



# Exploring Textual Action

**Edited by Lars Sætre,  
Patrizia Lombardo,  
Anders M. Gullestad**

**Aarhus University Press**



# Exploring Textual Action



# Exploring Textual Action

Edited by Lars Sætre,  
Patrizia Lombardo,  
Anders M. Gullestad

*Exploring Textual Action*

Acta Jutlandica. Humanities Series 2010/5

© The authors and Aarhus University Press 2010

Cover design: Jørgen Sparre

Cover illustration: Lee Miller: "Portrait of Space", 1937.

© Lee Miller Archives, England 2010. All rights reserved.

ISSN 0065-1354 (Acta Jutlandica)

ISSN 0901-0556 (Humanities Series 5)

ISBN 978 87 7934 726 7

Aarhus University Press

*Aarhus*

Langelandsgade 177

8200 Aarhus N

Denmark

*Copenhagen*

Tuborgvej 164

2400 Copenhagen NV

Denmark

[www.unipress.dk](http://www.unipress.dk)

Fax 89 42 53 80

International distributors:

Gazelle Book Services Ltd.

White Cross Mills

Hightown, Lancaster, LA1 4XS

United Kingdom

[www.gazellebookservices.co.uk](http://www.gazellebookservices.co.uk)

The David Brown Book Company

Box 511

Oakville, CT 06779

USA

[www.oxbowbooks.com](http://www.oxbowbooks.com)

Published with the financial support of the University of Bergen, The Research Council of Norway and the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Bergen.

# Contents

---

Preface: Exploring Textual Action [7](#)

## Part I: Elaborations

- J. Hillis Miller, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE  
Performativity<sub>1</sub>/Performativity<sub>2</sub> [31](#)
- Svend Erik Larsen, AARHUS UNIVERSITY  
“Speak again. Speak like rain” –  
The Mediality of Performance [59](#)
- Lars Sætre, UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN  
Powering Textual Action:  
Duras’ Space in  
*Véra Baxter ou Les Plages de l’Atlantique* [83](#)
- Erika Fischer-Lichte, FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN  
Culture as Performance –  
Developing a Concept of Performance [123](#)
- Mads Thygesen, AARHUS UNIVERSITY  
Interaction and Framing in the  
Performance *Insideout* by Sasha Waltz [141](#)
- Randi Koppen, UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN  
Re-thinking the “Performative Turn”:  
Fashioned Bodies, Sartorial Semiotics  
and the Performance of Culture, 1900-1930 [165](#)
- Patrizia Lombardo, UNIVERSITY OF GENEVA  
Bazin, Bresson and Scorsese:  
Performative Power and the Impure Art of  
Cinema [187](#)

## Part 2: Explorations

- Atle Kittang, UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN  
**Topography and Textual Action in the  
Urban Prose of Balzac and Breton** [223](#)
- Ragnhild Evang Reinton, UNIVERSITY OF OSLO  
**Producing “...images we never  
saw before we remembered them”.  
Memory as Textual Action in Walter  
Benjamin’s *Berliner Kindheit um  
Neunzehnhundert*** [253](#)
- Tone Selboe, UNIVERSITY OF OSLO  
**Virginia Woolf  
and the Ambiguities of Domestic Space** [283](#)
- Asbjørn Grønstad, UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN  
**Dead Time, Empty Spaces: Landscape as  
Sensibility and Performance** [311](#)
- Anders Kristian Strand, UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN  
**Textual Action  
in W.C. Williams’ *Paterson*** [333](#)
- Jorunn S. Gjerden, UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN  
**The Reader Address as Performativity  
in Nathalie Sarraute’s *L’Usage de la parole*** [367](#)
- Anders M. Gullestad, UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN  
**Loving the Alien:  
Bartleby and the Power of Non-Preference** [395](#)
- Contributors [423](#)
- Index [429](#)



