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# Bijlage 11: Summary

## Summary

(vertaling Drs. Els Spin, beëdigd vertaler Engels; Univertaal)

### Identity Development of and in a University of Applied Sciences for teacher training:

#### Responding to the Appeal of the Other

#### Introduction

From an almost 'lifelong' involvement in education with a particular worldview or ideological orientation (specifically: Protestant Christian education), curiosity arose about that orientation, its potential developments and its meaning and value.

This curiosity was reinforced by years of commitment to the Marnix Academy, a Protestant Christian university of applied sciences and provider of the bachelor's degree course in primary education and, previously, to one of its legal predecessors: the Reformed Academy for Education "Jan van Nassau". This commitment by way of a career in education has rendered a wealth of experience in the (ideological<sup>97</sup>) teaching practice with questions and queries into the relevance of this ideological orientation. It was striking, for example, that Protestant Christian schools for teaching were initially further specified as, for instance, 'Reformed', but that later the designation 'Protestant Christian' appeared to suffice.

Both in the years of being taught and of active involvement in teaching and training, it was evident how the ideological orientation was addressed, how it developed, and how shifts in opinions seemed to arise in communications, documents and associated

97 *Ideological, ideology* en verwante woorden zijn veelal gebruikt om de begrippen *levenbeschouwing, levensbeschouwelijk* en verwante woorden te vertalen. In stead of ideology one could read *worldview*.

educational practices; there has been an ongoing search for formulations and expressions of that orientation. That made me curious - curious about the development of what is called the 'ideological identity' of an educational institution, specifically when it came to:

- *What*: what was the identity, how was it experienced and how did it develop? (a reconstructive question)
- *How*: who or what played a role in these shifts and developments? (a clarifying question)
- *What for*: the question into the substance of the identity and the importance and relevance of this substance (an appreciative question).

Because of my personal knowledge of, and experience at, the Marnix Academy, my curiosity zeroed in on this teacher training institute for primary education whose ideological 'identity' or orientation is now being referred to as 'open Christian', while the official name still encompasses the term 'Protestant Christian'. This might be signalling some type of friction and a lack of clarity: how open is open? And: isn't 'open Christian' a *contradiction in terms*?

This curiosity and the possibility of friction in the current wording of the 'ideological identity' of the Marnix Academy led to a research question:

How has the organisational identity of the Marnix Academy been shaped over a period of 30 years and how can the (possibly polyphonic) narrative of the Marnix Academy be reconstructed, interpreted and appreciated?

### Research design

The research question for this study referred to a defined period of 30 years. This delimitation can be clarified as follows. In 1984, the Marnix Academy started as an independent teacher training institute for primary education in Utrecht. In 2014, a second accreditation (quality assessment) application was successful: the bachelor's degree programme in Primary Education was qualified as 'good'. Within and around this 30-year period, there were some *critical situations*. Vos & Keuken (1984) define a critical situation as 'a description of a school situation in which, according to people involved in a school, something of fundamental importance happens and which in reflection and discussion serves as a clarifier as regards considerations, values, appreciations and possible suggestions for change' (Vos & Keuken 1984: 9). This allows for critical situations to be related to identity development. It is possible to identify at least five of such critical situations over the said 30-year period: the period in which the Marnix Academy was established, the period of evaluation and assessment of the quality of the Marnix Academy, a period of educational change, a period of development of its outlook on the profession and the associated requirements, and a period of formulating the strategic direction for a term of four years. These periods follow each other, with the period

of quality assessment being the exception to 'the rule'; this period covers a large part of the thirty years and thus 'overarches', as it were, the third, fourth and fifth periods.

The research question was further specified in subquestions:

- The question into the nature of the concept of 'identity': does 'identity' refer to a constant (an essence) or is it a matter of development?
- The question of reconstruction and description: how can this identity (in development) be reconstructed?
- If identity development can be considered to be a story (narrative), is it about one or more stories - and who tells which story in which context?
- How can this development (expressed and experienced in narratives) be interpreted and appreciated? Is it about personal and independent stories? Is there room for personal stories?
- How can we position and describe what is known as an 'ideological identity'? Can or should the development of an ideological identity be approached as part of the overall development of identity?
- What does the (possibly polyphonic) narrative of the Marnix Academy look like?
- How can the development of the Marnix Academy's identity be interpreted and appreciated?

