

Thomas Hylland Eriksen

Tyranny of The Moment. Fast and Slow Time in the Information Age

Øyeblikkets tyranni

Genre: Non-Fiction
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This fascinating and original book argues that slow time is an increasingly scarce resource in the information age. Using a wealth of examples, "Tyranny of the Moment" takes a cool, diagnostic look at this 'hurried era'. It shows how phenomena such as soap operas, youth culture, advertising and 'flexible work' are connected to the same logic, based on information technology, and how they link up with the history of modern society. At the same time, it indicates that there are deep contradictions in technology-driven contemporary society. Who would have accepted apparently time-saving technology, from the filofax to e-mail and the mobile phone, to result in time being scarcer than ever? Since we are theoretically 'on line' 24 hours a day, we must fight for the right to be unavailable – the time to live and think more slowly. Eriksen considers the main cause of the problem as the exponential growth in everything to do with communication – from web pages to air traffic. The result is potentially devastating, as life in western societies threatens to disintegrate into disjointed and incoherent fragments.

"A broad and concrete, witty and precise description of how, despite all technological advances, one's experience of time is an unassailable fundamental quantity, both in the life of the individual and in that of society." (Politiken, Copenhagen)

'...I found myself both charmed and challenged by its breathlessness. The subject is an important one, and Thomas Hylland Eriksen handles it with both style and a light touch.'

Todd Gitlin, New York University

'... an entertaining and important book, popular science in the best sense of the term - easy to read, thought-provoking and informative.'

Svenska Dagbladet

Thomas Hylland Eriksen is Professor of social anthropology at the University of Oslo and the author of numerous books on anthropological and cultural issues, including *Small Places, Large Issues* and *Tyranny of the Moment*, which have both enjoyed tremendous success in Norway and abroad. From 1993 to 2001 he was affiliated with the Centre for Technology, Innovation and Culture at the University of Oslo. His research spans ethnic relations, nation building and cultural dynamism in multicultural societies and he has written several books on such subjects. He has carried out field work in Mauritius and Trinidad.

SELECTED TITLES

Us and Them in Modern Societies, (in English) 1992.
Kulturelle veikryss, 1994.
Flerkulturell forståelse, 2001 (Ed.).
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Et langt kaldt land, nesten uten mennesker, 1998.
Egoisme, 1999 (with Dag O. Hessen).
Øyeblikkets tyranni, 2001.
Hva er sosialantropologi, 2003.
Røtter og føtter, 2004.

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