# Exploring Textual Action

---

## *Preface*

The present volume is the first publication to stem from the research project “Text, Action and Space. Performative language and topographical patterns as converging areas in modern drama, prose fiction and film”, or “TAS” for short.<sup>1</sup> The individual essays collected in this anthology are the result of shared investigations in an area where the concerns of both aesthetic and cultural analysis meet. Initiating basic research by approaching modern drama, prose fiction, poetry and film in a focused inter-aesthetic framework, they discuss the theoretical implications of some of the most important debates within the Humanities during the last 50 years. These

---

1 “Text, Action and Space” was initiated by Lars Sætre and Atle Kitang at the University of Bergen in 2006, with Sætre as project leader. Along with these two, Patrizia Lombardo (University of Geneva) and Svend Erik Larsen (Aarhus University) make up its leadership group. For this volume, Ragnhild Evang Reinton (University of Oslo) and Anders M. Gullestad (University of Bergen) have served as additional members of the editorial group. TAS consists of scholars from Norway, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and the United States, and represents a plethora of disciplines in the Humanities: comparative, Anglo-American, Germanic, Italian and French literary studies, theatre studies, dramaturgy, and film studies.

are centered on three main, interrelated basic questions: respectively, that of *performativity*, of *space* or topography, and of the *converging of genres and art forms*.

To start with the last of the three, modernity has been characterised by a vast move that can be traced in modern literature and art up to contemporary media: the converging of genres, from the Romantic *mélange des genres* to the present ruptures of the various artistic expressions, dramatically reshaping their identities. Epic traits have entered modern drama; features of recent dramatic art have emerged in prose fiction; writers re-circulate the same materials in series of works within drama and fiction, sometimes also in film and TV. Partly inspired by literature, film has cultivated its paradoxical specificity as an aesthetically “impure” and inter-medial art form; video installations have changed the world of painting; the division between theatre and film is becoming increasingly blurred; the use of cyber technologies in special effects has proliferated in film and other media. And – as was already the case for the founders of the Romantic literary journal, the *Athenaeum* – during the 19<sup>th</sup> and particularly the 20<sup>th</sup> century, criticism and philosophy have influenced artists to such a degree that fragments from different philosophers and theorists from Søren Kierkegaard or Friedrich Nietzsche to Jacques Derrida or Roland Barthes can appear as creative elements in their works. Undoubtedly, the “impurity” of the converging of genres marks aesthetic configurations with an imprint of other forms or media, pointing to an exchange and fusion of their respective characteristics.

Why do genres and art forms converge? In which contexts are the shared forms inscribed? What aesthetic strategies are made possible by such convergence? What cultural effects does it have? These and related questions are discussed in the anthology in order to highlight how the aesthetic transactions install changes with a vast existential and cultural impact on

human perception, imagination, reflection and interaction – between people, as well as between people, technologies and the material world. In particular, such an impact is the case with the shared capacity of fiction, drama, poetry and film to function as *localised performatives*. That capacity opens up further questions: what is the relationship between space and topographies, on the one hand, and performativity and textual action, on the other? What existential contents, meanings or values in the recent history of modernity do phenomena in performative language and in topographical patterns open up for, and how can they help us reflect on culture’s conditions of possibility?

This brings us to the two other questions informing this book. First, to that of the *performativity* of aesthetic works, or, to be more precise, of how they can have an impact on their surroundings. Through the scrutiny of the action of the aesthetic dimension of art works and their impacts on the reader or the spectator, and through a rich comparative material selected from both historical and late modernity, the anthology investigates central artistic configurations and their installation of cultural shifts.