The first step was to develop a theoretical framework within which the natures of the concepts of 'identity' (in development), 'organisational identity' (collective construction process) and the construction process, narrative in nature, were investigated. Next, the study focused on the use of the concepts of 'ideology' and 'religion' and into the use of the concept of 'ideological identity'. A reconstruction framework was then developed based on the theoretical findings.

The methodological framework in this thesis describes the design and execution of the study together with a methodological rationale. It concerned a *case study*, in which a reconstruction of the development was made on the basis of document research and *open-ended* interviews. This reconstruction was interpreted by means of narrative and discourse analyses. The *positioning theory* (Harré & Van Langenhove 1999) was also used in this interpretation.

The reconstruction, interpretation and appreciation are presented next, first in five distinct periods - referred to as episodes - and subsequently in a summary in which the reconstructions and interpretations are collated into a (polyphonic) narrative. This summary shows that there is something remarkable about the ideological layer in identity development: this layer was not or hardly mentioned, discussed and specified in the interviews, albeit that something that might be interpreted as the 'loose exclusive narrow' conceptual approach to ideology was mentioned. This failure to recognise or name the ideological layer was interpreted as 'embarrassment, incapacity or unwillingness' in the analysis. This led to further research into the ideological layer and the

conceptualisations of that layer. A contemporary theological and philosophical approach helped demonstrate that this can be related to a conceptual paradigm shift that has not, or insufficiently, been realised.

### Theoretical framework

First of all, the nature of the concept of 'identity' was investigated. The study revealed a dichotomy in approaches: identity as situated in the psyche and, from there, in interaction with the environment and in development, or identity as the constructive 'product' of continuous interaction and development. Benwell & Stokoe (2006) argue for a discursive approach to 'identity', because discursive approaches "are, for example, able to explicate the processes by which people orient to consistency in their accounts of themselves and other people (underpinning the view of 'identity' as fixed), whilst simultaneously showing that identity is contingent on the local conditions of the interactional context" (Benwell & Stokoe 2006: 17-18). This approach situates 'identity' and identity development in discourses and also assumes that "identity is constructed in narratives" (Benwell & Stokoe 2006: 130).

Based on Benwell & Stokoe (2006), we arrived at the following properties of the concept of 'identity':

- Identity is a dynamic construct in development.
- Identity is narrative in nature, constructed and situated in narratives.
- Identity development is a relational process.
- Identity development is a contextual process in which time and place play a role. These properties also apply to the concept of 'organisational identity', with 'organisation' being understood to be "cooperatives/collectives aimed at achieving one or more goals" (Polling & Kampfraath 2007: 21).

The properties were then given more detail by exploring and interpreting concepts such as 'process', 'narratives', 'performed and produced identity' and 'positioning'.

Identity development is a continuous construction process of which *snapshots* can be taken (the term was introduced by Gioia & Patvardhan 2013: 57). In the reconstruction (making the snapshots), metaphors can be used to emphasise the developmental nature of the process. Brown (2006) introduced the metaphor of the 'patchwork quilt'. Kalsky (2017) followed others like Deleuze and Guattari (1976) in using the words 'rhizomatic process'.

Identity construction becomes visible in narratives; in fact, identity construction takes place through narratives. Somers (1994) distinguishes four dimensions in narratives: the ontological (renamed by Ammerman 2003 as 'autobiographical') narrative, the public narrative, the meta-narratives (also called 'master narratives') and the conceptual narrative. All these dimensions can be found in the construction of identity. They also render useful perspectives for the reconstruction of the development.

With these dimensions arises the question of the possibility of freedom in which the identity narrative is constructed. Is it about *produced* (here referred to as repeated and reproduced from dominant narratives, such as the public and master narrative) *identity* or *performed* (here referred to as discursive identity construction) *identity*? Whereas Foucault (1972) refers to *discursive production of the subject* (the subject/identity as a product of the dominant social discourses), Butler (1997) points to the paradox in Foucault's position: "subjection consists precisely in this fundamental dependency on a discourse we never choose but that, paradoxically, initiates and sustains our agency" (as quoted in Benwell & Stokoe 2006: 31). Butler introduced the concept of 'performativity', indicating that every new *performance* offers the subject the possibility of adapting the dominant discourse through new ways of assigning meaning and weakening or strengthening that discourse. There are possibilities for *discursive agency*.

