



Call for Participation: Researchers, Arts Practitioners, and Activists

Winter Symposium : Reading Gerald of Wales
Topographia Hibernica (1188) and *Itinerarium Cambriae* (1191)

The newly established Nordic Summer University study circle [*Praxis of Social Imaginaries: Cosmologies, Othering and Liminality*](#) invite all who are interested in joining our group to investigate the praxis of reading together, the praxis of listening and the praxis of telling stories.

The project can be described as a cosmological artistic intervention. By bringing people together from various different disciplines and fields into shared laboratories of praxis, we aim to create a transformational learning environment and witness together how shifts in awareness and epistemic paradigms may occur.

Our reading material centres around medieval traveling accounts, with which we will engage and dialogue about, addressing what we encounter in our readings. The texts are filled with depictions of cultures, peoples, lands and religious, artistic, culinary and sacred practices from times and places different from our own. *What happens when we practice standing, sensing and listening with another in our explorations? What can we learn from encountering worldviews and scientific perspectives different from our own? What are the various media through which we can engage with texts and stories written hundreds of years before our time? What do we do if and when we find passages that are disturbing to us? How do we remain ethically grounded in practices that open for dialogue and critical scrutiny yet do not shut down or close off the possibilities of learning from what is uncomfortable? And how do we do all of this together with people from various different fields of study that also have their own perspectives and contributions to how we can learn and explore together?* These are some of the thematic questions we will pursue.

Who can participate?

The [Nordic Summer University](#) (the organization under which we arrange these Symposia) is open to all who want to engage in interdisciplinary and mutual learning under the values of equality and openness. You can be a student at bachelor's, master's, or doctoral level, and you can be a researcher, a scientist, an artist or work in a cultural or other third sector organization.

What do we offer?

First and foremost, we offer a platform for learning and collaboration.

For students, we can also offer study credits for active participation. **For scholars**, we plan for joint publications in open-access peer reviewed journals. And **for artists** and academics who want to collaborate, we will organise events where your works can be disseminated to the public. We have partnered up with forums like [aboagora](#) for presenting arts and science collaborations.

We further offer the chance to learn Digital Humanities methods of working with and annotating historical texts, as well as the opportunity to connect with the vibrant Nordic Summer University; a one-of-a-kind, radically non-hierarchical, democratic, and community, oriented institution of education and research. Finally, we endeavour to make the study circle accessible to all, including financially. We are able to provide some financial aid and continue to pursue further avenues through which to offer as much financial aid as needed to those who reach out to us to request it.

What will we start with?

We will meet for the first Symposium **3-7 March 2023 at the University of Oslo, Norway**.

The texts we read in that meeting are **Gerald of Wales's** traveling narratives *Topographia Hibernica* (1188) and *Itinerarium Cambriae* (1191). These will be provided for you in English. Draft versions of the texts are already available on our Scalar site: <https://scalar.usc.edu/works/praxis-of-social-imaginaries/books>

How can you participate?

Send us a short bio with your name, information about yourself, your home institution/organisation, your artform or area of research and a short motivation as to why you want to participate.

Please also let us know if you will have institutional support for participation, accommodation and travelling costs or if you would want to be granted a scholarship. The earlier you send in your request, the better the chances we will be able to work with you to secure scholarships! People in the Nordic/Baltic region are given priority in scholarships as we partner with Nordplus for this event.

Our final call for applications is January 10th 2023. Please reach out and express your interest earlier if at all possible.

Costs

Participation fee (including membership in NSU) 85€

Reduced price for people without institutional support 55€

The fee will include food and accommodation in Oslo for the duration of the symposium.

Accommodations are in double or triple rooms. If you wish to have a single room, there will be an extra charge of 150€

Traveling from the Nordic/Baltic region with climate-friendly transportation may be supported by additional scholarships. Please indicate in your application if you wish to have such a scholarship and give an estimate of your travel costs.

Background to the choice of texts.

During this Winter Symposium, we want to explore the problematics of racialising in Gerald of Wales's (c. 1146 – 1223) writing. It has been argued by Geraldine Heng that his portrayal of the Irish is a particular case in point where questions of racialisation also are entangled with the use of land and cultural customs in relation to the landscape. We want to investigate how the portrayal of religious rituals, agricultural practices, lived religion and ethnicity were sometimes used to create a sense of community and inclusion that overruns bodily descriptions of otherness, while at other times, these same practices divided people.

We see that the exploration of these themes are particularly important for all who want to learn more about how Western Scientific worldviews and Christian Theologies are entangled in the process of racialization and oppression, as well as questions of sustainability that still continue today.

Contact us with questions and send your application to:

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Your co-facilitators:

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<https://www.nsuweb.org/study-circles/circle-3-the-praxis-of-social-imaginaries-cosmologies-othering-and-liminality/>

<https://scalar.usc.edu/works/praxis-of-social-imaginaries/index>