

Book of Abstracts

Challenging Gender Frontiers

Societal, Legal, Medical, and Artistic
Discourses and Practices of Emerging
Gender Identities



UNIVERSITY OF BELGRADE
FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY

Belgrade, Serbia

September 5–6, 2025

Challenging Gender Frontiers

Societal, Legal, Medical, and Artistic Discourses
and Practices of Emerging Gender Identities

Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade
Belgrade, Serbia
September 5–6, 2025

Edited by

Isidora Jarić and Andrija Golubović
Belgrade 2025

Publisher

University of Belgrade – Faculty of Philosophy
Čika Ljubina 18–20, Belgrade 11000, Serbia
www.f.bg.ac.rs

For the Publisher

Prof. Dr Danijel Sinani
Dean of the University of Belgrade – Faculty of Philosophy

Editorial Board

Branko Bešlin, Smilja Marjanović-Dušanić, Nebojša Porčić,
Mira Radojević, Aleksandar Z. Savić, Aleksandar Životić

Cover design

Ivana Zoranović

Pre press and printing

Dosije studio, Belgrade

ISBN 978-86-6427-372-5



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Conference Program 5

Aleksa Milanović 9

Community building through joint regional actions: cultural and artistic projects of trans, intersex, and gender variant people

Isidora Jarić 11

Situating Intersex Identity in Modern Identity Frameworks

Aleksandra Panić 14

Narrating the Self Beyond Binaries: Autotheory and Autofiction as Transmedial Strategies for Reshaping Gender Frontiers

Marija Grujić 16

In their own Name: Subjectivity of the Participants in the Documentaries on Transgender Lives

Nora Koller 18

Trans/Intersex Feminism as Intercorporeal Ethics

Jakov Đorđević 20

Body and Gender of the Medieval Monk in the Ordination Rite: The Case of the Dečani Monastery

Alawna Hanan 22

Beyond the Veil: Colonial Legacies, Gendered Resistance, and the Representation of Iranian Women in Graphic Narratives

Jelena Erdeljan, Svetlana Tomin 23

The Man-Like and Man-Minded Women in Serbian Medieval Culture

Alice Bakradze 25

Negotiating Identity and Belonging: Armenian Ethnic Minority Women in Georgia (The Intersections of Motherhood and Faith)

Branka Galić 27

State support for misogyny against women on public spaces of Croatian cities

Jure Skubic 30

Gender Ideology in Slovenian, Croatian and Serbian Parliamentary Discourse

Slobodan Cvejić 32

Exploring Gender Equality Initiatives in Higher Education: A Study of Institutional Practices and Challenges

Migena Kecaj, Rubin Mandija, Ergys Pirani 34

The impact of the part-time jobs on the students' academic achievement and well-being (Department of Art, University of Shkoder "Luigj Gurakuqi" case)

Svetlana Tomić 37

From Ignorance to Demonization: Gender Identities through the Lens of Institutions Shaping Linguistic Norms

Andrija Golubović 39

The Curious Case of STR8 Men on Gay Dating Platforms in Serbia



Tatjana Rosić Ilić.....41
Intersex and Intertext in Jeffrey
Eugenides MIDDLESEX

Merima Omeragić43
Ageing and Sexuality at the
Crossroads of Mithology: Baba Yaga
Laid an Egg by Dubravka Ugrešić

Abhiruchi Ranjan.....45
Talking back to the digital
Manosphere: The cinematic
subversion of Patriarchal Control in
Contemporary Indian Cinema

Erzsébet Barát47
Solidarity beyond Polarization

**İrem Sumru Müftüoğlu
(she/they)49**
Queer Strategies Against Hate
Speech: The Politics of Vulnerability
and Performative Resistance

**Marija Radoman,
Aleksa Milanović51**
Queer Resistance and Societal
Change:
Student Protests in Serbia 2024/2025

**Poteko Kaja,
Perger Nina53**
Fueling the Flames: Slovenian
Media Coverage of Gender Non-
Normative Athletes in Times of
Retraditionalization

**Özge KORKMAZ ŞAHBAZ,
Hatice KOÇ55**
How Platform Economies Can
Support Women-led Cooperatives
and Economic Resilience?

**Milica Resanović,
Tijana Matijević.....57**
Everyone is Afraid of Gender:
Current Controversies and Uses of
the Concept in Serbia

**Marija Mandić,
Jelena Čeriman.....59**
Gender-sensitive language in legal
and public discourse: A critical
discourse analysis of social actors

Tijana Matijević.....61
Critique Lacking Criticism: Rhetoric
of Serbian Gender-Critical Feminism

Aleksandra Knežević63
Gender and the Scientific
Method: Reassessing Biological
Reductionism

**Zona Zarić,
Liljana Pantović65**
What Does Medicine Do to the
Female Body? An Anthropological
and Philosophical Inquiry into the
Concept of Obstetric Violence

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Friday, September 5, 2025

09:30–10:00 Registration

10:00–10:15 Conference Opening

10:15–12:00 I Session: Community Building through Identity Politics

10:15–10:30 Aleksa Milanović (Faculty of Media and Communications, Singidunum University, Belgrade, Serbia): Community Building through Joint Regional Actions: Cultural and Artistic Projects of Trans, Intersex, and Gender Variant People

10:30–10:45 Isidora Jarić and Valentina Sokolovska (University of Belgrade / University of Novi Sad, Serbia): Situating Intersex Identity in Modern Identity Frameworks

10:45–11:00 Aleksandra Panić (Faculty of Media and Communications, Singidunum University, Belgrade, Serbia): Narrating the Self Beyond Binaries: Autotheory and Autofiction as Transmedial Strategies for Reshaping Gender Frontiers

11:00–11:15 Marija Grujić (Institute for Literature and Arts in Belgrade, Serbia): In Their Own Name: Subjectivity of the Participants in Documentaries on Transgender Lives

11:15–11:30 Nora Koller (University of Coimbra, Portugal): Trans/ Intersex Feminism as Intercorporeal Ethics

11:30–12:00 Discussion

12:00–12:15 Coffee Break



12:15–13:30 II Session: Historical Legacies and Cultural Frames

- 12:15–12:30 Jakov Đorđević (University of Belgrade, Serbia): Body and Gender of the Medieval Monk in the Ordination Rite: The Case of the Dečani Monastery
- 12:30–12:45 Hanan Alawna (University of Szeged, Hungary): Beyond the Veil: Colonial Legacies, Gendered Resistance, and Representation of Iranian Women in Graphic Narratives
- 12:45–13:00 Jelena Erdeljan and Svetlana Tomin (University of Belgrade / University of Novi Sad, Serbia): The Man-Like and Man-Minded Women in Serbian Medieval Culture
- 13:00–13:15 Alice Bakradze (Ilia State University, Tbilisi, Georgia): Negotiating Identity and Belonging: Armenian Ethnic Minority Women in Georgia