These possibilities for the assignation of meaning (regarded as 'linguistic, culturally relative, socially constructed and local' by Harré & Moghaddam, 2003: 24) are realised in a process in which speakers either do or do not embrace, adopt, refuse and design the 'subject positions' emerging in discourses and meta-narratives. The *positioning theory* emphasises that speakers can make themselves either powerful or powerless, dependent or independent, victim or victor, passive or active. It can be concluded that it is important to use the positioning theory in the reconstruction of identity development and to pay attention to who says what and who does not.

The keynote of identity development is always *the good* and the pursuit of *the good*. This keynote has the character of a utopia, a vision that is continually modified, altered and adapted; it is an endeavour energised from continuously differing sources. Identity development and its reconstruction can so also be characterised as *the ever produced narrative* (Czarniawska-Joerges 1994: 198).

After an exploration of the concepts of 'identity', 'organisational identity' and 'identity development', the concept of 'ideological identity' was investigated. The main question in this part of the study was whether it should be taken as a separate concept, or whether 'ideological identity' should be approached as an integral part of, or a layer in, identity development in general. This question is important, as a separate conceptual approach to 'ideological identity' is often taken in the Dutch context, usually with reference to a religious or ideological denomination of a school, whether or not articulated.

First, the concepts of 'religion' and 'ideology' were explored in more detail in order to answer the question into the use of 'ideological identity'. In this partial study, the approach of Droogers (2010), who refers to 'ideology' as "a form of culture in which people, in a playful and yet serious way, explore and assign meaning to their own human reality through exploration and identification", caught the eye. For the concept of religion, he adds: "a reality experienced as sacred", "in order to assign meaning to one's

own human reality” (Droogers 2010: 16-17). The dynamics, the process and the continuous development, stand out here. The same can be said for Ganzevoort (2007); he suggests that “religion is not an instrument [or instrumental concept; bdk] in society; it is much more central than that” (2007: 11).

Following on from the exploration, the next step was to look into the use of the concept of ‘ideological identity’, focusing on:

- The aspect of static identity versus dynamic identity
- The aspect of produced and performed identity
- The aspect of social constructs versus institutionalism.

First, a picture was sketched of the different uses and interpretations of ‘ideological identity’. It was noticeable that in the vast majority of cases the respondents preferred to name and describe or typify just a single component of the identity of the (educational) organisation. This separate description usually led to a characterisation associated with a detached, exclusive and narrow (ideological) identity concept. The question was whether this did justice to the identity development’s nature as a constructive process and the non-instrumental, central nature of religion and ideology. Based on these considerations, it was decided that the ideological aspect would be approached in the reconstruction as a layer of Marnix Academy’s identity development, rather than as a concept to be examined separately. Identity development is ideologically charged or layered in the sense that it plays a role in assigning and granting meaning, in order and desired order, in choices made and new options. It can so also be said that the concept of ‘ideological identity’ is, in fact, a pleonasm.

### Methodological framework

In the methodological framework, the design and execution of the study were described together with a methodological rationale.

A reconstruction framework was developed in which, based on the theoretical explorations, five components for identity and identity development were identified: the relational component (the other), the behavioural component (the praxis), and the symbolic component (the wording) as borrowed from Pratt (2013: 25), and ‘ideology or tradition’ and ‘utopia’ borrowed from Dupont & Hermans 2003: 43 -67. These five components were used in the description and interpretation of the identity development in five episodes. With one exception, these episodes were sequential in nature. The development of the identity in each episode was described along four lines: the (national) context (the national discourse), the development within the Marnix Academy, the experiences from within and the interpretation of the development.

For the reconstruction itself, materials were used from external and internal (policy) documents, open-ended interviews with a varied group of (former) employees of the

Marnix Academy and studies into the developments in higher professional education in general and in primary school teacher training institutes in particular.

The study was characterized (following Thomas: 2011) as a *case study* involving a *local knowledge study* and possibly also a *key study* (subject) with *instrumental* and *evaluative/explanatory* objectives, in which *reconstructing* and *drawing a picture* were central (approach) to a *cross-case, nested/sequential/snapshot* (process) study. The qualitative study was primarily an ‘interpretative investigation’ in which ‘human beings are not understood as objects but as agents’ (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow 2012: 46). In the way in which Schwartz-Shea & Yanow (2012) develop interpretative research, agency, contextualisation and abduction are important notions.

