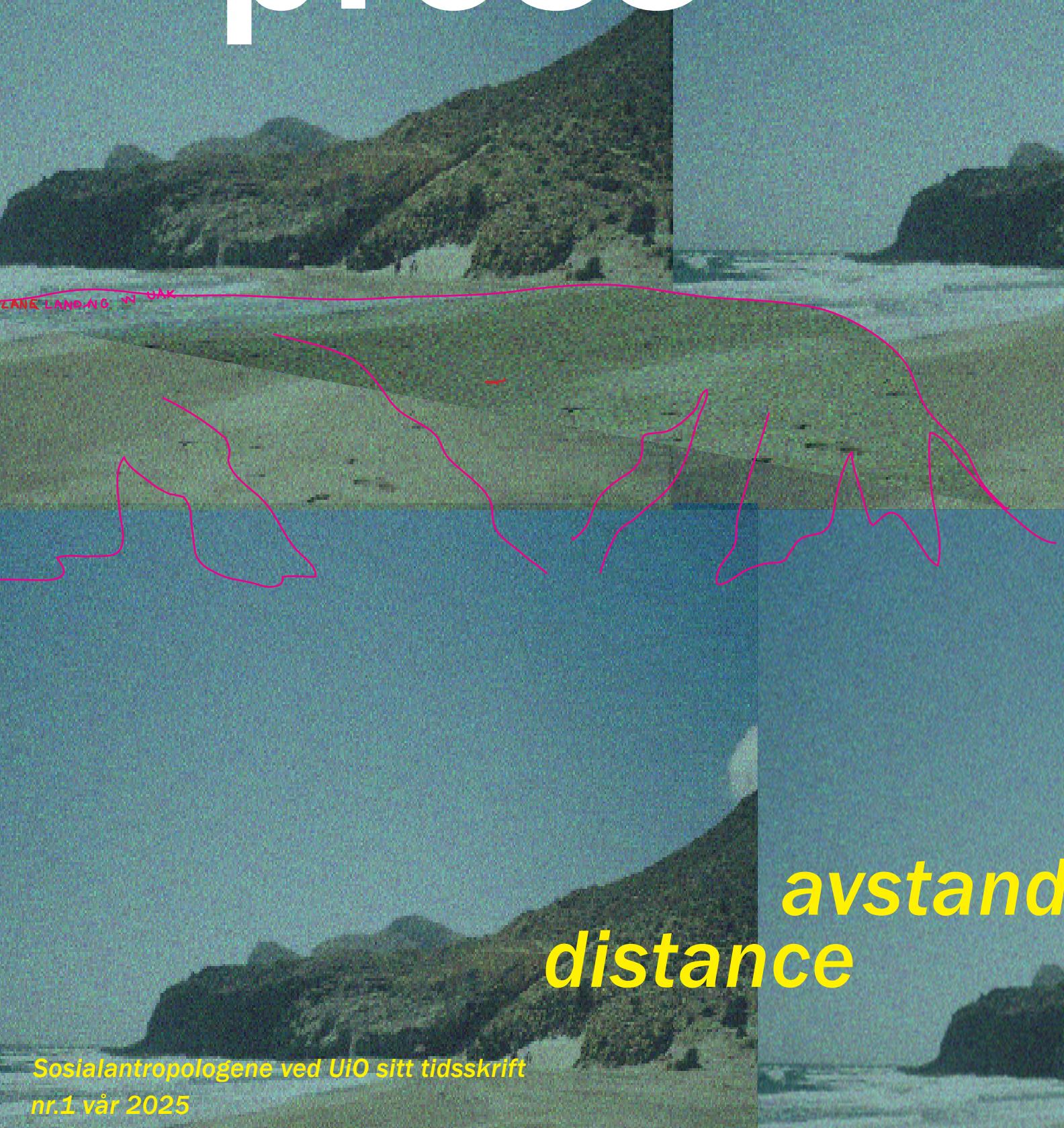


antro press



© Antropress

Sosialantropologene ved UiO sitt tidsskrift.

Paper Issue Fall, nr.1 vår 2025

Avstand—Distance



Front Cover: photography, Cabo de Gata,
Back Cover: Montanha do Pico, Azores.

– Sara Martínez Belendez

”The Chamaleon Factory”

Oslo, Norawy

All texts, images and artwork in this issue are the property of their respective creators. No part of this issue may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior written permission of the author or artist. For information about reproducing any material, please contact the creator directly.

1st Print Edition

200 prints

Antropress is run by an editorial collective of bachelor's and master's students from SAI.

For this Issue the team has been:

Martha Førde Bondahl,

Sebastian Boehlke,

Stian Moeller,

Jonas Banggren,

Rigas Karampasis,

Sverre Bjørnhaug,

Håvard Widerøe,

Joanna Grytnes

and

Sara Martinez Belendez.

With special help of Ivonne Bautista,
Maka Suarez and Rigas Karampasis.

innhold

*Rock
formations
in Cabo
de Gata,
Spring
2024*



06	EDITORIAL
—07	Antropress
08	WHY I DECIDED TO STOP DOING RESEARCH A
—09	PERSONAL REFLECTION ON MY MASTER THESIS
Stian Moeller	
10	LÆRINGSNÆRHET. TANKESPRANG OM
—12	AVSTAND OG TILSTAND
Thorgeir Kolshus	
13	QUETZAL & VELVET
—16	Lars Gabriel Unlayao Slettebø
	Fabio Nicolás Venero Figueroa
—17	EN AUTO-ETNOGRAFI OM UTLENDIGHET
Ivonne Bautista	
—18	FOREST SOUNDBITES
Kristine Aarnes	
19	PANOPTICUM OF CARE. MOSAIC.
—21	Sara Martinez Belendez
22	THE COLLAPSE OF THE ORDINARY: TIME, LATE-STAGE
—25	CAPITALISM, AND THE LOSS OF MEANING
Sebastian og Håvard	
26	35mm. PHOTO EXHIBIT
—39	Vilde Rogeberg
40	WHAT WAS LEFT BEHIND
—41	Juan Grajales
42	CHRONOTOPES OF SEPARATION
—43	Rigas Karampasis
44	FINAL BACK
—45	

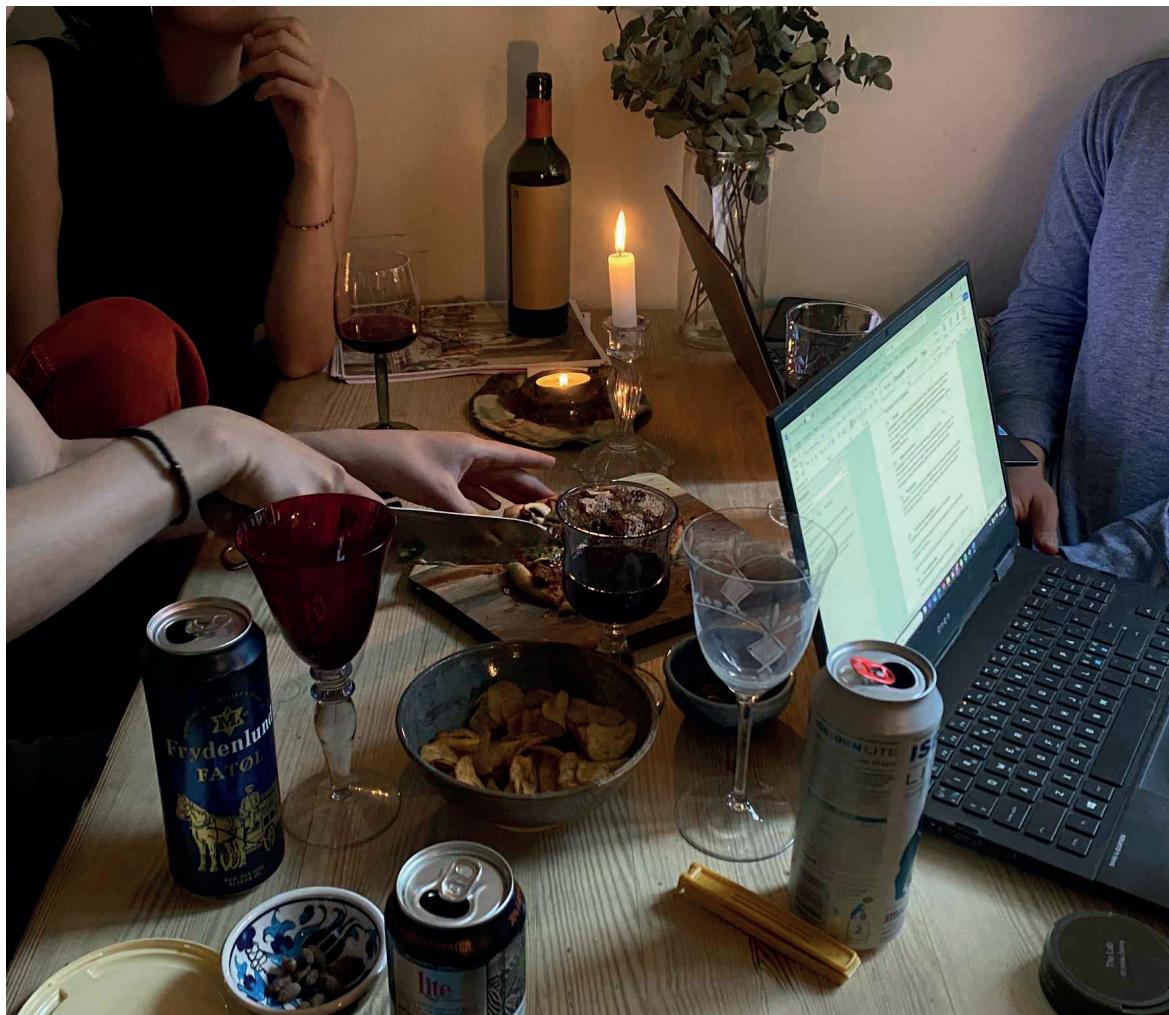
editorial

*whom
where*

Close but not too close. A familiar motto in Anthropology. But what does this really mean? When does Distance become a familiar pretext on legitimacy, objectivity and power? When is it something else? Thinking with it, we are given the opportunity to open up a dichotomy, a space 'between', a space that might be traversed, or a space that can be merely observed – left alone. At SAI, we encounter its patterns between the Fieldsite and Reading Hall, between the 9th floor and U1, between Academic and Practicing Anthropologists. Beyond the academic realm, Distance also shows up in the everyday. In how we fail to recognize one another, in the gaps that limit access, or in the barriers that shape how we move through spaces. What happens when specific conversations seem

so disparate, so far away from each other, that travelling across the distance between them becomes almost unimaginable? How can we overcome such distance that makes community, learning and organizing impossible? How can we bridge the Distance to other ways of communicating and producing knowledge, ways 'foreign' to us and how we are trained? Of course this is not an easy task but it might help to engage with these distances not only as obstacles, but as productive spaces of learning and reflection.