As originally theorised by J.L. Austin in his groundbreaking *How to Do Things with Words* – based upon his William James Lectures at Harvard in 1955 and posthumously published in 1962 – performative speech acts are ways of doing things with words and signs. Language not only *reveals* a pre-existing phenomenon or a state of affairs, it also has the power to *create* and *install* something new. A dynamic modelling of the world, and of *a* world, is taking place. Even though Austin chose to focus on “serious” utterances of the kind where one means what one says, this performative dimension is undoubtedly present in all forms of language, including those of drama, theatre, poetry, prose fiction and film. Here, they are for example to be found in the enunciations and in

the movements of characters, or in the works' rhetorical and material figurations, or in their composition and form.

This ability of aesthetic works has wide-ranging effects on the everyday world, and consequences for apperception, understanding and reflection in that world – socially, culturally and historically. A number of modern theorists discuss the creativity of art and culture in terms of performative language and cultural performativity or in closely related perspectives.<sup>2</sup> This anthology draws on the thinking of some of these, and also attempts to show its potentials for analysis, and to make some distinctions. In so doing, the essays aim to give an assessment of this diverse field, including the possibilities for re-applying old concepts in new ways as well as for creating new ones.<sup>3</sup>

The generating power of such creative transformations is what we call the *textual action* of aesthetic works, hence the title of the anthology. In their focus on that power, some of the essays discuss the performativity of art works, while others approach their textual action either by trying to define its scope, or by interrogating its relationship to performativity. While neither of the terms is new, textual action has hitherto largely been used in an undefined, commonsensical way, whereas performativity has been used as a specific term within theatre studies,<sup>4</sup> but elsewhere often with meanings that are vague or bordering on the metaphorical. So one of our aspirations is to salvage these terms from unreflected us-

---

2 For example Friedrich Nietzsche, Ernst Cassirer, Richard Ohmann, Mary Louise Pratt, Jacques Derrida, J. Hillis Miller, Paul de Man, Gilles Deleuze, Shoshana Felman, Angela Esterhammer, Erika Fischer-Lichte, Judith Butler, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Jacques Rancière, to name but a small selection.

3 Regarding these basic questions, see in particular the contributions by J. Hillis Miller, Svend Erik Larsen, Lars Sætre, Erika Fischer-Lichte and Atle Kittang.

4 Cf. Carlson (2004).

age, trying to delimit their possibilities and strengths when consciously related to each other and applied to aesthetic works in a thorough manner. Launched here as a first step towards further investigations, such analyses of art's generating powers seem promising, as they are both precise and wide enough to be aesthetically inclusive. They foreground the *energy* of texts and their potential to transform human perception and life.

Although more work remains to be done in this regard, what is gained through the mutual enriching of the notion of textual action and theories of performativity is a highlighting of the bond between the truly *creative* aspects of an utterance and its illocutionary power (as opposed to its constative functions as mere expressive and mimetic representation). That power breaks with the logics of causality, time, place and the supposed linearity of the everyday by way of a productive relationship between space and language, thereby affecting human life through textual, symbolic acts and their possible ramifications. Another gain is the possibility of describing the aesthetic utterance's creative changes of register, entailing a slide from mimetic descriptions and representations to a self-referential alterity with deictic shifter functions, carrying the necessary minimal rudiments of a systemic discursive character. Also, all the negative connotations in J.L. Austin's take on literary and aesthetic performatives as being "hollow", "void", "parasitic", "etiologies" etc. are avoided.

Finally, the anthology is centered on the question of *space*. Thinking in terms of textual action means taking seriously the fact that aesthetic works can act at various levels and in different localised spheres. The notion of textual action indicates precisely the *taking place* of the dynamic modelling acts of performative language, insofar as they succeed in *showing*, *changing* and *constructing locations* by performing them in language, images and gestures. Topographies are "place in-

scriptions”, installations and transformations of space. Being written or gestured, they creatively *take* place as much as they refer to or describe “existing” places.<sup>5</sup> In modern drama, prose fiction, poetry and film, topographical patterns are constantly being formed and changed in the linear and spatial movements of characters, imagery, motifs, dialogue, narrative voices, and visual and mental perspectives. They are figured in dynamic patterns such as landscapes, cityscapes, rooms, bodies, subjectivities, minds and experience. They are also moulded, for instance, as communities, inter-personal relations, institutions, ethics, ideologies and technologies; literary, theatrical and cinematic universes; reading and translations. Sometimes the figuring of topography and space also bears sensory witness to the boundaries of existence, from which full cognition, understanding and knowledge are barred.