13:15–13:30 Discussion

13:30–15:00 Lunch Break

15:00–16:45 III Session: Reshaping Gender Frontiers in Institutional Discourses

- 15:00–15:15 Branka Galić (University of Zagreb, Croatia): State Support for Misogyny in Public Spaces of Croatian Cities
- 15:15–15:30 Jure Skubic (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia): Gender Ideology in Slovenian, Croatian, and Serbian Parliamentary Discourse
- 15:30–15:45 Slobodan Cvejić (University of Belgrade, Serbia): Exploring Gender Equality Initiatives in Higher Education: A Study of Institutional Practices and Challenges
- 15:45–16:00 Migena Kecaj, Rubin Mandija, and Ergys Pirani (University of Shkoder, Albania): The Impact of Part-Time Jobs on Students' Academic Achievement and Well-being
- 16:00–16:15 Svetlana Tomić (Alfa BK University, Serbia): From Ignorance to Demonization: Gender Identities and Linguistic Norms
- 16:15–16:30 Andrija Golubović (University of Belgrade, Serbia): The Curious Case of Str8 Men on Gay Dating Platforms in Serbia

16:30–16:45 Discussion

Saturday, September 6, 2025

10:00–11:00 IV Session: Artistic Lenses of Gender

- 10:00–10:15 Tatjana Rosić Ilić (Singidunum University, Belgrade, Serbia): Intersex and Intertext in Jeffrey Eugenides' "Middlesex"
- 10:15–10:30 Merima Omeragić (National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University): Ageing and Sexuality at the Crossroads of Mythology: "Baba Yaga Laid an Egg" by Dubravka Ugrešić
- 10:30–10:45 Abhiruchi Ranjan (CHRIST University, Bangalore, India): Talking Back to the Digital Manosphere: Cinematic Subversion in Contemporary Indian Cinema

10:45–11:00 Discussion

11:00–11:15 Coffee Break

11:15–12:45 V Session: New Horizon(s)

- 11:15–11:30 Erzsébet Barát (CEU Vienna / University of Szeged, Hungary): Solidarity beyond Polarization
- 11:30–11:45 İrem Sumru Müftüoğlu (Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany): Queer Strategies Against Hate Speech: Politics of Vulnerability and Performative Resistance
- 11:45–12:00 Marija Radoman and Aleksa Milanović (University of Belgrade / Singidunum University): Queer Resistance and Societal Change: Student Protests in Serbia 2024/2025
- 12:00–12:15 Kaja Poteko and Nina Perger (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia): Media Coverage of Gender Non-Normative Athletes in Times of Retraditionalization
- 12:15–12:30 Özge Korkmaz Şahbaz and Hatice Koç (Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University, Turkey): How Platform Economies Support Women-led Cooperatives and Economic Resilience

12:30–12:45 Discussion

12:45–14:00 Lunch Break

14:00–15:30 VI Session: Framing Gender in the Serbian Context

14:00–14:15 Milica Resanović and Tijana Matijević (University of Belgrade, Serbia): Everyone Is Afraid of Gender: Current Controversies and Uses of the Concept in Serbia

14:15–14:30 Marija Mandić and Jelena Čeriman (University of Belgrade, Serbia): Gender-sensitive Language in Legal and Public Discourse: A Critical Discourse Analysis

14:30–14:45 Tijana Matijević (University of Belgrade, Serbia): Critique Lacking Criticism: Rhetoric of Serbian Gender-critical Feminism

14:45–15:00 Aleksandra Knežević (University of Belgrade, Serbia): Gender and the Scientific Method: Reassessing Biological Reductionism

15:00–15:15 Zona Zarić and Liljana Pantović (University of Belgrade, Serbia): What Does Medicine Do to the Female Body? An Inquiry into Obstetric Violence

15:15–15:30 Discussion

15:30–16:00 Final Discussion and Conference Closing

Aleksa Milanović

Faculty of media and communications

Singidunum University

Belgrade, Serbia


aleksa.milanovic@fmk.edu.rs

ORCID: 0009-0000-4414-3458

COMMUNITY BUILDING THROUGH JOINT REGIONAL ACTIONS: CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC PROJECTS OF TRANS, INTERSEX, AND GENDER VARIANT PEOPLE

ABSTRACT

The topic of this paper is the emergence and development of trans activism in the post-Yugoslav space as a form of collective resistance to pathologization, medicalization, and discrimination of trans, intersex, and gender variant (TIGV) people. Due to the shared history and cultural and linguistic similarities, the TIGV community in the post-Yugoslav space is connected and often cooperates in activist actions. Gender-based oppression, violence, and discrimination are prevalent in all post-Yugoslav countries. Gender-phobia is a product of the normative gender-binary system and is fueled by dominant conservative societal attitudes and institutional practices. In the past few years, anti-trans narratives become widespread in activist, political, academic, and public media circles throughout the region, leading to rapid regression of the rights of women and TIGV persons and negative public opinions about TIGV people. To find the most effective responses to all these problems, TIGV activists from post-Yugoslav space and their allies joined forces. They are developing joint strategies through various activist projects to build a strong intersectional movement for those oppressed based on gender and/or sex. These strategies mostly rely on artistic and cultural projects that challenge and disrupt dominant transphobic narratives and provide insight into the fact that gender and sex are socially constructed categories that go beyond the binary frames. This paper aims to analyze such



initiatives as the only sustainable solution for proactive art and cultural actions oriented towards amplifying TIGV voices and community building in the post-Yugoslav space.

Key words: trans activism, post-Yugoslav space, activism, anti-trans narratives, community building

Aleksa Milanović, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Media and Communications in Belgrade and the author of *Representation of Transgender Identities in Visual Arts* (2015) and *Media Construction of Other Body* (2019). He holds a PhD in Transdisciplinary Studies of Contemporary Arts and Media from the Singidunum University in Belgrade and an MA degree in Theory of Arts and Media from the University of Arts in Belgrade. He is engaged in scientific research work in which he mainly deals with body studies and gender studies in the field of transgender and queer studies, theorizing the discourse of different, non-normative genders by analyzing representations of transgender and other gender bodies within mass media, visual arts and popular culture. He has been involved in trans activism since 2008, when he volunteered for numerous activist organizations and informal activist groups working to promote LGBTIQ+ rights. He participated in the founding of regional TIGV NGO Trans Network Balkan in 2014, as well as Serbian Kolektiv Talas TIRV (Collective Wave TIGV) in 2020.

Isidora Jarić

Faculty of Philosophy
University of Belgrade
Belgrade, Serbia
dorajaric@gmail.com
ijaric@f.bg.ac.rs
ORCID: 0000-0002-6025-2555


Valentina Sokolovska

Faculty of Philosophy
University of Novi Sad
Novi Sad, Serbia
valentina.sokolovska25@gmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0002-4106-6212

SITUATING INTERSEX IDENTITY IN MODERN IDENTITY FRAMEWORKS

ABSTRACT:

This paper explores the positioning of intersex identity within contemporary theoretical frameworks of identity, including gender theory, queer theory, and intersectionality. Drawing on interdisciplinary literature, the study examines how intersex experiences both challenge and enrich dominant narratives about sex, gender, and embodiment. Due to social stigma, medical secrecy, and underdeveloped legal frameworks, the intersex population remains largely invisible in many statistical records and academic studies. This systemic invisibility significantly hinders the social articulation of intersex identity within public discourse, limiting both political recognition and cultural understanding. By analyzing legal, medical, and sociocultural discourses, the paper highlights the tensions between normative classifications and lived realities. It argues that intersex identity occupies a critical space that reveals the limitations of binary thinking and calls for more inclusive and flexible models of identity. Ultimately, the paper contributes to a broader understanding of how intersex individuals navigate visibility, recognition, and agency in modern society.