On the way to the metro when Oslo's streets are covered with slippery ice, everybody looks to the ground—a careful dance of feet and steps. The otherwise short distance stretches, and only when the ice melts we look up again and remember the tree branches and birds around us. What if one puts on some crampons? A pair of skis? What if we hold each other by the arm? What if we embraced the slippery possibilities the ice offers? If you have perfected the skillful art of sliding from door to door? Sometimes you might end up in the emergency room with a cast, sometimes you will have a lot of fun, and more often than not, the thrill will pass and



What if we embraced the slippery possibilities the ice offers? If you have perfected the skillful art of sliding from door to door? If we understand Distance not only as an objective gap to be crossed, but as a productive space of learning and reflection.



you'll stop noticing it. If we understand Distance not only as an objective gap to be crossed, but as something embedded in our practices. As a fruitful exercise when sorting out fieldnotes, but also as something enacted through Blindern's architecture or reflected in social fabrics when building community. The dilemmas of too much or too little distance, as well as the contrast between perceived and measured distance accentuated by the means of navigating it, create fertile ground for misunderstandings, surprises, and reflection.

In this issue the authors and pieces engage with many forms of distance and closeness. Stian Moeller and Rigas Karampasis take us with them into the struggles of Distance between home and fieldsite. Vilde Rogeberg, Kristine Aarnes

and Sara Martinez Belendez reflect on Distance through the possibilities their cameras offer. Ivonne Bautista and Juan Grajales give us powerful accounts of the distance to and blurring of homeland. Gabriel Unlayao Slettebø and Fabio Venero Figueroa bridge the space towards a different history-telling. Sebastian Boelke and Håvard Widerøe dare to confront the distances growing amongst us. And Thorgeir Kolshus reflects through time on the nuanced spaces between students and teachers at SAI.

Through the process of reviving *Antropress*, we have found the potential of coming together and being playful. Working from fieldwork, from campus and beyond, distance opened up a dialogue. Through Lu's wonderful work on the magazine design all the way from Lima, we found in practice how distance can be a space of collaboration rather than a gap to cross. By discussing the topic and pieces for this issue, by searching for the ways of knowing and doing that *Antropress* has tended since the 70s, we have tried to breach the distances that at many moments, made the paper issue you hold in your hands a far away possibility. In the process we have found many valuable conversations reflected in the pieces presented here, we hope you enjoy.

In representation
of the editorial collective
by Sebastian and Sara.

why I decided to stop doing research

Stian Moeller

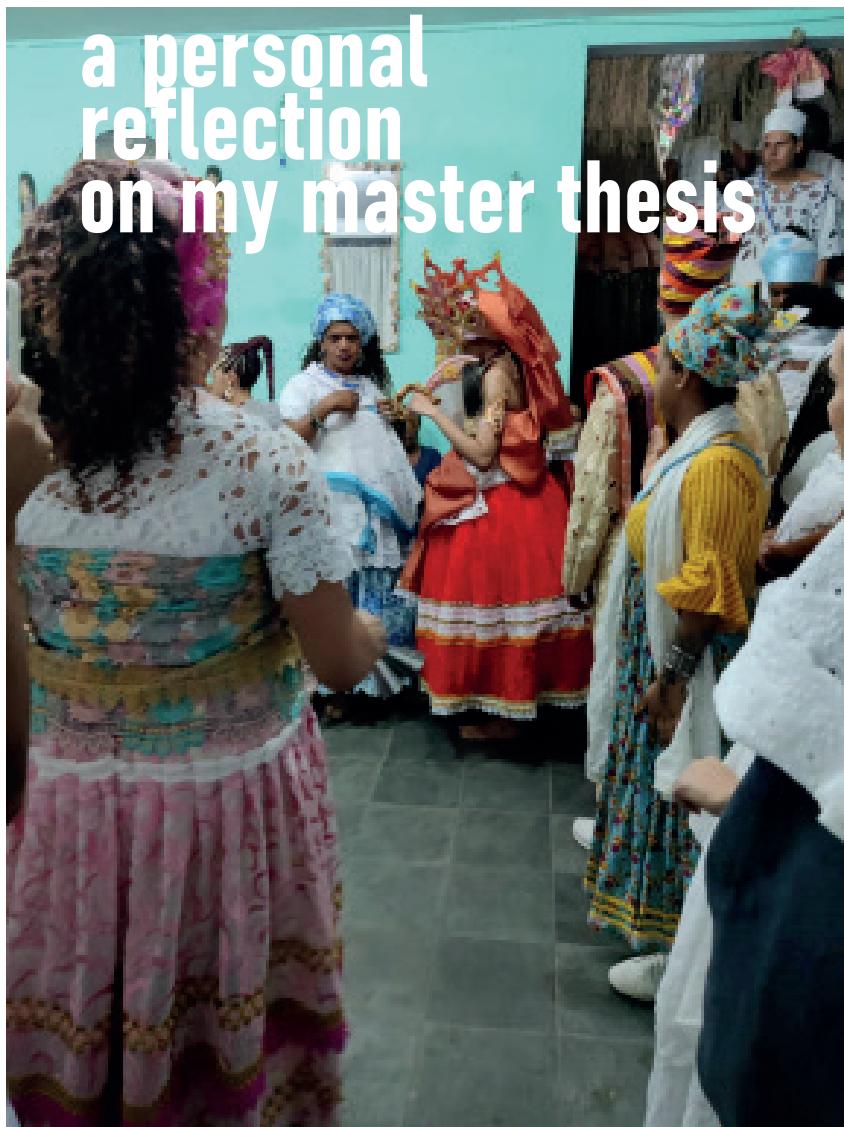
MA Student UiO

I sat down after doing all my compulsory readings to start doing some research on my master thesis, which is about the relationship between the Brazilian trans community and candomblé*. This has been a project I have been interested in since I came back from my backpacking trip to Brazil, where I first was introduced to the different afro Brazilian religions and continued since then. My good friend João, an upcoming *pai-de-santo* of an umbanda terreiro introduced me to this wonderful world of magic, music, spirit possession and spiritual guidance, in an otherwise – chaotic city of São Paulo. He started to date a candomblé practitioner, who invited to his terreiro to have the privilege to observe the initiation of two new *filho-de-santo* (people who can receive and be possessed by the orixas). The drums, dancing and singing really struck me with awe. I have never seen anything like it before! It led me to undertake a huge task; trying to make sense of it all.

I really don't think people understand just how much I have read about this topic: introduction books on Umbanda (in Portuguese of course), field notes from candomblé temples, an entire book about the different mythologies of the different orixas (its 500 pages all in Portuguese), as well as countless articles and books about the lives of Brazilian trans women, whom many practise the religion. I have tried to do everything I can to decimate the "pombagira" (an entity/spirit), to understand the history, legacy and how this entity functions within the different "terreiros" (temples). But at the end of the day, the more I read, I only get more confused. I feel like everything I have learned is only in vain – everything

contradicts itself within this field.

This might have something to do with the history of afro Brazilian religions itself. Candomblé started out as something completely different than its contemporary counterpart. It was first the enslaved people from Congo who established the practice, (unfortunately very little is known about this stage of candomblé since it was illegal and repressed by state and church). But many slaves made it to the other side of the Atlantic, bringing with them different gods, deities, traditions and practices, which all influenced candomblé today. Not to mention the different religions and practices like French spiritism and indigenous beliefs, which has also affected the contemporary version of candomblé. Apart from this, there also exist different afro Brazilian religions like Umbanda, batuque, Xango and minas who all exist within Brazil and have been affected by, but also changed the practice of candomblé. Candomblé itself is also a varied practice. It differs regionally, and each terreiro (temple) has their own



traditions and practices that vary significantly in between themselves. Also, each terreiro has different approaches to the different orixas and entities, so how they wish to employ everything is really up to themselves.

And here I am, sitting in complete confusion, since anyone I ask has something else to say about the different entities like Exu or any other orixa. Apart from the orixa and the aforementioned entities, other african deities have also had an massive impact, like the Inquetes (bantu deites) as well the voudons, all different sets of deities, gods, practises and folk stories. Most terreiros also worship caboclos, ameri-indian spirits! Here I am, trying to collect everything to make sense of an orderless, non-dogmatic religion, and I can't say that I understand anything more than when I first started on this journey back in 2021.

It was in all this confusion, It finally struck me, on the eve of Halloween. I may have made the same mistake as my anthropological predecessor, Franz Boas. By chance I read a great article written by Isaiah L. Wilner called : Transformation masks: re-collecting the indigenous origins of global consciousness (2018). The article is about the fieldwork Franz Boas was conducting on the northwestern coast of Canada/ United States among the native Americans who lived there. He had collected a huge amount of different masks that were used under their performances, so he could take them back to Germany to showcase their cultural heritage. He almost risked his life crossing the sea under gruesome conditions that could have led to his death, under the pressure of collecting more masks. What he did not understand was that the mask he was collecting did not have any intrinsic value in themselves, it was the person who wore it that communicated a story through the use of the mask that gave it meaning.

The native American stories of the north eastern coast were also a very interesting point to me, as it reflected some of my own hardships with my fanatic collection of stories. Boas was fascinated with all the different stories they told him while traveling across their land, writing many of them down. But the stories in of themselves, situated as if they were without time and place, lose their original purpose. The meaning of the stories changed in functi-

on and meaning depending on how and who told the story. It was how the story was employed to describe something about the current situation that created its function and meaning. To take the story out of its social and cultural context, its original meaning was lost to the reader, the same case with the mask he had collected.

And this all got back at me. I had turned into Franz Boas, trying to understand the different entities and orixas by learning and reading every story and forgetting why they were even told in the first place. Exu is not a mythological creature like our old norse gods, he is a living being, who exists among us in the crossroads of our own lives. Maybe the history and my systematic understanding of these entities and orixas was truly only interesting to one person, me.

I should do what Boas failed to do when he started conducting his research; stop collecting "masks", and instead try to understand how the "masks" are being used. I am trying to construct and force objects of cultural heritage into a system that was not constructed out of their cultural understanding, by forcing one narrative or one Exu, when there are multiple. At this time, I had attempted to do what the scientists in the 40s were attempting, to create one single calculation to explain the whole world – the world of afro Brazilian religions. Instead, I need to put on my feminist goggles and be content with the fact that I can't understand every aspect of the Exu, that there are huge tensions and contradictions in the literature and the stories regarding the entities and orixas, since it is not about one narrative, one story of one entity for that matter. It is about people and how they interact with these entities in a very real way, and these experiences are very different from each other.