Several ways of figuring space are shared by the genres represented in these studies. In this sense, genres and art forms are also topographies. By exploring the aspects of space shared by different genres and media, the essays attempt to bring out some of its historical, cultural and aesthetic significances in modernity, while discussing some essential theories of space.<sup>6</sup> Especially important here are those aspects of space and topographies that are dynamic and have performative

---

5 For a discussion of the relationship between the concepts of *space* and *place*, see for example Tuan (1977) and Larsen (1997, 2002 (Chap. 7) and 2007).

6 Numerous modern theorists explore the creativity and the functions of space, such as Joseph Frank, Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane, Martin Heidegger, Walter Benjamin, Gaston Bachelard, Georges Poulet, Jean-Pierre Richard, Maurice Blanchot, J. Hillis Miller, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Michel de Certeau, Henri Lefebvre, Edward Casey and Paul Virilio, to name but a few. The volume edited by Crang and Thrift (2000) offers a useful introduction to some of these, as well as to other key thinkers on the subject of space.

power in the text, thereby challenging any static understanding of space as an unchangeable and inert given.

The present studies, then, are informed by some general hypotheses. First: by way of the art works' discursive and signifying "impurity" involved in the converging of genres, textual action and space installation function as agencies of culture formation. This has been largely disregarded in disciplinary scholarship, but – when approached from an inter-aesthetic perspective – the striking phenomenon of converging can be understood precisely as the interplay between the performative character of an art work and the topographies it creates and in which it takes place. Second, through concrete readings of aesthetic works and in critical dialogues with relevant intellectual forebears, it is possible to show how the interplay between performativity and space emerges, and how it produces cultural values in the re-assignment of subjectivities, communities and the production of knowledge. Third, these comparative investigations of space and performativity will allow for some order and direction in the vast production of research in cultural studies, as well as putting an alternative, dynamic method into use. The contributions are reflective close readings of art works *and* theories, integrated in the focus upon the interplay of space formations, textual action and generic/medial convergence, and their conjoined aesthetic strategies for cultural effects.

Even though we know that aesthetic works have this ability to shape reality, explaining *exactly* how, why and when this comes to pass is far from easy. If taken seriously, this fundamental insight leads to further questions, as pressing as they are tricky. Just to name a few: is this active, shaping force of aesthetic works something that can be properly understood? Is it totally random, or is there some deeper order to it that can be grasped? If the latter is the case, will this for example allow us to foresee the effects a work will have – if not with

complete accuracy, then at least with some predictability? Should achieving such effects then be considered an aim of those creating art, or would this be tantamount to sacrificing everything that makes aesthetic works valuable on the altar of propaganda, no matter how well-meaning the intentions? Related to this is the question of whether the ability to cause effects is linked to the quality of aesthetic works, or if there is no special relation between the two, so that a mediocre but popular novel can just as easily cause effects as a great one? And what is, in fact, meant by the word effects, a term which can of course indicate a plethora of different reactions ranging from the miniscule (such as yawning and putting away a boring book) to the gigantic (such as being inspired to start a revolution)? Is the term precise enough, or are other and better notions available?

### *Elaborations*

As anyone who has ever grappled with questions such as these must soon have realised, they do not only proliferate endlessly – their slipperiness will also easily lead one astray if one does not come armed with theoretical tools sufficient for the task at hand. This, then, has been the aim of the first part of the anthology, entitled “Elaborations”: as if we had to dig out an old city or erect a new building, here we have attempted to assemble essays that give an overview of some of the tools that might be of use in such a venture, trying them out, attempting to see how far they can get us, delimiting their strengths and weaknesses, as well as trying to clear up common misunderstandings that might have surfaced over time.