The reconstruction of the identity development was shaped and analysed by way of narrative and discourse analyses. The narrative analysis used Clandinin’s insights and applications (e.g. Clandinin & Connelly 2000; Clandinin 2013) and two analysis methods developed by Riesmann: the thematic and the dialogical/performative method (Riesmann 2004, 2008). In the discourse analysis, the emphasis was on the *discourse-historical approach* as developed by Wodak (Wodak & Meyer 2009). The narrative, rhizomatic approach deserved special attention, because of its partial focus on the effects of discourses, to polyphony and multiple entrances, dynamics and (temporary) coherence. Sermijn, Loots and Devlieger (2011): “the self [and ‘identity’; bdk] does not have a stable core but is plural, polyphonically discontinuous, and fragmented” (2011: 148).

A special and more detailed justification was provided as regards the person, the role, the place of the researcher and her co-researchers. All had been, or still are, involved in different roles in the Marnix Academy. The risk of ‘going native’, or rather the risk associated with ‘being native’, needed addressing. By way of data, theory and method triangulation, through ‘member-checking’, ‘co-researching’ and by paying attention to the identification and interpretation of positions (*positioning theory*), these risks were limited as far as possible. It should be noted here that the use of various forms of triangulation promotes the use of ‘the space in between’. This space, coined by Dwyer & Corbin (2009), is the leeway for bridging dichotomies (such as the in- or outsider perspective) and thereby a creative space, functioning as the space of “paradox, ambiguity and ambivalence, as well conjunction and disjunction” (Corbin & Dwyer 2009: 60).

### The reconstruction, interpretation and appreciation

The Marnix Academy started in 1984 as an independent teacher training institute for primary education, based in Utrecht. That start had a reason. At that time, the formation of such institutes was on the agenda throughout the Netherlands as a result of an educational system overhaul forcing at least one elementary school teacher training provider to merge with at least one school for kindergarten teachers into one teacher training institute for primary education, which was now to be taught in schools for 4 to 12 year-olds instead of in two separate schools for two separate age groups. This



overhaul was deemed necessary as lifting the separation would improve the ability to realise the ongoing, continuous development of the learning child, promote creativity and advance individualisation, differentiation and cancellation of educational arrears. It meant that the separation in the associated training also had to be lifted. Hence the formation of new training institutes, which were, and still commonly are, referred to as Academies for Primary Education. Taking into account the demographic developments, the locations of the existing institutes, their denominations and the denominational and regional distributions, a plan was developed for the formation of these academies, directed by the framework of the government at the time.

The partners for the Protestant Christian Academy for Primary Education to be formed in the region of Utrecht were obvious: the Reformed Jan van Nassau and Christian Rehoboth teacher training institutes and the Marnix school for kindergarten teachers. These three institutions formed the new Marnix Academy, the Protestant Christian University of Applied Sciences in Primary Education. It is striking that all the specific terms for the respective ideological orientations disappeared; "Protestant Christian" was believed to be more in keeping with the compartmentalisation as developing at the time and as adopted in the development plan.

The chosen ideological orientation was undisputed and self-obvious given both the partners' history and the framework of the development plan. As from its start, the Marnix Academy was committed to Protestant Christian primary education and positioned itself as such. History also showed a strong link with the Protestant Christian primary schools in the city and region of Utrecht.

The formation of the academy virtually coincided with another development: the establishment and legislative adoption of higher professional education to be provided by universities of applied sciences. The academies for primary education formed before 1984 were already referred to as higher professional education providers, but they came under the Secondary Education Act until 1986. This also applied to other sectors in higher professional education: the institutes (legally) came under either secondary or vocational education. The 1986 Higher Professional Education Act turned higher professional education into a separate sector.

The meaning and consequences of the former status of the academies for primary education and their predecessors should not be underestimated. The fact that the government had approached the courses they provided as secondary education for quite some time, rendered not only strict government direction, but also a hybrid educational model: the emphasis was on general education (which rendered them the nickname of *poor man's universities*) and, but to a lesser extent, preparation for the profession of a teacher. In her standard study, Van Essen (2006) addresses this hybrid objective, which required the schools to seek and find a balance constantly; the formation of academies

for primary education and the establishment of the legal basis for higher professional education jeopardised this balance.

