1. Being concerned about markets

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Building markets is one of the most ordinary ways to produce society. This assertion seems both obvious and controversial. It is obvious because it quite simply accounts for what we see all around us, namely the pervasive-ness of economic logic in the domain of social life. The situations in which market transactions intervene in our relationships with other people and in the course of our everyday activities multiply: shopping in malls, city centres or online is an ordinary leisure activity; students are increasingly advised to consider university education as an investment decision and universities compete by demonstrating the pay-off of a degree in salary terms; our personal conversations on social network platforms fuel the constitution of marketing databases; professional sports clubs increasingly resemble multinational companies; dinner conversation over organ donation markets or whether and how surrogate mothers should be paid for their services are commonplace; and health care issues have moved into lifestyle and technology markets, to name but a few examples.

But the assertion is also controversial. This is because to a large extent the economy and society are still considered as two complementary but nonetheless different dimensions of human affairs. The clash between social values and the economic order is a matter of ordinary perception, but also of disciplinary battle; witness, for instance, the fight between liberal economists striving for the implementation of pure competitive market coordination in all possible domains of activity and social science researchers insisting on the primacy of social order over the logic of economic transactions. The return on investment of ‘human capital’, as considered by Gary Becker, strongly conflicts with Karl Polanyi’s conception of markets as ‘embedded’ in pre-existing social institutions and with Mark Granovetter’s weak embeddedness position, where economic action is entangled in ongoing social relations.

Recently, a number of researchers from different academic disciplines have attempted to give deeper meaning and content to the idea that markets produce society and to go beyond its paradoxical or polemical
flavour, which has in the past often led into dualist fights (Cochoy, 2012). This book gathers a series of research studies investigating in particular the emergence and dynamics of ‘concerned markets’: markets where, simply put, the economic and the social writ large are intricately entwined.

We propose the notion of ‘concerned markets’ to debate market configurations that take into account the various concerns that are associated with the unfolding of economic transactions. The vocabulary of concerns originates from the domain of political science. Such notions as ‘political concern’ or ‘public concern’ are used to point to the questions that, in modern democracies, are liable to arouse the attention of citizens or of the public authorities representing them. In contemporary dictionaries (for instance in the Oxford Thesaurus, 2nd Edition), the definitions proposed for the verb ‘to concern’ raise awareness of three different dimensions: (i) refer, relate to; (ii) affect, influence; (iii) worry, trouble. In markets, concerns are those things and situations that – for better or worse – are related to us, can affect us and worry us in the current context of liberal market democracies.

Political scientists have long stressed the importance of the processes through which one ‘becomes concerned’ by a given question. John Dewey’s (1927) pragmatist perspective taught us that these processes are constitutive of the emergence of public issues, and, subsequently, of the very possibility of democratic order. In this context it is important to distinguish, as does Andrew Barry (2002), between politics as a set of techniques, practices and institutions, and the political as an index of the spaces for disagreements and negotiations.

The contemporary era, where such disagreements and negotiations engage with the complex and sometimes unexpected consequences of scientific and technological development, calls for a reformulation of the place of these processes in social and economic organizing (Latour, 2007). Bruno Latour (2004) argues that the possibility to solve the problems posed by the ecological crisis that we witness will be measured by our capacity to understand the differences between the ‘matters of fact’ and the ‘matters of concern’ that characterize contemporary innovation. In other words, we should by now be fully aware that the entities that science and technology produce do not have distinctive frontiers and identities, that they cannot be clearly detached from their unexpected consequences, and that their effects on our lives are less characterized by their ‘social impacts’ than by the diversity of connections that they develop with other entities substantiating our everyday existence. In the indeterminacy of matters of concern, the political, the social and the economic fuse.

The extension of markets in the social sphere is an important dimension of this contemporary context, not only because markets are the primary
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vehicles through which challenging innovations circulate, but also because more generally, the proliferation of marketable – and marketed – goods requires an investigation of the relations we develop with them. Gradually, we learn that we are never completely devoid of the goods spawned by our (post)-modernity: we have to understand how we are related to them, how they affect us and how they trigger our worries – or how we are concerned by them. As Michel Callon (2007) showed, the production of ‘matters of concern’ is an ordinary consequence of the functioning of markets, and by no way a failure – to allude to the term used by economists deploring the encroachment of social and political issues into the economic arena – expressing their pathological drifts.

