The world had changed forever after February 24, 2022, when the Russian Federation invaded Ukraine. Before this invasion, it de facto occupied Belarus in 2021 and later used its territory as a launch pad for shelling Ukraine. Currently, all other neighboring countries are expressing their concerns about the future intentions of Russia, which allegedly claims that its borders be reinstated to the former Russian empire or the USSR. The urgency to reassess Russian and Slavic studies is imperative in this outrageous geopolitical situation. The evidence that we should decolonize many subfields, including art and material culture in Eastern Europe and Eurasia, is only growing.

These political events received immediate attention in the cultural sphere. It triggered the re-examination of identities that were intentionally altered by the Russian imperial and Soviet official narratives. Still, the Russian and Soviet cultural hegemonies created myths concerning the colonized territories, including Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, the Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, Poland, Finland, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. Arguably, this colonial cultural order started in the 18th century when Peter I defeated Sweden in the Great Northern War (1707-1721) and founded a new capital on the Swedish lands and when Catherine II annexed Crimea in 1783. It continued when the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was partitioned and the Russian empire acquired new western territories and thus changed the political map of Europe. The centrality of the Russian empire was consolidated in the 19th century when imperial Russia settled...
its dominance in its western provinces and colonized the Caucasus and Central Asia. Revised colonial narratives persisted in the 20th century when the Soviet Union imposed its cultural policies based on the dominance of the “title nation” of Russians over other ethnicities and with the Russian language as lingua franca and Russocentrism as a core cultural discourse.

This volume hopes to re-examine and deconstruct the imperialist history that laid the foundation of Russia’s aggressive geopolitics. We seek contributions to a volume of essays centered on the decolonization of the visual arts and material culture to deconstruct the hierarchies of arts and visual cultures created by the Russian empire and the USSR. In the context of Eastern Europe, post-colonial studies often add the account of the “colonized” without a thorough investigation of hegemony and resistance through time and place. The former provinces of the Russian empire and the republics of the USSR do not fully respond to this approach as Svitlana Biedarieva [1] and Vitaly Chernetsky [2] propose. Therefore there is an urgent need to develop an approach that explains Russia’s colonialisit narratives and the cultural resistance expressed by the oppositional voices. We hope to start developing the methodology of decolonization that answers to Walter Mingolo and Madina Tolstanova’s call to build the “epistemology of exteriority.”[3] We envision this volume as an attempt to find new approaches that inform Slavic, East European and Eurasian studies and reassess the existing framework.

The proposed volume asks questions related to the emergence of Russian centrality in the region of Eastern Europe and Eurasia. However, we are more concerned with re-examining of both the hegemony of Russian culture and the inferiority of cultures that previously constituted both the Russian empire and the USSR. How did visual representations and material culture resist or conform the hegemonic narratives? How were these official colonial accounts created and what spheres did they aim at and why? How did these unequal narratives co-exist and relate to one another?

We hope to receive submissions targeting different geographical regions, including Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, the Baltic states, Central Asia, the Caucasus and the multiethnic Russian Federation. The case studies that focus on 19th and 20th-centuries and post-Soviet resistance against colonization are especially welcome. We are particularly interested in the following topics but welcome submissions that deal with other aspects of visual and material culture and decentering of cultural heritage:
Official art, art education and the tension between dominant and colonized voices;
Rethinking the histories of collecting and museums through decolonization and the ideas of the restitution;
World Fairs as an opportunity for acquiring voice for the colonized ethnic groups and their cultures;
Photography and print media: the interrelationship between word and image in caricatures, posters, and book illustrations as messages of colonialism and resistance;
Dress and textiles as bearers of ethnic identity within the official colonial and imperialist cultures;
Gendered narratives of decolonization in visual culture and collecting;
Arts and crafts movements in the Russian empire and the Soviet Union and their revival in post-Soviet period;
Appropriation of ethnic crafts and symbols into Soviet design and mass production;
Architecture as a decolonizing tool.

The abstract should clearly state the author’s argument, outline, and briefly describe the research methodology, and identify the aims of the work. Please provide a short proposed bibliography with your abstract.

Formal invitation to contribute to the volume will be emailed by December 31, 2022. The first drafts of the chapters will be expected by May 31, 2023. The final contributions should be 6,000-8,000 words in length.

Please submit an abstract of the proposed paper of up to 500 words and a short CV by September 24, 2022 to

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and

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**Preliminary Bibliography**

Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. Hoboken, NJ: Taylor and Francis,