This might sound very obvious to you, the reader. But for me, this has been a long, tiresome journey. I have spent so much of my time reading, talking and trying to understand something that was not supposed to be completely understood in the beginning. I am only thankful I understood this before I went on fieldwork. And I hope you, the one reading this, are able to avoid the same pitfalls as I have succumbed to.

Bon voyage!

læringsnærhet

Tankesprang om avstand og tilstand

«Nærmere kommer du ikke». Det var tittelen på en artikkelsamling om feltarbeidet som ble utgitt i 1996, akkurat da jeg var i ferd med å dra avsted på mitt første. Dette var på en tid da de fleste antropologer, og i kanskje enda større grad antropologistudenter, var opptatt av myter – i teorien, selvsagt, men også i praksis. Jeg hadde begynt på grunnfaget (tilsvarende et årsstudium) i 1994, og det første som møtte oss var eldre studenter som snakket om sine feltarbeid. Og mye av snakkingen bar preg av mytologisering: av enkelthendelser, som i bakspeilet på trygg avstand fremstod som analytiske fyrtårn og empirisk ankerfeste; og av selve det å være I Felten. Ingen kunne si noe om hvordan dette skulle gjøres, ble det sagt. Hvert feltarbeid var unikt, og derfor var det knapt et eneste råd som kunne gis.

Dette var ikke bare noe som gav seg til kjenne ved UiO. Signe Howell, en av våre forelesere, hadde tatt utdanningen sin ved Oxford. Den eneste rettesnoren hun fikk før hun dro på feltarbeid dypt inne i den malaysiske regnskogen, var følgende: «If you are any good, you will figure it out.» I metode-spørsmål var antropologer øyen-synlig på pedagogisk linje med filosofen Lucius Annaeus Seneca: «For den seiler som ikke vet til hvilken havn hen skal, er ingen vind gunstig.»

Likevel ble det gjort noen spede forsøk. For oss nærmere ett hundre som begynte på hovedfag, forløperen til mastergrad, høsten 1995, var det satt opp et eget kurs om feltarbeid. Mange fra årskullene før oss dukket også opp, for det skulle holdes av ingen ringere enn Fredrik Barth. Han var en levende legende. Et munnhell

Thorgeir
Kolshus

Head of Department
of Social Anthropology, UiO

i internasjonale kretser var at det fantes tre typer antropologer: De med ett feltarbeid; de med to feltarbeid; og Fredrik Barth. Han hadde åtte langvarige empiriske studier i fire verdensdeler, de fleste av dem banebrytende og skoledannende. Så hvis ikke han kunne fortelle hvordan det skulle gjøres, var det ingen som kunne det! Han var også en av få antropologer med stor innflytelse på samfunnsvitenskapene mer allment. Det ble sagt at hvis det hadde vært en Nobelpris for samfunnsforskning, ville han ha fått den. Og han var vår foreleser! Årefrykten lå tykk som et eksamensjernteppe i SV-byggets Auditorium 7.

Gjennom seks forelesninger var det ingen som våget å stille et eneste spørsmål, langt mindre gi en tilbakemelding som kunne hjelpe ham å gjøre budskapet mer treffsikkert og publikumstilpasset. Og på nittitallet var begreper som ‘underveisvurdering’ og ‘midtveisvaluering’ av undervisningen’ mye mer frem-





med enn baktamanenes initieringssykluser. Jeg skulle til en øy i Stillehavet der det ikke fantes særlig informasjon, hverken i biblioteket eller på det forsiktig gryende internettet, så for meg bød Barths forelesninger på mange nyttige tips. Å snike en sekk ris inn I vertshusholdningen for å bidra uten å bryte illusjonen av ubegrenset gjestfrihet var ett av dem.

Men for det store flertallet som skulle ha en ganske annen type feltarbeid, bekreftet den manglende relevansen av hans mange råd og vink at de gamle hadde rett: Hvert feltarbeid var unikt, og det var ikke mulig å gi allmenngyldige råd om noe så særegent. Så selv om Barth hadde en fjetrende tilstedeværelse og en gudbenådet formidlingsevne, var det for en gangs skyld uttynning i salen ettersom forelesningene skred frem.

Og det var kanskje like greit, for dette var før studieplassbegrepet ble innført, og det var enormt mange studenter på ganske få ansatte. Vi var cirka fem hundre som begynte på grunnfaget hvert år. Det var umulig å bli kjent med mer enn en brøkdel. Og for foreleserne må det ha vært fullstendig overveldende. Ingen auditorier på Blindern

var store nok, så en del av forelesningene fant sted I Colosseum 1, Norges største kinosal. Kommunisering av utilgjengelighet må ha vært viktigere enn studentkontakt, simpelthen for å kunne finne tid til å bedrive sin forskning. Vi som utgjorde det som bokstavelig talt må ha fremstått som en studentmasse, skjønt nok at foreleseren lett kunne ha druknet i henvendelser. Og kombinert med beskjedenhet og ærefrykt ble kontaktavgrensningen enkel. Det var bare de litt grenseløse med kortere sosiale antenner som våget å snakke til foreleserne.

I hvert fall frem til den tradisjonelle turen til OSI-hytta for nye studenter. Der hadde da værende førsteamanuensis Arve Sørum inntatt øverste etasje i badstuen, og jeg hadde sneket meg inn. Han fortalte om svetting i jungler på Ny-Guinea og Borneo og andre steder jeg hadde drømt om. Og det var mange som ville høre, så badstudøren gikk opp og igjen, igjen og igjen. Det fikk Sørum til å påpeke at han var varm i hodet, men kald på føttene. Før jeg rakk å tenke meg om, slang jeg ut: «Det er vel slik det skal være for en akademiker?» Det tok litt tid, så nikket Sørum og sa: «Du har jo rett i det.» Jeg forsøkte å skjule at hjertet jublet vilt over denne ørlille anerkjennelsen fra øverste hylle. Og jeg gav meg på topp – for det var alt jeg sa til en foreleser i løpet av hele grunnfagsåret.

Tredve år senere er Sørum for lengst blitt Arve, og vi er fortsatt venner, han på åtti og jeg på femtitre og et halvt. Og med tiden ble til og med Fredrik Fredrik i stedet for Barth.

Så hva kan disse anekdotene og småfortellingerne fra et nittitallsstudentliv si om antropolo-



gifaget og tilværelsen for studenter og ansatte ved Sosialantropologisk institutt i dag?

Først av alt tenker jeg det er fint å bli minnet på at usikkerhet i større eller mindre grad preger alle samhandlingssituasjoner. Noe står jo på spill! Risikoen for å bli avvist er ikke stor, men det er vondt når det skjer. Så lenge alle studenter og ansatte har dette i bakhodet, vil vi også møte hverandre med en ekstra raushet og velvilje.

Og da skaper vi et miljø der det er lov å snuble, og til og med gå seg vill i jakten på de spennende koblingene og nye vinklingene. Det gir trygghet til virkelig å omfavne UiOs motto: Våg å vite! For å kunne nærmere seg blinken, kreves det først mye bomming og kaving og feiling. Så det er mye mer fornuftig å rette blikket mot neste mulighet enn å bruke energien på å dekke over gammel tryning. Å snakke om det, eie det og lære av det betyr at vi vokser videre fra det. Deling av egne tilkortkommenheter skaper en trygghet og fortrolighet som er det beste grunnlaget både for arbeids- og studiefelleskap og for vennskap.

Men det disse anekdotene også kan illustre, er hvordan antropologisk forståelse krever både avstand og tilstand. Dyp innsikt betinger en slik vekselvirkning, mellom det ganske fjerne og det helt nære. Innimellom er det ren mentalhygiene å ligge på magen i gresset og fortape seg i alt det som skjer på den lille kvadratmeteren vi har oversikt over. Andre ganger kan det være like fantastisk å leke seg med

makroperspektiver på Google Earth. En del ting forstas nok best på avstand. Men å finne den rette balansen mellom passe generalisering og overforenkling, betinger at det har vært en historie av tilstand: Å ha vært tilstrekkelig forbundet med noe, rundt noe eller omgitt av noe til at vi har fått erfare at noe står på spill. Denne erfaringen bør også være langvarig nok til at vi kan skille det vane-lige fra unntakene. Erfaringsdybde, som er en kvalitativ målestokk, må altså understøttes av erfaringsbredde, som er en kvantitativ målestokk. Det er først da vi med rette kan hevde at ingen andre fag kommer nærmere en forståelse av Det Menneskelige. Veien dit er ikke enkel, og den går på ingen måte rett frem. Men vi blir en god del klokere mens vi går den.

Studenter ved vårt institutt bør forvente at disse innsiktene kommer til uttrykk i møtet med de ansatte. Så selv om veien oppover i etasjene i utgangspunktet er lang, og ble enda lengre gjennom innføring av vrang kortlesere, er det greit å minne på at alle ved SAI, studenter og ansatte, er forenet i samme prosjekt: Å forstå det menneskelige i all sin dybde og bredde. Så sårbarheten som ligger i kontaktsøking – for å stille et spørsmål, komme med en innvending, lufte en interesse, gi en kompliment, eller «bare» å gi seg til kjenne – den er så inderlig gjenkjennelig. Den skal møtes med raushet.

Og heldigvis er det slik at nær sagt alle av instituttets ansatte er tydelige på at vi sav-

Images

a. Dette bildet er tatt fra baksiden av Vilhelm Bjerknes' hus. Hva mangler? Teigens fotoatelier/MUV.

b. Ståle Skogstad/MUV

c. Bindern har en rekke vakre trapper! Her fra vestbyggen i Harriet Holters hus. Teigens fotoatelier/MUV

d. Nå begynner uteområdene å ta form. MUV/Foto: Sigmund L. Løvold.

Alt materiale kommer fra UiOs historie digitale arkiv.

Tilgjengelig på:
<https://www.muv.uio.no/uios-historie>



quetzal & velvet



Lars Gabriel Unlayao Slettebø

Postgrad UiO

&

Fabio Nicolás Venero Figueroa

MA Student PUCP

Atop a finely woven gold-threaded mat sits a man with immaculate posture, adorned with a cape of shimmering jade-green quetzal feathers. His regal features are tastefully accompanied with large oblong earpieces which almost reach his shoulders. The soft glimmer of his golden diadem elegantly compliments his nutty brown complexion. He smirks as he makes eye contact with the man sitting next to him, soft wrinkles deepen around his eyes as he ponders over how to respond to his friend's thoughtful metaphysical reflection which seems to be coming to an intriguing conclusion. He sips from the red cup in his hands, containing a bitter yet fragrant drink.

