It is a time of crisis.

Crisis comes from the Greek word *krisis*, which means judgment or decision. But *krisis* also indicates the turning point in a severe course of illness, when the sick person moves towards either cure or doom.

A crisis, then, is a dangerous moment. But it is also a moment intensely charged with the possibility of change. And change is what we're talking about here. I want to thank you for inviting me to join you. My name is Mette Birkedal Bruun, and I am a church historian at the University of Copenhagen.

I want to talk about research transformation.

My research is about monks. About people who are in the world by withdrawing from the world. It seems world-distant, but it is not necessarily. In the research tradition that I come from, i.e. the humanities and theology, we study what it means to be human. Human in the world, human away from the world, to be human with a language, a set of values and a historical context, a human who expresses themselves in art, music and communication of various kinds. We examine what it meant to be human before and what it means to be human now. Human in the world, human in society, human on the planet, human beings by themselves, with other people, with nature.

The research draws the long lines. It lays a foundation of knowledge, understanding, and critical analysis beneath all the information we surround ourselves with every day. But research is also about being first with the latest news. It points forward, outwards, further and into the future.

Research must be able to do both: The long haul and the quick jolts. We never know when we suddenly need knowledge about something from the large pool of insights and investigations that is the foundation of our knowledge. When will we need scholars who know something about infection, who can understand Russian, who know something about climate change in the deep past?

Back to the monks. They withdrew from the world to draw closer to God. I research withdrawal. How does it work? How do you draw boundaries between yourself and the world? For the monks, it's all about the abbey wall and a particular way of life with a lot of rules. From the monks, I turned my focus to other forms of withdrawal in history. I became interested in the concept of the private, of the boundaries that individuals draw between themselves and others. I couldn't study this alone. I had to engage with researchers who know something about legislation, architecture, social conditions and political ideas at different times in history.

At the Centre for Privacy Studies (DNRF138), we conduct historical research on privacy. We develop new interdisciplinary forms of collaboration. It's really difficult. Because all researchers at the Centre for Privacy Studies are trained to work alone and to work within a specific scientific profile. If we want to work together, we must put some of our disciplinary education aside and try to open ourselves up towards new ways of being scholarly. We need to change our research approaches and ways of thinking. We're changing our ways of doing research, and it creaks in all our scientific joints.

We were brought up to work alone because that is what we do in the scientific traditions we come from. But it is also true more generally that the scientific world applauds the solitary scholar. The scientist who stands out as something extraordinary. We are brought up in the academic world, wanting to be that one scientist who stands out before all the others like a shining star. When we work across research fields, we have to put that dream aside for a while. We must put cooperation

at the forefront. I need to work on our shared success and not just on my own. It creaks in all the joints of my scientific vanity when I have to change in this way.

It is exciting to conduct historical research, but it is even more exciting if we can show people that history can shed light on the present. At the Centre for Privacy Studies, we practice talking to researchers and practitioners who work with privacy and privacy today: legislators, technologists, and people working with GDPR or artificial intelligence. We participate in conferences and conversations. We give presentations about what our historical research shows. We can see that when people at different times in history try to delineate and protect their privacy, a lot of other things are at stake. We examine historical documents and ask: Who has power over access to privacy? Who has the power and the right and duty to surveil others? Who pays? Who suffers? What values drive the endeavour?

I'm a church historian, and I'm particularly interested in what people believed in the past. We also believe in all sorts of things today. We may not believe in God, but we do believe in economic conditions, democracy, prosperity, security, health, and longevity. We also believe that happiness looks a certain way or that a family or a home looks a certain way. Such values and convictions determine how we approach privacy and surveillance today. Historians can ask questions to people who work with privacy and private life in the present: What kind of values do we abide by nowadays? Who decides? Who pays? Who suffers? It takes courage to engage in these kinds of conversations, where we historians are way outside of our comfort zone as researchers. We are changing our perception of what we can achieve with our research field. It creaks throughout our need to stand on safe ground.

Privacy sometimes takes place in the home. Home has become a new field of interest for me. Right now, I am part of a project concerning health care in the home. What happens to the home when the hospitalisation moves into the home? What happens to a person who is sick at home? With the people who are relatives of the patient? And the nurses who have their workplaces in people's homes? I work with researchers from, among other fields, anthropology, law, technology studies, history and pharmacy.

But also with nurses from home care, Bispebjerg Hospital and Rigshospitalet, with pharmacists and with consultants who look at the financial and political side of the matter. In the project, we work with many different research approaches, and we must – again – try to put aside some of our own scientific traditions to understand each other's approach. But we also work with practitioners who have daily experience and a lot of knowledge and insight that we, as researchers, do not have access to. It's a gift and joy, but we are also balancing a tightrope. The researchers may be a little paralysed with awe when faced with the nurses' colossal practical knowledge, and the nurses may be wary of the researchers' theoretical language. We must dissolve our prejudices about each other and change our uncertainties in the professional meeting focusing on our shared interests. It creaks and squeaks in all our professional joints and uncertainties while we learn to bring theory and practice together in a fruitful way.

It's a time of crisis. It's a moment of change. Time throws a challenge and an invitation to us researchers: we must become better at working with each other in respect for each other's academic skills and while jointly overcoming the academic fixation on the success of the individual researcher that is so central to the entire system. We must reach far beyond our academic competences. Across the humanities, natural sciences, technology, and medicine. We must engage in exchanges with people with practical knowledge and experience. And it will creak and squeak in all the joints, but we must do it.

Because this is a time of crisis. And the crises are so complex that we need all sorts of angles to get all the way around them. It takes training, it takes courage. It requires me to open my academic horizon and basic scientific attitude, and surrender to that shared work with researchers and practitioners which changes us mutually.

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