



coordinator [which has never happened]). When the joint leadership allocated time to the theory course—in the draft version of the semester plan—the purpose was to transform it into a more self-contained unit, while preserving from of the sandwich-course virtues (Fig. 1). The small steps approach clearly comes out here: since a major premise for having the previous theory course shortened had not been taken into account. From 10 weekly slots on Fridays to 3 weeks.

This has nothing to do with petty sums. It was about getting the *idea* of synergy on which the old model with weekly slots was based—which we have been talking though at many different occasions—and overlooking the idea in planning a more *self-contained* theory unit: that is, over-looking that to be self-contained as a 5 ects course the theory course would need not 3 weeks as in the plan above, but 4 weeks (20 days of 6 hours is 120 hours, and still 5 hours less than the minimum of 125 hours). With the 3 weeks/15 days formula it would be 90 hours (35-60 hours short).

In effect, the theory curriculum—which is planned to cover work and deliveries equivalent of a 5ects course according to NOKUT—which is 70-120 hours short over a year. It should be said that in this audit, the MA as a *whole* also lacks some hours. It is quite short in the autumn, but a bit over the minimum in the spring. In sum, with the autumn and spring, the deficit is 30 hours only to reach the minimum of 1500 hours. In the older plan the theory teaching was under budgeted so that it would could eat *with* the specialisations, based on the idea that this would be to a mutual benefit.

This idea was clearly not moored/grounded, since it was overlooked. But in the new plan, which intended for theory to eat less *with* the specialisations—which likely reflects the tendency to think and act from silos/isolates—the joint leadership presented a semester plan which was still short of hours, but based on a different idea. Or, it is implied that an idea indeed has been hatched for the MA, since the new plan is deemed to be *more integrated* between the specialisation at the MA programme as a whole. Yet, the joint leadership's time-budget would thus *recreate* the problem.

That is, the problem according to leadership that theory was eating time, *not* with but from the other subjects. It is difficult to see how this could *not* happen, given that the two theory courses in question were under-budgeted *also* in the new plan. Evidently the problem here is not that the math is difficult—since it is simple arithmetic—but that the math wasn't done, for whichever reason. Since we cannot assume that the NOKUT-criteria are counted less severely for theoretical than for practical subjects. The idea seems to have been that the MA does not need “so much” theory.

This is a conclusion with some nuances, since the Dean had motioned for some deliveries—e.g., keeping a *logbook* (which up to the present has been part of the theory curriculum), should be shared by *all* courses: based on the idea of integration that was the foundation of the old plan. But only one specialisation motioned for this. While the others showed resistance, considered it inadequate or as interference. One specialisation moved on the idea that a win-win situation could be developed with theory. The other two appeared not to think in this way (nor share this di/vision).

Which is why we run into paradoxes when considering that the plans in the pipeline for the second year, aims at a more integrated theory curriculum. But this time, by dividing a concentrated course of 6 weeks into the beginning and the end of the year. Which could have worked if the professional synergies between theory and the specialisations had been more mature. But they fundamentally lack that experience, at the present juncture. So, the *small steps* approach—in this case—is to have less visibility for theory, and it could *appear* integrated. But without idea for the MA as a whole.

To be integrated it would need substance and the ideas that would attract importance to the MA, at the level of the 3 specialisations. Which means that: it may well be that—at the present point—big steps would be a better strategy (for substance and a clear idea) than the small steps approach. *But what does it take?* More explanations/more convincing?

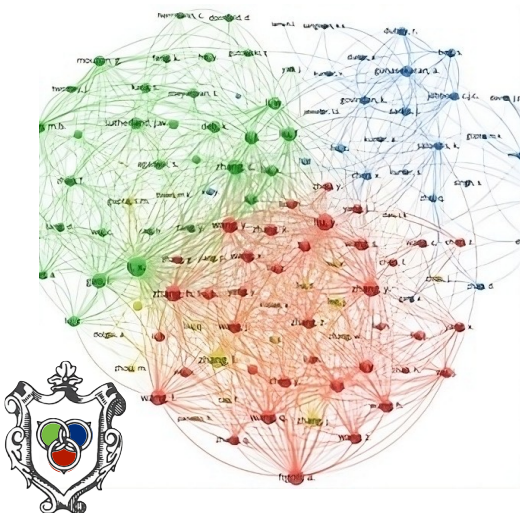


Fig. 3—In the Borromean crest (lower left) the hoops are interlocked by their boundaries. In the above right diagram, the fields have each their attractor at their cores, and one attractor holding them together.