This formation and establishment were a national issue around 1984. The formulation of the Higher Professional Education Act came with the government's objective to stand back (and be less directive) and make the new sector itself responsible for its quality, results and efficacy. In the government's philosophy, it was *Scaling Up, Task Division and Concentration (STC)* that should take centre stage. This implied that size and specific profiles were conditions for quality and results. 1986 heralded the start of the STC operation, which had to lead to the formation of great, multi-sectoral universities of applied sciences with a student population of at least 600. For the academies for primary education, a lower number would suffice - 200 - taking into account the recent mergers and a greatly decreasing number of students due to surpluses in the labour market. A considerable part of the academies that had just been formed became part of a multi-sectoral university of applied sciences under the influence of the STC operation. Initially, seven, and eventually five, academies for primary education remained independent (and, therefore, mono-sectoral). These formed the educational federation *Interactum* in the longer term. The Marnix Academy joined this federation in 2001. In 2016, *Interactum* was converted into an even greater educational affiliation: *Radiant Teacher Training Institutes*. This group includes not only independent academies but also multi-sectoral institutes (albeit small in their numbers of sectors).

When it turned out that it was difficult for the institutes for higher professional education to realise the care for quality and to live up to the responsibility for results, the government used its position as the funder to take the reins again, step by step. Efficiency and results would be 'enforced' by potential state funding cuts. The institutes chose *extensification* as their means towards efficiency: fewer contact hours and more independent study. As for the targetted results, one of their solutions was to acquire students from abroad. These trends led to two well-known cases of misconduct: widespread fraud with unjustly received funds for international students and the diploma fraud at *InHolland University of Applied Sciences*. They caused a long-lasting atmosphere and situation of mistrust; this trust had to be rewon, not to mention the possibilities for more self-direction.

Within the context of international (European) harmonisation and transparency, higher professional education also saw the introduction of bachelor's and master's degrees and, for each and every course, a structure of majors and minors (as generic and specialisation components) in keeping with the Anglosaxon educational model with its associated philosophy of results, rankings, efficiency, revenue and measurable quality. From that moment on, higher education in the Netherlands took on a more process-based and business operational approach. In order to measure quality, 'descriptors and qualifications' were, and still are, used.

Based on quality assessments and social discontent with the quality of primary education and, so, with the quality of teacher training, the academies for primary education became the focus of attention, and the government steered into the direction of national knowledge bases and national examination. So-called performance agreements for all universities of applied sciences were also introduced: on the basis of the *targets* set by the institutions, part of their funding is now dependent on them achieving these targets, or not.

Governmental direction (and the direction by sector councils steered by the government) and measurements that followed one another in rapid succession caused and still causes a great many educators to feel alienated from their core task and their execution of that core task. Educators and philosophers who have raised the subject were 'embraced' (Nussbaum 2011, Biesta 2014). As for educational reasoning and actions, different emphases seem to be placed as well, such as the focus on *emergent teaching* (see Crowell & Reid-Marr, 2013).

These national developments have formed the background to the (polyphonic) narrative of the Marnix Academy. The STC operation began soon after its establishment in 1984. Attempts have been made to liaise the Marnix Academy with other institutes and have it become part of a larger whole to be formed (joining a secondary school for higher technical education, an academy for social work, other academies for primary education in the city of Utrecht), but none seemed to want to enter into a cooperation. "Nobody wanted us," said the director and deputy director at the time. It was decided to take a different course: not to get stuck in the feeling of not being acknowledged, but to make its independent position a strong suit by standing out as different. From the very beginning, the difference lay in the focus on the student and the professional practice. The keynote of the academy became *the focus on the other* (a keynote it also had before the merger!). Responding to the other's appeal, to stand out and be different in this respect - was what characterized the academy. It soon became apparent to the students that the self-evident Protestant Christian identity was no longer shared or recognised. It was not shared in the sense that students no longer experienced any connection with the Protestant Christian points of departure, and not recognised in the sense that the personal and unbending sound of the teacher of religion at the time was not recognised or acknowledged as a 'Christian' sound.

In three rounds of review visits (visitation was part of the quality assurance system developed by the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences), the Marnix Academy presented itself assertively with its own choices. During the 1991/1992 review, the Marnix Academy received a positive assessment as one of the few academies for primary education. This was also the case in the second round in 1996 when the assessment panel wondered why the academy reacted so reluctantly. Apparently, the academy had begun to look inwards rather than outwards, with the necessary suspicion of external control.