Even though there are certainly other possibilities, our starting point has been a nexus of related notions that have proven very productive for intellectual thought: *performatives*, *performativity* and *performance*. As attested to by



Mieke Bal and Jonathan Culler, among others,<sup>7</sup> these have long and complex histories, their trajectories – sometimes intertwined, sometimes differing – the result of the many critical debates that have followed in the wake of J.L. Austin’s founding of speech-act theory.

Chief among these debates about Austin’s legacy, perhaps, is the one between John Searle and Jacques Derrida in the 1970’s, representing the clash between analytical and continental philosophy at its most heated.<sup>8</sup> Since then, J. Hillis Miller has played an important role in the further development of a deconstructive approach to the insights of speech-act theory. Miller opens this anthology with the article “Performativity<sub>1</sub>/Performativity<sub>2</sub>”. Here, he offers clarifications of, on the one hand, how the concept of “performativity” has come to refer to widely different things, and, on the other, the differences between Austin, Derrida and Judith Butler, whose influential work since the end of the 1980’s has pushed this trajectory in yet other directions. Miller also offers a detailed reading of George Eliot’s novel *Daniel Deronda* in keeping with the theoretical distinctions he makes.

Important as Butler’s work on how questions of social justice and equality can be approached through insights from speech-act theory and performativity studies has been and continues to be,<sup>9</sup> it is not always evident what bearings her writings have upon the question of aesthetics. Much clearer in this regard is theatre scholar Erika Fischer-Lichte, who has shown how a Butler-inspired approach can be fruitfully com-

---

7 Cf. Culler (2000) and Bal (2002).

8 See Searle (1977) and Derrida (1988). For an alternative approach, critical of both Derrida and Searle, see Cavell (1994).

9 Exemplary in this regard is her *Excitable Speech* (1997), for example in analysing the performative aspects of *hate speech* and regulations in the US army, where defining oneself as homosexual was deemed an *act* for which the utterer could be dismissed.

bined with more thorough attention to the aesthetic qualities of the work at hand. Further elaborating some of her main arguments from *Ästhetik des Performativen* (2004), in this anthology's "Culture as Performance – Developing a Concept of Performance", she calls for the development of a new aesthetics adequate to the challenges posed by the "eventness" and "liminality" of performances.

Some of the possibilities and difficulties facing such a new aesthetics are taken up in Mads Thygesen's "Interaction and Framing in the Performance *Insideout* by Sasha Waltz". In active dialogue with Fischer-Lichte's views, he shows how certain theatrical performances can be said to resist integration into a theoretical framework that stresses their role as purely "self-creating systems". At the same time, he also approaches some of the questions raised by Miller about the intellectual lineage from Austin to Derrida to Butler, but from the perspective of dramaturgy and theatre studies.

The article by Randi Koppen – "Re-thinking the 'Performative Turn': Fashioned Bodies, Sartorial Semiotics and the Performance of Culture, 1900-1930" – also takes up the thread from Fischer-Lichte, more specifically from her book *Theatre, Sacrifice, Ritual – Exploring Forms of Political Theatre* (2005). Through interrogating clothes as a way of performing an identity, Koppen here shows how the sartorial played a key role in the shift from a "textual" to a more "performative" culture.

The distinction between *performativity* and *performance*, crucial to Fischer-Lichte, is further interrogated in Svend Erik Larsen's "'Speak again. Speak like rain' – The Mediality of Performance". Offering a much-needed clarification of the relationship between these notions, Larsen then goes on to show how the latter concept – originating in theatre studies and usually used in the context of actors "putting on a show" for an audience present in the flesh – can also be brought to

bear upon texts not intended for the stage – including prose – without merely extending the meaning of the term by way of analogy, but through a genuine reflection on literature’s particular textual actions.

