



We live in a time marked by technological changes and blending of new and old media. A consequence of the turn from an analogue culture to a digital age is the transformation of the letter and its functions. For centuries the letter has been a written dossier dispatched from a sender and transported to a receiver by a postal service. Today it is substituted by email and SMS, and maybe even by communication channels without defined receivers, such as social media and the blog. “The new letter” is transmitted through the World Wide Web with its specific structure and materiality.

For sure, the letter has always been in a process of transformation. It has changed both physically and as a part of a communication system. Its status as a source has been recognized, and its different functions have been described in literature since antiquity. However, what are the implications when the letter is transferred from one medium to another? What kinds of challenges do the transformation of the letter present to us as researchers and scholars in the archives, the humanities and the social sciences? On this background The National Library of Norway poses the question: Where is the Letter? We invite scholars and researchers to shed light upon this crucial topic.

The conference is open to everyone and there is no conference fee. Registration before February 10th to letter@nb.no

Thursday February 16th 2012

“Letters, new media and network”

- 09:00–09:20 Coffee and registration
- 09:20–09:30 National Librarian Vigdis Moe Skarstein:
Welcome address
- 09:30–10:30 Keynote Speaker
Esther Milne:
Epistolary Desire: Absence and Presence
- 10:30–10:50 Coffee Break
- 10:50–11:50 Keynote Speaker
Nicole Coleman:
*Where is the Republic of Letters? A Digital Cartography
to Explore the Intellectual Geography of the Early
Modern World*
- 11:50–12:00 Excerpt from our Collections
Anne Melgård:
Amundsen’s South Pole Letter to King Haakon VII
- 12:00–13:00 Lunch
- 13:00–13:45 Eli Skogerbø:
*From the Republic of Letters to the Republic of New
Media*
- 13:45–14:30 Lin Prøitz:
Love Actually
*Follows the lives of some Norwegians in dealing with
their love lives in various loosely and interrelated tales,
all seen through analogue and digital ‘letters’*
- 14:30–14:50 Coffee Break
- 14:50–15:00 Excerpt from our Collections
Guro Tangvald:
The Carte de visite and Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson
- 15:00–15:45 Finn Erhard Johannessen:
The Material Conditions for communication with Letters
- 15:45–16:30 Per Pippin Aspaas:
*The Letter as Scientific Instrument: the Correspondence
of Astronomers During the Eighteenth Century*
- 16:30 Guided tour in the Letter exhibition at The National
Library, #VennligHilsen Fra brev til Twitter

Friday February 17th 2012

“Letters as historical source”

- 09:15–10:15 Keynote Speaker
Narve Fulsås:
Letters, literature, and authorship
- 10:15–11:00 Iselin Theien:
*“That we may become the islands of solitude shouting to each other across seas of misunderstanding”:
Letter-writing in exile between C.J. Hambro and Johan Nygaardsvold, 1940-45*
- 11:00–11:15 Coffee Break
- 11:15–12:00 Tore Rem:
The Stuff of Life?: A Biographer’s Tale of Letters
- 12:00–13:00 Lunch

“Letters as/in literature”

- 13:00–13:15 Excerpt from our Collections
Trond Haugen:
The blue letter
On the significance of two small words in the love letters from Knut Hamsun to Julie Amanda Lous
- 13:15–14:15 Keynote Speaker
Bergur Moberg:
Letterwriting as Emergent Prose: Epistolarity as a Challenge to Literary History
- 14:15–15:00 Tone Selboe:
“Our novel is beautiful.” The correspondence between Amalie and Erik Skram 1882 - 1899
- 15:00–15:15 Coffee Break
- 15:15–16:00 Marius Wulfsberg:
Emails and blogs in Contemporary Norwegian Literature

Biographical notes:

Esther Milne is Deputy Head of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences at Swinburne University in Melbourne, Australia. She researches in the areas of celebrity production across legislative and cultural contexts; and the history of networked postal communication systems. Her book *Letters, Postcards, Email: Technologies of Presence* is published by Routledge.

Nicole Coleman is the head of the Stanford Humanities Center Research Lab. The Research Lab puts technology and design to work to advance humanities research. Coleman is co-investigator of the Lab's current project, *Mapping the Republic of Letters*.

Anne Melgård works as a research librarian at the National Library (the Manuscript Collection). One of her main responsibilities is the archives of the polar expeditions. She holds a degree in ethnology from the University of Oslo.

Eli Skogerbø is Professor at the Department of Media and Communications at the University of Oslo. She has researched and published in areas such as media policy and politics, digital media, local media, telecommunications, political communication and media and democracy.

