, Reassembling the Social (2007), as the first source of uncertainty. What he writes is that there is no group only group formations. What he means is that researchers themselves make groups while studying them; the researchers are themselves part of the group formation, yet there are no groups without ANT researchers who make or remake them (Latour 2007). When they are creating knowledge, they are at the same time building worlds.

This is a reaction against the idea of one great scientist. An actor-network analysis shows how bringing these ideas or research findings out into the world is based on the work of building networks or creating alliances and not just a "great discovery" as is often explained. The ANT scholars' argument is that these research objects are not just out there waiting to be found but they are instead performed by the researchers. With the ANT scholars' introduction to knowledge as constructed and performed and the work of black boxes, they also challenge what is otherwise taken for granted or taken as a "natural" thing.

What I have briefly introduced above – the construction or constitution of knowledge including the performativity aspect as well as the use of the word black box – are some of the central elements of ANT. In the following section, I will continue with the other concepts.

**Generalized symmetry including the focus on non-humans**

ANT scholars argue for what they call general symmetry. Instead of finding the answers solely in social relations like scholars within SSK (Bruun Jensen, et al. 2007), they argue that non-human actors should also be taken into account. But not just taken into account, it is, as Callon (1986) describes in the introduction to his article, important to use the same language or use of words when they move between the technical and the social. Latour also describes, in the previously mentioned book, "Reassembling the Social" (2007) the following:

> …*what is new is that objects are suddenly highlighted not only as being full-blown actors, but also as what explains the contrasted landscape we started with, the overarching powers of society, the huge asymmetries, the crushing exercise of power. This is the surprise from which sociologists of associations wish to start instead of considering, as do most of their colleagues, that the question is obviously closed and that objects do nothing, at least nothing*

*comparable or even connectable to human social action, and that is they can*
*sometimes 'express' power relations, 'symbolize' social hierarchies,*
*'reinforce' social inequalities, 'transport' social power, 'objectify' inequality,*
*and 'reify' gender relations, they cannot be at the origin of social activity.*
(Latour 2007, 72)

Besides describing how objects have agency, this is also a message to sociologists that do not describe these objects on equal terms with the human actors but rather as the causes or backdrops for human action. Latour here gives an example of how it is not the remote control that makes the coach potato, but that it rather allows the human being to be a coach potato. In other words, the object here is not the cause for some human action but the shaping of the coach potato happens in a relation between the human and the non-human actor in this situation (Latour 2007, 71–72).

**Translation**

Translation is the other concept I will introduce here as a central element in ANT. Latour (1999) describes in his chapter, "On recalling ANT," how translation plays an important role in understanding the notion of network. The network in ANT should not just be seen as transportation of information among different actors. Here he mentions the introduction of the WWW with the understanding of "unmediated access of information" as one of the resources to misunderstanding the term. What the ANT scholars mean with the use of network is not just a transportation but rather a translation or transformation. The actor's work of creating new alliances is not just a question of being linked to each other but includes these translations or transformations, in which heterogeneous actors become homogenous and aligned. Each time a translation succeeds, an actor can act upon or has made himself/herself a spokesperson for a greater number of actors. In this way, scientists or researchers create alliances and support for their work by "translating" more people into their network (Latour 1987).

Callon (1986) thoroughly describes this work of translation in his article, "Some elements of a sociology of translation: domestication of the scallops and the fishermen of St Brieuc Bay," in which he follows three marine biologists in their project of cultivating scallop larvae in St. Brieuc Bay on the French northwest coast to prevent extermination of scallops. In this article, Callon calls what is known as ANT,

the "sociology of translation" and describes four steps of translation. It is four strategies for the marine biologist to get the other actors, the fishermen, the scallops of St. Brieuc, and their research colleagues aligned with the question, does *pecten maximus* (the scallop species) attach itself?

The first step is problematization, which has to do with making yourself indispensable. It is the marine biologist who defines the problem and expresses how it is relevant to the actors. At the same time, the marine biologist puts himself at the obligatory passage point (OPP). OPP is the problem of "whether pecten maximus attaches itself?" which is made important to all the actors to solve their problems.

The next step is called Interessement and refers to the French use of the word of coming in-between. The marine biologists want to create alliances and lock them to their project; this includes coming between potential actors who can threaten the alliances. Callon (1986) furthermore describes how interessement leads to enrollment, which is to define and coordinate roles. The work is to identify which actors are not enrolled yet, what these actors want, as well as who or what these actors are associated with (Callon 1986, 211). The step of interessement therefore also contains a multilateral group of tricks (seduction), negotiations, and trials of strengths or violence to get actors enrolled. The enrollment succeeds when the Interessement makes the definition and coordination of roles possible and the actors accept it (Callon 1986).

The third step is enrollment. Enrollment is about the definition and coordination of roles. It refers to a strategy of defining a set of roles and at the same time ascribing them to the different actors, and most importantly making these actors accept the roles. The enrollment therefore entails tricks, negotiations, and trials of strength that make this defining and ascribing of roles possible.

The last step of translation is the mobilizing of alliances. Callon (1986) writes that to mobilize means to make entities mobile and refers to the movement or displacement through transformations to a situation in which the translating actors can make themselves spokespersons. In his analysis of the three researchers' work, he stresses how the project is a meeting of spokespersons for the constituencies of the local fishermen, the scallops in St Brieuc Bay, and the researchers (marine biologists). Spokesmen means actors who speak on behave of others, either human or non-human actors.

The question of spokespersons also includes whether these spokespersons are representative, which means whether the constitutions are aligned. Callon (1986) defines this as a practical and not theoretical question. The spokespersons are only representative when the constitutions are aligned or they will defect, which was what happened in the story of the marine biologists. The fishermen got impatient with the research and went to fish for scallops, which meant the (researcher's) project did not succeed. Callon here points to the close relation between translation and betrayal – the translation turns into betrayal when the constituencies defect.

In chapter six, I use the steps of translation and specifically interessement as well as mobilization in describing how the idiot put questions on participation in co-design and participatory design that are otherwise described as direct and meaningful in co-design.

**Scripting / describing**

In relation to translation, there are the words scripting and describing. Inscription means to translate scientific results into material form (e.g. text), which is what the researcher in the laboratory is busy with. Madeleine Akrich (1992) also uses the term in relation to the study of technological objects. Here she describes how the designer inscribes technical objects with projected use and/or users and defines the space of action, interests, goals, etc. Also how the "real" use of the technology is employed is what she calls a de-scripting of the object. She describes here how to study technical objects to go beyond a single point of view:

> … *if we are interested in technical objects and not in chimera, we cannot be satisfied methodologically with the designer's or user's point of view alone. Instead we have to go back and forth continually between the designer and the user, between the designer's projected user and the real user, between the world inscribed in the object and the world described by its displacement.* (Akrich 1992, 208–209)

The word chimera refers to a technical object that doesn't manage to "meet" users or in other words "*no actors will come forward to play the roles envisaged by the designer*" (Akrich 1992, 208). This points to what I have mentioned earlier with the say-do problem, when reporting from co-design workshops and other

explorations. What is often written is the design researcher's intended use of the design material and artifacts in these encounters – and not how they are being used in the actual meeting among the different partakers. The focus – and with that the description – stays with the design researchers' pre-scripting of the design material and artifacts. At the same time, the analytical work of de-scripting the design material and artifacts can make visible the agenda of the design researcher or the project inscribed to them – and how these actors can determine or are intended to determine the collaboration.

ANT has been at the center of much discussion since it was introduced including the critique of feminist scholars[6]. This claims that ANT only sees or writes the account of those who are visible – and in that sense commits to telling the story of the powerful and the majority (Asdal, et al. 2001). This critique has been put forward in the work of Susan Leigh Star (1990) and Verran (1999), among other scholars, where what is called a strong focus on "war" is being problematized as well.
In general, the writings of ANT are employed in this dissertation – though especially in chapters five and six – to "see" what I have "been part of" and to challenge what is otherwise taken for granted. In chapter five, it is in the description of how the resistance is coming into being, what is a resistance against, as well as why the resistance becomes troublesome. In chapter six, it is more in relation to what the "idiot" makes visible in relation to participation in co-design and participatory design – and how the normative description of participation is here challenged. It is not about discovery or revealing the (another) truth about these moments, but rather opening up descriptions and "seeing" particular aspects in the empirical material. In other words, it means to pay attention also to the non-human actors; to the work of translation including interessement, enrollment, and mobilization in the very doing of co-design; as well as the inscription and description especially of the project's concepts, but also of design material and artifacts in relation to these meetings of co-design and citizen involvement, or in short "who is doing what to whom here? (cf. Suchman 2002).

To sum up, especially Verran (1999) and Michael (2011; 2012) have being important for first of all the change I have made in what kind of PhD dissertation I was writing,

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[6] Law, Latour and Callon among others address these discussions and the critique in the book, Actor Network Theory and after (Law and Hassard 1999).

which most importantly included a change of the research aim and questions. They made me in different ways turn my attention to these small troublesome moments – or disconcerting moments in general - as the empirical material for this dissertation, which was moments that affected me and kept haunting me – as moments or incidents that needed to be told. Verran has especially influenced me in terms of paying attention to my own bodily tensions (and reactions) as well as to describe these moments in ways that could keep the differences and not explain the e.g. resistance away, but also to be comfortable with the "small" moments as something that could "still" make an important contribution to the greater discussion of the project as well as co-design and participatory design in general. Here I otherwise have raised questions of the truth – and whether I didn't need to tell the whole story of the project. I will return to the question of the "whole story" in the second part of this chapter in relation to the concept of partial connections. In relation to the question of truth, I follow scholars like Verran, Michael, and others within STS of how truth is performative and created in the relations. The truths in these moments lie in the how it is enacted or made by everyone involved including me - as well as how what is the truth also shapes everyone involved.

Verran (1999) and Michael (2011; 2012) are both related and have also contributed to the work of ANT. Here, I have presented a part of ANT and I have done it with focus on what has been important for the analytical work in this dissertation. Some of the perceptions and concepts have worked more as background knowledge while some of the concepts I have applied more specifically in the analysis, especially in chapter five and six. Lastly, both the work of Verran (1999) and Michael (2011; 2012) as well as the writings within ANT have affected me to write accounts with focus on: opening descriptions of what is coming into being, to keep the differences, to "see" non-human actors as "equally" important, and with these descriptions try to challenge what is otherwise taken for granted.


## What is it – where is it?

The other main problem the dissertation is concerned with is how to follow and describe something that is very difficult to get a grip on. This concern follows from the last period in the project, when the project tried to establish two living labs, where I took part in one of them. I thought I could write about it as a defined and maybe as a

definite object. Though I continually attempted to get grip on an object to follow, it rebounded in my writing. At the same time I realized that in writings about living labs (e.g. Björgvinsson, et al. 2010; Binder, et al. 2011a; Binder, et al. 2011b; Björgvinsson, et al. 2012) there were few if any concrete descriptions of what living labs are in practice as a specific setting for doing co-design. Despite the name, the living lab I was part of (and probably more generally) only very loosely resemble laboratories – living labs are less circumscribed both in terms of what they are and where they are. So, I suspected that my difficulties in writing clearly and definitely about the living lab were not only down to personal shortcomings, but had to do with the nature of the object itself, and that it consequently is necessary, when we talk about living labs in co-design, to unpack the complexities of the 'what' and 'where' of living labs. The main questions are therefore what is a living lab (and what is coming into being in the living lab), and where it is with a concern for not prematurely black-boxing it into a defined and definite object.

The problems of writing were also heavily influenced by my experience with being part of the living lab. In the following section, I will elucidate the different circumstances that created the ontological questions of what the object is and where it is. Firstly, I will describe what became the problem in the period of being involved in the living lab. Secondly, I will describe how it turned into these ontological questions of what it is and where it is in an attempt at describing what came into being in this period called a living lab[7].

I was one of the main design researchers in a living lab that took place in a big urban park (Valbyparken) in the area of Copenhagen, as a series of bi-weekly meetings lasting three hours each. The main activity was exercise and outdoor games mainly facilitated by the sports instructor (the private partner), who was made a central figure in this living lab. These exercise activities were mixed with different small events or other kinds of activities. Activities involved different students from the research institutes, taking part in some meetings to try out their experiments, sporadic visits from the local health center regarding a potential collaboration, a visit from an evaluator of the project, visits from a film team making a film about research at ITU, activities with smartphones and later a smartphone application developed for

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[7] I have stayed with the definition of this period as a living lab even though I still question what it is – and what is being created and/or performed in the living lab. It was a term that was shared among the different actors taking part here – there were though different interpretations of what a living lab is.

the living lab, activities with a small art bureau creating different temporary physical manifestations for the meetings in the park (bench, game tools, a mark for the meeting place), and a visit from other elderlies – who were brought to the park by their activity center but were not physically capable of taking part in the exercise activities.

Even though many of these activities and events were related to the outdoor exercise activities, they also created a picture of these meetings to be showcased for different stakeholders. At the same time, these different activities such as the smartphone app, students' experiments, etc. also created a picture of an outdoor exercise activity being inflated (to be more than just an outdoor exercise activity). These circumstances are probably often how it is in these projects with many different agendas and when the aim is to create something that continues and does not end when the project ends. But, it still made me raise questions during the time in the park of what the living lab is. The confusing set of activities and agendas together with the main activity of "just" playing a lot of outdoor games in different ways defined these meetings in the park, but it also blurred the picture of what was coming into being.

The design researchers wanted to try out a new, radical form of citizen involvement and co-design in general, where citizens along with the municipality and the private partner continued this on their own especially after the project was completed. The work was described as infrastructuring, co-production, and design after design as different strategies for the work. It was inspired by recent literature within co-design and participatory design (Björgvinsson, et al. 2010; Binder, et al. 2011), which argued for rethinking co-design and participatory design to go from design for "use before use" to instead "design after design" through infrastructuring.

"The living lab," as a methodology together with these different "strategies" was unknown ground to us co-designers. It created uncertainty and vagueness of what we were doing. It raised questions of what we were facilitating – a sports instructor's outdoor exercise activity for senior citizens, meetings among different citizens, and/or collaboration between private and public organizations – and with what aim? Was it to create an outdoor exercise activity, a new service for the municipality, an infrastructure, or just communities of senior citizens, etc.? What were our tools, techniques, and roles/responsibility? The lack of known design materials, artifacts, roles, and responsibilities made me also question whether we were more a kind of social workers (a reduced version).

The multiple activities, their divergence, and the agendas together with being on unknown ground also created problems afterwards in the analytical work. Topologically, it was difficult to frame it as something. I found it unmanageable and still difficult to see or identify what came into being. It was unmanageable because a lot of the project's efforts were not necessarily at a certain time or place, such as in the case of the workshops. This made it difficult to figure out what I was "following" in the descriptive and analytical work.

The main things going on in these encounters were sports activities and they were simple and unproblematic. At the same time, a lot of the drama took place outside or in between these encounters among the project group and the partners. I thought it could be described with the strategies of infrastructuring and the work of designing for "design after design," but it was also a lot of other things – and the others who took part (our partners) defined it in different ways. In our attempts of trying a new, radical way of involvement, we – the design researchers – had also created a situation in which both "what" was being produced but also "how" it was being produced were defined in different ways by the different partakers. So, my attempts at describing it as infrastructuring and "design after design" turned into several failed attempts among other trials, a paper describing it as "Sustainable infrastructures for ad hoc communities" (Malmborg and Yndigegn 2013). At the time of writing the article (I can say this in retrospect), I wasn't sure if it was sustainable infrastructures for ad hoc communities that were done in the living lab. But I couldn't say that it wasn't.

However, there was something that didn't fit or didn't cohere in my attempt at ordering it as infrastructuring, design after design, and/or a design of ad hoc communities. It was a violent act that would reduce the messiness and complexities into a singular telling. Insisting on defining it through the concepts of co-design made it a clean and virtual project that among other concerns didn't take the other partners' definitions into account.

To sum up, what became the concern for me here was to see what it was and where it was while at the same time being heavily influenced by these different predetermined definitions and descriptions – a sense that resonates with the following description from Riles:

*One might summarize this project as an exercise in finding a vantage point from which to approach what it [was] too familiar to apprehend with ease. While conducting fieldwork and later writing this book, I often thought of a deceptively simple exercise in graphic design I once was asked to perform in an art class at primary school. The teacher piled a jumble of ordinary stools on the table and asked us to draw not the shape of this mundane object but the shape generated by the spaces between the stools – to see the other figure that was in front of us. My frustration at my inability to see what was in front of me that day was replicated numerous times in the field.* (Riles 2000, 22)

Riles here put words to my struggles with what was too familiar – but at the same time couldn't figure out how to grasp and describe. On one hand, I could actually see what it was: I could see the living lab, the attempts at infrastructuring, and/or the design after design (and therefore made several attempts at ordering in accordance with these concepts). On the other hand, I couldn't see it at all. It could also "just" be people who met in the park to play different games together initiated by the project – and where the citizens decided to continue to meet after the project ended. I felt as if I saw it and at the same time "saw through" it, to cite Verran (1999, 140).

## Multiple, fluid, and elusive

It was different theoretical work situated within STS (Law 1994; Law and Hassard 1999; Verran 1999; Mol 2002; Law 2004; Latour 2007; Michael 2011), especially the writings of Law (2004) in the book, "After methods – mess in social science research," which helped to articulate and address the question of "what it was and where it was." In other words, it was scholars and writings overlapping with the theoretical work and concepts I described in the previous part in relation to the small troublesome moments. Here it was, though with a special attention to how objects are performed and how to describe objects as multiple, fluid, and/or elusive, which helped me in characterizing the problems I was struggling with, including how to go about what I found difficult to get a grip on i.e. messiness and complexities of what was being enacted in the living lab. The following part of the chapter therefore contains a description of how objects are coming into being as multiples but also how they can be fluid as well as elusive, which is mainly based on the work of Law.

**After Methods**

The main resource is, as mentioned, the work of Law in his book, "After Method," in which he also draws on fellow STS scholars' work. In this book, Law's project is to describe what he calls a modest sociology, in which he explores how methods can deal with mess. "After Method" shouldn't necessarily be understood as a research approach without a method but his intention is the following:

> … *to broaden method, to subvert it, but also to remake it. I would like to divest concern with method of its inheritance of hygiene. I want to move from the moralist idea that if only you do your methods properly you will lead a healthy research life – the idea that you will discover specific truths about which all reasonable people can at least temporarily agree.* (Law 2004, 9)

He continues after this quote to describe how that means to go away from singularity and ideas of how there is a limited set of processes, commitment to a particular politic, or that your work only is politically relevant if you attend to a certain determinate phenomena of e.g. gender, class, etc. (Law 2004, 9). Law argues that what we need to do is the following:

> … *unmake many of our methodological habits, including: the desire for certainty; the expectation that we can usually arrive at more or less stable conclusions about the way things really are; the belief that as social scientists we have special insights that allow us to see farther than others into certain parts of social reality; and the expectation of generality that are wrapped up in what is often called 'universalism.' But, first of all we need to unmake our desire and expectation for security.* (Law 2004, 9)

The first attempt to avoid universalism as well as the expectation for certainty or security is with the possibility of multiple realities being enacted. In the following section, I will describe this approach, which became a way for me to open up singular project stories and "the clean and virtual co-design project."

**Multiplicity**

Multiplicity is the first part Law describes of his modest sociology and this attempt of unmaking our methodological habits including the expectation of certainty. Here he

draws on the work of Annemarie Mol (2002). She was one of the first to introduce the possibility of multiple objects including describing how an object is enacted in different sites and different practices. As Law (2004) describes, Mol builds on the work of Latour and Woolgar (their laboratory studies) but: *"then shifts us in two ways. She moves from representations to objects, and as she does so, she also does away with singularity. In-hereness and out-thereness[8] can be, and indeed-usually are, multiple"* (Law 2004, 57).

In her work, Mol (2002) follows how the ordinary disease "atherosclerosis" is enacted in different places and argues that it cannot exist independent of the practices where it is articulated and manipulated. She emphasizes how the disease is not something you have but something you do (Bruun Jensen, et al. 2007). With this emphasize on how objects change among these different sites and practices, Mol follows a performative approach, in which things are not just "out there" to be observed but are being enacted. But, Mol turns away from the word performance and instead uses the word enactment with the argument that enactment has *"… no references, precisely because I would like you to read it in as fresh a way as possible. In practice, objects are enacted."* (Mol 2002, 43). She continues with reference to what I described above with the quote from Law, namely how it builds upon but also it turns away from construction. *"Talking about enactment of objects builds on and is a shift away from another way of talking about objects, one in which the term construction has a prominent place"* (Mol 2002, 43). To describe objects as enacted instead of constructed is a way for Mol to avoid what is often part of the construction stories, namely that objects grow up and become stabilized. The use of enactment is a way to avoid this closure:

> *It does not simply grant objects a contested and accidental history (that they acquired a while ago, with the notion of, and the stories about their*

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[8] A few words about Law's definition of in-hereness and out-thereness and presence and absence. In-hereness refers to whatever is made present such as representations, whereas out-thereness refers to what is made absent. Absence comes in two forms. The first is manifest absence, which is what is recognized as relevant or correlates with presence - presence is incomplete and depends on what is manifest absent. The second is absence that is not made manifest or also referred to as Otherness, which can take a variety of forms. Law here mentions routines, insignificance, and repression as some of the possibilities. Otherness describes what disappears even though presence still depends on it. It can be a routine that is Othered or hidden as it is not found interesting. The notion of Othered has similarities with the term black-boxing (Law 2004).

*construction) but gives them a complex present, too, a present in which their identities are fragile and may differ between sites.* (Mol 2002, 43)

And she ends this sequence with, *"If an object is real this is because it is part of a practice. It is a reality enacted* (Mol 2002, 44).*"*

**Partial connections**

The enactment of multiple realities should not be misinterpreted as perspectivalism. To Mol, differences are differences among different practices and sites i.e. differences among different worlds. Perspectivalism is instead differences among different perspectives in the same world. With this approach, it is also possible to get a picture of the whole world if you just gather enough perspectives. Latour (Latour and Hermant 2006; Latour 2007) has also described this difference with the use of the concepts Panopticon and Oligopticon. Panopticon describes the possibility to have a total view. Here you can "stand" in the same place overlooking the "whole" world through different perspectives. Oligopticon is the opposite of Panopticon and means to see or make something visible – and to do that well. But, the cost of making something visible is always to also make something invisible (Latour 2007, 181–188).

What Latour describes with Oligopticon resonates with the term partial connection first introduced by Donna Haraway and later by Marilyn Strathern (Law 2004, 64) and refers to being part or partially connected with that which you study. Partial connections is Haraway's response and a critique of "God's eye view" in scientific research as well as what she calls "knowledge from nowhere," i.e. knowledge that supposes to be detached or emerging from a "neutral" position. At the same time "partial connections," "multiple worlds," and Oligopticon in different ways are critiques of the belief in an ideal world, where all indicators add up and fit together. Multiple worlds are instead multiple worlds that overlap, conflict, and are partially connected. There is not one whole but instead multiple possible truths (Law 2004, 52).

In this relation, Mol uses the phrase *"More than one - less than many"* (Mol 2002, 55). It refers to this connection among the multiple realities. It emphasizes a difference from singularity and relativism – that there is not just one. But, it is also different from pluralism in that it is not an endless number of fragmented worlds. These worlds actually hang together. This means that these different worlds are not

the same and are not entirely separated, but partially connected. Partial connections can be between different worlds or different people but it can also be partial connections within the same person, which makes it a bit more complicated (Law 2004, 64). Partial connections both are part of what you study as a researcher but also what you "have a part in." In other words, it means that the writer also takes part in shaping the world she is studying and she does that with her already existing knowledge, interest, experiences, and stakes in the object of study.

Mol's work, and especially how it is described and used by Law, has opened my writings to the possibility of multiple worlds. The enactment of different realities or possible truths has made me able to go beyond non-constructive discussions of right or wrong – or successful or not. Both Mol's and Law's work addressed something central for my attempts at describing what was coming into being in the living lab. It was both that objects were enacted in different practices and how it was a continual process. But also that which was coming into being was not stabilized and completed, but remained open and negotiable.

Furthermore, the terms Oligopticon and partial connections have been central to all my work to understand how I was part of what I saw and made visible, and how striving to provide a total view is unrealistic and even impossible. This has been important in my change from being heavily involved in the project and afterwards, when trying to make a retrospective reflection of my experiences. I often found myself trying to stand "outside" or distancing myself from what I had been part of; these were attempts that were never really possible and created feelings of limiting the description unnecessarily. But, it has also given me a way "to see" and make the design researcher's part in the co-design meetings visible, which otherwise is often made neutral or not reflected upon, a critique of the participatory design researchers, which Helen Karasti (2010, 89) has expressed by calling the participatory design researcher the best kept secret.

Finally, the work of Mol (2002) and Law (2004), here addresses some conflicts I had with a more traditional ANT analysis. Even though more classic ANT has inspired me, I found that an ANT analysis did not resonate with the complexities and messiness of the living lab, where I wasn't sure what I was following. I will continue with this concern in the next part of this chapter about the fluid and elusive.

## Shape-changing and name-changing

This also means that I didn't stay with the multiple when following the work of Law but had to turn to descriptions of objects as fluid as well as elusive in an attempt to answer my own ontological questions of what it is and where it is. I struggled among other things with the problems of plans, aims, and names that changed between different practices but also over time, together with changes of "what we were doing" and "how we were doing it," which also was defined differently in different practices, also by the same actors. I though found resonance with the problems in the following description by Law of the study he did with Vicky Singleton on alcoholic liver disease:

> *We were involved – and participating – in slippage. But what should we think about this? As I have just noted, we gradually came to think that this was not simply a sign of a shoddy method, a failure to get a grip on something defined. Instead, we slowly came to believe that we were dealing with an object that wasn't fixed, an object that moved and slipped between different practices in different sites. This was an object that, as it moved and slipped, also changed its shape. It was a shape-changing object that, even more misleadingly, also changed its name. It was an object whose slippery shape-changing also reflected what the managers and other participants took, perhaps correctly, to be an expression of organizational dislocation, fragmentation, and disorganization. So its relevant context out there changed too.* (Law 2004, 79)

This quote is, as mentioned, from Law's description of a study of alcoholic liver disease, made along with Singleton. He describes how this study brought them to different sites: the textbook in the office of the consultant gastroenterologist, the doctor (a consultant gastroenterologist) in his office, a ward nurse (down the corridor from the doctor), and the fourth site, which is a few miles from the hospital: a general practitioner in his office. These different sites and practices enact different versions of alcoholic liver disease (the object) (Law 2004, 70–74). But, as Law also describes in the quote above, in their study, the object and its context were continually moving about. The object wasn't fixed, but it easily changed shape and name. Sometimes the object of the conversation they had with the different practitioners was diagnosis and treatment of alcoholic liver disease; sometimes it was liver disease; sometimes it was

alcohol abuse or the overall quality of life. Again, it was an object that changed shape; it changed name and it changed relevant context as well.

Law refers to this as a fluid object inspired by the study of Marianne De Laet and Annemarie Mol (2000) of a bush pump, which can be defined as something that both moves between sites and/or practices, but as it does that it also changes shape. The bush pump is a fluid technology (Law 2004). It is created by an engineer as a kit and brought out into different villages in Zimbabwe. Here it lives its own life – it changes shape in terms of how it is assembled but also repaired when it breaks differently in the local setting by the people of the different villages. De Laet and Mol (2000) describe how the success of this technology lies in its fluidity.

What Law does here is to both take the description of multiple objects further by also including these indefinite objects of the Zimbabwe bush pump as well as the alcoholic liver disease. At the same time, he raises the question of how to handle this fluidity. In the case of the bush pump, the fluidity is defined as part of its success. But, when it comes to the alcoholic liver disease, it seems to be different. Law (2004) points to the indefiniteness as something that is both a methodological problem as well as a problem in "real" life in terms of disorganization in the work with and treatment of the disease. He raises the question of whether the methodological difficulty is a sign of difficulties in the "real" world, and whether this suggests that objects and their contexts are best when they are fixed and definite. His answer is that this might be so in the case of the alcoholic liver disease but at the same time uses the story of the Zimbabwe bush pump and the work of de Laet and Mol (2000) to remind us to be cautious.

As described above, Law's description of objects aren't fixed, but it easily changes shape and names and resonates with my struggles of different practices enacting different realities – and how it was difficult to get grip on one fixed object. What was coming into being in the park were different multiple objects, which were indefinite and not fixed. I have used Law's concepts and descriptions here of the fluid to characterize – but also to be able to describe – what was coming into being in the living lab. "Seeing" objects not only as multiple but also as fluid made space for the shape-changing, which especially is relevant in chapter nine, where I describe the project's attempt at designing "new technology," which both takes shape as e.g. smartphones, courses, a potential infrastructure, but also as a fun activity and my PhD

project – and changed from being different project concepts, just smartphones as well as a smartphone application. In chapter eleven, I also bring up Law's question of whether the methodological difficulties are signs of difficulties in the "real" world, with reference to the fluid and especially the elusive in relation to these project collaborations.

## The elusive

Here I will continue with what Law calls the non-coherent in-here and out-there. This refers to something elusive – something that can't be put into words. To describe the elusive, Law uses the term allegory. Allegory is *"… the art of meaning something other and more than what is being said"* (Law 2004, 88). To work allegorically can mean that you

> *… are moving the boundary between what is manifest and what is Othered around. Official versions of the manifest, the literal accounts offered by experts, are being doubted. Parts of what is Othered in those versions is being brought into view, made real.*

And he continues:

> *And this is what allegory always does. It uses what is present as a resource to mess about with absence. It makes manifest what is otherwise invisible. It extends the fields of visibility, and crafts new realities out-there. And at least sometimes, it also does something that is even more artful. This is because it makes space for ambivalence and ambiguity. In allegory, the realities made manifest do not necessarily have to fit together.* (Law 2004, 90)

This mention of expert in relation to allegory is based on writings of the STS scholar Brian Wynne, who has written about the lack of trust in experts. The lack of trust means that what the experts make present are being doubted, and what is otherwise Othered by the experts, is made visible. What is Othered is being made manifest in allegorical work. Allegory makes space for ambivalence and ambiguity – and *"the art of allegory is to hold two or more things together that do not necessarily cohere"* (Law 2004, 90). Here Law also describes the inquiry of a train collision, which turns out to probably be caused by the use a safety device "in the wrong way" though used intentionally this way by many of the drivers as a way to increase safety.

As Law describes this, non-coherence or local adaption is maybe what holds the (train) system together. Law here describes why allegory methods are needed:

> *Singularities are not only sought, but they are normatively enacted. A good reality is one that is centrally co-ordinated. Non-coherent realities such as bush-pumps, health screening programmes, or decisions to cancel aircraft are poorly appreciated – they look like mistakes. This is why we also need allegorical methods.* (Law 2004, 100)

What Law introduces and suggests with the word allegory is to be sensitive to non-coherence and to realities that do not fit. On one hand, he describes how coherence would have been preferred in the work of treating alcoholic liver disease but how we would miss the point if we tried to fit the non-coherent, ambivalence, and ambiguity into a singular telling. What he instead encourages is an allegorical attitude that *"softens and plays with the boundaries between what is Othered and what is made manifest."* (Law 2004, 90)

Law goes beyond the description of multiple and fluid objects in his use of the word allegory to try to describe non-coherence, ambiguity, and ambivalence. The word is a way to discover (Law uses this term still with a performative approach) the elusive – and that which is difficult to put into words.

One thing I have missed in the description of the shape-changing, name-changing objects that also change context is the question of when, or the question of temporary. When Law and Singleton describe alcoholic liver disease, they study practices of treatment taking place or that take place over time. There was some kind of "routine" or ongoing in these practices. In the living lab, we started something we've never tried before; we had a history of methods, etc., but this way of working was new in many ways. At the same time, it was very temporary – it was not a one-time incident as a train collision – but there was not a repeating practice as such. It was elusive also as something new and as something that couldn't be characterized as a continued practice. Here I have struggled with on the one hand blaming myself for not being able to see that it is not that different from Law etc. as objects are constantly enacted. But on the other hand, I acknowledge taking this feeling of something that still does not fit with these descriptions by Law (2004) of the multiple, fluid, and elusive serious. Even though I can't come any closer to it here, it might be where the

key to my struggles lies. It could point to the reason why the "use" of moments comes to be important for my accounts.

What I have described in this part of the chapter is a greater part but not the whole description of Law's project of defining a modest sociology. But Law's work with the multiple, fluid and elusive has helped me in my struggles of how to describe what is taking place in the living lab. On one hand the complexities of what took place in the living lab couldn't be described in a singular story of how the project was a success – even though it looked like one by the fact that the citizens continued on their own after the project ended (one of the aims of the living lab), which was how it was otherwise described by the project group. At the same time, it couldn't be described as a mistake either – at least not as reduced to that.

But being able to also attend to and allow for the indefinite, not-fixed, non-coherent, ambiguous and ambivalent has helped me to describe what was taking place in the living lab – how did a living lab play out in practices – which is what is central for chapters eight, nine and ten. In these chapters, I also use these different ways of characterizing objects – or what is being performed to be attentive to as well as accommodate these uncertain, non-coherent, and conflicting objects and practices – as well as to make a connection between them.

In this chapter, I have presented the main parts of the theories – scholars and writings – that have played a role in my work with transforming personal incidents and frustrations into articulated research aims and questions. The main part of the theory presented here together with additional theoretical components, which will be described and elucidated in relation to the different chapters where they are used, will be employed in the dissertation to point my attention to specific or interesting aspects in my empirical material. In the following chapter, I will describe and unfold the empirical material – the gathering and selection - as well as how I have worked with this material analytically.

# 4: Disconcerting moments – materials and roles

In this chapter, I will describe the empirical material with focus on how it was gathered and selected – as well as what analytical approach and aim the material was employed. This dissertation is an empirical based dissertation but it has not been the intention to write an ethnography of a user-driven innovation project. It is rather a retrospective reflection of my experience with taking part and being heavily involved as participant in this user-driven innovation project. This has been done through a series of selected "moments" from the project and beyond, which in various ways is significant for what is happening in the project – and how the project is enacted.

This reflective approach, my research aim, questions, my material, as well as the analytical aim and approach, were all things that emerged from the participation in the project – over time but mainly as something that manifested themselves after the project ended. When I entered the project as a co-designer and PhD student, I had another research aim during my participation in the project. The focus was here on everyday innovations among elderlies, how to "make space" for everyday innovation in a co-design process, as well as how to extend the dialogue between co-design meetings as a way to improve the participation for the people involved – the last was imagined to be done by digital technology.

