



Can CEE Lesbians Speak? Towards Central Eastern European Lesbian Studies

Symposium, UCD Humanities Institute, 25-26 July 2024

Organiser: Dr Aleksandra Gajowy, UCD School of Art History and Cultural Policy

The purpose of the symposium is to think broadly and collectively about lesbians and lesbian studies in Central and Eastern Europe, particularly in the context of art, literature, history, community, affect, sex, post- and decoloniality, and East/West connections and their inherent problems. While there is, of course, lesbian scholarship in existence across the region, it seems we have rarely spoken collectively, in dialogic form, or transnationally. In short, “lesbian studies” as a discipline has not yet been outlined or conceptualised in the region, unlike the more established investigations of gay masculinities and queerness.

This event is a methodologies-oriented workshop, discussing the current state of the field, different approaches to the subject, and opportunities and concerns of working with the knowledge we have thus far, as well as the obvious archival absences and gaps. I hope this symposium will serve us to look for connections, common methodologies and theorisations, and consider collective approaches to “lesbian” in the region and their challenges and shortcomings.

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DAY 1

9:30-10:00 Coffee morning

10:00-10:15 Welcome, opening remarks

10:15-11:45 **Session 1: Theorising Together?**

Maja Pan, *Research and Theorising Lesbian (Activist) History: Some Examples from Slovenia*

Ramona Dima, *Do we really need a common denominator? Parallel capsules and intersecting networks in SEE lesbian studies.*

Marija Radoman, *Reflections on Lesbian Studies in the Post-Yugoslav Region: Methodological Challenges and Research Opportunities*

11:45-13:00 Lunch

13:00-14:30 **Video screening and Q&A with Katarzyna Perlak**

Chair: Aleksandra Gajowy

14:30-15:00 Coffee break

15:00-17:00 **Session 2: Relations**

Teri Szűcs, *Queer Lesbian Caregiving and Aging in Eastern Europe*

Masha Beketova, *Queer migrants negotiating gender nonconformity, desire and subjectivity between languages*

Tjaša Kancler, *Relations: lesbian, trans* and decolonial politics in Eastern Europe*

Kamil Karczewski, *"Anywhere we choose." In Search of Cruising Lesbians*

17:00-18:00 Wine reception

DAY 2

9:30-10:00 Coffee morning

10:00-12:00 **Session 1: Threaded through Time**

Rasa Navickaitė, *Why We Still Need to Talk about Soviet Legacies and their Effects on the Lithuanian Lesbian Community*

Aleksandra Gajowy, *The White Lady: Transhistorical affinities in contemporary lesbian art from Poland*

Anna Dżabagina, [title TBC]

Suzana Tratnik, *Lesbian artifacts*

12:00-13:00 Lunch

13:00-14:30 **Reading and Q&A with Ju Bavyka**

Chair: Masha Beketova

14:30-15:00 Coffee break

15:00-16:30 **Session 2: Between the Lines**

Liliana Bajger, *Darning archival holes: The analysis of scattered messages of women written to film stars in Poland*

Anna Borgos, *Erzsébet Galgóczi, the first openly lesbian writer in Hungary. Literary, sexual and political aspects*

Mark Cornwall, *Czech Lesbians in the Twentieth Century: Exiles in the National Community?*

16:30-17:00 Closing remarks/discussion

17:00-18:30 Wine reception