Beyond the Third Mission: toward an actor-based account of universities relationship with society /
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Recently, there has been an expansion of political narratives that seek to develop universities’ links
with society, predicated on the idea that academia needs to abandon the proverbial ivory tower and
become more engaged with its environment. This chapter discusses the following questions: What is
it that academics do when they engage with their societies? What are the ideas, issues and constraints
surrounding these forms of engagement? How do they reflect and/or reproduce the concepts of
(academic) authority? Based on ethnographic fieldwork in the UK, I develop a critical investigation of
how academics’ narratives and practices interact with the structural conditions of knowledge
production, how they relate to the status and rewards associated with the academia, and how they
(re)construct the boundaries and power relations between the university and society. (HRK / Abstract
übernommen)