Focusing on the performative aspects of another medium lacking the possibility of communication based on the bodily co-presence of actors and audience that is so fundamental to theatre, Patrizia Lombardo, in her “Bazin, Bresson and Scorsese: Performative Power and the Impure Art of Cinema”, shows how the question of film having an *impact* on the viewers was central to critics and directors connected to and influenced by *Les Cahiers du Cinéma*. In so doing, Lombardo shows that the thinking of theorists such as André Bazin and Robert Bresson in many ways bears a resemblance to and can be fruitfully read in dialogue with different approaches to performativity, thus making both traditions emerge in a new and different light. These points are accompanied by analyses of films by Bresson and Martin Scorsese.

Finally, included in this section is also Lars Sætre’s “Powering Textual Action: Duras’ Space in *Véra Baxter ou Les Plages de l’Atlantique*”. Drawing on the works of J. Hillis Miller and Jacques Rancière, the question of the generating power of textual action is here approached from the vantage point of the figuration of space in aesthetic works, precisely because spatial representations or evocations might trigger transformations in perception of both the external and internal worlds. Sætre also analyses the functions of converging phenomena in Marguerite Duras’ work.

### *Explorations*

Based on the groundwork thus laid out, the different articles that together make up the second part of the anthology, “Explorations”, then set to work, seeing where these ideas might

take us. These essays are not meant as simple applications of theoretical tools. Instead, they aim at a dynamic use of those instruments, one that is always closely attuned to the work under scrutiny, be it prose, poetry, art, theatre or cinema.

Starting out with the essay by Atle Kittang, “Topography and Textual Action in the Urban Prose of Balzac and Breton”, this section is directly oriented towards textual analysis of what has been prepared by the first part, also developing further the conceptual framework. Thus, Kittang deepens the understanding of textual action in a close dialogue with texts of Balzac and of Breton. He shows how a nuanced use of this term allows us to avoid Austin’s (still troubling) refusal to accept that aesthetic works should be considered a legitimate area of interest for speech-act theory, or, for that matter, his relegation of such works to the realm of the “parasitic”.

Taking up the lead offered by Sætre, several of these essays are concerned with the relationship between textual action/performativity and the question of aesthetic works and space; for example the city of Paris in Balzac and Breton, as interpreted by Kittang, able to produce – expected and unexpected – encounters that are extremely powerful; or landscape in film, as analysed by Asbjørn Grønstad in his “Dead Time, Empty Spaces: Landscape as Sensibility and Performance”. Pursuing the general *invisibility* of landscape – *i.e.* the way it is perceived as little more than a backdrop for the action, and very rarely as something to be approached on its own terms – Grønstad considers how it takes on a performative dimension in the recent work of directors such as Bruno Dumont, Theo Angelopoulos and Carlos Reygadas, capturing the viewers’ attention at the expense of the story being told.

Another take on the textual action/space nexus is to be found in Anders Kristian Strand’s “Textual Action in W.C. Williams’ *Paterson*”, elaborating how the performative force of Williams’ poem rises out of the way the river – more specifi-

cally the Passaic River – functions as a dynamic device, both structurally and thematically. In her “Virginia Woolf and the Ambiguities of Domestic Space”, Tone Selboe, on the other hand, focuses on the importance of domesticity for the converging of aesthetics and quotidian life that informs Woolf’s *œuvre*. Selboe sees the textual action of Woolf’s work as an ongoing, creative dialogue with the space of her Victorian past, as well as with that of her contemporaries. The last text that explicitly interrogates the importance of space in coming to terms with the performative effects of aesthetic works is Ragnhild Evang Reinton’s “Producing ‘...images we never saw before we remembered them’. Memory as Textual Action in Benjamin’s *Berliner Kindheit um Neunzehnhundert*”. By juxtaposing Jacques Rancière’s theories with Benjamin’s thoughts on the production of experience through remembrance, and with his vision of the urban space of his childhood, Reinton asks how such an active recollecting can intervene in the present. She also argues that as a perspective, textual action allows for a more dynamic approach to Benjamin than does reading him as a melancholic mourning the past.