There were mainly two things that took part in determining this change of research aim and question – as well as the gathering of material and the analytical method. First of all, I couldn't write what I had intended to write – I had no material to be able to "answer" my initial questions. Second, there were these disconcerting moments (cf. Verran 1999) that had affected me and kept "haunting" me whenever I was trying to employ the material – notes and video recordings from my participation, and to write "anything" – i.e. whenever I tried to write a PhD dissertation. In other words, (or with Michael's (2012) words) it was personal incidents that took place as part of my work in this project that in different ways affected me and came to mark a transition – and where the descriptive and analytical work with these moments transformed me as a researcher and my becoming as such. I write the last with a

reference to Michael (2012) and his work with Anecdote, which became important to me to understand this possibility to transform personal incidents and what could be perceived as personal shortcomings into contributions that could question the very doing of research i.e. here co-design and participatory design. It is this work, I will describe and elucidate in the following.

**Research aims**

First, I will repeat my research aim that structure the dissertation:

1) The first research focus is on resistance as part of the co-design and citizen involvement. The aim is to describe and analyze how resistance is performed in the practice of the meetings between citizens and the project, and how resistance is handled in the project, or not handled. The intention is to describe and reflect upon something – resistance (against the co-design project) – that is rarely described or discussed within co-design and participatory design despite the strong focus on differences and controversies when bringing different people together[9].

2) The second research focus is on the practice in a living lab and how that evolved over a longer period and as relations among design researchers, private partners, citizens, partners from the public, technology, and multiple agendas. The aim is to describe and reflect upon what is being performed in the living lab, as this rather new practice within co-design and participatory design of which there lack empirical descriptions (Björgvinsson, et al. 2010; Binder, et al. 2011a; Binder, et al. 2011b). In addition, the intention is to contribute to the discussion of co-design in "new" constellations of multiple partners and multiple organization (and orderings) (cf. Balka 2006; Karasti 2010).

**"In front" of the project**

Besides being a PhD student and co-designer in the project, there was also a version of my participation I will characterize as being the person "in front" of the project. By "in front," I mean to be in a particular position where I was presenting and

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[9] Helena Karasti (2010) has, in relation to this, also described how the focus of the PD researchers is rarely on "the self": "The focus of the PD researcher has been on the 'other' (technology and user) at the expense of concern for the self and relationships" (Karasti 2010, 89).

representing the project. It was not a fixed position but it emerged on several occasions. I will elucidate that in the following section.

As a PhD student, I was allocated many hours in the project and therefore also one of the main persons during the practical and empirical work, which means I came to play an important role in the project. Being one of the important project persons doesn't mean to be the one making the big decisions and leading the way. It though meant that I was the one who was "out there" meeting and engaging with the "real world." Meeting and engaging with the "real world" was on one hand through research activities as making "field-visits," conducting interviews, doing workshops as well as establish a living lab. It was as the same time also meeting and engaging with the "real world" as presenting and representing the project as well as to get people to come, stay, and come again to the different meetings. This is of course also part of "doing research" but it was at the same time how the position of being "in front" emerged. By being an important person in the project in relation to the practical work, I was also the one that citizens and stakeholders approached with critical questions and objections - not necessarily with bad intentions. But, it included often having to stand on the objectives of the project in the meeting with the "real world." Although the work resulted in many interesting meetings, it was also in this position "in front" that I experienced my disconcerting moments, which were often unpleasant or at least puzzling, worrisome, or awkward. I will unfold these moments further in the following section.

## A selection of disconcerting moments

These disconcerting moments encompass my research practices in different ways. First, they were what made me change how to write my dissertation including my research aims. Second, they form – most of – the empirical material that is used and analyzed in the different chapters in this dissertation.

With a reference to Verran (1999), I characterize these particular moments, which were not "just" moments, but were moments that were disconcerting. Verran uses this concept as a placeholder for the analytical difficulties – or to capture the subtle and complexities of the relations in these moments. To her, these are moments in which a certainty is disrupted and becomes a different sort of certainty. I use her concept here to also capture what I found to be troublesome, disturbing, puzzling,

confusing, and worrisome, but had difficulties with putting into words – at least to start with – as words in a PhD dissertation. However, it was moments that in different ways affected me since, that draw my attention to things that didn't fit, uncertainties, and that contained cracks and clashes I couldn't grasp.

In the beginning I was writing up these moments even though I, for long time, placed them in the desk drawer (figuratively speaking) and didn't think they could be relevant as part of my research as well as a contribution to an academic discussion. In the beginning (both doing and after my participation in the project ended), it was on one hand more a kind of therapeutically processing. At the same time, though, the writing was done with a sense that here was something that could be important for others, at least others who also engaged themselves in funding projects especially with a focus on co-design and participatory design, but also in general, projects with multiple stakeholders and/or citizen involvement. As I described earlier the work of different STS scholars, especially very concretely Verran (1999) and Michael (2011; 2012), helped me in terms of how this could be possible – or in other words how these personal incidents and disconcerting moments were important also as a contribution to an academic discussion within co-design and participatory design but not limited to that.

In this dissertation, my selection of empirical material is therefore, inspired by the concept of Verran, and based on my own disconcerting moments, which emerged this sense of being "in front" of the project. It was again moments that became disconcerting as I experienced them as things that didn't fit or uncertainties, and contained, or were cracks and clashes I couldn't grasp.

The moments I describe and analyze in this dissertation are all moments that can be characterized as what I experienced as disconcerting. In the first part of the dissertation, I characterized some particular disconcerting moments as "small troublesome moments." These moments here were all moments that contain some kind of resistance. In the second part of the dissertation the different disconcerting moments are mainly from the living lab period, and contain different – puzzling, frustrating, surprising, conflicting – incidents, in the meeting among the different actors in the living lab.

## Project participation and "roles"

The accounts in this dissertation are therefore mainly based on these disconcerting moments – but there are also additional descriptions of the project. In this part, I will try to elucidate where and how my participation took place to show the different roles or responsibilities I had in the project and how they have enabled me to - within reasonable bounds - speak about what happened in these moments specifically and the project more broadly.

I especially experienced these disconcerting moments in meetings with the senior citizens the project tried to involve, the private partners of the project, as well as other employees from the public sector working with senior citizens. There were all two kinds of meetings. The first were informal interviews as well as presentation in the project, where we from the project visited different activity centers and care homes to talk with the citizens as well as the private partners and employees at their workplaces. These meetings were preparation – including recruitment of participants – occurring before and in between the workshops and later as preparation for the living lab. In general, their purpose was to get an insight into the different people's everyday (work) life but framed by the aim of the project – and to present, find resonance with, and get people involved in the project. The second kind of meetings (also called workshops) also contained informal interviews and presentations of the project but had a focus on bringing all these different actors together to create the possibility for "co-design" i.e. that the different involved actors take direct part in the design dialogues and -work. This took place in a Culture House in the area of Copenhagen the project worked within. Here I was – sometimes with other people from the project group – made responsible for the collaboration in one group of six or seven people in this gathering of thirty to fifty people.

In both the first and the second kind of meeting described here, I was mainly the interviewer, facilitator, as well as the "presenter" i.e. the one to present but also to represent the project – ideas and concepts. This was a very actively engaging way of participating.

There was also another kind of engagement that came into being, which was during the period articulated as a living lab in the last part of the project. Here the setup was more loose and undefined (as described in the previous chapter) and the facilitating, managing, "presenting," documentation (video and photo) were more

distributed among all the actors from the project during meetings that took place in a big urban park in Copenhagen. This means that my participation slipped and moved more or less constantly in these meetings between being facilitator, and "presenter," while conversing and socializing with the citizens as well as recording videos and taking photos. I though also experienced being "in front" of the project here – and in a somewhat more "naked" way, where I couldn't "hide" behind a structured schedule with planned co-design exercises, materials and a format for the meetings (as in the workshops).

In relation to these different kinds of meetings, where the project was engaging with stakeholders and citizens, my description of the project is also from email conversations among the people taking part in the project, taking part in project group meetings, as well as among the design researchers including work with preparing design materials, artifacts, scripts for, and discussions and analyzing outcomes of the workshops.

To sum up the role and the way I took part doing the project, it was not fixed but happened in relation to these different situations I was engaged in including the responsibility I more explicitly had. I was very actively engaged but my participation also has some similarities with what ethnographers will define as observing-participant (Blomberg, et al. 2003). The ambition was never to write an ethnography but in the manner I here took part I had both access to and the ability to understand what was going on in the project (sort of).

**Notes, video recordings, and project documents**

What I have described so far is all different kinds of participation, where I was bodily involved, so to speak. These meetings were either documented by video recordings, audio recordings, or by shared note taking. In addition, I had my own notebook with my own "observations" – these notes were either made during meetings but especially after considering my often very actively engaged participation, where the focus was on facilitating, conversing, etc. My notes were not "strategic" in relation to this dissertation because I had as mentioned another focus during the project, but some of these experiences I had – the disconcertments – needed to be written down. In addition, the empirical material in the dissertation also includes project documents e.g. the project applications as well as resumes and video recordings of some

meetings and interviews where I didn't take part myself – this is made explicit in the text when the last situation is the case.

## Retrospective reflections

I have now described how I, during the project, participated in different kinds of "meetings" where the project was performed as well as how I took part in different ways. Furthermore, this is how as I was taking part I experienced this feeling of being the person "in front" often through what I have characterized as disconcerting moments. Now I will continue with how and with what approach I worked with these disconcerting moments in relation to my "new" research aim, which emerged after the project ended and as part of writing up these moments.

The selection of empirical material that is the basis of my analytical work is based on these disconcerting moments but with the aim of transforming these moments into something that could be of interest and make a contribution to research, especially within co-design and participatory design – but also to the intersection with STS. The work with these moments has evolved into this recursive process of moving among descriptions of these moments; theoretical writings within STS, which have made me able to "see" significant aspects of the moments; as well as research questions. In other words, the empirical material, the theoretical writings – or readings – as well as the questions I raise have mutually shaped each other in this process. In this recursive process, the moments have been transformed analytically into contributions for an academic discussion of resistance in co-design and participatory design, and the practice in a living lab, with a discussion of co-design in "new" constellations of multiple partners (including the citizens) and multiple organizations (and orderings).

As I described initially, the dissertation is written as a retrospective reflection of the Senior Interaktion project based on these disconcerting moments, which in different ways are significant for what was happening in the project – or how the project was performed. With the dissertation, my ambition is to contribute to the field of co-design and participatory design with a more reflective approach, which can hopefully be of value to and take part in the discussion of new challenges for participatory design described here by Karasti:

*…the role [as a PD design researcher] is becoming increasingly complicated with the movement of PD to distributed contexts (cf., multi-sited ethnography, Marcus 1995), the blurring of user-designer roles (Karasti & Baker 2004; Syrjänen 2007; Millerand & Baker 2010), and the need for PD researchers to become mediators in multi-stakeholder settings (Balka 2006))."* (Karasti 2010, 89)

And here she suggests that it requires: *"the need for the PD researcher to carry out even more careful self-examination, and the use of a variety of reflexive genres, such as confessional, pragmatic, theoretical, textual, and deconstructive"* (Karasti 2010, 89).

My reflective approach has partly been confessional, but it doesn't stop there. The text here is not only about forgiveness, but more importantly about contributing to academia. In relation to that, the work during the project, which also is about involving each other, is often a work in which you work very closely with other participants and partners and you get entangled in different ways, which applies to the researchers, citizens, partners, etc. That creates some challenges when things are written up. On the other hand, this means that there is loyalty, which you feel you are betraying when putting on the reflexive and critical hat – a loyalty that can be difficult to handle in the descriptive and analytical work. At the same time, it is necessary. In this kind of work, there must be a greater loyalty toward the academic world and the discussions to which you as researcher are accountable.

Finally, to end this chapter, and now move to the analytical part of this dissertation, my hope and ambition is to contribute to this genre as another kind of – and needed – contribution to the field of co-design and participatory design as well as the field's intersection with STS – but not limit to that. The text lives it's own life in "your hands" (cf. Latour) so whether I have managed with that, remains to be seen.

# Part 1: Introduction

We have now been through a description of my research focus and aim, the theoretical writings and concepts, and the empirical material, which all take part in shaping this dissertation. We now move to the analytical chapters and the first part of the dissertation in this relation. This first part, which contains three analytical chapters, follows the first research focus on resistance as part of co-design and citizen involvement. The aim is to describe and analyze how resistance is performed in practice, especially in the meetings between citizens and the project, and how resistance is handled in the project, or not handled. In these three chapters, I describe and analyze the different versions of resistance, how the resistance is troublesome in the encounter with the project, and the ideas of participation in co-design and participatory design, as well as how it was handled in these different situations. The four accounts of resistance are described in chapter five. They are what I call "small troublesome moments," which are particularly disconcerting moments.

**Chapter five** contains the description of four troublesome moments I experienced as facilitator and as being a person "in front" of the project. Each one represents a resistance. In this chapter, I stay close to the descriptions of these small troublesome moments and ask how resistance is coming into being. I use the concept of the idiot (Stengers 2005; Michael 2011) to inquire the resistance and more importantly why it becomes troublesome. The idiot makes visible what is otherwise taken as self-evident, and challenges what is taken for granted.

**Chapter six** continues with these small troublesome moments, here with the objective of exploring why what the idiot makes visible challenges the interpretation of participation in co-design and participatory design. These design traditions emphasize the collaborative inquiry and that design happens with the citizens (or users and other stakeholders). The "with" participation is here normatively described as: direct and genuine; meaningful and relevant; as well as participation on equal footing. I here analyze and discuss these descriptions of participation in relation to these four moments of resistance.

**Chapter seven** continues with these four troublesome moments but now with a question of how the resistance is managed. I return to the four accounts of these moments with the purpose of describing how the resistance was handled – or not handled. I here discuss the way of handling the resistance in relation to the strong focus on differences and controversies within participatory design and co-design as well as with the use of Mol's (2002) writings of how to handle differences and controversies. This discussion is focused on what implication it has for co-design and participatory design when the resistance is not confronted but instead worked around in an attempt to keep the "co-design meeting" going.

# 5: Small troublesome moments: Resistance as idiotic

In this chapter we turn to four troublesome moments I experienced as facilitator and as a person "in front" of the project – these moments all consisted of a resistance. I here stay close to descriptions of these small troublesome moments and ask how resistance is coming into being. The resistance was in different ways against the project and it becomes troublesome because it didn't follow the consensual way of participating or falls out of frame of these meetings. I here use the heuristic of the idiot to inquire the resistance and more importantly why it becomes troublesome. The idiot in these moments makes visible what is otherwise taken as self-evident and challenge what is taken for granted – or as innocent.

The four moments are from the end of the project's first year when the project group held a series of three workshops, where the project had invited citizens, partners and employees to take part in designing new service for senior citizens in Copenhagen. The moments all contain a resistance from these citizens, which to a more or less degree obstructed my work as the facilitator and the group work as such in the workshop (sometimes only for a small while). As I explained in chapter three, these moments were for a long time placed in my desk drawer as insignificant though still troublesome incidents and only told as examples of failed facilitation and problematic workshop situations. I have though turned these moments into significant and important issues for the discussions of the project in itself as well as of co-design and citizen involvement with the help of writings by Verran (1999) and Michael (2011; 2012).

## Resistance

The troublesome moments described in this chapter all contain some kind of resistance. It is resistance in various ways and "against" various elements of what the project tried to involve the citizens in. The resistance is toward the project's assumptions of the existing everyday practice among the senior citizens; toward the project's assumptions of "needs of the future"; toward the relevance of the project concepts; toward the project's attempt of optimize socializing among the citizens in

particular ways as well as; toward the use of digital technology. It was in all moments a resistance by the citizens. During the project and the workshop, there was also resistance (controversies and conflicts) among the different partners as well as the project group members, but this is not in focus in this chapter. There will though be examples of this in chapter eight, nine, and ten.

In this chapter, the empirical and analytical aim is therefore the question of how resistance is coming into being in attempts of involving citizens as part of co-design workshops. To describe and unfold the participation that made these moments troublesome to me I use the character of the idiot from the writings of Isabel Stengers (2005) and Mike Michael (2011). I will describe this character and how it is used in this chapter in the following.

## The idiot

The character of the idiot is central for this chapter. As I earlier have described Michael's writings and use of the idiot helped me in working with these small troublesome moments. Michael (2011) uses the idiot (inspired by Stengers (2005)) and misbehavior as heuristic in his analytical work of participation in public engagement event to inquire and address the behavior that overspills the frame of the events. Michael argues that it is a behavior that is otherwise often sanitized in the reporting of these events and does not get to challenge the overall agenda. The character of the idiot (and the misbehavior) gave me a way to work with these moments analytically and characterize the troublesome as well as what it points to and why it becomes troublesome.

In the following section, I will describe this character based on the work of Stengers before continuing with how I use it in this chapter. Stengers describes and uses the concept in relation to what she calls "The Cosmopolitical Proposal," which aims at "slowing down" – a plea that is central in Stengers' work (2005; 2011) and to make a space for hesitation in the construction of a "good common world" (Stengers 2005). Stengers' "idiot" that "slows us down" is based on the work of Deleuze as well as the figure of Dostoevsky. In the following section, she describes Deleuze's conceptual character[10]:

*But Deleuze's idiot, borrowed from Dostoevsky and turned into a conceptual*

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[10] Stengers (2005) also describes how the idiot originally stems from ancient Greek and was defined as a character who was not able to speak Greek and was therefore excluded from the civilized society.

*character, is the one who always slows the others down, who resists the consensual way in which the situation is presented and in which emergencies mobilize thought or action. This is not because the presentation would be false or because emergencies are believed to be lies, but because "there is something more important."* (Stengers 2005, 994)

In the conceptual character created by Dostoevsky, the idiot is not able to explain its behaviour because he does not know. It is a character that makes us listen – or where we need to listen to be able to make sense ourselves of the idiot and what it points to. Stengers continues describing how the idiot is murmuring there is something more important as well as points to this question of: "What are we busy doing?"

"What we are busy doing" both points to aspects of time. It is about being slowed down and about us being too busy doing something that could be questioned – or we need to question ourselves. At the same time, I also read the "What we are busy doing" as a simple question of "What are we doing?" which is about challenging the consensual; what we "all" can agree upon without further consideration; or what is otherwise taken for granted. The idiot breaches the consensual way or what is taken for granted – if it is listened or paid attention to (Stengers 2005). Stengers here also describes how it is very easy to forget the murmurings of the idiot and that there is something more important: *"because the idiot neither objects nor proposes anything that 'counts'"* (Stengers 2005, 1001).

Michael uses as mentioned the idiot with inspiration from Stengers (2005) as a way to transform what he defines as a *misbehavior* in public engagement events to important moments that should make us slow down and ask this question of *what we are busy doing*. Michael on one hand analyzed what kind of citizens that is shaped by these public engagement events but most importantly use the idiot and the misbehavior to turn the attention to the participation that overspills the frame and often gets to transform the event. Though, it doesn't get to influence the overall frame of these events: *"… arguably, there is a tacit process of sanitization whereby the engagement event is cleaned up so that the existing methodological, conceptual, and institutional frame of the engagement event remain unchallenged"* (Michael 2011, 2).

The idiot is also used in this chapter to point to the misbehavior, which here is

the resistance that makes these moments troublesome, awkward, and difficult to handle. It is not necessarily a behavior that is idiotic in all senses of the character. Though, I characterize the idiots in these moments by their behavior, which is that they either:

- Overspill the frame of the event
- Slow down the others
- Resist the consensual way
- Do not explain themselves
- Transform the event
- "Murmur" there is something more important, or
- Point to the question: "What are we busy doing?"

I use this conceptual character and its characteristic in a rather concrete manner to support the descriptions and to go into depth with what is coming into being in these moments. But, I also use it as something that can point to, create awareness of, and emphasize what is important here in an attempt to go beyond and challenge what it is often taken for granted in these meetings with citizens, partners, and employees described as co-design and citizen involvement.

Finally, and in extension of this, is my use of the idiot also an attempt inspired by Stengers (2005) and Michael (2011) to move beyond discussions that stay within the frame i.e. discussions that deal with methods and how to make co-design and involvement of citizens – and instead ask the question what is it we are doing (is there something more important) and what are the implications?

As mentioned, I stay close to the descriptions of the four troublesome moments of resistance in this chapter with the question of how the resistance is coming into being. The idiot is used to inquire this resistance and why it becomes troublesome. In the following chapters – chapter six and seven – I will continue with these four troublesome moments: in chapter six with the question of what the idiot and these troublesome moments say about participation in co-design and participatory design, where participation is articulated as direct, meaningful, and on equal footing; in chapter seven I will analyze how the resistance is managed and discuss it in relation to the question of controversies and conflicts in co-design and participatory design.

### A series of three workshops

The following four accounts of troublesome moments are from a period in the project when we held a series of three workshops. It was in the end of the project's first year. Before the three workshops, there had been eight months of project preparation including approximately 20 hours of meetings (interviews) with citizens and people working with senior citizens in Copenhagen. At these workshops, there were between 35-50 people – project group members, project partners, citizens, and employees from the care sector – gathered in a culture house in the area of Copenhagen that the project focused on.

The workshops were split between a morning session, with focus on the current everyday life of the present citizens, and an afternoon session, with focus on changing the here-and-now situation and imagining possibilities for the future. This is a "classic" way to organize co-design workshops that seek to "get to know" the existing everyday life of the people you work with. Before going into the next step that is what the co-design project is set out for, namely exploring possibilities for the future (Halse et al. 2010).

This all happens within one day – one workshop – but also over time in a series of three workshops. In the Senior Interaction project, the idea was that the balance between the everyday life of the senior citizens and the imaginings of the future started with most weight on the former in the first workshop but progressed toward most weight on the latter in the third workshop. Therefore, the ideas and the concepts of the project took more and more space in the workshops. It was explained among the project group as a way of getting the citizens "slowly" on board and not e.g. scare them away with technology concepts already in the first workshop.

# A non-compromising resistance toward what-if suggestions

In this first account, we encounter a very non-compromising resistance toward some what-if questions from the project containing loose suggestions for the future. The idiot makes visible how these what-if questions are more than just loose or innocent suggestions. This account is from the first workshop, which we enter in the afternoon,

when these what-if questions are brought into play as the base for the collaborative work.

The purpose of the whole workshop was described among the project groups to create dialogue and together learn about "what a good senior life is." The morning assignment was to create collages of "a good day." All the seniors made a collage of what "a good day" to them entails. They did that in collaboration with one of the project partners or employees from the public sector. In the afternoon session, after the lunch break, the assignment, done in small groups, was to create a "future scenario of a shared experience." To support that process, all the groups got some paper sheets with what-if questions created by the design researchers as well as different materials (foam boards, wood dolls, carbon, pictures, pipe cleaners, etc.) to make a doll scenario. The purpose was to end up with a two-minute long video recording of a doll-play of a future scenario done by each group.

In this moment, one woman, Ulla, refused to work with these what-if questions brought to the table by me (the facilitator) and this blocked the group work – at least for a while.

## "I don't like to go on a trip to Fisketorvet"
*"I want to be in a group with someone else – you are too negative,"* promptly comes from Anne.

She sounds serious, but also has a teasing glimpse in her eyes. The comment is directed at her neighbor, Ulla, who she is now placed with in a group at this workshop. I am thinking the same. It would maybe have been easier to agree on some ideas with other people in the group. In the moment, I find Ulla troublesome for our group work. Ulla tries to explain: "*But Anne, you enjoy going to activities and trips like that – I don't,*" she says with a strong voice.

We are all sitting around a round table: Anne and Ulla – who are neighbors and take part in the workshop as senior citizens, Peter from a service company, Malene from the Copenhagen Municipality, and me, the facilitator. The assignment is to make a doll scenario together about "a good shared experience." The basis for the scenario is the everyday stories from Anne and Ulla about what a good day is to them. They had a conversation with Peter as well as me about this in the first half of the workshop. The other foundation for making the scenario is the "what-if questions" on

paper made by the design researchers. These questions are supposed to trigger new ideas for how to think social activities differently in relation to the development of new services. They don't really trigger new ideas at this moment. They trigger resistance – Ulla refuses to go along with any of them.

I continue and try to suggest some of the other what-if questions: *"What if it is easy to get in contact with others who are out exercising? Or what if there are exercises in the park and a house with props to borrow?"* *"No, that is not for me!"* Ulla replies and Anne agrees hesitantly. I try with some other what-if questions that are not about outdoor exercises*: "What if shopping can be done without going into stores?" "But I like shopping,"* Ulla explains. I try to unfold the idea of this question, but they still do not agree. I continue to talk about some of the ideas that include trips to Fisketorvet (a shopping mall, which is a partner in the project), different kinds of arrangements at the activity center, or activities where you can meet up with others and maybe make new acquaintances. Anne likes some of these ideas but Ulla disagrees. She explains that she never goes to activities in the activity center where Anne goes almost every day, and that she would not go on a trip to Fisketorvet or the like. I actually understand her; suddenly these what-if questions are not that attractive. But we need to use them for our doll scenario or at least I feel we have to.

I look desperately at Malene and Peter on the other side of the table to see if I can get some help. They both smile anxiously and look at me with wide-open eyes. However, none of them say anything. It goes on like this for a while; actually, it feels like a very long time to me. We are locked in this situation and it is in the middle of this when Anne suddenly turns to Ulla, calls her too negative, and makes her wish to be in another group. I actually look to see if that's possible, but our neighbor group seems to be doing fine and is already caught up in playing their doll scenario. We need to make a doll scenario too, so to loosen up the situation I try to start with the shared everyday life of Ulla and Anne.

The focus of the assignment is changed from outdoor exercises, Fisketorvet, and activity centers to be about safety in these women's lives. But at least we can continue with the scheduled program of making a doll scenario and a video recording of it to be shown to the other groups.

## A non-compromising resistance

In this moment, Ulla shows a strong resistance toward all these what-if questions I have brought to the table. Her resistance is strong in the sense that she is very explicit about it and she doesn't make any attempt to actually compromise to work with any of them. Her resistance blocks the group work – at least for a while and leaves me as the facilitator in a desperate and problematic situation. I found this moment troublesome. I didn't know what to do about Ulla's resistance and it also surprised me. To me – until I met Ulla – the what-if questions were rather innocent and I expected that we could agree to base our story on at least one or part of one of the suggestive questions. For a long time, I placed this moment as an example of failed facilitation – I failed to make the group create a scenario that followed the ideas and concepts of the project. Instead, the story came to be about these women and the feeling of safety in their everyday life. It was a bit outside the focus of the project, which was probably also why this scenario was later deselected as one of the scenarios the project continued to work with.

## An unexpected rejection of the consensual way

I have framed Ulla here as the idiot. Together with the what-if questions, she creates a troublesome moment in which she prevents the rest of the group to work with the what-if questions and puts me in a situation in which I have to struggle with what to do to keep the group work ongoing. I haven't framed her as the idiot here because her behavior overspills the frame of the event. She shows resistance toward the what-if questions but it is a behavior that is related to the actual work going on in this workshop. It is not a misbehavior that tries to do something else with the event or tries to stay out of what the project group has asked her to do (sort of). Instead, she enters the negotiation of what scenario we are going to make. At the same time, she is also able to explain herself. In the conversation with Amy and me, she expresses her reasons to refuse the suggestions of the what-if questions very concretely; she doesn't go to activity centers, she likes to shop for her groceries, etc.

Instead, I have framed Ulla as an idiot in this moment because she managed to slow the others (including me) down. At the same time, this misbehavior is also a resistance of the consensual way of working, which is another of the characteristics of the idiot. She goes into the negotiations of the what-if questions as I mentioned

earlier, but she does not compromise and accept to go along with any of them. Something I, at least in the moment expected: that there would always be some kind of compromise we could agree upon to work with. By refusing all the suggestions, she puts me in an unexpected situation and makes it somewhat impossible to continue the work based on the what-if questions.

This breach with the consensual way of working according to my own experiences and knowledge from other projects/workshops within co-design and participatory design projects created this troublesome and disconcerting moment for me. I thought of the what-if questions as rather innocent but the idiot makes them both visible – and visible as problematic actors in this moment. In the following section, I will concentrate on the what-if questions in co-design and how they were made in the Senior Interaktion project.

## What-if questions in co-design

The what-if questions are brought into the workshop to "trigger the imaginings of possibilities for the future" (Halse et al. 2010). They are combining "what" as referring to something specific with "if," which indicates an uncertain element. Together they make suggestions of something rather specific that could be imagined or maybe possible for an uncertain future. When asking what-if, you suggest that things could be different and at the same time, you try to transcend the present situation by providing (loose) pre-made ideas for this change or transcendence.

The questions are often created by the designers and are not supposed to be closed suggestions of solutions but rather open suggestions that can create an "verfremdungs effect" (alienation) and evoke the evolvement of scenarios or a spectrum of possibilities "for the future" among the actors taking part (Halse et al. 2010). In co-design meetings, these questions are often used to encourage and influence the transformation of the existing and known everyday life or practice into thinking of new possibilities in the collaborative work among designers and non-designers. At the same time, the what-if questions can also work as framing devices. It is suggestions shaped by the designer that makes it possible to direct the collaborative work in a specific direction and get the invited people involved and aligned in the ideas of the project.

In this workshop, the what-if questions consisted of 18 different suggestions of how to rethink services to senior citizens and service deliveries. The questions addressed the aim of the project of supporting social interaction among a community of senior citizens with a focus on the project themes of exercise, meals, and cultural experiences. They were all either activities connected to activity centers or related to the private partners of the project (shopping malls, sports companies, service companies). The questions were prepared by the design researchers before the workshop and were based on the agendas of the private partners of the project, the project aims and ideas, as well as the research done prior to the workshop i.e. interviews with senior citizens at activity centers, as well as employees working with senior citizens (approximately 20 hours).

As such the what-if questions were brought into the workshop to on one hand support the facilitation of and to frame the collaborative work to stay within the aim of the project and the focus for this workshop. On the other hand the purpose of the what-if questions was to support the collaboration, especially the non-designers, in being able to see possibilities for changes and/or how things could be different in the future with the focus on services for senior citizens. This was also a technique to frame the citizens and partners as co-designers in the workshop with having them (or trying to have them) take part in the design work. In the following section, we will take a closer look at the what-if questions made for this first workshop and the question of what assumptions and ideas they entail and how this conflicts with the everyday life of Ulla.

## Pre-made assumption of the future – and the present

The what-if questions were different suggestions for doing exercise with others, eating and shopping with others, or going on trips with "cultural experiences" together with others, e.g. "What if it is easy to get in contact with others who are out exercising?", "What if there was a dinner place for people of all ages?" or "What if a day at Fisketorvet makes space for everything? They also entail ideas of meeting places to meet others with shared interests in exercise, eating together, or going out together for some "cultural experience." They are all different suggestions that in some way or another relate to sharing and interacting with other people and with people who are not necessarily familiar to you. In general, these suggestions have to

do with supporting, optimizing, and maintaining social interaction among communities of senior citizens.

There are some agendas and assumptions inscribed into these suggestions that first of all address the aim of the project: to increase life quality among elderlies by improving their "social life." On one hand, it describes a current need among senior citizens in Copenhagen to have their social interaction with other people (mainly other seniors) supported, maintained, and optimized. At the same time these suggestions describe in loose or open terms different solutions, that build on assumptions of how this support and optimization of the senior citizens' "social life" should be done by meeting with or going on shared trips with other people – trips and meetings that either have to do with being physically active, visiting Fisketorvet, cooking, etc. It is shaped according to the themes of the project and the private partners. The suggestions describe solutions that take for granted how the senior citizens want to socialize with other seniors, that they want to optimize their "social life," and finally that they need the municipality or arrangement between the public sector and the private companies to support them in this. Randi Markussen addresses this issue in the article: "Politics of intervention in design: Feminist reflections on the Scandinavian tradition" (1996), in which she writes:

> *"… new ideas of how to work, as the prototype suggested, the given reality is also shaped in a specific way: it is not simply there in any self-evident way. Hermeneutically speaking, a horizon of the expectation of the future implies a certain way of thinking about the past.* (Markussen 1996, 132)

Markussen here describes the prototype she experienced as part of a participatory design project – and how this prototype both suggested specific ideas of the future and certain ways of thinking about the past. What she also points to in this quote is how these assumptions are taken to be self-evident, which is exactly what is at play in the moment of Ulla's resistance. The idiot makes visible with her rejection of the what-if questions how the reality is shaped in a particular way by the project but also how this reality is not self-evident – something I otherwise took as innocent and obviously without thoughts of how they both described particular everyday practices of the senior citizens as well as particular practices for the future. Markussen continues: *"Was the suggestion in the prototype better than the present? Was there a*

*problem before that finally was answered with this solution?"* (Markussen 1996, 132).

Was there a problem before for Ulla that is now answered by the suggestions of the what-if questions? Or do the what-if questions at least suggest a change of practices or a possible future for Ulla that is better – even though she doesn't have an explicit problem now? It is Anne, who has brought Ulla to the workshop. The project met Anne at one of the interview meetings before the workshop at an activity center for senior citizens in Copenhagen. As Ulla also mentions at one point in the conversation about the what-if questions: *"Anne, you enjoy going to activities and trips like that – I don't"*. Here she makes us aware of the difference between her, Anne, and the what-if questions. Not that Anne can follow all the what-if questions but some of them she expresses interest in. Ulla is not interested in any of the suggestions and she explains to us how she spent most days by herself or together with family or friends, e.g. her neighbors. The collages "A good day?" Ulla made during the morning session with me consist of different pictures, text, and figures that illustrate what a good day is to Ulla. It is different activities like talking on the phone, drinking coffee, taking a nap, visits with friends and family, going to the theatre or to a restaurant.

## The what-if questions meet the idiot

The introduction of the what-if questions in the workshop, and with that the project's assumptions of the present and the future clashes both with Ulla's everyday practices and her choice of how to live her life – also in "the future." On one hand, Ulla does not accept the project's assumptions of the present. At the same time, she is not willing to negotiate with or compromise on her choice of how to live her life and with that accept some or just one of the project's suggestions for the future. The what-if questions should of course just be seen as different suggestions but Ulla rejects all of them, which suddenly makes the presence of the what-if questions in this workshop very visible and problematic. Instead of supporting me in the facilitation and work as triggering devices for ideas of possible services for senior citizens the what-if questions in "alliance" with Ulla and her everyday life, become these troublesome devices that obstruct my work as a facilitator and block the group work of creating a doll scenario. But they also take part in framing Ulla as an idiot as she doesn't accept

"the consensual way" of working with these suggestions and what they are supposed to evoke. She doesn't respond to them as loose suggestions that evoke imaginings of new possibilities.

At the same time, Ulla's resistance makes the what-if questions less innocent – if at all – and self-evident. I framed Ulla as the idiot here as she made us slow down and reject the consensual way of working with the what-if questions within co-design and participatory design. But also because Ulla points to some issues regarding the project in it's meeting with the everyday life of the senior citizens that are overlooked in this moment and by the project in general.

We now turn from a non-compromising resistance toward the what-if questions to a quiet resistance toward concepts of the project.

