
THE END

MEGA SEMINAR, SANDBJERG, 16-18 AUGUST 2017

PROGRAM

Wednesday 16 August

11.00-12.00 Check-in

12.00-13.00 Lunch

13.00-13.30 Welcome by the MEGA committee

13.30-15.00 Keynote by Professor Elizabeth Povinelli: *Political Concepts in the Shadow of Geontopower*

15.00-15.30 Coffee and cake

15.30-18.30 Parallel panel session I (3 hours)

Panel 1: *Rebounding and Returning: After the End the Same Again?*

Convened by Steffen Dalsgaard (IT University) and Anders Emil Rasmussen (Moesgaard Museum)

Frauke Mennes: End of Patronage

In the 1960s and 1970s there was a widespread belief among South Asian academia that the end of patronage in social practice was near. Modernists claimed patronage would not comply with the 'modern ways of politics', where impersonal relations and long term vision would prevail over personalized, short-term politics. In very similar arguments, Marxists claimed capitalism would impersonalize labor relations and rid them of their moral and social connections. However, patronage seems to be engrained in an economic and political culture of 'gifts' and brokerage, that seems to ensure a relatively continuous existence of networks of favor and service.

Patronage thus has prevailed in modernity and capitalism, although its primary dimension seems to have shifted from the economic to the political. This shift however has not been studied in detail, and has left considerable gaps with respect to the rural, where it is unsure to what extent remnants of old patronage systems such as jajmani and zamindari continue to impact on patronage and politics. This paper presents a set-up of questions for future field work on the change of patronage within

the rural context. It moreover uses the notion of patronage to understand political relations and their violent expression in rural India.

Steffen Dalsgaard: “Once You've Lost, You're Out”: The “post-office” careers of Papua New Guinea politicians

People in Manus Province, Papua New Guinea, have never re-elected a previous member of parliament, after he or she has lost their seat. This would probably be nothing but a curious fact, if it were not because it is sometimes openly voiced as a challenge and a matter of predicting electoral outcomes, when voters tell their previous representatives directly that they are bound to lose. The historical lack of success of discarded politicians is not for want of trying. Several previous Manus politicians have stubbornly kept contesting – unsuccessfully – election after election, trying to overcome the challenge. This begs several questions about the relation between voters and their representatives; about what 'is in it' for candidates 'destined to lose', and about what a political career looks like 'after the end'. The paper will especially address what (former) politicians do after they have lost elections; i.e. how 'post-office' careers are pursued whether the aim is to re-enter politics or not.

Noa Vaisman: What Comes after Justice? Or is this the end?

This paper is an attempt to think through the end and the repetitions that bring it into being in the context of the ongoing trials of crimes against humanity in Argentina. Exploring the affective, political and ideological dimensions of the work of judges, lawyers and witnesses in a number of these recent trials the paper inquires into the meaning of justice and its post-life. For over a decade, numerous mega-trials investigating the crimes committed during the last civil-military dictatorship in Argentina (1976-1983) have been taking place across the country. During this time many of the same witnesses have given testimony in the courts repeating and reliving the trauma they suffered. Judges sitting for months and sometimes years listening to these and other narratives slowly work their way towards a verdict. And once rulings are given and confirmed we could consider justice to have been meted out. But is this really the case? Or maybe a post-justice world is only a repetition and a variation on a world where the struggle for truth and memory is all consuming?

Christiane Falck: Return of the Dead – Transformations and appropriations of an anthropologist in the Sepik River region of Papua New Guinea

This paper aims to explore the agencies and structures as well as the emotional and ethical conundrums of returning 'after the end'. During my fieldwork at the Sepik River in Papua New Guinea many people perceived me as being a dead person from the village who had returned clothed in white skin. Although I denied my new identity recurrently, people persisted in their perception of me. Villagers' interpretation and appropriation of my being-in-their-world had consequences for my fieldwork situation and data collection – emotional, moral, and ethical dilemmas occurred between me and my interlocutors, and agencies and structures were re-defined with consequences for villagers' practices, beliefs, and actions. I hope to shed light on what it means to return 'after the end', by comparing experiences and understandings of my being-in-the-field as someone who returned 'after the end' from two different perspectives – mine and that of the woman who identified me as being her dead daughter.

Anders Emil Rasmussen: After the end of value – begging for value and refusing the gift in a local museum in Denmark

This paper addresses the peculiar situations that occur when inalienable objects – heirlooms – no longer have receivers. I address the specific social situation of people contacting me, as the curator of recent history in a 'local museum' in Denmark, offering their heirlooms for the museum collections, and me or my colleagues, quite often, refusing the gift. Certain inherited items, several hundred years old embroideries for example, have often lost their social relevance as things to be passed on within particular families, where they communicated and embodied certain social positions of the families in question. Contemporary prospective receivers tend to decline the gift, and often givers (elderly women in particular) are surprised to learn that the items have no monetary value either, and as a (sometimes) last resort, they come to the museum, asking the curator to receive them as a gift. I discuss these exchange situations through what I call 'value questions' and argue that by asking the curator to take in the item, the curator is also asked, sometimes begged, to ascribe to them 'some kind of value' and thereby to salvage the spirit of the item from termination.

Panel 2: *The End of Anthropology as We Know It?*

Convened by Maja Hojer Bruun (AAU), Cathrine Hasse (AU), Dorthe Brogaard Kristensen (SDU) and Marie Stender (AAU)

Bodil Just Christensen: Quantified anthropology

Anthropology has a long-standing relationship with medical science. In recent years with the heightened emphasis on cooperative and interdisciplinary approaches to complex societal challenges - such as management of natural resources, improving health, or minimizing the effects of climate change - collaborations between medicine and anthropology have gained new ground. In 2013 the University of Copenhagen distributed nearly half a billion Danish kroner to strengthen interdisciplinary research at the university. 18 projects were granted research funds from the 'Excellence Program for Interdisciplinary Research' in order to explicitly fund teams and research agendas that develop new scientific approaches and create cross-disciplinary synergies. As an anthropologist working in one of these programs I encounter the productive tensions of interdisciplinary research on a daily basis. The bio-medical/anthropological research project on weight loss after obesity surgery that I am part of is clinically embedded, but contrasting bio-medical and anthropological categories and definitions are nonetheless major challenges in the collaborative analysis. Notably, the integration of qualitative interview data and physiological measurements (hormone levels, genetic risk scores, metabolic rates, etc.) has been a central concern as each discipline has its particular definition and operationalization of 'data'. In this presentation I want to describe and discuss how the conception of data, and my own quantification of qualitative interviews, has required efforts, compromises and analytical creativity – but at the same time enabled alternative explorations of knowledge production and different and better intervention practices.

Jazmin Cullen: Fusion Anthropology or Analytical Practices in Consultancies?

Based on 9 months fieldwork in four different consultancies among academically trained anthropologists and others who consider their work anthropological I wish to account for and discuss how anthropology is being applied in these contexts. In consultancies, fieldwork is repeatedly reduced to short term 'field visits' with the duration of few weeks, sometimes few days; interviews have clearly formulated questions and thus end-goals; design methods are also used to collect data.

Anthropological qualitative approaches are being instrumentalized in these contexts, and qualitative methods and long-term fieldwork as taught in academia, has taken a new form in commercial settings. Is this the end of anthropology, as we know it? Looking further and beyond what is usually deemed the core of anthropology: qualitative methods and long-term ethnographic fieldwork, I will account for and present ethnographic data, which will show how anthropologists also put other tacit competences into play in these contexts. Using their academic background and training, I argue, that these anthropological consultants are able to practice anthropology 'as we know it' even though the methodological approaches for data collection have changed. I wish to make explicit, how e.g. conceptualization plays a crucial role in their work. Anthropological and other concepts are being used to make sense of the different fields in which my interlocutors interact. Anthropology as practiced in consultancies may thus be seen as an example of how anthropology is reconfiguring and enlarging itself – rather than coming to an end.

Karen Walторp and Jens Walторp: What's the purpose? On hyphen-anthropology as the End of the myth of disinterested social science

In this paper we consider the purpose of anthropology after years of working across the university department, the marketing company, the NGO, and in collaboration between university and external partners from both the public and private sector. We take our point of departure in the way the purpose of Anthropology was discussed by E. E. Evans-Pritchard in his 1951 lecture on Applied Anthropology: "...I shall discuss the question most anthropologist must have been asked from time to time. What is the purpose of studying social anthropology?...the question in this form needs to be divided into a discussion about its use for the primitive peoples themselves and for those who are responsible for their welfare, and a discussion about its value to the men who study it – to ourselves". (1951:109). Who are 'the primitive peoples, and who constitute 'ourselves' in anthropology as it is configured in 2017? Are we reaching the End of Anthropology as we know it? Do new configurations of hyphen-anthropology help us towards better accountability for anthropological work carried out within and beyond the university? We enter into dialogue with Evans-Pritchard's thoughts in 1951 on colonialists, missionaries and anthropologists, and Gregory Bateson's reflections on his work for the Office of Strategic Services during World War II (Price 1998). Finally, we end with a meditation on a good piece of advice offered by Margaret Mead in 1942, pointing towards the future of (hyphen-) anthropology, not the End.

Júlia Govatá: How things make culture: Alfred Métraux and the Unesco project in Haiti

In the years that follow the end of the Second World War the preservation of material culture gets progressive increased attention, reaching eventually the core of the debate concerning the political and practical role of anthropology as a science. Such an idea is in direct connection to the birth of international institutions like Unesco, and is premised on the assumption that traditional populations would be assimilated, in this process, their cultures would meet their end. The work of the anthropologist Alfred Métraux interestingly shows how these notions informed research at this time. Responsible for a large survey about peasant life that was part of an Unesco pilot project, and formed in the tradition of the twentieth century french anthropology, Métraux kept a special gaze at the relation between cultures and objects while dealing with one of his main concerns: the end of Haiti's "popular culture". This paper explores at the "ways of doing" (De Certeau, 1980) anthropology in the end of the 1940s through Métraux's experience at the Unesco project in Haiti.

