

A Letter from the Editor

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Humans and the Environment / Walking Threads

The environment, or 'nature', in anthropology today, is no longer seen as something detached and separate from human life. Instead, what is emphasised is its relational nature, and the inseparability of life with the surrounding environments in which life is lived. It is for this reason that the chosen wording of this volume's themed title, namely 'the environment', might, in retrospect, be criticised for being 'old fashioned'. While we all live in and perceive different environments, the title of this issue emphasises the existence of a wider commonality and brings forth the realisation that we all also share and live in the same world.

The individual contributions to this double-issue of *The Unfamiliar* all explore the different and intricate relationships that exist between people and environments. The environment is here understood in its broadest sense, to also include social, economic, cultural, and political aspects, all co-constitutive elements influencing how one comes to perceive and relate to the surrounding world.

In continuation with the theme of Humans and the Environment, the final part of this volume is dedicated to a special section on the ongoing collaborative initiative Walking Threads. While interdisciplinary collaborations and workshops abound, the reflections and results of these interactions are often intangible and site-specific, they tend to remain in the sphere of discussion and experience. The different reflections, essays and creative interventions represented by these pieces offer a glimpse into an ongoing conversation that originated in the context of one such collaboration, between performance and anthropology, and after an unplanned communal walk with a thread in Seaton Park, Aberdeen.

Taking the form of different reflections on and responses to this walk, together with an exploration of some of the practical and theoretical implications, the different texts explore, and illustrate, how the walkers tentatively have come to understand this experience. As a result, the contributions exemplify the value of experimentation and play, while also offering us reflections on the walk's potential methodological implications and relevance for anthropological research – and how we come to know and connect with our surroundings in the world.

We have learned a lot from our different contributors when putting together this issue, and we hope you will find this issue of *The Unfamiliar* an equally interesting and enjoyable read.

Hakon