Key words: intersex identity, identity politics, social invisibility, gender theory

Isidora Jarić holds PhD in Sociology. Full Professor on Department of Sociology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade. Throughout her career she has been involved in many internationally and nationally supported research and capacity building projects. Since the focus of her professional expertise are the issues of education, gender and health her researches are predominantly concentrate on the minority, marginal and vulnerable groups. She has been a consultant on a considerable number of projects, as well as the team leader of several national and international research projects. She is the author of three monographs: *Public and Hidden Curricula* (Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, 2014), *Parenting under Risk* (Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, 2017), and *Education for Compassion* (Scientific Society for the History of Health Culture and EU Cooperation Center, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, 2022); the co-author of five books: *The Path to Equality* (with Marta Sjeničić, IDN, Belgrade, 2024); *Culture and the Transformation of Serbia: Value Orientations of Citizens in the Post-2000 Era* (with Zagorka Golubović, Službeni glasnik and Res Publika, Belgrade, 2010); *Measures in Education Targeting Vulnerable Populations: Analysis of Policy Impact – Abridged Version* (with Martina Vukasović, Government of the Republic of Serbia – Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Team, Belgrade, 2009); *Youth – Our Present: A Study of the Social Biographies of Young People* (with a group of authors, Institute for Sociological Research, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, and Čigoja Press, Belgrade, 2012); and *Gender Equality in Vocational Education: Attitudes and Contributions of Secondary School Teachers and Professional Associates in Advancing Gender Equality* (with Vesna Jarić, GIZ VET, Belgrade, 2013).

Valentina Sokolovska holds PhD in Sociology. Full Professor on Department of Sociology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Novi Sad. She has written dozens of original scientific papers in the fields of violence and peer violence prevention, demography, application of statistical methods in sociological research, sociology of ethnicity, and other relevant scientific and social issues. Since 2010, she has led numerous scientific research projects, including the following: *“Research on Peer Violence among High School Youth”*, funded by the City Administration for Sports and Youth of the City of Novi Sad (2013); *“Monitoring Peer Violence among High School Students in the Territory of Novi Sad”*, funded by the City Administration for Sports and Youth of the City of Novi Sad (2014); *“The Importance of Participation in Social Networks for Adapting to the Euro-Integration Processes”*, funded by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (2011–2017); *“Survey on the Perceptions of National Minorities in Serbia”*, supported by the Council of Europe (2017); *“The Impact of Local Foundations on Social Change in Local Communities”*, supported by the Trag Foundation (2022). She also participated as a researcher in the project *“Vulnerable Languages and Linguistic Varieties in Serbia”*, funded by the Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia (2022–2024).

Aleksandra Panić

Faculty of media and communications

Singidunum University

Belgrade, Serbia

alex@alexandrapanic.com

ORCID: 0009-0005-5625-4813

NARRATING THE SELF BEYOND BINARIES: AUTO THEORY AND AUTO FICTION AS TRANSMEDIAL STRATEGIES FOR RESHAPING GENDER FRONTIERS

ABSTRACT:

This paper explores *autotheory* and *autofiction* as trans-medial artistic strategies for narrating the self beyond binary gender norms. Both forms advocate hybridity—blending personal narratives with theory and philosophy (autotheory), or with fiction (autofiction). These hybrid modes of storytelling challenge not only genre and identity, but also institutional and societal expectations around gender expression. In doing so, they provide a powerful platform for marginalized voices and open space for a collective reimagining of identity politics. Narrating the self through autotheory and autofiction, we move beyond merely representing gender to performing it—as fragmented, in motion, and always becoming.

Drawing on contemporary authors such as Paul B. Preciado, Gloria Anzaldúa, Maggie Nelson, Ocean Vuong, and local authors such as Lejla Kalamujić and Bojan Krivokapić, I analyze how queer, and non-binary writers use these forms not only to articulate identity but to stage a resistance to fixed subjectivity. I focus on the ways their narratives center embodied knowledge and blur the lines between text, body, and experience. By doing so, they refuse containment—whether by genre, gender, or the neoliberal publishing market—and suggest more fluid, open-ended modes of becoming.

Ultimately, this paper argues that autotheory and autofiction offer vital narrative strategies for challenging normative structures and reconfiguring the relationship between language, identity, and embodiment.

Key words: autotheory, autofiction, transmediality, gender dissidence, post-Yugoslav queer poetics

Aleksandra Panić is a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Media and Communications, Singidunum University in Belgrade, Serbia. She is a writer and creative teacher, known for integrating holistic, body-centered, and trauma-informed methods into her pedagogy. She holds an MFA in Creative Writing from Goddard College, Vermont, and a Master's degree in Italian Language and Literature from the University of Belgrade. Her doctoral research explores memory culture and female authorship in post-Yugoslav autofiction. Passionate about hybrid narratives, she investigates and creates works that challenge disciplinary boundaries, genres, and forms. She currently lives in Belgrade with her family.

Marija Grujić

Institute for Literature and Arts

Belgrade, Serbia

marija.grujic345@gmail.com

ORCID: 0000-0002-0646-5170

**IN THEIR OWN NAME:
SUBJECTIVITY OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE
DOCUMENTARIES ON TRANSGENDER LIVES****ABSTRACT:**

This paper aims to present and analyze specificities and challenges of the documentaries making focused on the representations of non-binary identities, from transgender to intersex to cross-dressing and other types of the queering of individual self-identification. The paper will try to map the brief history of documenting interviews with transgender and non-binary subjects, taking into consideration iconic examples such as *Paris is burning* (1990), *Before Stonewall* (1984), and *After Stonewall* (1999). The analysis also deals with the more contemporary types of filmmaking approach to the documentaries with video interviews of non-binary self-identifying subjects, such as *Disclosure* (2020), *Kiki* (2016) and the others, particularly those ones that have already been critically acclaimed and widely received at film festivals. The paper also aims to pose some questions for a critical discussion and create a platform for the further analysis of these documentaries. Does video interviewing and the documentaries based on this type of representation contribute to the self-creation of the transgender and non-binary subjectivity of the participants and in which ways? Should we understand the narratives of self-definition given for camera as performative language created to adjust to the existing world frames, or the tools designated to deconstruct the existing order?