Specifically, it focuses on the draft of a rural museum, which was conceived in a very enlarged sense by the project: as a house for the local production of art, as a guardian of traditional objects (in other words, voodoo objects), and, finally, as a place to stimulate literacy, agricultural production, and hygiene practices, part of what was regarded at this time as "fundamental education". The reflection can shed light on the ways in which anthropological knowledge has been (and perhaps continues to be) demanded by public institutions, but more than that, it can show how the fear of the end of cultures was able to build a strong model of anthropology that has remained until today.

Marie Stender: Architectural anthropology – potentials and pitfalls of mixing disciplines

Today the majority of anthropologists work in cross-disciplinary and applied environments rather than in the anthropological University departments. At the same time, both private companies and public organisations have over the last decades shown increasing interest in applying anthropological approaches to e.g. understand and involve users, clients and citizens. Several other disciplines currently also approach and embrace anthropological methods, and new sub-disciplines such as design anthropology, architectural anthropology, business anthropology and techno-anthropology have emerged. These developments have broadened the foci and applications of anthropology providing new opportunities for anthropologists, yet the so-called "hyphen"-anthropology is also subject of critique from within the discipline. The situation of the anthropologist working in cross-disciplinary and applied environments may be considered as a type of disciplinary diaspora: In the foreign land held to be Anthropologist with a capital A, though among anthropologists seen as much more of a hybrid. Rather than regarding this as a matter of disciplinary identity, the paper discusses what kind of anthropology can develop from these cross-disciplinary and applied settings, and how it may contribute to anthropology in general. Based on research and teaching in the field of architectural anthropology, the paper discusses the potentials and pitfalls of mixing approaches from the two disciplines using examples of architects' approaches to fieldwork. The paper questions whether 'a little anthropology' is better than no anthropology, and explores what may supersede *anthropology as we know it*.

Maja Hojer Bruun: Beyond the Two Cultures. Transgressive interdisciplinarity in the Techno-Anthropology programme

Cathrine Hasse: The posthuman or posthumans – a challenge for anthropology?

Anthropologists have always been learners of other people's cultural self-evidences. It has been a hallmark of the discipline that anthropologists must develop a sensitivity to what matters to others. This has probably also sensitised anthropologists to working with others in interdisciplinary contexts. It has not been acknowledged how important face-to-face human contact is for learning about what matters to others. In this paper I examine what happens when anthropologists learn what matters to others - the process and the importance of physical contact to develop a relational agency with ethnographic subjects. I shall argue that when anthropologists increasingly rely on learning through algorithmic devices embedded in AI (machine learning), IoT (Internet of Things), Big Data and robots their capacity for deep learning about what matters to humans decreases. In order to restore anthropology, we need to acknowledge our skilled capacity of learning from and with others in interdisciplinary

research. This entails a critical approach to the surface learning presented in new automated technologies such as robots, as well as a sensitivity to how new kinds of Posthuman learning challenge our conception of what 'humans' are, but also changes how we are capable of learning from each other.

Panel 10: *At the End of the Line – Life On the Margins*

Convened by Eva Gulløv (DPU), Laust Lund Elbek (AU) and Jonas Strandholdt Bach (AU)

Eva Gulløv and John Gulløv: East of the sea, north of the border – social mobility at the end of the nation

Doing fieldwork close to where the country ends, in Tønder, we are exploring local social dynamics in relation to broader society. From one perspective, the area is challenged by economic deprivation, changes in demographics and a low level of education compared to the main cities. From another perspective, the local community is full of activities (sport associations, festivals, music arrangements, theatre work), and of innovators and entrepreneurs who find their way drawing on social networks rather than mainstream trajectories. We suggest that this complexity relates to changes in local hierarchies and forms of social control. Within the last 50 years, the position of the local elite has ended as a separate and influential social stratum. In order to maintain their privileged position, affluent families have tended to send their sons and daughters away to be educated persons in the big cities. Though this investment was successful for social status, it did not preserve the families' local positions as their offspring rarely returned. Consequently, the local society, compared with the national average, has relatively fewer people with higher education. This has led to a less intense competition from people with high education leaving room for locals without or with less formal qualifications or certifications to make unconventional shifts in their careers, form their own occupational niches and take up positions that elsewhere are reserved for people with specific training or degrees. So, despite a tendency to economic and social decline, a local mobility and entrepreneurship can be observed resulting in a range of different lifeforms.

Nanna Jordt Jørgensen: At the end of the potholed road

It took nearly 2 hours to drive the 60 km potholed Kenyan road from the administrative center in Laikipia North to the nearest big town by car or minibus. And much longer if riding on top of one of the heavy lorries transporting sand from dry riverbeds in the area to construction sites in town. When young people travelled to town, they would often, when reaching the smoother part of the tarmac road, exclaim something like 'now we have arrived in Kenya' or 'this is where development begins', as if Laikipia North was not really part of the Kenyan state. The relation between pastoral communities on the Horn of Africa and the state has been extensively discussed with a focus on these areas as 'borderlands' or 'margins' in which the populations practice 'the art of not being governed' (cf. Scott, 2009; Catley et al, 2013). In Laikipia North, the situation appears less clear-cut. While many young people proclaimed their community to be marginalized and in political opposition to the government, they also dreamed about infrastructure development and aspired to a closer incorporation in the Kenyan state and its development schemes. This paper explores the ambiguities of roads leading to rural places, as they orient people's bodies, gazes and orientations towards town and place their everyday lives in marginalized 'end-of-the-road' positions while also opening up opportunities for social mobility. The paper interweaves young people's stories of the politics of the road with descriptions of their embodied orientations in the landscape.

Laust Lund Elbek: "The State is the Enemy" - The Spectre of 'the Arab Spring' in Lampedusa, Italy

During the so-called Arab Spring in 2011, the Italian island of Lampedusa received significant attention. Situated closer to Tunisia than mainland Italy, the island found itself in the midst of a massive flow of undocumented migrants and refugees attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea into Europe. Lampedusa's population temporarily tripled more or less overnight when 20,000 young men from Tunisia arrived. While boat migrants had been arriving on Lampedusa since the early 1990s, the Arab Spring became a 'critical event' (Das 1995) – not only on a political level, but also for Lampedusa's 6,000 inhabitants. This was the case partly because of the sheer number of refugees, but even more so because of how the Lampedusans' relation with the Italian state became reformulated. Lampedusa's main source of income is tourism, and the circulation of images of emergency and chaos had a strong negative effect on the number of visitors to the island. This economic detriment was accompanied by a perception that the state had sacrificed Lampedusa on the altar of border management, and the Arab Spring thus became a prism through which the Lampedusans make sense of their (negative) relation with central authorities. While tourism has stabilized, the events of 2011 still loom as a 'spectre' (Navaro-Yashin 2012, Derrida 1994) and the fear that '2011 might happen again' is ubiquitous. In political discourse, notions of 'invasion' are often evoked in the description of boat refugees in the Mediterranean. From a Lampedusan perspective, however, 'the invader' is a malevolent state apparatus that has colonized the island for migration management purposes thus jeopardizing the economic foundation of local life. As one interlocutor put it, "since the Arab Spring we have known that the state is the enemy".

Kirsten Marie Raahauge: Into the Outskirts. Welfare Spaces in Tønder

This paper explores spatio-temporal changes happening in the provinces. Cities and landscapes of the province used to be microcosms of their own, mirroring life of the larger cities. Now they have turned into silent and repetitive outskirts, radically different from the rest. This development is related to a spatio-temporal transformation; larger cities are connected to each other, while disconnecting the places that are not part of the high-speed network of highways, airports and the Internet. Due to less welfare, poorer service, fewer distribution canals and complicated logistics these ligated cities have a tendency to slow down. Tønder is one of these cities; it is situated in the marshlands at the border of Denmark, next to both Germany and the North Sea. This high profiled city – historically, culturally and architectonically – used to be prosperous, vibrant and multifaceted with an abundance of welfare institutions; now it has become more silent and less special, its various institutions, shops and events have been diminished. With the example of Tønder, the paper addresses the topic of provinces that turn into outskirts, the effects for the inhabitants, the imaginaries and distributions of welfare, and the transformation of space and velocity. Also, it addresses the topic of segregation, asking the question whether Denmark is undergoing changes towards a multiplicity of societies with different velocities and different spatial distributions. The project is connected to the larger research project Spaces of Danish Welfare at The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, The Schools of Architecture, Design and Conservation (KADK).

Mikel Venhovens: Where one begins, the other must end”: The Material Embodiment of the Contested De-Facto Nation State.

This paper focuses on the borderlands of the contemporary Republic of Abkhazia, a disputed territory and partially recognized state situated north-west of the Republic of Georgia. I would like to draw attention to the unique position that de-facto or partially recognized states take within the debate on borders and borderlands. The insecure and anxious state in which the borderlands are situated, both from a local perspective and on a more geo-political level, make these particular places deeply interesting. In addition, it could be argued that the borderlands of de-facto states are explicitly meant to be additionally ‘hard’ and immovable, as the ‘insecure, unrecognized state of being’ makes it more important to stress the existence, firmness and cohesiveness of the state. For these entities, there is an existential need to express where one space begins and where another ends, often done by walls, barbed wire, border control and other forms of tangible representations that carry on the narrative of the state. On the other hand, there is Georgia, which carries out the narrative of contested statehood as they see Abkhazia as an integral part of their nation state. Negotiating these spaces seem to be impossible as the diffusion of where one nation state begins and ends, is regarded as a threat directly pertained to both their collective identity and existence.

