

FLECK LECTURE 2013

SLOWING DOWN THE SCIENCES?

Prof. **Isabelle Stengers** (Université libre de Bruxelles)

Thursday, May 30, 2013, 7:15 pm

Semper-Aula (HG G 60) of ETH Zurich, Rämistrasse 101, 8006 Zürich

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Moderation: **Prof. Johannes Fehr** (Director Ludwik Fleck Zentrum)

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The idea of a slowing down of science is connected with the emerging conviction that the present-day relation of scientific practices with the socio-economico-political milieu they interact with is a destructive one. It will be argued that what is called «knowledge economy» may well be in the process of destroying the cooperative nature of the research dynamics which Ludwik Fleck characterized in his *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact*.

In order to characterize this crucial contemporary matter of concern, the need for a comparative epistemology emphasizing the respective intrinsic constraints of different thought-collectives will be confirmed. Taking these constraints into account is necessary in order to approach the very possibility of a slowing down of science. A strong contrast will be proposed from this point of view between Ludwik Fleck and his «discoverer» Thomas Kuhn.

Isabelle Stengers is a philosopher of science teaching at the Université libre de Bruxelles. She was first known for the book *Order out of Chaos*, coauthored with Nobel laureate Ilya Prigogine. In 1993, she received the Grand Prize for Philosophy from the Académie Française. In her influential and wide-ranging work, she explores the role of science in modern societies and challenges its pretensions to objectivity, rationality, and truth.

On Friday, May 31, 2013, from 10:15 to 12:00 am, a **Day-After-Seminar** will be held at Collegium Helveticum (Semper-Sternwarte, Schmelzbergstr. 25, 8006 Zürich). The seminar will provide an opportunity to discuss with Isabelle Stengers her delivered lecture. Please register at info@fleckzentrum.ethz.ch.

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