## A quiet resistance toward "future needs" – and "loud methods"

In this moment, we meet a quiet resistance toward the use of the concept of the project and its assumptions of "future needs." At the same time, the account is also the story of "loud methods" and silence and passivity in the co-design workshop. The account is from the second workshop, which occurred about a month after the first one. The focus articulated among the project was: "Activity-based communities in everyday life and how technological devices can bring us together and support existing networks." In the morning, the assignment was to create collages of "activity-based networks in everyday life," based on the life of the citizens. All citizens have made a collage in collaboration with one of the project partners or employees. Here, they had gathered activities from the daily life that they shared with other people (family, friends, neighbors, and acquaintances). In the afternoon session after the lunch break, the group assignment was to recreate the future doll scenarios from the last workshop. This time, though, the design researchers, through the concept of super dots, added the use of technological devices.

The super dots were developed for this workshop but is based on early (project) ideas and concepts by some of the design researchers (Foverskov and Binder 2011). The concept supports how to be connected with people in your network around a specific activity e.g. Nordic walking or knitting. The idea is that the super dots can

make it easy for you to make yourself visible or to get in contact with your network, when e.g. seeking someone to do the activity with. The rest of the props are different technology props representing different functions to get in contact with others (speak, read/see, seek, write). To represent this concept, each group got a set of props containing a messenger, a screen, a seeker, and some foam dots (the super dots). They are going to be used as part of the group work and doll-play to support the exploration of technology in the scenario and are made out of foam, paper, and carbon to support the exploration of how to be connected with technology. The purpose of the group work was again to end up with a video recording of a two-minute long doll scenario of a future scenario created by the group.

We enter this workshop in the beginning of the afternoon session where the project group members, including me as one of the facilitators, are introducing the ideas with the Super Dots for the citizens at the table. Carl's sailing club (one of the citizens) is used to explore the use of the super dots in relation to the citizens' everyday life. Carl himself, though, quickly makes the suggested use redundant.

## "But I actually go to my sailing club almost every day"

We are about to start after lunch. There is some talk around the table. Here, I (the facilitator) am placed with Carl (one of the people the project has recruited through an club for seniors in Copenhagen), Anne, Ulla (the neighbors – see previous part of the chapter), Henry (a partner and sports instructor from a small company making outdoor exercise concepts), Lise (the project leader from the municipality), and Mats (a designer from one of the project partners – a digital design company). It is the afternoon session of this second workshop. We are going to recreate a doll scenario based on Carl's group's scenario from the last workshop of "a nice trip to Valbyparken." Carl did this scenario with two other people from his activity club, but they could not come this time. Before we start on the actual doll scenario, there is some initial talk about this concept we have all just been introduced to by one of the design researchers, the super dots, and the props that are now present at the table. To make the concept relevant or accessible to the senior citizens around the table, the facilitators and partners try to couple it with Carl's everyday life as an example. Henry suggests Carl to use the super dots in his sailing club, to create a sailing community and refers to the conversation he and Mats had with Carl in the morning session. Lise

leans forward and looks excited at the collage that Mats, Henry, and Carl have made together: *"Which color is Carl's sailing club network there?"* (Pointing at Carl's landscape of activity networks). Henry replies, *"Yellow."* Lise grabs a hollow cylindrical prop – the messenger – and adds a yellow dot. *"What if this yellow dot represents your sailing community with your friends and you can send messages to the people in this community with the messenger?"* she explains while shaking the messenger and handing it over to Henry, who places it in front of Carl.

There are many activities among the partners and the props at this moment and I try to follow them along with Anne and Ulla on my side of the table. Lise is tapping her finger on the prop, while looking at the others and explaining how Carl could receive information about activities in the club by using the messenger. Carl, who until now has been sitting silently in the middle of the partners and props, suddenly reacts to this comment: *"But I actually go there almost every day,"* he says quietly and continues, *"And there's a bulletin board just inside the door, where you can read what is happening."* Now the rest of the table is silent. *"He doesn't want to think about what happens in the future,"* my concern is in this moment. *"He is going to need the "super dots," when he can't go to the club by himself."* I'm continuing for myself – as that was a naturally occurring incident. Considerations and assumptions, I am not especially proud of here in retrospective. However, in the moment, I find Carl a bit troublesome and I also find it a bit problematic that we can't discuss "the future" as it is articulated by the project and here by "my own thoughts" (which was probably a good thing!).

Lise starts again: *"But there are some people, who are not well-enough to go out all the time; they maybe need to know what is going on."* Mats looks at Ulla: *"You've told us that many are sitting at home, so what if we address the people that can't come in the club that often?"* Mats takes the messenger in his hand, *"One could imagine; what if they got this?"* *"Yes exactly! Those who don't get out, that could be good!"* Ulla exclaims. Carl is now silent. Lise continues with a question of who could be the one telling "these people" mostly sitting at home about the activities in the club. Mats and Lise introduce the screen as a way for friends in Carl's community to get messages about what is going on in the sailing club, so they know when it would be good to come by. Anne and I are handed a big paper frame. We are now part of the story as the people just *"sitting at home"* with a screen to receive messages on. Carl,

from his side of the table, just observes what is going on with his sailing club (Foverskov and Yndigegn 2011).

## A quiet – though still troublesome – resistance

In this moment, Carl shows a quiet resistance toward the technological exploration (or exemplification) made by the partners in the group. He tries to explain that the way they want to use the concept of the super dots is useless to him. He doesn't need a digital connection to see what is going on in the sailing club when he goes there almost every day. His resistance is quiet in the sense that it is not very loud but also because he stays silent afterwards. He more or less stays like this for the remainder of this group work.

His resistance is only a small disruption of this exploration and the rest of the group very quickly continues the conversation and enactment with the super dots and props. However, I still find Carl's resistance troublesome in the moment, which has to do with the willingness to imagine something for the future. I take Carl's resistance as a rejection of "how things probably might turn out" i.e. that he at one point will be immobile and in need of this digital connection to the sailing club. Carl's resistance, though, disrupts this image of the future and the group has to rethink the exploration of the super dots. But instead of rethinking the use of the concept, the problem is solved by inventing some new people to design for. In the following section, I will unfold the project's assumptions of "future needs"; the invented actors as well as; how Carl stays out of this creation of a scenario, mostly observing the others.

## The Super Dots meet the idiot

The super dots were a way to maintain and optimize social interaction among senior citizens (it follows the line of the what-if questions in the previous part of the chapter). It was described among project group members as "tickets to talk," "to notice and be noticed," and technology that grows with you. Where the first two was related to the use of digital technology in particular ways to create "openings for social interaction," the latter followed an idea of introducing technology before it became a need. In other words, the technology should be made part of the elderlies' life before they come to a point when they really need it but at the same in a state when it was difficult to adapt to their life. With the ideas of "tickets to talk" and "to

notice and be noticed" the project was to create new openings for social interaction, where you could e.g. on your television get notifications if people from your community went out shopping. This could be an "unarticulated" invitation for you to follow or ask them to buy something for you as well, which would mean that they had to stop by afterwards. In relation to the sailing club it would mean that people didn't have to go down there all the time to figure out what was going on – and/or they could follow from a distance what happened at the sailing club if they transmitted directly from events and activities (this was how it was articulated among the design researchers). In other words, the idea was directed at people who weren't so active (immobile) or socially active (sitting mostly at home – maybe being lonely).

What Carl makes visible with his resistance is how the project is not only introducing the concept of the super dots as a way of imagining "future possibilities," but that it is also a particular way of imagining "future needs" and – with reference to Markussen (1996) again – as they were self-evident. It is imagined that Carl and other seniors at one point will need this technology "to notice and be noticed" when they are becoming immobile – or it is imagined for people who are already "immobile and maybe lonely."

I participated in imagining of "future needs," something I am not especially proud of today, as what I also learned by getting to know Carl and the other people taking part in the project is that ageing is a complex thing (it may sound a bit naive but nevertheless it is). Carl was 86 years old. He sold his boat when his wife died a couple of years ago but he still came to the sailing club almost every day. He also enjoyed going to many other activities for senior citizens around Copenhagen. He loved to bike and he used that as his main means of transportation. Carl didn't seem to be one who at a point would need a digital connection to the sailing club. But, who can predict the future?

## Murmuring - there is something more useful
In this moment, the group of partners together with Ulla, continues but instead of designing for Carl's "future needs" which is disrupted – or rethinking the concept to address needs or imaginings of possibilities Carl actually might have, the group directs their attention to these people just "sitting at home," which Ulla knows, as the target for the technological exploration. These actors are harmless and the group can

continue smoothly with this small assignment without any resistance. What Carl also makes visible with his quiet resistance is how the concept of the super dots and the exploration in this moment are made for either these invented "users" or invented "future needs."

I have framed Carl here as an idiot as he with his resistance rejects the consensual way (the project's way) of thinking about "the future." But maybe more importantly because I find that he with his quiet resistance tries to murmur that there is something more important. He is not accepting the way the group tries to connect him with the super dots but he is not rejecting the concept of the super dots. The group could have made the concept relevant to the everyday life of Carl, which the exploration was about, but instead Carl is made irrelevant and replaced by these invented "lonely and immobile" actors. In chapter six, I will return to these actors and the question of direct participation. For now, I will continue with the question of Carl's behavior as silent.

## The "loud methods" meet the idiot

As described above, I found Carl's rejection troublesome in the moment but at the same time, I was also struck by how smoothly things were running when observing the partners' interactions with the concept and the props. It was very easy to connect the concept with Carl's everyday life in the sailing club and make a "relevant" example of how to use the technology. It was not until later when I revisited this moment, which was videotaped, that it struck me why it ran very smoothly despite the quiet resistance. The group doesn't stop and listen to how Carl makes the technology useless but instead continues the technological exploration in relation to Carl's sailing community. Carl does not insist on his rejection of the technology as useful and at the same time, he stays more or less silent, so the group can continue without any obstruction.

I have characterized Carl's behavior as silent and actually also passive in this moment. But, what does it mean to stay silent and passive? He sits at the table, he follows the others' interaction with each other and with the props, and he answers their questions about the sailing club. But the dialogue material, the tangible props, and materials for the doll scenario afford – or are supposed to afford – something else. The concept of the super dots is presented in the workshop as foam dots as well as

props made out of the paper, carbon, and polystyrene (different technological devices). It follows from this focus on direct and genuine participation as a central part of co-design workshops (Simonsen and Robertson 2013). Here different design materials and artifacts are often prepared prior to a workshop and brought in as things that should evoke participation of "telling, making, and enacting" among all the participants and especially the "non-designers." These design materials and artifacts can be design games (Brandt, et al. 2013) as well as props, sketches, prototypes, and the like to create and play scenarios with. In the workshops in the Senior Interaktion project, the "telling and making" was encouraged by the activities to create collages of "a good day" and of "activity-based networks in everyday life," which were used in the two first workshops. The props, dolls, and stages for the doll scenario were made part of the workshops to encourage activities of "making and enacting." Through embodied enactment with the props and later with the dolls, it was intended that the groups could make a *shared* exploration of how technological devices could be used in a "shared experience among senior citizens."

What is characterized as silence and passivity is not a simple question but instead a complex and fluid phenomena, which depends on the current practice and context of where it takes place. What I try to say here is that Carl is not totally silent or passive in the very literal meaning of the word, but in the setup of the workshop that expects something else this is what his participation turns into. The frame of the workshops, the design devices, and materials as well as methods all expect a present, active and/or "speak up" participation, where everyone around the table takes part in – influences and gives voice to – a shared exploration of new possibilities for service concepts. When Carl stays out of the interaction with the super dots and the props, he on one hand leaves it to the rest of the group to interact and make the scenario. At the same time, he also creates a design situation where not everyone takes an active part in creating the scenario, which puts a question of how shared "the shared exploration" is in this moment.

Carl transfers himself or is transferred into silence and passivity after his attempt at rejecting the technological proposal. What I want to point to here is the idiotic of Carl's resistance in the workshop. Staying silent and passive and not taking part in the enactment with the props overspills the frame for the participation as co-designers. In other words, Carl is framed here as an idiot because he breaches what I

have characterized as "loud" methods that expect something else. To tell, make, and enact in these meetings means in some way to make yourself "visible" – make yourself noticed – to influence what is going on. A participation that stays silent and passive is in that sense difficult to grasp in the moment but also when reporting from the co-design meeting, where participation beyond being an "informant" is encouraged.

To sum up, on one hand I characterize Carl here as silent and passive, which is a characteristic of his behavior that is framed by the expected participation of a co-design meeting. The methods and the materials expect and recall something else. At the same time, Carl makes these materials and methods visible by breaching what they expect – with his behavior, he makes their "loud" character visible. Maybe for the loudness of the method and interaction Carl does not succeed with slowing the others down in the moment. It rather seems like they are speeding up seduced by this new focus on these actors who "really need" the technology. In chapter six, I will return to the question of silent and passive participation within co-design events that expect direct and actual participation.

## Playful enactment and a serious resistance

Here we turn from a quiet resistance, design for "future needs," as well as a set-up of "loud methods" to instead a serious resistance during a playful and very joyful enactment. It is a rather serious and explicit resistance toward meeting with strangers in the scenario "on a trip to the park." Despite the very explicit resistance, it is not really taken into account or is overrun by the joyful atmosphere.

The account is again from the second half of the second workshop. It is still the group consisting of Carl, Anne, Ulla, Henry (a partner from a small company making outdoor exercise concepts), Lise (the project leader from the Municipality), and Mats (a designer from one of the project partners – a digital design company), and me. The group is going to recreate a doll scenario based on Carl's scenario from the last workshop of "a nice trip to Valbyparken." In the moment we enter the "trip to Valbyparken," which the dolls are out on, it is interrupted by unknown people who have heard about the trip and want to join. This exploration and interfering in the group's work and in the dolls' trip ignites a "serious" resistance in the otherwise "joyful" group work.

## "I don't like to spend time with people I don't know"

After the initial intermezzo with Carl's sailing community, the group continues with creating the doll scenario of a trip to Valbyparken, and explores how the super dots and the technology props could support it. There is a rather cheerful atmosphere around the table.

Carl can't really remember that he took part in making this scenario the last time, so Lise and I try to retell what the scenario was about. We are now going to make the story again but this time by including the super dots. Everyone is sitting around the table with the stages for the dolls in the middle. I'm standing behind the stages. It makes it easier to help with the dolls and the scenes with backdrops. Our group tries to figure out how Ulla, Anne, Carl, and Henry, the sports instructor, are all coming to the park. Carl, Henry, and Anne want to bike but Ulla explains that she can't bike, so she will take the bus. She holds her doll that is now dressed with cloth and yarn in an attempt to look like her. She gives the doll to me, so I can place it in front of one of the backdrops with a picture from the park. The atmosphere is still cheerful. Henry is flirting with Anne or the other way around – they are arranging to go on a tandem bike together.

After a while when the scenario is at a point where the dolls are about to eat lunch, Lise hooks up with Mats, who sits next to her at the table. They agree on playing the role of two new people from the place Madam Blå (an activity center for seniors in Copenhagen) who want to join the others on their trip to Valbyparken. Here, Lise tries to introduce some of the ideas we have talked about among the project group. *"But we don't know you,"* Ulla exclaims. This interruption has made both Ulla and Anne rather skeptical. I'm a bit surprised both by Lise's interruptions but also with the women's reaction. I ask them if they want to meet with these people. *"But what if the chemistry is bad? I don't like to spend time with people I don't know; my time is too valuable for that,"* Ulla answers. Both Lise and Henry laugh quite strongly now. I'm not sure how to react to this mix of critical rejection and joyfulness. I find Ulla a bit troublesome again but I also understand her. Why should she meet with these people? At the same time, it seems like the cheerful atmosphere can solve the problem of her obstructing resistance, which makes me stay a bit passive here.

The conversation in the group continues with discussing "who these people are," "how they heard about the trip," and "why they should meet with them when

they do not know them." The situation is somewhat serious but on the other hand, there are also jokes being made among the group about how Mats and Lise seem to be nice people even though Mats is Swedish. Anne makes fun by telling how she has always been warned about the Swedish people. Lise tries again: *"Ok, but do you think we can figure something out?" "We can't really say no, can we?"* Anne says hesitantly. No one really answers.

Instead, Lise, Mats, Henry, and I continue to play with the dolls and the props and are busy with figuring out how the new people find the group in the park and forget the two women for a moment. Anne and Ulla at their corner of the table continue to discuss with each other whether it is ok to turn the others' proposal of joining them down: *"But would it be all right to say no?"* Anne asks Ulla again. Lise interrupts them from her corner of the table: *"But we pretend you know us a little."* Ulla now looks rather confused. *"Ok, so maybe Anne knows you because she has met you at this place [referring to Madam Blå], you go to places like that, Anne. I don't."* With some persuasion the creation of the scenario can continue.

## A serious resistance in a joyful moment

The resistance of Anne and Ulla is evoked by Lise's interruption in the work of creating a doll scenario. In the moment, Lise introduces a small exploration or what she calls a challenge of how the technological devices can be used if some new people want to meet with the group in the park. Lise's question is concerned with how these people can get in contact with the group in the park i.e. what technological devices can be used to meet this challenge Lise puts forth. Between Ulla and Anne, the focus is instead on the "new people," which is a more pertinent issue to them, one that evokes a skeptical resistance. The resistance is concerned with who these people are, where they suddenly (or again magically) appear from, and maybe most importantly why the women should meet with them – a question that is not really answered. Their skeptical resistance makes it difficult to continue. The resistance interrupts and questions the group's work of exploring the technology functions but also interrupts the joyful and playful atmosphere.

Ulla and Anne's resistance come as a surprise to me. On one hand I understood Ulla's and Anne's skepticism – they were on this nice trip together and suddenly some other people have to join. On the other hand, I was also caught up in

the flow of play and the experiment – and couldn't really see the problem as this was just a doll scenario and it was about "imagining possibilities for the future." What struck me in this moment was the strong resistance toward something "we were just playing" in a doll scenario, something that has been worrying to me in retrospect also because it seems as if what is most important to the facilitators including me is: How we can continue what had been initiated by some of the partners and, to keep the flow of this playful exercise (I watched the video recordings of the moment later on). It still surprised me in the moments, though, since my experience was that people would just play along when reached this far in the workshop (managed to get to the enactment of the dolls), so Ulla and Anne's reaction breached my experiences and expectations.

## Playful doll scenarios of the future

This moment plays out in the middle of the group making a doll scenario. On one hand, there is the creation of the scenario with dressing the dolls, making small props and backdrops as well as the enactment with the dolls. Along with this, there is the discussion and negotiation among the group of partners, project group members, and the citizens at the table.

What is central here and often is central in co-design workshops is the playful as an important element to be able to imagine "future possibilities." The creation and enactment of scenarios becomes this mediator of imagining and negotiating "future possibilities" among the group. The playful is in this way supposed to make a transcendence of the everyday life to be able to imagine future possibilities (Halse et al. 2010; Brandt, et al. 2013).

To mark the playful inquiry, the "doll-play" was often used in the Senior Interaktion project. Here, the material consisted of wooden dolls, a stage with three scenes (now, a change, the future), different materials of pictures, pipelines and cloth to dress the dolls and make the backdrops of the stages. To play with dolls stands in contrast to e.g. play "full-bodily." The idea is that with the doll scenario, it is easier to make things in small scale, it gives a better overview, and everyone knows how to play with dolls (Halse et al. 2010). When the doll scenario was used as a method in the Senior Interaktion project, it was emphasized among the design researchers that people should play themselves in the scenario (if they were a part of the scenario) and

there should be an anchor kept in the everyday practice. This was put forward to avoid the risk of these future scenarios turning into science fiction as well as a way to keep the possibility of people to have a stake or imagining themselves in these future scenarios (Halse et al. 2010).

## Oscillations of joyful-playful and serious-playful

In the moment with Ulla and Anne's resistance, the conversation and enactment oscillates between the doll scenario and the people around the table – and between the joyful, serious, and playful. It is both confusing and quite complex, but I will try to unfold it in the following statements. Ulla and Anne are skeptical toward the idea of meeting new people on their trip in the doll scenario. It splits the group into two parallel tracks: 1) The first is especially run by the project group and private partners, which is mostly concerned with the artificial doll scenario. This group continues with the exploration of what technological device to use so these two groups of dolls can meet. This goes on for a while without taking the resistance of the two women into account. 2) The second track is run by the two women and seems to be mostly concerned with sociality of their everyday life. Anne and Ulla continue with a discussion of whether they should accept to meet with these strangers or if it is acceptable to turn the request down. There is an oscillation between the serious and the joyful/playful.

First, Ulla and Anne are being involved in the creation of the doll scenario. It is a playful technique to support the groups' work in imagining the possibility of the future. This playful imagining is though based on the everyday life of the senior citizens, and in this moment interfering with the women's perception of socializing – they don't like to meet with people they don't know. There is an oscillation here between the serious investments based on a current everyday of Anne and Ulla, versus the playful doll scenario the group is in the middle of making. The playful doll scenario should create space for possibilities of the future but in this moment, we are all suddenly brought back to the current social practice of these women.

Secondly, Ulla and Anne react very skeptically toward the suggestions of these strangers joining them on the trip in the doll scenario. At the same time, the group around the table makes fun with whether "Mats and Lise" are nice people and here referring to them as persons (not as dolls). There is an oscillation that takes place

between the skepticism enacted in relation to the doll scenario and to keep the joyful atmosphere among the group around the table, which also includes Anne and Ulla. The latter means that the women's skepticism is softened and maybe also reduced by laughing and joking. The joyfulness keeps the flow of the group work but at the same time, it also blurs the seriousness of the resistance.

Finally, there is oscillation between playing yourself and "just" pretending. The women are on one hand involved in the doll scenario as playing themselves; the same goes for Henry, the sports instructor, who is part of the (doll scenario) "trip to the park." But, to persuade the women to accept these new people they are told by the project group to "pretend" that they know the new people a little – something that makes Ulla confused. The oscillation between playful, joyful and serious shifts among the different people around the table as well as the artificial doll-scenario and the existing everyday life. It is enacting in different versions among the different practices also within the same person.

## The playful setup meets the idiot

When introducing the doll play as an exercise in these co-design workshops I have often experienced rather skeptical comments both in the Senior Interaktion project but also in projects before that. People feel they are treated as kids and cannot understand why we just cannot talk about things as grownups. There are several reasons for that and for using the doll play also mentioned above. First, it has to do with the idea of making people able to distance themselves a bit from their current everyday life and imagine possibilities for the future. The problem is that the very joyful atmosphere in this moment somehow makes the project group including the partners forget what we are doing. Instead of listening to their resistance, the women are persuaded to just pretend that they know these people a little and their resistance is more or less ignored. I have framed especially Ulla but also Anne as idiots in this moment. It has mainly to do with how their behavior slowed us all down (for a short while) but more importantly made me ask: "What we are busy doing?" The question is how can we navigate to make the right balance of evoking imaginings of the "future" with a playful approach, but at the same time take into account the seriousness of the situation for the people around the table?

In this moment, the group creates a situation in which we instead confirm the skepticism of the doll play as a serious exercise. We are ignoring the seriousness of their everyday practices, so why should they then accept doll play as a serious enactment of what could be? What Ulla and Anne make visible with their behavior is how the joyful undermines the playful – or rather the seriousness of the playful in this moment. The playful enactment of future possibilities can be both joyful and serious, but in this moment the joyful overshadows the seriousness or that we are trying to change these women's social practice without listening to their skepticism.

# Unbending resistance toward workshop invitation

With the resistance, unfolded in the previous section, I pointed to the oscillation of the serious and the playful in the encounter as well as how it puts a question mark on the relation between (investing) the existing everyday life and "just" pretending. The final resistance I will point to here is a rejection of the invitation to participate in the workshop.

The following is an account of a meeting that takes place at one of the activity centers for senior citizens, which has been involved in the project. The activity center is a big place with a great number of activity possibilities every day, both weekly scheduled and more improvised trips, etc. The group of researchers from the project visited this place as preparation for the third and final workshop. On the tour around the house to take some pictures to use for the coming workshop, the group of researchers coincidentally happened to drop in on a group of knitting women's weekly gathering. Some of them have taken part in previous activities in the project, including the two workshops. It is a joyful reunion with the women. In the following ethnographic account it is revealed how and why some of these women have accepted the project's invitation to the workshop – but some have not.

### "We are not interested in technology!"
Five or six women are sitting around a table in the middle of a big room when my colleagues and I enter. The room is filled with many different materials like yarn, fabric, cloth, and other things for needlework. The conversation around the table

circles around knitting and embroidery. I know that the women have received the letter with an invitation to our next workshop, so I ask if they are coming. Kirsten and Esther promptly reply that they are coming and have already signed up. They seem happy to take part again. There are some women around the table, who has not taken part in the two earlier workshops. They ask us about the workshop but also make it explicit that they do not dare to come.

One of them explains that she is happy that the others will look into it first, then she might attend at a later occasion when she has heard more about it. Ingrid enters through the door right behind me. She participated in the two first workshops. I turn to her and very promptly ask if she is going to participate again. *"No, I'm not going to attend next time,"* she replies. I am a bit surprised, I didn't expect this answer, but I still manage to ask her why. Ingrid answers very straightforwardly: *"I think there was too much about technology in the last one, and I'm not really interested in that…."*

Betty who has been sitting silently at the table all the time looks out from behind a newspaper and supports Ingrid: *"No. We are not coming. I don't think it was good last time. But the first time was really interesting."* The atmosphere turns a bit awkward. I am not sure how to respond to their skepticism. They were really committed and valued participants at the previous workshops and I would really like them to come again. But I won't push them to take part again. None of my colleagues respond to these comments, we're all maybe taken by surprise by the women's rejection. So, we silently just accept their rejection without any further questions.

Esther breaks the silence: *"The lunch was also better the first time."* I manage to continue the conversation with the women but stay on the subject: knitting. Before we leave, some of my colleagues take some pictures of the knitting women for the workshop, and I confirm with Kirsten and Esther that they are still coming. On our way out, Esther shouts: *"Do we get Sarah Bernhard cakes again?"*

## An unbending rejection

In this moment, there is a very explicit rejection of the project's invitation to take part in the last workshop. It is a strong resistance that leaves no openings for making them attend the workshop or engage in the project again. What they articulate as the reason for not taking part again is a fundamental part of the project – the technology. It is

based on their participation in the previous workshop, where they also took part in the exploration of the concept of super dots in relation to their everyday life and the development of new service concepts.

It is a resistance that is difficult to handle, at least I feel so in the moment. It is an unbending resistance. They don't want to take part again and we can't really force them to do so. Instead, it becomes this awkward moment when the women's rejection is left a bit out in the open. What was troublesome to me was the feeling of not being able to do anything with their rejection and to maybe make them come again – I will return to this frustration. At the same time, it also disconcerted me that my colleagues seemed unaffected by this incident – something that made me feel a bit too sensitive.

## An invitation to design with the project

The women are all being invited to the workshop to take part as co-designers in something that is expected to be of relevance to them. The idea of co-design and participatory design is to explore and design for a certain context – and to do that together with people (as well as organizations, companies, or institutions) who could have some kind of stake in or be influenced by this design. This is often described as designing with, by, and for these people. There is though a need of inviting them first and making them come and take part to be able to do that. It also means that those who are invited to the workshops are people the project finds relevant for what is being designed – and it is expected the other way around that the people who decide to come find the project relevant to take part in.

But why some people accept the invitation to come and why some don't is rarely being inquired and it is not always made clear to the design researchers. The participants are rarely asked – at least not very directly. In the Senior Interaktion project, it was often articulated among the design researchers that "whoever comes come." It is on one hand a response to a critique of how the project never will be able to involve all relevant actors and at the same time can't be sure that the right people will show up. On the other hand, this sentence was also used as an argument for not asking people why they accepted the invitation and took part in the workshops – or why they didn't. In the following section, I will return to this moment with the knitting women, how they react to the invitation, as well as how I have framed Ingrid as the idiot in this moment.

I experienced the meetings with the women as rather unique i.e. to get an insight into why some had not taken part at all, why some wanted to take part again, and at the same time why some chose not to take part again. The coincidental meeting with the women is a result of the former workshop and preparations for the next one to come. Roughly speaking, this situation could be seen as three different modes of relating to the workshops. There is the rejecting participation by Ingrid and Betty, who make explicit that they do not want to attend the next workshop. Their reason is that they are not interested in technology, which was central in the last workshop and in the project in general. It is an unbending rejection and they don't explain it any further. This participation stands in contrast to the accepting participation by Kirsten and Esther, who make explicit that they are going to come again. They seem happy to take part. They don't give any further reasons for their acceptance except Esther's comments about the cake and the lunch. Furthermore, there is the curious, though anxious, participation by the rest of the knitting women who have not been taking part in the workshops at all. They find it too intimidating and are nervous to do that – and would rather wait until the others have tried it out.

## The workshop invitation meets the idiot

I have here framed Ingrid as the idiot. Her participation (literally) overspills the frame of the event (the workshop). It happens outside the workshop, which is often the only part that is reported in co-design and participatory design literature ("workshopping literature" as one of my colleagues have called it). At the same time, the women also write themselves and their critique out of the project by rejecting to take part again.

But, I have also framed Ingrid as an idiot here as she is: only partly explaining herself. I am not sure I could have asked but I do not even try to go deeper into why she rejects to take part again except that she isn't interested in technology (and maybe that is reason enough). At the same time, she is trying to murmur that there is something more important by rejecting to take part again. She could have come just for social reasons or the cake. On some (unarticulated) level, I knew that the workshops were used for other things than being a co-designer and with a stake in the object of the project, so it surprises me and I didn't expect to be turned down. There is really something more important.

Finally, I framed her as an idiot as she at least made me stop for a short while and ask "what are we busy doing?" What disconcerted me by this rejection of the invitation to take part was that no one (including me) went into questioning the rejection at a more detailed level. It is difficult and maybe not an option to try to persuade them to participate again as I mentioned earlier. However, their reason for not taking part in the project again could still be important to the project. The participants who seem to have something at stake or are engaged (though negatively) in relation to the aim of the project of developing technology are excluded. Instead, the ones the project makes participate are included not because of the object of the project but according to their taste for cake! Unfolding this moment with the women raises the questions of whom the project attracts and who becomes interested. Furthermore, who and why do some actors become important to the project and some not as well as how and why are some included and some excluded?

What the idiot makes visible here in this moment is how there is a lack of space in the project set-up for the skeptical. What about those who do not find the project or parts of the project useful in relation to their everyday life like the question of technology? The question is, does the project not depend on the participation of the skeptics to really unpack the topic of seniors' technology use or non-use? Or does the project need to accept that it attracts people according to their taste for cake?

By using the conceptual term of the idiot to turn the attention to this troublesome moment and the resistance has also led to a small insight into the participation of these different women – and with that a description of how they relate to these workshop encounters. They use them for different things, which nuances but also complicates the description of how the project involves citizens in designing new service concepts. At least it gives another description of what co-design is – and what it means, "to have a stake in" when people come for the lunch, but don't come because they find the project intimidating. I will return to this and the question of *interessement* and meaningful participation in chapter six.

## The idiot challenges the "innocent"
In this chapter, I described and unfolded the small troublesome moments I experienced being a facilitator and as a person "in front" of the project. The topic here becomes a resistance, and more specifically a resistance in meetings between project

and citizens in co-design and citizen involvement. These moments all contain a resistance from the citizens and the question I asked was how this resistance is coming into being – but also why the resistance becomes troublesome. This is inquired and described through the heuristic of idiot.

The resistance is troublesome in these moments since it is disturbing my work as facilitator and as a person "in front" of the project – and the group work and the process of citizen involvement as such. It is troublesome because it disturbs, but also because it is difficult to handle, especially when the resistance becomes non-compromising and unbending. The resistance from the citizens in these moments was a resistance toward what-if questions, the use of the concept of the super dots, the suggestion to meet unfamiliar people as well as the invitation to the final workshop. It was a resistance that emerged as a clash between on the one hand the project and on the other hand the current everyday life and social practices of the citizens, the imaginings of the future – and future needs as well as in general the choice of how they want to live their lives. The project's assumptions and suggestions did not fit with or were not relevant to these citizens.

The resistance – or the idiot in these moments – is troublesome because the participation went against the consensual way of how to take part in these co-design meetings – or how it was expected (a non-compromising resistance and too skeptical in the doll-play); and/or their participation fell outside the frame of the meeting (silence or rejecting to take part at all). The resistance was also difficult to grasp within the discourse of co-design's focus and it fell outside the format and reporting from the meetings. I have also framed the "resisting" citizens as idiots here since they slowed me (us) down, they "murmured" there is something more important and they made me ask, "What have we been so busy doing?" Questions that went beyond the concerns of co-design methods, design explorations as well as technological development that is otherwise at the center of the co-design meetings.

But what does the idiot do for this analysis of the small troublesome moments? The idiot makes things visible that are otherwise taken as self-evident and challenges what is otherwise taken for granted. It makes visible how the design materials, artifacts and concepts of the project are prescribing particular assumptions together with particular suggestions in relation to the citizens' everyday and how to design new services for senior citizens in Copenhagen. These prescriptions define a

specific space of action and negotiation in these meetings of citizens, design researchers, employees from the public sector and private partners. The idiot makes visible how these prescriptions are not innocent "framings" but rather problematic ordering devices in the meeting with the citizens in these meetings of co-design and citizen involvement.

I have framed the resistance here as troublesome and idiotic – and described how it went against the consensual way of participating in these meetings. But, it is a resistance that should have been expected and that there should have been room for in a co-design workshop with focus on designing with and for these invited actors as well as aligning controversies. In the following chapter, I continue with the question of why the resistance becomes troublesome – but first I ask the question of what these small troublesome moments say about participation in co-design and participatory design, which is often characterized as direct, meaningful, and on an equal footing.

# 6: Resistance – direct, meaningful, and equal participation?

In the previous chapter, I asked how resistance was coming into being but also why the resistance became troublesome and idiotic in these moments. In this chapter, I continue with these small troublesome moments, but now with the objective of exploring why what the idiot makes visible challenges the interpretation of participation in co-design and participatory design. These design traditions emphasize that the inquiry and design happens with the citizens (or users and other "relevant" people) and to emphasize the "with" participation is normatively described as direct and genuine; meaningful and relevant for the people who take part, as well as on equal footing.

The chapter is therefore split into three parts, where each has one of these characteristics of participation in focus. Here, I use the participation of the idiot from the small troublesome moments – together with some of the "steps of translation" (Callon 1986) - to analyze, but also to raise specific questions in relation to participation in co-design and participatory design. What the idiot makes visible in these moments in different ways questions these normative characteristics of participation in workshops, which is not always direct, meaningful and on equal terms – or at least it opens up a discussion of what it means when participation is characterized in these ways.

Before turning to the three parts, I will in the following section describe the characterization of participation in co-design and participatory design through the literature. This is to give a picture of how these definitions of participation are described within the field.