In the last round in 2003, the academy's own choices were appreciated, but the assessors also had criticism: the Marnix Academy did not have an (educationally defined) specific outlook on the profession and interpreted its task in an instructional manner. They also expressed their concern about the national trends: academies for primary education do and have to do a lot, but this multitude led to a lack of depth.

The Marnix Academy took the comments to heart and put effort into the development of an educationally defined outlook on the profession. The development started with the question: what do we train for? The keynote, which was already present (to focus on the other/the Other), became the foundation for the curriculum and was linked to the ideas of the French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas. The development resulted in three keywords - *skilled*, *involved* and *inspired* - and a publication with these three keywords as its title. Important elements were integral and integrative thinking and acting, congruence in practice. The latter was not only related to the outlook on the profession of the primary school teacher. It should also serve as a guideline for all the staff members at the Marnix Academy and for the organisation itself. The appeal by the other was not to be taken only as the appeal of the learning child, but also the appeal by the learning student, the professional practice, the academy's staff and the surrounding community and the world. It was about (ideologically layered) educational thinking and action.

The first accreditation round (which replaced the visitation system) in the period of 2007-2009, did not turn out well for seven of the academies for primary education. The Marnix Academy was one of them. Some of it could, without a doubt, be related to the ongoing social criticism and a government that believed that scrutiny and strict standards should form the answer to this criticism. Some intentional decisions (in the area of examinations for one) were not recognised, acknowledged or assessed for reasons of too little evidence as regards the implementation of the policy. The fact that the academy and its ideas could so easily be dismissed created an atmosphere of fear throughout the organisation and made the assertive and somewhat stubborn culture disappear. It took quite some time to regain the atmosphere of trust, 'togetherness' and willingness to be different and stand out. During the formulation of the strategic plan for 2013-2017, efforts were made to repair these feelings of 'together', trust and zest. This ultimately resulted in a very positive assessment in the second accreditation round of 2014.

In the interpretation of the development of the Marnix Academy's narrative, various things became clear:

- There is a dominant public narrative, which in the course of time has become focused on keywords like revenue, measurement, justification, economic profitability, top-down, reactivity to incidents and unrest;
- There is a dominant idea of the ideology, which has developed from a concept that was provided as a matter of course and embraced in all kinds of practices into a

separate discourse, provided from the outside, that is exclusive or plural, but for many insufficiently relatable to choices and practices;

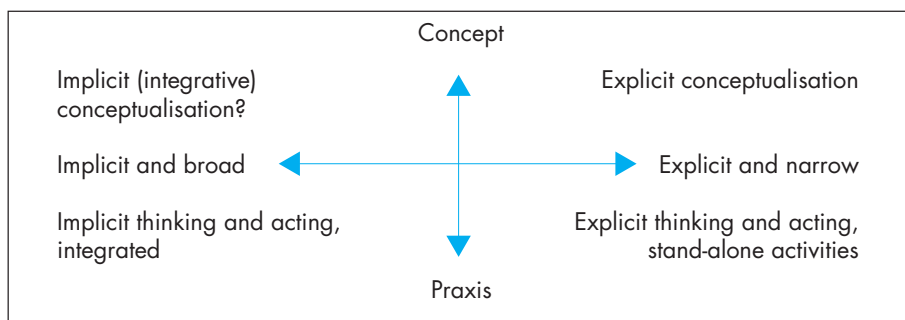
- There is an organisation narrative with constant components: openness, own choices, seeing opportunities, dialogical and relational, focus on the other;
- There are personal narratives that show undercurrents or counternarratives, where involvement, quests and visions play an important role. In the personal narratives, the feeling of the importance of *belonging* prevails: I am significant, I am seen or want to be seen, the Marnix Academy is a home, or so it should be.

There is *discursive agency*; in the reconstruction, the spotlight is on the moments of one's personal choices (by departure from *critical situations*). By making its own choices, the Marnix Academy sought room to stand out and be different and to legitimise its existence this way. This means that the development of the Marnix Academy's identity lies mainly in *discursive agency* itself, often in response to dominant discourses, sometimes also from the narrative of the academy itself, or from personal narratives.

