

# NEWS FROM THE CAMPUS

“Be the change you want to see in the world” - Gandhi

Editorial – by Agnès

Two years ago the idea for a Campus for Transition was conceived in the heart and mind of Cecile Renouard. She was immediately joined by colleagues, friends and doctoral students. She was able to convince them to act without further delay, to train future generations concerning the emerging challenges facing the world at the dawn of the 21st century. History is written when multiple new initiatives are finally able to change the paths that some people despairingly thought unchangeable. The Campus hopes to play its part in this change, we feel supported by a network of friends of which you are one, who are able and willing to participate in this adventure.

As a new year dawns we can see the amazing work that has already been done. Fundamentals are in place to welcome more and more students, as well as working professionals and civil society stakeholders looking for tools to support and create new paths for the future.

This newsletter aims at keeping in touch with all those who have supported and helped this project to become a reality. We want to continue to build it with you and all those who will join us later.

May the year 2019 tighten existing bonds and develop our cooperation: this project aims to be shared widely, it is for all people who want to participate and find in it hope for a better world. We have much to do together! Our dearest wish is that this new year be good news for each and every one of you.



*From left to right: Xavier Ricard, Yves Marignac, Matthieu Calame, Giles Lhuillier, Christophe Goupil, Louis Daumas, Delphine Decq*

## The First in a series of Forges Get-togethers, November 10th

The Forges estate was enveloped in mist and an autumn rain fell throughout the afternoon. This did not deter about 100 people from Forges and other parts of France from coming to take part in two round tables on the energy transition.

Firstly, Cécile Renouard and Romain Senoble, Mayor of Forges and first Vice-president of the grouping of cities of Montereau, welcomed the participants. Then, the first speakers talked about the main options for the energy transition. Energy is the source of all the main physical, biological and anthropological balances that rule the living world, so energy must be put at the heart of all contemporary public and economic policies. It is proven that a smart energy transition, conceived in collaboration with the food industry, industrial production, transport and new technologies, would create sustainable jobs and offer hope for the future.

During the first break, the participants shared their business cards and phone numbers. Then, the second roundtable focused on local initiatives. Yves Jégo, former Minister, MP of Seine-et-Marne and Mayor of Montereau, said that energy-efficient building renovation is one of the main tasks for the coming years. This topic was discussed at length, both at the level of Seine-et-Marne and of our Campus. The speakers discussed ways to improve the energy efficiency of the 'chateau' while protecting the historic heritage, and using innovative techniques found in the local economy. Thomas Rochefort presented a few options for the Campus. Elisabeth Dubujet said that an inclusive approach was needed.

To facilitate these attractive perspectives happening rather than remaining a dead letter, the meeting ended with a buffet dinner and mulled wine. Securing the energy transition will take time but people are enthusiastic about it.

This meeting would not have happened without another form of energy, that which was expended by numerous volunteers, men and women, throughout the weekend and the days that preceded it; we thank all those who contributed to the success of this event: students from the Lübeck high school, the friends of the Campus, and all the young helpers who were there tirelessly preparing, cleaning, cooking and getting everything in order..... it gave a taste to participants of things to come, auguring well for the future which we will ensure will just as passionate and warm. See you soon at the next 'Forges Get-togethers'.

*Émeline B.*

## First Training Course: Centrale, 7-9 December 2018



*Students from Centrale and the team from the Campus are well-wrapped up but smiling*

Welcoming the first students in December was one of the challenges faced by the Campus. There was rain and morning frost when the students from Centrale [a French postgraduate-level institute of research and higher education in engineering and science] came to visit. Though the heating system was not great and very limited in the building, this first training course was both studious, warm and joyful.

Students arrived by bus early on the Friday morning. There were four girls and sixteen boys who study the same subjects at Centrale. They were offered the possibility of rearranging the time of their courses so they could have an immersion experience at the Campus for Transition.

During the first morning, the students focused on climate diagnostic. The teacher and researcher Marie-Antoinette Mélières, explained the complex mechanisms of climate regulation; how to measure the impact of human activities over the last decades; simulation methods to predict the climate; and how to anticipate the impact of global warming on living organisms for each extra degree. This



With Swann Bommier, discussing the purposes and responsibilities of companies

knowledge is essential to influence human behaviour.