Key words: non-binary, subjectivity, documentary, video interviews, self-identification

Marija Grujić is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Literature and Arts, Belgrade and Lecturer at the Center for Gender Studies at the University of Novi Sad (Serbia). She holds PhD degree from the Central European University (Budapest/Vienna), where she defended the dissertation titled “Community and the Popular: Women, Nation and Turbo-Folk in Post-Yugoslav Serbia” in 2010. She was affiliated as a visiting researcher at the Freie University Berlin (2013/2014 and 2016), as well as at the University of Pittsburgh (2007). Ms. Grujić gave talks on gender and sexuality studies, nationalism, film studies, and popular culture in the Balkans at many academic institutions, including the University of Graz, University of Cologne, University of Nottingham, and University of Pittsburgh. She is an author of four books, titled *Razumeti Boru Stankovića: Proza intimnih realnosti* (Understanding Bora Stanković: Intimate Realities Fiction, 2022), *Rod i kultura fragmentarnosti* (Gender and the Culture of Fragment, 2015), *Reading the Entertainment and Community Spirit* (2012), and *Bakhtin and Feminist Literary Analysis* (2007). She is also a co-editor of the international academic proceedings titled *Film i književnost* (Film and Literature, 2020).

Nora Koller

Faculty of Letters
University of Coimbra in Portugal
Coimbra, Portugal
thrashtay@gmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0003-4052-6835

TRANS/INTERSEX FEMINISM AS INTERCORPOREAL ETHICS

ABSTRACT:

Relying on filmic representations, in this presentation I wish to use the concept of intercorporeality to flesh out the notion of transfeminism as a bodily project and as an ethical commitment to the (intersex) Other. I take the concept of intercorporeality from philosopher Gail Weiss, who writes: “To describe embodiment as intercorporeality is to emphasize that the experience of being embodied is never a private affair, but is always already mediated by our continual interactions with other human and nonhuman bodies” (1999, p. 5). Weiss argues that subjects construct their body images via corporeal exchanges with infinite others. To reformulate: Others lay claim to our bodies at the same time as we lay claim to them. While these exchanges may problematize the unity of the “I”, importantly, it is this ongoing confusion of bodily boundaries that is the condition of having a body at all. Weiss places the subject squarely in the social, in the company of others, following Merleau-Ponty in claiming that the body “bears the schema of the world in itself” (p. 11). Sociality also means a corporeal acknowledgment of bodies transformative potential, whereby alternative imaginary schemas would serve as “corporeal solutions” to the exclusion of sexual, racial and other differences that “set bodies apart from, and thereby put them in relation to, one another” (ibid.) A negative correlation may be produced by the mainstream “exposure” of trans and intersex people as “»really« another gender” (Bettcher, 2006, p. 204; Morland, 2012); a positive one by a shared, joyful historicity (Yusin, 2022).

Key words: intercorporeality, transfeminism, phenomenology, transphobia, bodily imaginary

Nora Koller works at the Faculty of Letters at the University of Coimbra in Portugal. Her disciplinary background is in English and Media Studies. She was a Marie Curie Research Fellow at the University of Hull, UK, and worked in the field of trans* studies while in the doctoral program of the University of Vienna on “Gender and Violence in the Era of Globalization.” She was co-editor of the volume *Gewalt und Handlungsmacht: Queer_Feministische Perspektiven* (Gender Initiativkolleg, 2013). Her current research concerns the representation of Hungarian trans* children.

Jakov Đorđević

Faculty of Philosophy
University of Belgrade
Belgrade, Serbia

jakov@gmail.com

ORCID: 0000-0002-4337-6863

BODY AND GENDER OF THE MEDIEVAL MONK IN THE ORDINATION RITE: THE CASE OF THE DEČANI MONASTERY

ABSTRACT:

The introduction of queer theory into historical studies has enabled us to raise more complex questions that deepen our understanding of the past. Certain scholars have even projected today's queer identities onto individuals from different historical periods. Yet the aim of this paper is different. Instead of understanding contemporary identities as transhistorical, it seeks to uncover the transhistorical human need to be an embodied part of a greater whole. It argues that gender has always been a far more complex category than a simple binary division and that it has been constantly rethought in creative ways to help people make sense of the world and provide them with the means to engage with it.

This paper argues that the medieval Christian East developed a rich discourse on monastic gender that could be characterized by today's term "non-binary". This argument is explored through an analysis of the ordination rite performed at the Dečani Monastery. The rite took place in a specific part of the main church, whose painted program was devised to engage a new monk in self-reflection. He was encouraged, through the surrounding images of various liminal bodies, to enter a new identity. By discussing and contextualizing the depicted figures of a eunuch, an angel, and a desexualized woman (who had previously led a life of sexual indulgence) in the ritual space, we can grasp how monastic gender and (a) sexuality were perceived and constructed.

Key words: monastic gender, ordination rite, angelic likeness, non-binary body, medieval Christian East

Jakov Đorđević is a research associate in the Art History Department at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade. In 2014, his M.A. thesis on late medieval macabre art received the National Museum in Belgrade Prize, and that same year, he was awarded a scholarship by the Ministry of Science and Technology of the Government of the Republic of Serbia. He has been a member of two research projects: *Serbian Medieval Art and Its European Context* (2014–2018) and *Christian Culture in the Balkans in the Middle Ages: The Byzantine Empire, the Serbs, and the Bulgarians from the 9th to the 15th Century* (2018–2020). In 2019, Jakov Đorđević defended his Ph.D. dissertation on representations of the dying, dead, and resurrected body in late Byzantine visual culture, under the supervision of Professor Jelena Erdeljan. He is currently researching Byzantine representations of the body in the context of gender expression and sexuality.

Alawna Hanan

Literary and Cultural Studies

University of Szeged

Szeged, Hungary

hananalawneh4@gmail.com

ORCID: 0009-0006-2242-6741


BEYOND THE VEIL: COLONIAL LEGACIES, GENDERED RESISTANCE, AND THE REPRESENTATION OF IRANIAN WOMEN IN GRAPHIC NARRATIVES

ABSTRACT:

This paper explores the intersection of colonialism, gender, and media representation in the portrayal of Iranian women's resistance movements, focusing on Marjane Satrapi's graphic novel, *Persepolis*. Through a postcolonial feminist lens and critical discourse analysis, it examines how the novel challenges Western Orientalist narratives that depict Middle Eastern women as passive and oppressed. It also highlights how graphic novels serve as tools of resistance, allowing Iranian women to reclaim their narratives and decolonize history. This study contributes to broader discussions on colonial legacies, gendered resistance, and the role of visual storytelling in shaping historical memory.

Key words: Orientalism, Feminism, Graphic Novels, Media Representation, Iranian Women Colonialism.

Hanan Alawna, PhD is a researcher in literary and cultural studies, specializing in feminism, gender representation, and postcolonial discourse. She earned her PhD from the University of Szeged, Hungary 2024, where her research focused on the role of Middle Eastern women in literature and visual storytelling. Her work explores themes of identity, resistance, and media representation, with a particular emphasis on graphic novels and feminist narratives.