Rather than simply replacing or overlaying social bonds with economic transactions, markets initiate a plurality of social relations of a new kind, bearing matters of concern that should be carefully monitored. They invite us neither to reject the economic dynamics of markets nor to try to purify them from any remaining social relation, but rather to search for modalities of organization that are all the more relevant for the implementation of market exchanges. As a whole, we believe that moving the ‘concern for matters of concern’ from political science and risk analysis towards market studies demonstrates less the domination of an uncontrollable economic order than the increasingly intricate connections between social, scientific, political and economic issues.

In this book we collectively take this perspective of the entangling of the scientific, political, social and economic realms in and around markets as a starting point and explore a number of market configurations that are emblematic of the contemporary necessity to carefully articulate these entanglements.

THE PERSPECTIVE OF ‘CONCERNED MARKETS’ IN THE FIELD OF MARKET STUDIES

It is of course possible to develop the topic of concerned markets from a number of analytical perspectives that are prevalent in contemporary studies of markets. ‘Market studies’ refers to a large set of research works that have been carried out in the recent period by scholars from several academic disciplines, including marketing, sociology, economics, philosophy, history, political science, anthropology and so on. Among other shared assumptions, these researchers acknowledge the importance of markets in contemporary society, but do not consider their development as a natural movement that would indicate an evolution of human history towards an inevitable economic order, nor as a testimony of the superior
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efficiency of market logics as compared with other modalities of organization of social life. Instead, they start from the idea that markets do not emerge as natural realities. Their establishment and functioning requires specific organizational processes enacted by a plurality of actors, which implies the integration of various stakes, practices, norms and values (see for instance the edited volumes by Araujo et al., 2010; Callon et al., 2007; Zwick and Cayla, 2011; Beckert and Aspers, 2011; or the special issues edited by Araujo et al., 2008 and Geiger et al., 2012). It is through the study of these heterogeneous modalities of organization that it is possible to account for the contribution of markets to the development of society.

We can now trace how we consider the notion of ‘concerned markets’ to complement and connect to a select number of the research trajectories that are part of the domain of market studies. As an exercise of mapping intellectual thought, we are by no means claiming our discussion to be exhaustive. Rather, we have been deliberately selective in our choice of comparators and refrain from drawing parallels from our notion of ‘concerned’ to other broadly economic and/or sociological frameworks emanating from somewhat different sets of ontological and epistemological assumptions.4

There are four research trajectories in particular that we elaborate upon. These are the Actor-Network Theory-inspired conception of markets as socio-technical agencements by Michel Callon and colleagues (e.g. Callon, 1998a; Çalişkan and Callon, 2009; 2010; Callon et al., 2002; Callon and Muniesa, 2005; Cochoy, 2012); Boltanski and Thévenot’s (2006) theory of justification and orders of worth; David Stark’s (2009) heterarchic organizing; and Neil Fligstein’s (1996, 2001) work on markets-as-politics. The three different dictionary meanings of the verb ‘to concern’ that we mentioned above (refer, affect, worry) are used to organize the discussion.

Concern: Refer, Relate to – Markets Uncut

In all four research trajectories, the starting point is the observation that many contemporary markets differ vastly from the neoclassical market model of the determination of prices, outputs and incomes through supply and demand. This is an ideal state of relative stability that Callon (1998b) refers to as ‘cool’ situations. Arguably, in such situations there is no relating or referring to; buyers and sellers enter and leave the market as strangers, products and services exist only as disentangled goods in predetermined market spaces, and the boundaries of the market insulate the market space from any outside interference. Markets thus become ‘spaces of calculability’ (Callon, 1998a, p.20).