Victor Cova: Frontiers of Reason in the Ecuadorian Amazon

In this paper I present a portrait of a town at the Amazonian frontier of Ecuadorian settler colonialism, Macas. I do this by going back and forth across the borders and divisions (class, gender, race, sexuality, temporality) that constitute it, and that constitute it as a frontier town. I present photographs, drawings and maps alongside soundscapes, interview excerpts and narratives to draw a topology of pleasures and desires at a time of political and economic crisis. This paper will dialogue with two important work in Latin American thinking about borders and frontiers. *Borderland / La Frontera*, by Gloria Anzaldúa is an autobiographical reflection on what it is to live at the borderland between Mexico and the US, but also between heterosexuality and homosexuality, between male and female, and other such binaries. *Razon de la Frontera y Fronteras de la Razon*, by Colombian mathematician Fernando Zalamea, examines the tools used by marginal scientists and artists to think the border and go beyond the limits of reason, especially the divide between science and art. In these maps of pleasure and desire, I look for the points where they turn into their opposite, pain and aversion, or vanish into numbness and indifference. I also follow people who themselves go back and forth across these borders, such as indigenous transgender people, or mestizo settlers sent by the State to indigenous territories, and interrogate the knowledge that they produce. What do they do to concepts such as « border », « liminality », « mestizaje », « transition », « transgender », « crisis », « alternation », or « dialectics » ?

Christian Vium: At the Fringe of the Nomadic City. An Ethnographic archive from Nouakchott, Mauritania

Since 2006, I have been conducting recurrent ethnographic fieldwork in the so-called *quartiers précaires* (precarious neighbourhoods) on the outskirts of Nouakchott, the rapidly growing capital of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania. Largely populated by *haratin* (former slaves), immigrants from neighbouring Senegal, and sedentarised nomads escaping droughts and hardship in the arid desert areas, the fringes of Nouakchott are home to a steadily growing impoverished population seeking ‘a

better life' while eking out their everyday in *kébé* (slum) and *gazra* (illegally inhabited land). What is a margin? A fringe? A periphery? From which vantage point is the margin defined? Where is the centre? Who decides what the central vantage point is? The fact of the matter is that the majority of the world's (urban) population inhabit the margin or the periphery. How might one write an 'ethnography of the (so-called) margin'? Over the years, I have been attempting to create a visual anthropological mapping of 'the fringe'. In addition to long-term participant observation and extensive filming, systematic photography and GPS logging of imagery, I have been conducting life history interviews, and photo-elicitation on the basis of vernacular photo-archives and family albums that I have been allowed to reproduce. Over the years, I have mined private, local and colonial archives, assembling a welter of material (scientific articles, poetry, essays, government reports, statistical surveys, maps, newspaper clippings, films, photographs, music etc.). In this presentation, I wish to present this urban archive, the book I published (*Ville Nomade*, 2016) and open a discussion about how to re-conceptualize the notion of the periphery/the margin/the fringe, by attending to the emergent forces that govern these spaces, which I have elsewhere termed spaces of 'immanent potentiality' (Vium 2016).

Panel 8: *The End of Nature?*

Convened by Kirsten Hastrup (KU) and Heather Swanson (AU)

Lars Christian Kofoed Rømer: To kill or not to kill - hunting as moral education and natural preservation on Bornholm

Based on fieldwork carried out on Bornholm from 2015-16 this paper aims to show how contemporary hunting on the Danish island of Bornholm can be seen as a sort of natural preservation. While paradoxical in nature, hunting, as I will suggest, entails a distinct element of ongoing moral education on how to approach and contemplate nature. At the turn of the 19th century a series of large scale construction projects of Medieval churches and castles, as well as building battle ships in the 17th and 18th century, had left the island all but deforested. This process was further enhanced by the local populations usage of the forests as grassing areas for livestock. In a similar vein, the exclusively Royal hunting privileges had severely decimated the population of roe deer. Red deer was completely killed off in 1785. During the 19th century, however, a process of reforestation, return of hunting rights and reintroduction of roe deer left a distinct mark on the makeup of the islands landscape. Although killing and a domination of nature is central to these contemporary hunting practices, the question of subsistence is minimal. Rather, what is at the heart of the hunt is a matter of observing and caring for the potential prey as well as cultivating egalitarian social relations to fellow huntsmen and the landscape.

Drew Robert Winter: The Future of Meat: the diminishing place of gustatory pride in climate-conscious Denmark

On year ago, the Danish Council on Ethics released the most covered and controversial report of its 30-year history: the Council recommended a tax on red meat as a means of reducing consumption, and by extension production, because of animal agriculture's greenhouse gas emissions. Though met with strong opposition from the blue block, the Alternative Party displayed interest, and a growing number of Danes advocate reducing—if not eliminating—meat from the Danish diet. Many of these claims are based on an ethical appeal to a shared sense of responsibility for those most affected by climate change, who live outside of Denmark. This criticism of the Danish meat and dairy industries therefore manifests a worldview that not only

expands the boundaries of ethical, moral, and political concern beyond the nation-state, but does so at the expense of an industry perceived to be one of Denmark's prime movers. The proposition marks a stark contrast from the 2012 "meatball wars" during which the Danish People's Party shored up support by suggesting that pork be served in all Danish public institutions. This suggestion cannot escape a climate of a different sort—the national debate over immigration, especially of Muslims. Using these two events as conceptual footholds, ongoing fieldwork exploring meat as an environmental problematic, and anthropologies of ethics (Fassin 2008, Lambek 2010, Faubion 2011) as a theoretical apparatus, this paper examines the future—or possible end—of pork as "gastronationalism" (DeSoucey 2010) or "banal nationalism" (Billig 1995) in Denmark.

Anette Høite Hansen: A Sustainable Future?

The Danish Government's recent plan of action for the Danish contribution to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), emphasizes that sustainable development is: '[...] an ongoing process that involves the integration of economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainability, and considerations of the fact that future generations shall have at least the same opportunities for living a good life as we do today' (Regeringen 2017:10). This paper will discuss the role of this 'future generation', which is often mentioned when various climate-, environmental- and sustainability goals are discussed. Children are often emphasized as innovative and enthusiastic when it comes to changing behavior in a more environmentally sustainable way. But, is it fair that we put our trust in them instead of acting more ambitiously ourselves? What efforts are made to raise and educate our children to becoming sustainable citizens? And how do they themselves experience growing up in a world that is often mentioned to come 'to an end' if we do not act 'now'? While municipalities tend to focus on giving kinder garden children and pupils sustainable awareness and skills, there a less focus on how these issues are expressed and practiced when children are at home. In my paper, I will draw on my professional experience as a municipal Green Generation coordinator working on how to implement sustainability in the everyday lives of children through their schooling and life in day care institutions.

Stine Krøijer: New Forests: An exploration of two ways of growing wild in the era of the Anthropocene

This paper explores two ways of 'growing wild' and making nature in response to the realization that nothing is (left) untouched by humans. The first case describes German environmental activists and their attempt to rewilding themselves by taking up life in a little forest in the Ruhr district to resist the expansion of lignite mining in the area. By living in and among trees the activists strive to grow wild and strip themselves of civilizational impulses, and in so doing, they come to co-produce the possibility of a natural realm involving human beings. The second case, reversely, looks at an indigenous group in the Ecuadorian Amazon deciding to clear-cut their forested territory to engage in commercial palm oil production. Whereas the original forest was described as a cultural realm – a forest made up and shaped by various human and non-human persons – the indigenous group considers the new palm plantation to be 'wild' as it is inhabited by unknown spirits outside the control of shamans. The two forests are interpreted as expressions of the end of nature as we knew it, but also as sites that produce a new wild domain involving different configurations of human and non-human beings.

Rebecca Journey: “Experimental Prototype City of Tomorrow”

Green design in Denmark today extends the moral promise of Danish Modern—to solve midcentury social problems through good design—to the postindustrial problem of a post-sustainable world. Within the Danish urban planning world, this moral mandate assumes the epistemic form of the prototype: a portable, provisional template from which a model of planetary stewardship may be locally perfected. Broadly, this paper examines the claims, affordances, and moral valences of the concept of prototype in a context in which climate change is framed as a problem of urban design. Based on an ethnographic study of green infrastructure design and experience in the self-styled “eco-metropolis” of Copenhagen, the paper examines ongoing municipal efforts to build the world’s first carbon-neutral capital, and by extension, to draft a prototype of an ethics for a post-fossil future. To that end it considers what it might mean at this moment for a Danish city to be vaunted as a prototype of green design that is at once a moral blueprint of social-democratic governance; a normative trope which has enchanted an American political imaginary across the ideological spectrum from Bernie Sanders to Francis Fukuyama. The improbable mass appeal of the Danish mock-up is compelling not for its overt utopianism, I suggest, but rather for what it implies about the Scandinavian exceptionalism latent in the project of “getting to Denmark.”

18.30-20.00 Dinner

20.00-21.30 Workshop 1: PhD Publication Workshop led by Mikkel Rytter (Aarhus University) and Karen Fog Olwig (University of Copenhagen) – open to all PhD students.