Jelena Erdeljan

Faculty of Philosophy
University of Belgrade
Belgrade, Serbia
jelenaerdeljan3@gmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0002-5272-0160

Svetlana Tomin

Faculty of Philosophy
University of Novi Sad
Novi Sad, Serbia
svetlana.tomin@ff.uns.ac.rs
ORCID: 0000-0001-8622-095X

THE MAN-LIKE AND MAN-MINDED WOMEN IN SERBIAN MEDIEVAL CULTURE

ABSTRACT:

This paper will deal with the topos of the man-like and the man-minded woman in Serbian medieval literature, as well as the activities of women as statesmen and ktetors in Serbian medieval culture. Although nominally qualified as weaker and powerless, royal women often took over the affairs of the state, politics and diplomacy in critical moments for the history of the Serbian medieval state and culture. Their identity, therefore, in both written and visual culture, is constructed as an expression of characteristics traditionally attributed to men. The examples to be presented in this paper include queen Jelena, princess Milica, and the nun Jefimija, all from the late medieval period.

Key words: man-like woman topos, Serbian royal women, Serbian medieval culture, literature, visual culture

Jelena Erdeljan is a Full Professor at the Department of Art History, University of Belgrade - Faculty of Philosophy and at the interdisciplinary MA program "Religion in so-



ciety, culture and European integration” at the University of Belgrade. Prof. Erdeljan is a scholar in the field of study of Byzantine, Serbian medieval and pre-modern art of the Balkans and the Mediterranean world, including Jewish art and culture. She has published extensive volumes on related issues, most notably *Chosen Places: Constructing New Jerusalems in Slavia Orthodoxa* (Brill 2017). She is the founding director of the Center for the Study of Jewish Art and Culture at University of Belgrade - Faculty of Philosophy and decorated Kavayera del Ladino. She is currently developing an interdisciplinary research project on the soundscape identity of Serbian sacral space of which she is the principal investigator.

Svetlana Tomin (1964) is full time Professor at Department of Serbian literature, Faculty of Philosophy, Novi Sad. She teaches several subjects regarding Medieval literature. In her doctoral thesis she explored Bishop Maxim Branković in History and Literature. The focus of her professional expertise is Serbian Medieval Literature, Women and Gender Studies, Incunabula. She took part in several congresses of Medieval studies and Slavic studies in Serbia and abroad. As a visiting professor she held courses in Poland (Krakow, Opole, Wroclaw 2008), Italy (Pescara, Torino 2017, 2019, Napoli 2019), Bosnia (Banja Luka 2016, 2019) and Romania (Targoviste 2023). She has published nine books and edited six.

Alice Bakradze

Ilia State University

Tbilisi, Georgia

alice.bakradze.1@iliauni.edu.ge

ORCID: 0009-0002-7132-2333

**NEGOTIATING IDENTITY AND BELONGING:
ARMENIAN ETHNIC MINORITY WOMEN IN
GEORGIA
(The Intersections of Motherhood and Faith)**

ABSTRACT:

This paper explores the interplay of motherhood, race, and religion among Armenian ethnic minority women as they navigate diasporic existence and cultural preservation through the lens of Implicit Religion. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork and in-depth interviews, I examine how Armenian women's motherhood experiences become sites of cultural resistance and transformation, particularly as they negotiate traditional religious expectations alongside evolving sexual and gender identities.

The Armenian community's historical relationship with Christianity serves as an "integrating focus" through which women construct meaning around motherhood and religion. Using Taves' (2009) framework of "experiences deemed special," I analyze how maternal practices among Armenian women function as implicit religious rituals that simultaneously preserve ethnic identity and create space for challenging heteronormative and patriarchal structures.

This research contributes to understanding how marginalized women survive in worlds they are simultaneously trying to transform (Ahmed, 2023). For Armenian minority women, motherhood operates as both a site of cultural preservation and a potential space for feminist, queer, and transformative projects. By centering their experiences at the intersection of multiple identities, this paper reveals how these women resist erasure and invisibility through the cultivation of alternative kinship networks and mater-



nal practices that reimagine traditional Armenian religious values.

Through this analysis, I demonstrate how Armenian women's navigations of motherhood, sexuality, and faith represent "intensive concerns with extensive effects" (Bailey, 1997) that shape not only individual identities but also community formation and cultural transmission in diaspora contexts. Their experiences offer critical insights into how religion, race, and gender entangle in ways that both constrain and enable survival, belonging, and transformation.

Key words: Armenian minorities, gender, motherhood, religion, Georgia

Alice Bakradze is a PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology at Ilia State University in Tbilisi, Georgia. She is actively engaged in academic work related to Religious Studies and qualitative research methods at Ilia State University. Throughout her academic career, she has participated in several research projects, including Armenian Genocide Memory in Javakheti (Ilia State University), Socio-Economic Ties and Transnational Religious Belonging of Georgian Migrant Women (University of Ferrara), and a field study on Ukrainian and Russian migrants in Georgia.

Branka Galić

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
University of Zagreb
Zagreb, Croatia
brgalic@m.ffzg.hr
ORCID: 0000-0002-0711-7012

Izvor Rukavina

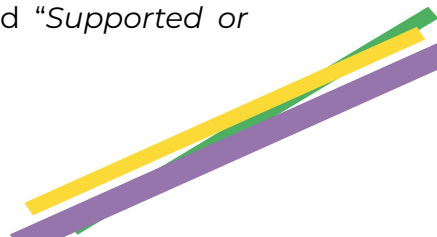
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
University of Zagreb
Zagreb, Croatia
izrukavi@ffzg.unizg.hr
ORCID: 0009-0000-2548-8952

STATE SUPPORT FOR MISOGYNY AGAINST WOMEN ON PUBLIC SPACES OF CROATIAN CITIES

ABSTRACT:

Since the early 1990s, Croatian society has become increasingly conservative and susceptible to neoconservative and anti-gender social movements. In the last two or more years, the government's support for the public expression of misogynistic attitudes against women and their human rights has been openly demonstrated through the "prayers" of groups of men who call themselves "*Knights of the Immaculate Heart of Mary*" and who have been gathering in public squares and streets of Croatian cities since October 2022 until today, and in a kneeling position they "pray" for the deprivation of women's reproductive rights, are against emancipation, and for the return of patriarchal norms to the family and society.

In order to determine how much such gatherings are supported by public opinion in the Republic of Croatia, a group of researchers from the Faculty of Philosophy and Law of the University of Zagreb conducted a survey in 2023 on a representative sample of the national population as part of an institutional project entitled "*Supported or*



Subjugated Social Risks of Threat and the Possibility of Protecting Women's Reproductive Rights in the Republic of Croatia “.

The results showed that a significant majority of 70% of Croatian citizens do not support such gatherings, that women reject them somewhat more strongly, but men do not support them either. The older population is somewhat less inclined to these gatherings than the younger ones. The population that is religious in accordance with church teachings turned out to be the most inclined to “kneelers”.

Key words: anti-gender movements, misogyny, kneelers, women's reproductive rights

Branka Galić, PhD, is Full Professor of Sociology, Head of Gender Sociology Unit at the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb.