Callon shows just how much investment is involved in making a market
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correspond closely to this neoclassical model, and just how difficult – if not impossible – it is to maintain it, using the example of Garcia’s strawberry market. The effort is mainly one of framing, which Callon (ibid.) explains acts by ‘allowing for the rejection of networks of relations, and thus by constructing an arena in which each entity [was] disconnected from the others.’ He highlights that framing is an ongoing achievement; that is, the networks interrupted and the relations cut produce overflows, and markets will only remain ‘cool’ if these overflows can be either internalized or disregarded as being ‘outside’ the market.

As many empirical accounts have demonstrated subsequently, relations and networks in and around markets are not that easily cut. This is especially the case in situations in which multiple actors with diverse values, expectations and aims are concerned enough to ‘concern themselves’ with the market in question (with apologies for the tautology). If such actors proceed to relate to the market by making some of the market’s overflows count, a ‘hot’ situation ensues (cf. Callon, 1998b). In a ‘hot’ market, the very core of the market’s functioning – the ‘economization’, or disentangling of the product or service bought and sold from prior or subsequent relations in order to make it calculable – is called into question. Only significant investments can ‘cool down’ such situations and allow them to be negotiated in the ‘orderly’ way typically associated with spaces of calculability. The notion of concern works well to bring together the different issues involved in this dynamic process of heating up (through relating) and cooling down (through unmaking relations).

Similarly, we suggest that the notion of concern as relating speaks to a central issue in the work of Boltanski and Thévenot (2006, pp. 34–5) regarding the relationship between agreement and discord: namely, what it is that creates the need for justification. Here, cool markets, in the Callonian sense discussed above, imply that matters of agreement and discord are successfully handled via negotiations over price between direct counterparts (or in the extreme case, are relegated to the workings of the price mechanism). A concerned market, on the other hand, is one in which such direct counterparts are not that easily identified, to say nothing of the possibility of them reaching agreement. Instead, the co-existence of some particular actors cannot be regarded simply as a matter of coincidence, or their respective doings as largely independent of each other. In short, a concerned market is a market in which something that has previously been regarded as a mere contingency is recast as part of a situation of a defined nature – that is, a situation where actors become related. This, in turn, sets processes of justification in motion.

Following Boltanski and Thévenot’s logic, depending on who or what is related, different orders of worth may be invoked as part of justification.
Concerned markets are thus no longer bound by the particular order of worth associated with markets, in which competition occupies the central role for resolving conflicts. Instead, multiple methods of reaching agreement or encompassing disagreement come into play, such as scientific inquiry, political negotiations, legal proceedings, or civic ideas. Rather than the orderly exchange of well-defined products and services within an established infrastructure, these multiple engagements result in struggles where actors tap into different principles of justice or explanations of what is good.

What is at stake in these struggles is the delineation of some common good that can be used to establish a compromise (Boltanski and Thévenot, 2006, p. 336). By suggesting what and for whom something is ‘common’, the notion of concern as referring or relating to may be used to address how the search for such a common good and the compromise between different orders of worth is set in motion. While Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) acknowledge that several orders of worth (for instance the market, the industrial and the civic) do co-exist in many contemporary markets, raising concerns typically involves challenging this co-existence on specific counts. For example, how to shift a specific issue from being resolved with reference to the ‘industrial’ order of worth to being resolved with reference to that of the ‘market’?

**Concern: Affect, Influence – Markets, Heterarchies, Hybrid Forums**

The second use of the verb ‘concern’ addresses how controversies around markets are potentially resolved. Concerned markets can be seen as an opportunity for coalescing, for reorganizing, for making markets better, more just and, perhaps, also more efficient. As we noted above, Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) invoke the notion of compromise when orders of worth clash, emphasizing that such compromises are arrived at through tests, or proofs of worth. Fligstein (2001), on the other hand, highlights power struggles and the domination of one group over others as the major explanation for the emergence of contextually and historically dependent market orders. Rather than the notions of compromise or domination, we prefer a perspective in which actors attempt to make multiple concerns count, through the continuous process of relating (‘it’s your concern as well’), troubling (‘economizing in its current form is not good enough’) and influencing (‘you need to take our concerns into account’).

