



CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2022

Whiteness, Racialization and (Post-)Soviet Pasts

'Racialization, Whiteness and Politics of Othering in Contemporary Europe' (Study Circle 5)
Nordic Summer University

Hybrid Symposium: 31 March – 1 April 2022, Vilnius University

Invitation

The Nordic Summer University study circle 5 'Racialization, Whiteness and Politics of Othering in Contemporary Europe' is pleased to invite proposals for our symposium to be held from Thursday, March 31 through Friday, April 1, 2022. The symposium will take place at Vilnius University (Vilnius, Lithuania) in hybrid format: while we hope that most participants will be able to be there in person, we also want to accommodate prospective participants who will not be able to travel to Vilnius.

Theme of the symposium

The symposium of the study circle 5 will explore how whiteness and racialization are intertwined with ongoing (post-)Soviet pasts, and reflected in processes of subjectification, representation, social change, mobility, affectivity and materiality, among others.

Whiteness and racialization remain contested topics in contemporary Europe (Dzenovska, 2018; Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012), central to the very notion of what Europe is, and for whom. Despite almost 30 years having passed since the fall of the Iron curtain, divisions between East and West continue to constitute an inter-European axis of difference along with other divisions, like one between North and South (Dzenovska & De Genova, 2018; Kuus, 2004; Kalnačs, 2016).

The struggles and anxieties over Europe, its subjects and boundaries are rooted in Europe's colonial past, which continues to mark its present (Hvenegård-Lassen & Maurer, 2012; Jensen et al., 2017). The persistent racial ideologies and imaginaries contribute to negative attitudes towards increasing inflows of migrants and refugees to the Eastern borders of the EU. This calls to shed light on racialization and othering in the region as well as to reflect on the role of so-called Eastern European countries in global colonisation debates and decolonial struggles (Istratii, Demeter & Ginelli, 2020).

This symposium is open to participants from different countries and backgrounds. In particular we aim to engage (post-)Soviet perspectives, bringing together *post-socialist* studies with studies of *postcolonialism*. Foci will include practitioners' and researchers' perspectives on democratization and Europeanisation; (post-) Soviet histories and indigenous perspectives; decolonial thought from post-Soviet contexts (Tlostanova, 2018); 'becoming European' (Dzenovska, 2017b); orientalisation of Eastern Europe (also within academia) (Buchowski, 2006); East-West (return) migration as new form of economic dependency evoking former colonial period (Morawska, 2001); intersectionality and racialised positionalities in-between Eastern and Western Europe (Krivonos & Näre, 2019).

The symposium provides an opportunity for open discussions on topics particularly important for this region and facilitates access to scholarly activities for persons from different backgrounds of society. We welcome participants who are working on these and related issues as academics, activists, artists, independent researchers or practitioners, as well as others who are interested to discuss the above topics. When applying please tell us why you are interested to participate and indicate how you would like to contribute to the symposium.

Format

The symposium will take place over two days of work-in progress sessions and in-depth discussions (with breaks), focusing on the participants' needs, for instance, exploration and playfulness, advice on publishing, or comments related to coherence, and/or a sense of community with other scholars working in relatively isolated circumstances. We will group the abstracts by topic and circulate abstracts in advance to enable the presentations to be relatively brief, giving more time to discussions and exchange of ideas. When planning the symposium, we will take into account the needs of online participants who might be in different time zones.

To apply

Please fill out the google form by the **23 January 2022**: <https://forms.gle/Pn9Cv1DH9JSrHifW6>

In your application, please indicate the following:

- Short biographical statement and your interest in the topic
- What do you hope to get out of (and contribute with) at the symposium?
- Would you like to travel to Lithuania to present in person? (Travel and accommodation costs are covered by participants; participants from Baltic and Nordic countries are eligible for reimbursements thanks to NordPlus grant)

Participation costs

Participation in the seminar requires *NSU membership*, which is connected with a small fee:

- Students, unemployed and independents, West Nordic & Baltic residents: 10 euro
- Those associated with institutions or companies: 25 euro

To join NSU, please visit: <https://www.nsuweb.org/product-category/nsu-membership/>.

In addition, there will be a small *participation fee* for in-person participants that will cover meals during the symposium.

About the circle

The study circle 'Racialization, Whiteness and Politics of Othering in Contemporary Europe' discusses how processes of racialization and ideas of whiteness shape present Nordic, Baltic and European spaces, identities and politics. The circle invites interdisciplinary debates about Europe's condition/integrity and poses questions about who and what counts as 'European', 'Nordic' and 'Baltic' from different locations, practices and subject positions. The circle wants to broaden and develop existing research networks on race, racialization and whiteness in the Nordic with perspectives and knowledge from the former Soviet countries in order to enrich existing scholarship by combining post-Soviet and post-colonial perspectives.

Circle coordinators

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About NSU

The Nordic Summer University ([NSU](#)) is a Nordic network for research and interdisciplinary studies. NSU is a nomadic, academic institution, which organises workshop-seminars across disciplinary and national borders. Since it was established in 1950, NSU has organised 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 organisational 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.

The Nordic Summer University is committed to the principle of sustainability. At our symposia we offer vegetarian/vegan food only and aim towards zero waste. We thus invite members to bring their own reusable coffee cup and water bottle to the symposia and to consider carefully the carbon footprint of their travel choices.