

***Text, Image, Sound, Space (TBLR). Norwegian Researcher Training School –
Analysis, Interpretation, and the Exchange of Theories and Ideas***

The Norwegian University of Science and Technology, The Arctic University of Norway, Nord University, The University of Agder, The University of Bergen, The University of Oslo, and The University of Stavanger.

Call for papers, PhD Training Course

January 9th–12th 2018, Paris

Forms of life: Vitalisms, bio-politics and new ecologies

Over the last decades “forms of life” has gained currency as a signature term for exploring changing conceptions and perceptions of “life”. While inevitably drawing on earlier conceptual elaborations (Wittgenstein, Canguilhem, Foucault), from the vantage point of the 21st century, the concept provides a means to articulate a contemporary experience: where the blurring of the nature-culture divide is less a critical position than a characteristic trait of the infrastructure of everyday reality in the Anthropocene.

In 2016, *The International Geological Congress* received the recommendation to formally designate the current epoch, characterized by increasing levels of greenhouse gases, acidification of the oceans, rapid extinction of biomes, and manmade sediment production exceeding that of other sources, as “The Anthropocene”. In its July 2017 issue, *Nature* revealed that a team of American researchers had stored a film sequence in a bacteria’s genome using the DNA code’s inheritance units, thus realizing what Rudy Rucker over 25 years ago coined as “wetware”. Under such conditions, all cultural and political issues are necessarily framed by “the question of technology” and “forms of life” cannot but be articulations of the current political economy of living beings.

In various ways, art and artists have responded to the shifting realities and their immediate effects not merely on human life, but on life forms in general. From Eco-criticism, Eco-poetry and Eco-art, to Object-Oriented Ontology, Zoo-poetics, and laboratories for the “new we”, manifestos and charters abound. Thus, art, literature and theory not merely interpret but respond to and intervene in the current situation and its pressing concerns. What we witness are ongoing explorations and negotiations of our notions of what life and community entail, contemplating the outsides and insides of the current life forms and their respective ecologies.

We invite the participants to focus on how literary, aesthetic and cultural studies interact with and respond to the life sciences and pressing issues of ecology. What happens when the distinction between the micro-politics of the biological body and the macro-politics of the community become blurred in a general bio-political economy? What are consequences for “life” when the nature-culture distinction becomes a complex hyper-object, an aggregate where traditional distinctions have ceased to be immediately meaningful? How do we need to revise our notions of communication, when media become elemental, and elements become media? How do literature and the arts respond to anthropology that cannot be conceived independent of an increasingly subcutaneous technology?

To address these and related questions, we suggest the following: *forms of life*, *vitalisms*, *bio-politics*, and *new ecologies*, as tools to think upon the on-going re-mapping of the human and non-human, matter and mind, people and things, art and life, forms and processes.

Taking these concepts as a starting point, we invite the participants to articulate some of the specific traits of the aesthetic experience of the 21st century and identify and discuss matters of concern that mark contemporary art and literature.

PhD students from TBLR member universities are invited to attend and present their work. In addition, the course will be open to a limited number of students from other universities. The number of participants is limited to 18.

Key-note speakers:

- Cathrine Mallabou, Kingston University, Irvine University
- Jens Hauser, Copenhagen University

TBLR participants: Ina Blom, Universitetet i Oslo; Janne Stigen Drangsholt, Universitetet i Stavanger; Knut Ove Eliassen, NTNU; Svein Halvard Jørgensen, Nord Universitet, Lars Sætre, Universitetet i Bergen; and Frederik Tygstrup, Københavns universitet.

Application Process: Considering the participant number limitation, those who would like to attend should fill in the application form and submit a short draft of their paper by the 10th of December latest (300 words). If the number of applicants exceeds 18, a selection will be made on the basis of relevance, previous participation in the TBLR program, affiliation and status of PhD training; beyond that, early applications will be prioritized. Papers to be presented must be submitted by the 5th of January latest. After this date papers will be made available to the participants.

Program: The program will consist of plenary key-note lectures (45-minute presentation, 45-minute discussion) and group work. Participant papers will be presented in a conventional conference setting (20-minute presentation, 20-minute discussion).

Working language: English.

Credits: 5 ECTS. Signed and authorized course diplomas will be bestowed upon each PhD student participant on completion of the course.

Venue: Centre Universitaire de Norvège à Paris, CUNP
Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme,
54 Boulevard Raspail, 75006 Paris

Hotel: *Le Programme franco-norvégien en sciences sociales* and the TBLR researcher training school will cover board and lodging for the duration of the four course nights. Hotel reservations will be made by the organizers. Those who would like to prolong their stays must cover any extra expenses themselves.

Travel: PhD students are expected to cover their own travel expenses.

Texts: Reading materials will be made available to the participants by Dropbox no later than a month before the seminar. The reading list will include texts by:

Application Form

Text – Image – Sound – Space
National Researcher Training School

Forms of life: Vitalisms, bio-politics and new ecologies

PhD course

Programme franco-norvégien, Fondation Maison des sciences de l’homme

January 9th –12th, 2018

NAME

INSTITUTION

ADDRESS

PRIVATE ADDRESS

E-MAIL

MOBILE PHONE

TITLE OF PHD PROJECT

NAME OF SUPERVISER

HOW RELEVANT IS THIS COURSE FOR YOUR PROJECT?

TITLE OF PAPER

OTHER TBLR COURSES YOU HAVE ATTENDED

STATUS OF YOUR PHD EDUCATION

(ECTS POINTS ACHIEVED)

Deadline for application: December 10th, 2017

Deadline for paper: January 5th, 2018

To be submitted to: Knut Ove Eliassen, HF, NTNU: knut.eliassen@ntnu.no