In “The Reader Address as Performativity in Nathalie Sarraute’s *L’Usage de la parole*”, Jorunn S. Gjerden sheds new light on Sarraute’s notion of *tropisms*, suggesting that a fundamental “desire to establish contact” characterises both the relationship to the other and the relationship between text and reader in her writing. The performative aspects of enunciation and narrative structure in *L’Usage de la parole* can thus be said to strive to mobilise the reader and awaken our passion by confronting us with alterity. In “Loving the Alien: Bartleby and the Power of Non-Preference” – the last text of the anthology – Anders M. Gullestad returns to the legacy of J.L. Austin, more specifically to his notion of “performative speech acts”, which has tended to become subsumed under and obscured by the more general concept of performativity.

Through a critical engagement with the influence of speech-act theory on Gilles Deleuze and J. Hillis Miller's different approaches to Herman Melville's "Bartleby, the Scrivener", he argues that, conceived as a speech act, the enigmatic scrivener's generic reply – "I would prefer not to" – can be said to push Austin's theory "to its limits".

Indeed, by testing the limits of some theories, opening up the hidden structure of sentences in various texts, linking themes, juxtaposing notions and trying out new interpretations, the *elaborations* and *explorations* of this anthology stress the very hypothesis underlying the notion of textual action: aesthetic works – works of art, literature, music, theatre, cinema etc. – are not stable objects, finished once and for all, whose sole purpose is to be contemplated by us, as "disinterested" perceivers. Rather, they are *active*, shaping forces, capable (at least sometimes) of generating effects that extend far into the quotidian, thereby undermining any clear distinction between art and "real" life.

### *Acknowledgements*

Our debts are many. First of all, we thank the individual scholars who have kindly contributed to the anthology and to the workshops we have held, in a project conducted as networking between senior, junior, postdoc and PhD scholars, who have all the while served full duties in their positions at their respective universities. Our acknowledgements and thanks also go to the institutions that have kindly supported our work and granted us the necessary funding: the University of Bergen, and The Research Council of Norway and the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Bergen in conjunction. This has enabled us to arrange four workshops – two in Paris and two in Bergen – as well as guest lectures, PhD seminars and leader-group meetings. The sums granted have

also covered the expenses involved in publishing the present anthology, and in connection with that we also extend our thanks for patience and professionalism to our publisher Aarhus University Press, especially Claes Hvidbak, Rikke Kensinger, Nick Wrigley and Søren Mogensen Larsen.

We are very grateful for the invaluable administrative support rendered by Signe Solberg, Marianne Eskeland, Alf Edgar Andresen, Solveig Steinnes, Håvard Peersen and Liv Mørch at the Faculty of Humanities in Bergen; by Barbara Blair and Marit Norberg at Aksis; and by Lars Mossefinn for technical assistance.

Likewise, our most cordial thanks for hosting our workshops twice in Paris go to the Centre de Coopération Franco-Norvégienne en Sciences Sociales et Humaines at the FMSH at Boulevard Raspail. In particular, we would like to mention directors Per Buvik and Paola de Cuzzani, and not the least the Centre's administrative leader, Kirstin Skjelstad, whose warm and cheerful assistance has been an invaluable asset. We also want to thank the Bergen Maritime Museum and Tore Stensbø for housing our workshops twice.

Finally, we are grateful for the productive and collaborating attitudes and efforts, and for the sustained scholarly inputs rendered by TAS colleagues in Bergen, Geneva, Aarhus, Copenhagen, Berlin, Irvine and Oslo.

Bergen/Geneva, October 2009

*Lars Sætre, Patrizia Lombardo, Anders M. Gullestad*