She has 33 years of lecturing experience and research in different fields of sociology: *Social Ecology, Sociology of Culture, Sociology of Work and Organization*, as a younger researcher and assistant. After PhD, she took over *Sociology of Family* and introduced several courses at the department of Sociology, FHSS, UNIZG: *Sociology of Gender, Feminist Theories and Movements*, at MB and MA level. At the Doctoral Study of Sociology, she introduced the course: *Gender, Women's Movements and Society*, until the year 2024. At the University of Split, Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Sociology, she introduced and lectured a course “*Sociology of Women*” 2007-2019. She leads a section “*Woman and Society*”, at the Croatian Sociological Society. Experience in working on and leading scientific project in the field of modernization and identity of Croatian Society; including Roma in Croatian Society; An Identification of the standards of discrimination against women in employment in Croatia; Perception, experiences and attitudes about gender discrimination in Croatia, and a series of institutional projects (FHSS) dedicated to

women's reproductive rights with the main title "*Supported or subjugated*", from 2020-2024.

Fields of interest and publishing papers: gender relations and identity, gender stratification, discrimination and sexism, feminist theories, movements and women's reproductive rights, patriarchy and critique of institutions in reproduction of patriarchy.

Izvor Rukavina, rođen 1980. u Kastvu pored Rijeke gdje i živi. Od 2010. radi na Katedri za metodologiju Odsjeka za sociologiju Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu. Od 2018. zaposlen je kao predavač i drži nastavu iz nekoliko obaveznih uvodnih i izbornih metodoloških kolegija te seminare iz Sociologije porodice, što uz nejednakosti te aktivizam predstavlja i njegove istraživačke interese. Sudjelovao je u nizu istraživačkih projekata kao stručnjak za metodologiju društvenih istraživanja, primarno za kvantitativne podatke.

Jure Skubic

Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana

Institute of Contemporary History

Ljubljana, Slovenia

Jure.Skubic@inz.si

ORCID: 0000-0002-2678-7695

GENDER IDEOLOGY IN SLOVENIAN, CROATIAN AND SERBIAN Parliamentary Discourse

ABSTRACT:

The concept of gender ideology has been observed as an emerging and semiotically changing linguistic innovation in public discourses around the world. The idea of gender ideology as a conspiracy or a threat to traditional societal values has recently evolved beyond its initial strong populist connotation and entered into significant socio-political debates on women's reproductive rights, violence against women and LGBTQ+ rights, among others. In this paper, we analyze the use of the term "gender ideology" in Slovenian, Croatian and Serbian language (Sl: ideologija / teorija spola; HR, SR: rodna ideologija) both in general public discourse and in specific parliamentary discussions. Our main research questions revolve around whether and how frequently the terms gender ideology and gender theory appear in public and parliamentary discourse in each country, what collocations appear alongside these terms and what they can tell us about the context, social meaning and use of these terms. To this end, we used the parliamentary corpus ParlaMint 4.0 (Erjavec et al. 2023), which contains parliamentary debates from 29 European countries between 2009 to 2022 and provides extensive metadata and linguistic annotations that allow us to gain insights into anti-gender rhetoric in parliamentary discussions and explore how national contexts influence the use of the concept of gender ideology. We also use the CLASSLA-web corpora for all three languages – large corpora with more

than 2 billion words containing various articles published online. Using content, sentiment and corpus analysis, we investigate how the term »gender ideology« is used in social, political and cultural contexts in all three countries. Our preliminary results show that the topic of »gender ideology« is most frequently discussed in Croatia, followed by Slovenia and Serbia, with similar collocations occurring in all three countries. We also show that, unsurprisingly, the sentiment in debates on the topic of »gender ideology« is predominantly negative and that especially in parliamentary debates, it is becoming an increasingly debated topic.

Key words: gender ideology, parliamentary discourse, sentiment analysis, content analysis, human rights

Jure Skubic is a PhD candidate in Gender Studies at Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, and works as an assistant and researcher at the Institute of Contemporary History in Ljubljana, Slovenia, and at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. His main research interests include violence against women in politics, violence against women in social media, political representation and participation of women, gender-based violence and gender equality issues. He is also interested in the study of parliamentary debates, political speech and political violence against women. He has published various works on violence against women and participated in numerous national and international events and conferences. He is also a member of the Slovenian Sociological Association, a member of the research network Gender and Politics in South-East Europe and a member of the RN_33 Women's and Gender Studies of the European Sociological Association.

Slobodan Cvejić

Faculty of Philosophy

University of Belgrade

Belgrade, Serbia

scvejić65@gmail.com

ORCID: 0000-0002-4226-2784

EXPLORING GENDER EQUALITY INITIATIVES IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A STUDY OF INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES AND CHALLENGES

ABSTRACT:

This paper examines institutional arrangements for promoting gender equality in higher education institutions (HEIs) within a global context. Drawing on a dataset of 56 cases of offices dedicated to the development of inclusion, diversity, equity, and access (IDEA) in HEIs collected within the Erasmus+ project IDEA-NET, the study investigates the extent to which gender-related issues are addressed within these structures. The primary aim is to map how these offices operationalize their gender equality objectives, identify the areas they prioritize, and analyse their core activities, including support services, educational initiatives, and advocacy efforts. Particular attention is given to understanding the scope and depth of these activities and how they align with broader institutional missions and policy frameworks. In addition, the analysis distinguishes between offices or programs explicitly dedicated to gender equality and those where gender is addressed as one of several dimensions of equality. It further considers whether the effectiveness of these approaches is context-dependent—shaped by broader societal conditions, cultural norms, or specific institutional arrangements within higher education systems. Finally, the study identifies key challenges practitioners encounter in advancing gender equality within

these institutional settings, including resource limitations, competing priorities, and resistance to change.

Key words: gender equality, higher education, inclusion, diversity, equity, access, support services

Slobodan Cvejić is professor of Social Statistics, Methodology of Social Research, Economic Sociology and Sustainable Development. He teaches at undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral studies of sociology at the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Philosophy and at the UNESCO master studies of Management in Culture at University of Arts, Belgrade. Professor Cvejić completed graduate and PhD studies at University of Belgrade, Faculty of Philosophy. In 2000-2001 he was a visiting scholar at University College London. Professor Cvejić has more than 30 years of experience in empirical social research and policy research, both quantitative and qualitative. His major research interest is in social and economic inequalities, poverty and social exclusion, social stratification and sustainable development.