## Three characteristics of participation

**Direct participation** is emphasized in participatory design and co-design as a critique of system design and the like where design happens with no direct influence by the "users" or insight into the everyday practices that are being designed for (Suchman 2002). Originally, in participatory design it was a way to empower the workers, when (new) technology was introduced at work places. To involve the workers directly in

the design process was a way to give them influence on what was being designed and at the same time get insight into their work practices (Simonsen and Robertson 2013). It also has a more pragmatic purpose to avoid what Suchman (2002) describes as design from nowhere inspired by Haraway's "knowledge from nowhere". She problematizes this kind of system design that happens without knowledge of existing practices. Instead, she argues for blurring the boundaries between design and use in an attempt to create what she calls artful integration, where new practices and technology grow out of old practices and technology. In her case (and with her profession) Suchman (2002) argues for an ethnomethodological approach of making studies of practice. The Scandinavian tradition of participatory design has instead argued for direct participation in the design process as a way to blur the boundaries between design and use.

The following is a description of how direct and genuine participation is imagined:

> *…the fundamental transcendence of the users' role from being merely informants to being legitimate and acknowledge participants in the design process. This role is established - for example - when users are not just answering questions in an interview about their point of view or knowledge of a particular issue, but are asked to step up, take the pen in hand, stand in front of the large whiteboard together with fellow colleagues and designers, and participate in drawing and sketching how the work process unfolds as seen from their perspectives.* (Simonsen and Robertson 2013, 5)

As the quote describes the idea with defining and encouraging genuine participation is to go from informant to design partner – and to do that by making the "design world" accessible. The different exercises, design materials, and artifacts brought into the workshops are therefore often designed to be recognizable and familiar to the different participants such as the wood dolls, pipe cleansers, carbon, and polystyrene. Ehn (1993) described this as how the non-designers/users took part in the language game of design and the designers on the other hand took part in the language game of use in an article about the early Participatory Design projects.

In that sense genuine and direct participation is associated with an embodied interaction in the design work – the invited design partners sit together with the design researchers at the same table. With the embodied interaction, I mean that it is both about raising your voice but also interacting with the design material and artifacts – or joining the whiteboard as described in the quote above. In chapter five in the moment of Carl's resistance and silence I also described this with the "loud methods" of telling, making, and enacting, which is another way of illustrating the ideal participation as being active both in terms of voice and an embodied interaction. When I return to direct and genuine participation in the following section, I will discuss it in relation to the moment of Carl's resistance.

The next characteristic of participation is the idea of **meaningful or relevant participation** – or that is should be meaningful and relevant for the invited people to take part. As mentioned, the participants are participatory design and co-design actors viewed as design partners who can take part on equal footing with the rest of the partners. It is articulated that the project design *with* and *for* people to whom what is designed is relevant. This at the same time means that it is expected (taken for granted) that those who take part find the topic of the project relevant or that they have a stake in it – or the project should make it relevant or meaningful for these people to take part (Simonsen and Robertson 2013).

Participatory Design and co-design projects therefore stand in contrast to more commercial situations of involvement as e.g. focus group interviews, where participants get presents, gift certificates, or money for their participation. Participants are very rarely paid for their attendance, as they are seen as equal design partners, with a stake and interest in the design project, which on the other hand gives these participants an opportunity to influence the inquiry and design.

But what does meaningful participation mean? To have a meaning (a purpose or a stake) or something is meaningful to you (matters or makes sense) is in one way or another describing that what you participate in is relevant to you. Meaningfulness is in that sense important for the project to "secure" the genuine and direct participation in which the actors have a stake in or feel ownership of the project. But what is meaningful to the participants and what their reason is for taking part (or not taking part) can differ and come in many versions of relating to the workshop. When I return to relevant and meaningful participation in the following section it is with a

focus on the moment of Ulla and Anne's as well as Ingrid's resistance, but mainly with an emphasis on the techniques and tricks the project uses to make it meaningful and relevant for those taking part.

The last participation characterized here is connected to the genuine participation, which is **participation on equal footing**. In the project application, it is described as follows:

> *Both user groups[11] participate on an equal footing with the other parties in the workshops and other activities in the three development courses, which use user-driven innovation methods, including ethnographic snapshots conceptualizations of early prototyping.* (Senior Interaktion, project application, April 2009).

In the literature of co-design and participatory design, it is also described as having an equal voice, to be equal partners as well as how *"design should be cooperative with an equal importance and responsibility for all stakeholders"* (Simonsen and Robertson 2013, 150).

Participation on equal footing is about having the same influence on the decisions, taking part on the same premises and/or being able to take part with your own stakes in the topic. Equal is a difficult term and difficult to describe what exactly it is about. It very easily becomes a micro detailed evaluation of everyone's influence - and a question of power relation. I though try to address the question of equal participation with the circumstance for this to be possible with unfolding the relation between prepared and unprepared participation. Here I return to the moment of Ulla and her resistance toward the what-if questions.

We have now followed how the description of participation is done in the literature as an outset for the inquiry of why what the idiot makes visible becomes troublesome in relation to the normative description of participation in co-design and participatory design.

Now, we turn to the question of direct and genuine participation in relation to the moment of Carl's resistance.

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[11] "Both user groups" refer to an idea there was in the beginning of the project to have what was characterized as "young elderlies" and "old elderlies" as two different user groups.

# Direct participation, invented actors, and silence

The terms "spokespersons and representatives" within ANT and more specifically are one step in Callon's (1986) sociology of translation. The idea of participation as direct and genuine is to involve the influenced actors, what you often call stakeholders, and/or potential users as design partners. This is done with the aim of collaborating with these "design partners" in a 1:1 relation and preferably not with spokespersons. This idea is complicated among other things by the participation of employees from different public institutions or private companies, as you would image that they somehow are present not only representing themselves but also as accountable to the institution or organization where they work. But it gets even more complicated when those that are designed for are "invented actors" not present at the table (in flesh and blood) or people being present though silent in the group work.

## Direct participation and spokespersons

Spokespersons means - as also described in chapter three - actors who speak on behalf of others, either human or non-human actors. The question is whom do the spokespersons speak on behalf of and are they representative? The last refers to the question of whether the constituencies are aligned with the spokespersons or will they defect? (Callon 1986). In his dissertation, Jens Pedersen (2007) problematized the discourse on representation and spokespersons within participatory design and co-design – or rather the lack of taking this into consideration. There is this strong focus on direct and genuine participation – and how to encourage and evoke this through co-design methods and design materials. But what is often forgotten, overlooked, or not taken into consideration is the aspect of whether what or who is present in the workshops becomes spokespersons, for what constituencies they speak or take part on behave of, as well as whether the constituencies are aligned and pacified. This discussion is also very relevant in relation to the Senior Interaktion project. But in this case, with the return to the moment of Carl's resistance, there is something else and a bit more complicated at play.

## Spokespersons for invented actors

In this moment of Carl's resistance, the partners ally themselves with the concepts and the props and defines the purpose of the concepts, which is to make it possible to

get information from the Sailing Club without being physically present. Instead of Carl, who resists this as a possible future need, the constellation gets Ulla onboard, and together they invent some "lonely and immobile" actors, which keep the concept and technology relevant.

The "lonely and immobile" actors are already made part of the Senior Interaktion project from the beginning through the project application. Here the "lonely seniors in Copenhagen" are one of the reasons made to seek funding for this project. They are described as those citizens to whom cleaning help becomes a way to seek comfort and company, and it is some of those citizens the project wants to make more socially active with other senior citizens to be able to cut down on "hands" needed in the care sector – to say it a bit roughly (Senior Interaktion, project application, April 2009). The problem described in the project application was based on earlier research, but never inquired in this project. To make them part of the workshop these "lonely and immobile" actors are mobilized and brought in to the workshop in a combination of the story of Ulla as well as the work of the project group and partners. The "mobile and lonely" actors are not brought into the workshops themselves (in flesh and blood) and instead Ulla makes herself the spokesperson. But the question is where or what is the constituency of "lonely and immobile" actors – does it exist and is it aligned?

With an agenda inscribed in the project of also helping the lonely actors, the question of "what about the lonely elderlies" was often raised by outsiders the project met. The project's answer was always: "…that you have to start somewhere and here it is more suitable to start with the resourceful – and then it can spread to the lonely elderlies, the immobile and those who are mostly sitting at home in the long term"[12]. But the concern is that the problem can't be unpacked as something that can be designed for. Why they are immobile, whether they are lonely (and how, when and why), if they want to get out more, etc., can't be asked or at least not answered when they are not taking part. The premise is direct and genuine participation, so the subject will not be inquired in any other way. And at the same time they can't reject the

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[12] You can easily have the idea that what you have done of "good" for the resourceful citizens will spread to the e.g. "immobile and lonely actor." Though, in this way it becomes sort of a matter of serendipity and something that is out of the design researchers' and the project's hands. It also means that no one has to be responsible or may become accountable to whether this happens.

possibilities that are being imagined by this group – or make the exploration more nuanced. The mobilized – and invented – actors are harmless.


## Spokespersons for silence

But it's a double act – the group both makes themselves spokespersons for the "immobile and lonely" actors and also for Carl and his everyday life in his Sailing Club. The last especially happens since Carl stays more or less silent and no one is listening to this silence.

Dagny Stuedahl (Mörtberg and Studedahl 2005; Stuedahl 2010) who has written several articles on "silence and silence in participatory design," emphasizes that silence is not absence. Silence should be understood as a present and active part of social practice (Stuedahl 2010). When your are silent like Carl in this moment you can still be active in terms of just being present at the table as well as physically by e.g. interacting with the other actors like the dolls and props. Carl, though, also stays out of this last part with his participation, which could characterize his participation more in terms of passivity[13] – at least in relation to what is expected (and taken for granted) in the discourse of direct and genuine participation. Carl's silence could be a silent acceptance of the rest of the group's work. In contrast, it could also be a silent or passive resistance (Ong 2001), where Carl stays quiet and passive to "express" that he doesn't agree with the way the group uses his sailing club. Either way, the silence and passivity here becomes an active choice of either agreeing or disagreeing. Finally, the silence and resistance could also be an expression of lack of relevance or that the situation – the others' enthusiasm – is too overwhelming.

Carl's silence is a present part of the collaboration around the table but space is not made for it; the others are not slowed down by it – but are busy with making themselves spokespersons for someone not present at the table. Carl transfers himself or is transferred into silence and passivity at least when it comes to the discourse of direct and genuine participation, which is characterized as a 1:1 design partner relation as well as "not just being an informant".

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[13] In chapter eight I will return to passivity, where it is described as a pleasure. Law (2001) has described how passivity can be seen as a pleasure of abandoned agency and instead seeks care and non-responsibility. This could in some sense also have been the case here with Carl.

Again you can ask if the spokespersons (the group of partners and Ulla) are representatives for Carl or Carl's silence is a way to betray and defect the attempt at enrolling him and his everyday life into the project. That we don't really know. Callon raises here the concern of speak for others in relation to especially the scallops, which everyone knows do not have an articulated language:

> *Using the notion of spokesmen for all the actors involved at different stages of the process of representation does not present any problem. To speak for others is to first silence those in whose name we speak. It is certainly very difficult to silence human beings in a definitive manner but it is more difficult to speak in the name of the entities that do not possess an articulate language: this supposes the need for continuous adjustments and devices of interessement that are infinitely more sophisticated.* (Callon 1986, 216)

The concern of speaking for others can also be raised here both in relation to actors that in flesh and blood never have been present[14] in the project but just as stories, numbers and imaginations as well as in situations in which people speak on behalf of other people (present at the table) you expect have an articulate language and are able to speak for themselves. On one hand the rest of the group make themselves spokespersons on behalf on these actors without further consideration of whether they are representative. It is something that complicates the question of what direct participation - and participation in a 1:1 relation - means. On the other hand there is also the question of whether everyone can take part in the co-design and participatory design meetings. Maybe these "invented actors" and "silent – and passive – people" cannot speak "the language of loud methods", which is put forward in these workshops. The "direct and genuine" participation discourse and methods are supposed to be very including, but here they instead could become excluding. Here, it is not non-human actors as in Callon's story, but still a situation of spokespersons and actors that "can't speak up", which could point to questions of who is present?, who speaks for whom? - but more importantly points to the need for continuous

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[14] It is complicated to write that there were not any "lonely" present at the workshop. But the whole category "lonely elderly" is complicated, e.g. what does it means to be lonely?, who defines whom as being lonely?, is loneliness e.g. fixed or flickering? A discussion that I will not go into here, but some questions that could have been relevant to open up these numbers, stories and imaginations.

adjustments and devices of interessement in relation to co-design and very delicate matters, which are infinitely more sophisticated.

# Meaningful participation, interest, and cake

In this part of the chapter we turn from the direct participation and questions of spokespersons to instead meaningful participation and tricks and techniques of interessement.

The reason for recalling the direct and genuine participation is to give those who are (can be) influenced or may have an interest in the matter an opportunity to take part and make their influence. It is difficult to talk about people being directly influenced by what is being designed when working with this broad collaboration with e.g. the Copenhagen municipality in projects that "cover" a broad area or number of actors. These projects are different from the previous and especially early Participatory Design projects in which they were happening with certain workplaces and/or job positions, where new technology were going to be implemented. But regardless of that, direct and genuine participation is very much about the design researchers getting an insight into these people's lives and practices as a basis for designing something that makes sense and is relevant. So there is a mutual exchange in question of meaningful participation in which on the one hand it is about making it meaningful and relevant to those involved participants – all while these involved people should be relevant and their everyday / working practices should make sense to the project.

## Interessement and meaningful participation

I here want to bring in again and discuss another step of translation: Interessement, which refers to "in between" and Callon describes how the work of getting actor's interest is to create arrangements that can be placed between the target actors and other threats. This process contains a multilateral group of tricks (seduction), negotiations, and trial of strengths or violence. The reason why I want to bring in this step of translation of Callon's work in connection with the question of meaningful and relevant participation is to open up what it means for the design researchers' work but also to nuance this idea of meaningful participation.

When a participatory design and co-design project is established there seems to be the impression that there is just an interest out there in the project just waiting for the project to come by so to speak, so the people with "the interest" can be given the opportunity to make their influence. But this impression blurs the part of the design researcher's work that includes recruiting – priming and making people interested to come and take part – as well as the continual process of keeping this interest so people will stay and come again. In other words, it is a work that can be related to the step of interessement, in which it is important for the design researchers to get citizens etc. on board and therefore also to use different techniques and tricks to make these alliances interesting and to keep other threads away.

## Techniques and tricks to make it meaningful and relevant

I here want to return to the Senior Interaktion project and the workshops described in chapter five. First of all, the main thing must be that people are interested in the object of the project – or it makes sense to them in one way or another. But for the design researchers to make it meaningful can mean a lot of different things and not necessarily (only) to make the main object of the project "to design new services" meaningful or relevant for those the project wants to interest and enroll. Instead there are also other kinds of tricks, methods of seduction, or negotiations. These techniques and tricks can be to make explicit that the invited people's participation matters, to connect with them personally and socially, as well as, to make them feel secure and comfortable in different ways.

To make it comfortable was for example done in the three workshops by:
- "Using" people's everyday life (e.g. Carl's Sailing Club)
- Creating a joyful group work (e.g. the doll play with the trip to the park)
- Placing the citizens in groups with some of the people they already knew
- Making sure that new and strange technology was introduced slowly and with familiar materials (the concept of the Super Dots and the props)
- Socializing to make us from the project familiar faces
- Providing morning coffee, lunch, and cake as part of the workshops.

## Confirmation of the project's relevance

The project doesn't pay the participants for the ideological reason that it should be meaningful and relevant for people to take part, but at least some of these different techniques, tricks, and methods of seduction blur the picture of what meaningful means in relation to the co-design and participatory design – or most importantly that it is relevant doesn't necessarily mean that the object of the project is the reason. Callon writes in relation to this, *"The interessement, if successful, confirms (more or less completely) the validity of the problematization and the alliance it implies"* (Callon 1986, 209–210). What he writes here is that if the alliances can be locked into place, they confirm that the problematization formulated by the translating actors are right – more or less.

There is a risk here that I take Callon's quote a bit too literally here but still in the Senior Interaktion project, it was often formulated that "if the people found it meaningful, they would come again", an articulation that more or less implies – but with a more vague formulation – that if people find that the project makes sense and is relevant to them, they will take part. In other words, the presence of fifteen elderlies who continue to come and take part in the project's workshop activities confirms that the project is relevant. What are though rarely reported and discussed are what techniques and tricks are used to make these people interested in coming – and coming again, as well as why people find it meaningful and relevant to use their time on the project. It is maybe not important as long as they just come and take part – but what does it mean for the confirmation of the project's relevance if people are mostly there for the social gatherings, joyful atmosphere, and the lunch and cake?

In relation to the situation with Ingrid, I want to add that I, by coincidence, observed how one of my colleagues (not with any bad intentions, but because of cancellations from other participants) in the morning just when we were about to start the second workshop persuaded Ingrid to leave the group with Betty, Esther, and Kirsten (her friends from the activity center). She was instead placed in another group with two, to her, strange people. At that moment, there was a breach with what otherwise had been a central aim in our preparation, namely to create circumstances for a familiar, secure, and friendly atmosphere for the elderlies' participation. Ingrid did not look happy about the move to another group. With this extension to the story, I maybe put doubt on Ingrid's reason for rejecting to participate again – it could also

have been a reaction to the uncomfortable situation at the last workshop. This is not really my point, but rather to put on display the complexity of these meetings of how they are made meaningful and the rather practical circumstances in which the project also obstructs itself.

There are many things at play in these meetings, which blur the picture of what is meaningful and relevant – and what is meaningful and relevant of course differs between the different partakers. However, I find it important to nuance the picture of why people come and take part – and why the project invites these people to take part – at least if the presence of these partakers are used to confirm the relevance of the project.

# On equal footing, ready-mades, and unprepared participation

Here in the final part, we return to the what-if questions in this moment of Ulla's resistance. I asked earlier whether equal participation means to have the same influence on the decisions, take part on the same premises, and/or to be able to take part with your own stakes in the topic. In the following section, I will address this question by unfolding the relation between prepared and unprepared participation in relation to the workshop situation.

## Ready-mades

In this moment, the what-if questions magically appear in the workshops. They are, as mentioned, created by the researchers and presented by the facilitators in the workshop. In that sense, there is nothing especially magical about them. But they turn up as these ready-mades in this moment of the collaboration. They are prepared and known to the project group but especially the seniors are novices and unprimed in relation to these suggestions. At the same time they are inscribed with the project's assumptions and ideas of the present and the future. Instead of just being triggering devices, they also become these devices that should frame the collaborative work.

The design materials and artifacts are referred to primarily as something that can create space for everyone to bring their agenda into play. It is in many ways also the intention. But what co-design and participatory design here seem to forget is on

one hand to make the design researchers' intentions and stakes more explicit. What is not always made explicit in co-design and participatory design is how the various intervening entries – design materials and artifacts – are also highly agenda-leading with the project's assumptions and concepts inscribed. It is not just for the citizens (we all probably know that on some level), but this sentence "we are designing with and *for"* blurs the pictures of these relations and the question of equal participation. This relates to the second thing co-design and participatory design forgets or overlooks, namely the question about being prepared or not prepared.

## Prepared and unprepared participation

The magical appearance of the what-if questions creates an unbalanced situation of who is prepared, which in this case is me; and unprepared participants, which is primarily Ulla but also Anne (her neighbor) and the two partners. I write primarily as this is the project's first meeting with Ulla. Anne has taken part in one of the dialogue meetings before this workshop where she was introduced to the idea of the project and we heard about her everyday life. So Anne was primed by the project. Ulla is new to the project and has heard about the workshop through her neighbor, Anne, so Ulla's way into the workshop and to how she could have been primed goes through Anne. This also means that Ulla is not recruited through one of the activity centers like the rest of the workshop participants.

Some are prepared and primed – and some are not in relation to these what-if questions, which somehow problematize what I started out with, namely the participation on equal footing. Taking part on equal terms on one hand comes down to how prepared you are for being able to relate to, make your influence on, and imagine possibilities for your future everyday practice based on the ready-made suggestion by the project. In other words how prepared are you for direct and genuine participation? Ulla though succeeds very well despite her being unprepared with relating to these questions and to make her influence – here by turning them down.

Ulla also turns the question of who is prepared around. Who is prepared for Ulla's resistance? In this moment, the project including me is not particularly well-prepared for Ulla. The resistance "magically" appears in this moment and it turns out to be difficult to handle within the frame of this workshop. The question is, does the resistance become troublesome because we're not prepared for it – for the participant?

Does the project need to be better prepared for the participants? I'm not sure that is the right question or at least that there is more to it than that, which I will try to elucidate with the following story. It also points to this unbalanced situation of being prepared and not prepared.

## A "tight" setup and the great project-machine

After one of the workshops, there was a small evaluation among the project group and some of the private partners, in which the tight schedule of the workshop was problematized by both partners and the project group. It was explained by one of the design researchers that the short time made the facilitators feel that they were doing or had to do "all" the work in the workshop – and the "actual" involvement of the citizens was questioned. The situation was compared to how you as parents sometimes treat small kids – you know it is best to let them do it themselves, but because of lack of time you end up doing it for them. In the evaluation it evolved into a discussion of the right number of assignments and whether the meeting could be expanded in time.[15]

This small story describes another unbalanced situation in which the citizens are pictured as being treated as kids while the design researchers and partners are doing the work for them – in other words, the pacified elderlies and the too busy facilitators. It both put a question on direct and genuine as well as equal participation. The story describes two important issues. The first is time and a rather tight schedule in these meetings, which complicates the relation between the different "design partners" – and it becomes the project group and partners who take over the work that needs to be done in order to get through with the planned program and exercises. This is something that could also point to why the resistance becomes troublesome – there is little time and space for this troublesomeness and slowing down in these meetings with the tight schedule, the planned program as well as premade materials and format for the outcomes, which also was the concern in the moment of Ulla's resistance.

In this story, this concern is brought to the table with questions of adjusting the practical circumstances of time and the amount of work. This aspect is important but it stays within the frame and methods of the meeting and only leaves small

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[15] The workshops lasted four hours including breaks and lunch, and included different presentations by the project and partners from the Municipality, besides the "group work."

adjustments possible. The actual relation and collaboration with the citizens as well as the other partners are not brought up for consideration. A relevant discussion here could have been this feeling of the parents-kid relation, which also points to what I brought up earlier of the prepared and unprepared participation and how it complicates the question of participating on equal footing.

This shouldn't be understood as an argumentation for creating meetings where the ideal is that everyone is equally prepared – or the project was more prepared for the citizens. What I instead try to point to with this story is the complicated setup of these meetings where the project group on the one hand has made a very well prepared and orchestrated program with a tight schedule, as well as design materials and artifacts with agenda-leading inscriptions. Those who on the other side come and take part had maybe met the project one time before. They come more or less from the street so to speak and are imagine to participate "directly, genuinely, and on equal footing," and that it at the same time should be relevant and meaningful for them.

There is on one hand a need for this tight setup to manage the collaboration and be able to "get somewhere" in these meetings when people are more or less "coming from the street". On the other hand, it doesn't leave much space for getting to know each other including hesitation, to dwell on something, resist and go into a negotiation of the project's suggestions and concepts, etc. As mentioned earlier with Ulla and the question of being prepared and unprepared, it creates situations where who is prepared for whom or for what moves between the different practices in these moments. Ulla manages to resist the suggestions but we have difficulties adjusting to it – we're not prepared for this resistance and can't really "take it in."

A last thing I want to say about the story above is how it also shows that there were a lot of good efforts and good intentions in the project, but the "great project machine" was running. Here, the great project machine refers to the whole set-up of project application including plans and concepts, funding program obligations as well as various agendas of design researchers, the municipality and private partners. It made it difficult to slow down, look "outside" the tight and orchestrated frames, and ask questions like "what are we busy doing" with this way of involving citizens in the project. It was also difficult for the project to accommodate the resistance or critique from within the project group and partners.

# Participation and the troublesome resistance

In chapter five, I described how the idiot makes visible that the design materials, artifacts, design experiments and concepts of the project are not "innocent", i.e. that they are not neutral actors in these meetings, as something that should "just" support the collaboration and the design work. Instead, they prescribe a space of action and negotiation. In this chapter, I continued with these small troublesome moments but now with the objective of exploring why what the idiot makes visible challenges the interpretation of participation in co-design and participatory design, where it is normatively described as direct and genuine, meaningful and relevant as well as on equal footing. I discussed this with the use of Callon's steps of translation as well as the description of participation within the literature of co-design and participatory design.

In relation to direct and genuine participation, I described how the group members in the moment of Carl's resistance make themselves spokespersons for both the invented lonely and immobile actors as well as for the silent Carl and his Sailing Club. This is something that complicates the description of design happening in a 1:1 relation between the different partakers, but also raises the question of how to design with and for actors who can't speak the language of the "loud" methods. Secondly, I described how the project uses different techniques and tricks to make people come, stay, and take part again. It points to how these tricks and techniques – that don't always have to do with making the object of the project relevant – blur the picture of what is meaningful and relevant for the people who take part. The meaningfulness and relevance of the project is often confirmed by how people come and take part – but this confirmation is complicated, with people "just" coming for the cake (roughly said). Finally, in relation to the moment of Ulla's resistance, I described the unbalanced situation of prepared and unprepared participation in a complex set-up of people from "the street" and a well-prepared tight workshop schedule – but also how "who is prepared" here slips and moves among the different actors and their participation. I will continue this in the following with the question of why the resistance becomes troublesome.

Before continuing with this question I though want to emphasize – to avoid too many misunderstandings - that the requirement of participation is the problem of the project (Jensen and Winthereik 2013, 107). It is the project that has obligated

itself on citizen involvement and co-design with a requirement of equal, meaningful, and direct participation. The seniors, on the other hand, take part in the way they want to or in the ways it is possible for them to do so. And they seem to (mostly) have a great time. What I want to say with this is that the discussion of participation in co-design and participatory design and whether or how it is direct and genuine, meaningful and relevant or on equal footing is not to critique a "evil and powerful project and design researcher" who doesn't treat the invited participants well enough. Again participation is our problem; we have obligated ourselves to this kind of design situation and methods – the invited participants they can come and leave, as they want (in principle but sometimes they maybe find it inappropriate to do so).

## The troublesome participation

Why does the resistance become troublesome and idiotic? I already described this with the concept of the idiot in chapter five – the idiot's participation rejects the consensual way or falls out of the frame of these workshops and the expected participation. But it shouldn't have been – the resistance – the rejection of the project's suggestions and concepts, assumptions of everyday practices, and future needs, as well as the invitation to come again. I would say it should have been expected in a setup arguing for direct, meaningful, and equal participation. So, what is the problem?

I already described this briefly, especially in relation to the question of equal participation. Many of the participants are more or less people invited from the street (in a figurative sense). In order to make this kind of citizen involvement, the project creates a tight setup[16], to wear all through – where the format, the concepts, and the outcome are not entirely up for negotiation – or at least no one considers to take them up for negotiation. It is a well-prepared setup, and there is in many ways not so much space for negotiation especially if we also consider the obligation toward the project application, funding program, as well as the accommodation of the various agendas of researchers and partners. In other words, the participation becomes troublesome because we're not prepared for it – and it is or can be difficult to take into account in complex project set-ups or what I earlier referred to as the "great project machine

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[16] Whether it is the "kind of citizens" or it's the workshop methods, whichever comes first here – is somewhat a chicken and egg discussion. And both are probably managed by other circumstances such as the research agendas and cooperation with the municipality.

running" to illustrate the complexity, but also the time issue. There is no time or space of action to listen, dwell, hesitate and/or slow down.

## Is it taken seriously or as an act of "just pretending"?

But at least the resistance showed an engagement in what the project was about. I often had the feeling in these workshops that people came to these meetings, took part (for whatever reason), but didn't necessarily have to have a say – or had to have a stake in what was going on. It is a little difficult to articulate this feeling. It was not that people were unconcerned or unengaged, but I had this feeling of non-concern – a non-concern as if this was something we "just pretended" or this was something you just turned up for because it was fun and exciting to be part of, but nothing more. In these design situations, there is always an amount of playfulness and imagining – their needs to be, if we want to transcend the everyday life situation and imagine change or new possibilities for what have not yet come to be.

But when I write "just pretended" it refers to a feeling of something that wasn't anchored in the current situation and as something that would never be a possibility – at least not for these people taking part. "Luckily" Ulla, Anne, Carl, and Ingrid showed resistance and made their concerns of their participation explicit, which in these moments proved my feelings wrong. And it only later struck me, e.g. by writing the accounts of resistance, that this is not a feeling created by the presence of the people we invited – or at least not by that alone, but it rather has to do with the project group's focus in these meetings and the relation to the citizens. This is something the story from the evaluation with the "kids-parent-relations" also points to. It was somehow this mix of fun and exciting work where we from the project including the partners were running the show, but sometimes were disrupted by a serious resistance toward what the project tried to involve the citizens in.

What I want to point to with this is what was at play already in the moment of Ulla and Anne's resistance toward "new people joining their trip" – the oscillation between fun, playful and serious. The feeling of "just pretending" was also or maybe mostly on the side of the project group and partners. The question is, who took this seriously? And here, I don't mean the methods or the way of working, but the focus of designing new services for senior citizens that would improve well-being and quality of life – as well as relieving the care system.

I might have taken it too seriously together with Ulla, Carl, Anne, and Ingrid. This is not to praise myself or to be unfair to those who came for other reasons – and we weren't the only ones. But I think we need to ask: what are we actually here for? What is the purpose and what are we doing together? Does the resistance become troublesome because we're actually "just" pretending in these meetings of co-design and citizen involvement?

# 7: Conflicts and controversies: Managing the resistance

In the two previous chapters, we followed the resistance in four small troublesome moments, I experienced as facilitator and as a person "in front" of the project – and how the resistance became idiotic – disruptions – in these moments of co-design and citizen involvement. I continued in chapter six with the question of what the idiotic says about participation in co-design and participatory design. In this chapter we return to where I started, namely with the question of these moments being an act of failed facilitation. Following the inspiration from Michael (2011), I in this chapter continue with these four troublesome moments to question how the resistance was managed. I end this chapter with discussing what implication it has for co-design and participatory design when the resistance is not confronted but instead worked around in an attempt to keep the "co-design meeting" going.

A concern for controversies, and conflicts, has been penetrating participatory design (and co-design) from the very beginning. A current discussion within these democratic design traditions concerns a re-introduction of the focus on controversies, conflicts, and perceiving it as an obligatory part when gathering users, citizens, stakeholders etc. in projects with multiple agendas and concerns. This is done with the inspiration of Chantal Mouffe's concept of agonistic spaces (Björgvinsson, et al. 2010; Binder et al. 2011b).

The four moments of resistance were an enactment of differences and emerging controversies in the group work as well as between the involved citizens and the project (in particular). The analysis and discussion of the management of resistance in this chapter contribute to this discussion of how to handle the differences and controversies in these co-design encounters as well as in the project in general. Here, I also use Mol (2002) to raise the question of where and when it is possible to improve in relation to this. I start here with a brief description of how the focus on controversies and conflicts has evolved within the tradition of participatory design.

## Re-introducing controversies and conflicts

Differences among the stakeholders as well as controversies and conflicts have been central within the Scandinavian tradition of participatory design from the very earliest projects.[17] In the early participatory design projects, the designers and researchers took sides with the (unskilled) workers, where the technological development threatened their jobs. These projects had an ideological focus on empowerment and democracy. The designers and researchers tried to involve the workers (the end users) in the design of the new technological systems – and with that tried to empower them in relation to the management and the technological development that either dissolved jobs or required new work skills (Ehn 1993; Bannon and Ehn 2013; Simonsen and Robertson 2013). What the designers and researchers did here was to go into a rather obvious conflict and support one side – "the weak one", which was very much in line with the political turn at that time (the seventies). The (strong) focus on democracy at work, differences were handled differently in the development of participatory design during the 1990s and 2000s. Here the tradition changed the perspective to still emphasize direct and actual participation but now with a focus on collaborating with multiple stakeholders including "the management level" (Binder, et al. 2011b; Simonsen and Robertson 2013). In the projects of participatory design but also co-design, the researcher focused on navigating among these different actors – not taking side – and aiming at consensual decision-making. This "neutral" position of the researchers has been criticized for a lack of recognition as well as critical reflection on the difference of agendas present in these collaborative design projects including power relations, but also for not making the researchers' own stake in the project explicit (Markussen 1996; Shapiro 2005; Pedersen 2007; Karasti 2010; Simonsen and Robertson 2013).

With inspiration from Latour and his Ding politic (2005), as well as Chantal Mouffe with the concept of agonistic spaces, Pelle Ehn has, with different colleagues (Binder et al. 2011b; Björgvinsson, et al. 2012), recently tried to re-introduce the focus on controversies and conflicts into participatory design. Here the inspiration from Latour (2005) is used to articulate participatory design as designing both things/objects and things. The last term refers to the old ancient Nordic and German word and is described as socio-material assembly that deals with "matters of concern"

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[17] Participatory design is widely used and with that follows a lot of different definitions and methods. Here I though focus primarily on the Scandinavian tradition.

(Björgvinsson, et al. 2012). The use of the word things is also associated with a focus on designing for unforeseen uses in relation to projects with multiple stakeholders, where the users and use situation often are unknown. It is described as a change within participatory design from designing definite products and objects to instead designing for design, modification, and/or appropriation beyond the design project – a continuation of the negotiation of the thing. Here incompleteness becomes a norm for the designers (Björgvinsson, et al. 2010; Björgvinsson, et al. 2012).

Ehn and colleagues introduce, with inspiration from Mouffe, design and innovation as creating agonistic spaces, which is to perceive differences and controversies as a vital element of a democratic space. Ehn et al. borrow the term agonism to propose attention to the polyphony of voices and as something that does not presuppose the possibility of consensus (Björgvinsson, et al. 2012). The argument here is that there is no need for consensus among the different actors to actually be able to make something together; it is possible despite the differences (Ehn 2014).

## Management of differences

To go a bit more into the question of managing the resistance in relation to these troublesome moments, I will turn to Mol (2002) and her writings of controversies and with that, the handling of differences. Mol's work in this book is as mentioned in chapter three the study of how multiple realities are enacted – and what she also describes is how to handle the differences between these multiple and different though partially connected realities.

