



## **Written on the Body: Narrative (Re)constructions of Violence(s)**

Call for Traces

July 26–August 2, 2020

Location: World Wide Web/Local initiatives

**The Nordic Summer University 2020 will take place in an adjusted format because of the Covid-19 pandemic.**

### **Invitation and Theme:**

‘Written on the Body: Narrative (Re)constructions of Violence(s)’ was meant to be a week-long symposium organised by the study circle ‘Narrative and Violence’. Following the discussions on how to make sense of violence in the digital age, which took place last February at the University of Gdańsk, this was to be the second symposium of our Study Circle’s. However, due to the pandemic of Covid-19, the Nordic Summer University Summer Session 2020 will not be able to take place as a physical gathering, but will instead take place in distant and dispersed formats of encounter, sharing and connection. The participants are invited to create a *trace* (please see below for a more detailed description). Taking the advantage of the current environment, rather than collapsing under its restrictions, NSU is thus opening a space for traditional and unconventional collaborations, experiments, unusual meet-ups, creative interventions and other innovative approaches. In all this, documentation, accessibility and shareability aspects are crucial.

We therefore invite scholars, students, practitioners and activists from all disciplines to submit proposals for traces that will address how *bodies* becomes subjects and objects of violence and how, by simply ‘being’, they narrate their traumatic experience. But how do *bodies* narrate violence(s)? Our understanding of a *body* is purposefully broad and includes the human and nonhuman, the organic and inorganic, and their diverse material or corporeal forms. We are therefore engaging with bodies that are human, animal, vegetal, natural and technological; that are both singular and collective (i.e. the social body); that are situated in both the physical and virtual space; and that express naturecultural entanglements (Haraway 2003). To consider the materiality of violence implies attending to its trans-corporeal intersections and therefore addressing its inseparability from the ‘environment’—a network of relations (human and nonhuman), phenomena and space (e.g. the home, the neighbourhood, the city) that foster, produce, perform, and ultimately bear witness to violence. Hence, inspired by Catriona Sandilands (2019), we envisage the entangled forms of violence done to human and nonhuman bodies as metonymic and intersectional. Our ambition is to engage with the

imaginative (re)constructions of (human/nonhuman/social/natural/technological) bodies that perform or experience violence; with how they reproduce the intertwining of gender, power, agency and heteropatriarchal capitalism; and with their contribution to ethics, aesthetics, and politics. Finally, in addressing how *bodies* narrate violence we wish to reflect on the implications and effects of such (embodied) practices—whether positive or negative—and on the possible strategies to counter-act or counter-story them.

We invite contributions exploring various practices of storying violence on *bodies*, and attending to ‘the wounds of the world’. Suggested themes relate to narratives addressing human and nonhuman bodies, within non-digital and digital realities, fictional or factual, and their multiple intersections. They include but are not limited to:

- Self-inflicted violence (e.g. self-harm, eating disorders, suicide, etc.)
- Other-directed violence (abuse, harassment, murder, genocide, etc.)
- Technological representations/forms of bodily violence (e.g. social media, videogames, drones, etc.)
- Aesthetic representations of bodily violence (e.g. art, literature, film, etc.)
- (Neo)colonial labour and slavery
- Appropriation of indigenous knowledge
- Environmental violence and its effects on communities (e.g. natural catastrophes and their aftermaths, exploitation of indigenous/ancestral lands, etc.)
- Entanglements of misogynist and anti-ecological violence
- Micro- and macro-political violences
- Governmental policing and rationalization of (public) spaces
- Reconstructions of war-crimes (e.g. forensic architecture)
- The effects of field-work violence: researchers, practitioners, activists, NGOs workers

The framework of the Study Circle is intersectional and open to multiple approaches and methodologies in humanities, social sciences and from the practicing field. The overarching intention of our three-year Study Circle is to contribute in particular to the fields of digital and environmental violence.

### **What is a *trace*?**

A trace is defined as the outcome of our Study Circle’s activities in the Summer Session 2020. A trace is documented and can be archived or presented as a form of evidence. A trace can have a variety of formats: it can be an article written or co-written by you or a discussion held among our Circle’s members; it can be a virtual meet-up or a localised interdisciplinary micro meet-up between members of different circles in a form that is permitted; an online podcast or interviews. The format is not restricted in any way. As the Circle’s coordinators we will evaluate the potential outcome, creative and academic contribution, quality and shareability of the proposed traces.

The Board of NSU has defined the following guidelines for the shortlisting of the proposed Traces:

- produced by a single individual or group of participants;
- sharable and open to all during the Summer Session time frame;
- fitting to NSU’s overall goals, aims and vision;

- related to the Circle's theme;
- created in its main language English or a Scandinavian or Baltic language;
- those who make a trace must be members of NSU (pay membership fee) & participate in the democratic forum of NSU (may become a delegate for the General Assembly meeting);
- the team or the individual creating a trace needs to provide some promotion material considered as an INVITATION to the trace, before the Summer Session with an image & description of 200-500 words;
- those who make a trace need to provide a brief report of the trace to their coordinator (form to be provided by NSU, including number of participants, goals, etc.) after the trace has been produced.

As always, NSU is particularly interested in supporting people who are at the outskirts of the Nordic region – the Baltic and West-Nordic communities as well as those with special needs. So please inform us if your application for a Trace grant falls under the regional support or if the pandemic has had particular financial consequences to you.

Please send proposals for traces (200-500 words and an image, if appropriate) with a title and a short biographical statement (100 words) to **narrativeandviolence@gmail.com** by **31st May 2020**. This is also the deadline for the application for grants of up to 7000.00 DKK per trace. Authors of accepted traces will be contacted after 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

More information about NSU can be found by following this link: <http://nordic.university>.