Migena Kecaj

Department of Art
University of Shkoder “Luigj Gurakuqi”
Shkoder, Albania
migena.selcetaj@unishk.edu.al
ORCID: 0000-0002-0819-5573

Rubin Mandija

Department of Art
University of Shkoder “Luigj Gurakuqi”
Shkoder, Albania
rubin.mandija@unishk.edu.al

Ergys Pirani

Department of Art
University of Shkoder “Luigj Gurakuqi”
Shkoder, Albania
ergys.pirani@unishk.edu.al

THE IMPACT OF THE PART-TIME JOBS ON THE STUDENTS’ ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND WELL-BEING

(Department of Art, University of Shkoder “Luigj Gurakuqi” case)

ABSTRACT:

Nowadays, students are involved not only in attending universities but also in part-time jobs. Balancing academics and work are a challenge for many students affecting their academic performance and psycho-social wellbeing. The current study aimed to analyze the involvement of the students in part-time jobs and their academic performance, psychological well-being and preparation for the labor market. Part-time jobs help in the development of practical skills and are financial support for the students. At the same time is related to problems of time management and well-being. The sample ($N = 100$) was randomly selected, and data were collected across females ($N = 55$) and males (N

= 45) from Art Department. The method used in this study is descriptive research design using questionnaires addressing various aspects, including academic performance, the psychological impact of work, and students' perceptions of their preparation for the labor market. The majority of the students have a high-grade point average despite their work engagement. Most of their part-time jobs are not related to their field of study. Part-time jobs do not positively affect their well-being. Part-time jobs contribute to the development of practical skills and financial independence, but at the same time create challenges in psychological and academic aspects. This study contributes to existing literature by providing an in-depth understanding of the challenges and benefits of employment during studies and by proposing strategies to improve student experience.

Key words: students, well-being, part-time employment, academic achievements

Migena Kecaj (Selçetaj). Lector of Psychology, Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Shkoder "Luigj Gurakuqi", Albania. Her academic interests and research are general psychology, clinical psychology, developmental psychology, school psychology, community psychology, etc. She finished doctoral studies in Psychology in 2020. She holds Master Degree "School and Community Psychology" from University of Bologna, Italy in 2015, Master Degree on "Clinical Psychology, relational and development" from University of Tirana, Albania, in 2013 and Bachelor Degree in Psychology from University of Shkoder "Luigj Gurakuqi", in 2009.

Rubin Mandija is a Director of department of Arts, University of Shkodra. He completed his BA studies at Academy of Fine Arts in Tirana, Albania. He is a Master of Sculpture, Faculty of Arts, University of Prishtina and holds PhD in Art History, Center of Albanological Studies, Tirana.

Ergys Pirani Lector of Solfeggio, Instrumentation and Orchestration at the Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Shkodra "Luigj Gurakuqi", Albania. He graduated in

2010 in the composition specialty with the work “Concert for Piano and Orchestra” where he defended the title of “Composer”. His artistic, academic and research interests mainly include classical music activities with creativity ranging from miniatures, chamber music, vocals to symphonic works. He has various artistic works as artistic works with the symphony orchestra of the University of Arts, formations with renowned chamber music musicians, cho-
rales, participants in workshops, composition competitions, award winners, articles in national and international magazines in the field of music, music education. His creative interests also extend to the genre of song, being the author of several songs that have participated in various festivals.

Svetlana Tomić

Faculty of Foreign Languages

Alfa BK University

Belgrade, Serbia

tomic.svetlana@gmail.com

ORCID: 0000-0002-5082-3764

FROM IGNORANCE TO DEMONIZATION: Gender Identities through the Lens of Institutions Shaping Linguistic Norms

ABSTRACT:

The aim of this paper is to point out the distortion of fundamental postulates regarding the gender category in linguistics, carried out by some of the highest representatives of scientific, educational, and cultural institutions in Serbia during the recent public debate on gender-sensitive language. The debate emerged after May 20, 2021, when the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Gender Equality Law, which for the first time mandated the use of gender-sensitive language in administration, education, and media. The Committee for the Serbian Language Standardization, a conservative institution that has held a monopoly on the educational, political, and administrative market for decades, strongly opposed this law and misrepresented knowledge about language and gender.

To identify the link between the distortion of knowledge and the socio-political consequences of creating epistemic injustice, this paper combines linguistic methods (critical discourse analysis) with a recent trend in epistemology (ignorance studies). The research findings are related to: a) distortion of facts (from general linguistics and the history of the Serbian language); b) ignorance of new knowledge and issues (standardization of gender-related vocabulary; addressing problems in syntax and punctuation); c) the gradation of weaponized language used to spread hate speech and convey prejudices about gender identities; d) suggestions for overcoming the crisis in science and lan-

guage policy. This paper can be useful to those engaged in linguistics, philology, gender studies, epistemology, sociology of education, and those formulating public policies.

Keywords: gender in linguistics and sociology, gender-sensitive Serbian language, ignorance studies, weaponization of language, epistemic injustice

Svetlana Tomić, a Full Professor at the Faculty of Foreign Languages (Alfa BK University, Serbia), a member of the editorial board of *Serbian Studies*, and a contributor to *World Literature Today*. Awarded for her poetry (2001, the *Literary Youth of Serbia* award) and scholarly work (2022, the Serbian Sociological Society award for her decade long contribution to gender and feminist studies). Her book *The Hidden History of New Women in Serbian Culture* has been awarded *The 2022 North American Society for Serbian Studies Book Prize* as the best book published in English on aspects of Serbian social and cultural history. Her main research interests are institutionalized public knowledge of Serbian literature and language, research methodology in closed societies, hidden history, women's writings, and Post-Yugoslav literature. She has published fifteen books, more than seventy papers and a hundred reviews in Serbia and abroad. More about her work you can find on this link: <https://www.svetlanatomic.com/>

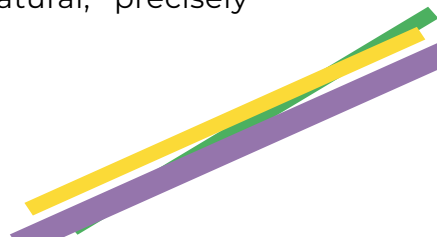
Andrija Golubović

Faculty of Philosophy
University of Belgrade
Institute for Sociological Research
Belgrade, Serbia
andrija.golubovic@f.bg.ac.rs
sociolog.eindex@gmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0001-5697-1947

THE CURIOUS CASE OF STR8 MEN ON GAY DATING PLATFORMS IN SERBIA

ABSTRACT:

In this paper, I will shed light on a seemingly “counterintuitive” phenomenon that has become increasingly visible on gay dating online platforms in Serbia in recent years — straight-identified men seeking sexual encounters with other men. The main goal is to present different interpretative frameworks that have originated in the academic field of the Global North for understanding a similar phenomenon in these societies, while the specific goal will be to consider what happens with these theories when they come into contact with the local version of this paradox in Serbia. The key question that will guide this paper is what discursive strategies these men use to maintain their heterosexual identity despite their pursuit of gay sex. I will conduct qualitative research through in-depth semi-structured interviews with straight-identified men who visit gay dating online platforms in Serbia, while drawing theoretical inspiration from the approach developed by queer theorist Jane Ward in her book *Not Gay: Sex between Straight White Men* (2015). Contrary to dominant understandings that see straight and gay sexual subjectivities as irreconcilable opposite essences, Ward claims that they are mutually constitutive cultural spheres that allow some straight men to construct their heterosexual identity as seemingly natural, precisely through same-sex sexual relations.