"... dubito, cogito, ergo sum!"

Confident and proud of his eloquent choice of words, the other man patiently listens to his philosophical sparring partner's response. He, on the other hand, sits atop an ankle-high rosewood stool, nearly hidden by his glistening velvet cape. Contrary to his partner, his face is unadorned, exempt a stylish mustache and goatee. Absent-mindedly he brushes away a strand of his wavy and impeccably kempt hair, which raven black hue dramatically contrasts with his beige skin and snow-white collar.

As the man with the plumed cape melodiously expresses his own stance on the matter, the man with the velvet cape furrows his brow thoughtfully, a smirk playing on his lips. He takes a sip from his own white and blue porcelain cup, containing a similarly bitter and fragrant

(but somehow more poignant) beverage. At first, he finds himself eagerly nodding sympathetically at the poetic lamentation expressed by his partner, but as he reaches the end his eyebrows are raised in shock.

“... na nikuika pampa onkaj tonati uan ta, ikenke axtikuika?”

An awkward stillness drags on for a long moment, until they simultaneously burst into giddy laughter, and tap each other’s backs in a brotherly half-embrace. “I think we need stronger refreshment.”, one of them exclaims. With a mischievous smile the other waves over an attendant and responds:

“Indeed, for life is short, my friend.” Their smiles are infectious.

Above we’ve described a fictional scene between Nezahualcoyotl and Descartes discussing philosophy, to ponder how the two men separated by large distances in time and space, might have interacted. You see, both philosophers saw the world as illusory (Portilla, 2006). However, their philosophical responses to this observation stand as polar opposites.¹

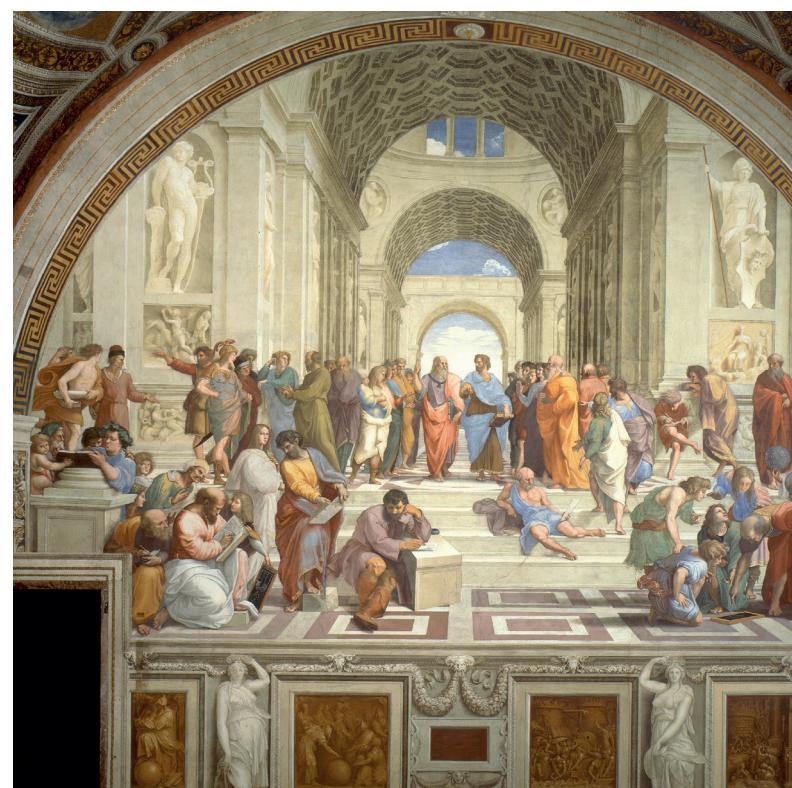
Nezahualcoyotl calls the earth a “treacherous house of paintings” and laments life’s impermanence “... even jade loses its shimmer, even gold breaks, even quetzal feathers must tear. Not forever on this treacherous earth, just a short time here.” As for humans: “like paintings, we fade away, like flowers, we dry up, here on this treacherous earth.” He recognized that suffering and uncertainty was an indelible part of the human condition. In his despair he asks the songbird why it sings, to which it responds:

1 To be precise, we interpret the difference in Nezahualcoyotl and Descartes rooted in their understanding of god. Nezahualcoyotl perceives “god” as impermanent (referring to the pantheistic entity named teotl in Mexican metaphysics (Maffie, 2015)). While he distrusts his own senses, he accepts them and makes art to deal with the impermanent nature of god. Descartes on the other hand perceives god as eternal and his soul too. He distrusts his own senses (although only methodologically, he never rejects god spiritually) and rejects them, trusting in stead in logic.

“I sing because I am alive to see beauty under the sun, why don’t you sing?” This conveys a poetic approach to knowledge—he embraces uncertainty through creative, intellectual, and artistic expression. In this article we use Nezahualcoyotl’s poetic approach to explore the philosophical discourse itself. It should be noted that poetry, art, and philosophy are referred to as “flower and song” in Nahuatl (Maffie, 2015).



In stark contrast, Descartes’ approach to illusion is not about embracing it, but fighting it with logic. “I will suppose therefore that... some evil demon, as clever and deceitful as he is powerful, has employed all his energies in deceiving me.”, then he concludes with “I doubt, therefore I think, therefore I am.” The contrast between the two philosophers reflects two distinct ways of knowing. Descartes treats doubt and analysis as the foundation of knowledge. Nezahualcoyotl, on the other hand, sees knowledge as something to be experienced, sung, and felt. On another note, we wonder how they might have felt had they known their faces would one day be plastered on hun-



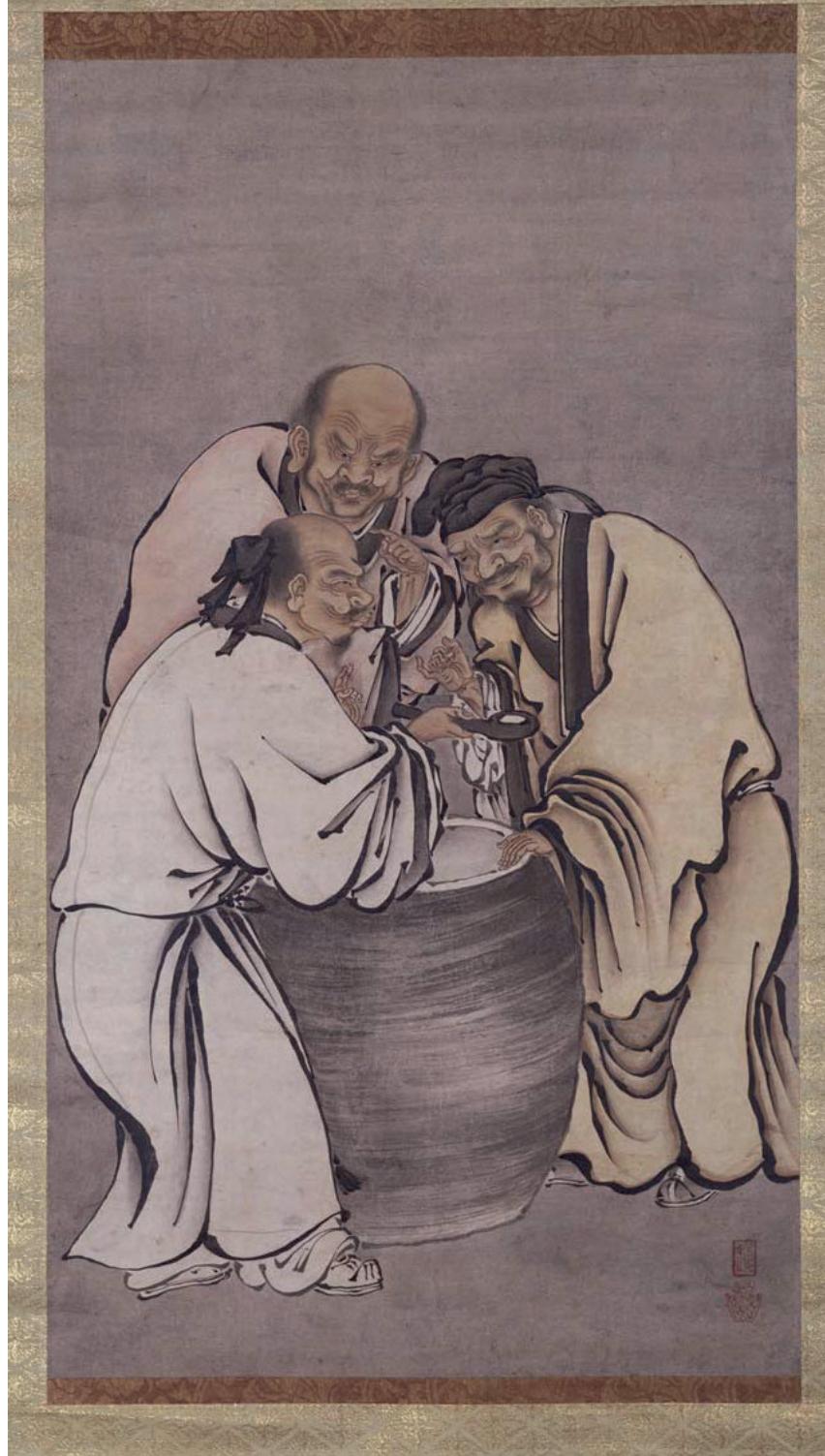


dred-bill denominations of France and Mexico?

At the time of writing, most state governments promote shared historical narratives, cultural symbols, and values that foster a sense of belonging to a national identity.

Education and media instill national identities, teaching citizens about their country's history, ideals, and philosophy. Nationalist imagery, such as flags, anthems, or the faces of famous philosophers printed on currency, is disseminated to shape the imagined communities' landscape. Exposure to certain key-figures, like Nezahualcoyotl and Descartes, encourages emotional connection to the imagined community and reinforces social cohesion and national pride. Making it intuitive for a member of each imagined community seeking knowledge to engage with philosophers they have been familiarized with. We can contextualize nationalist-imagined communities with The School of Athens by Raphael.

Raphael has included his own likeness in the lower-right-hand corner, along with his contemporaries Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo. The fresco invites the onlooker to internalize the common heritage and continuation of philosophical thought between Hellenistic and Renaissance



thinkers. Perhaps imagining the complex conversations they might have had.