This was followed later in the morning by the economic researcher Pierre-Jean Cottalorda who explained the correlations between economic growth, social inequalities and the perception of well-being. Then he

opened up the question of the desired end of economic activities, what do we want it to be for? This was followed up in the afternoon by Cécile Renouard who discussed philosophical and ethical discernment as applied to personal and collective choices.

On Saturday morning, Swann Bommier, a Sciences-Po alumnus, discussed the issue of company status and responsibility. The students were invited to work on concrete examples of the cases of multinationals monitored by Swann when he was doing his thesis. That led his presenting the concept of companies as 'commons' that he developed with Cécile Renouard in a book that they wrote together.



They have created a company that produces no carbon and they rejoice over it!

On the following days, students had both time on their own and time for work in small groups. For instance, they wrote letters for their grandchildren; and imagined the 'company of the future' that would take into account the concepts previously discussed.

That was the academic part of the project! However, the Campus is also an immersion, a place to experience the knowledge that is received. For instance, the students visited the 'chateau' and thought about its transition as a workshop – with Thomas Rochefort, an alumnus of Centrale. The students had a walk where they measured the time spent since the Big Bang – with Emeline Baudet, who is doing her PHD at the ENS [higher education establishment training of professors, researchers and public administrators]. The students also cooked their own meals

## One minute, one work of art

### *Piano Concerto No2 by Sergei Rachmaninov*

This splendid concerto is at the heart of the new film *Au bout des doigts*, by Ludovic Bernard. The concerto was written in 1900, after Rachmaninov went through difficult times.

His first symphony had been a failure. He suffered from a nervous breakdown and was no longer interested in music. He was healed by Dr. Dahl and hypnosis. This concerto is about Rachmaninov's mental and emotional journey, from darkness to a renewed love of writing and life.

You can listen online to a number of performances: for instance, by the young pianist Anna Federovna, whose repertory is already quite broad (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rEGOiHjqO9w>); or by Nicolai Lugansky (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5HKgsngmliw>). Lugansky also gave a breathtaking performance of Rachmaninov' Preludes.

These two performances have an epic intensity and they show great control of Rachmaninov. You'll be surprised to hear that the most virile performance is not the one you could expect. Take an hour and let's get carried to the frozen land of Russia...

*Émeline B.*

with vegetables coming from gardens in the area. They made natural household products with the help of two Agro [university in life science] alumni, H el ene Bardou and Xavier de B enaz e. They also received advice from a student in architecture, Mano lle de Hesselde. All this time was spent living as a small community on the spot.



*Cookhouse fatigue on the menu as the day ends with selfies and laughter.*

Reflecting on their experience, the students said they really enjoyed discussing with the teachers and the members of the Campus. They also enjoyed the reflections about the energy transition which did not ignore the challenges. One of the students had written in the letter to his future grandchildren: "Hopefully the prophecies of doom will not be fulfilled and humanity will find a way to renew itself before it destroys itself. I hope you will see that day." The Campus has been created to bring hope to the current generation of people, to pool their energy and ideas and invent the path of transition. That is the Campus' mission!

Agn es R-T.

## An Opinion

*The ecological transition will be democratic or won't be at all*

Dennis Meadows said in an interview published in the newspaper Le Monde on 2 December: "*Democracy has failed to solve the environmental problem*". Meadows co-authored the report The Limits to Growth, published in 1972, which was one of the first warnings of the geophysical limits of growth. The fact that he makes such a statement is dangerous, because it seems to forget that environmental issues mostly arise as a result of the democratic deficit – rather than the other way around.

Meadows notes that politics has failed to face the emergency of the environmental crisis. He notes that international negotiations on climate change are in crisis, and he criticises all concerted policies on the matter. It is true that environmental issues are global, so environmental policies should be made at a global level. Nowadays, the initiative launched by the UN at the Earth Summit at Rio in June 1992, and continued with many other agreements (such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, UNFCCC), is strongly criticised for its inefficiency. For instance, it is said that often, agreements are not binding; or that the secondary laws adopted at the Conference of Parties (COP) are not being ratified. The implementation – and the success – of these agreements rely on the goodwill of the States. Their implementation also depends on stakeholders outside of the State – such as multinational companies. But often, these companies believe that their own interests are not compatible with the ecological transition – which deals with long-term stakes and questions the current