Workshop 2: Creative Writing Workshop led by Line Dalsgård (Aarhus University) and Helle Bundgaard (University of Copenhagen)

21.30 Bonfire

Thursday 17 August

07.00 Sweatshop (more information onsite)

08.00-09.00 Breakfast

08.30-10.00 Parallel panel session II (1.5 hours)

Panel 5: Ruins and Rhythms of Life and Development after Progress

Convened by Stine Krøijer (KU) and Marie Kolling (SDU)

Vibe Nielsen: The End of Museums as We Know Them? Curating in Postcolonial South Africa

The transition from apartheid to democracy in South Africa in the 1990s proved unable to change the fundamental inequalities of the country. The hope of progress in the first years of what was then known as the Rainbow Nation has now largely disappeared and movements like the Rhodes Must Fall at universities throughout South Africa has shown the dramatic and powerful dynamics of anger. It is yet to be seen whether a peaceful decolonisation of universities and museums can be made or whether that is at all achievable or desirable. In this presentation of my PhD research I will highlight some of the recent debates currently dominating the art world in South African museums and art galleries and look into how the disseminations and categorisations of South African art are changing our understandings of South Africa and Europe today. What conflicts are reshaping the new democracy of South Africa and whose voices are being heard in the often rupturous debates about representation? My findings are based on comparative fieldwork conducted in South Africa and the country's two former colonial powers: The United Kingdom and the Netherlands. By looking at the relationship with Europe my presentation will show how colonial connections still play a major role in South Africa today. A wish to detach from old European structures and colonial categorisations are, however, significantly changing the dissemination of art in South African museums and art galleries: Are we looking at a final rupture between a former colony and its colonial ties? And if so, how is the future – build from the ruins of colonisation and apartheid – imagined?

Marianne Bach Mosebo: 'Before what passes away?' – Urban elites' use of authenticity and the end of pastoralism in Uganda

Photographer Jimmy Nelson's coffee table book 'Before they pass away' contains pictures of indigenous peoples in their traditional outfits and natural habitats allegedly captured before their lives were destroyed by progress. The images are beautiful. They look like the stuff that dreams are made of. But they have little resemblance to everyday life of the people they portray, and it is not likely that these people will all pass away, so what is it feared will pass away? This paper is about young urban elites from the largely pastoral region of Karamoja in Uganda. In a short period of time, symbols of progress have reconfigured their home lands; tarmac roads, mining stations, factories, new housing, etc. suddenly appeared after peace has been declared following decades of armed conflict in the region. The young urban elites have yearned for the opportunities this entails, and most of the time they talk of their pastoral kinsmen as backwards and violent. Sometimes however they invoke the same dream stuff as Jimmy Nelson's photos. They talk of tradition, authentic lifestyle, and they express fear that pastoralism is coming to an end. The paper explores the social situations, when the life and people normally associated with backwardness and violence are frozen in images of beauty that have little resemblance to the ever-

changing lives amongst pastoralist in Uganda. How may we understand the simultaneous invocation of the dream stuff of progress and the dream stuff of authenticity in a time when progress much yearned for has happened?

Panel 9: Post-Diagnosis Life: The End of Diseases and the Rise of Chronicity

Convened by Alexandra Ryborg Jønsson (Yale/KU), Tine Tjørnhøj-Thomsen (Statens Institut for Folkesundhed), Helle Ploug Hansen (SDU), Susanne Reventlow (KU) and Michael Andersen (Independent researcher)

Morning session moderated by Tine Tjørnhøj-Thomsen: Beyond Mental Disease Diagnoses

Ida Nielsen Sølvhøj: Social Hospice: Everyday life among middle-aged Danes diagnosed with schizophrenia

This paper explores the social implications of early retirement pension (førtidspension) among middle-aged Danes, who have been struggling with diagnosed schizophrenia for decades. From interviews with people with mental disorders, I explore how people with schizophrenia experience early retirement pension, analytically conceptualized as a social hospice. At the time of the diagnoses, schizophrenia was considered a chronic and lifelong disease. People would not mend, or so it was thought (Good et al. 2010). Accordingly, the diagnosis schizophrenia, for these Danish interlocutors, entailed an early retirement pension. Today, however, the understanding of mental disorders as well as the very concept of chronicity has evolved, and a new paradigm of recovery has emerged (Jenkins and Carpenter-Song 2005). Contrary to recent anthropological discussions of lived chronicity among people living with cancer or other somatic diseases, which has emphasized positive imaginaries and agentive inclinations, this piece illustrates how the interlocutors find it almost impossible to navigate and live post-diagnosis because of the stigma of their disorder, their exclusion from the labor market, the loss of networks and authority over their own lives. I propose the concept of "social hospice" to provide insight into the ways in which society coproduce chronicity among people diagnosed with schizophrenia. This enables us to make sense of how everyday life despite social and healthcare interventions from society, is experienced as a palliative and not curative treatment, which in the end can lead to a sense of socially withering away or socially dying (Vigh 2006).

Anne Mia Steno & Kathrin Houmøller: Open ends: An ethnographic radio montage about post-diagnosis lives in Denmark and South Africa

This presentation takes the form of a radio montage and presents stories of post-diagnosis lives in Denmark and urban South Africa. Based on ethnographic fieldworks with young people in psychiatric treatment (Denmark) and among hiv-positive people in anti-retroviral therapy (South Africa), the montage explores how successful treatment – and hence the end of sickness or imminent death – may be experienced as ambivalent in contexts characterized by instability. For the young people in psychiatric treatment, the fading of familiar voices and hallucinations through medicines is not simply a welcoming relief but also experienced as a loss of companionship and a growing sense of mistrust in the 'truth' of memories. And in South Africa, people in anti-retroviral therapy not only celebrate that hiv is no longer "the end of life" but also seek to reinstate the presence of the end (death) in order to act, socially, in a context of fragile relationships and economic insecurity. In bringing out these ambivalences, the montage throws light on the social orientations beyond treatment and addresses an anthropological call for a shift in attention away from disease exclusively and towards the mundane part of life. By drawing on the format of

the radio montage, the presentation responds to the conference call for “the end of the boring conference paper” and experiments with the textures and thick descriptions embedded in the audio format. The interweaving of voices from the culturally very different contexts invites the listener to stand in the open, allowing for different interpretations and open ends.

Nico Miskow Friberg: Trans people's struggles to access gender affirming treatment in a post-diagnosis pro pathologization health care system

During 2014 two central legal changes regarding legal gender recognition and gender affirming treatment were passed in Denmark. The first change made legal gender recognition accessible through an online registration form, replacing the former demands of divorce and castration, while the second – a government issued set of guidelines for doctors on gender affirming treatment – made the psychiatric diagnosis ‘Transsexualism’ (F 64.0) a demand to access both hormone therapy and surgery and led to monopolization of diagnosis and treatment to “the Sexological Clinic” at Copenhagen’s General Hospital. The changes sparked waves of trans activism fighting to obtain access to treatment and to depathologize being trans. Struggles recently reflowered with the news that a) the Danish government wanted to change the guidelines and b) remove the diagnosis ‘Transsexualism’ from the list of psychiatric illnesses. The promising news initiated processes of negotiations between trans activists, NGO’s, politicians and government officials. While the diagnosis was replaced by a new one named ‘DZ768E Contact regarding gender identity issues’ in January 2017, a diagnosing process within the psychiatric system is still required to obtain access to treatment. This paper is based on an ethnographic research project in its early stages that seeks to explore trans people’s access to gender affirming treatment in Denmark. The paper explores: How do activists make meaning of the pathologizing language and demands in the politically decided requirements for gender affirming treatment in their activism? And how is the meaning of ‘trans’ negotiated in dialogues between activists, government officials and politicians?

Panel 4: Apocalyptic Anthropology – Aiming For the End

Convened by Malthe Lehrmann (AU), Thomas Fibiger (AU) and Henrik Hvenegaard (KU)

Henrik Hvenegaard Mikkelsen: Wasting Away: A Schopenhauerian anthropology of passivity

There is a long tradition in Western thinking for tying human unhappiness to our passions and our quest for pleasure. However, a long line of philosophers have recently argued that seeking pleasure has today become a moral injunction: society today *commands pleasure*. This paper is divided into two sections. First, I outline how this command for pleasure has entered into the field of elder care in Denmark. Especially, I argue, pleasure becomes a key point of reference in the encounter between health professionals and the “passive elderly”, i.e. those elderly who express no desire to participate in social activities. Secondly, taking my cue from Arthur Schopenhauer, I suggest that radical passivity – a wasting away stripped of agency or intentionality – involves a *nihil negativum*: an inconceivable nothingness. Any attempt to address passivity among Danish health professionals gives way to optimistic flickers of hope and renewed attempts to explore the citizen’s potentials for pleasure. A similar optimism can be traced within anthropology where passivity typically indexes different types of social resistance of the subaltern. But to what extent is it possible to imagine passivity without agency or eventual reanimation? This, I argue, is analogous to imagining death without rebirth and separation without reintegration. It seems that

when trying to grasp the curiously interrelated concepts of detachment and expiration – the darkest undersides of cosmology - we inevitably leave open spaces for new beginnings or reattachment.

Matthew Alexander Halkes Carey: This Evolving Object of Annihilation: Apocalypse and the Moral Community in late European Thought

Ideas of the apocalypse and our imminent annihilation have a long and distinguished pedigree. They loom large in each of the Abrahamic religions and, as has often been noted, they are tightly woven into the conceptual tapestry of European civilisation, featuring not only in the infinite variety of Christian Millenarianism, but also in Norse mythology (Ragnarok), Enlightenment catastrophism and, more recently, in the fears of technological or industrial disaster that have flourished since the beginning of the atomic era. We also see related forms of the apocalyptic imaginary in a range of other cultural traditions, from Taoist thought, with its Divine Incantations Scripture, all the way to Amerindian myths, revelations or forecasts of the destruction of a people, tribe or way of life (e.g. Kopenawa and Albert 2010). What this final example makes particularly clear is that ideas of the Apocalypse are always linked to a particular moral community - for here the object of annihilation is not "humanity" in, say, its grand Christian or Enlightenment sense, but some other social collective that represents the extent and limits of a given *world* and is now vulnerable to erasure. This paper, then, works from the assumption that we can only understand what is socially at stake in ideas of the Apocalypse if we first identify the assumed object of annihilation. It explores shifting Western European apocalyptic imaginaries over the last thirty years, charting the movement from nuclear threat to second Millenarianism and now climate catastrophe, showing how the moral community in question evolves in tandem with the perceived existential threat.