The four theoretical trajectories of market studies we mentioned above provide two indications of how markets could be organized in order to build concern into the heart of the market space. Callon et al. (2009) describe hybrid forums; dialogical spaces where matters of concern can be
identified and debated, and where they can be made measurable and calculable (or economized). Callon et al. recognize that as much as the market often leads to exclusion and inequity, it can also be a powerful space of encounter between contradictory interests if organized in such a way that it is open to the voices emanating from hybrid forums.

Callon (2009) invokes the notion of civilizing for this ongoing process of opening up and restabilizing market frames. Civilizing is a particular form of contest and disruption, which typically contrasts some conception of a more moral or ethical market practice with incumbent practices, and endeavours to shape the way in which actors frame a particular market and qualify its goods in socio-technological terms. This takes us beyond Fligstein’s (1996) assumption that market actors direct actions toward the creation of stable worlds, while change emanates from external shocks. While raising concerns is about endogenizing issues by challenging the current way of conflict resolution, civilizing markets is about organizing the handling of such concerns. A civilized market, from Callon’s (2009, p. 541) perspective, is one ‘that organizes the discussion of the matters of concern produced by its functioning and the framings/overflowing that it entails.’ Civilizing as an ongoing activity is important in all markets as it puts existing socio-technical arrangements ‘under trial’ (Callon, 2007), which in turn allows these arrangements to be adapted, adjusted and reformulated.

Another related way of resolving situations of controversy can be considered by drawing on Stark’s (2009) ideas on heterarchies as an organizing principle to establish heterogeneous criteria for what is a good in a market. Heterarchies are about establishing ‘local settlements’, or an order of worth for a given market that is able to handle more than one common good. One central challenge facing such attempts is how to relate different common goods to each other. Two ways of handling this are to prioritize (for example ‘only organizations that fulfil the following criteria will be allowed to compete in the market’) or to translate (‘what is the economic value of biodiversity’). These alternatives, however, also signal the often significant and ongoing investments needed in order for a market to be able to ‘organize dissonance’. Making concerns count in markets is never achieved once and for all but influences every market exchange afresh.

**Concern: Trouble, Worry – Controversies Ongoing**

As the chapters assembled in this book witness, the search for the common good and for a governance regime that allows this common good to be realized in markets is not always easy. Many of the empirical sites reported represent highly controversial situations. This is hardly surprising, given
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that concerning, that is relating and affecting, heats markets up. On the one hand, the boundary between that which is taken into account and that which is not allows markets to function in the first place. On the other, that very boundary is also the origin of matters of concern (Callon et al., 2009; Latour, 2004). At the market boundary, these matters of concern, unstable as they may be, represent a rallying point for the concerned groups, who can start troubling the market space by making matters of concern visible to other market actors, and making themselves visible (and, as spokespersons, audible) through the matters of concern.6 Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) speak of ‘denunciations’ when actors destabilize and trigger controversy concerning the legitimacy of the situation by drawing on an order of worth that had not been implicated in the situation previously.

If markets or their effects are troubling to someone, by virtue of it affecting them, efforts are made to relate others to this, in order to have them troubled as well, which is likely to highlight more issues by virtue of the way these others are related, how they influence others, and so on. Conversely, such efforts of concerning also necessarily serve to configure ‘the other’; those elements, entities, actors and so on that either have little to be concerned about, or have reason to assume a diametrically opposed position.

It is hardly surprising, under such circumstances, that markets assume an explicitly political flavour, as emphasized, among others, by Fligstein (1996). His work on the political facet of market shaping has underscored that market orders are likely to reflect the interests of powerful groups. The specific institutions that he suggests are necessary preconditions for markets to exist, such as property rights, governance structures, conceptions of control, rules of exchange, are never neutral, but favour certain groups (Fligstein, 1996, p. 658). Here, the notion of concern offers a way of appreciating this process without starting with ‘powerful groups’; instead, the process of concerning produces potentially powerful groups. The classic Actor Network Theory concept of the ‘macro actor’ comes to mind here; however, the notion of concern emphasizes that there is no inevitability as to who this ‘macro actor’ may be, or what shape it may take; instead, the notion of concern helps us understand what goes together: concerns form groups – even if they are unlikely alliances formed by being subject to common influences.

OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS

All of the chapters in this book share one key trait: they are based on solid empirical material which exemplifies clashes of interest or orders of
worth in a variety of market settings or contexts. Notwithstanding their diversity, all the market settings covered are highly topical. Specifically, the chapters take us to such settings as the upstream market for coffee in Uganda (Onyas and Ryan), the market for primary health care in a Swedish county (Johansson Krafve), the budding global market for environmentally labelled palm oil (d’Antone and Spencer), the markets implicated in Swedish consumers’ efforts to engage in ‘green’ food practices (Kjellberg and Stigzelius), the introduction of market incentives in the Dutch education system (Dix), the European market for functional foods (Azimont and Araujo), the bioenergy market in Germany (Hauber and Ruppert-Winkel) and the efforts to design bottom-of-the-pyramid markets in the Sundarban islands (Chakrabarti and Mason).

Broadly in line with our three notions of concern discussed in the last section, these empirical market settings illustrate three facets of the term ‘concerned markets’: (i) Concerning as relating: organizing the direct transactions between market actors; (ii) Concerning as affecting: orienting market transaction so as to handle externalities for other actors, which do not take part directly in the market transactions, but nonetheless experience positive or negative consequences of these transactions; and (iii) Concerning as resolving controversies: making markets governable, that is to say, articulating economic and political regulation of markets.

Concerning in the Organizing of Transactions

The four chapters that address the first use of the term ‘concerned’ take up the market settings of subsistence, environment, food and bottom-of-the-pyramid (BoP). The first chapter under this heading, ‘Credible qualifications: the case of functional foods’ by Frank Azimont and Luis Araujo, addresses how product qualifications and the credibility of those qualifications are established in markets. The authors consider the emerging field of functional foods and the efforts in attempting to establish this as a product category. The standards required to establish health claims in functional foods bring this category closer to pharmaceuticals than food, but this also throws up a whole range of additional qualification and credibility issues. Standards and their implementation become a live issue for companies and regulators alike.

The chapter describes how one large food multinational attempted to develop a market for functional foods, in parallel with more conventional foods and cognate areas such as medical nutrition. The empirical analysis traces how this manufacturer addressed the development and marketing of functional foods and how it invested in creating an infrastructure to produce and use scientific evidence in its efforts to position itself in this market. These
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efforts, though, produced a clash of different orders of worth within the case company, which eventually led to a significant decrease in its commitment to the functional foods market. The chapter demonstrates just how complex and contested new qualification processes can be when they are not easily reconciled with existing scientific, business and marketing practices.

The second chapter with this theme is ‘Designing better markets for people at the bottom of the pyramid: bottom-up market design’, by Ronika Chakrabarti and Katy Mason. The authors problematize the issue of market design by questioning how market interventions are designed in Bottom of the Pyramid (BoP) markets. The starting point is that this market context turns market design from a top-down phenomenon to one in which the tension between shifting from the context of ‘subsistence’ to ‘BoP markets’ to ‘markets as bundles of practices and connected systems’ requires multiple stabilization efforts. The chapter presents findings from a two-year ethnographic study of the market-making efforts of villagers, NGOs, scientists and academics following a tsunami in the Sundarban islands, which removed the traditional income sources from inhabitants. In so doing, the authors explore the practices that enable people at the BoP to participate in markets and engage in a process of inquiry that brings benefits for their communities. By using an analysis tool based on Dewey’s (1938) five-step inquiry process of situation–problem–solutions–reasoning–experiment, the chapter shows how multiple actors worked together to redesign a market ‘bottom-up’.

The third chapter under this heading is ‘Articulating matters of concern in markets: (en) tangling goods, market agencies and overflows’ by Winfred Ikiring Onyas and Annmarie Ryan. In this chapter the authors highlight the process of articulating matters of concern in relation to how a market works in terms of how well it accounts for the multiple entanglements of the product that is subject to exchange. Specifically, as no market framing can be all-encompassing, the question becomes how a particular overflow, perceived by one group of actors, can be turned into a matter of concern which serves to direct the development of the market?