## Recipe: Vegetarian beetroot cake (for 6 people)

### Ingredients (6 people)

220g of raw or cooked beetroot  
100g of ground almonds  
100g of stewed fruit  
50g of sugar  
50g of buckwheat flour  
30g of corn starch  
20g of olive oil  
1 package of yeast  
1 package of vanilla sugar  
1 pinch of salt  
Plenty of cinnamon

### Preparation

Pre-heat the oven to 180 C. Grate the beetroots. They can be raw or cooked (it is better if they are raw but both ways work) Put in a salad bowl the beetroots, ground almonds, sugar, flour, yeast, salt and cinnamon. Add the stewed fruit and oil. Mix with a wooden spatula. It is better this way than with a whip. Put the mixture in a silicon mould or a greased mould. Put in the oven for 30 minutes. 30 min. Bon app etit !

You will find the recipe at this address: <https://www.cuisineetudiant.fr/recette/4241-gateau-vegan-a-la-betterave>

The students really enjoyed this dish ;)

consumption patterns.

For these reasons, we might think that democracy cannot deal with the growing threats that we face – such as the increase in greenhouse gas emissions and the inertia which fails to transform the models of prosperity. We might also feel that democracy cannot deal with the geopolitical threats that lead some influential States to step back from international policies – for instance, when the US withdrew from the Paris agreement, or when Brazil chose not to host COP25.....

However, green politics is not restricted to the UN or State level. Nowadays, green politics mostly manifests itself at a local level. New initiatives are trying to build a democratic and ‘sustainable’ political life – for instance, with shared gardens, shared transport services, the development of short food supply chains and recycling. These initiatives renew the way citizens and groups use their power. It shows that a ‘strong State’ that makes decisions without consulting its members is not an appropriate solution to the current crisis. Some sociologists are trying to renew the democratic space – we can think about Habermas’ procedural approaches; the ‘promotion of capacities’ (A. Sen and M. Nussbaum); the concept of ‘delegative democracy’ (B. Ford); ‘cosmopolitics’ (U. Beck); ‘ongoing democracy’ (D. Rousseau); and the ‘unglobalised democracy’ (W. Bello). Locally, we can see new governance models emerging – for instance, the eco-villages or local currencies that are present almost everywhere in France. The development of a new legal capacity for the groups involved in the transition raises new questions: what kind of political, social and ethical organisation will enable these groups to participate in the political decision-making process? How is it possible to develop spaces that are binding but remain outside of the State, and where the voice and initiatives of each citizen is respected – regardless of their income or education?

The discernment that is needed to build a fair and zero-carbon society has been blocked by the fact that state power is tightly kept by the financial, industrial and administrative elite. That is the real illness of our democracy. We cannot give up on the democratic aspiration because democracy is held hostage by some factions – that would be complete nonsense. Our democracy needs a State that is able to protect the arena of debate and institutional inventions. The solution is to protect democracy from the privatisation of the world – as this privatisation is nipping the collective creativity in the bud. But to do that, the State needs to be protected from the blinkers of technocracy – since technocracy is putting the absolute respect of monetary and financial rules above the exercise of democracy. Technocracy is under criticism in Europe because we feel that the European institutions – especially the European central bank – are going too far. It seems that they are asphyxiating States with budget restrictions without serious economic rationale; it looks as if these restrictions put the short-term interests of the financial world first. The risk here is to postpone the ecological transition for ever – though the situation

## Book recommendation

**Marie-Antoinette Mélières et Chloé Maréchal, *CLIMATS. Passé, présent, futur.* Belin 2015, 415 pages, 34 euros.**



Climate sustains us. We are starting to understand its great complexity from a scientific point of view. And today we are threatened by global warming.

Marie-Antoinette Mélières and Chloé Maréchal, who are both teachers and researchers, have produced a synthesis gathering many documents, maps, graphs and tabs. The book is really easy to understand for people who are not students and want to have a better grasp of the subject. The book has six parts:

- The climate on Earth and its engine: energy.
- An assessment of the energy on Earth.
- The mains causes of climate change.
- Teaching from the past.
- Recent climate change.
- The climate in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: various options.

*Enjoy your reading! Agnès R-T*

## News from Forges

### *There are new comers on the Campus!*

Cock-a-doodle-doo!

