

Presentation and discussion, Friday, 4 March, 2022, 5-7pm (CET)

Curatorial and artistic research: Exploring transregional and gendered trails in recent East European art history

The closing event of a two-day workshop titled “Transregional Dynamics in Eastern Europe and the Americas: New Empirical Approaches” which was held at the Tagungslounge in Leipzig, took place as moderated session on “Curatorial and Artistic Research: Exploring Transregional and Gendered Trails in Recent East European Art History”. At this podium three curatorial projects and one academic research project were introduced and subsequently discussed in the framework of a conversation, led by Beata Hock and Simone Wille respectively.

Two of the curatorial projects – *Left Performance Histories* presented by Beata Hock and *Left Turn, Right Turn* presented by Kristóf Nagy and Márton Szarvas – explored artistic activities that have often been left out of critical debates with gender insubordination and a discursive reading of leftist political criticism as thematic strands that connected the two projects. The curatorial in both works came as a communal effort and as research projects.

Research based was also the project that Przemysław Strożek presented: *Ahmed Cherkaoui in Warsaw: Polish-Moroccan Artistic Relations, 1955-1980* which he realized as an exhibition in 2020 at Zachęta – National Gallery of Art Warsaw. Simone Wille’s research on *Patterns of Trans-regional Trails: The materiality of art works and their place in the modern era. Bombay, Paris, Prague, Lahore, from ca. 1920s to the early 1950s* ([FWF, P29536-G26](#)) overlapped with the three curatorial projects in its methodological endeavor to transcend boundaries such as the local, the regional, gender, but also the boundaries of disciplines. What the works also have in common is the endeavor to make the invisible visible. While these studies are very much rooted in archival research, the presenters spoke about different ways of making this research accessible/visible for a broader audience.

The four projects connected well with the overall topic of the conference, namely the Transregional Dynamics in Eastern Europe, in that they explored trans as a method of inquiry and as a method to overcome established frameworks of research within area studies. Here, the overall impression is that the habilitation and book projects presented over the course of the two-day event were collectively concerned with questions about the perception of difference, border crossing both physical but also ideological, the connection that the trans can potentially establish between space and body, between modernism and modernity, but also the quest to locate the periphery. Area studies, one could argue, are increasingly perceived as a tool for exploring intra-regional relations as well as trans-regional entanglements, leading to the assumption that studies concerned with East-Central or Southeast Europe gain profile through globally oriented research approaches.

The workshop presentations were lively discussed, and each project was unique and original. It is hoped that a follow up event such as this one will be organized.

by Dr Simone Wille