

## CfP Rethinking Public Space

8-10 March 2018

Oslo University, Department of Philosophy, Classics, History of Art and Ideas.

### Invited speakers

**Cecilia Rosengren, Department of Literature, History of Ideas, Religion, Gothenburg U.**

**Line Cecilie Engh, Norwegian Institute in Rome**

**Jorunn Økland, Norwegian Institute in Athens**

Public space is under rapid transformation today. Material, political, and historical developments as well as conceptual reconfigurations work together to profoundly affect what public space is and how we conceive of it. The question of the meaning of public space today surfaces for example in relation to recent protests in Stockholm by paperless migrants and the increasing right wing populist activity throughout Europe, both online and on the streets. Recent verdicts in the EU court of justice regarding the wearing of the veil in the work place reveal the need for critical research on the notion of public space in connection to categories such as gender and religion. The #metoo campaign, where social media is used to speak out about experiences of sexual abuse and harassment, calls attention to questions of gender, sexuality, and digital public space.

Drawing on the rich tradition of feminist philosophy and other critical bodies of knowledge, this symposium aims to provide a space for multifaceted discussions notions of the public in historical and contemporary perspectives, from Antiquity until today. Feminist philosophers from Enlightenment thinker Mary Wollstonecraft to socialist feminists such as Alexandra Kollontai, Emma Goldman, and Rosa Luxemburg have pointed out the gendered and bourgeois aspect of the division between the public and the private. According to political philosopher Wendy Brown, late modern political institutions are increasingly defined by a rationality that switches the meaning of democratic values from a political to an economic register, thereby severely circumscribing public space. Inspired by Hannah Arendt's understanding of public space and the political, contemporary philosophers such as Bonnie Honig and Linda Zerilli have formulated visions of feminist politics in terms of agonism and world building. How should the changing material, conceptual conditions and their implications for feminist theory be formulated? What can feminists contribute to the project of rethinking public space, the political and the common? What do categories such as gender, sexuality, and race have to do with public space, historically and today? How can historical examples unsettle current understandings of what public space is?

The purpose of the symposium is to shed light on the notion of public space from as many angles as possible. The organizing network is based in the disciplines of history of ideas and philosophy, but we welcome contributions from scholars from a wide range of disciplines, for example literature, art, gender studies, sociology and political science.

The conference is organized by the network **Feminist Philosophy: Time, History and the Transformation of Thought** of the Nordic Summer University and hosted by the **Department of Philosophy, Classics, History of Art and Ideas at the University of Oslo**.



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## **Participation**

Anyone interested in presenting a paper at the symposium in Oslo is invited to submit an abstract of 300 words to [feministphilosophy@nsuweb.org](mailto:feministphilosophy@nsuweb.org) no later than **December 14th 2017**. Presentations can be made in English or a Scandinavian language. Decisions regarding acceptance will be communicated shortly thereafter. A preliminary program will be sent to the participants by December 15th. We might be able to accept late applications, contact the organizing committee if deadline has passed.

## **Practical information**

The registration fee is 300 SEK for students, participants from the Baltics and people with low income, 500 SEK for PhD candidates and 700 SEK for senior scholars. Registration entitles you to accommodation in a shared double room and lunch meals, all of which will be taken care of by the organizers. Single rooms are available for an additional fee. Further instructions about registration and payment will follow in an e-mail to all accepted participants. NSU will also be able to fund the travel expenses for a number of Nordic and Baltic participants. Please indicate whether you are interested in travel support in your application.

## **About the network**

*Feminist philosophy: Time, history and the transformation of thought* is an international platform for inquiries in feminist philosophy and history of ideas. From 2017 to 2019, we will organize a total of six conferences. Our first conference on the theme of Feminist Utopias was held in collaboration with the University of Iceland in the spring of 2017, the second conference Feminism, phenomenology and genealogy was held in Latvia in July 2017, altogether attracting more than 80 scholars from all over the world. For more information about the network, visit our web page: <http://nordic.university/study-circles/3-feminist-philosophy-time-history-transformation-thought/> and FB-group Feminist Philosophy (NSU).

## **About the Nordic Summer University**

Founded in 1950, the Nordic Summer University is an independent, non-profit academic institution that fosters scholarly and cultural exchange between the Nordic and the Baltic countries. Committed to egalitarian and interdisciplinary modes of learning, the NSU is open for senior scholars, doctoral and master students as well as artists and professionals with relevant backgrounds. The NSU is funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers. Read more about the Nordic Summer University on the website <http://nordic.university>

## **Organizing committee**

Synne Myrebøe and Valgerður Pálmadóttir, both from the Department of historical, philosophical and religious studies at Umeå University, and Johanna Sjöstedt, LIR, University of Gothenburg. Contact the organizers at [feministphilosophy@nsuweb.org](mailto:feministphilosophy@nsuweb.org). Local contact person is Line Cecilie Engh, UiO and Norwegian Institute in Rome.



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