Here Mol also refers to Mouffe, but in her writings, she has a more general focus on how controversies have been handled in science. She describes here the relation between differences and controversies: *"Differences may come with attempts to coordinate. But it may also take the shape of controversy and conflict"* (Mol 2002, 88). Difference is not just there – existing out there – but is created when you try to bring actors together or coordinate them. Difference may also take the shape of controversy and conflict, which is evoked when the difference turns into frictions. (Mol 2002) is critical toward controversy studies in the eighties where sociologists studying science draw a picture of closures of controversies as something that depended on power, force, and number – and where one truth wins (Mol 2002, 93). She here provides a nuanced picture of how controversies can turn out that goes

beyond a neutral description of the different closures of controversies that overlook the relations and forces within these closures, but also how there sometimes can be nonclosure: *"Differences aren't necessarily bridged: they may be kept open – with suitable hard work. They need not be overcome, be it by agreement or force, they may just keep going,"* but also how there can be differences without controversy (Mol 2002, 101–104). Here Mol (2002) as mentioned also uses Mouffe and describes that:

> *… she [Chantal Mouffe] warns that difference should be taken a lot more seriously in political theory (Mouffe 1993). Seriously – not as a pluralism that fragments society into isolated individuals, but as tension that comes about inevitably from the fact that, somehow, we have to share the world. There need not be a single victor as soon as we do not manage to smooth all our differences away into consensus. Taking difference seriously requires, or so Mouffe argues, a continuing movement between taking distance and mixing things together. Between leaving – otherness – be and relating to it. What is important here is the recognition that frictions are vital elements of wholes."* (Mol 2002, 114–115)

What is pointed to in this quote is Mouffe's emphasis on differences and frictions as an essential part of the world that should be taken into account, not as something problematic necessarily but instead as something important that she argues to take seriously. Mol continues with implying that,

> *It makes little sense to call some of these sites political and others science: they all have to do with the organization of human lives and the world that comes with this, and in all of them rules, regulations, ideals, facts, frictions, frames, and tensions are paramount.* (Mol 2002, 116)

Followed by this, Mol argues how:

> *This is not a call for homogenization after politics and science are no longer separate domains. Instead, it is a plea for attending to the various sites and situations – and a way of wondering when and where we might do better.* (Mol 2002, 116)

What Mol emphasizes here is how the management of controversies is neither in relation to politics nor in relation to science. The handling of the controversies is dependent upon the particular situation and not something that can be reduced to a universal right or wrong. Different sites and situations can have or need different ways of handling differences, which could be everything from toning down tension, to bringing tensions out.

Ehn et al. (Binder et al. 2011b; Björgvinsson, et al. 2012), with the use of agonism have a rather general approach on how to keep and align differences and controversies. To Mol (2002), the "agonistic approach" is "just" one strategy out of many. She argues for "sensitivity" towards how to manage controversies differently in different situations and places. In relation to these different theoretical perspectives of how to manage controversies, I briefly want to point to the difference between this management being an intervening "in real" and on the other hand an intervening in the analytical. This is not always a clear distinction and managing it can be overlapping. Mol (2002) mainly describes how to study and analyze controversies (especially in relation to science) but also how the differences are handled in practices she studies. The main concern of participatory design and co-design with an action research are approached on the other side on the management of controversies as interventions in practice.

In the following paragraphs, I will return to the four (troublesome) moments of resistance and question how the resistance was managed or left alone. This is first with a focus on the situation in practice but the management also becomes intertwined with how this resistance – and with that, the controversies in relation to the project – was managed in relation to the overall project. The question is, were the differences and controversies among these different actors kept and aligned in what could be agonistic spaces and/or handled with a sensitivity of what was most expedient for the site and situation? The theoretical perspectives presented here suggests turning the attention toward the differences and controversies as an obligatory part of the gatherings that are important to keep (Björgvinsson, et al. 2010), but on the other hand, as something that can be handled in different ways – toned down, turned up, or something else – depending on what is most suitable for the particular situation (Mol 2002).

# Managing the resistance: Still a question of failed facilitation?

In relation to the question of differences as well as controversies and conflicts in co-design and participatory design, I will return to where I started in chapter five i.e. the question of failed facilitation. These moments, which I associated with personal frustration and shortcomings, were turned into different moments of resistance. This resistance made explicit differences among the citizens, their everyday practice, and choice of how to live their life in relation to the project, the project's assumptions, and concepts of the present as well as the future.

I here return to this failed facilitation with a question of how the resistance was managed in these different moments that took place as part of co-design workshops as well as in the preparation for a workshop – maybe it was moments of failed facilitation. Using Michael's (2011) terms, this is both put into perspective in relation to whether the idiot gets to transform the group work, how the idiot and the misbehavior are managed within the framing of the encounter, as well as whether the idiot ever gets to challenge the overall project. In the following ethnographic account, we re-enter the first moment in which it is the assignment of the group work that is changed to be able to continue the work of making a doll scenario.

## Managing the resistance in the local situation

The discussion of the what-if questions has been going on for a while and the situation is at a stalemate. In the role of the facilitator, I try to turn the attention toward the current everyday life Ulla and Anne share as neighbors who look after each other. Ulla repeats a story she told me in the morning of how Anne once forgot to tell her that she was going to Kolding. I ask some questions about the story and the group discusses the situation, and how we could help both Anne and Ulla in situations like this. I try to bring the two partners, Peter and Malene, who have otherwise been passive observing the rest of us into the discussion. The time is moving on. Peter, very quickly, tries to suggest that they, from the service company, could provide some kind of screens to send messages for others to read. The idea of the screen is discussed and very quickly the group decides to go with it. The group has to finish the work to get back to the other groups with a video-recorded doll scenario. This small

group consisting of Ulla, Anne, Malene, Peter, and me make a doll scenario of "feeling secure in your everyday life" with support from the service company.

The assignment of creating a service to support and optimize social interaction among a community of senior citizens is transformed into being a story of creating "security in the everyday life of the seniors." The change is made to accommodate the resistance toward the suggestions of the what-if questions. On the other hand, this act also moves the situation away from the problematization of these what-if questions including the assumptions and suggestions by the project. These changes manage to keep the group work ongoing – or going again in the moment. The group sticks to the planned format for this workshop, namely a doll scenario that could be recorded and cut down to an approximately two-minute long video. This format is chosen for the workshops in general to make sure that everyone ends up with a video-recorded doll scenario that can be shared among the others "inside" – as well as people "outside" – the project. What is shared of this moment is a nice doll scenario that shows how researchers, partners, citizens, and employees from the public sector are brought together and in collaboration have made these stories of possibilities for the future. It is though a format for the outcome of the workshop that leaves out or smoothed away the negotiation, the resistance, and the differences. This means that the resistance and problematization of the project's assumptions and suggestions are not kept in the moment.

Ulla's resistance toward these suggestions is taken into account in the local situation and the group work is transformed and leaves out the what-if question as basis for the scenario. But what about the bigger picture that concerns the whole project? I will return to this question in the following section but for now continue with unfolding how the resistance is managed in the three other moments.

The next moment consists of Carl's resistance toward the suggestion of how to use the technology, i.e. the concept of the Super Dots, in relation to his sailing community. Carl makes the technological concept useless and rejects the projects assumptions of "future needs" in this situation. Instead of going into how it perhaps could be made useful for Carl, the group invents the fictive actors of the lonely and immobile for which the exemplified technology is useful. With these fictive actors, the group also avoids further resistance – they are harmless. Carl managed to transform the group work with his resistance to make the concept relevant for

someone else – and the fictive actors can't complain. It is though the concept and the project's assumptions of "future needs" that are kept in the moment, and not Carl's problematization.

In the third moment, Ulla and Anne's skepticism toward meeting with strangers is handled by persuading the two skeptical women to pretend to know these newcomers a little. The transformation of the group work based on Anne and Ulla's interfering is a bit more complex. Hence, the project group and partner are continuing the exploration of how to meet with these newcomers without really taking the women's resistance into account. However, they need to change the situation a bit to be able to get the women on board again, so the strangers become someone Ulla and Anne "can pretend they know a little." The greatest transformation in this moment is rather that the resistance turns the atmosphere from joyful and playful to instead very serious and skeptical. The management of the difference between Ulla and Anne's life and the exploration of the project is though here being blurred with a joyful and playful atmosphere.

Finally, in the last moment, the rejection of the invitation to take part again is handled by leaving the women alone. Their response is discussed immediately after the encounter among the design researchers but otherwise ignored or made absent in the project as insignificant. The women's rejection as well as their skepticism toward the technological part is not taken into account in the project. "Just" leaving the technological skepticism alone and continuing without it was possible in this situation in which the women had made themselves absent from the co-design encounter.

The resistance enacted in these four moments obstructs (at least for a moment) and in different ways transforms the meeting. But it is not a misbehavior that "destroys" the group work and encounters like in the most of Michael's (2011) cases, and it can be worked around to be able to continue. I will elucidate that in the following.

## Workarounds to keep the co-design situation

These different ways of managing the resistance are different ways of creating – some kind of – compromise and practically making-do in the situation. It either happened by changing the focus of the assignment, inventing fictive figures to be designed for, persuading to continue by "just pretending," or finally by just leaving the

technological skepticism alone. These different "strategies" to manage the resistance are all ways of somehow avoiding going into or confronting the resistance and the problematisation that is brought to the table. This is something that points back to the quote mentioned earlier from Mol (2002) using Mouffe of how to take differences seriously by *"… taking distance and mixing things together. Between leaving – otherness – be and relating to it. …"* (Mol 2002, 114–115). What Mol with Mouffe points to here stand sort of in contrast to how the resistance – and with that the differences between the citizens' everyday life and the project's assumptions and concepts of new services – are handled. The project – the design researchers and partners – only manage to do the one part, which is to take distance as well as leave otherness be, though the project doesn't keep the disruption or relate to it – but rather leaves it alone.

What I want to say here with the return to the moments as well as Mol (2002) is how these moments more or less explicitly also become different workarounds that "go around" the resistance. They are workarounds that are made to be able to keep, continue, and maintain the concepts of the project (maybe not in the first moment where the what-if questions are abandoned); the staged co-design situations of partners, citizens, and design materials being engaged and make something together; as well as to reach the planned outcomes of the encounters – here most importantly the video recordings of doll-scenarios.

Turning the attention to this management of resistance can make us consider whether these moments can actually be seen as failed facilitation but in terms of not being able to "keep the resistance," a resistance that is important both to be able to challenge the overall project, take the involvement of the citizens and partners seriously, as well as for the idea of participatory design and co-design of a focus on aligning controversies. Leaving out the resistance partly happened because of my own immediate blindness toward it – and to mainly see it as a case of just troublesome participation and/or failed facilitation. The facilitation, and with that the management of the resistance, came in these moments instead to erase, blur, or ignore the resistance in the local situation of the encounters. The problematization, and with that the possibility to challenge the overall project's ideas and concepts, was not kept in the project.

The enactment of the resistance becomes a misbehavior in relation to these co-design encounters. As I mentioned in chapter five, they may not overspill the framing of the event in the same sense as Michael (2011) points to but in one way or another they disrupts the co-design encounters and/or the work put forward by the project group and partners. In the management of this idiot enacting the resistance, it seems to be difficult to go into or relate to the resistance and the problematization it consists of and not just leave it alone. There can be different reasons for that e.g. as I have suggested earlier a kind of blindness toward it, the time issues, or the formats to be followed that determine the group work and the outcome. This also means that the resistance and differences in relation to the project are not kept in these moments but instead sanitized. But, what implication does this have for co-design? The chapter will continue addressing this question.

## Management of differences in design

The resistance and problematization it consists of, is not confronted; it is being worked around to be able to continue the group work and finally this problematization and controversy are not kept and/or get to challenge the overall project. This raises a problematization in relation to the focus on controversies and conflicts in general in participatory design and co-design. Based on the description of the management of the resistance and controversies, the following part of this chapter will point to three different concerns that have to do with, how co-design "ends up with" the "low hanging fruit" when it comes to seek "false" compromise, forgetting to see and reflect upon the controversies that are directed toward the project in itself, as well as the question of whether these collaborative encounters become events of becoming together instead of just being together, inspired by Michael (2011).

### "False compromise" and low hanging fruit

The resistance is managed in these four moments (more or less consciously) in ways that make the co-design situation able to continue and still stay within the framing of these events (formats, structure, and outcomes). A compromise is however made in the local situation where the resistance to some extent is taken into account. But the compromise is without confrontation, I would argue. It is a compromise that is made by erasing, blurring, and/or ignoring the problematization that is brought to the table

through the resistance. Instead of confronting the resistance and the problematization, it is sanitized or vanished, which means that it is not brought up in relation to the overall problem. I call this way of creating a compromise, a "false compromise." The question is though whether this can be handled any differently in co-design situations of citizen involvement. Is it possible to keep and also go into/confront these differences and controversies that are at play with this misbehavior? That is to some extent what is suggested by Bjorgvinsson et al. (2010; 2012) and Binder et al. (2011b) – to intervene in the "real" practice of the controversies. It is though not clear how this precisely should be done.

But, when confronting the controversies, there could be a risk of the project being challenged! This sounds a bit provocative. Following Mol, the "workarounds" were one way of handling the resistance that probably seemed most suitable in the situation – at least to avoid a controversy. However, she encourages us to wonder, *"When and where we might do better"* (Mol 2002, 116). Confronting or turning the attention toward the resistance might not have been the most appropriate in all four of these moments but there is a risk of the project/co-design going after "low hanging fruit" when "false compromise" is being sought every time. What I mean by low hanging fruit is that the easiest or less controversial solution is sought and at the same time, you avoid going into the controversies and conflicts. To confront the resistance calls for sensitivity in the local situation of these meetings both to pay attention to it and also be able to take it into account in the "real" situation. This includes paying attention toward the resistance or critical voices that confronts the project in itself, which leads me to the next question or concern of where the differences and controversies exist.

## Where are the differences and controversies?

What is described and put forward in the literature of participatory design and co-design concerning conflicts and controversies is often a focus on the different actors being involved. It is the controversies among the involved partakers that are addressed e.g. concerns and controversies of being a marginalized group in the society, lack of possibility to make their voice heard, etc. It was also one of the main focuses of the Senior Interaktion project – to bring together the Municipality of Copenhagen (Health and Care Department) and other employees, different private partners, and senior

citizens in an attempt to modernize the welfare state in a way that was not (just) about cost savings. It was articulated that the citizens could be part of the decision-making body themselves and influence the way the services for senior citizens should/could be shaped in the future. In other words, the project is *for* the citizens.

It gives a picture of the good (innocent) project (Fogh Jensen 2013) gathering these different "stakeholders" and citizens in an attempt to make them do something together though still keep their differences and controversies. It becomes a description of how the design researchers bring different "stakeholders" (including citizens and users) together and work with aligning controversies (Halse et al. 2010; Binder et al. 2011b; Björgvinsson, et al. 2012). To some extent the role and stakes of the design researchers are in the articulation reduced to be about gathering different actors and facilitating the process (Pedersen 2007). It is though (often) the design researchers who have started and formulated the project with a specific agenda.

How "innocent" is the project? The four moments of resistance raise the attention toward the controversies between the project and the involved actors. The controversies that might evolve during the involvement as conflicts between everyday practices and/or choices of how to live your life on the one hand and on the other the plans, goals, methods, processes of enrollment, as well as design concepts of the projects. Hence, the resistance that emerges in the different small, troublesome moments. The resistance was here in one way or another directed toward the project i.e. assumptions of the existing everyday life and "future needs" as well as toward suggestions for new everyday practices and social interaction. The agenda of the project and the design researchers can be hidden behind or blurred in the articulation of citizen involvement, designing with and for them, as well as direct participation of equal footing. But, it is maybe forgotten that the project tries to influence people in different ways – both in the artificial situation of the workshops as well as making changes in relation to the citizens' everyday life.

What is suggested here is that the design researchers overlook the controversies and conflicts between the citizens and the project. On one hand, this could be due to the plans, goals, methods, and processes of enrollment, as well as design concepts of the projects – articulated entities of the project that leave little space for challenging or negotiating the project despite the focus on citizen involvement. On the other hand, this could also be due to "the good project" of citizen

involvement, democratization, equal participation, and a focus on helping the citizens including the lonely seniors in Copenhagen – articulated entities that dilute the resistance toward and problematization of the project (it is just very difficult to discuss when black boxing "the good project for the citizens"). This raises the question of how it is possible to align controversies and do things together if the role of the project (and the design researchers) agenda is forgotten. If main parts of the stakes are blurred or not visible, there might be no alignment either.

## "Just" being together or becoming together?

The overlooking of the resistance toward the project leads me to a third concern that has to do with the constellation and collaboration among the different actors in the co-design encounters. What I try to emphasize here is a more nuanced glance of the participation and "interaction." The collaboration is often described in broad terms of co-design, shared inquiry, "creating a common language," as well as "equal participation with space for every one's agendas" (Binder, et al. 2011; Simonsen and Robertson 2013; Brandt, et al. 2013). The question I want to raise here is what is coming together in these encounters. What is changed, (invested), influenced or transformed?

As I pointed to in the previous section, in the case of the four moments of resistance, the controversies in relation to the project are overlooked or cannot be grasped within the framing of the encounter. Their participation is actually "authentic" within co-design's and participatory design's focus on aligning controversies, but their resistance toward the project, however, was difficult to grasp or confront within the framing of "the good project." In other words, the resistance – the differences between the citizens and the project – are not turned into controversies.

In relation to this, Michael describes the becoming of an event[18] (Michael 2011, 8). What he puts forth is the difference of "being together" and "becoming together." An event is coming into being when a transformation is going on – when the different actors being involved are transformed. The encounters are changed from being in a situation in which the different actors are "just" interacting or "being together" to a process in which these actors are transformed in the interaction and

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[18] See chapter eleven for a more thorough description of the concept of the event.

"become together." Michael (2011) emphasizes that this process should also include the researchers.

The difference of just being together or becoming together leads back to the previous concerns of "false compromise," as well as overlooking the controversies in relation to the project. When the resistance is not confronted, there is a risk that things will stay the same. It will just be meetings with "false compromises" gathered around "low hanging fruit", where no one will be affected (roughly speaking) or transformed in this engagement with each other. This also leads me to question, "What is citizen involvement in design?" – if "the involvement" doesn't get to influence and challenge the ideas and concepts of the project - then it will be "just pretending".

## Is the big machinery of citizen involvement idling?

The term misbehavior is as mentioned earlier a characterization of this behavior in "public engagement events" that overspills the framing of the event. Michael (2011) describes in the accounts he brings forward how the idiot in different ways gets to transform the situation by entering the "public engagement event." At the same time though the misbehavior – which cannot be grasped within the framing of the event – is not taken into account in the analytical work of these events. This means that the idiot not necessarily gets to challenge or undermine the original framing of the engagement event. Michael (2011) argues for turning the attention toward the idiot and the misbehavior. It here becomes an analytical work.

The management of the resistance in these moments was made with workarounds to make the groups able to continue with the co-design situation and the planned outcome of the workshops. Some kind of placeholder for the resistance or misbehavior was lacking in the workshop or in general in the project (in the structure, format, material, or reporting) to keep it. And the design researchers did not – were not aware of or did not know they should – pay attention to it. This was as I mentioned, due to in my own case, an immediate blindness toward it or a too strong focus on making the meeting succeed. The resistance and problematization were vanished and were never brought up in relation to the overall project. This means that the misbehavior never comes to undermine the framing in relation to overall methods,

concepts, and framing of the project. In other words, the involvement of the citizens with their problematization toward the project does not get to challenge the overall project.

Ehn et al. (Binder, et al. 2011; Björgvinsson, et al. 2012) argue for keeping and aligning the controversies with a democratic approach of agonism and a focus on the possibilities of making something together despite the differences. To Mol (2002), this is one strategy out of many and she emphasizes that the management of the controversies should be attentive to the site and situation. In other words, what can be pointed to here is a consideration of whether the workarounds were the most appropriate strategy in some of the situations – whether or not the problem was then challenged? This is though with a risk of making the co-design situations to be more about the materials and formats than the actual participants in them. At the same time, providing a placeholder in the project for the resistance and problematization would probably have been most suitable in most of these situations. There was a problematization of the shared problem we were all working on that should had been taken into account.

As I have pointed to earlier, the resistance doesn't get to challenge, transform, or undermine the overall project, which to some extent includes the design researchers. It gives a picture of how the big machinery of citizen involvement is idling. It looks like co-design and citizen involvement but nothing is really happening. At least in the sense that the project can continue more or less as intended from the beginning.

# Part 2: Introduction

From the first part of the analytical section of this dissertation with the focus on small troublesome moments and resistance, we now continue with the second part. The second research focus is on the practice of a living lab and how that evolved over a longer period and as relations among design researchers, private partners, citizens, partners from the public, technology and multiple agendas'.

This aim also stems from my own difficulties in writing clearly and definitely about the living lab. Despite the name, the living lab I was part of (and probably more generally) only very loosely resembles a laboratory. Living labs are less circumscribed both in terms of what they are and where they are. So, I suspected that my difficulties were not only specific to personal shortcomings, but had to do with the nature of the object itself, and that it consequently is necessary, when we talk about living labs in co-design, to unpack the complexities of the 'what' and 'where' of living labs. The main questions are therefore what is a living lab (and what is coming into being in the living lab), and where it is with respect to not prematurely black-boxing it into a defined and definite object. This is also done with the purpose of contributing to the discussion of co-design in "new" constellations of multiple partners and multiple organizations (or orderings) (cf. Balka 2006; Karasti 2010).

In these three chapters, I therefore follow three central aspects of the project with the focus on how they are performed in the practices of the living lab – and how and whether they "survived" the living lab. These three aspects are active citizens, new technology, and public-private partnerships. These are all subjects that invite broader political discussions; this is though not my intention here. In the description of what is and where it is, I stay close to the empirical materials of the living lab. The empirical material here is based on my disconcerting moments but also includes different project documents e.g. the application. It is not a very stringent description of the living lab but a description in which I follow how these three objects are performed in different moments, which are non-coherent, ambiguous, and uncertain in different ways (cf. Law 2004).

The living lab took place in the last year and a half of the project. It was established as bi-weekly meetings of three hours each in a big urban park (Valbyparken) in the area of Copenhagen. The focus on the living lab was briefly

described as outdoor exercise activities for senior citizens – and to introduce and explore how new technology could support these activities especially as a way to make the citizens able to run and maintain the activities on their own with only little support from the municipality. It therefore included some of us design researchers, the project leader from the municipality, as well as a private partner – a sports instructor with his own small company making outdoor sports concepts. The living lab was split into two phases. The first phase was initiated in May and ended in December with a workshop to mark the completion of the first phase and as an opportunity to negotiate the continuation. The second phase started in December and lasted until October the year after, when the project ended. After this, the citizens who had taken part continued to meet every second Friday in the park on their own. Most of the moments I describe here in these three chapters are mainly – though not only – from the first phase of the living lab, when I was present.

**Chapter eight** starts with the question of what "active citizens" are and where they are. In this chapter, I follow how active citizens are enacted as one of the central things in the living lab. The chapter contains five different accounts; the first is based on the project application to describe how active citizens are performing, and the rest is based on four different disconcerting moments from the park. "Active citizens" in these different moments move among how the citizens themselves are active, how the project group and partner want to make them active in particular ways, as well as how the different partakers try to take control of where and when to be active. I end the chapter by questioning the complexity of active and passive with the use of Law's (2001) description of the "pleasure of passivity," a question I raise in relation to the agenda of the municipality and the design researchers.

**Chapter nine** starts with the question what is "new technology" – and where is it? In this chapter, I follow how "new technology" is being enacted as a central part of the living lab. The new technology is central here as a way for the design researchers to try out the different concepts of the project "in reality." The description of the technology is therefore first based on the project's articulation of different concepts before entering the meetings in the park. In the "actual" living lab, the enactment of "new technology" is found and described through four different moments. The object

is difficult to follow because it changes shape in different ways and names during the living lab – and it changed in terms of whether it was an important part for the continuation of the outdoor exercise activity or not.

The "new technology's" presence in the living lab can be seen as an attempt for the design researchers (and the project in general) to make the practice of the citizens follow their technology agenda. This makes me raise the question of where the new technology is from and whom it is for. I discuss this question with the use of the concepts of artful integration as well as artful infrastructuring by Suchman (2002) and Karasti and Syrjänen (2004).

**Chapter ten** is again a question of what it is and where it is but now with a focus on "public-private partnerships." In this chapter, I describe the relation among the different partakers (partners) in the living lab through different moments of partnerships. Partnerships – or rather public-private partnerships were a central focus in the project as a way to make new kinds of service deliveries. In this chapter, I have a broader take on the term, which also includes the collaboration with the design researchers and the citizens. Partnerships are here followed and described through four moments, which also include email conversations. I end this chapter with a discussion of the collaboration in the living lab among these different partakers including the question of whether this kind of collaboration means that co-design becomes extreme co-design or that co-design is dissolved.

# 8: Active citizens and new radical involvement

What are "active citizens," and where are they? In this chapter, I follow how active citizens are enacted as one of the central things in the living lab. The "active citizens" also played an important role as one of the project's strategies of how to make the outdoor exercise activity continue beyond the project.

The focus is not only central in this living lab – and project as such – but important as something that is high on the political agenda in Denmark, and therefore also a strong focus for the Municipality in Copenhagen. At the same time, it is an agenda that is partly shared with co-design – with the strong focus on "active participation." "Active citizens" is a broad subject and involves political discussions, but my take on it here is with a focus on how it plays out in the living lab. The purpose of describing "active citizens" as part of the living lab strategy is also to nuance and question this focus on "activeness."

Among these different partners in the living lab, there was a focus on creating active citizens in different ways. First, it followed the agenda of the municipality to create services where the citizens were put in the driver's seat as the ones to create and maintain services together in these communities of citizens. They were made an active part of the service. Second, it followed the agenda of co-design (but also the municipality) in terms of involving the citizens doing the design process, but in an extended version in the living lab, which was described as a "new, radical involvement" of citizens. Finally, it was a way to create *physically* active citizens, which both followed the agenda of the municipality as well as the small sports company that was involved in this living lab – and represented by the sports instructor Henry.

The chapter contains of five different accounts, where the first is based on the project application to describe how active citizens are being performed here, and the rest is based on four different disconcerting moments from the park. "Active citizens" in these different moments move among how the citizens themselves are active, how the project group and partner want to make them active in particular ways, as well as how the different partakers try to take control of where and when to be active. The

last points to a complexity of what it means to be passive and active, which I will discuss at the end of the chapter. I do that inspired by the concept of the "pleasure of passivity" described by Law (2001) – and with the purpose to reflect critically upon this focus on "active citizens responsible for their own service" both from the perspective of the design researchers and as something on the agenda of the municipality, in which the design researchers engage themselves.

    We start here with the project application for the Senior Interaktion project, and how the active citizens are performed here.

## A new radical involvement

In the project the project group tried to establish a living lab in Valbyparken to explore a new way of making services and involving citizens. In the project application, this is described as *"new, more radical ways to involve the users in the design of new technology"* (Senior Interaktion, project application, April 2009, p. 4). Here it was described that the main activities in the design process would be placed at the senior citizens' everyday environment – i.e. it would not only be designed with the citizens but also done at the citizens' location as it was articulated.

    At the same time, the citizens were envisioned to be the driving force for their own services. In the project application, it was described as how communities of citizens could run their own services and help each other out within these communities – and with only some support from the municipality. It was described as going from a one-to-one delivery of service (horizontal) to instead a delivery of service to a whole community of citizens (holistic), where: *"the service offers can benefit from the ability to coordinate across and stimulate the capacity to self-sufficiency. There is a latent resource in the local networks"* (Senior Interaktion, project application, April 2009).

    This new way of rethinking services was described as a way to create social interaction among senior citizens, which was envisioned as something that would increase life quality among the citizens and could contribute to more self-sufficiency (more senior citizens being self-sufficient or senior citizens being more self-sufficient). But, it was also described as how it could relieve the care system and "hands" needed for the public sector (Senior Interaktion, project application, April 2009).

## Activate citizens and optimizing sociality

Active citizens in the project application becomes a way to optimize sociality among the citizens as well as to increase self-sufficiency. At the same time, it is an important means (or latent resource) for the public sector to reduce the number of hands needed in the care sector. In other words, it is being presumed that there are passive citizens who can be made active and active citizens who can be sustained as – or made more – active, and that this can happen through optimized social interaction among senior citizens. Active citizens in this situation become social active citizens. At the same time, this builds on assumptions that the senior citizens by increased social interaction can help each other instead of seeking help by the public sector, which means they can decrease the number of employees. Active citizens in that sense become people who take over the job and to some extent the responsibility of the municipality. At the same time, "citizens helping each other" is made a central part of the municipality's service delivery – it is imagined to be put into the system and in the control of the public sector.

The living lab was going to incorporate this new more radical way to involve the senior citizens, which included making "active citizens" the ones to run and maintain the activity after the project ended. The active citizens are coming into being here as "optimizing sociality" among senior citizens as well as "making citizens in charge of their own services." We now move to the park.

# "If we become a good, close-knitted group, we'll continue to meet …"

The following accounts are the description of very active and experienced citizens in the park – but also a description of how the community of active citizens the project needed in the living lab was created. It is also a description of how these active citizens – or especially one woman, Inger – pacifies me and makes me insecure about what we, the design researchers, are doing here in the living lab.

It is late summer and the sun is shining. It's Friday morning, I am standing with Inger (the active citizen), and other project people at the meeting place in the park. We are waiting to see if other elderlies are going to show up; there were only two to three citizens at our last couple of meetings. *"How long is this going to*

*continue?"* Inger asks. She takes me a little off-guard with this question. *"Oh, the plans … yes, we are going to meet here in the park every second week. I think we're going to continue for two maybe three months."* I'm a bit uncertain of the plans and whether they are agreed upon among the whole project group. I still try to tell Inger what I know. I pause a little in my explanation of the plans with considerations of whether I should continue and reveal the entire plan to Inger that they are going to continue on their own.

In the conversation with Inger, this becomes ambivalent. I though continue: *"I mean, the plan is that you should take over and run it on your own after these first months."* At the moment, I am a bit uncertain of how supported this continuation will be by the partner and the municipality of Copenhagen, so I leave that out. At least I just know that the design researchers have planned to withdraw and observe this from a distance and I will go on maternity leave (I'm pregnant and due in two and a half months at that moment). I feel ambivalent to reveal to Inger that we are going to leave them by themselves at one point. At this moment in the living lab we are very eager to make citizens come and take part, so a lot of the project group's efforts go with socializing with the Inger and the others to make them connected to this or, in other words, to us.

Inger reacts very promptly to what I have hesitantly tried to explain to her. *"If we become a good, close-knitted group, we'll continue to meet …"* The comment surprises me. She seems to already know what this is about and what is going to happen. At the same time, she also somehow confirms my concerns with this work of the project. The circumstances of the work seem insecure to me, as it feels like it depends on whether the people involved will get along. In the moment, Inger's comment makes me a bit passive and instead I can't stop thinking, *"what are we doing here in the park? What is the role of us design researchers? It seems as if we are very much depending on something rather coincidental."* Meanwhile I'm getting more and more concerned with what we are doing. Inger continues talking and sort of takes over the situation. She tells me how she was earlier part of another project arranged by the Municipality of Copenhagen with a focus on getting senior citizens to be (more) physically active. Here they could take part in different sports activities for twenty weeks and after that, the trainers would support them to find the right place (club, activity center etc.) to continue with the sort of activity they liked. After these

twenty weeks finished, three to four months ago, Inger and her group continued to meet because they liked each other's company. They arrange this by email and are now meeting bi-weekly or monthly to eat together or attend some cultural events.

It is the same park but some weeks later. It is still warm and the sun is shining even though the trees are changing colors. The project group is struggling with recruiting people to the living lab, but at this meeting a couple of weeks after my conversation with Inger, eight seniors come. Most of them are Inger's friends and acquaintances. They all either heard of it directly from Inger or through some of the others. It is a mix of people from the former project Inger had taken part in and is still meeting with, some people from other exercise offers for senior citizens in Copenhagen, which Inger also attended, and lastly, Inger's old friend, Eva. Eva had taken part in some of the earlier encounters in the park with Inger. They were old colleagues and had been friends for 50 years. Later, Eva's husband also joined. Inger recruited most of these people who came this day to the park, and in that way she helped the project by making this citizen-involvement-machinery start running or run again. She also "helped" herself by making sure the encounters would continue (she seemed to enjoy these Fridays in the park). At the same time, it rather sped up the process of creating a community of "active citizens," but in her own way, she was making her own "close-knit group" by re-connecting already existing connections.

## Active experienced citizen

The active citizen becomes very present in this conversation and in her creation of a community of active citizens in the park. Inger is this experienced project participant who has tried something like this before. She turns out to be what the project tries to make i.e. both a physically active citizen as well as a citizen who takes part in making her own "activity," which in this case is a group of seniors who meet around eating and cultural experiences. At the same time, Inger also reveals to me her version of how this will succeed and continue after the project ends: the community of (active) citizens needs to be a close-knit one.

The sustainable infrastructure for the continuation lays in social bonding. That is her experience from former project participation. Inger also makes sure that that happens by bringing friends and acquaintances. In this account, the active citizen is not something the project produces – not literally – but rather something the active

citizen produces herself through my conversation with her. At the same time, her stories and actions make me the passive researcher. Inger's experienced approach makes me insecure and at the same time questioning of what we, the design researchers, are doing. What are our roles?

## Inexperienced "social workers" and non-committal "grandchildren"

The citizens are already active. Those who come and take part are already a treasure of active citizens defined by the Municipality of Copenhagen. The idea of the new radical involvement is where they are going to continue on their own with this service. Inger explains that this happens if they become a close-knit group. In other words, in her description, the work of the project depends on whether the citizens get along and get connected socially.

The conversation with Inger makes me passive because of the uncertainty about our roles in this living lab. If the product is "active citizens," who socially comes along, where does that leave us, the design researchers? What is the work of the design researchers including what methods, materials, and techniques in this new, radical way of involving citizens? I knew what to do when it came to making a co-design workshop (see chapter five). I had been trained in that. But what should I do in a living lab? And, not just any living lab, but a living lab where the outcome was going to be "active citizens" who would take over and continue on their own with the outdoor exercise activity. The sports instructor took care of the actual physical activities. I, on the other hand, felt that we design researchers were becoming more a kind of social workers (without experience and tools) and at the same time enacting non-committal grandchildren. I will elucidate this in the following section.

What became our responsibility was to create and maintain a community. The seniors though already took care of this themselves. Our responsibility was also to connect these citizens to the project and make sure they would commit to it, so they would continue and run it themselves after the end of the project.

Following what I described above, the tools and techniques for the design researcher became to "socialize" with the citizens as a way to make them stay and come again. We needed a commitment among the citizens to be able to create this continuation, where they were the ones running it. On one hand, this was a nice "job," but at the same time, it was difficult to see what it had to do with being a design

researcher, especially when this part was the main part of what we were doing in the park. I felt as if I was being a reduced version of a social worker[19], whose responsibility is to create self-running communities and activities in a local neighborhood or the like. I would though say that we in that sense were inexperienced social workers without tools and techniques.

The socializing was mutual. The elderlies enjoyed talking to us from the project group or so they expressed. They often asked and wanted to hear stories about our work life at the universities or stories of our everyday life with our friends and families. My pregnancy here also became a subject of great attention and was followed closely during this period. The stomach became a gateway to connecting with the elderlies. They at the same time framed us as grandchildren – or non-committal grandchildren. As such, there was no commitment in these relations and they were not problematic in the sense that relations with family or friends can be. So, the feeling of whether these citizens and "grandparents" were committed to this thing in the park stayed uncertain through a great part of the living lab's first phase.