Based on an ethnographic study of an effort to reorganize exchanges in the up-stream Ugandan coffee market, the chapter analyses the multiple framings of coffee and how one group of market actors, the coffee farmers, seeks to articulate concerns about the way prices are set in this market. The authors’ account particularly highlights how different actors respectively seek to render visible, handle and exploit disagreements concerning what entanglements/qualities to take into account when valuing a market object. Importantly, their analysis suggests that tracing how a matter of concern is articulated and responded to is a fruitful way of studying ongoing market shaping activities.
The fourth chapter, Hans Kjellberg and Ingrid Stigzelius’s work about ‘Doing green: environmental concerns and the realization of green values in everyday food practices’, focuses on how individual consumers stabilize multiple, competing concerns in their day-to-day efforts to ‘do green’, that is realize environmental values, in relation to food. The chapter investigates how such attempts to ‘do green’ impact and are impacted on by practices related to the production, distribution and consumption of food. Three complementary case studies are used to describe and analyse explicit efforts to produce green values in different food-related practices. The cases encompass collective food production, online food retailing and efforts to educate consumers in ‘green’ cooking practices; three sites where consumers in various ways seek to ‘do green’.

The authors’ analysis shows how consumers are motivated by multiple concerns, traces how the tensions across such concerns are being balanced and how other actors attempt to influence consumers’ attempts to realize green values by providing particular scripts. Finally, they highlight the central role of monitoring practices in assessing the extent to which you ‘do green’, underscoring the trade-off between convenient yet limited rules of thumb and more comprehensive but cumbersome monitoring procedures.

**Concerning by Handling Externalities**

There are two chapters which relate to this use of the term ‘concerned’ and these focus on the food and environment market settings. First, Simona d’Antone and Robert Spencer’s chapter addresses ‘Concerns and market-ization: the case of sustainable palm oil’. The authors examine the case of palm oil and the original attempts to organize palm oil markets through the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) to investigate how it is possible to integrate the concerns of sustainable development in the construction of markets.

The RSPO initiative has grown into a large collective gathering of hundreds of actors engaged in the definition of the criteria for a more sustainable palm oil and has spawned labels and certification schemes enforcing these criteria. The Roundtable is devoted to facilitating the inscription of environmental concerns in the functioning of the market by creating a political space where a vast array of stakeholders can participate in the definition of the characteristics of goods entering in the market. As such, it replaces the blind logic of transactions and their aggregation by a process of formulating, making explicit and debatable, and negotiating concerns.

D’Antone and Spencer’s analysis shows how there is nothing evident in the functioning of this system. On the one hand, it requires strong
governance mechanisms in order to be efficient in the enforcement of the most adapted and desirable concerns. On the other hand, it contributes to transform the way in which actors calculate and frame their market actions. Thus, one of the consequences of the RSPO is increasing the multiplicity of market versions, including the emergence of other market spaces structured by actors, which do not consider the concerns supported by the RSPO legitimate or relevant. As a whole, this chapter suggests that the implementation of a hybrid forum enabling the integration of sustainability concerns in the market is in itself contested, and in fact leads to a deep transformation of the calculative spaces through which actors consider their participation in the market.

The second chapter here is ‘Engaging diverging interests through pricing: the case of maize for bioenergy production in Germany’ by Jürgen Hauber and Chantal Ruppert-Winkel. In this chapter Hauber and Ruppert-Winkel conceptualize the organization of markets in general and pricing practices in particular as a way to reconcile diverging interests, not just across a range of actors within one market but also across several overlapping markets. The authors address the efforts made in aligning the diverging interests of farmers in organizing the market exchange of corn as a substrate for the production of bioenergy in Germany. While on the one hand farmers as sellers of corn are interested in a mode of exchange that guarantees flexibility, on the other hand the buyers of corn are interested in a stable mode of exchange.

