

Nordisk Sommeruniversitet

Nordic Summer University

Study Circle 8: Futures of Education, Cultural Diversity, Imaginations and Collective Transformations in Time of the Anthropocene

Call for Papers

Topic:

Education and Nature as the Other in the Anthropocene

Winter Symposium 26-28 March 2021

About this study circle

The aim of the Study Circle is to analyze, discuss and (re)think the futures of education, cultural diversity and the individual, collective and social transformations in the current epoch of the Anthropocene. Anthropocene is the unofficial term for the present epoch which denotes the dominance and global effects of human activities on the Earth's ecosystems, biodiversity and geology. This poses new challenges and threats to our collective life (both human, animal, and to the ecosystems), and forces transformations. This includes issues such as human rights, world citizenship, alterity, heterological thinking and new concepts of peace and sustainability, both from western and non-western perspectives, human and non/trans-human perspectives. Dealing with these different issues, the "response" to the Anthropocene is ever-present, whether as optimistic or as pessimistic approaches. Currently, education systems are undergoing reforms to meet the needs of the economy for growth. One example is the reform effective in Norway from next school year, where the aim is to produce workers for the future for the sake of the economy. Such a focus leaves out much to be wanted in an educational setting with regards to answering the current crisis. Traditionally, the idea of Bildung has served as a conceptual framework from which to form a critique of these trends. Due to its holistic focus on education, Bildung can serve as a mutual opening of the self and the world as reflected in the idea of the Anthropocene, and create a relation between the human and the non-human other.

The study circle is organized around the following *six major themes*:

Theme 1. Education and Nature as the Other in the Anthropocene

Theme 2. Education and the Human Other in the Anthropocene

Theme 3. Education and the Technological Other in the Anthropocene

Theme 4: Imagining the Future – Traditions and Transformations

Theme 5: Diversity, Transformation and the Future

Theme 6: Action-oriented Change – Potentialities for Sustainability

About the Winter Symposium 26-28 March 2021:

The Symposium will be organized around Theme 1: **Education and Nature as the Other in the Anthropocene.**

The following points serve as focus points for the Winter Session:

- Exploring the limits and possibilities of current pedagogy and educational system in relation to Nature as the Other.
- Exploring foundations of our education tradition, definition of humanity in light of an exploration of Nature as the Other.
- Exploring the limits of Human Rights in view of establishing a heterological relationship with Nature as an agent in its own right.
- Will there be a need for eco-rights?
- Bringing in non-western traditions in discussing Nature and Education in order to break away from western centric views of Nature
- Human spaces and natural spaces: invasions, innovations or harmony?

Description of the theme:

In this first theme we wish to explore nature as the non-human other and the possibilities and limits of the current pedagogy and educational systems in both the Nordic area and the Baltics in relation to the non-human other. This means daring to explore and reinterpret the entire foundations of our educational traditions, and even the definition of humanity in light of insights from the non-human other. Through current proposals such as dark pedagogy, wild pedagogy and ecocritical pedagogy, and ideas such as “bewildering education” (Snaza 2018), “decentering the human”, “environmental literacy”, “re-wildering the human consciousness”, and knowledge emerging from a “natural library” (Hawke 2012), we can find interesting perspectives on how nonhumans can be included in educational activities – not only as objects for study, but also as agents in their

own right. This will bring about ideas on how to develop heterological relations with the radical other, at the same time discussing if human rights need to be limited, changed or otherwise rethought from the roots in relation to having eco-rights on an equal base. Also non-western traditions, where we find different ontologies, anthropologies and naturephilosophies, should be included in the exploration of (re)defining the human and non-human other and their relations, including the investigation into what McKenna called the archaic revival (McKenna 1991).

Location

The NSU Winter Session 2021 will not be held in a physical location, due to the current Covid-19 world pandemic. Instead it will be held online for all the activities mentioned in this CfP for the Study Circle 8.

Deadline

The deadline for submission of the title and a brief abstract (3-5 lines) is **December 1, 2020**. Please note that you have to send the title and the abstract to all three coordinators mentioned in the call.

Those who have applied will be informed about the decisions in late January 2021 and we will send out the program for the Winter Session including technical details, regarding the online conference platforms (Zoom, or others) which we will have an access to in a secure version.

Program

You can apply for the Winter Session 2021 in some of the following formats:

- 1) Presentation of an academic paper or lecture - 30 mins.
- 2) Shorter presentation of ideas on the topic of the CfP - 10 mins.

The Winter Session 2021 program will include:

- 1) Social Sessions
- 2) Screening Session: *Snowpiercer* (2013, d. Bong Joon-ho)

*The length of the talks/ presentations is adjustable, depending on the number of participants and density of the program.

Fees

Each participant is expected to pay a modest fee for participation at the Winter Session:

- €15 fee for students (including NSU membership)
- €35 fee for other participants (including NSU membership)
- €50+ fee for participants in the WS who want to support the future of NSU (including NSU membership)

You pay the fee by following the instructions here <https://payment.nsuweb.org/>

Organizers

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The Nordic Summer University (NSU) is a Nordic network for research and interdisciplinary studies. NSU is a nomadic, academic institution, which organizes workshop-seminars across disciplinary and national borders. Since it was established in 1950, Nordic Summer University has organized forums for cultural and intellectual debate in the Nordic and Baltic region, involving students, academics, politicians, and intellectuals from this region and beyond. Decisions about the content and the organizational form of the NSU lay with its participants. The backbone of the activities in the NSU consists of its thematic study circles. In the study circles researchers, students and professionals from different backgrounds collaborate in scholarly investigations distributed regularly in summer and winter symposia during a three-year period.

For more information: <http://nordic.university>



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