

**Call for Papers**  
***Negotiating Europeanness:***  
***Race, Class, and Culture in the Colonial World***  
**Date: 27 June 2022**  
**Leiden, The Netherlands**

The expansion of European powers overseas brought Europeans into contact and conflict with the inhabitants of Africa, Asia, and the Americas. Historians of colonialism and post-colonial scholars have long argued that this encounter was crucial for the formation of European identity, which originated in contradistinction to the non-European ‘other’ (Kiernan 1980; Hargreaves 1982). However, what meant to be European in the colonies was unclear and historically contingent. Europeanness, or identification as European, is better understood on a spectrum with multiple gradations, being often a fluid and pragmatic concept, standing in contrast to a coherent system of classification based on phenotype features. (Stoler 2002; Fischer-Tine 2009; Luttikhuis 2013; Mizutani 2011; Herzog 2012). As Richard Drayton has recently emphasised, ideas of whiteness and of European difference *vis-à-vis* non-Europeans resulted from the interplay of race, class, and culture embedded in social practices against which actors needed to negotiate their place in colonial societies (Drayton 2019).

Due to their high mortality rates in the colonial settings during the early modern European expansion, Europeans continuously depended on local populations and their existing social structures. Cross-cultural exchanges ensued, giving rise to in-between groups and societies of cultural and biological *métissage* (Zúñiga 2002; Brooks 2003; Bosma and Raben 2008; Havik and Newitt 2015). By the late nineteenth century, however, a new phase of imperial growth facilitated the increase in the number of people from Europe in colonial spaces. Meanwhile, ‘sciences’ of race had reinforced existing ideas of natural inequality associated with skin colour and the superiority of the ‘white’ race over all others, supported by deep-rooted views of internal hierarchies within the ‘white/European’ race (Stepan 1982; Bancel, David, and Thomas 2014; McMahon 2016; Turda and Quine 2018; Mogilner 2021).

This workshop aims to address the development of the concept and the practice of Europeanness overtime in European colonies worldwide. The focus lies on the way gradations of Europeanness were negotiated, adapted and/or modified by local actors across space and time. By bringing together scholars working on premodern and modern historians of empire

and colonial interactions, we hope to stimulate a two edge discussion. On the one hand, discuss the premodern roots of modern processes of identity formation as ‘European’ in a colonial context. On the other hand, compare and contrast the way in which modern identification processes diverged from previous forms. The workshop aims to bring a better understanding of the role of local societies in shaping European colonial projects from within the colonies and show their continuities and discontinuities beyond usual historical periodisation. We welcome papers dealing with specific empires, colonies or regions, as well as translating a trans-imperial perspective.

The workshop will take place on 27 June 2023 in Leiden at the Institute for History (Leiden University). Participants to the workshop are expected to give 15-20 minute presentations. Proposals should include a provisional title and abstract (max. 300 words) and a short CV (max. 1 page), and be submitted to [m.a.goncalves@hum.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:m.a.goncalves@hum.leidenuniv.nl) by 15 December 2022. Confirmation of acceptance of papers will be sent in the first week of January 2023.

Convenor: Márcia Gonçalves, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow, Institute for History, Leiden University

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