Farmers have two markets to choose from when selling their corn: the food market and the bioenergy market. Each of these two markets would allow farmers to realize one interest in particular while downplaying the other interest. The market actors use their position to influence pricing formulas in the bioenergy market that take reference from the corn food market to balance both interests. The prices for corn can be seen as a compromise that is enacted through the process of pricing, as conflicting interests are at least temporarily resolved through pricing practices.

Concerning by Making Markets Governable

The two chapters that address this third use of the term ‘concerned’ take up the market settings of education and health. The first chapter under this heading is ‘Expressing concerns over the incentive as a public policy device’ by Guus Dix. In this chapter Dix deals with an issue that is of primary importance for the understanding of marketization processes and the integration of public concerns in markets: the penetration of market mechanisms in public services. The empirical material centres on the introduction of monetary incentives in education, specifically a reform
conducted at the end of the 2000s in the Netherlands. It questions to what extent an activity that is traditionally considered as external to the logics of the economy be redefined, transformed, improved or deteriorated with the infusion of market processes in its organization.

Dix shows that this reform gave rise to the public expression of a whole series of different meanings and values by three categories of actors: economists who, drawing on their scientific expertise, had conceptualized monetary incentives in the frame of principal–agent theory, and expressed the potential advantages and risks of the reform; political actors in the Dutch government in this period, who supported the reform in the name of a transformation of the organization but also of the culture of the public sector of education; and teachers’ representatives and trade unions who opposed the reform, stressing its incompatibility with traditional values of education such as the spirit of team work and equality. As a whole, this chapter illustrates the process of interweaving market practices and the political concerns they engage through the dynamics of public controversy.

Linus Johansson Krafve’s work, ‘Marketization by the (rule)book: concern for market and public values in primary care’, deals with how different values are enacted in the process of organizing a market through regulatory efforts. As part of market reform efforts, policy-makers often assign particular importance to free choice and competitive neutrality as means towards values such as efficiency and quality. This also applies to market reforms in the provision of public services such as health care. But are free choice and competitive neutrality only means towards such ends, or are they also ends in themselves?

The author attends to the practical work of regulating free choice and competitive neutrality in a primary care market in Sweden. By studying the work undertaken in one Swedish county council to formulate and subsequently revise a ‘rulebook’ for authorization of care centres, Johansson Krafve is able to gain detailed knowledge about the market regulatory process and the values enacted therein. The rulebook is suggested to frame free choice and competitive neutrality in the studied market and guide market action by establishing a concrete system for reimbursement. Interestingly, however, while this system of reimbursement is fundamentally revised, the values of free choice and competitive neutrality remain as central values. Besides raising important issues concerning the pliability of market devices, Johansson Krafve’s chapter provides an insightful perspective on how particular values can be made to matter in markets.

Lastly, in the final chapter, Franck Cochoy offers a commentary and reflection on the idea of concerned markets. He sees the notion of ‘concerned’ markets as an alternative conceptualization of the interplay of
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In sum, the empirical chapters and our earlier analysis suggest the bold conclusion that there are no markets without concerns. Each of the eight empirical chapters exemplifies an empirical market setting that is to a greater or lesser extent ‘hot’, where there is a need to organize and govern through taking into account multiple concerns. Importantly, however, the chapters also illustrate that market organization, design and governance is not (only) the business of ‘macro actors’, the State or some other all-powerful entity. Across the chapters, we see teachers, farmers, salespersons, scientists, consumers and even the destitute concern themselves with the ways those markets in which they are involved are organized.

Each of these ‘hot’ settings thus illustrates processes and practices that are recognizable to most of us and that are not necessarily confined to highly controversial markets. We would argue that, perhaps to different degrees, the clashes of concerns debated in the chapters can be seen even in the most mundane and ubiquitous markets. There are examples in the gradual move of more and more formerly uncontroversial foodstuffs into the ‘concerned markets’ corner, such as foods with high levels of fat or sugar, or the increasing need for clothes manufacturers to make supply chain issues regarding sustainability, animal welfare or worker conditions explicit. With the emergence of ‘big data’ available to market actors in a whole range of markets including those of ‘the self’ (such as social media), concerns have spread into the very fabric of our daily lives and further blurred the distinction between the social and the economic, the ‘micro’ and the ‘macro’, the ‘matter of fact’ and the ‘matter of concern’. In other words, this is the era of the ‘concerned market’ as the norm, not the exception, and we are all concerned.