Cameron David Warner: Inevitable Ends

Among Buddhist practitioners worldwide, impermanence (Skt. *anitya*, Tib. *mi rtag pa*), is one of the earliest and most fundamental topics of meditation and is often enacted through ritual performance and has inspired innovative art. In the Tibetan tradition, one must accept the concept of impermanence to call oneself of a Buddhist, for it is an essential step if one endeavors to live a happier life. For Buddhists, all compounded phenomena, that is anything produced by a cause, is by nature impermanent or disintegrating for the moment it was first produced. Therefore, one's death or the end of the world is then neither a source of terror or joy, but a step towards deeper more profound contemplations that reject apathy. For example, there are just as many if not more rituals for extending one's life or the life of others as there are meditative practices for accepting death and impermanence. In this presentation, I propose that we as a group use a series of examples drawn from the Buddhist world to meditate on the inevitability of impermanence, especially in relation to material forms, as well as preservation and the positive value of efforts to stave off the inevitable.

Thomas Brandt Fibiger: When the Mahdi returns. Apocalyptic visions within contemporary Shia Islam

"A day will come", Ali warns during a drive in his car around Kuwait city, "when a man from Yemen will take power over all of the Gulf. This will pave the way for the return of the Mahdi", he goes on to explain, in one of several such visions for the end of this

world. The Mahdi is the twelfth and last Imam according to mainstream Shia Islam, who went into occultation 250 years after the death of the Prophet and is expected to return before *yom al-qiyama*, the day of judgement. And this day may not be so far into the future, if one notes the signs that early Shia hadiths have foreboded. A war will break out in Syria and Iraq. Yemen will fall into chaos. Turkey will interfere. This seems already to be the case. Then one man from Yemen will take power over all of the Gulf, and then the Mahdi will come to save the righteous.. "I may not live to see this", says Ali, who is in his late 60's, "But you may". I don't know what to think of either prospect. Is it soon? It is apparently, for both me and Ali and others, a time both to hope and fear for. In this presentation I will reflect on these apocalyptic vision among my Shia interlocutors in Kuwait and in Shia Islam more generally.

Malthe Lehrmann: Anthropology of Negativity

How might an anthropology of Negativity and hate look like? The aim of this paper is to find new ways to overcome the analytical tendency in anthropology to conceptually establish a synchronic logic for asymmetrical elements such as radical social change. If we take radical social change to include ruptures and disruptions, the analytical move of symmetry to flatten out the more disruptive and destructive elements thereby hinder what radical social change might be all about, the end. Instead by taking serious the idea that social change spins on rupture and a break with the former, I argue that, anthropology, in order to analytically capture the more ruptures elements in radical social change need to develop and anthropology of hate and negativity.

10.00-10.30 Coffee

10.30-12.00 Keynote by Professor Douglas Holmes: *Fascism at Eye-Level: The End of the Beginning*

12.00-13.00 Lunch

13.00-15.30 Parallel panel session III (2.5 hours)

Panel 5 (cont.): Ruins and Rhythms of Life and Development after Progress

Convened by Stine Krøijer (KU) and Marie Kolling (SDU)

Katy Overstreet: Improvising progress: the perils of scientific breeding in the dairy worlds of Wisconsin

Cows today produce unprecedented amounts of milk. The USDA estimates that the average dairy cow produces 5 times as much milk as the average dairy cow in the late 1920s; a change due in large part to the application of scientific breeding methods. In the name of progress, farmers and other cattle breeders have shaped their breeding around milk production. But these leaps in production capacity have come with many costs. Namely this "progress" means that many cows suffer and die from production-related diseases and, like many agricultural animals, that they have much reduced life spans on farms. Further, while campaigns for scientific breeding promote breed progress as "genetic gain," they in fact contribute to genetic loss in diversity terms as the gene pool for dairy cow becomes increasingly inbred. I will engage the audience in a participatory examination of this paradox at the end of progress through an improv game. Through establishing defining logics of the game, I will turn audience members into dairy cattle breeders who must negotiate the drives for progress and the perils of scientific breeding as they try to earn a living and keep a

herd of "dairy cows." Through this game and a discussion of observations afterwards, I will engage participants in a discussion of how progress might be otherwise defined and how games such as this one might help anthropologists examine how logics in progress narratives get operationalized.

Dorthe Brogård Kristensen: "The temporalities of the optimizing self"

In modern consumer culture the term optimization has entered the microphysics of everyday life; it now also refers to a mode of living, as a strategy of "making the most" of life (Rose 2007). The goal is continuously to improve, enhance, manage, develop and transform the self. On this background the aim of this paper is explore the concept of optimization that increasingly characterize individual strategies for making the most of life. To this end we explore the optimization of the self in in practices of self-tracking (Ruckenstein 2014; Lupton2014). The overall methodology of the project involved ethnographic studies of experience and everyday practices from 2012-2017 among member of the Danish Quantified Self. More specifically the focus in the paper is the human/technology assemblage, and the rhythms and temporalities of self tracking practices (Ruckenstein 2014). Self-tracking provides a frame that allows for the mutual constitution of self and technology, and an interior world of dialogue and evaluation. The self is perceived, enacted and sensed exactly through the use of technology and the production of data. In other words, self-trackers use technologies to assist in the exploration of the self – to take the self apart, to highlight certain "authentic" aspects of it, or to intensify it. The interesting thing is that while the use of self tracking practices often departs from an intention of improvement, in the long term it also changes and decreases the interest in personal self-improvement and progress.

James Maguire: Thresholds of Progress: Volcanic Landscapes, Energy and Aluminium

Over the course of its history Iceland has been plagued with various forms of instability; topographic, climatic, and more recently, financial. Aspirations towards progress have been as palpable as their attainment fleeting. In more recent times the Icelandic state has embarked upon a new renewable energy adventure, in part by transforming some of the country's vast and powerful volcanic landscapes into geothermal energy sites in the service of the aluminium industry. Proponents argue that coupling one of modernity's primary metals with one of the world's cleanest energy forms is a sign of progress, industrial as well as planetary. However, the conversion of volcanic forces into energy resources is having some disturbing, collateral effects. Making geothermal energy has begun to crumple subterranean rock, altering seismic thresholds and triggering 'man-made' earthquakes in the process. Geologists describe this in terms of acceleration, as the longstanding seismic rhythms of the Hengill volcanic zone in the southwest of Iceland have begun to speed up: much to the anxiety of locals living in the vicinity. This paper will engage with two interconnected issues. First, it will ethnographically explore the temporalities of 'man-made' earthquakes as the Hengill volcanic zone's seismic rhythms continue to accelerate. Second, by thinking through the implications of greening a metal that the world just can't seem to live without, the paper will examine the conceptual purchase of thinking 'progress' in terms of thresholds. The notion thresholds of progress holds, I argue, the possibility of relating the aspirations of a nation for a 'better' life with the socio-material arrangements of living that such aspirations generate.

Marie Kolling: The intertwinement of progress and ruination in Brazil's urban peripheries

This paper explores the intertwinement of progress and ruination. Amidst the rubbles of development in a precarious social housing estate in Brazil, residents try to make a respectable life in the aftermath of a state-led development intervention of forced resettlement from slum to social housing. The intervention was part of a political vision of a 'new Brazil': a Brazil in which socio-economic progress was experienced by all social classes and ethnicities as the nation was moving towards 'a shared future'. The paper shows how material decay and broken promises are intimately woven together in the residents' experience of progress. In the new housing, progress is a verb and a doing and 'to progress' becomes an individual endeavor, displayed in the tedious improvements of their new homes. Residents strived to obtain objects with aesthetics of progress for their new homes, like white tiles to cover the crude and dismantling concrete floors. Their efforts to obtain these objects through various debt financing schemes were both doing and undoing people's sense of progress and bringing increased irregularity and economic instability to their lives. The motto of "Order and Progress" is inscribed in the Brazilian flag and it the aspiration upon which Brazil was founded. The residents' efforts were strongly influenced by aspirations of progress, which both maintained and further relegated them to the margins of society – the opposite of what the development project intended to do.

Panel 9 (cont.): Post-Diagnosis Life: The End of Diseases and the Rise of Chronicity

Convened by Alexandra Ryborg Jønsson (Yale/KU), Tine Tjørnhøj-Thomsen (Statens Institut for Folkesundhed), Helle Ploug Hansen (SDU), Susanne Reventlow (KU) and Michael Andersen (Independent researcher)

Afternoon session moderated by Helle Ploug Hansen: Encounters of Sociality and Chronic Illness

Camilla Brændstrup Laursen: Post-dustbin-diagnosis Life: The Case of Irritable Bowel Syndrome in Denmark

What characterizes post-diagnostic life when it is uncertain whether the condition is chronic or not, and how it should be treated? While we might approach an end of diseases, this paper engages with a health issue that is not coming to an end: Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a functional, gastrointestinal disorder that officially affects 10-16 % of the Danish population. Currently, the Danish healthcare system faces an increase in healthcare activities related to IBS, for which neither cause(s) nor cure(s) are known yet. Diagnostic criteria define IBS as a chronic disorder, meaning that symptoms should be present for at least six months, but it is also acknowledged that symptoms may be intermittent or disappear altogether through the course of a life. Based on ethnographic fieldwork in Danish outpatient clinics and in the homes of patients, this paper points to how post-diagnostic life depends upon the nature of the diagnosis as well as understandings of who holds the responsibility for treatment. Among practitioners, IBS is often understood as a diagnostic end-point after which patients are expected to live with the disorder or change their "lifestyle" through "homework". Among patients, IBS is sometimes viewed as a "dustbin diagnosis", and it is hoped that practitioners will identify and treat the *actual* cause. This paper offers ethnographic descriptions of the process of diagnosing IBS and what "post-diagnostic life" might mean when the diagnosis does not necessarily lead to treatment or changes to life.

