

Arts of Scholaring on a Damaged Planet

*A step towards building the academy we want
in the Anthropocene*

This story was co-created in the workshop ‘Arts of Scholaring on a Damaged Planet’, which took place on November 12 of 2024 at Solidaritetshuset (Södermalm, Stockholm).

We were aiming to share our concerns regarding the roles of academia in the current historical epoch – the Anthropocene – and to co-create some material artifacts which could help us move forward towards the horizons we are demanded to achieve as part of our wider struggles. If you want to read more, see the full comment on the Anthropocene History Centre website [here](#).

You can access the rest of the stories and share them in order to spread initiatives and networks for another possible academia.

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We have a story for you, and it's fantastic because it's not just exciting and interesting... but also because it's set in the future. So we have this fantastic idea of a science fiction story where the academy is a spaceship in outer space and it's not any science fiction story, but it's a benign science fiction story, in the Star Trek fashion; because we think that science fiction is too dystopian, and it should be more utopian again. So a more positive belief and creative ways of science fiction, so this spaceship is not out to colonize other worlds, but actually to explore and to creatively experiment with these encounters.

It has all kinds of characters -I don't remember those in total. They are not only humans but others, other organic or inorganic forms of life and matter that would play a role. We talked about trees, lichens... And the struggle or tension is the inside and outside of the spaceship, perhaps. The spaceship as enabling and also as limiting, which, of course, we know from the history of spaceflight is a big issue. Even with the Earth itself being seen as a spaceship, it's both sufficient and efficient, but it's also very sort of... yeah, constraining. And this, in a way, is the storyline that then unfolds, like in Star Trek it has, where so many of the social and socioecological problems have been discussed, basically, through science fiction.

And now this spaceship is currently on a trajectory through space on a journey to solve pressing issues, that is going to planets that have died. Initially, they go there and get plugged into these planets with a cord or something. There's a spaceship and there's a small connector, and they try to contribute to the soil and to the air, and try to make the planet better and regenerate life there. But they noticed that when they do that after a couple years the planets die again, so they're like 'okay, how can we make it so that it's a long-lasting impact?'. During all these encounters the crew is then challenged to... well, with all its repository of skills and sensorial tools and ways of navigating, communicating to solve this. We imagine that the characters are in symbiotic collective relationships that are much more than our usual common human relationships, but are more like these networks that, for instance, liken entertain. There is a constant learning going on and interaction, both with the inner worlds of this spaceship, but also then with the worlds that they encounter. And there would, in our understanding, then be this kind of creative, ingenious ways of dealing with these encounters of mutually changing, where not just the other worlds are changed, but also oneself; where forms of regeneration are sort of enacted and world-building is performed in ways that can be enlightening somehow and can create better worlds.

What they realized is that they need to kind of... open themselves up a little bit more to possible injury and they need to like dissolve their spaceship so when they land they dissolve the spaceship so they can have a closer relationship with the planets they're trying to mutually help. Get nutrients back from them and then when they do this the planets actually survive for many many years.

In the Star Trek fashion, as said, where we thought that it's a very good example of how you can be curious without being violent, for instance. You can actually think about the academy as a place of exploration and curiosity that isn't colonizing and that doesn't have to be always defensive, for instance, but could also be very open-minded. That was what our story would be about.