We would hope that future empirical research will take the notion of concern and the insights from the various chapters contained in this volume into the analysis of an even greater gamut of markets, including mundane or ‘everyday’ market sites. Such studies might address the role of various market actors such as regulators, politicians, citizens and the...
media (social and otherwise) to frame what concerns are made explicit and how; the role of certain types of market professionals in building different orders of worth into their products, services and market-framing activities (as highlighted for instance in Zwick and Cayla, 2011); or the role of regulators, politicians and other actors to make concerns count in markets via governance structures and hybrid forums.

To this last point, we would like to stress again that the proliferation of concern means that markets need to make space for concerns. We are, collectively, required to allow markets to become increasingly reflexive. While the ideal market may indeed be capable of handling its own overflows, the important distinction between the economists’ notion of ‘internalization of externalities’ and our notion of concerns is that – as the chapters in this volume so aptly illustrate – we do not see ‘the market’ as a stable superstructure but instead as continually emergent. This emergence means that there is no inevitability in the way markets ‘happen’ but that each individual actor has a means of shaping the market by making their own concerns matter. In short, in any market groups can make themselves and their concerns count; not only as disruptions or disjunctures, but as opportunities for relating, for balancing, for finding compromises. Through making their concerns count, they can change the market, if only by creating a greater space for reflexivity. In our view, the resounding message to be drawn from the present volume is just that: concerns matter in markets, and it is our collective task to make them matter.

NOTES

1. Authors appear in alphabetical order.
2. On the relation between this beginning of the century pragmatist perspective and the analysis of political stakes in the contemporary period, as it is nowadays informed by Science and Technology Studies, see Marres (2007).
3. As an academic field, market studies could be said to be the ongoing outcome of the meeting between Science and Technology Studies, economic sociology and (critical) management studies. This would capture an important origin, but would also unduly reduce the multiple disciplinary backgrounds of researchers active in the field. Since 2010, we have been involved in organizing a biannual interdisciplinary workshop dedicated to market studies, through which we have had the benefit of exchanging ideas with political economists, economic historians, geographers, marketing and organization scholars, sociologists, philosophers, anthropologists, STS scholars, to mention a few.
4. We would count stakeholder theory (e.g. Donaldson and Preston, 1995; Hill and Jones, 1992), the dialectics of community and markets (Gudeman, 2008), and markets as socio-cognitive structures (Rosa et al., 1999) among these frameworks. Due to major differences in starting points, we have also excluded several economics approaches from our comparison, including institutional (Williamson, 1975, 1991) and evolutionary economics (Nelson and Winter, 1982), as well as more recent work on market design (Roth, 2009).
5. There is an obvious parallel here to Mol’s (2002) work on how incoherent sources of knowledge can be handled through processes of privileging or calibrating (see also Sjögren, 2006).

6. Matters of concern are of course those matters that concerned markets deal with most often. This also demonstrates that concern does not have to be a purely ideological or value-driven issue; it can equally have a material basis. This is powerfully demonstrated in environmental markets, where for instance plastic bottles or shipwrecks act as visible and complex matters of concern and rallying points for those who are concerned (Hawkins, 2011; Gregson et al., 2013).

7. The chapters are the final selection from invited papers from the 2nd EIASM Interdisciplinary Market Studies Workshop held in Dublin in June 2012, which was organized by the editors. The theme of ‘concerned markets’ emerged out of the editors’ efforts to select individual contributions from the workshop that fit well together while offering an interesting variation in terms of empirical sites of inquiry. We would like to thank the workshop participants as well as the reviewers of the chapters for their constructive comments and suggestions on the papers and evolving chapters.

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