Marie Kofoed Svensson: The (in)visible life of congenital heart defects: The chronic nature of 'invisible' conditions

Congenital heart defects (CHD) are the most common types of major congenital defects - in Denmark approximately 475 children are born with CHD every year. Untreated some types of CHD are lethal, however the range of severity is quite wide. The diagnostic tools and treatment options for CHD has undergone considerable advances the last decades, resulting in higher survival rates for newborns, better long term survival prognosis, and a new focus on CHD as a chronic illness. CHD is not necessarily a very visually apparent condition, and surgical corrections often appear in infancy, so memories of this are often faded, especially for the CHD children. Yet simultaneously with this "invisibility" CHD families engage in and initiate practices that visualize CHD, such as heart scans, heart rhythm recordings, 3D prints of hearts, photo diaries of surgical interventions or hospitalizations, or taking pictures at checkups. Based on fieldwork among Danish CHD families in private homes, hospitals, and at patient organization events, I would like to discuss, how looking closely on the two opposing conditions and practices of (in)visibility can further an understanding of what it means to be a CHD child, parent or sibling. This also leads to an exploration of what chronicity means when the condition is simultaneously invisible and "fixable" as some parents phrase it, while also being something that requires lifelong medical checkups and sometimes multiple surgeries, through which the illness is made continuously visible.

Alexandra Brandt Ryborg Jønsson: MONOLOGUE. Pace and Precaution: Navigating Social Relations with Chronic Diseases

"Sometimes I force myself to play the role of the good wife even though I should not be baking because of the arthritis" the elderly woman held up her hands and showed the movement. I had asked her about challenges with self-care plans and it would unfold a long talk about trying to live up to other people's expectations while also taking care of one self. Today, being diagnosed with a chronic disease is rarely a life-threatening condition. However, it does have a severe impact on the person's every day life in terms of physical symptoms and mental burdens such as worries and depression. Adding to this comes a vast amount of self-care and treatment plans to follow. Yet, as Kleimann¹ urges us to look for what really matters in the stories of ordinary people, this paper draw on stories from my ethnographic fieldwork among elderly with several chronic conditions such as the one above. My aim is to shed light on the impact of illness chronicity in social relations. Using the terms 'pace' and 'precaution' I point to the way chronic conditions forms people to both engage in and withdraws from social relations. Anthropologists have shown diseases to affect sociality ie. cancer patients frequently self-imposing social isolation as a way of coping with denial from family members². I add to this by unfolding the navigation in choice and rejection that is constantly at play for my interlocutors as they strive to maintain social identity, marriage and family relations.

Jens Seeberg: Eroding Landscapes of the Lung

'How, as anthropologists, do we engage the wonders and terrors of these more than human forces that continue to shape our worlds?' ask the panel organizers. Here' I'll approach this question through a discussion of ruined landscapes of the lung that result from prolonged and practically untreatable tuberculosis. Mycobacterium tuberculosis can, for the less fortunate third of the world's population' that is infected with latent TB, be said to form part of the normal human microbiota, where it inhabits Povinelli's

geontological figure of the virus: "The Virus copies, duplicates, and lies dormant even as it continually adjusts to, experiments with, and tests its circumstances. It confuses and levels the difference between Life and Nonlife while carefully taking advantage of the minutest aspects of their differentiation." Once awakening from its dormant state and developing symptomatic TB disease, a dramatic process of erosion of the landscape of the lung is initiated. Treatment may be difficult to tolerate for the human host, due to side effects and social consequences. When experiencing interrupted exposure to potentially fatal substances in the form of single or combined anti-tb drugs, the bacteria change into new strains able to withstand this attack while continuing the decomposition of the alveolic landscape. At the scale of human sociality, the internal erosion of the bodily landscape increasingly erodes social functioning and relations, as breathing itself becomes not only laboured but increasingly contagious and dangerous to others. Whereas, at this level, the disease turns the landscape into a swamp, from the perspective of global health governance, Povinelli's figure of the desert seems to be at play, if not immediately then in the projection of an undesirable future of global drug resistance to be avoided: "the place, where life was, is not now, but could be if knowledges, techniques and resources were properly managed".

Olivia Spaletta: Incomplete Eradication: The Disappearance of Down Syndrome and the Transformation of Disability into Chronicity

Does Down syndrome still exist in Denmark? Many believe that Down syndrome births do not surpass one or two per year, occurring only in rare cases when women decline screening or decide to continue an affected pregnancy. Indeed, uptake of prenatal screening for Down syndrome is nearly 95%, and nearly all women who receive a prenatal diagnosis terminate the affected pregnancy. Yet, the end of Down syndrome has not come in the way anyone envisioned. The birth rate of infants with Down syndrome has leveled off at 20-30 per year in Denmark. Nearly all of these births occur in families who participated in the screening program, and received a "false negative" or low risk threshold. Such cases are described by physicians as a failure on the part of medical professionals and the state. Surprised parents endure the public assumption that they have made a "selfish" choice to keep a child who will be a burden to society. This paper explores the lives of families raising young children with Down syndrome during a moment of "incomplete eradication." I focus on how the decline of specialization and municipal cost-savings efforts transformed Down syndrome into a chronic condition, in which the focus of care providers has shifted from developing children "as far as they can go" toward managing children who will always remain disabled. In this system, children who develop too quickly risk the withdrawal of support from their municipality. This raises questions about how the notion of chronicity narrows and amplifies certain kinds of patient experiences, and how patients adjust to the expectations that chronicity demands.

Matti Weisdorf and Sara La Cour: CONVERSATION: Being Post-Traumatic: The remaking of worlds

This paper revolves around the experiences of Danish war veterans living with and through Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), an infliction to which there may well be treatments, but no sure-fire cure. PTSD is something one lives with, as it were. Anthropologists of a critical bend have leapt at the chance to deconstruct PTSD as a diagnosis so encompassing of lived reality that it obfuscates more than it uncovers. Similarly, and predictably, anthropologists have been quick to point to the socially

and culturally constructed nature of PTSD, a particularly visibly offshoot of the overarching "empire of trauma" (Fassin and Rechtman 2009), characteristic of a particular point in time and space. Still, this does little to alleviate the 'carnality' (Povinelli 2006) of *being* Post-Traumatic experienced by Danish veterans. Drawing on scores of conversations with veterans, this paper puts this experience squarely in the limelight. Through empirical scaffolding the paper seeks to unearth the way in which living Post-Traumatic transcends clinical de- and prescriptions. Living Post-Traumatic is bad sleep and frequent hot flushes. It is constant scanning of the surrounding (human) terrain. It is extreme sensitivity to unexpected sounds, sinking gut feelings, anxiety. It is compulsive attention to security, substance abuse, and social isolation. It is heightened moral commitment. Being Post-Traumatic is an embodied unmaking and remaking of a world; an inauguration of a mode of being. Such 'ontogenesis' (Manning 2007) offers a chance to gauge prevalent understanding of chronicity and urges us to think anew of matters of (social) rehabilitation. *The presentation is formulated as a curated dialog with Danish veteran and anthropologist, Sara La Cour. Collaborative and immediate at heart, the conversation allows, or so we hope, for a portrayal that is less a matter of making the Danish veteran – vulnerable, dysfunctional, proud, perhaps dangerous – an objectified entity of study and treatment and more of an embodied exploration of being post-traumatic.*

Panel 7: Movements to an End

Convened by Karen Fog Olwig (KU) and Kristina Grünenberg (KU)

Susanne Bregnbæk: Denmark as a dead-end: Day-care institutions, liminal children and the paradox of hope

On the 13th of October the journalist Carsten Jensen documented a story of how a 21-year old man from Afghanistan was forcibly returned to Kabul. His application for asylum in Denmark had been rejected and even though he prior to the trip had swallowed a razor blade in a desperate attempt to avoid deportation (Jensen, Oct. 13th 2016, *Information*). With this dystopian account as a point of departure, this paper looks into what happens when requests for asylum are denied. It tells the story of two families from Myanmar, who were denied asylum and are now living under the threat of deportation. The parents of these families have left Myanmar 10 years ago and have been living in several European countries before settling in changing asylum centres across Denmark. Their children have been born in exile, now speak Danish and have no knowledge of their parent's homeland. I examine what Mattingly has called 'the paradox of hope' (2010) from two angles: On one hand I show how these families struggle along (Desjarlais 1994) for the sake of their children while enduring a form of social death. On the other, I show how Danish pedagogues relate to such 'liminal' children in ambiguous and temporary ways, including how they to varying degrees keep them at an emotional distance or try to give them a sense of childhood, while agreeing that they do not really have a future.

Karen Fog Olwig: The End of kinship? Biometric Identification and the "Mutuality of Being" among Refugees in Denmark

Twenty years ago Denmark began to use biometric technologies when refugees and migrants applying for family reunification had no credible papers documenting family relationships or the age of family members. DNA-analyses were conducted to verify whether declared parent-child relationships were "real," i.e. based on biological kinship, and X-rays of teeth and bone scannings were performed on children to assess whether they were less than 18 years old and thus minors who had the right to family

reunification. From an anthropological perspective this reduction of the family to a biologically defined parent-child entity may be viewed as a harbinger of the end of meaningful, socially defined kinship among refugees and migrants. Inspired by Sahlins' notion of kinship as "mutuality of being," meaning the ability to "partake of each other's sufferings and joys, sharing one another's experiences even as they take responsibility for and feel the effects of each other's acts," we will here show that the biometric definition of family relations has widely different implications for young migrants' family relations and how they experience their everyday lives in Denmark. For those expected to help often traumatized parents and siblings out of war-torn areas, identification as unaccompanied minors may be vital to maintaining the sense of "mutuality of being" basic to kinship. For those whose family is living under safe conditions, on the other hand, being identified as adults with no right to family reunification may support their efforts to establish a new life abroad that can generate the social and economic resources necessary to support the absent family and thus sustain their "mutuality of being."