While renaissance-era Europeans enthusiastically adopted ancient philosophers into their imagined spaces of discourse, they were not inclusive of foreigners and women. While the revival of classical thought in Europe evolved to legitimize and justify colonial violence, systems of oppression, and wholesale resource extraction (Mignolo, 2003), The School of Athens was remarkably inclusive for its time and



place and contributed to ushering in an era of intellectual synthesis across cultures.

Similarly, Water and Land paintings combine historical and mythical philosophers, intended to be meditated upon and allow the onlooker to orient themselves in a space of exuberant discourse. An especially popular motif, The Three Vinegar Tasters, depicts Confucius, LaoZi, and Buddha all taking a sip from a vat of vinegar. This motif depicts the three sages expressing their attitudes towards vinegar: Buddha finds the vinegar bitter, Confucius finds it sour, and Laozi finds it sweet. This apocryphal (and absurd) event portrays elegantly and succinctly how these philosophers perceive a common world they all inhabit differently. The motif is widely considered respectful to all three traditions, and communicates the value of, and reverence for, all three patriarchs.

The above examples provide a concrete example of how representing philosophers in friendly dialogue can bolster narratives of social cohesion and co-existence for different world-views. Lamana (2019) advocates for the recognition of Guaman Poma de Ayala, whose critique of colonial society has largely gone ignored in North Atlantic mainstream discourse. He compares Guaman Poma with Plato and Aristotle, and argues that his insights are as indispensable to understand the modern world, depicts himself in dialogue with Indigenous and Spanish leaders, clergy, and peasants. Himself dressed in European-style fashion, demonstrating his own intellectual positionality at the confluence of these two societies. Nevertheless, his critique of colonial society have largely gone ignored in North Atlantic mainstream discourse (Lamana, 2019).

Imagine if we took Lamana's proposal seriously, and depicted Guaman Poma de Ayala conversing with Plato, Aristotle, and Da Vinci, in our time's "School of Athens"? One way, is to imagine Nezahualcoyotl and Descartes discussing philosophy and laughing, at a non-descript bar. And, if it's not too daring, what if we depict ourselves as Raphael did? Engaging with those vital yet unjustly ignored thinkers, and breathe new life into the classics, hopefully redeemed of their inveterate eurocentrism.

We, the authors, envision a community where our flowers and songs—our paintings, literature, and artistic expressions—are celebrated as components of decolonial healing. To do this, we must remember that in order to create spaces of respectful and egalitarian dialogue, we must first imagine them.

Lamana, G. (2019). *How "Indians" Think: Colonial Indigenous Intellectuals and the Question of Critical Race Theory*. University of Arizona Press.

Maffie, J. (2013). *Aztec philosophy: Understanding a world in motion*. University Press of Colorado.

Montiel, J. (2019). *Aztec Metaphysics—Two Interpretations of an Evanescent World*. *Genealogy*, 3(4), 59.

Nezahualcoyotl's poems: San iuki tlakuiloli ah tonpopoliui/Como una pintura nos iremos borrando.; In xochitl, in cuicatl/La flor, la canción.; Piltototsin./Pajarillo.

Portilla, M. L. (2006). *La filosofía náhuatl: estudiada en sus fuentes* (Vol. 10). Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

Av Ivonne Bautista
Migrante Peruana,
MA Student UiO



Hvor mange meter er det mellom
Meg på spansk og
Meg på norsk?
Sju år?
Hvor mange ord kan jeg på spansk?
Videregående skole.
Hvor mange ord kan jeg på norsk?
Mastergrad.
Er utdanning en avstand?
Hvordan ser selvtiliten ut på spansk?
Hvordan ser selvtiliten ut på norsk?
Hva er fagforening på spansk igjen, mamma.
Jeg husker ikke igjen, mamma.
Er det noen skrivefeil i dette her?
Er det noen tanker som
jeg ikke burde ha?
Hvor mange meter er det mellom
Meg på spansk og
Meg på norsk?
Syttende januar to tusen atten.

*Tusen takk til Cecilia Salinas for inspirasjon
og for hjelpen.*

The Collapse of the Ordinary

THE DISINTEGRATION OF COORDINATES

There are moments when the coordinates of life disappear. When what once felt stable and self-evident dissolves into uncertainty. In these moments, reflection is no longer a luxury but a necessity. History is filled with such fractures, where the collapse of meaning has resulted in fertile grounds for new thought. As Walter Benjamin observed, we do not become historical beings in times of progress, but in the face of the abyss, when structures disintegrate. It could be argued that only when the familiar world is torn apart are we forced to interrogate what has been lost and what might be built anew. One thing is certain, try we must!

It seems like we are living through such a moment now. The world order that once seemed secure is crumbling. Growing economic disparities, environmental collapse, shifting populations, and hardening state boundaries, have come to define our era. Yet we are still grappling with precisely how we are to make sense of and develop a direction forward. In the last decade mass protests have erupted across the globe – expressions of collective frustration, but often without materializing in any structural change. Why?

Time, Late-Stage Capitalism, and the Loss of Meaning

Sebastian Boelke
MA UiO

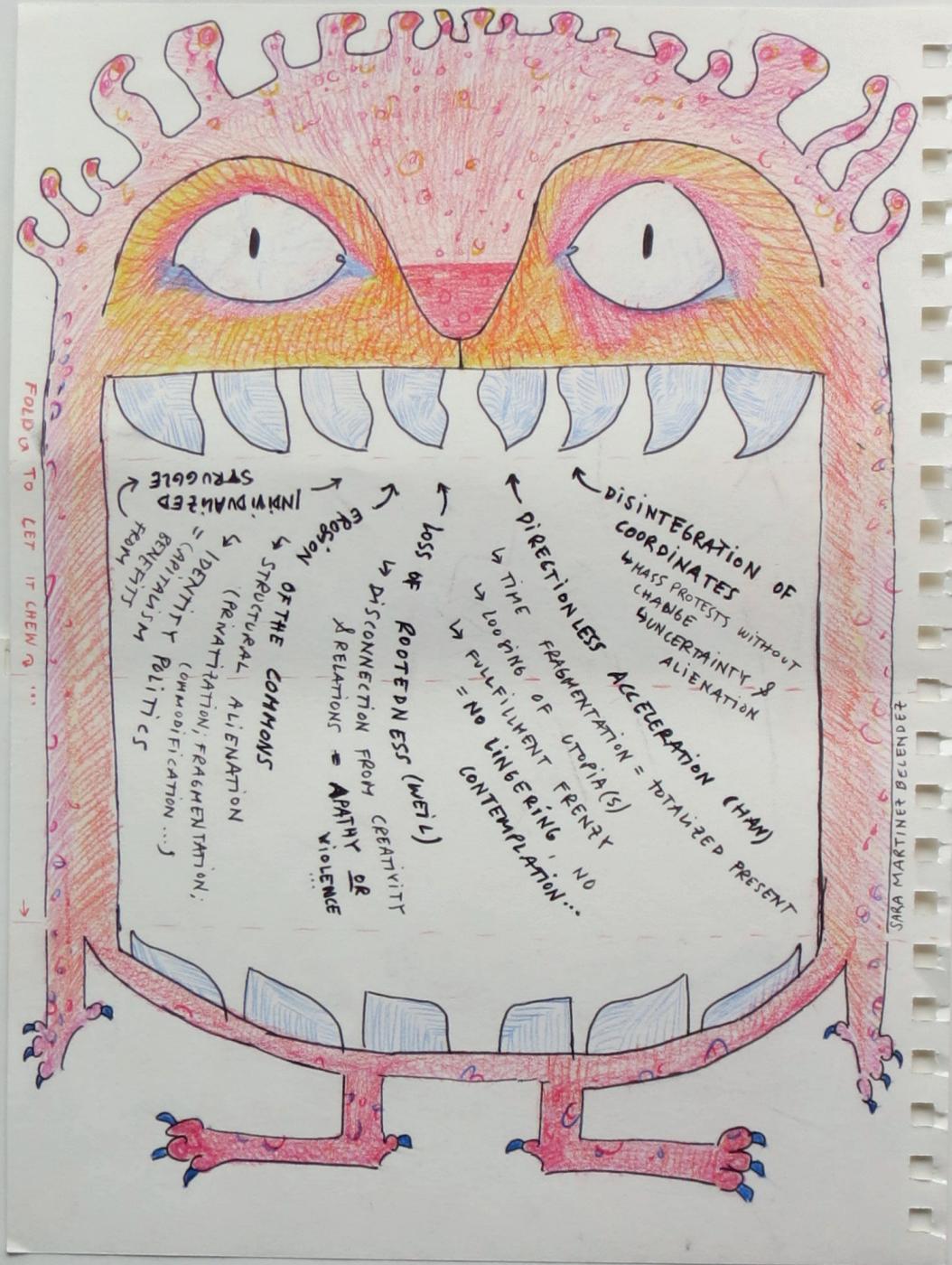
Håvard Widerøe
Postgrad UiO

THE AGE OF DIRECTIONLESS ACCELERATION

The South Korean philosopher Byung-Chul Han provides a crucial diagnosis: it is not simply that time is moving too fast, but that we are accelerating without direction. In late-stage capitalism, life is not progressing toward anything – it is merely speeding up. Time is no longer experienced as a structured narrative but as a series of fragmented, fleeting moments. The present is totalized; the future, emptied of possibility – or at least utopian possibilities. The ideas we use to think other ideas with simply do not lead to utopia(s) any longer. Even our thoughts have been commodified, time to think is scarce, and as a result thoughts always have to labour. This condition has led to a general lack of deep thinking, thinking-as-calculation, makes genuinely different thoughts, utopias among them, precarious. Whatever cannot be rendered does not exist in the present, leaving us with two conditions: nothingness and the present itself. Thus, waiting has become a form of suffering.

Scrolling through social media, consuming (dystopic) news at an ever increasing pace, constantly seeking productivity – these do

"THE COLLAPSE OF
THE ORDINARY
MONSTER DIET."



DO NOT FEED !:

- RADICAL ATTENTION (WEIL)
- VITA CONTEMPLATIVA (HAN)
- COLLECTIVE ACTION (REBUILDING COMMONS)
- MAKING UDD-KIN (HARAWAY)
- ENGAGE THE POSSIBILITY: TO BEGIN AGAIN...

not add up to a meaningful whole. Acceleration without orientation produces not depth, but exhaustion. The modern subject, constantly rushed and yet going nowhere, loses the ability to reflect, to pause... Alternatives are no longer considered. This erosion of contemplation, Han argues, is not incidental; it is systemic. The idea that whoever can live twice as fast – think the Instagram trend ‘my 5am morning routine, among a plethora of other self-improvement schemes – can enjoy twice as many life possibilities, that the acceleration of life multiplies life and thus brings a person closer to fulfillment, confuses fulfillment with plenitude, a calculation that rests upon a quantitative basis. Yet a long list of events does not produce the tension that makes for a good story. A life without breadth is robbed of duration.