It is striking that there is some type of friction in the interpretation of the ideological layer in this identity development. In the open-ended interviews, there is little or no mention of the ideological orientation or layer. When it does come to the fore, that layer seems to be connected and examined on the basis of a separate, exclusive and also narrow concept. When examined against that concept, whatever presents itself as an ideological layer is not recognized, not discussed (anymore) or the ideological choices are considered to be 'falling short' (compare the interviews on the topic of 'Where has Jesus gone?'). There seems to be conceptual confusion, which causes embarrassment, inability or unwillingness around (the interpretation or recognition of) that ideological layer.

### The ideological layer

From the suspicion of this conceptual confusion, that layer was examined further, primarily focusing on the moments when that layer clearly played a role. A framework was developed for the reconstruction and interpretation of those moments:



The framework is partly inspired by what Bailey (1997) coined as a concept: *implicit religion* (1997: 7). The framework zooms in on five developments and activities, where the ideological layer was an explicit factor: the attempts to establish a Federation of Christian Universities of Applied Sciences, the development and realisation of the Diploma in Biblical Education and the Diploma in Christian Primary Education, the institution and the work of the Identity Committee, the justification of the identity of the academy in memoranda and documents and, finally, the institution and the work of the research group of *Dynamic Identity Development*.

When interpreting these developments and activities, the framework helped reveal a movement from self-evident, explicit thinking and acting (in the narrow approach of the self-evident column), to explicit thinking - no relationship with action (the crisis in the column), to implicit action (integrative) which also includes proposals for, and encouragement towards, implicit, integrative conceptualisation. However, the movement seemed to have come to a standstill; the explicit stand-alone (compartmentalised) concept was referred back to again in many cases of conceptualisation. The respondents (1) felt no connection with this concept anymore; or (2) felt that this concept was replaced by an approach without any differentiation or reflection (all ideologies/religions are welcome, it makes no difference, for it all boils down to the same thing); the other view is (3) that the old concept is embraced and used as a criterion and standard but is found not to be complied with, or most practices are not recognised as being related.

A question mark is placed in the top left quadrant (implicit, integrative conceptualisation) of the framework. This question mark does not denote an (in)ability to provide content here but signifies a new way of dealing with (reconceptualisation) of the concept of 'ideology' or world view. There has been a partial paradigm shift (towards a broad, integrative concept); but there must also be a paradigm shift effected in the approach to this concept.

On the basis of a study of some contemporary theological and philosophical contributions, it can be said that the need for a paradigm shift is shared. The considerations also provide a substantive impetus for this reconceptualisation: discursive, emergent, multiple, cross-border, rhizomatic, cross-religious. Kalsky (2017) proposes to depart from foundations and separate concepts and to situate ideology in the rhizomatic praxis, in the process itself. This process is 'transreligious, transcultural, rhizomatic, polyphonic and multiple'. The ideological and religious aspects can, therefore, also be interpreted as a development process, with the development taking place in *discursive performance*. In this performance, the *subjective turn* is also realised, i.e. the departure from ideology or religion as provided from the outside as a detached and normative concept.

## Conclusions and recommendations

The conclusions that were formulated first at all, which can be regarded as answers to the research question and the subquestions. The reconstructed narratives and

discourses were assessed by making appreciative statements about them. As for the narrative of the Marnix Academy, it can be said that *the focus on the other* has been one of the most important 'supportive threads' in the development of its identity. It was also shown how embarrassment, inability and unwillingness in respect of the interpretation and appreciation of the ideological layer have presented itself in that narrative.

As for the (discourses in the) context, it was noted that, in general, the academies for primary education reacted extremely flexibly and responsively to the directive appeals by the government and the sector council. The academies differ in the extent of *discursive agency* in their response to that appeal. There seems to be a connection between realised *discursive agency* and (recognised) quality.

This leads to the appreciative conclusion that it is good to have leeway as to how to respond to the appeal of the other party (including the government) and, above all, to use this leeway for *performativity* and *discursive agency*.

With regard to the ideological layer in identity development, it was concluded that it is necessary to realise a *subjective turn* in the ideological and educational discourses. The ideology is also about *discursive agency*.

Finally, recommendations were made for further research and for further elaboration into the professional practices. For the Marnix Academy, the recommendation is to (continue to) work on the dialogue with attention to what has been identified as important 'supporting threads' in the identity development: stand out and be different, focus on the other and do so 'together'.