Emilie Lund Mortensen: After the end

Let me introduce with the End. During the year of 2012 it came to an end for Bilal, Qais, Nawras and Abood with their forced migration to Jordan. It was the end of Syria, as they remember it and the end of their lives, as they lived, knew and imagined them. They survived the war, but they lost their lives to the circumstances of the civil war. This presentation explores the young men's experience of and responses to the end of their ways of being-in-the-world in Syria. The end is thus tied to endless processes of adaption and negotiation of self and future as ethical practices to reconstitute new ways of being in Jordan. Based on these insights, it will further be argued that the ethnographic study of the end as a passed point in time – how it is experienced, negotiated and interpreted – can be fruitfully explored through participatory methods such as the so-called collaborative life story interview and the production of an ethnographic exhibition. Through practical negotiation of the contents of an exhibition, social spaces are created in which individual and shared interpretations, understandings and responses to the experience of the end become apparent and articulate. Here, the role of the ethnographer becomes a guiding participant and part of the story. Further, creative and visual expressions create potential to generate emotional resonance (see e.g. Wikan 1992) within the audience and thus potential for understanding of individual stories as examples of the shared human vulnerability to unpredictable ends.

Trine Brinkmann

Kristina Grüenberg: Embodying the end

As terror threats and migration flows towards Europe are increasingly addressed as two sides of the same coin, European governments have attempted to refine their ways of regulating and understanding the nature of these movements and identifying the people on the move. One way of doing this is through the implementation of biometric technologies in different places of the 'border world' and the reliance on their ability to identify and verify peoples identity e.g. against large EU databases. The technologies drawn upon - such as facial, voice and vein recognition, digital fingerprinting and a host of other upcoming technologies are not only developed for security purposes or in order to restrain access, however, but also in order to enhance seamlessness – e.g. ensuring and facilitating continuous flows of people, such as

seamless travel experiences of (selected) passengers. Departing in ethnographic fieldwork undertaken at conferences and workshops focusing on migration flows and biometric technologies, as well as in biometric researcher and developer labs, this paper explores the tension between the need for flow as well as fixity in the border world, and how these apparently contradictory needs shape the development of biometric technologies. The paper furthermore explores what 'ends' might look like from the perspective of researchers who work on these biometric technologies, and how they continuously strive to close the gaps between 'real life bodies' and their "data doubles" (Haggerty and Ericson 2000) and move towards an imagined and coherent end.

Panel 13: *Death, Desire and Digressions*

Convened by Marianna Päivikki Keisalo (AU) and Morten Nielsen (AU)

Atreyee Sen: 'Dying for a cause': Desire, digression and the politics of female martyrdom

This paper will use a cross-cultural, interdisciplinary perspective to explore how everyday feminine desires that are often suppressed in the context of conflict, are mobilized by various nationalist and terror groups to promote Female Suicide Bombing (FSB). It will show how violent political movements disseminate a range of gendered discourses on love, heroism, sensuality, marriage, motherhood and feminine pleasures related to female martyrdom, in order to digress from ethical discussions on the brutal death inflicted by FSB. According to Isocrates, the power of political rhetoric lay not in the meticulous following of principle moral threads within an oratory dialogue, but in the digressions which instigate confusion or criticism among the audience. Writing *Panathenaicus* at the age of 97, he urged public speakers to make an apologetic return to central subjects. But he offered a superior position to skillful speakers who would confess to their digression as a personal indulgence, having known that the digression itself had had an impact on the people. I will redeploy this classical connotation of digression and its subtle manipulation within an analysis of contemporary speeches legitimizing women's final sacrifice (usually delivered by charismatic religio-political leaders). I argue that these public endorsements of women's 'glorious death' strategically confuse communities about women's vulnerability, and disposability of the female body during war. I further show how FSBs also use this convoluted space of digression, masking the inevitability of a gory ending, to emasculate local men who have failed to create a land protected from horrific and undignified wartime deaths. I suggest that in many cultural contexts FSB eventually transpires as women's last revenge on both native (our) and enemy (their) men.

Flora Botelho: Thanatos in the repeating narratives of children's play

The concept of the death drive and its suggestion that in every organism there is an innate immanent principle that impels it to return to an earlier condition was derived from a direct consideration of repetition phenomena – among them, children repeatedly reenacting unpleasant experiences in play (cf. Freud 1920). This paper takes as its starting point my fieldwork among children, looking at: 1) play narratives that involve a dramatic or conflictual element and are repeated daily; 2) children's stories that are requested again and again in spite of the distress they apparently produce; and 3) conversations about death among children. It uses these to think beyond the idea of two conflicting drives – life and death – innate to the individual. Inspired by the idea that the death drive is a positive originary principle for repetition

and that pleasure making, fantasy building and game creation can only be lived through repetition (Deleuze 1968), it focuses on what is being produced through these repeated narratives. It finds that, instead of a bidirectional movement pulling towards opposite ends (life and death), each repetition is an end in itself and constitutes a new creation that opens up to alternative narratives. Repeating play events, rather than slowing down an irresistible movement towards the end, are best thought of as reaching out to alternative realities and actualising in this way other potential narratives.

Anders Sybrandt Hansen: Rush Unto Death: Anthropology at the End of Proletarianism

The spread of the temporary contract is a central trait of current capitalism that sets it apart from earlier models for the organisation of labour. With the casualization of labour comes also a new temporal environment with attendant anxieties. This paper uses the study abroad experience of Chinese elite university students as a frontline report from the war between the temporal modes of proletarianism and the project. In the struggle to get ahead, elite students are expected to carefully deploy their time. Studying abroad has become one more step in a culturally idealised temporal arrangement of how one is expected to go about advancing. The downside to this ethics of striving is shown to be a pervasive sense of restlessness (*fuzao*). The paper shows how the relocation to a different life environment allowed a group of students to respond to their temporal predicament in existentially creative ways that socially registered as personal maturation. It is argued that these responses were set in motion by the students' digression into an expanse of *not-yet-purposeful* time. Treating the temporal experience of Chinese elite students as a pronounced inflection of an increasingly global temporal mode of striving, the paper inquires into the temporality of the present human condition.

Thomas Randrup Pedersen: On the edge: Where peace is a dead end, war is full of desire for life

Usually, we might think of peace as the end of war, and war as the end of peace. Usually, we might associate peace with life and prosperity, and war with death and destruction. But what happens if we consider peace as the end toward which one is propelled by a death drive? What happens if we think of war as a digression that one pursues out of a desire for life? In this paper, I address peace as death and war as life. More specifically, conceiving peace as a dead end, I explore war as a risky and thus pleasurable way of living on borrowed time. Based on my fieldwork with Danish combat troops on the training ground in Denmark as well as in the theatre of operations in Afghanistan, I examine war as a window of opportunity not merely for feeling alive through adrenaline-rushing edgework, but also for playing with death in order to take life seriously. I argue that there are Danish rank and file soldiers who seek out war in search of life in the form of adventure and, by implication, as a form of digression before one leaves the military to settle along a more peaceful life trajectory, if not to 'live happily ever after', then at least, ideally speaking, to live and die with a peace of mind.

Marianna Keisalo: "Laugh or I'll Die": Facing Death on the Stand-up Comedy Stage

In this paper I explore stand-up comedy as a way of courting and repelling death through digression. The idioms of death are curiously present in stand-up comedy. When you do well, you 'kill', and when you fail you bomb, or as they say in Finland, you 'die on stage'. This 'kill or be killed' ethos may be at odds with the idea that

humor is supposed to be enjoyable, but stand-up comedy comes with risks for both performer and audience. What draws the comedian to keep trying, to face annihilation time after time? I suggest these high emotional stakes are part of the value of comedy, which may be at its most enjoyable when it provides a way to engage with fear and pain. Death is also a fairly common topic in comedy routines – death of a loved one, fear of death, etc. Thus, I present a view of stand-up comedy as facing death in both its off-stage and on-stage forms, in relation to the digressions inherent in comedy; it is an indirect form of communication, taking advantage of 'non-linear associations' that come back to punchlines, it relies on narrative leaps and requires the audience to follow. The ambiguity of comedy, the simultaneous presence of contrasting elements, creates and relies on semiotic excess. Comedic digression allows – even requires – us to find new perspectives on the imperatives of life, and a well-timed improvised digression can save a show going badly. The research is based on 20 months of field work in Finland, including becoming an amateur comedian myself.

15.30-16.30 Playtime

16.30-18.00 Keynote by Professor Diane Nelson: *Ground Zero*

18.30-19.00 Pre-dinner drinks

19.00 Conference dinner

22.00 Afterparty featuring DJ Savage

Friday 18 August

08.00-09.00 Breakfast

09.00-10.30 Parallel panel session IV (1.5 hours)

Panel 6: *The Uses of Dystopia*

Convened by Stine Krøijer (KU) and Matthew Carey (KU)

Introduction by Matthew Carey

Marie Stender: 'After we have become a ghetto' – Dystopian place branding in disadvantaged neighbourhoods

Leading Danish architects materialised modernistic utopian visions of the good life with community, equality, green surroundings, light and air in the great housing plans of the 1960s and 1970s. Today the very same areas with their seemingly monotonous rows of housing blocks are on the contrary linked to a powerful current dystopia: The ghetto. The undesirable and frightening – yet existing place, held to pose a potential thread to the social order of the surrounding society. From originally denominating a particular Jewish neighbourhood surrounded by walls, the ghetto-concept has in a Danish context evolved into a powerful political technology – fuelled by the so-called 'ghetto-list' paving the way for thorough physical and social interventions. Buildings are demolished to 'open up the ghetto', flats are merged to attract new groups of tenants, and housing areas are transformed and renamed in order to combat the tainted image. The paper analyse the impact of the ghetto-concept among tenants and other actors in a number of Danish neighbourhoods that have recently been regenerated. On the one hand side, they struggle with the territorial stigmatization (Wacquant 2007) inherent in being listed as a ghetto, but on the other hand side, they also appropriate the notion of the ghetto and use it strategically. The paper introduces the concept of 'dystopian place-branding' and discusses, how place-making, political technology and the built materiality of architecture interact in dystopian brandscapes.