THE LOSS OF DURATION & ROOTEDNESS

Han argues that true experience requires duration—the ability to linger, to allow meaning to unfold over time. In other words, to distance ourselves from the totalizing now. But in a world where distance is reduced to an obstacle, where every commute is something to “get through” as quickly as possible, we lose the spaces where contemplative thought might emerge. Like tourists in our own life, we are rushing from attraction to attraction, we live without truly inhabiting time. Beauty, which is never immediate but arises through contemplation, is lost to us.

Writing from exile during the second world war, Simone Weil similarly perceived a profound crisis unfolding in her own time. In *The Need for Roots*, she diagnosed the most dangerous affliction of human societies as uprootedness – a sickness of the soul, deprived of the sustenance and nourishment necessary for a moral life. The uprooted individual is severed from the universe around them: a being whose thoughts and feelings are disconnected, whose relationships are fractured, and whose existence is isolated, stripped of any deeper meaning. Like the subject Han describes,

such a person rarely reflects on the social significance of their actions or the final destination of what they produce.

The uprooted person moves without direction, learns without seeking truth, and works without any expression of creativity or purpose. They know the price of everything, yet the value of nothing. Starved of spiritual nourishment, they are left with two bleak options: fall into a deathlike, apathetic (vegetative) state or lash out in desperation. Prone to apocalyptic fantasies, they may turn to violence, uprooting those who still remain connected to life and meaning. In this barren landscape, where the soul is numb and society has grown cold and mechanical, the uprooted individual clings desperately to anything that resembles flesh and blood. Personal loyalty becomes the last refuge: devotion to a leader, an idol, a figure to whom they attach themselves with all their might, for they have nothing else.

Afflicted in body and soul, Weil asks: how could such a person even imagine anything that does not bear the mark of their desolation? Today, we see the effects of this uprootedness everywhere. Political movements flare up and disappear, unable to sustain themselves. Social bonds grow weaker as attention spans shrink. The inability to pause, to think deeply, leads to polarization – people grasping at simplistic ideologies because complexity requires time they no longer have. Atomized time is discontinuous time. Nothing binds events together. Freed from their context, things start to ‘float’ due to the absence of gravitational meaning.. The holding-together dissipates. Things accelerate without hold. To evaluate the value, or weight, of experiences in a no-gravity environment is hard, as acceleration and gravitationlessness lead to a massification of events and information experiences as potential meaningful/meaningless experiences. The fact that there is no gravity makes it hard to distinguish the important from the non-important. The social structures that create continuity and duration are increasingly disintegrating, atomization and individualization take hold of societies as a whole. As

such, promises and commitment – temporal practices, in that they commit to a future, are losing their importance.

Alienation is not just an individual experience – it is structural. It is the result of enclosure: the privatization of land, the fragmentation of productive processes, the transformation of human relationships into economic transactions. It is the severing of people from each other and from themselves.

THE EROSION OF THE COMMONS AND THE RISE OF INDIVIDUALIZED STRUGGLE

The idea of the commons – at times like these – should fascinate our collective imagination, precisely because its loss is waking us up to its significance, as common spaces – whether physical, political, or intellectual – disappear. Commoning then, is the rebuilding of social relations that have been eroded by neoliberal individualism. Yet, instead of organizing around shared material conditions, contemporary struggles are often fragmented along individual lines. Identity politics, in its neoliberal form, risks becoming a method of individualizing struggle rather than fostering collective resistance. Rather than seeking solidarity through unifying categories, contemporary politics too often operates through an atomized framework, where identity, rather than shared conditions, becomes the primary organizing principle. This shift runs the risk of cementing the isolation of individuals rather than their integration into a broader collective. Whatever keeps the exploited divided maintains for capitalists a tight-fisted grip on labor and the earthly commons. In turn, those who overcome division and build unity take crucial steps towards freeing that grip.

As Donna Haraway puts it: Make odd-kin! The struggle is not simply about asserting individual identities within the existing system, but about transforming the very nature of our social and economic relations. Autonomy, after all, does not mean to be free from others, severed and isolated, but the

freedom for the self (auto) to abide by the rules (nómos) one chooses. Thus, freedom is expressed in the collectivity. De-alienation begins socially and ends socially – it is both a means and an end

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

If acceleration without direction is the disease, then attention and rootedness are the cure. Weil urges us toward attention—a radical form of presence that resists the frantic demands of modern life. Han, similarly, calls for a return to *vita contemplativa*—a way of living that values slowness, thoughtfulness, and depth over mere productivity.

But de-alienation cannot be a solitary act. It must be social. Rebuilding the commons, reclaiming time, and reintegrating with one another are not individual lifestyle choices; they are acts of collective resistance. The project of reclaiming meaning, of rediscovering duration, is not about nostalgia for the past—it is about making a livable future.

It seems we are on the precipice of collapse, and that the only political views that exist are radical on either side of the spectrum. But in collapse, there is also the possibility of beginning again.

Caffentzis, G., & Federici, S. (2014). Commons against and beyond capitalism. *Community Development Journal*, 49.

Han, B.-C. (2017). The scent of time: a philosophical essay on the art of lingering. Polity.

Haraway, D. J. (2016). Staying with the trouble: Making kin in the Chthulucene. Duke university press.

Strathern, M. (1992). Reproducing the future (Vol. 1). Manchester University Press.

Weil, S. (1952). The need for roots: prelude

Wilde, O. (2003). The picture of Dorian Gray. Reprinted with minor revisions. London ; New York, N.Y. : Penguin, 2003.



35mm. PHOTO EXHIBIT

In her Photographs, Vilde Rogeberg animals and humans chasing unexpected

She also finds a productive distance–*relation to their fieldnotes*– in the that create a space in relation with the



Opera, Oslo 2022 – 35mm film

All photographs were taken in Oslo, Norway or Guanajuato Capital, Mexico between the summer of 2023 and the spring of 2024. Shot on a Kodak Retinette 1A with Ilford HP5 Plus black and white 35mm film.

next page, Island, Oslo Winter 2024 – 35mm film

explores the distance between moments and symmetries.

very much like the anthropologists
materiality of her camera and film
image, her and the moment of taking



