***Tekst, bilde, lyd og rom (TBLR).***

***Text, Image, Sound, Space. Norwegian Researcher Training School –***

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

PhD and Research Seminar, May 22-24, 2024

Humboldt-Universität, Berlin

# Call for papers

**Ending, closing, quitting/stopping…and continuing. Aesthetic, artistic, and literary practices of finalization.**

If it is so difficult to begin, imagine / what it will be to end –

Louise Glück

Problems of ending, stopping and closing have shaped the public discourse in recent years: Think for example of the multiple ‘ends‘ of the Covid-19-Pandemic, the ongoing discussions about the end of capitalism, history and globalization, or the unsolved environmental and social challenges caused by the inevitable exhaustion of natural resources. New cultural practices like silent quitting, cancelling, or ghosting have received increased attention, for many the idea of ‘leaving society’ became attractive again; to stop flying or eating meat was perceived as a controversial imperative.

The aesthetic sphere did not remain unaffected by these contemporary ‘senses of endings’: apocalyptic, dystopian, and catastrophic scenarios are flourishing in literature, in exhibitions, in movies and on stage. Furthermore, there are radical forms of ecological art, posthuman theory and Nature Writing dealing with various forms of extermination and extinction in the natural world. Joan Didion’s aphorism “It is easy to see the beginning of things, and harder to see the ends” (*Slouching towards Bethlehem,* 1968), is still valid today and points to the inherent difficulty of endings, closure, and completion.

It might therefore be productive to turn away from the reckless proclamation of various ends (of art, an era, a trend) and rather look at the cultural, aesthetic, and social practices connected to endings, closure, and determination, trying to map the media specificity and the historical determinants surrounding different forms of endings. Ever since Aristoteles’ definition of the end as something coming “after something” and at the same time having “nothing else after it”, practices, morphologies and conventions of closure have been established for different fields, formats, and genres. There are rules for how a tragedy ends, how a poem should close, when a painting is finished, or when a character goes off stage. Katharsis or happy Endings, non-finito, closing formulas or finales, just to name a few, provide an intricate knowledge of finalization, a structure for the production and the reception of art. At the latest with the dawn of modernity these rules and structures became problematic and have remained so ever since. Think of Theodor W. Adorno’s claim that all new music “is tormented by the question of how it can close, not merely end” (*Mahler,* 1960), which might account not only for symphonies, but for all art and literature produced during modernism.

These above mentioned tendencies provide the background for our seminar as a possible analytical framework for capturing the specificities of endings and closure in various discourses, media and forms of art. With these perspectives as a starting point, participants are invited to reflect on different questions of finalization, and how these pertain to their dissertation subjects empirically, analytically, or epistemologically.

The number of participants will be limited to max. 15. Should the number of applications exceed the places available, priorities will be made based on relevance, previous participation in the TBLR program, and status of PhD training. Early applications will also be prioritized.

**Program:** The program will consist of plenary key-note lectures (60-minute presentation, 30-minute discussion) and group work. Participant papers will be presented in a conventional conference setting (20-minute presentation, 20-minute discussion). In addition, there will be text reading sessions. Participants can choose between presenting their own work or a theoretical text from the reading list for a text session. (See below.)

**Key-note speakers:**

PD Dr. Sandra Fluhrer, Friedrich-Alexander-Universität, Erlangen Nürnberg

PD Dr. Michael Bies, Freie Universität Berlin

Prof. Dr. Michael Squire, University of Cambridge

The keynotes will also comment on the PhD students' texts and take part in plenary discussions.

**Working language**: English.

**Application Process:** Those who would like to attend should fill in the application form and submit a short draft of their paper by the 15th of March latest (roughly 300 words).

**Working language**: English.

**Credits (TBLT students): 2/5** ECTS. Participation and presentation will result in 2 ECTS, working over and submitting an edited version of the presentation (10-12 pages) after the seminar, will yield an additional 3 ECTS. Signed and authorized course diplomas will upon request be bestowed upon each PhD student participant having completed the course.