However, there was something ambiguous here that was difficult to grasp with our role. The design researcher's way of making the active citizens committed to the continuation was by connecting personally to the senior citizens as "reduced and inexperienced" social workers and as "grandchildren." At the same time, this was done with the knowledge that after this first phase, we were going to leave the living lab and the citizens should (or would) continue on their own, which created this sense of ambiguity. In other words, this constant meditation of creating a commitment but also knowing that we would leave them to be on their own created a sense of how we were "simultaneously *"in the field," still "entering" it, and already in the process of exiting"* (Jensen and Winthereik 2013, 47). With still "entering," I here mean that without the citizens' presence at the meetings in the park, which for a long was very uncertain if they would be there, there was literally no living lab.

To sum up the citizens in the park are already being active in similar ways as the project wants them to be, and they are experienced with what we are going to do in the living lab. These active citizens but also the project's ambition of making the citizens take over after the project ends, create uncertain and passive design researchers who are not sure what their role is and what there is to be done. The

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[19] The responsibility of creating self-running communities and activities in a local neighborhood or the like is only part of some social workers job depending on their work area and responsibility.

citizens are already active but they also need to be connected and committed to the continuation. The design researchers here instead become "reduced and inexperienced" social workers, and non-committal "grandchildren." These design researchers try to commit the citizens through everyday stories of work and families – and through pregnant stomachs.

## "It should just continue like this"

In this first account from the park, "active citizens" raised questions of the role and work of the design researcher including how to create commitment among the citizens to a continuation. The project wanted the citizens to continue when the project ended, so a bit further into the first phase of the living lab, it manifested in different strategies of preparing the citizens for the continuation by trying to make them take part in planning the meetings in the park. The citizens were already active but the project wanted them to be active in particular ways.

We now move to a period in the middle of this initial period. It is still very warm and sunny – some people would call it Indian Summer. This Friday meeting is about to end. We're all gathered around the table-bench arrangement, where we always end our days together. The project group has brought crisp bread – a healthy sort – apples, and water. The elderlies just finished a game of Ultimate. *"It was a wild game; I was almost afraid that I was going to injure myself,"* Eva says. She is still a little short of breath. *"Yes, I know … it looked wild,"* Erika reply, *"but fun, I couldn't stop laughing,"* she says and smiles. *"But I'm glad I stayed out of the game, my bag isn't in shape for games like that …."* Mie interrupts: *"So, how did you like it today? I mean you really engaged in the last game of Ultimate!"* She pauses a little and smiles. *"But for next time what would you like to do? Do you have any ideas for other games or things you would like to do differently?"* *"I think it was fun today,"* Jens replies. Jens is married to Erika and it's his first time at our meetings. Mie tries to ask for suggestions or things that should be done differently again since no one else is saying anything. There is again a bit of silence, and people eat crisp-bread and apples. I continue to help Mie out of the silence: *"So, if you have any suggestions or things you want to do differently you're very welcome to make a comment on the blog."*

The project (me) had created this blog to write about our meetings in the park, upload pictures, and inform about new meetings and the like. There had been no post

or comment by the citizens so far, but they were at least given the opportunity[20]. Finally, Erika exclaims: *"It's great! I mean the games are fun."* Inger follows enthusiastically: *"Yes, it should just continue like this."* Thilde follows up in a more calm voice: *"It's nice to come to these meetings with the programs you have made."* Both Mie and I seem to give up on this attempt of involving the participants in the decision of what to do next time. *"But it's not going to continue like this."* I can't stop thinking while looking at the happy faces around the table that it was a great and fun day but in two months' time they will be left to take care of this themselves.

## Passive active citizens

I could understand the seniors' answers. They enjoyed taking part in the meetings unaware of what activities they were going to play that day. Sometimes they had suggestions for small changes; but often the already planned program suited the people who took part very well. There was something here I couldn't really grasp. They were "active citizens" but here not active in the particular way the design researchers imagined with "the new, radical way of citizen involvement." We wanted to make them take over after the project ended including taking over the project groups and sports instructor's job as the ones who plan and facilitate these meetings and what games to play. This was our way to prepare them for that – to try to involve them in the decision of what to do, while we were still present at the meetings. But the citizens didn't know that and there was at the same time something incoherent about it that pointed to complexities between being active and passive.

I found recognition in Law's description of the "pleasure of passivity" (2001) of these moments with the elderlies and the question of what it meant to be active. In the article, "Machinic Pleasures and Interpellations," he describes passivity as one of these machinic pleasures (Law 2001). Here you transfer yourself into passivity to leave the control and responsibility to others. He gives the example of when you decide to enter a plane, where you are placed as "spam in a can," you at the same time leave the control to the "arms" of the big machine. This is a way to abandon agency. There is though an economy in this act of giving up agency to something outside your body.

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[20] The project had this idea of trying to extend the dialogue between the meetings in the park, as a way to evoke other things among the participants including creating ownership of these meetings in the park – and the blog became the solution to do that.

This economy is described in three parts by Law (2001, 5–7). The first is the luxury of no possibility of action, where it is instead possible to experience the pleasure connected to fatalism. The second part is about care. In this case, you leave agency to instead be taken care of as another part of the pleasure. The last one also has to do with trust as Law describes, there is a desire in allowing others to care for you. The last part is the luxury of non-responsibility. It is not about being irresponsible to the choice you make but rather not to have a choice. Law emphasizes that this has not to do with irresponsibility but precisely non-responsibility (Law 2001, 6).

What is being enacted in what I described above is on one hand not active citizens in the particular way the design researchers want them to be i.e. to help us do our job and that of the sports instructor. They don't really contribute to the co-production of a plan for the next meeting. And then again, maybe it is active citizens; but active citizens who make a decision to transfer themselves into passivity. This is an action of abandoning agency and leaving yourself in this case to the arms of the project: these meetings in the park including the program, instructions, and already planned activities. Somebody else takes the responsibility of what is going to happen. At the same time, the elderlies show a trust in what the project does, how the meetings are set up, and the instructor and the design researchers carry them through them. Finally, there is also the element of care. The citizens wanted it to stay like it had been, where the sports instructor took care of the program and they could "use" the rest of us as non-committal "grandchildren." There was an aspect of mutual care in these meetings that wouldn't stay like this.

There is a complexity of passive and active in this performance of "active citizens" in the living lab. It raises the question of what it means to be an active citizen and what it means to be a passive recipient. It is also a complexity or rather ambiguity that is difficult to grasp as what is active and what is passive slips among the different practices – also within the same person. Roughly described, there were times when the citizens were just the right active citizens, which made us (me) passive design researchers. There were times when we, the design researchers, tried to make the citizens active in particular ways that fulfilled our idea of new, radical ways of citizen involvement, which on the other hand made the active citizens passive.

The use of Law's "pleasure of passivity" (2001) might be a bit exaggerated in terms of how passive they were, but I still think it points to or makes this act of eagerly making citizens active, and to make them responsible for creating and maintaining their own services, visible in another way. It points on one hand to a difference between being an active person and organizing your own activities within your communities, and being an active citizen who takes over the work and responsibility (on a small scale) of the municipality as well as the project group in this situation. On the other hand, this more nuanced description of what it means to be passive, which includes being passive as an active choice and pleasure, points to how a keen focus (ardent advocate) on activeness and active participation both on the political agenda here in the Municipality of Copenhagen as well as within co-design and participatory design blurs the picture of what it means to be active or passive for that sake – as well as how the activeness is either rarely questioned or brought up for negotiation.

We move here from one strategy of how to prepare the citizens for the continuation – that made the citizens passive – to another strategy with the same purpose, which was initiated by the sports instructor and shared with the rest of the project group in the living lab. Active citizens here become rehearsed ambassadors for the outdoor sports activity.

# Educating ambassadors

It is again an account of how the project tried to make the citizens active in particular ways as a way to make sure that the outdoor exercise activity would continue without the project group. We here start with the planning of the living lab before initiating the series of meetings in the park as well as the project meetings in between, where active citizens are coming into being as potential ambassadors. And we continue with how the educating of ambassadors is practiced in the park as a strategy to prepare the citizens for the continuation. Here the citizens (Eva and Thilde) still distance themselves from the responsibility of this thing, though Eva takes an active part in the project's rehearsal of her as ambassador. But, first the planning of the living lab.

The private partner enters the Senior Interaktion project with a vision of: "Senior citizens should be ambassadors for the activities," (Partner workshop, September 2010). This idea of ambassadors is repeated in the different conversations

between the private partner and the design researchers – and made part of the visions for the living lab where it is described as "educating ambassadors." Educate ambassadors means to create ownership among the citizens to this outdoor exercise activity including getting them to spread information to others as well as being hosts for the activities.

Just before the first encounter in the park, it is articulated that the project group should choose ambassadors among the seniors, which is described as someone particularly engaged or a "fireball." Inger (the active experienced citizen) is mentioned as a potential ambassador among the project group. She is though absent in the final month of the first phase of the living lab when she is on vacation. In her absence, Eva becomes a target as a potential ambassador. She is Inger's friend and a stable participant, who has taken part in the main part of the encounters. She is therefore "chosen" to be the one making the introduction of the day with the sports instructor as a step in the strategy of "education of ambassadors." It is the design researchers who initiate this. We now move to the park again.

It is now in the last part of this first phase of the living lab. It is getting cold (winter). The Friday meeting is just about to start. Henry (the private partner and sports instructor) and Eva (Inger's friend and stable participant) are standing in a big circle of about twenty people. It is different people from the project group: the group of senior citizens, who are now a stable part of these encounters; an evaluator (partner from the project); some students from KADK, as well as a bigger group of senior citizens who have not taken part earlier[21]. Henry and Mie (design researcher) turn to Eva just before the meeting is about to start with the question of whether she would like to take part in introducing the day. Henry quickly gives her a briefing of what is going to happen, so Eva knows the program she is going to introduce to the others.

*"We are playing these things that the young people here are coming up with,"* Eva says while smiling to the newcomers and pointing at Henry and Mie. *"Yes, and today we are going to play croquet like last time … is there anyone …"* Henry enthusiastically takes over but gets interrupted by Eva again: *"But it is not the normal kind of croquet. It's some weird ones you are going to use,"* she says while

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[21] The "new" citizens are from a care home and have been invited to the meeting in the park as a strategy among the project group (maybe mainly the municipality) to spread the news of what the project is doing. These citizens are though physically "older" than the already stable citizens in the park e.g. many of them use a walker and have to be transported in the project's Christiana bikes (cargo bikes) to get around in the park at this meeting. They never took part in these Friday's meetings again.

with her hands tries to show the shape of the croquet clubs. *"But it is actually really fun …"* she says smiling again. Some of the others laugh.

*"Yes, and we don't play with small balls; instead we play with big foam balls,"* Henry continues. *"Oh!"* It comes promptly from Eva. *"Yes,"* Henry says while looking at Eva smiling. *"But I prefer the small balls,"* Eva continues, *"the big balls can be rather heavy."* The situation turns a bit awkward. Henry looks a little skeptical at Eva and says hesitantly, *"Ok, yes … we can see how it evolves. We can maybe also try with small balls."*

The introduction of this day's program though continues. *"And then we go down and play Kubb afterwards."* Eva interrupts again and says a bit complainingly toward Henry: *"It's maybe not all who know these games."* Eva takes the time to explain the game in detail for the newcomers. Henry takes over when she is finished: *"And finally we end with making something with the Frisbees,"* Henry says a bit slowly and questioning, looking at Eva. He doesn't know the game. It was invented at the last encounter after he left. Eva takes over and explains this new game to everyone including Henry.

Mie, who stands behind Eva interrupts: *"And what did we call this game?"* *"We called it safari Frisbee, because we play it with the wooden animals,"* Eva says referring to a place in the park with wood figures of animals with an African descent. Mie repeats with a raised voice: *"Safari Frisbee"* and she continues: *"but Thilde [a stable participant] had another point with calling it Safari Frisbee, isn't that right, Thilde?"* *"Oh, I don't think it was me who came up with that name,"* Thilde says quietly, looking out behind some of the others. She has been standing hidden in the crowd. *"Yes, you said it was so we could cheat others to believe that it was very warm like on the Savannah,"* Mie exclaims and smiles. A lot of people around Mie laugh. Eva and Henry round off this introduction and everyone starts walking into the park.

## Rehearsed ambassador – and ownership

Eva is now invited to take part in the introduction of the program of the day with Henry. It is part of a strategy of educating ambassadors among the senior citizens. The potential ambassadors are imagined to be a driving force to keep the outdoor sports activity alive beyond the project. In other words, the project group, and partner's interpretation was that the potential ambassadors would be extra active

citizens in this particular way, which the project needed for the continuation to succeed.

On one hand, Eva is here staged as being one on "the team" together with Thilde. By inviting Eva to make the introduction together with Henry she is performed as a co-producer of the activity – the same goes for Thilde and the description of how she was the one making up the name for the new game. In both cases, there is though a slight resistance from the citizens toward this enactment. Regarding Eva, by describing how, "*We are playing these things that the young people here are coming up with,*" it is not she who has made the decision of what to play.

At the same time, Eva though does what she is asked to do by the project group, namely to introduce the day to the newcomers together with the sports instructor e.g. to explain the games and how "we do things here." The active citizen is in many ways coming into being here as how the future is imagined by the project. By inviting Eva to take part in introducing the day, she is staged in the role she and the other citizens are imagined to be taking when they are going to be on their own. She is rehearsed as a potential ambassador. The question is whether this creates ownership among the citizens. It is difficult to say at this moment – it looks like it is. Eva's ownership of the activity is here on display to the newcomers.

In this account, there is also a small conflict between Eva and Henry in the question of what balls to play with. I will return to this conflict after the final account and the following discussion. It was a conflict that followed an ongoing discussion between Henry and (some) of the citizens of what they were – or felt they were – physically capable of doing in relation to these games planned by the sports instructor. The following is also a conflict between the sports instructor and one of the citizens – Erika – in the question of where to be active. It happens as part of a negotiation of how this outdoor exercise activity should continue. It is one the project group's last attempts at creating ownership among the citizens and getting them to take part in deciding how the continuation of the meetings should be in this first phase of the living lab.

# Out in the open

We are in the same park but just a couple of weeks later. Now it is very cold and nasty – the weather. It is at the end of the day and everyone is gathered around a fire in a shelter in the park to try to keep warm and drink glögg (Scandinavian Christmas punch). It is the last meeting in the park in this first phase of the living lab. Both the sports instructor and the project leader from the municipality have agreed to be part of the continuation to still support the citizens. The design researchers are going to withdraw. One of the design researchers therefore asks the sports instructor to bring up the question of the continuation with citizens now as they are all sitting around the fire. The weather is very cold now so the worry is that a continuation of these meetings could be difficult.

The sports instructor takes the word and brings these worries of the very cold weather and a continuation of the meeting up here in the shelter. There is some discussion of what they can do with the suggestions like maybe they could meet at bit later than 10 o'clock; adjust what exercise to do; bring something warm to drink, etc. One of the women, Erika, interrupts: *"What about the DGI city [a big sports- and conference center in Copenhagen] don't they have something you can just go in and use …?"* Erika sits on a bench opposite Henry. *"Nja I don't think so…"* Henry replies before Erika has finished her sentence. But she still continues: *"But I know they have a ping-pong table you can just use."* Henry doesn't respond to the last part but instead replies: *"The problem is that the DGI city has their own things and projects …"* Erika tries again: *"Yes I know, but I mean it is open for everyone …."* Henry interrupts with a rather authority voice: *"This project and my presence in it, is restricted to be either here in the park," h*e points to the ground *"or somewhere else outside … it can also be in Enghaveparken [another urban park in Copenhagen] if you want something that is closer to you …"* There is a short silence. *"Ok, yes …"* Erika says a bit cautiously. Henry continues still with a rather authoritarian voice: *"My experience says that you should show consideration of whether it is dark, you should show consideration of whether it is icy, and you should show consideration of being in motion all the time. That is some of the parameters my experience says it is good to take into consideration when the weather is cold."*

## Negotiating where to be active

Active citizens are here enacted as people who take an active part in negotiating how to continue these meetings. It is not a question of whether they would like to meet but they take part in figuring out how they can continue together with the sports instructor. So, some kind of ownership is created or a least a desire to continue with the meetings. The active citizens are at the same time enacted here with some limits to where they can be active. The citizens' answer to the cold weather is to move inside. The sports instructors on the other hand wants to keep it outside, so it fits his business model. He sort of vetoes this here disregarding that it doesn't fit the elderly bodies and the cold and nasty weather very well. The sports instructor's answer to the cold weather is instead to be more active.

The private partner in terms of where it is possible to be active frames the negotiation with the active citizens of the continuation. There are some rules made explicit here that the citizens are not aware of. There had earlier in these meetings been talk about the possibility to meet inside somewhere when it was getting colder, so the suggestion by Erika doesn't come out of the blue. The "rule" here of where the citizens can be active – especially the tacit character – makes the idea of how the citizens are supposed to be in the driver seat and to run this on their own, a bit complex – and raises questions of who is making the decisions.

At the same time, it is made visible that this outdoor exercise activity is part of something bigger than the gathering around the fire. It is not just about designing with and at these citizens' everyday environment – and to make them continue on their own with this activity. The gathering around the fire or the meetings in the park here become visible especially to the senior citizens as also being about business strategies and private-public partnerships. This is something I will return to in chapter ten.


## Control over your own body – and when to be active

In the introduction with Eva and in the negotiation with Erika (the two previous accounts) attempts were made by these citizens to take control over the part that has to do with the capability of their body. In both situations, it turns into a small conflict with Henry of how he has planned the game and the continuation of the meetings. The introduction with Eva turns into a small conflict when Eva tries to suggest playing the croquet game with some smaller balls than Henry has suggested. This small incident

follows an ongoing discussion from this period in the park between (some of) the elderlies and Henry on how to play the games. The elderlies sometimes felt that the games were a bit too fast and wild e.g. the Ultimate game, and they were worried that their body couldn't follow their enthusiasm and they would injure themselves when they engage in these games. "We still feel young, but our bodies aren't," some of them explained. The same goes for the weather when it was getting colder, they also worried they would get sick but at the same time they wanted to continue to take part in the meetings.

Concerning the pleasure of passivity I described earlier, in these situations the elderlies do not seem to have confidence in the choice of how to play the game created by Henry – or how to continue the meetings – to just leave agency and trust and the responsibility to the sports instructor. This builds on experiences from earlier meetings and in these moments described above they (Eva and Erika) try to make their influence of how and where the games should be played so it suits their body.

This lack of confidence in the sports instructor's way of making the elderlies physically active is both a distrust in his work, and a distrust in their own body – or their own body's capability if they engage too much in these games or in the meetings outside. There is a conflict here between being active and being too active – and forgetting that you can't be too active or that it can be risky.

## Active citizens - in the park

I ask what active citizen is and where it is – and have in this chapter tried to follow how active citizens were enacted as one of the central things in the living lab. Active citizens here move among how the citizens themselves are active, how the project group and partner wants to make them active in particular ways, as well as how the different partakers try to take control of where and when to be active, which also points to the relation between passive and active.

The question of what the active citizen is but also where it is, was difficult to get grip on – and I still think it is. The active citizen was in the park. The questions were however blurred by them being more active than we, the design researchers, were in terms of knowing what we were doing – and what needed to be done to make it succeed. The design researchers were on unknown ground without design materials, methods, artifacts, and techniques. The "already" active and experienced citizens

made me uncertain of what we were doing and evoked questions of what the role of the design researchers was. Without methods, tools, and techniques we mainly became inexperienced "social workers" and non-committal "grandchildren" in our attempts at creating commitment among the citizens to the living lab by socializing with them.

Locating the active citizens also became a question of ambiguity when the citizens in some moments were passive. They were though mainly passive as we tried to make them active in particular ways that should prepare citizens to take over "our job," when they were going to be on their own. A sense of passivity I, for a long time, had difficulty putting into words but though found resonance in Law's (2001) description of the pleasure of passivity. Here passivity is about care, trust, and non-responsibility – and to actively choose to abandon agency. This is something that both complicated but also nuanced the description of what it means to be passive and to be active.

Finally, the questions of what active citizens are and where they are was also complicated by the citizens sometimes taking control over where and when to be active – in the question of being physically active. Here, they didn't just always leave themselves to the "arms of the project" but instead went into negotiations and discussions to decide by themselves how, when, and where to be active physically. The activeness was sometimes deselected in an attempt to care and take responsibility for their own body. In other words, in some moments activeness was deselected in an act of responsibility and care for your own body. In other moments, passivity and to abandon agency was chosen as a way to seek care and non-responsibility. I will elucidate on this in the following section.

## Active – passive – and questions of care, trust, and non-responsibility

The last part points to the issue of self-management and determines when one is "active" and "passive" – but it also points to the question of what it means to be active – an active citizen – and to be passive. I will discuss this in the following - again with a reference to Law (2001). The municipality – and here together with the project wants to make passive recipients active citizens and active citizens more active. Here it is imagined to be done by making the citizens an active part of creating and maintaining their own services – and to do this with and for other citizens c.f. the idea

of the municipality delivering services to a community of citizens (instead of a one-to-one delivery) that on the other hand helps each other.

When we in the project group earlier in relation to other groups of elderlies presented some of these ideas, we were often met with reluctance. Many of the citizens were not interested in this kind of exchange, as they explained it. "I don't think I'm capable or physically strong enough to return the favor and to help others." They didn't want to be indebted to somebody especially when they weren't sure they could "pay back." At the same time though, we heard stories from the same citizens in the conversations we had with them of how they already helped each other (neighbors and friends). So what was the problem? It could be the ability to control and determine when and how you wanted to be active. It was not something that should be controlled or put into the system as part of a service offer from the municipality.

This last point should not necessarily be understood as a question of people not wanting to be active citizens, and trying to make care and responsibility into something that the public sector must meet. But, the question could at the same time be: What does it mean that the "active citizens" are envisioned to take over and be the "arms of the public sector" (reduced scale, though), where other citizens can seek care and accountability? It is an ambitious idea of service and service delivery, and I think the descriptions of how "active citizens" were enacted in the living labs points to the need to nuance this idea including the relation between being active and passive, which is not simple but rather something that changes and slips among the different practices – also within the same person.

Questioning the whole idea of how to rethink services and service delivery in the relation between the public sector and the senior citizens, also points back to us design researchers. We follow or combine the municipality's agenda of making active citizens with our ambition of trying out new, radical involvement of the citizens, where the design takes place at the citizens' everyday environment and they are envisioned to be able to take over and continue with the "design" – modification, negotiation, etc. – of the object after the project has ended. This, in itself can be an interesting design idea especially in an attempt to accommodate unknown use situations[22]. Though, it here becomes more problematic when this is practiced in

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[22] What I describe here is inspired by the approach of "design after design," which means to design for unknown users and uses by making incomplete objects and things, which are open for modification, negotiation, etc. in the use situation (Binder, et al. 2011b).

relation to the agenda of the municipality. The design researchers including me are somehow with our own agenda uncritically trying to also implement the agenda of the municipality.

This points to what I have addressed earlier with the relation among the different actors being involved in the co-design projects and most importantly the design researchers role or position in these constellations. As mentioned in chapter seven, with the descriptions of the history of participatory design, the participatory design researchers have roughly speaking gone from - in the seventies and eighties - taking side with the "weak part" in attempts of empowering to a position that is articulated as aligning controversies and matters of concern. Here, the design researchers do not explicitly take sides, but are imagined as part of these constellations of multiple "stakeholders" and agendas.

But some kind of side taking occurs when the design researchers partner up with an actor like the Municipality to seek funding to a common project (like the Senior Interaktion project). It is not necessarily incorrect and does not have to be problematic. But I will point to a need for participatory design and co-design researchers in these kinds of positions and projects to develop a (critical) reflective practice where "the others'" agendas including one's own is not just taken for granted or taken as "innocent" as long as e.g. the citizens are just being involved. I will return to this in chapter eleven with a suggestion of being able to listen, dwell, hesitate but also object and resist. Karasti (2010) have made similar arguments and suggests that participatory design can turn to and strengthen interaction with STS. The field of STS, Karasti argues, *"has a long tradition of research with more extensive societal scopes and interests than PD"* (Karasti 2010, 89).

This chapter described how active citizens are being performed in different ways including how the design researchers, the municipality and the sports instructor all want to make the citizens active in particular ways. However, the "active citizens" here "survive" the living lab on one hand as something made "sustainable" through the living lab but mainly by doing what they already did i.e. being physically and socially active – also by initiating their own "activities". In other words, the citizens continued to meet in the park every second Friday after the project ended. In the following chapter we continue with the description of the living lab but here with the

focus on "new technology" – and how new technology is being performed in different moments including whether or how it is made sustainable to "survive" the living lab.

# 9: New technology - and a new social practice

What is "new technology" – and where is it? In this chapter, I follow how "new technology" is being performed as a central part of the living lab. But this chapter is also a description of something that slips among plans, intentions, and actual use, and conceptual ideas meeting practice "in a park" as well as of design researchers going against their own approach of co-design including a bottom-up approach of infrastructuring (Björgvinsson, et al. 2010; Binder et al. 2011b).

In general, new technology was a fundamental part of the project and in the living lab, where there were different stakes. First, the design researchers (especially those from the ITU) wanted to explore the design concepts of the Twitterido-groups and the super dots. For the municipality, it was a central part of their political agenda to develop "welfare technology"[23]; and for the sports instructor it was perceived as an opportunity to expand his business.

The new technology in this sense became central in this living lab as a way for the project, or especially the design researchers, to try out the concepts of the project "in reality." This could also be seen as an attempt from the design researchers to make the practice of the citizens follow their technology agenda – including the agenda of creating a new social practice of "ad hoc communities." At the same time, the accounts in this chapter are also a description of confusion and vague strategies among the project group in relation to this attempt, as well as how the new technology turns into a failed effort of integrating a sustainable infrastructure for the community through a smart phone application.

The four different accounts described in this chapter, show how the "new technology" is different things at different times during the living lab. In the park, it moves among being e.g. a spontaneous smartphone course, a smartphone application, a fun activity, as well as homework and finally something that was made redundant as well as made into my PhD project – something that makes me raise the question of whom the "new technology" is for. In the final discussion, of this chapter I will

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[23] Another question is what is welfare technology. That is not my focus here, but the question is raised in a recently defended PhD dissertation about another user-driven innovation project in collaboration with the public sector (Ertner 2015).

therefore discuss this attempt of integrating an "infrastructure" and a new social practice – and to do that in relation to the concepts of artful integration as well as artful infrastructuring by Lucy Suchman (2002) and Helena Karasti and Anna-Liisa Syrjänen (2004). I use their concepts here to discuss how "new technology" as a potential infrastructure is developed as part of this living lab – or rather how it isn't.

We start with the description of how new technology was being articulated in the project as different concepts before entering the meetings in the park. The new technology was performed here as concrete concepts as well as an important support for, and to increase, social interaction among senior citizens.

## From Twitterido-groups to ad hoc communities

In the project application, "new technology" is described as an important part in supporting social interaction among senior citizens. Here are more concrete concepts described like the Twitterido-groups:

> *Twitterido is about to give the senior citizens the opportunity to notice and be noticed in connection with everyday activities. Concretely, the idea is to create dedicated Twitterido-groups around certain everyday activities. The group is a social community in which you share information about these activities. It could be twitterido-groups for shopping, culture, or exercise."* (Senior Interaktion, project application, April 2009)

A Twitterido-group is also described as a "new and equivocal opening" for social interaction among elderly citizens based on making yourself "visible" to the others in a community. This idea of making yourself visible was also described as an "implied" invitation as well as a ticket to talk i.e. as a way to get in contact with others without making it explicit that you were lonely and needed company.

The Twitterido-groups later became the concept of the super dots when the concept was brought into the workshops with the citizens and partners (see chapter five). Here it was also given a physical shape – foam dots, a carbon tube, polystyrene balls, etc. It still followed the idea to be connected in different communities and to inform the others when you were doing specific activities by making yourself "visible."

During the planning of the living lab, it was articulated among the project group that the super dots should be the infrastructure for the living lab to support the

continuation, though without a further consideration of how that should be manifested. To make it a bit more complicated to follow the "new technology," the concept of the super dots that existed during the planning of the living lab turned into the concept of the ad hoc communities, which also became one of the names of the living lab in Valbyparken[24]: the living lab of ad hoc communities.

Ad hoc communities followed the same idea as the super dots of people being connected in different communities. By making yourself visible when you were in the park or did the activity the community shared an interest in, it was imagined as this "implied" invitation for others to join you. In that way, the use of technology for "ad hoc communities" should be able to make improvised meetings possible – but also it enhanced shared and last minute planning. The last point was also described among the project group as a way to make it more flexible and easier to plan among the citizens.

## Potential infrastructure and new social practice

"New technology" was (before entering the park) a series of concepts developed by the project and earlier brought in and tried out in relation to the citizens in one of the co-design workshops. For the living lab, it was more concretely articulated as a possible infrastructure for ad hoc communities of outdoor exercises. It was to make joint planning easier as well as to make last minute organization and improvised meetings possible – but also to support the citizens to continue on their own beyond the project. There were, in other words, ideas of what the "new technology" should do and more importantly, what kind of practices it should initiate among the communities of citizens. The concept of the ad hoc communities entailed assumption of a need for better ways to organize among the senior citizens, that they needed ways to meet impulsively as well as to do last minute planning. The "new technology" before entering the park was both a potential infrastructure and a new particular social practice for the senior citizens.

How the new technology together with these concepts and plan should be made present in the living lab was not really clear from the beginning of the living lab. However, the project group got the chance to borrow two smartphones from one of the partners in the project, so they became the "new technology" together with a

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[24] The living lab had several names – and some of the names at the same time e.g. Henry in Valbyparken, Outdoor exercises in Valbyparken, The Network Zone, etc.

blog[25] when the bi-weekly meetings were initiated. In the following three accounts, I will focus on the smartphones.

The new technology as a potential infrastructure for ad hoc communities was difficult to locate in the park in the initial meetings. The new technology's encounter with the meetings in the park was in many ways confusing – a confusion that is also a sign of confusion, uncertainty, and a non-coherence between the initial plans of the living lab and what was planned for the meetings. The following account is from one of the first meetings in the park.

## "What if you're only accustomed to push-buttons?"

It is a bit windy and the sun is shining this Wednesday morning in June. The project group and the private partner are standing by the lake at the entrance to Valbyparken. David (master student from ITU) very quickly shows Mie and me what he thinks we need to know about the smartphones. He also hands us a manual he has made for the elderlies. Together with the sports instructor, he is in charge of this day's activity – a treasure hunt.

Some of the people start to show up and we turn our attention to them. Twelve elderlies show up. There is a small introduction both to the project and to the program of the day by Lise and David, who also splits all of us in two groups. David continues with the introduction: *"We are going on a treasure hunt and we have to find the activities. I've made some cards on these,"* he says, showing the phones for everyone, *"so, each group gets one of them and must find the activities they are asked to."* He looks down at one of the phones. Some of the women on the first team start to look a little anxiously at each other and one of the women says: *"What if you're only accustomed to push buttons?"* and laughs a little. Some of the others laugh with her. David doesn't seem to notice what is being said. The anxious women agree that the men probably know how to use this new phone, so they rearrange the groups. Now the two men (besides David and the sports instructor) are placed in one group each.

The introduction is finished and the first team starts to walk. When they are out of sight, my team starts walking towards the first station. Inger leads the way with

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[25] http://valbyparken.blogspot.dk/

the smartphone in her hand. Eva, Olau, and I follow her. The rest of the group is slightly behind. I can hear them talking about the weather and the park; in my part of the group the conversations is about the map on the smartphone and how to find the first station. My group, with the phone, stops the whole group many times on the way, when there are problems with finding the way. The strong sunlight is interfering, so many of the stops are made to actually see what is on the screen. Olau is now holding the phone and Inger tries to make a shadow for the screen with her hand. I can't stop thinking that these troubles with finding the way on the phone are a bit ironic, as we can almost see the station from where we are and the road is actually straight ahead. Finally, we reach the point in the park that is shown on the map in the phone.

The task at the first station is to take some pictures with the smartphone. I try to help Inger with how to do that. It is the first time Inger is handling a smartphone and this Android-based phone is also new to me, so I'm not that much of a help at this moment. We are standing with the manual we received from David, who is on the other team. "*Try to click somewhere and see what it says,*" I am telling Inger, who is holding the phone. "*We have to wipe the screen, it is a little greasy,*" is Inger's response and she continues with *"but where is the camera?"* Olau mingles with us and we continue to look for the camera. Inger constantly looks back and forth between the phone and the manual and seems confused. She tries to press the place on the phone that is marked on the manual. *"It says click here to get to the camera, but nothing happens."* I feel a bit stressed and desperate trying to look around to see if David is nearby. We can't figure out how to get to the camera and I can't read his manual. I feel a bit unprepared at that moment. After a while, I get the phone from Inger and try alternative options on the phone without using the manual. I find the camera and Inger happily gets ready to take pictures.

## Smartphones – not an "infrastructure"

The "new technology" became, in the encounter with the park, maps and apps that disappeared; strange, greasy and black screens unable to be "touched" (often it didn't react to the hand pressure); but also exciting functions as the camera to take pictures of each other. At the same time, in the meetings "new technology" became: disrupted walks and conversations; an articulated difference in technology expertise between men and women; a split in the groups between those who were engaged with the

phones and those who were not (this split was though not definite); but also gatherings of those who were engaged with the phone in figuring out how to use it, making shields for the sun for each other and exchanging knowledge – or lack of knowledge of how to use these phones as well as small fights of whose turn it was to hold the phone.

New technology here becomes confusing when encountering the meetings in the park but also the other way around – the meetings in the park become confusing when encountering the new technology. It is at this moment difficult to recognize the new technology as an (potential) infrastructure for new social practice in the particular way the project had imagined as well as a support for the continuation beyond the project.

Despite the confusing encounter, the new technology also became a smartphone course for the citizens. They had never used smartphones and applications before, so this became mostly an introduction to the different functions, how to push a touch screen, and how to find your way around the phone. But also it gave the opportunity to find your way around the park using the phone. In that sense the new technology also became an extension of the outdoor exercise activity – that made it more than "just" an offer of exercise for the senior citizens. Without the technology in these first meetings it would just have been games in a park with a great bunch of instructors (we were seven people from the project), who also took pictures and videos. The new technology here made it a living lab with a technological "experiment" as well as something more or different from the activity offers for senior citizens our participants otherwise attended.

The spontaneous smartphone course could be seen as preparation for later use of the smartphones for other purposes. But, the enactment of the new technology here was not coherent with the initial purpose of the project group of creating an infrastructure for ad hoc communities including creating a social practice in a particular way. To me it raised some questions of what was coming into being with the use of the phones in these initial meetings – what was the new technology doing in the living lab?