Cyclist, Oslo 2022 – 35mm film



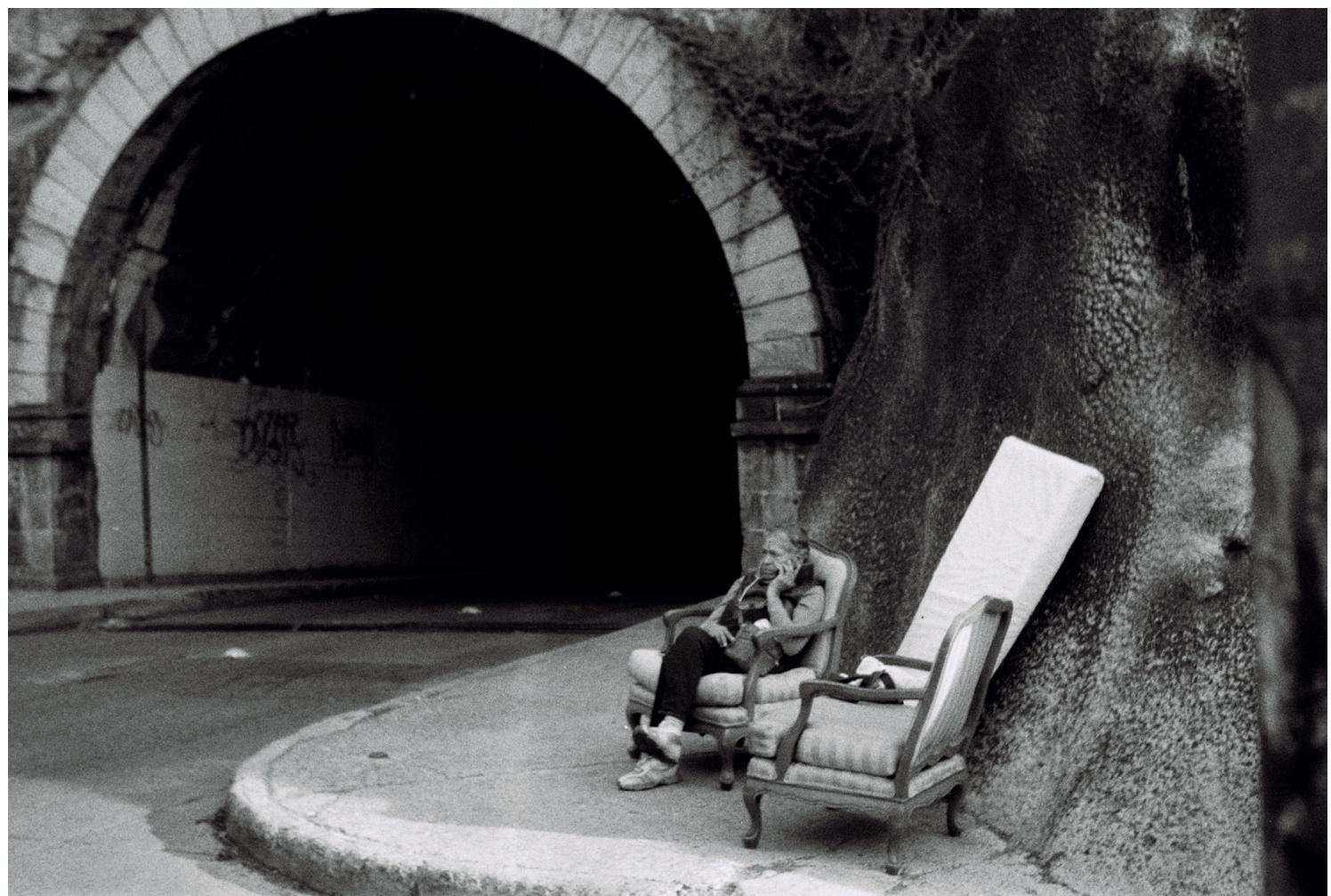




left **Mann mater fugler**

upper right **Dame i sofastol**, lower right **Fugler**

Guanajuato 2023 — 35mm film



next page, **Cat in Kitchen** — 35mm film



Kitchen Rules

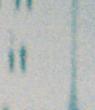
Empty it - Fill it

Dirty it - Clean it

If you open it - Close it

If you spill it - Wipe it up

If you cook it - SHARE IT





right, Tram Spring 2024

— 35mm film



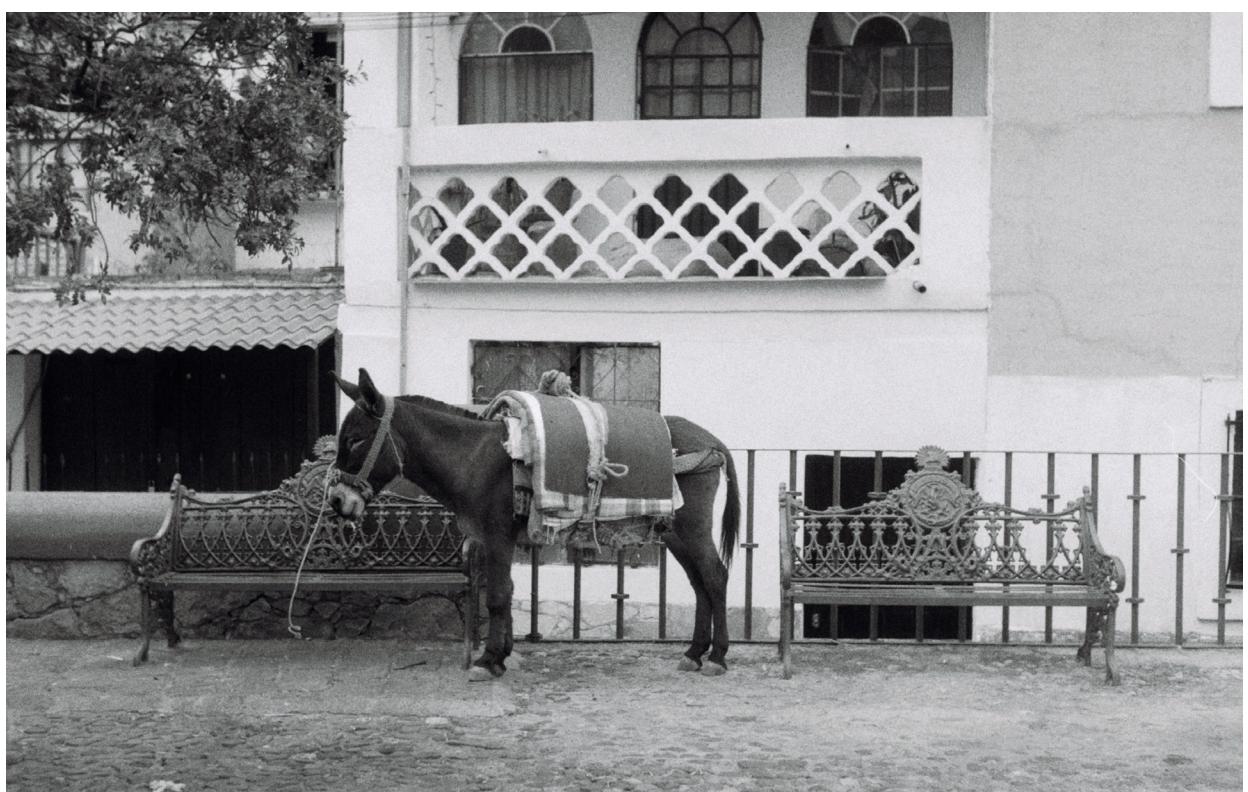




upper left **To hunder og en hest**

lower left **Hest**

right **man in treeshade**



Gu



upper left, Bak døra er en annen verden

lower left, stasjonert esel

right Blomster

To hunder, Guanajuato 2023 – 35mm film





Backyard, Norway 2024— 35mm film

what was

Behind were left the mountains and jungles, the hills crowded with bromeliads, the flocks of birds vanishing into the black storm clouds of an instant downpour.

Behind was left the land—brown, soft, and fertile—from which trees and animals sprouted, and so many blue, red, and green birds that graciously imitated the voice of life.

Behind was left the city that sheltered, with concrete, other forests of the past; the tall glass buildings lost in the gray tide of asbestos rooftops; the irregular streets, the bare-brick houses piled on the slopes of memory, the daily bustle of the markets, the midday heat that made the asphalt shimmer and life unbearable, and the coolness of the evening reviving the entire world. Behind were left your neighbors, sitting in front of their homes, fanning away the last sweat of the afternoon, listening on the radio to the miraculous mix of cheerful music and a newscast, also delivered in a cheerful voice, recounting the week's latest horrors.

Juan
Grajales

escritor y líder de
Latín-Amerika-
gruppene i Norge

Behind were left your friends—with your same brown eyes, your same black hair, your same scars from a bad bike ride, the scraped knees of a happy childhood, and hearts dulled by the terrible fever of youth. The fever of hope.

Behind were left the barricaded streets, with yellow tape waving in the breeze of oblivion, and the walls freshly painted, still dripping, where once there had been graffiti and murals. Behind was left the cry for mercy, the raised hands, the pellets, the blood, and the air corrupted by tear gas.

Behind were left your notebooks, your pencils, your shoes.

Behind was left your first love.

Behind was left the immense Atlantic—furious and shoreless—that erased your past with blue brushstrokes, like an uncertain haven, like a fake calm, like a sorrow without origin.

Behind was left the warmth of the wind, the scattered clouds, the sudden downpours.

Behind was left the chant of “The people, united, will never be defeated.”

You arrived in a strange world, with different glances and a sky without birds.

left behind

The hours were changed, time inverted, the stars disordered, and the wind blows from the other side.

What remains here, then, is a tree without its root.

A person without origin, a gaze without a past.

Your story became uncertain, like the memory of a bad dream, like a bitter taste in the mouth.

And it is because you carry tattooed in your soul the names of those who did not surrender.

It is that heartbeat—deaf and confused—that breaks the silence of the fjords, rides the winds, crosses the Atlantic, and rains back on your forests, your mountains, your street, and your home.

The rain of your tears washes away the ashes of your scorched life.

Behind was left your high sun, Mexican.

Behind was left your jungle, Brazilian.



Behind were your salt-peter mines, Chilean.

Behind were your valleys and the warm sob of the Magdalena River, Colombian.

Behind was left the gray haven of rain over the Paraná, Argentine.

Behind were left the song, the rain, and the pain.

Behind was left the hope, dear Latin American.

Now begins the exile.



forest soundbites

In this project I filmed a small forest outside Ås, while combining it with soundbites from the Amazonian tropical rainforest. Refle-



Take a deep breath in.
Click play on the video.
Walking through a forest
at the brink of it shedding
its last autumn leaves, what do you see,
what do you feel?

I hope the sounds of
the forest surround you
and give you some calm
here at the start of this
new year. Reflecting
upon what nature means to you now
that we are in the dead of winter,
remembering the light and
warmth of the sun.



The soundbite disconnects with
the familiar Norwegian forest. How are the world's trees
connected and how do we
connect to them?

Kristine Aarnes
MA Student UiO



Sara
Martinez Belendez

Panopticum of Care. Mosaic

In the vast landscape of the farms, binoculars become part of the domestic architecture, a daily apparatus of care. Panopticum of Care turns the logic of surveillance inside out: looking is not about control, but about sustaining relations, rhythms and attention across distance.

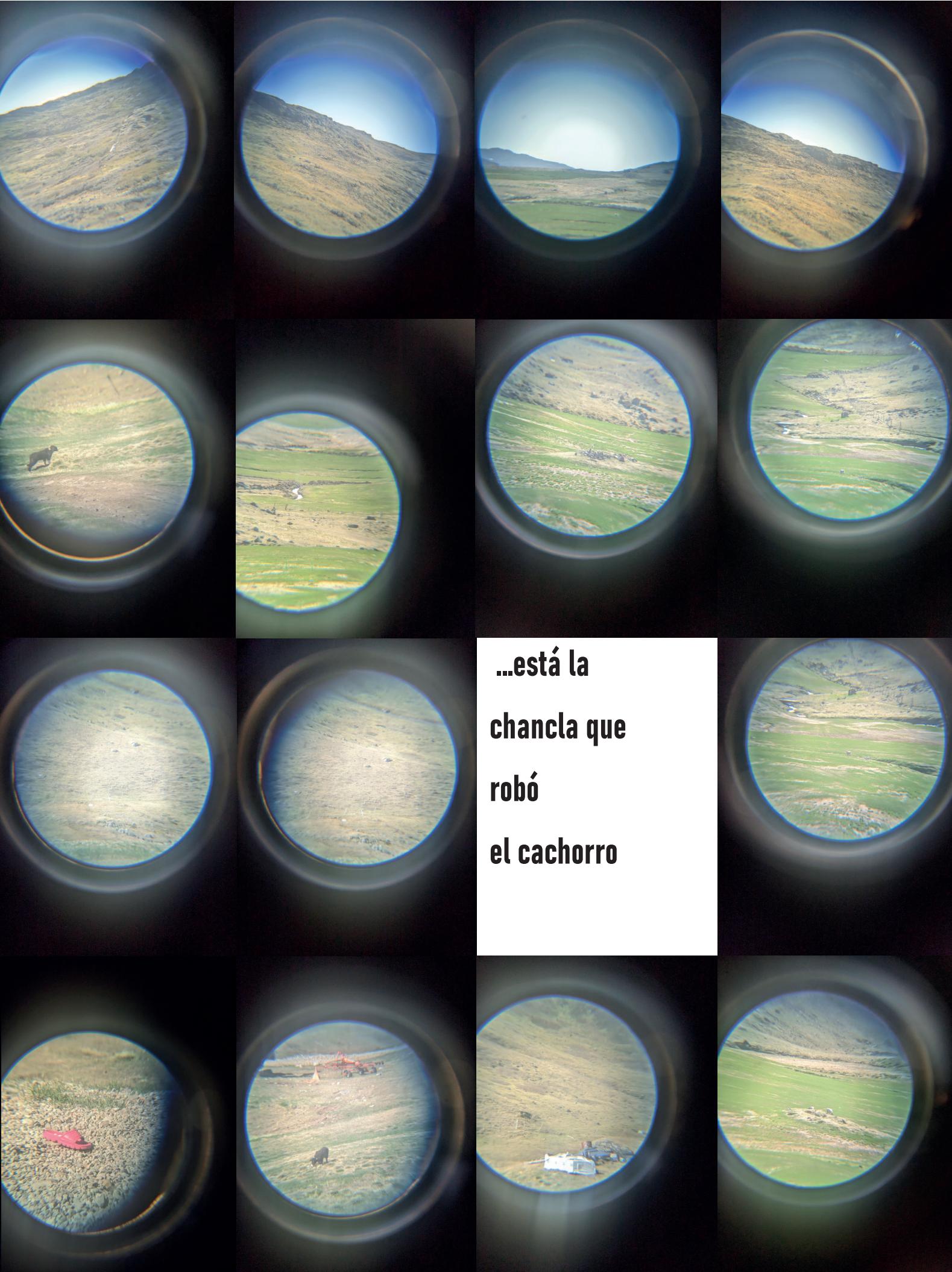
In every farm I visited during my fieldwork, I would find a pair of binoculars on the kitchen window. The big landscape shrunk to tiny details, a hole in the fence, sheep grazing far away, a slipper the puppy stole lying in the middle of the fields.



