



Call for Applications

PhD Course: Situated Research - Exploring Place and Time through the Environmental Humanities

Convenors: Ursula Münster and Pierre du Plessis

When: 7 June – 10 June 2022

Where: Different Locations in and around Oslo, Norway

Organiser: Oslo School of Environmental Humanities (OSEH), University of Oslo, Norway

Co-funded by: Norwegian Researcher School in Environmental Humanities (NoRS-EH)

In the Anthropocene, a time of planetary environmental and climatic crisis, common understandings of place and time have become increasingly contingent. Ecologies all over the world are adjusting to new scales of disturbance, new assemblages of species, and shifting temporalities. Global climate change, for instance, affects the seasonal temporalities of plants, animals, and microbial life, threatening dangerous mismatches of timing within ecosystems. This disrupts cultural, economic and spiritual connections with environments and landscapes, with important sequences of events being disrupted or squeezed. It brings about new intensities that alter the compositions of ecological assemblages once associated with particular places, and new relations to and understandings of place emerge.

Capitalism and capitalist logics have exacerbated these transformations, not only increasing spatial homogeneity and prioritizing temporal decontextualization —as with both the industrial factory and plantation—in ways that materially shape environments. Moreover, they have also reoriented the temporal relations through which many peoples engage with place, away from a sensitivity and responsiveness to more-than-human temporalities. In this process of spatiotemporal displacement, it has become difficult to navigate between global challenges and local particularities, together with historical contingency and the immediacy of crisis that challenges liveability on the planet. These are issues that affect the ways in which we engage with our own research and research sites. As a result, it has become increasingly important for scholars to reconsider their research, by situating their thinking and ideas in relation to the sensitivities of place and time.

How can theories and methods in the environmental humanities lead to a deeper understanding of a place and time in the Anthropocene? How do we attend to situated political ecologies without losing sight of how other-beings story place, make their worlds, and shape people's lives? How can scholars from a diversity of disciplines collectively cultivate their "arts of noticing" (Tsing) the timescapes of the places they live in and/or research? What do we gain from re-conceptualising

time as relational, multiple, and multispecies? And how might place emerge as more than an exclusively human category through an attention to multispecies temporalities?

Our researcher school, hosted by the Oslo School of Environmental Humanities, University of Oslo, will explore connections between place and time through diverse perspectives gathered by the environmental humanities. Facilitated by a group of scholars with a range of disciplinary backgrounds, we will focus on emplaced learning, research and teaching-methods through which we will engage with the situatedness of our research activities - be it the manifold, affective, bodily and multi-sensory ways of knowing involved or the act of writing itself.

Together, we will investigate how place-based learning techniques may help us engage with notions of space and time differently from, for instance, purely discourse-oriented types of analysis. What does a place-based approach to research reveal about how knowledge is constituted? How can we be more attentive to how nonhuman life forms make their worlds through different rhythms, coordinations and temporalities? How may we rethink connections between 'data-collection', 'analysis' and the act of 'writing up' our findings (conventionally portrayed as a linear process leading to research 'outputs')? And how may we encounter, conceptualise and engage with place, time, and temporality differently outside the 'classroom' by actively engaging in tasks and activities in the open?

The school will take place at various locations in Oslo, both indoors and outdoors, such as the Botanical Garden, the Oslo Fjord or the Akerselva River. Our aim is to generate situated experiences and discussions that will support participants' evolving research projects. Participants will have the opportunity to exchange ideas about their engagement with concepts of place and time in their own research, through a combination of place-based activities and writing exercises. They will also be expected to read preparatory texts in advance of the school which will inform the place-based activities and communal discussion during the workshop.

The Researcher School has different parts and combines workshop elements with public events:

7 June: Public evening event, "**Reclaiming Sustainability? - A Conversation on Education and our Environmental Futures**" at Kulturhuset, Oslo. **Keynote by Tim Ingold** (Anthropology, University of Aberdeen) on "**Reason and Response-Ability**", followed by a podium discussion with **Mette Halskov Hansen** (China Studies and Co-rector of UiO), **Britt Kramvig** (Tourism and Northern studies, The Arctic University of Norway) **Felix Riede** (Archaeology, Aarhus University), and **Heather Swanson** (Anthropology, Aarhus University), moderated by **Sara Asu Schroer**.

8-9 June: Place-based teaching and writing exercises in different parts of Oslo, such as the Botanical Garden, the Oslo Fjord or the Akerselva River. Modules will be led by an exciting group of scholars including: **Michelle Bastian** (University of Edinburgh/OSEH), **Paolo Gruppuso**, (University of Aberdeen), **Felix Riede** (Aarhus University/ OSEH), and **Per Ditlef Fredriksen** (University of Oslo/ OSEH).

10 June: Environmental Humanities Festival hosted by The Oslo School of Environmental Humanities with keynote by **Jamie Lorimer** (University of Oxford) on: "**The Probiotic Turn and the Green Rebranding of Cattle in the Anthropocene**", followed by presentations of the OSEH **Collaboratories**, as well as an **Eco-Slam** by students from the Honours Certificate in Environmental Humanities and Sciences (EHS).

Application:

Places at the Researcher School are limited to 15 participants. In case you are interested in participating, please send a short CV (max. 2-pages) as well as an abstract (max. 800 words) in which you outline your current research project, how it relates to the topic of the Researcher School, and your motivation for attending. The deadline for submissions is **20 March 2022**. We will get back with a decision by **1 April 2022**.

Who can apply:

Participants must be enrolled in a PhD program to join this course. You can attend at any stage of your project. Other candidates such as early-stage postdoctoral researchers and final stage master students may be accepted. All are welcome to apply, though first priority is given to applicants who are NoRS-EH members; membership is open to current PhD students based in Norwegian universities working with environmental humanities-related topics and methods (see <https://www.uis.no/en/node/1760> for details about the membership process). There is no fee to attend the course. However, participants are responsible for paying their own travel and lodging, except NoRS-EH members, who will have their travel and accommodation costs covered by the Researcher School.

Application details:

Please submit via email a single PDF document that includes the following:

- your name
- your department or program and your university
- title and expected completion date of doctoral project
- a 800-word(max) description of your doctoral project and motivation for attending
- a 2-page(max) CV
- contact information with email address
- Submit your application by **20 March 2022**, to Carina Bjerk Tørud: c.b.torud@ikos.uio.no

Facts about the course:

- Credits: 5 ECTS
- Language of instruction: English
- Registration deadline for accepted participants: 15 April 2022
- Evaluation: Pass/Fail based on active and full attendance, a brief presentation during the workshop, and a piece of work to be sent within 10 days from the end of the course, which reflects over questions and themes raised during the PhD school. This can be a paper of max 1500 words (ref. included), or a creative composition of text + images (photos, drawings, etc).



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