Since 2019, the farmyard at the Campus is becoming more diverse. There have been already 11 gallinaceous hens since last summer. Now there are seven new chickens, a black rabbit and a couple of pouter pigeons. The new breeds have foreign names such as Sumatra, Brahmaet and Wyandotte. Forges is now connected with Indonesia, India and Canada, thanks to our new residents-with-feathers. This is an invitation to contemplation and travel without having to go far: the farmyard is three steps far from the 'chateau'.

Thank you, Simon and Julie, for this nice Christmas gift.

*Xavier de B.*

requires urgent and massive 'green investment'. Populism is not the only threat to democracy, solidarity and the green transition: as long as experts are used as a substitute to citizens and their elected representatives, they will continue to asphyxiate the democratic debate – and even play against democracy. Citizens should push for the technocratic expertise to be used for deliberation – rather than the other way around.

This change is not possible if we are not convinced that ecology is first and foremost a way of life – rather than words. We must believe that the true emergency is to discuss – not to impose. We must see that the problem is not that democracy is failing – democracy will die on the day when we, as a group, stop believing that each one of us can contribute to democracy, and use democracy for the green transition and for greater social justice.

*Joint letter published on the website of the newspaper Le Monde on 7 December 2018. It was signed by Émilie Baudet, Alain Grandjean, Giles Lhuillier, Gaël Giraud and Cécile Renouard.*

## Portrait of the month : Cécile Renouard

### Proust Questionnaire

- **My main characteristic:** zeal.
- **The quality I enjoy the most in a man:** kindness.
- **The quality I enjoy the most in a woman:** kindness.
- **What I love above all in my friends:** the ability to listen; kind gestures and words.
- **My main shortcoming:** I am impatient.
- **My favourite hobby:** celebrating, chatting and reading in a beautiful landscape.
- **My dream for happiness:** the Campus for Transition!
- **The greatest hardship for me would be:** to lose hope.
- **What I would like to be:** the person I really am deep down.
- **The country where I would like to live:** the one where I am at the moment.
- **My favourite colour:** the rainbow.
- **My favourite flower:** buttercups.
- **My favourite bird:** The humming bird.
- **My favourite authors:** Etty Hillesum, Michael Walzer, Zola, Stuart Mill, Martha Nussbaum, and Ivan Illich.
- **My favourite poets:** Saint François d'Assise, Jean Pierre Lemaire, and Father Christophe of Tibhirine.
- **My fictional heroes:** Jean Valjean and Captain Haddock.
- **My fictional heroines:** Jo March, the narrator in To Kill a



Mockingbird.

- **My favourite songwriters:** Bach, Vivaldi, Mozart, Schubert, Leonard Cohen, and Renée Claude.
- **My favourite painters:** Fra Angelico, Monet, Arcabas.
- **My favourite heroes in real life:** Jésus, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Thomas More, Lucien Herr, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and Pope Francis.
- **My favourite heroines in history:** Marie-Madeleine. St Marie Eugenie (foundress of my Congregation) Simone Weil.
- **What I hate above all:** pettiness.
- **The reform I praise the most:** health coverage for all, in 1945.
- **The gift of nature I would like to have:** playing an instrument.
- **How I would like to die:** holding someone's hand.
- **The shortcomings for which I have the most mercy:** anger.
- **My motto:** Listen to the music I have deep down and make life dance.

*Cécile R.*

## Photos



The people living in the chateau send their best wishes! From Ahmednur, Emeline, Xavier, Cécile and Hélène

## Diary: don't forget!

**You are all invited to: (more information on the website)**

12-13 January: Weekend Friends (basketry in the wild)

16-17 February: Weekend Friends (zero waste)

16 March: second 'Forges Get-togethers'

23-24 March: Weekend Friends (energy)

**First training 'Campus Colibri' in April-May 2019: T-Camp**

Students finishing their Masters degrees and those from Grandes Écoles can register. Don't wait, as there are only 30 places.

[www.tcamp.fr](http://www.tcamp.fr)

## Editorial board

Writing & coordination : Émeline Baudet, Xavier de Bénazé, Cécile Renouard, Agnès Rochefort-Turquin

[www.campus-transition.org](http://www.campus-transition.org)

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**Campus**  
 de la Transition  
 ÉCONOMIE ÉCOLOGIE HUMANISME