Lin Prøitz is a post doctor at Centre for gender research at the University of Oslo working on the research-project *Gender, Sexuality and Intimacy in Autobiographical Digital Genres*. Her work concerns young people's self-presentations and interactions via personal and social media, with particular focus on gender and sexuality performances.

Guro Tangvald works as a research librarian at the National Library.

Finn Erhard Johannessen is Professor in History at the University of Oslo. He published the history of the Norwegian post-office (vol I 1647-1920) in 1996. He has written several business histories and is now working on the Norwegian inshore fleet and coastal defense 1750-1814.

Per Pippin Aspaas is an academic librarian at the University Library of Tromsø. Originally a Latinist, in later years he has undertaken research on various aspects of the history of science in early modern Europe. His PhD thesis (to be defended in 2012) is called *Maximilianus Hell (1720-1792) and the Eighteenth-Century Transits of Venus : a Study of Jesuit Science in Nordic and Central European Contexts*.

Narve Fulsås is professor of history at the University of Tromsø, Norway. He has introduced and commented Henrik Ibsen's letters for the new edition of Ibsen's writings, published in book form 2005–10 (4 vols.) and on the web 2010 (www.ibsen.uio.no). He has also published books and articles on national historiography, intellectual history, cultural history, and university history.

Iselin Theien holds a D.Phil. in history from the University of Oxford (2001) and works as a senior researcher in history at the National Institute for Consumer Research. In 2010, she published a biography on the actress and World War II double agent Sonja Wigert. She is currently working on a biography on C.J. Hambro (1885-1964), Conservative politician and President of the Norwegian Parliament.

Tore Rem is professor of British Literature at ILOS, University of Oslo, and has written extensively on British and Scandinavian 19th century literature, reception history and the history of the book. Most recently, he has published a two-volume biography of the Norwegian writer and intellectual Jens Bjørneboe (1920-76), *Sin egen herre* (2009) and *Født til frihet* (2010).

Trond Haugen (dr.art) works as a research librarian at the National Library.

Bergur Rønne Moberg holds a Ph.D. from the Department of Scandinavian Studies and Linguistics at University of Copenhagen. He is currently a Postdoc. at the same university, working on a project called "Echo over the Atlantic. A Commented Edition of Selected Letters by William Heinesen and a Treatise on the Letters as the Genesis of his Published Works".

Tone Selboe is professor of comparative literature at the University of Oslo. She has written on 19th and 20th century literature (with a special emphasis on city novels and essays), the oeuvre of Karen Blixen (Isak Dinesen), and literary history.

Marius Wulfsberg works as a research librarian at the National Library. He holds a PhD-degree in comparative literature from the University of Oslo, where he also has been a post-doctorial research fellow. He has worked particularly on European modernism, and contemporary literature exploring the border between fiction and non-fiction.



Fram-Expeditionen

15 dets 1911.

Deres Majestæte.

Hermed tillægs jeg mee at meddele, at 5 mand af Fram-Expeditionen
- mee selv herimod - ankom her til Sydpolområdet - ifølge obs. $89^{\circ} 57' 30''$ S.Br.
- igår den 14 dets. - for en vellykket sledetur fra vor vinterkvarter i Framhøjen.
Vi forlot dette den 10 dets. med 4 sleder, 52 hunde og proviant for
4 mand. Vi har på vor vej bestemt den store "Ross barriere" udstrek-
t mod syd - ca 86° S.Br. - samt Kong Edward VII's Land's og Victoria lands
sammenlutning på samme sted. Victoria land ophører her, mens
Kong Edwards land fortsætter i S.V. retning indtil ca 87° S.Br. med en midte
fuldgode med toppen indtil 22000 f. o. h. Disse sammenløstene fulgde
har jeg tilladelse mee at kalde - som jeg hjælper med tilladelse - Draining Straud's
Kjeder. - De store inlandsplatauer fandt vi - på ca 88° S.Br. - at gå over
i en helt flad højslette, som lå ved 89° S.Br. ganske svaki bejvredte at skine
med mod den anden side. Højsletten hvide o. h. ca. 10750 f. -
Vi har idag med en radius af 8 km inderkretsen den geografiske sydpol,
hvori de gamle flag og kaller den svaki skianenne slette, hvorpå der har
lykkes os at bestemme den geografiske sydpols beliggenhed for Kong
Håkon VII's Tid med - som jeg hjælper - Deres Majestæte tilladelse.
Vi begynder tilbaketuren imorgen med 2 sleder, 16 hunde og vil
styre med proviant.

I os høidehede

Roald Amundsen