Mikkel Bunkenborg: Dystopian Dining: Chinese Food After Morality

Since the demise of Chairman Mao and the end of utopian socialism, China has been haunted by a pervasive sense of moral crisis. Discarding first the particularistic morality of Confucianism and then the universalistic comradeship of socialism, Chinese citizens are said to lack a moral compass for navigating an increasingly urbanized society populated by strangers, and it is particularly in the domain of foodstuffs that the effects of what some anthropologists have called an 'immoral economy' operated by 'uncivil individuals' make themselves manifest. Food scandals ranging from milk laced with melamine to recycled gutter oil and rat meat camouflaged as mutton attest to a lack of concern for the health of strangers and feed suspicions that producers are using pesticides, hormones, and additives in ways that make their products unfit for human consumption. Based on fieldwork in rural north China where people appear to have resigned themselves to producing cash crops that they would not eat themselves and to consuming food they assume is even more dangerous, this paper explores the end of moral obligation both as a historical point in time and as a particular form of social relation that emerged after socialism.

Panel 11: (T)Reason – The End of Loyalty (Note: This panel starts 08.45 and ends 10.45)

Convened by Perle Møhl (KUA), Kristina Grünenberg, Ayo Wahlberg and the Technology and Political Economy Researcher Group at the Department of Anthropology, University of Copenhagen

Birgitte Romme Larsen: End of story? From partners in dissemination to (unintended) co-creators of research – an ethnographic tale on collaborating with ‘the media’

In recent decades, the influx of refugees to Denmark has been met with widespread, negative media attention in combination with political fears over its socio-economic consequences, and anthropological studies have shown how in Denmark the majority population has expressed a growing cultural anxiety toward ‘non-Western’ immigration. This anxiety is visible – for example – in the often negative response of local communities to the establishment of asylum centers and in how such opposition is being highlighted in public media. As anthropologists, we have paid great attention to how such fears of ‘immigrants’ are (re)produced within the realm of Danish national public debate, while at the same time we have sought to qualify and contest this debate by publicly disseminating our research – through the same communication channels. Yet, we have paid less attention to how such media collaborations may at times strike back on our very own ethnographic research processes, as ultimately they might lead to new empirical situations that influence – or even reshape – our fields and findings. Based on my current research study, which focuses on everyday dynamics of neighborliness amongst asylum seekers and established residents in the small Danish town of Jelling, in this presentation I wish to challenge the idea of public dissemination and research as elements belonging to two parallel or separate realms: if considering ‘the media’, not just as a partner in dissemination, but as an extension of the ethnographic field as it were, as collaborators we sometimes become closely entwined, absolutely obscuring where the story ends.

Daena Funahashi: The Promise of Failure: Rethinking the Collaborative Ends

Collaborations between individuals with different training and intellectual genealogies often build upon expectations of what the other can offer. This paper is based on one such collaborative experience with rehabilitative experts in Helsinki, Finland, who at first welcomed my participation as a trained ethnographer who could, they proposed, uncover and analyze for them how their patients “really felt” about their program for burnout. But later, what I provided for these clinical and rehabilitative experts was to prove a disappointment. “It’s useless,” they said of an article I had published based on my fieldwork at their center. What they had expected was a text that either verified or critiqued the effectiveness of the rehabilitative program that they had developed. Instead, the analysis I had produced as well as the ethnographic detail I had emphasized neither supported nor suggested what they could do to do better. Disappointment on my part came when the crisis of knowledge and of knowing I had hoped would emerge to spur discussion about the premises of the rehabilitative treatment failed to occur amongst my clinical collaborators. What, then, is collaborative work when the co-laboring fails to produce a vantage point from which each member finds “use”? And while being found useless is indeed the limit of collaboration, what potential can we find in ethnography that refuses to corroborate with the telos of clinical imperatives? What use can we find in uselessness? What kind of a “tool” is ethnography when found useless?

Nana Vaaben: Until the end of time

The paper is about a struggle over teachers' work and working time that has been going on for years, but culminated in 2013 when a new working time law as well as a major reform of Danish public schools was initiated. The profession has over time increasingly been governed through systems that can be characterized by closed reciprocity, where a defined "product" is supposed to be delivered and the relation is thereby terminated, where teaching has historically been seen as a calling where the "product" is unclear, but the obligation lasts forever (open reciprocity). The analysis investigates how the changes in the governance of schools and teaching, imply that teachers are split between loyalty to their profession and to their workplace. "Sometimes you just feel like an incredibly mean grownup", one teacher expressed it. On the one hand teachers can uncritically "collaborate" and deliver what they are demanded to, even though they find it unwise, even wrong in relation to the pupils. They can even choose to see this as a form of resistance, where "working by the book" is assumed to make the system collapse. On the other hand they can "resist the system" by doing invisible work off the record, thereby feeling less miserable in relation to their pupils, but risking to collapse themselves, or to keep a dysfunctional system afloat. In both cases their work holds elements of collaboration and elements of resistance. Many teachers found themselves in unbearable dilemmas, and some ended up quitting. The end.

Perle Møhl & Anja Simonsen: Knowledge, loyalty and the dividual corporate researcher body

It could be assumed that in order to analyze a complex and highly contentious assemblage such as a border world where a multitude of different actors, technological practices, epistemes, and political, commercial and individual interests are at play, nothing would be more obvious than a collaborative project that illuminates that field from several contrasting perspectives by having different researchers position themselves within different constituents of the assemblage. And that is indeed the basic assumption of our collaborative project, that to understand, simply speaking, what goes on at the border, where some people try to filter movement and manage flows while others try to circumvent or breach such filters, and where biometric technologies are taken into use and altered for both purposes, we could operate through a simple division of knowledge labour. We are thus doing as a group what we could not as individual researchers: dividing ourselves and our partialities. Within this constellation, one of us follows a group of Somali migrants on the move into and through Europe, crossing external and internal borders, while the other follows the daily work of a group of border control agents who maintain a checkpoint somewhere along the Schengen border. And we both learn things about our interlocutors' ruses and stratagems. For example about profiling socks. And about where to buy a "clean fake" passport. And we come to question the obviousness of sharing knowledge. In this paper we analyze the chains of loyalty in a collaborative project and the necessity of keeping knowledge to oneself in order not to breach both one's own and one's fellow researchers' loyalties to the field and thus, by extension, to one another. It is, in sum, the end of some loyalties in order not to betray others, constructing a dividual corporate researcher body where positions can be upheld and where knowledge can be protected because *not* shared.

Panel 14: Public Anthropology and the End of Journalism?

Convened by Christian Suhr (AU), Peter Hervik (AAU) and Carolina Sanchez Boe (AAU)

A roundtable discussion with the following participants:

- Douglas Holmes
- Sine Plambech
- Anja Kublitz
- Carolina S. Boe
- Peter Hervik
- Christian Suhr

Panel 15: Alternative Endings?

Ester and Jonas Fritsch: The End: A Generative Potential for an Alter-politics of Affect across Anthropology and Interaction Design?

We take this engagement with 'the end' as an opportunity to express a generative potential working across anthropology and design framed as 'an alter-politics of affect'. Anthropologist Ghassan Hage (2012) introduces the concept alter-politics as an anthropological possibility to critically exceed who we are. In affect theory, Brian Massumi (2011) also emphasizes the need to develop an (ecological) alter-politics of affect. Inspired by this thinking we move across insights from a fieldwork in the Northern Italian community Damanhur and concrete design experiments unfolding new relational capacities of digital and interactive technologies. According to Damanhurians the world might be ending in 2600 partly due to a disconnection between humans and plants, Damanhurians explain, why they carry out practices to strengthen this relation involving different technologies for cultivating new affective attachments and ethical sensibilities beyond the human, if we follow Jane Bennett (2001). We unfold and critically assess how these uses of technology might hold a generative potential for creating altered affective attachments, thus changing fields of relations in ways that hold an alter-political potential when facing other ends of the world in the wake of the ecological, financial or refugee crises we are experiencing today. To exemplify this, we present concrete design experiments: The Voice Pump is an interface exploring differential and relational attunement to the refugee crisis through air-based interaction with affective qualities of refugees' voices and FeltRadio which is a device that translates WiFi signals into Electronic Muscle Stimulation (EMS) to cultivate a critical reflection through sensorial augmentation.

Christian Vium: The Fringe - an audio-visual ethnographic poem

This 5-minute projection is a re-framing of previously unpublished film material from my award-winning project 'Ville Nomade', which was awarded the Prix HSBC pour la Photographie in 2016, and published as a monograph by Actes Sud (July 2016). 'The Fringe' is a kaleidoscopic rendition of life on the urban margin, exploring the aspiration to connect to a global flow of images, dreams and fantasies through the manipulation of technological infrastructures enabling such connection. At the same time, the piece is an exploration of visual textures, materiality and sonic samples. 'The Fringe' was commissioned by curator Sandra Maunac and had its world premiere on April 20, when it was screened at the Placa Mayor in Madrid, Spain as part of 'Proyecta: Imaginando Otros Posibles'.

Nanna Hauge Kristensen: How can we represent endings – and ethnography in general – through sound?

The Hospice - An intimate piece of audio ethnography by Nanna Hauge Kristensen:

Rattling breath. Opera in the bathtub. She, who ones loved her garden. Sing-along and afternoon coffee. Stiffening limbs on an air mattress. A lit candle on the living room shelf.

10.30-11.00 Coffee

11.00-12.00 To what end? Wrap-up and looking ahead

12.00-13.00 Lunch and Goodbye!