¡Mira!
allí...



**...está la
chancla que
robó
el cachorro**



Chronotopes

Rigas
Karampasis

MPhil Graduate in
Social Anthropology,
University of Oslo. Onassis Fo-
undation Scholar

11-hour time difference with Norway reconfigured intimacy into a series of digital exchanges. With this entry I am grappling with how romantic longing permeated ethnographic decision-making and overall reality in the field. By looking back to what probably was a million hours of midnight FaceTime calls and some sleep deprived journal entries I believe that the “unseen” emotional work/labour of sustaining love across 15.000 km became both a methodological vulnerability and an unexpected framework for understanding Tuvaluan concepts.

The 11-hour time difference between Funafuti and Oslo imposed a circadian rhythm of absence: waking at 2:00 AM to catch my partner’s return from work, going out and about the next morning all drowsy from the endless but much needed calls. Our relationship was sustained through such midnight FaceTime calls, in, from my end, rocky (and expensive) connectivity, and through the regular 6:30 PM call coinciding with his morning routine and what in Funafuti (capital of Tuvalu, and my main field) marked a devotion curfew (a rare moment of harmonious synchronicity). But this autoethnographic glimpse is not just about longing; it’s about how love’s infrastructural labor reveals the unseen emotional tectonics of fieldwork, and shapes the practice of research. If I hadn’t managed to stay in touch, if I hadn’t prepared letters to send, or hadn’t been able to find moments in my day to connect with him, the resulting strain on my psyche would have inevitably affected my capacity to do research. At the same time, after having to put parts of my life back in Norway on some type of a hold while fieldwork unfolded, maintaining our communication came with its own costs. Yet, in the end, those sacrifices were worth it.

This autoethnography examines the undocumented emotional labor of maintaining a transcontinental romantic relationship during anthropological fieldwork in Tuvalu, where geographic isolation, financial constraints and an

While FaceTime came to provide a sense of audiovisual continuity, it simultaneously exacerbated sensory deprivation. Not being able to do simple things together (like visiting his hometown, taking our first summer vacation, or just sharing what a day in Tuvalu was like, from meals to nights out with friends) made it harder to really feel present with each other, even when we talked. In addition, there was also the understated parameter of power outages that disrupted planned calls, and how each failed call came to amplify awareness

of Separation

of how digital privileges (Norwegian 5G networks and access to WiFi versus Tuvalu’s 4G LTE 2Mbps bandwidth) create, in a way, emotional hierarchies within the relationship itself. In this context, digital intimacy promised continuity but deepened absence. This distortion of “co-presence” reflects what UNESCO’s Digital Anthropology Project identifies as the paradox of connectivity: technologies that bridge distance often amplify absence by privileging visual and auditory cues over tactile, olfactory, or embodied presence / togetherness. Digital intimacy, much like Tuvalu’s digitization initiatives, became a negotiation with systems not designed for our survival; like my partner’s voice fading mid-sentence during rains, or my stories from the field losing their tangibility in transmission. These moments echoed the “disjunctive temporalities” described in feminist ethnography, where technological promise collides with the grit of material constraints.

In addition to all that, in the time spent with my Tuvaluan friends, I could see them potentially interpreting my screen-gazing during events as a disrespectful elevation of self (which I believe is well described by the term fakamaualuga in Tuvalu), unaware that these were attempts to balance my fragmented life, that took place at the same time in various spaces. On many occasions I was teased about my “ghost lover,” as my hidden queerness (avoiding to show a picture at any cost, aware of Tuvalu’s criminalization of LGBTQ+ identities) compounded the silence. My queerness, doubly concealed – both the relationship itself and its sa-

me-sex nature – forced me to confront a “double orientation”: splitting attention between the ethnographic present and the private self, which was (beyond a mere metaphor) a lived spatial and emotional reality that shaped how I moved through Tuvaluan communal life while quietly sustaining a relationship that could not be named or shown. These calls, the longing embedded in them, alongside the fear of sharing more about my own personal life to the people I was sharing my every day with exposed a hidden curriculum: how researchers are trained – or the lack thereof – to amputate personal anguish from fieldwork.

But it didn't stop here. Being back in Oslo, re-acclimating to sharing the same physical space after months of virtual connection and getting used to the reality of being present in the same place, while simultaneously maintaining connections to another life, exposed how neither our relationship nor our individual selves had remained static; the very act of maintaining connected across continents had reshaped our expectations and ways of being together. Where calls once bridged absence, the post-fieldwork reality demanded that we re-learn and reimagine presence. I had become distance-accustomed to expressing care through narrated absence, a “double alienation,” analyzed through Kamala Visweswaran's fissured self, that revealed to me how fieldwork's relational sacrifices

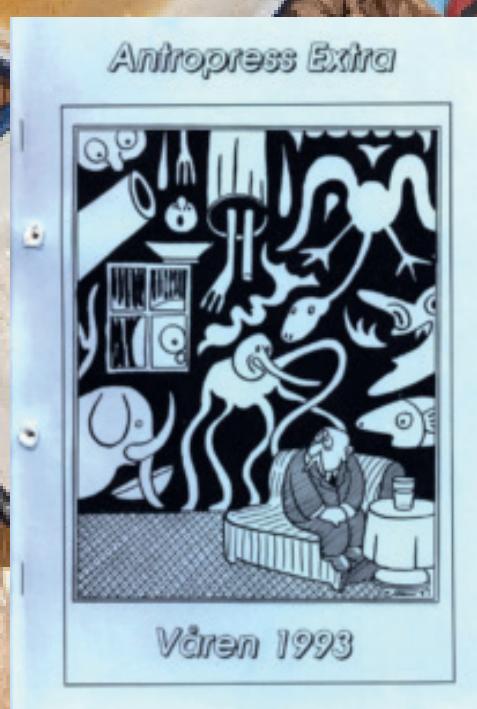
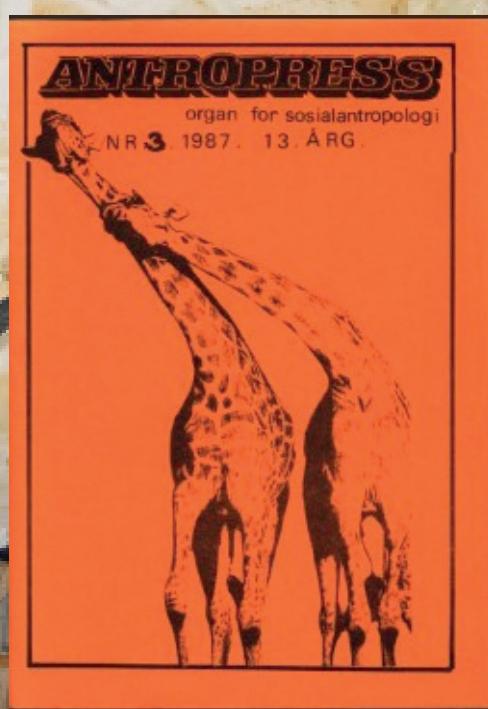
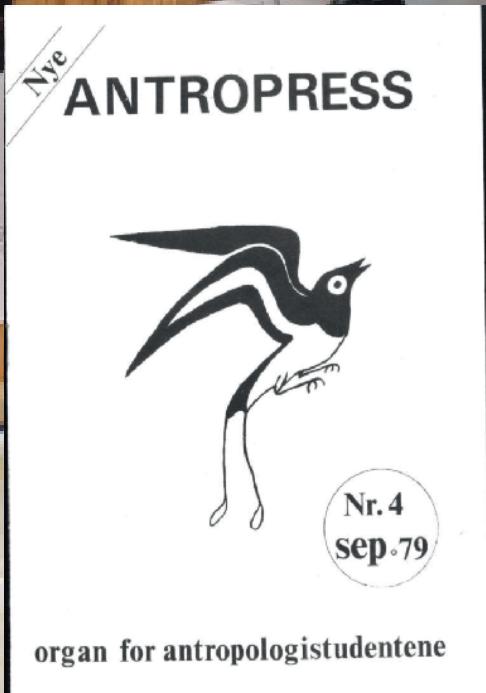
permanently reshape intimacy epistemologies. In addition to that, the perpetual jet lag manifested not as post-reunion adjustment but as a chronic state, collapsing “field” and “home” temporalities distinctions. In Tuvalu, I'd inhabited what Bakhtin calls a chronotope of separation, a time-space where love and labor coexisted in a disjointed simultaneity. My fractured presence, which was initially a source of guilt (a guilt divided between my partner, for my prolonged absence, and my fieldwork, for my inability, or my persistent – nearly obsessive – sense that I was not being fully present), became a lens for understanding how global marginality is lived not as a grand crisis, but through daily acts of care strained across bandwidths and time zones.

Through this short autoethnographic reflective moment I stress that longing is not fieldwork's Achilles' heel but can instead be a revelatory lens. The very “weaknesses” dismissed by methodological purists (those being sleep deprivation distorting observations, emotional preoccupation during events and festivities, etc.) became ethnographic assets when reflexively was harnessed. In reflecting on these midnight rituals, I came to recognize them not as indulgence, but as part of a broader human practice of sustaining connection through creative adaptation, a practice mirrored in Tuvalu's innovative approaches to preserving fenua amid unprecedented challenges.

While our contexts differed radically in scale and stakes, both endeavors required reimagining care across dislocations. Anthropologists' intimate entanglements, far from contaminating data, can forge new pathways for emotionally integrated (or, at least, emotionally informed) scholarship.



if you are not full
yet, go check our
archive to have
a final bite...



or visit
our
articles
online



WANNA
WRITE
OR JOIN
THE TEAM?

contact us on
antroblekk@
gmail.com :=)



avstand *distance*

Sosialantropologene ved UiO sitt tidsskrift