**Credits (IKK students):** Participation and presentation will result in ca. **3** ECTS

**Hotel:** Hotel reservations will be made by the participants themselves. Up to four nights will be reimbursed (up to 100 Euros per night) for students from the institutions participating in TBLR. A reasonable option is the Humboldt University’s guesthouse: https://www.ta.hu-berlin.de/guesthouse

**Meals:** Lunch every day, and dinner Wednesday and Thursday nights.

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

**Texts:** Reading materials will be made available one month before the seminar.

**Deadline for application: 15th March, 2024.**

Applicants from TBLR should submit form available on: <https://www.ntnu.no/tblr>

Any questions should be directed to Wolfgang Hottner [wolfgang.hottner@uib.no](mailto:wolfgang.hottner@uib.no) or Peter Svare Valeur: Peter.Valeur@uib.no

**Reading list**

Giorgio Agamben: “The End of the Poem”, “Pascoli and the Thought of the Voice”, both in Agamben: *The End of the Poem. Studies in Poetics.* Stanford University Press, 1999, pp. 109-119, and 62-76

Günther Anders, “Apocalypse without Kingdom”, in e-flux journal 97, 02/19. (From *Endzeit und Zeitende*, 1957)

https://editor.e-flux-systems.com/files/251199\_e-flux-journal-apocalypse-without-kingdom.pdf

Maurice Blanchot: “The instant of my death”, Stanford University Press 2000 (*L'instant de ma mort,* Montpellier: Fata Morgana, 1994).

https://www.sup.org/books/extra/?id=319&isbn=&gvp=1

Alfred Brendel: “Die Coda ist entzückt. Alfred Brendel im Gespräch», interview in SZ, May 17, 2010

https://www.sueddeutsche.de/kultur/im-gespraech-alfred-brendel-muessig-sein-werde-ich-kaum-1.527753

Roger Caillois: “Mimicry and Legendary Psychasthenia”, in *The Edge of Surrealism. A Roger Caillois Reader,* Duke University Press 2003. pp.89-107 (“Mimétisme et Psychasthénie légendaire”, in Caillois, *Le mythe et l’homme*, Gallimard 2012, 86-122)

<https://monoskop.org/images/2/2e/The_Edge_of_Surrealism_A_Roger_Caillois_Reader_2003.pdf>

Rachel Blau DuPlessis, “Endings and Contradictions”, in *Writing Beyond the Ending. Narrative Strategies of Twentieth Century Women Writers*, Indiana University Press 1985.

https://egargano.weebly.com/uploads/2/2/7/8/22785042/writing\_beyond\_the\_ending.pdf

Sigmund Freud: “Analysis Terminable and Interminable”, in Freud, the Standard Edition, Vol.23, Hogarth Press, 1964, pp. 216-253, (“Die endliche und unendliche Analyse”, in Freud, Gesammelte Werke, vol. 26, Fischer Verlag, pp. 57-100)

“The https://www.sas.upenn.edu/~cavitch/pdf-library/Freud\_Analysis\_Terminable\_Interminable.pdf

G.W.F. Hegel, “Position of Art in Relation to the Finite World and to Religion and Philosophy”, in *Hegel’s Aesthetics. Lectures on Fine Art*, vol.1, Clarendon Press, 1975, pp. 91-105 (Hegel: “Stellung der Kunst im Verhältnis zur endlichen Wirklichkeit und zur Religion und Philosophie”, in Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik 1, Suhrkamp 1970, 127-144)

<https://edisciplinas.usp.br/pluginfile.php/4179802/mod_resource/content/1/AESTHETICS%20I.pdf>

Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000)

<https://monoskop.org/images/d/d6/Kermode_Frank_The_Sense_of_an_Ending_2000.pdf>

Barbara Herrnstein Smith, *Poetic Closure: A Study of How Poems End* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968)