The account of how the mutual shaping of a new technology and the (social) practice in the park became confusing is also an account of how the organization, plans, and responsibilities among the project group and private partner were

confusing and uncertain at this moment. There was non-coherence between the initial plans of the living lab and what was planned for the meetings. The living lab in Valbyparken got the smartphones to use in these meetings but they were not super dots, ad hoc communities, or infrastructures – and no one really had a plan for how they were going to be.[26]

## An intermezzo of frustration

At this moment this – the confusion and ambiguous plans – was a bit too frustrating for me. Besides taking part, being a host, and socialize with the citizens I had so far been in charge of the blog, to update it and instruct the citizens on how to use it, but I chose also to take the responsibility of the smartphones – and later of the project of getting an app developed, which contained the ideas of the project with the concept of ad hoc communities and a potential infrastructure for the continuation.

It was very quickly decided among the project group to develop this smartphone app. My argument for the new smartphone app was mainly that if the project wanted to be serious with this concept of the ad hoc communities and to make it part of the community in the living lab, we needed to get our own smartphone app developed for this purpose. At the same time, I thought that if we should support the citizens in meeting after the project had ended – to make this infrastructure – there needed to be this possibility to be connected also outside the park. My reasons and arguments here should both be seen in relation to the initial plans of the project but also as a reaction toward the confusion and ambiguity of new technology in the initial meetings.

This decision to take responsibility of the "new technology" later created both a sense of ambivalence in the implementation and of puzzlement to me that made me raise the question of whom the smartphone app was for. Was it only for my PhD project? But it also raises questions of how the definite plans with the smartphone app cohered with the meetings and the community of citizens in the park. I raise this question in the final discussion of this chapter with the notions of artful integration and infrastructuring.

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[26] The non-coherence between the initial plans and the planning of the meetings in the park was a problem for the project – the citizens enjoyed the exercises with the smartphone despite the initial anxiousness and confusion.

# "I have used the Network Zone"

We here move from new technology as mostly confusing in the encounter with the meetings in the park, and my own personal frustrations as part of the work with "implementing" new technology, instead to the potential infrastructure and new social practice very concretely taking shape as a smartphone app – and with that how new technology was enacted as a new exciting activity in the park.

The application was developed after the concept of ad hoc communities i.e. to support improvised meetings as well as common and last minute planning. It contained functions to "check in" in the park (show your friends that you are in the park); "find your friends" in the park (see if and where your friends have checked in); "create an activity," "sign up" for an activity, "read tips" of the games as well as a "contact list" with contact information on everybody in the community. These were functionalities that in different ways could help the citizens: 1) in meeting unplanned and improvised when they could show their own position and find the others while being in the park; as well as 2) support them in arranging their own meetings, where others could sign up and take part in the ongoing planning. The last should also make it possible to make last minute changes due to weather or the like.

"The Network Zone"[27] (the app) was tried out with the citizens in the park. During the meetings, the different functions of the app were used in between doing the sports activities, i.e. trying to check in at specific places, finding out who else was in the park, where they were, as well as what activities were planned. The citizens happily engaged in these activities. The app was also used at home visits (we now had six smartphones), among some of the citizens between the meetings in the park. Here the citizens had the possibility to try out the app as part of their daily activities e.g. to create activities for the others to sign up for or show others in the community if they went to the park beyond the Friday encounters.

A "homework kit" with different assignments to encourage the citizens to try out the different functions followed the app on these home visits. This was also an

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[27] In the middle of developing the smartphone application, it was decided to call the living lab the Network Zone – and the smartphone application was supposed to be part of a technological platform for the Network Zone. For some reason – I can't really remember anymore – it was also decided to call the smartphone application "The Network Zone," maybe to make it less confusing – but actually it had the opposite effect.

encouragement for the citizens to start using it to meet planned/unplanned meetings between our bi-weekly meetings in the park. That didn't happen. After trying out the app a couple of weeks, Eva wrote to me this email (I had asked them to send me their comments):

> *I have used the Network Zone to suggest some activities. Also, I have signed up for other people's suggestions. It has worked well I think. […] I'm not sure how it will work, but for me I wish that I could subscribe to a date. I like to plan. [And] Maybe under activity before signing up, you could read the tips for the game. I have used the phone to take pictures, send SMS, MMS, and make calls. It has worked flawlessly. All in all a good experience.* (Eva, email, November 2011)

## An exciting activity but also a sense of ambivalence

What Eva writes here is her experience with the smartphone app – and how she has fulfilled the exercises I asked them to do e.g. try to suggest activities and sign up for the others' activities. The mail is though also a description of what the experience with using the smartphone in general was like (to take pictures, make calls, etc.). What Eva also tells me with her suggestions of improvements of the smartphone application is that she likes to plan and she likes to be prepared (read tips for the game before signing up).

The last clashes with some of the functions "to check in" that the smartphone app contain prescribing a possibility to find each other unplanned in the park. It was based on the idea of the project to support impulsive meetings and "implied" invitations for others to join you unplanned. Besides this prescription, the smartphone app also prescribed the possibility for the senior citizens to take over the work of the project group as well as the possibility for the sports instructor to do the same with the functions of "create an activity." This should enable them to plan meetings in the park as well as "read tips" of the games, which should make them able to play the games without "in person" instruction.

The new technology is a smartphone app with a prescribed space of action and projected use and needs (e.g. to be able to meet unplanned) defined by the project group. In the encounter with the citizens, it becomes an exciting activity among the different games in the park. The elderlies very quickly learned to use this application

(they were now getting pretty used to the phones) or they helped each other. They seemed to enjoy the different small activities with phones in between the sports activities. The new technology became an exciting activity between the meetings as well as homework to be done between the meetings. The last mainly took shape as a trial test rather than an actual integration with the citizens' everyday life.

I though had a sense of ambivalence in this period. There was still the hope of integrating a sustainable infrastructure and a new social practice among the citizens to support – and secure – the continuation. At the same time to be in charge of the integration of the smartphone app in the citizen's everyday practice also created this sense of obligation and disruption. I always felt as if I had to excuse interrupting games, conversations, or the like with the small exercises with the smartphone app. Often people happily agreed to do it, but I still had this sense of an annoying disruption of the nice gatherings, the joyful atmosphere, and the collective activities.

"This was never something that came from the citizens or grew out of their existing practices." The need for this infrastructure and a new social practice wasn't something that emerged among the citizens – at least not in the sense it was imagined by the project with the technology. This realization sounds kind of naïve here but somehow all the initiatives of citizen involvement in different versions had blurred my picture of this process, but it was here that the key to my ambivalence was buried. I will return to this in the final discussion of this chapter.

Instead, we now turn to the final accounts – it is first from a workshop at KADK completing the first phase of the living lab followed by my visit to the park four month after the project ended. In both instances, the smartphone is made redundant and not important for the continuation of the outdoor exercise activity after the end of the project.

## "We know it's every second Friday"

We now move to the end of this workshop at KADK where a negotiation of the continuation of the meetings in the park is taking place – at the end of a long discussion one of the women finally comes up with this suggestion:

> *We could decide that we meet every second Friday in the park. Then we always know that something is going on. And we don't have to plan what to do*

*…we can just figure that out when we meet. There are also the game tools in the shed we can use. Or otherwise we can always go for a walk as we just talked about."* (Amy, workshop KADK, December 2011)

This comment ended the negotiation of how this (the living lab) should continue. There was still one year left to the project, so it was agreed among the project group that the sports instructor, the project leader, and sometimes some of my research colleagues still facilitated and instructed these meetings until the project ended. The app was still part of the living lab and tried out during the meetings even though it was made redundant (as an infrastructure) for the community in this suggestion from Amy above. She here describes the "bi-weekly Friday arrangement" as a stable foundation for the continuation. And, the meetings in the park continued like this.

When the project ended a year after this workshop and Amy's suggestion, the smartphones were handed over to the citizens as a "gift" from the project. They were now used to them including using the Internet to send their own pictures to the blog or finding their way when they got lost, etc.

Four month after the project ended, I returned to the park and these bi-weekly Friday meetings to visit the citizens, who had continued to meet. It was here I got the comment from Eva[28]: *"We don't need the app; we know it's every second Friday"* (Eva, Valbyparken, February 2013). The smartphone application was made redundant here for the second time. I had been interested in whether they actually used the app as part of organizing encounters and activities now, and this was the response I got to my question. It was also during this conversation the women I talked to raised the worry of whether I had anything to write now that they didn't use the app. It was the second or third time the new technology explicitly was made into my PhD project – and this time it made me raise the question of whom the "new technology" was for.

## "Fixed Fridays in the park" – another infrastructure

What the women tell me here is that the smartphone app is not needed; it is reduced to a calendar function with the sentence that they know it's every second Friday and at the same time, the "bi-weekly Friday arrangement in the park" is here several times

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[28] See the introduction of the dissertation for a prolonged account of this meeting

confirmed as the infrastructure for their community. The smartphone app is made redundant by this other infrastructure. The bi-weekly Friday arrangement with a fixed meeting time and place was from the beginning a practical setup, when the living lab was going to be established. This arrangement was created through repeating practices in the park – it was e.g. never cancelled or changed during this first phase of the living lab. In that sense, it becomes an integrated practice of the citizens' everyday lives[29] – they adjusted their weekly schedule to be able to attend these meetings every time.

The "bi-weekly Friday arrangement in the park" was not an "ad hoc" practice of meeting in terms of when and where to meet – and the possibility to make it impulsive encounters, the practice the project group had imagined from the beginning of the living lab and the practice the smartphone app projected. The practice among the community of citizens was though an "ad hoc" practice of organizing the meetings in terms of what to do – what games to play, which was not necessarily planned before meeting in the park, as it was during the time the design researchers took part. They made their own community of "ad hoc" exercises.

The new technology is here made redundant as an infrastructure for the community of these citizens and the outdoor exercise activity – and deselected in favor of a practical and integrated habit. At the same time, the new technology is also enacted as my PhD project or in other words, the citizens' use of the smartphone seemed to mainly make sense as something they did for the sake of my project. I will elucidate this in the following discussion of what the new technology was and where it was in relation to this living lab and the project in general.

# Artful integration – and infrastructuring

The different accounts are descriptions of how the design researchers make different attempts to make the practice of the citizens follow the technological agenda. At the same time, they are also a description of confusion and vague strategies among the project group in relation to this attempt - as well as how the new technology turns into a failed effort of integrating a sustainable infrastructure for the community through a smart phone application. Furthermore, the four different accounts are also

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[29] We always met at the same place in the park and at the same time i.e. Friday at 10.00 by the entrance to the park. It was never cancelled.

descriptions of how the "new technology" was different things at different times during the living lab, where it in the park moved between being e.g. a spontaneous smartphone course, a smartphone application, a fun activity as well as homework and finally something that was made redundant as well as made into my PhD project. The "new technology" was difficult to follow since it was different things at different times – but also different things at the same time. At the same time, it moved and slipped between the different actors in the living lab in terms of how it was important – or not important – for the practice in the living lab as well as for the continuation beyond the project. The last also points to the design researchers' concepts and ideas of how to create a sustainable infrastructure for the outdoor exercise activity, where we as I described in the beginning seemed to go against our own approach of co-design, including a bottom-up approach of infrastructuring (Björgvinsson, et al. 2010; Binder, et al. 2011b). In the final discussion here I will focus on this initial plan and version of the new technology – and discuss it in relation to concepts of artful integration as well as artful infrastructuring by Suchman (2002) and Karasti and Syrjänen (2004). I use their concepts here to discuss how "new technology" as a potential infrastructure was developed as part of this living lab – other rather how it wasn't. Suchman, in her article "Located accountabilities in technology production,", describes three contrasting positions for design: The first, "The view from nowhere" – which is a design that is created "from nowhere" (decontextualized and standardized), where the designers ignore: *"their own position within the social relation that comprise technical systems"* (Suchman 2002, 5). Here Suchman also raises the question: *"Who is doing what to whom here?"* in the discussion of design within this position (Suchman 2002, 5). The second position is "Detached intimacy," which refers to design that happens too much "in house," where designers are in intimate relations with their own professions and with the companies for which they work and the distance from the context of use. She gives two examples I find relevant for the following discussion: "Fake collectivity," which is *"a kind of shared reality that provides the self-evidence, for anyone within the community"* (Suchman 2002, 5) as well as "de-realization," which is the establishment and maintenance of *"an environment (a lab, a mathematical theory, a computer screen) that provides distance from practicalities that must eventually be faced …"* (Suchman 2002, 5). Finally the third, "Located accountability," is Suchman's own suggestion in a discussion of how

to blur the boundary between design and use, where she describes design as being located and accountable. Artful integration is a way to avoid "design from nowhere" but also "detached intimacy." The definition of the artful means how new technology and new practices grow out of the existing practice and existing technology. Here, change is part of the everyday practice and not something applied by a technological system.

Karasti and Syrjänen (2004) use Suchman's term in relation to their analysis by two examples of infrastructuring in two participatory design communities or what they call "participatory in the wild." Here artful infrastructure is combined with Leigh Star's notion of infrastructure to analyze these communities' design practices as artful infrastructuring. The description of infrastructuring is here based on the work of Star and Bowker and their description of: *"the verb to infrastructure, emphasizing the tentative, flexible and open character of the activity"* as well as how *"technological infrastructures should always be seen in relation to organized human practices, as parts of a social system"* (Karasti and Syrjänen 2004, 21). The authors here combine *"the socio-material aspect of artful integrations"* and *"the processual and socio-historical features of infrastructure"* (Karasti and Syrjänen 2004, 24) to describe a design practice in these communities that is collaborative, decentralized, gradual, as well as containing an openness and flexibility.

## Design of detached intimacy meets the living lab

The attempt of integrating new technology in the living lab became a completion on something that had been in the pipeline for a longer time. The sense that I was disturbing was in many ways associated with the fact that this – the smartphone app and a new social practice – was not something the citizens themselves had asked for; or had a need for, or for that sake could see a meaning with. We were actually already told that in our first round of citizen involvement cf. the three workshops, but we forgot to listen to their resistance and murmurings of there being something more important.

I earlier asked whether the definite plans with the smartphone app cohered with the meetings and the community of citizens in the park. The problem was here that the smartphone application and the social practice it prescripted was something that came "far away" from the living lab. The idea of ad hoc communities was

described as part of a longer series of concepts from Twitterido-groups in applications to the super dots in the workshops. They were concepts formulated by design researchers and brought into play in different ways and in different contexts, which should make them relevant. But, it wasn't "design from somewhere" to use Suchman's term (2002) – it was from somewhere, but not from the use, or everyday practice of the citizens. I would rather define it as an example of detached intimacy. On one hand, the concept of ad hoc communities and the smartphone app were created in the collectivity of the design researchers and to some extent the municipality, a collective with common assumptions of a shared reality of the elderlies that needed techniques to come in contact with each other (tickets to talk and implied invitations to improvised meetings) as well as the ability to be more flexible in how to organize and plan meetings together, just to mention some of the assumptions.

At the same time the description of how new technology is coming into being in the living lab is also a description of how a "de-realized" design (again an example of design as detached intimacy) finally meets a local site or the everyday practice of the people it is intended for. The smartphone app's encounter with the living lab in that sense made it visible that the "new technology" is primarily made by and for the project, and here also for my PhD project.

Where Suchman's (2002) descriptions of different positions of design take part in defining how "new technology" performed in the living lab i.e. as an example of detached intimacy, the description by Karasti and Syrjänen (2004) of artful infrastructuring instead takes part in defining the smartphone app as an misunderstood attempt at creating an infrastructure for the community with a "technological system." The new technology or the smartphone app never became anything that could be identified as an infrastructure that was integrated with the citizens' practice in the park. It was not "sunk into" the community to use an expression by Star (1994).

To follow the scholars above, the ambition of designing an infrastructure for the community of citizens in the park could have taken place as an *"embedded, ongoing, multi relational activity"* (Karasti and Syrjänen 2004, 20) that grew out of the practice in the park and not as something that was "added on" or attempted to be (vaguely) enforced. At the same time, it could also have been interesting to take advantage of the time aspect, which made a great difference between the workshops

and the living lab. The living lab ended up lasting for one and a half years within the project's three years – something that could have encouraged an artful practice of infrastructuring leading to something that actually happened in collaboration and gradually became an open and flexible approach from everyone. The problem in our case with trying to "add" the app to the practice of the citizens in the park was that it became a question of acceptance or rejection – and not a common project with a shared exploration of what is possible, interesting and relevant in the enactment of new technology.

This chapter described how new technology is being performed in different ways including especially how the design researchers try to make practice follow their agenda on new technology – and more specifically by trying to implement a new "infrastructure" including a new social practice. But it is also a description of how new technology becomes confusing, non-coherent and creates a feeling of ambivalence in the design researcher (me) in the meeting with the practice in the living lab. Here, the object is not made sustainable and doesn't survive the living lab – at least not as a support for the community of the citizens for which it was intended.

In the following chapter, we continue with the description of the living lab but now with the focus on "public-private partnerships" – and how "public-private partnerships" are being performed in different moments.

# 10: Partnerships – and co-design in multiple organizations

What is "public-private partnership" – and where is it? In this chapter I describe the relation between the different partakers (partners) in the living lab through different moments of partnerships. Partnerships – or rather public-private partnerships was a central focus in the project together with "active citizens" and the "new technology", where it was envisioned to create new collaboration or partnership between the public sector and private companies. But with the focus on partnerships I also have a broader aim in this chapter, which is to study how co-design engages in "new project constellation" with a multiplicity of agendas – and what it means for the agenda of co-design – questions that has been raised by other scholars within participatory design (cf. Balka 2006; Karasti 2010). Liam J. Bannon and Pelle Ehn has described this new focus to new project constellation in the Participatory design projects: *"The main approach in Participatory Design has been to organize projects with identifiable stakeholders within an organization, paying attention to power relations and providing resources with a view to the empowerment of weak and marginalized groups. […] However, design today is rather heterogeneous, partly open and public, engaging users and other stakeholders across organizational and community borders"* (Bannon and Ehn 2013, 57)

In the Senior Interaktion project the idea was to make collaborations or partnerships between public institutions and private companies in delivering services for senior citizens. The project therefore included a great number of private companies where some of them were envisioned to be potential partners for the Municipality of Copenhagen including a small sports company, which was made the main private partner in the living lab in Valbyparken.

Public-private partnerships can more officially be defined as formal collaborations between public authority and a private cooperation, where there terms of conditions are made explicit in relation to investments as well as economic benefits and risks. But the word partnerships is also linked more broadly with relationships, collaborations, connections, alliances – and is associated with equality, commonality,

and shared win-win situations (Jensen and Winthereik 2013). To follow how partnerships are done in the living lab, I refer to this more broad definition of the term and recognize that partnerships can take several forms. At the same time, I don't narrow it down to the relation between the municipality and the private partner in this living lab – but see the moments of partnerships as something that also includes the design researchers as well as the citizens.

Partnerships as part of the co-design project becomes important in relation to discussions of the dynamic and exchange in the collaboration among multiple of partners and multiple organizations as well as how it coheres with co-design and participatory design's democratic approach to design that e.g. entails a focus on designing "with" and on genuine participation. In the final discussion here I return to the question of what it means for the co-design approach and methods when it is brought into these partnerships of multiple agendas and organizations – is it still co-design? I do that inspired by the concept of shared proximity described by Jensen and Winthereik (2013) (based on work of Stengers as well as Deleuze and Guattari's). The chapter here starts with a description of the arrangement with the private partner in this living lab. It continues with the four different moments of partnerships that take part in the park and "outside" the living lab – as well as after the project ended. These different moments of partnerships involves non-coherent collaboration, questionable synergy between research and business, conflicting strategies in how to involve the citizens as well as questions of ownership. Here I also raise the question of what part the citizens have in these partnerships. They are the ones being put in the driver's seat to run and maintain their own service for senior citizens. First, we turn here to the arrangement with the private partner.

## "Henry in Valbyparken"

The living lab was based on the idea of one explicit public-private partnership, which as an envisioned collaboration between the small sports company (two persons) focusing on outdoor exercises and the Municipality of Copenhagen's Health and Care Department. Henry was the sports company in this (we never met the other partner).

Before the different accounts of how partnerships are coming into being in the living lab, I will describe the arrangement between the project group and the private partner – and how it was initiated and planned before the living lab was established

"in the park." Henry had from early on (the project's beginning) been involved in conversations around this potential living lab. In the third workshop (see chapter five), the idea of this living lab was made into a doll scenario by the design researchers, which was called, "Henry in Valbyparken." In the planning process, the living lab was also at a time before initiating the meetings in the park, named "Henry – play and exercise in the open." In other words, the living lab was established with a close association to and depended heavily on this partner and his concept of outdoor exercises as well as "the social" as the foundation of the activities (Interview with project partner, November 2009).

Henry's main interest in the collaboration was to make some kind of smartphone app that could support these outdoor sports activities and make them more flexible in terms of creating new activities and closing them down if or when they didn't work. Henry was therefore very interested in the development of the smartphone app (the new technology) – and he saw the smartphone app as a potential gain for his business – a product he could sell to the different municipalities in Denmark.

After this short description of the sports instructor's role in the collaboration and his stake, we will continue with four different moments of partnerships to describe what these new constellations of multiple partners and agendas involve for the collaborations as well as (the definition of) co-design's work and methods. I have found moments of partnerships in the park but there are also moments of partnerships that take place in between or outside the meetings in the park.

The following account is of a partnership that involved ambiguous strategies and non-coherent ways of working, which also points to new constellations where the partners become very closely dependent upon each other.

## Just leaving

We now move to the park. It is half way through this first phase of the living lab. The sports instructor started, after three or four meetings in the park, to leave one to one and a half hours before the meeting ended; the meetings lasted for three hours. According to him, it was a way of slowly making the citizens take over and organize the activities themselves. They were supposed to be on their own at one point, so this was envisioned to prepare them for that. This "strategy of leaving" though conflicted

with the work of the design researchers. To us, it was too early to leave the citizens to instruct and play the games by themselves. At the same time, our work also included documentation (photos, videos, notes) primarily for research purposes, introducing the smartphones and the application, and socializing with the citizens to create commitment among them to the project. These research obligations made the option of leaving the citizens alone impossible especially as it was still quite early in this phase.

This situation meant that the instructor left to leave the work of instructing and organizing the games to the citizens. No one told the citizens this and the project group was still present. In practice, this meant that the responsibility of organizing the games was instead transferred to the project group – the project leader and the design researchers.

The sports instructor's "strategy of leaving" also had other reasons. In this period of the living lab phase the sport instructor also lost patience and started questioning what he used his time for and whether he would get anything out of it. His engagement was dependent upon the prospect of a possible expansion of his business. At this moment, there were these recursive meetings with the citizens doing different sports activities, in which he was instructing and trying out "new technology" – and his frustration expressed an uncertainty of where this was taking us and whether he was spending his time right. This made the rest of the project a bit uncertain regarding his commitment and whether he would stay in the living lab.

## Partnership as non-coherent collaboration

First, there is an ambiguity of this strategy of "just leaving." It is unclear whether it is a strategy from the sports instructor to prepare the citizens for the continuation beyond the project – and secure that they know how to be on their own – of, whether it is a way for the partner to protect himself and his company in this collaboration. He wasn't paid for his participation in the project, so there needed to be something he could get out of it. Or, maybe it was both.

Secondly, the strategy is non-coherent in the collaboration. The moment of partnership here involves two different strategies of how to prepare the citizens for the continuation beyond the project that doesn't really fit. For the sports instructor, the preparation of the continuation after the living lab is done by preparing the citizens to

be on their own, by actually letting them be on their own. To the design researchers, the preparation of the continuation is done by socially connecting with the citizens but also by trying out the smartphones and later smartphone app with the citizens as a way to prepare them for the continuation. With the strategy of just leaving, there is an uncertainty of how the work with preparing the citizens for the continuation is to be done. At the same time, both parts in the partnership do what they think is the right thing, which in this situation leaves the one part to do the other part's job as well.

The question is how the partnership, between the private partner and the researchers, is enacted. It comes into being as different ways of working, which could have benefitted each other or at least been a partnership, in which both parts could have worked the way they wanted but still in close collaboration i.e. that *"the involved parties pursue divergent interests through one another"* (Jensen and Winthereik 2013, 41). Instead, it becomes a partnership of conflicting strategies that work against each other, so the preparation of the citizens beyond the project becomes ambiguous in terms of whether they should try to be on their own or actually need more preparation especially from the sports instructor. It points to a partnership with a lack of coordination or even more precisely a lack of understanding for each other's work interests and obligations.

This is probably a known conflict within more formal constellations of public-private partnerships; but it created concerns among the design researcher who had made themselves very dependent on this partner. The strategy of "just leaving" raised questions among the project group in terms of the relation to the partner and his commitment to this. Could the project count on him? The "just leaving" strategy was both ambiguous, and non-coherent but it also created moments of an elusive partnership with questions of commitment and responsibility. This is something that was very intangible in this rather informal and loose setup.

This raises questions of the relation between research project and private businesses in these project constellations, something that is also present in the following account of a partnership of questionable synergy – something that takes place in an email conversation.

# "[Is] the energy … going to be paid back?"

The question of getting paid for his efforts became even more explicit in an email conversation. The email was a response to a controversy of how and when the codes of the smartphone application could be shared – the project group (including me) was at this point a bit reluctant with just providing him with the code for the smartphone's application. This reluctance was based on the elusiveness of the partnership described above.

> [The smartphone application is] *my basis for project participation, to exactly test and take the experience further as part of my business. I already know how to do what I'm doing in the project and would really like to have something for my efforts in the project, and not just deliver a known commodity. It does not increase my sales, but is rather "just" volunteering. What is your argument for synergy in public / private collaboration, if the energy [the company] put into the project is not going to be paid back?*
> (Henry, email, October 2011)

Henry describes his contribution to the living lab as energy, a known commodity, and eventually volunteer work. At the same time, he questions whether he will get the "information of the app" the design researchers are making as part of this project as a payment for his efforts. The design researchers thought the sports instructor needed more experience with working with elderlies, so this email was a bit of a surprise to us. We also saw his "volunteer work" in the living lab as an experience he could take further as part of his business e.g. to also sell his concept of outdoor exercises with examples of how to work with senior citizens to municipalities around Denmark. Not to be misunderstood. We also knew that he was interested in getting insight into the development and use of the smartphone application. He got the "background information" a week later; however, the project group needed him to stay in the living lab.

## The research-business partnership of questionable synergy

The partnership here involves a questionable synergy between the public and the private. What you contribute and what you get paid are questions that seem to be

central at this moment – in a very concrete manner (the partner wants to get some paid for his efforts, energy, and for delivering a known commodity). At the same time, the design researchers are not sure of his commitment and are therefore reluctant to "pay" him. On one hand, you have the design research project that is articulated as explorative, open, and with incompleteness as a norm. On the other hand, there is the project as a business opportunity for the partner, who wants to be sure he gets some "pay" for the time he spends. In theory, both parts could gain what they wanted in this i.e. an interesting research project of doing "new radical citizen involvement" and an "innovation to expand the business."

In practice in the park (and in between the meetings), it became complicated and a conflict of who was working for whom? Were the design researchers doing the job for the sports instructor, because he left his responsibility and just wanted the smartphone app? Or was the sports instructor doing a job for the design researcher, so they could get an interesting research project? It is a little black and white here, but it still points to a complicated relationship in this form of funding for projects in which research engages with business partners. These partners are investing their time and/or money in the project, and therefore (often) expect to get something in return that can benefit their business. But what can a research project with an explorative and experimenting approach – where process, knowledge, and outcome is very entangled – promise as a concrete outcome that is more than knowledge – and will it then still be an interesting research project? I will return to this question in the final discussion of this dissertation (chapter eleven).

## Free-play

We here move from one email conversation to another – and from a questionable synergy of research-business partnership to a negotiation of "how" to work with citizen involvement, which is an important subject on the design researchers agenda. It is two days before the next bi-weekly meeting in the park. This time the project group had made a poll on the blog as a new way to try to engage the citizens in planning the program and taking part in deciding what games to play. Henry sends an email with a suggestion for a program, but the elderlies have voted for some other activities. With the information from the output of the poll, I therefore write to

everyone including Henry with a suggestion of how we could accommodate both the program created by Henry and the wishes of the citizens:

> *Here is an update on the number of registered and feedback on disc golf […]. As you can see below there are now 6-7 who have signed up. […] In addition, a few expressed that they would like to play disc golf and another activity. […] I think we should listen to this. I'm considering whether we could swap around some activities and make room for real disc golf for those who would like to do some baskets.* (Signe, email, October 2011)

I promptly get an answer from Henry on this email:

> *I think it would be a bad idea to play disc golf especially now that I have deliberately chosen to build new activities upon the old ... especially to open new ways and eventually provide more tools for the self-training of the group. The idea is to give them the opportunity to train and organize meetings one day, etc. Isn't this the whole purpose? If it's just going to be free play, it has totally missed me and what I'm doing, and I certainly believe that we have adapted expectations this summer. I have in any case, discussed it with Lise [the project leader]. (*Henry, email, October 2011)

The sport instructor's answer surprised me again. I saw my email incl. my suggestions as rather "natural" according to the common agreement with the poll. There are at least three surprises for us design researchers in this response by the private partner; first, how the partner here holds very strictly to the program he has made. He is not open to consider whether it could be possible for some small changes to accommodate what the citizens have voted for; second, which is related to the first, it comes as a surprise that he calls it "free play" to change his program to include some of the wishes from the citizens. I didn't think it was free-play to ask the citizens, but he had another opinion – or at least that is how I read his email; and finally, we design researchers were rather surprised by the last sentence. The email was sent to the whole project group, and it raised a question among the design researchers: What expectation had been aligned between the sports instructor and the project leader? To

put it in plain words, I think we had the sense of being in control of this living lab and to mediate among the different partners – here the sports instructor and the municipality. We had been focused on and used a lot of effort on getting the sports instructor on board and to stay in this living lab (and not "just leaving"), and to mediate between him and the citizens. So, it was a surprise that there were actually things going on between the "public partner" and "private partner" without us knowing about it.

## Partnerships as negotiation of "involvement" methods

The last section reveals a secret partnership between the private partner and project leader (the municipality), which the design researchers were not aware of. "Adapting expectations" stands in contrast to how the partnerships were otherwise being performed during the meetings, which seemed to be more a question of "free play," where there were no clear lines of who was in charge and who was making the decisions. Until now, the division of labor had more or less tacitly been that the design researcher was in charge of the smartphone app, socializing with the elderlies, making the script for the day based on the program from Henry, as well as providing snacks and drinks for the breaks. The citizens came and took part, and were not eager to influence the program and what games to play. Henry was taking care of which games to play and how to play them.

The design researchers were here trying to create active citizens who take an active part in co-producing the plan of the meeting with the poll. But, they at the same time step over the "tacit" line of what is the territory of the partners. By "tacit" I mean that all maybe knew what the sports instructor was in charge of, but that it wasn't made explicit in the collaboration. This "border-crossing" by the design researchers prompted the sports instructor to react quiet strongly.

This partnership involves conflicting strategies of how to involve the citizens in the co-production of what is coming into being in the park. The design researchers are used to involving other actors in what to design or produce together with their co-design approach, where collaboration, participation on equal footing, as well as a focus on creating ownership are put forward. It is therefore important for the design researchers also during the process to involve the citizens as partners in the

negotiation of what we are creating together (cf. new, radical ways of involvement and to make active citizens – see chapter eight).

The sports instructor, on the other hand, seems to be used to being the one who instructs and decides what games to play and how to do it cf. the conflict between him and the citizens of how to play the games (see chapter eight). His purpose is therefore instead to instruct and train the citizens in different games during the process in which he takes part. In other words, his approach seems to be either he is present and instructs or else he is absent and the citizens can instruct themselves. The design researcher has a more gradual – and (over) protective – approach.

There is here a clash between what could be characterized as a hierarchical approach from the sports instructors on one hand and the democratic approach put forward by design researchers – an approach that by the sports instructor is defined as "free-play." The moment of partnership is uncertain in terms of who is making the decisions – is it the sports instructor, the design researchers, or the votes of the citizens? But, it is also indefinite in terms of what method to use in "how" to design or produce this thing in the park. Hence, the partnerships with the private partner – but also the "active citizens" and the municipality, and the co-design way of working is created from negotiation. In some sense, the close proximity of the public-private partnership involves a situation in which it is not the design researchers who (solely) define the methods anymore. I will elucidate on this in the final discussion in this chapter.

## Interrupting

In the last account of what partnerships are – and where they are, we move outside the park and "outside the project" to a "well-working partnership". We also examine the question of what kind of partner the citizens are in these "ships."

It was almost a year after the project ended. I'm on my way home from work and my attempts at writing text. Close to my home I run – or bike – into Henry. He is very happy and eager to tell me about his new job. The municipality has hired him as a consultant to do "what we did in the park" in other parks in the area of Copenhagen. It works according to the same concept. They meet for two hours at a certain place and time every second week. Henry takes part but there are also other instructors/trainers or physical therapists involved from the different local health

centers in Copenhagen. The idea is again for Henry to support them in the beginning to later make the senior citizens take over and run it more or less on their own. The activity is now called, "Together about exercise." He laughs a little when he explains how it works very differently in the different parks, so it becomes or has to be adjusted to the specific community (e.g. in one park it is only people with walkers who attend, which creates some other kinds of exercises).

I'm puzzled and a bit confused by this conversation. I just came from my struggles of writing, trying to figure out what I had been part of, and from the singular stories of the living lab as a success that blurred my work. And, here I bump into "the living lab" and "the public-private partnership" again. Henry tells me that due to his new job he also started coming in Valbyparken again to also support "our" citizens there who still meet every second Friday – also to follow what they are doing. So, I get the latest updates.

I'm a bit curious about the position Henry got and for how long. He ends by explaining the arrangement to me: *"The municipality or the health centers are responsible for sending people out to me in the park, but I am responsible for making them come again. I get my money for making people turn up again to these meetings."* We end the conversation and I tell him to say hi to the people I know in Valbyparken.

I later heard from "our" citizens in the park that they were a bit annoyed with Henry's participation in their meetings again. They were doing fine on their own, and as far as I could understand they had evolved they own routines and how to do things. So Henry came and interrupted this with his games and ways to run it. They also found it a bit bothersome that he had to sit and register them all and count how many of them showed up each time. They had one more complaint. The local health center encouraged people when they finished a rehabilitation course to continue doing exercise by joining the group in the park. I had also seen the poster at this local health center with the offer, "Together about exercise." But these people from the rehabilitation courses couldn't keep up with the exercises they were doing in Valbyparken, which was difficult for the people who were running it to handle. They were not sure the health center understood what they were sending these people out to in the park. "Our" citizens raised questions of whether they were responsible for the newcomers' physical capabilities – or lack thereof – and whether they should or how they should adjust to this in the well-established activity.

