

2021-2022 - Dutch Art Institute

On Tradition - Future Ancestors 2: Rurality and Law

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Coordination: -

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Short description

‘On Tradition - Future Ancestors’ focused on two specific inquiries: Rurality and Law. In a time of increasing crises, from migration, health to the destruction of the biosphere, what role does art play in responding to the urgencies of our contemporary moment? By bringing together the plurality of traditions and contexts from those within the COOP, the group investigated how it could develop methodologies as artists that rethink and challenge our understandings of tradition, rurality and law through the experience of the local and global.

As a focus point the course looked at the notion of law/lore in relation both to the question of tradition and future ancestry through the practice of speech, writing and storytelling. In particular, the COOP examined the relationship between writing and rurality from the perspective of female writers. Here rurality is not related to the classical idea of possession of land and expansion of agriculture, but stands for an attempt of redefining the conditions of writing, duration, sustainable economies between global and local that ‘make room’ for the emergence of languages from traditions, natural rhythms and the spiritual realms.

Syllabus

- Carol R. Kallend, selected poetry.
- bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*, Routledge, 1994.
- Olga Tokarczuk, *The Tender Narrator*, [Nobel lecture](#), 2018.
- Nan Shepherd, *The Living Mountain*, Canongate Canons, 2011.
- Andrea di Serego Alighieri, *Glossator 11, Cristina Campo: Translation/Commentary*, Open Humanities Press, 2021.
- Jennifer Scapetone (ed.), *Locomotrix, Selected poetry and prose of Amelia Rosselli*, University of Chicago Press, 2012.
- Lyn Hejinian, *The Language of Inquiry*, University of California Press, 2000.
- Karen Brodine, *Woman Sitting at the Machine, Thinking*, Red Letter Press, 1990.
- Nathaneal Mackey, *Splay Anthem*, New Directions, 2022.
- Nathaneal Mackey, *Sight-Specific, Sound-Specific . . .*, Poetry Foundation, 2010.

- Susan Howe, *The Quarry*, New Directions, 2015.
- Alice Notley, *The Descent of Alette*, Penguin, 1999.
- Adriana Cavarero, *For More Than One Voice: Toward a Philosophy of Vocal Expression*, Stanford University Press, 2005.

Documentation

- See [Google Drive folder](#) for pictures and other materials

Student materials

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Links to other sites

- [Course description on the DAI website](#)
- [DAI Chronicles: reports from the students](#)

INTRODUCTION TO PROGRAMME

Lore - from *lār*, the Germanic 'to learn'

A body of traditions and knowledge held by a particular group related to a location, typically passed from person by person to person by word of mouth.

Law - from *lag*, the Old Norse 'to lay something down or fix'

A system of rules inscribed with binding force or effect

Rural - from 'ruralis' "of the countryside" and 'reue' "open space", "to make room"

Room - Old English *rum* "space" (extent or time); "scope, opportunity". Original sense preserved to make room "clear space for oneself".

For the 2nd year of 'On Tradition - Future Ancestors', the COOP will focus on two specific inquiries: Rurality and Law. In a time of increasing crises, from migration, health to the destruction of the biosphere, what role does art play in responding to the urgencies of our contemporary moment? By bringing together the plurality of traditions and contexts from those within the COOP, we will investigate how we can develop methodologies as artists that rethink and challenge our understandings of tradition, rurality and law through the experience of the local and global.

From the very beginnings of human culture, the development of both language and technology have been paramount to our human effect on place. From the earliest forms of agriculture to the invention of the smartphone, such inventions would not be possible also without developments in language. In particular, the transferal of knowledge either through speech of what we call 'lore' and by writing 'law' which has formed the ground in which we find ourselves. However, what does this mean in a time when the boundaries between the global and local are increasingly collapsing or widening?

Through the turn of the 21st century, technology has been increasingly accessible and revolutionised the way we live. However, it has also come at the price of new potential totalisations of power (economic, cultural, political) through lack of legislation or understanding of rights. With advancements of technology often falling into rhetoric of making life better, how do we trace the wounds inflicted by capitalism while also challenging what laws are in place or absent? With contemporary art embedded within a complex fabric of internationalism, we would like to pose if there is a way of making contemporary art that is still embedded in place instead of an extractive act. By doing so, what kinds of protocol, alternative legislations, community building and aesthetics are needed in order for nurture/sustainability to take place over extraction?

At the heart of our COOP is an intention not to invent new ideas to face the current crisis. This coop aims to experiment with questioning its own infrastructures and regulations and eventually to prepare those cultural debates that need to take place in order for political and social change. In this respect we ask: What is law within

tradition(s)? What is legislation? Is there a need for new legislation? How can this be formulated?

As a focus point we will look at the notion of law/lore in relation both to the question of tradition and future ancestry through the practice of speech, writing and story telling. In particular, the COOP will examine the relationship between writing and rurality from the perspective of female writers. Hererurality is not related to the classical idea of possession of land and expansion of agriculture, but stands for an attempt of redefining the conditions of writing, duration, sustainable economies between global and local that 'make room' for the emergence of languages from traditions, natural rhythms and the spiritual realms. How is writing not an extraction? Echoing *A Room of One's Own* by Virginia Woolf - how do we re-imagine that same questioning of the condition of writing in both past and contemporary experiences of rurality. Can we find rhythms of natural cycles that are embedded within a transmission and sustenance of everyday knowledge? Can this knowledge equip us to write about the rights of mountains, animals, plants and about food, air and water? By doing so, can our writing become a form of law/lore that allows us to make roots after they have been for so long deprived?

STARTING QUESTIONS THAT HAVE STARTED OUR THINKING FOR THE COOP

- * How to rethink a law/lore anew?
- * What is a system of law? (Natural, Spiritual, Legal, Scientific)
- * How can we use law/lore as a tool of prophecy?
- * What is a law/lore of repair?
- * What is a spiritual law: the notion of repentance?
- * How can a law become a score?
- * What is the difference between the writing and application of law?
- * Is a new word needed for law?
- * How to create a structure of law through the abolition of police and prison?
- * How has writing been important for women?
- * How do female writers write about writing?
- * Monastic rules- history of monastic regulation
- * Obedience versus Disobedience. Duties and Rights.
- * What are the conditions needed for work in a contemporary art environment from the future? How we define that individually, and how we negotiate that collectively. How we build alternative infrastructures of sustain.
- * What is a habit? What is the relation between habit, law/lore and habitat?

- * What is the genre of law? How that genre differs from other forms of writing.
- * What is to make a root again after being without roots for so long?
- * What is near? What is the nearest? What is far? What is the farthest?

METHODOLOGY

- The COOP will build connections through a series of group rituals that will include working with the voice, choreography, a gratitude diary and cooking together.
- The COOP tutors will provide a bibliography of their own references in which students are encouraged to add and bring their own.
- A focus on creative writing and listening (recording, recitation, remembering, recalling, relaying). Interviews, notes, diary, audio-books.
- A questioning of the conditions in which we write and understand writing that expand our concept of the written word, ie. by imagery, sound, the body. What are the rules that govern how we write as an action of obedience and disobedience? What are the economic conditions and regulations?
- To create a connection with land and place in a post global/digital era and the difficulties of that. Communities, places, habits, resources. How can we think of non-extractive ways of making art?
- The COOP will follow a structure of creative manifestations, which will take place between sessions.
- At different intervals, there will be opportunity Face to Face sessions to get to know the individual practices of the students with the tutors.