

Seminar

Aesthetics and Practices of the Earth

Wednesday, October 19, 2016

ANNA TSING (UC Santa Cruz, USA):
Earth Stalked by Man - In English

Thursday, February 23, 2017

ÉMILIE HACHE (Université Paris-Ouest Nanterre-La Défense):
Hériter de l'écoféminisme - In French

Wednesday, March 8, 2017

JANAE SHOLTZ (Alvernia University, USA):
Intervals of Resistance: Reinterpreting Earth as the Space of the Cosmic - In English

Friday, April 28, 2017

ISABELLE STENGERS (Université Libre de Bruxelles):
Sortir de la maison du maître : pour une ontologie en voix moyenne - In French

Friday, May 12, 2017

FLORE GARCIN-MARROU (U. Toulouse-Jean Jaurès):
Propositions pour un théâtre écosophique - In French

Tuesday, June 20, 2017

THOM VAN DOOREN (U. of New South Wales, Australia):
Encountering Crows: Enacting Multispecies Democracies - In English

The seminar will be held from 3 pm to 6 pm, at the Université Libre de Bruxelles, room "Henri Janne" (Solbosch Campus, S Building, 44 avenue Jeanne, 15th floor)

We are living today in a partly new situation, with ecological disasters proliferating and with, for plenty of beings and species, possibilities to “live and die well” (D. Haraway) becoming more and more uncertain if not already destroyed. In their living milieus, some human activities have been provoking devastations of unprecedented magnitude. This situation cannot be understood as a temporary crisis; it rather is a profound mutation of terrestrial beings’ conditions of existence. Our time faces the “intrusion of Gaia”, an assemblage of multiple earthly forces becoming powerfully active, with a total indifference to our projects and rationale (I. Stengers).

When thinking of the rationale that has allowed those ecological destructions and has initiated processes of “double death” (D. B. Rose), the academic success of the term “Anthropocene” is not so much of a surprise. Initially suggested to define a new epoch affected by the geological impact of some human activities, it has become the name of an epic tale about a global/undifferentiated Humankind progressing along a development trajectory that leads it today to the rank of a terrible and sublime dominating telluric force. This undifferentiated “Humankind” has of course never existed as such and accepting the tale of unconscious and unavoidable destructions is out of the question.

Simultaneously, other stories are being told and interwoven: the “Chthulucene” (D. Haraway), the “intrusion of Gaia” (I. Stengers), the “dull edge of extinction” (T. van Dooren), the “disturbed beginnings” (A. Tsing)... Each of those stories, with its singular modalities, allows us to thicken our active presence to always singular situations of ecological degradation. *We want to work with the possibilities opened up by those other stories* - and with the philosophical propositions that come along with them. Those stories and propositions make us feel that we have never lived on an “external” Earth but rather *in* living, terrestrial milieus: we participate to those milieus and, as numerous other beings, we owe them our always more fragile existences.

In this seminar, we will collectively inquire into terrestrial aesthetics and practices - aesthetics and practices that create and reclaim possibilities of feeling, thinking, imagining and acting in the patchwork-worlds that sustain our existences. How can we experience and reclaim possibilities of living and feeling *in* a more-than-human Earth?

Practically, our seminar will be held monthly, from October 2016 onwards, at the Université Libre de Bruxelles. Each session is organized around the discussion of a proposition that our guest has previously submitted - the proposition is generally a text, published or not, but it can also be a field report or an art work, for instance. The proposition will be discussed with our guest and the active members of the seminar before an open discussion with the seminar audience. Our first perspective is philosophical but the seminar warmly welcomes propositions coming from other fields such as anthropology, ethology, sociology, sciences and the arts.