## Multiple senses of ownership - and interrupting partnerships

"What we did in the living lab" is becoming a service offer by the municipality here. This means first and foremost that it is packed as a "kit" that can be brought to other parks (in Copenhagen), where other senior citizens can do with it as they like, though with the support of the sports instructor. It has similarities to the "bush pump" – a fluid object (de Laet and Mol 2000). The "outdoor exercise activity" is fluid in terms of how it can travel to other parks as a kit with a "bi-weekly meeting arrangement and a sports instructor" but changes shape in the negotiation and maintenance by the people in the different parks.

In this case, the "fluid subject" follows the object more closely. The last becomes a problem when the concept returns to the park, where it was invented, and to the people who took part in inventing it. They "got" the concept on their own, when the project ended and the engagement from the sports instructor, the municipality, and the design researchers stopped. They have continued maintaining this thing on their own – and it doesn't cohere to the organization of the municipality and the sports instructor, an organization that includes making them: a number in the municipality's accounts and payment of Henry; objects for Henry's instruction again; as well as responsible citizens who take care of other citizens who need to be physically activated (the problem I also raised in chapter eight).

Who owns this thing in the park becomes a relevant but also complicated question here. The citizens have taken ownership of this local thing in the Valbyparken – they are running the biweekly Friday meetings in the way it has evolved among them with their routines and way to do things. The municipality and the sports instructor have taken ownership of the concept as it was developed during the living lab. They are now together spreading the concept to other parks initiating what they now call "Together about motion" and connect it to the local health center as an exercise offer beyond the rehabilitation programs (this was already initiated during the living lab). The partnership is a multiple feeling of ownership.

The citizens are in their ownership just continuing with what they took part in doing in the living lab and have continued the negotiation internally of what the meetings should be like. The sports instructor and the municipality in their ownership take up "this thing" again after half a year and do what the project all the time had imagined – to create (ad hoc) communities of outdoor exercises, where the citizens

are running it in their own way with some support from the municipality and with a reference to the local health center. But, the terms of conditions in this partnership are invisible – at least for the citizens. The citizens were put in the drivers' seat and were imagined as partners in a new radical way of involvement, but they weren't involved in the negotiations of terms of conditions. There is here a well-working partnership with the private partner and the public sector, but it raises questions of if and how the citizens should be part of this partnership.

## Partnerships as commitments - and elusive

In this chapter I inquire the relation between the different partakers (partners) in these "new" constellation, which co-design engages itself in i.e. projects with a multiplicity of partners, who are involved from the beginning (part of the project funding) and therefore also partners in terms of "getting paid" and putting time and manpower into the project. Partnerships as part of the co-design project becomes important in relation to discuss the dynamic and exchange in the collaboration among the multiple partners and multiple organizations as well as how it coheres with co-design and participatory design's democratic approach to design that e.g. entails a focus on designing "with" and on genuine participation. In other words it also means that was is in focus is how public-private partnerships emerge doing the time in the living lab phase, which goes beyond the explicit focus in the project application on partnerships being between the private partners and the municipality – but also the more formal definition of public-private partnerships to encompass also the research partner as well as the relation to the citizens.

In this chapter I here describe different moments of partnerships to inquire the relations between the different partakers. It was moments of partnerships that involves:
- Non-coherent collaboration between the project group and the sports instructor in terms of how to work – or to be present in the park
- Questionable synergy between business and research, which raised questions of who was working for who
- Conflicting strategies of how to work with citizen involvement – something I defined as a clash between as hierarchical and a democratic approach

- The questions of ownership and terms of conditions also in relation to the citizens in these partnerships

It was in other words moments where partnerships involved different aspect of collaboration including proximity and dependency, formal and informal relations as well as questions of commitment and responsibility. In the final discussion here I return to the question of what it means for the co-design approach and methods when it is brought into these partnerships of multiple agendas and organizations – it is still co-design? In this discussion I am as mentioned inspired by the concepts of divergent partnerships that works through shared proximity described by Casper Bruun Jensen and Brit Ross Winthereik (2013)[30], which they based on concepts both from Isabelle Stengers as well as Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari.

## Partnerships as negotiation of "methods"

Jensen and Winthereik (2013) describe different versions of partnerships in their book "Monitoring Movements in Development Aid – Recursive Partnerships and Infrastructures". It is partnerships as Auditing, as Conflicting Demands, as Multi-Directional Gatekeeping as well as the one I has been inspired by here, which is defined as "Partnership as Divergent Knowledge Making". They base this definition on Stengers:

> *"Recall Isabel Stengers' argument that co-evolution entails partnership precisely insofar as the involved parties pursue divergent interests through one another"*(Jensen and Winthereik 2013, 41)

As well as Deleuze and Guattari's:

> *"famous example of the mutual becoming of the wasp and the orchid can be used to illustrate a divergent partnership that works, not by linkage, by mixture, or by agreement, but rather through* "*shared proximity*" (1987, 293-294). (Jensen and Winthereik 2013, 41).

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[30] Jensen and Winthereik (2013) describe different versions of partnerships in their book "Monitoring Movements in Development Aid – Recursive Partnerships and Infrastructures" in their work with monitor development aid. Partnerships here both become an object of study as well as something that encompasses their research practice.

Shared proximity, rather than consensus collaboration, allows the wasp to gain food from the orchids, while the orchid spreads pollen via the wasp.

The character of the collaboration between design researchers, the private partner and the municipality as I have already described in many ways close and very dependent on each other to get what we wanted out of it. For the private partner – and the "public sector" partner the aim was to get solution that in different way could benefit their organization (expand the business and relieve the care system). For the design researchers the aim was to explore new ways of doing co-design with the focus on living lab as well as infrastructuring and design after design. Here the work of design researcher came to rely strongly on how to make this (the outdoor exercise activity) continue after the project ended, which made us rather depended both on the citizens – but also the sports instructor as well as the municipality to continue after the project ended. In this collaboration the design researchers and the municipality were obliged to remain in "the living lab" in order to complete the project (the project owner) – where the private partner were more or less "free" to leave the project (there were a few of the other partners who ended up leaving the project before the three years were over). It emerges into this close but at the same time elusive partnerships – were especially the design researchers depended on the other to stay engaged and connected.

In relation to the description of different versions of partnerships (cf. Jensen and Winthereik 2013) – you could say that partnerships here were also about gatekeeping and conflicting demands but what I find interesting in this relation is the question of shared proximity. These moments of partnerships are not without linkage and mixture (cf. the description of shared proximity) – what I though find central here is the question of shared proximity in the collaboration still get divergent things out of it through each other. Bringing researcher partners, private business partners, partners from the public sector – and citizens together in the collaboration creates a situation where what each partner wants to get out of it is very different. At the same time there were this shared proximity in terms of dependency as well as closeness in the work that was being done – especially when being in the park but also outside, where the lines between who was responsible of what were blurred.

So, on one hand there is this conflicting, non-coherent, elusive and interrupting partnership – and on the other hand the proximity and dependency of

each other – or especially the design researchers' dependency of the other actors. What emerges of this situation is to some extend a partnership of shared proximity, where the different partners get their divergent interest fulfilled through one another: a new (type of) service for the municipality; a new job for the sports instructor; a new activity for the citizens; and for the design researchers, a success of new, radical involvement since the citizens continued on their own after the project ended. But at the same what is it that continues? I would argue that the others more or less continue to do what they always have done like instructing (sports instructor), meeting for scheduled activities (the citizens) as well as register and control the activities (municipality). What happens to co-design in this constellation?

I described earlier especially in chapter three how I had difficulty with grasp what I had been part of as well as how attempts of defining it as co-design, infrastructuring and design after design failed – or felt as if I violently tried to reduced it to a singular story. There were some methodological difficulties here that were also signs of difficulties in the "real" world to recall Law's questions in relation to the Alcoholic liver disease that is not fixed and indefinite but rather a fluid object. On one hand this multiplicity of agendas in the loose set-up of the living lab, which also emerges into a multiplicity of organization. It made it rather difficult for the design researchers to just organize it in terms of principles and methods of co-design. On the other hand, we – the design researchers ourselves – encourage the citizens to be the ones in the driver sets and to run it on their own after the project ended – and at the same time we made us self very depended on the other actors. Hence, the ground was made open for a shared negotiation among all involved actors of "how it should be done."

The question is what happens when all actors become co-designers of the *"how."* If it could still be defined as co-design, but just this new, radical way also referred to as extreme co-design (among some of my colleagues)? With extreme, I think in qualitative terms − not multiple stakeholders − but that those who take part also take part in defining the strategies and rules for work (which normally is preserved for design researchers). The question is, on the other hand, if it still can be defined as co-design when it is made negotiable and the co-design agenda is marginalized. If the design researchers cannot manage the methodological agenda, do we still get a co-design project? This poses a dilemma of whether the project here is an example of extreme co-design with what it entails, or if it is instead an example of

co-design being dissolved. I will leave the dilemma open here and continue to the final discussion, where I among other will continue the question of the elusive as well as commitment in relation to these co-design and citizen involvement projects.

# 11: Event, commitment and "common projects"

In this chapter, I want to discuss the possibilities of commitment to a common project with focus on the concept of the event in relation to co-design and citizen involvement. This discussion is based on the issues and concerns I have raised throughout this dissertation. The aim with this chapter is to suggest an alternative, which is about wanting something with each other. It is maybe too ambitious and the question is if it is possible. The discussion and my suggestion is based on and inspired by the work of Stengers (Stengers 2005; Fraser 2010; Stengers 2011), especially the concept of the event.

## The troublesome

In the first part of the dissertation, I focused on the small troublesome moments I had experienced as facilitator, as the person "in front" of the project and as co-design researcher in a period when the project held three workshops. These moments – or more importantly the resistance they contained, becomes troublesome because it was a participation that went against the consensual way of taking part or the participation overspilled the frame of the meetings (also literally). More importantly though, the resistance became troublesome because we, the project group, couldn't encounter or accommodate the resistance – or at least we don't. Instead, we developed different workarounds to "go around the resistance" and to be able to continue the staged co-design encounter. I problematized a combination of a tight time schedule, well-prepared workshop programs, specific design materials and artifacts, citizens, and sometimes also partners coming from "the street" as well as what I defined as the great project machine (project application, funding obligations, plans, multiple partners and agendas to be met, etc.) that together created a situation in which the resistance was difficult to make room for.

The project was not prepared for this, or was "over prepared" to be able to accommodate it. Instead, the resistance toward the project and the concepts were overlooked – it became a situation in which false consensus was created and the idiot don't get to challenge the overall frame of the project.

I described these meetings with a feeling of "just pretending" and questioned who was taking it seriously. The moments of resistance became authentic and serious voices in a situation of joyful pretending – voices that committed to the project's assumptions, ideas, and concepts by objecting and/or verifying them. These moments of resistance created a picture of co-design and citizen involvement, in which on one hand these meetings were more a question of "just" being together rather than becoming together (cf. Michael 2011). On the other hand, it also created a picture of co-design and citizen involvement, where the idea and concept of the project "survived" without being challenged or transformed. Instead, it became a reproduction of the existing situations i.e. the concepts of Twitterido-groups and super dots entered and left the period of workshops more or less unchanged.

## The elusive

In the second part of the dissertation, it was the elusive that was in focus including my struggles with how to characterize and describe what I had been part of. In other words, the question became what is it – and where is it in relation to the living lab. In this second round of co-design and citizen involvement, the project tries out "new, radical ways" of involving by e.g. moving the design exploration and experiments out into the everyday environment of the citizens (an urban park). With the question of what is being created in the living lab, I describe how central aspects of the project – active citizens, new technology, as well as public-private partnerships – are being performed in different ways during this living lab period.

It was in many ways a loose and open setup (especially compared to the workshops) with space for the different actors to assert their agenda and influence the activity. At the same time, these descriptions of what is being performed in the living lab also raises a number of questions like who is managing, who is working for whom, who makes the decisions – and of what. Also, it asks who knows the rules and terms of conditions, who takes responsibility – who should/shouldn't take responsibility, who owns this. These are not questions that create a picture of a smooth or constructive collaboration – or a partnership of shared proximity, where what the different actors gets out of it is divergent, but it still happens in close collaboration.

There seems to be a common project in the living lab of making this continue, but how it can be made sustainable and what should continue differs among the different actors. It creates a picture of a very diverse – or heterogeneous – set of more or less explicit strategies of how to work as well as a definition of what to create together.

At the same time, the collaboration or partnership is elusive. It could be perceived as a situation, where the opportunity is there to "meet each other," but it doesn't really happen. What is the problem? My suggestion is that everyone is busy with their own agenda, which also means that – like in the workshops – nothing happens (roughly speaking). The citizens continue with their habits and routines. The same goes for the sports director; he continues to instruct and the municipality continues with their way of registering and controlling, and design researchers must give up their concepts and to some extent their methods to at least get the others to continue (in the manner they would like).

This introduction, which gathers the issues I have raised throughout the dissertation, is brought up here as a starting point to discuss the issue of elusiveness and commitment, including the question of commitment to a common project. I want to do that with the concept of the event and work of Stengers (Stengers 2005; Fraser 2010; Stengers 2011), which I will present in the following section, before continuing with my questions.

## The event

Earlier, I described the concept of the event with the work of Michael, which is inspired by Stengers (2005). I touched briefly upon it in chapter seven, with the question of whether these co-design workshops, i.e. meetings among design researchers, citizens, partners, and employees from the public sector are more situations of "being together" than actually "becoming together." The last item marks an event, where all actors are transformed. In other words, it is a transformation, which leaves no one unaffected (Stengers 2005) – and should be understand as a creation of a difference between a before and an after. It is this difference that "proves" the scope of the effect of the event (Fraser 2010).

Furthermore, this becoming together is also by Stengers, described as part of her "plea for slow science"[31]:

> *Moments of emergent values, for instance the moment when somebody feels transformed by the understanding of the perspective of someone else, the gathering [that] gets the transformative power to have its participants thinking together, or the experience that something [that] appeared insignificant may indeed matter* (Stengers 2011, 11–12).

Here she also emphasizes that these "moments" are difficult to define, but what can be interesting is to discuss how they can be fostered. The events should not be understood necessarily as moments of consensus or moments in which everyone agrees. Those affected by the event can be both aligned with and opposed to it. The interest in each other is also about *"objecting, putting to a test, verifying"* (Stengers 2011, 11). What I find appealing here is that the description of this should not necessarily be a smooth and easy process but *"the process will be, and must be, slow, difficult, rich in friction, pulling and tugging [among] diverging priorities"* (Stengers 2011, 11).

These last parts are described in relation to Stengers' plea for slow science and a call for researchers about how to engage with each other and most importantly in each other's work. It is maybe ambitious to expect this kind of togetherness among citizens, private partners, and employees from the public sector. As Stengers also argues, research is different from all other practices. She does that with a critique of early ANT about how they flatten science and make it equivalent to all other knowledge and practices (Fraser 2010, 10).

## The elusive – and the question of commitment

With this description of the concept of the event and the work of Stengers, I will here return to my initial questions of the elusive as well as commitment to a common project in these encounters of co-design and citizen involvement. On one hand, the elusive can be perceived as good ideals for these projects and the encounters of these

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[31] In this "plea for slow science," Stengers put forward a critique of what she describes as fast science, where the ability to "free think" is threatened when researchers are mostly bound to industrial interests including *"bound by the need to confirm the promises that attract their industrial partners"* (Stengers 2011, 9). This concern is similar to what I brought up in relation to the question of research-business partnerships in chapter ten.

different actors in the sense that it can make space for everyone to influence the project – and the project can evolve in many different directions depending on these actors (cf. the ideas of thinging (Ehn 2014)). It also means opening up for the possibility that what is created can happen in a decentralized manner and without predefined ideas of what to design and what "uses" to design.

I will, with my experience from the project and especially the living lab, allow myself to question the elusive as something that necessarily creates an interesting and constructive research project with a difference between a before and an after. I will elucidate that in the follow section, by returning to what I earlier described as "just pretending" and "just leaving" – both that create this sense that a commitment is lacking.

In one situation, I named "just pretending" and in the other "just leaving" – and both refer to this feeling of a lack of commitment. The first is a lack of commitment to what we are gathered for in the workshops. It is not necessarily a lack of commitment from the citizens themselves but from the side of the project and the partners. The question is whether we were gathered for something that was taken seriously, invested in, and risked. Or was it a case of various stakeholders together in order to hold on to their own stakes, and to convince the others? In my view, the workshops can be seen as a long "persuasion process" from the project side, to get citizens and partners aligned with the project's ideas and concepts. This didn't succeed completely – if at all.

In the second situation, the living lab, I called it "just leaving." This describes the elusive nature of these meetings – and the collaboration in general. Citizens and partners, but also the municipality and design researchers, are about "to leave" the living lab at different points in this period. At the same time, does the elusive collaboration give the feeling that it is easy to just leave, including to just "leave" each other's ideas, whether it is about what games to play and how, how to prepare and involve citizens in certain ways to implement a smartphone app as a sustainable infrastructure, or the suggestion of a possibility to "go inside." Once again, there is a lack of commitment to the joint project, a commitment that goes beyond being able to bring different agendas into play and influence what is going on.

Both these situations points at elusiveness – though in different ways. In the first situation – the workshops – it is gatherings of actors in which the main part is

more or less invited from "the street" so to speak combined with the way to work, where everyone meets three times for four hours over a period of four months. It is difficult to make these actors "from the street" committed to anything (in relation to the project), but the question is also whether the project was committed to these encounters and to what happened in these local situations. The living labs were elusive in other ways already described, but especially the loose setup where it seemed as if everyone was ordering it according to their own stakes and interests – and not necessarily in coordination and coherence or even interference (cf. Mol 2002) with the others.

## Event: A possible alternative?

With the focus on commitment, I am not trying to insist on the definite, fixed, stable, coherent, and certain – that's not a design project. What I want to insist on is to want something with each other in these collaborations – and to commit to a common project (without defining specifically what kind of project). What I mean regarding a common project and commitment is to be interested in each other and care for each other – including being able to listen, hesitate, and "slow down." This description should not be understood as comfortable gatherings that seek to create consensus and alignment of everyone. Caring, and to be interested in, is also to listen to the different voices – also the critical ones (including our own!) as well as being able to resist and object. My suggestion is here to insist on something other than "trials of strengths," "to just to be a stake-holder" as well as persuasion, an alternative that is instead about mutually "being moved and moving" each other to use a phrase from Suchman (2002, 10).

The question is, is this too ambitious? And, is it possible at all? If you look at the setup for these projects with multiple stakeholders (including attempts at citizen involvement) or at least with the experiences from the Senior Interaktion project, I would suggest that the conditions for the event – a transformation of everyone involved – has limited possibilities. Can you find a good balance between a not too tight setup with strict time schedules, (funding) obligations, etc. on the one hand, and at the same time not to aim at a too loose setup, where you won't meet at all. A right balance here will probably help. The question is though whether it is possible for the different actors in these encounters to risk their own agenda or at least be interested in

the others in ways that will leave them affected – and that the transformations in the local situations get to challenge the overall framing.

Is this possible for others than the researchers? To follow Stengers' argument that research is different from all other practices, in research there *must* be an ability to move and be moved, listen, hesitate, risk, object, and let yourself be affected and transformed. This ability is probably not the same, especially if you just came in "from the street" or you are bound to your company's interests (Stengers 2011, 9). So, even though we want this as researchers (and I think we should try!), it can still be very difficult to foster the possibility of the event in these project constellations.

To sum up, it is possible to make the argument of the event as an alternative – or an ideal of these collaborative situations – and emphasize what is important to take into consideration in relation to that. It is possible to adjust time and also the framing in an attempt at making transformation probable. But again if the different actors – humans and non-humans – are not able to move or be moved – transformed as well as putting something at risk − it doesn't really matter how much time we have or how flexible the overall framing is. And, even if they are able − I think the question of "what are we busy doing?" (Stengers 2005, Michael 2011) should be taken into consideration every time we make attempts at initiating situations or projects that require the different actors to be moved, or to move around with people. The question could be a way of slowing down and asking, is it realistic and is it appropriate?

# 12: Conclusion

We have now reached the final chapter of this dissertation – the conclusion of the arguments I have made throughout this dissertation. I started the dissertation with a description of the change of research aim I made from a classic co-design focus – which I had throughout my participation in this user-driven innovation project – to a change of research focus and aim of instead writing a retrospective reflection based on my participation in this project and described and analyzed a number of disconcerting moments I had experienced.

I found that there was a need to make more descriptive, non-reductive, critical and reflective accounts of experiences from a co-design project, which then became my new overall aim for the dissertation. As part of my change of research focus I also had to re-orient the theoretical foundation. To inform the analysis I therefore drew on theoretical concepts from Science and Technology Studies (STS) that have helped in different ways to open up the descriptions of the co-design project. Especially, a performative approach to how things are being done and enacted in practice has been put forward to avoid singular and reductive descriptions of the project experiences.

The work was structured by two research aims – or focuses. The first was on resistance as part of co-design and citizen involvement, where the aim was to describe and analyze how resistance is performed in practice, especially in the meetings between citizens and the project, and how resistance is handled in the project, or not handled. This is done in chapters five, six, and seven. The second research focus is on the practice in a living lab and how that evolved over a longer period as relations among design researchers, private partners, citizens, partners from the public, technology, and multiple agendas. The aim was here to describe and reflect upon what is being performed in the living lab, as this rather new practice within co-design and participatory design. This research focus is expounded upon in chapters eight, nine, and ten.

**Chapter three "The troublesome and the elusive"** gave insight to the difficulties I had with writing in relation to my participation in the Senior Interaktion project. Though most importantly the purpose with the chapter was to present the theoretical writings and concepts within STS that have shaped both my change of research aim as

well as how it affected me in my analytical work to point my attention to interesting aspects of the empirical material.

The first part of the chapter concentrates on what I call small troublesome moments. These are moments I experienced of taking part in the project as a facilitator – but it was also moments that emerged with this feeling of being a person "in front" of the project. These moments all contain of a resistance. Both Verran and Michael have in different ways worked with moments and personal incidents that are disconcerting (disconcerting moments) – or disturbing or out of the ordinary (anecdotes). These writings help me to both keep but also transform my own disconcerting – and here troublesome moments – into important contributions for the discussion of co-design and citizen involvement. ANT was introduced as well. The writings of ANT scholars including the different concepts of black boxes, translations, inscripting/descripting as well as generalized symmetry including the focus on non-humans has worked both as background knowledge as well as more directly in the analytical work. Finally, the work of Verran and Michael as well as the writings within ANT have helped me to write accounts with focus on opening descriptions of what is coming into being, to keep the differences, to "see" non-human actors as "equally" important and with these descriptions try to challenge what is otherwise taken for granted.

The second part of this chapter concentrates on what I describe as the elusive, which here is something that is very difficult to get grip on – and includes the question of what it is and where it is. This concerns what followed from the last period in the project, when the project tried to establish two living labs, where I took part in one of them. I thought I could write about it as a defined and maybe as a definite object. Law, Mol, and other STS scholars have worked with the multiple, fluid, and elusive as ways to also be open to and acknowledge the indefinite, non-coherent, ambivalent, and ambiguous – and here helped in how to describe the object of the living lab – or in other words to unpack the complexities of the "what" and "where" of living labs. Here especially Law's work and his accounts based on both his own and other's work have worked as important contributions to my own work with getting a grip on an object to follow. Furthermore, the different theoretical concepts and aspects presented in this chapter mainly through the work of Law – i.e. the multiple, partial connections, the fluid – and the elusive including allegory – have

been used in chapters eight, nine, and ten to describe and analyze the practice of the living lab through different disconcerting moments.

**Chapter four "Disconcerting moments – materials and roles"** provides an insight into the selection of empirical material that is described and analyzes in this dissertation including descriptions of how it was gathered and selected – as well as what analytical approach and aim the material employed. This dissertation is a retrospective reflection of a user-driven innovation project with a focus on co-design and citizen involvement.

Throughout the project, my participation and role was mainly as a co-design researcher, PhD student, and a facilitator – these roles included too often being the one presenting and representing the project, a "position" in which I experienced what I call disconcerting moments with the reference to Verran, from which emerged this feeling of being "in front" of the project. The empirical material used in this chapter is a selection of these moments defined by being disconcerting to me. These disconcerting moments are analyzed with the use of writings and concepts from STS to form a contribution to research, especially co-design and participatory design including the intersection with STS – but not necessarily limited to that.

In the **first part** of the analytical section of the dissertation concentrates on resistance in co-design and citizen involvement – and this part of the dissertation follows the first research aim. The three analytical chapters (five, six, and eight) contribute with descriptions and analyzes to the different versions of resistance, how the resistance is troublesome in the encounter with the project, and the ideas of participation in co-design and participatory design, as well as how the resistance is handled in the different situations of co-design and citizen involvement.

**Chapter five "Small troublesome moments: Resistance as idiotic"** provides four accounts of resistance from the (involved) citizens in different situations (mainly in workshops), where the project tries to involve citizens, private partners, and employees from the public sector in how to design new services for senior citizens. These were all moments of resistance I experienced as a facilitator and as being a person "in front" of the project. This chapter has the purpose of describing how

resistance is coming into being as well as why the resistance becomes troublesome. Here the concept of the idiot from Stengers and Michael was used to inquire the resistance, and why it becomes troublesome.

The resistance from the citizens in these moments was a resistance toward the project in different ways. It emerged as a clash between the project concepts, assumptions, and ideas about the future, and the current everyday life and social practices of the citizens and choice of how the citizens want to live their lives. The idiots – the resisting citizens – made things visible that are otherwise taken as self-evident and challenges what is otherwise taken for granted e.g. artifacts and concepts prescribing particular assumptions and suggestions that at the same time define a specific space of action and negotiation that frames these meetings. The resisting citizens are framed as idiots here as they slowed me (us) down, they "murmured" there is something more important, and they made me ask, "What have we been busy doing?" This questions went beyond the concerns of co-design methods, design explorations, as well as technological development that are otherwise at the center of the co-design meetings.

**Chapter six "Resistance – direct, meaningful, and equal participation?"** has the purpose of continuing the analytical work of these small troublesome moments with the objective of exploring why what the idiot makes visible challenges the interpretation of participation in co-design and participatory design. In co-design and participatory design, participation is normatively described as: direct and genuine; meaningful and relevant for the people who take part; as well as on equal footing – to emphasize the designing "with" as well as collaborative focus. The four moments of resistance are brought more sporadic into play here to analyze and discuss the participation in these moments in relation to these characteristics of participation with co-design and participatory design and with the use of Callon's steps of translation.

What the idiot makes visible complicates the idea of participation within these design traditions in these moments where group members make themselves spokespersons for both invented actors and for silence; that the project uses different techniques to make people come, which blur the picture of why people take part but also complicates the confirmation of the project's relevance "just" by people being present; and finally in relation to equal participation the unbalanced situation of

prepared and unprepared participation in these complex setups of people from "the street" and a well-prepared tight workshop schedule are problematized. I end this chapter with a rather strict question – namely whether the resistance becomes troublesome because we are actually "just pretending" in these meetings of co-design and citizen involvement.

**Chapter seven "Conflicts and controversies: Managing the resistance"** is the final chapter with a focus on resistance. The chapter contains descriptions and analyzes how the resistance is managed in relation to these four troublesome moments. The handling of the resistance in these moments is discussed in relation to the strong focus on differences and controversies within participatory design and co-design as well as with the use of Mol's writings of how to handle differences and controversies. The resistance is in these four moments not confronted but instead worked around in an attempt to keep the "collaborative work" going. Mol argues that handling difference should be adjusted to the local situation, but at the same time encourages us to consider when and where we might do better. In this regard, I end the chapter with a discussion of what implication it has for co-design and participation design when the resistance is not confronted but instead worked around. I here argue that the collaborations becomes meetings of "false compromise" that only gather around the low hanging fruit, that co-design overlooks the critical voices toward the project in itself, and finally that these meetings become situations of just being together rather than becoming together with the reference to the concept of event cf. Stengers and Michael.

The intention with the first analytical part of the dissertation was to describe and reflect upon resistance, especially against the co-design project, that is rarely described or discussed within co-design and participatory design.

Within co-design and participatory design there have recently been discussions on agonism in design, especially initiated by Pelle Ehn and his colleagues. They argue with the use of agonism that it is not about seeking compromises but rather to see controversies as a vital part of the democratic design space. I suggest based on the reflections on resistance that we should be open for conflicts not just among the participants but also conflicts with co-design itself. In the "new"

constellations that contemporary co-design are part of we ought to consider whether there is 'space' for resistance – and whether there is space for what is not planned, for what is 'Other' to the project.

The **second part** of the analytical section of the dissertation concentrates on the practice of a living lab and how it evolves over a longer period and as relations among design researchers, private partners, citizens, partners from the public, technology, and multiple agendas influence and contribute to this change. The purpose of unpacking the complexities of the 'what' and 'where' of living labs stems from my own difficulties in writing clearly and definitely about the living lab. The main questions are therefore what is a living lab (and what is coming into being in the living lab), and where it is. The three analytical chapters (eight, nine, and ten) therefore contribute to these questions with descriptions and analyzes of how three central aspects of the project are being performed in the practices of the living lab.

**Chapter eight "Active citizens and new radical involvement"** constitutes the empirical description of how active citizens are enacted as one of the central things in the living lab. The chapter provides five different accounts, which are primarily based on different disconcerting moments from "the park." They described how "Active citizens" in these different moments move among how the citizens themselves are active, how the project group and partner want to make them active in particular ways, as well as how the different partakers try to take control of where and when to be active. At the same time, the complex questions of what it means to be active and to be passive are raised and discussed with the use of Law's description of the "pleasure of passivity." I end this chapter with questions about the whole idea of making citizens responsible for their own services – including for other citizens – "for" the municipality, which is also a reminder to us design researchers to be more skeptical before we engage ourselves with "other's" agendas.

**Chapter nine "New technology – and a new social practice"** provides an empirical description of how "new technology" is being enacted as a central part of the living lab. The new technology is central here as a way for the design researchers to try out the different concepts of the project "in reality." The "new technology" is being

enacted in the project's articulation of different concepts before entering the meetings in the park including the idea of being a potential infrastructure. "In the park" new technology encounters "the real life" and becomes a lot of other thing e.g. a spontaneous smartphone course. This object changes shape in different ways and names during the living lab – and it changes in terms of whether it is an important part for the continuation of the outdoor exercise activity or not. Non-coherence, ambivalence, and confusion make this object particularly difficult to follow and grasp.

In the end of the chapter, the question of where the new technology is from and whom it is for is raised with a reference to "new technology" being mostly something for the project including my PhD project. The design researchers attempt to implement a new technology or an infrastructure – and a new social practice among the community in the park. This is discussed with the use of the concepts of artful integration as well as artful infrastructuring by Suchman, Karasti, and Syrjänen – this also includes a suggestion (to me) to do this more artfully next time.

**Chapter ten "Partnerships – and co-design in multiple organizations"** constitutes the empirical descriptions of how "public-private partnerships" are being enacted in different moments in the living lab. Through these moments, the relation among the different partakers (partners) in the living lab are described and analyzed. Partnerships here move among being non-coherent, elusive, and conflicting. These different versions raise different questions regarding the collaboration between research and business as well as the role of co-design in these project constellations, where everyone else also takes part in defining "how" to work.

To analyze and reflect upon the enactment of active citizens, new technology and partnerships in the living lab, I have used different analytical approaches. First of all, the methods assemblage suggested by Law (2004) to be able to grasp and describe the indefinite, not-fixed, non-coherent, ambiguous and ambivalent. Secondly, I have used the concept of the pleasure of passivity, artful infrastructuring and shared proximity either to elucidate what is being done, or – with a more normative approach – to (more critically) elucidate what is not being done.

The intention in this second part was to describe and reflect upon what is being performed in the living lab - and to do that also to contribute to the discussion of co-

design in "new" constellations of multiple partners and multiple organizations (or orderings). The description of what is being enacted in the living lab has emerged into a series of questions regarding co-design in these "new" constellations including the position or role of the co-design researcher. It was questions like, What is the role of the designers in the living lab? Who is doing what to whom - especially in relation to the design work or "implementation" of technology? Is it possible to both foster an interesting research project and at the same time guarantee an outcome for the business (but also public) partners? And finally, what happens to co-design in these constellations of multiple agendas? In the Senior Interaktion project everyone took part in defining methods of how to work – it was not solely the design researchers anymore like in the workshops. The question is, is this an example of extreme co-design or does co-design become dissolved?

**Chapter eleven "Event, commitment and "common projects""** constitutes a final discussion of this dissertation by first of all summing up the main issues and questions raised throughout the dissertation. I here question the elusiveness of these project constellations and collaborations, which I have defined as "just pretending" and "just leaving" – and discuss this in relation to a commitment to a common project and the concept of the event here following the work of Stengers.

I problematize the project setup in being elusive both in terms of how the different actors are brought together in the workshops but also in the living lab, where elusive could foster an interesting collaboration, but where everyone works to influence with their own agenda without caring for the other's agenda. The answers though to these issues are not necessarily found in a good balance between too tight or too elusive. Instead, I suggest that it is about wanting something with each other and to commit to a common project. With reference to Stengers and Suchman, I suggest an alternative that is about the ability to move and be moved, listen, hesitate, risk, object, and let yourself be affected and transformed. It is an ambitious suggestion – and the question is, is it possible for others more than the researchers.

Returning to my initial research focus, I hope with this dissertation to:
- With the descriptions and reflections of resistance toward the project and co-design, contribute with new ways to talk about this concern within the field of

co-design and participatory design - and to encourage other co-design practitioners to reflect upon this resistance in relation to their own projects.

- With the description and reflections of the practice of the living lab, very simply contribute with an example of the practice of a living lab – but also with some new questions and concerns regarding co-design in new constellations with multiple agendas.

- With the description and reflections in general, contribute to a more nuanced attention, description and reflection on the co-design and participatory design concepts of participation and collaboration. This is important for being attentive to what I have otherwise problematized about the relation between what we say and what we do - and to instead create an interest in how our concepts of participation plays out in practice.

Throughout the thesis I have problematized the collaborative work in the Senior Interaktion project. On one hand it was too tightly organized in the workshop and we couldn't accommodate, or we overlooked, the resistance. On the other hand, it was too loose or elusive in the living lab – and everyone was too busy working for their own agenda. In both situations it meant that it became situations of "just pretending" or "just being together" – instead of a collaboration where everyone could be affected or moved – and transformed.

The latter requires the possibility to risk your own stakes – but also that we in these project constellations are able to listen, hesitate, resist, interfere and confront each other. Inspired especially by Stengers, I have the ambitious idea of project constellations where that is possible – where the ability to move and be moved includes everyone involved.

But it is difficult in practice. I though still think we should slow down, listen, pay attention to and reflect upon:

- The question of "What are we busy doing?"
- The murmurings of the idiot – there is something more important.
- The question of "who is doing what to whom?" – especially in relation to the position and role of the design researchers in the project constellations.
- And finally, is there a possibility "to move and be moved" in the projects we try to set up.

With this simple but also ambitious "method assemblages" I hope to contribute to the field of co-design and participatory design as well as the field's intersection with STS, but also to other fields that work with citizen involvement and projects with multiple agendas and organizations.

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