Key words: straight men, gay dating platforms, homophobia, sexual identity, queer theory

Andrija Golubović is research associate at the Institute for Sociological Research in Belgrade and doctoral student at the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Philosophy – University of Belgrade, where he is also engaged as a teaching associate in several undergraduate courses. His thesis focuses on the social construction of (protest) masculinity among young men who train street-workout in Serbia, using two qualitative methods – semi-structured interviews and qualitative content analysis of the visual material on Instagram. He is a member of Sociological Scientific Society of Serbia as well.

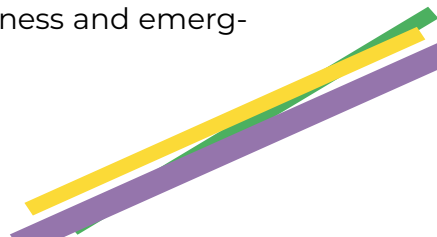
Tatjana Rosić Ilić

Faculty of media and communications
Singidunum University
Belgrade, Serbia
tatjana.rosic@gmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0003-2232-6311

INTERSEX AND INTERTEXT IN JEFFREY EUGENIDES *MIDDLESEX*

ABSTRACT:

The paper tries to point out how Jeffrey Eugenides' *Middlesex* navigates the intersection of myth, science, and politics of identity to challenge the limits of representing intersex in contemporary culture. *Middlesex* traces the cultural history of intersex in Western thought, contrasting the imaginative freedom of Greek mythology with the aesthetic of monstrosity that has pervaded in Western art from Romanticism to the present. The novel's narrator, Cal, carries 5-alpha-reductase deficiency syndrome—a rare autosomal recessive intersex condition caused by a genetic mutation. The moment of genetic expression becomes the starting point for a multigenerational saga of a Greek-American family settled in Detroit. Told as a memoir, the novel frames intersex not merely as a biological phenomenon but as an ethnic and cultural inheritance, establishing an ambivalent gender discourse: Cal uses the term “intersex” in political context but refers to himself as a “hermaphrodite” when narrating his personal life. Intertextual connections to names and hybrid figures from Greek mythology (including the term “hermaphrodite”) suggest that the existence of cyborg-like beings — situated on the border of politics and fiction, as Donna Haraway argues — is intrinsic to ancient mythology, which does not seek to unify hybrid bodies but instead embraces and proliferates their representations. The novel ultimately poses a pressing question: how are intersex bodies received in the modern world—a world shaped by political correctness and emerg-



ing scientific insights into the human genome? Through this lens, Middlesex is examined as a site where genetic and gender discourses intersect, revealing both the limitations and possibilities of representing intersex identity in contemporary fiction and art.

Key words: intersex, narration, novel, Middlesex, Jeffrey Eugenides

Tatjana Rosić Ilić is Full Professor at the Faculty of Media and Communications, Singidunum University, Belgrade where she teaches courses in literature, gender and media studies. She was Visiting professor at Department of Slavic Literatures and Languages, Michigan University, USA during 2016/17 academic year. She is also research fellow at the Institute for Literature and Art, Belgrade and visiting professor at the PhD Program at Philological-Art School, University of Kragujevac. As author, and coordinator she participated in numerous national, regional, and international projects related to gender, cultural and media policy issues. She has published her work in relevant professional and magazines. Her current field of research is focused on literary, gender and media in the context of (post)Yugoslav studies. Tatjana Rosic Ilic is author of following books: Ed. *Representation of Gender Minority Groups in Media: Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia*, Belgrade: 2015; *(Anti)utopije tela: reprezentacija maskuliniteta u savremenoj srpskoj prozi* (*Dystopias of the Bodies: Representation of Masculinity in Contemporary Serbian Prose*), Beolgrade: 2014 ; *Mit o savršenoj biografiji: Danilo Kiš i figura pisca u srpskoj kulturi* (*The Myth on Perfect Biography: Danilo Kis and the Figure of the Writer in Serbian Culture*), Belgrade : 2008; Ed. *Theory and Politics of Gender: the Representation of Gender Identities in Literatures and Cultures of Balkans and Southeastern Europe*, Belgrade:2008; *Proizvoljnost dnevnika* (*The Arbitrariness of Diary*), Belgrade, 1994.

Merima Omeragić

International Center for Cultural Studies
National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University
Hsinchu City, Taiwan

knjizevnost_pusshak@yahoo.com

ORCID: 0000-0002-6887-536X

AGEING AND SEXUALITY AT THE CROSSROADS OF MITHOLOGY:

Baba Yaga Laid an Egg by Dubravka Ugrešić

ABSTRACT:

The purpose of this paper is to explore the issue of gender in Dubravka Ugrešić's *Baba Yaga laid an Egg*. As the title of the novel indicates, Ugrešić employs the mythology and her own perspective to challenge the conventional narratives of female sexuality and ageing. This study will reconstruct the portrayal of Baba Yaga as the most feminist Slavic folklore character (Ryan, 2022) and also as an archetypal female figure, which Ugrešić uses as a symbol for three old women Pupa, Kukla and Beba. This paper aims to examine the elements described in the novel, such as senility, ugliness, thinness, large breasts, and poor eyesight, in order to gain insight into the mechanisms of „the double standard of aging“ (Sontag, 1972). My research focuses on the social practices of resistance undertaken by heroines who are subjected to various stereotypes and forms of discrimination, including rejection, disdain, asexualization, and invisibility. In addition, I review Ugrešić's critique of the patriarchal model of the female body, which is often reduced to beauty, masculinity, and eroticism. In light of the hypothesis, my research will be conducted with the aim of identifying the aging model as the ultimate self-awareness and social liberation model for women.

Key words: women's bodies, ageing, sexuality, mythology, Dubravka Ugrešić.



Merima Omeragić, PhD (b. 1988, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina) is theoretician of literature and culture, and Slavist. Currently she is postdoctoral fellow at National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University - International Center for Cultural Studies (Hsinchu, Taiwan) and senior researcher at University of Sarajevo – Center for interdisciplinary studies „professor Zdravko Grebo“. Omeragić graduated her studies with Major of study: National (South-Slavic) Literature – field of Literature. After completing her Master's Degree, she was Awarded “Golden Badge of the University of Sarajevo” as a student with highest rank in her graduating class in Faculty of Philosophy and University of Sarajevo. In september 2023, she completed her Ph.D. studies in literature at Department of Comparative Literature and Literary Theory. She defended her doctoral thesis with title „Post-Yugoslav antiwar Women's Prose“ at Faculty of Philology – University of Belgrade (Belgrade, Republic of Serbia), under the supervision of professor dr Biljana Dojčinović. Her focus of a major relates to South-Slavic and East-Asian literature, culture, art, film and different contemporary theories. Omeragić took part in several significant international conferences where she lectured some topics relating with comparative, transnational, interdisciplinary and intersectionally context and approach. She is author of scientific papers and book chapters that are published in relevant national and internationally reviews and magazines, and also in Scopus and Web of Science indexed journals (Peer-Reviewed). Omeragić is co-author of the book *Brnjica za vještice* (2021, Croatian edition), and *A Muzzle for Witches* (2024, Open Letter Books; University of Rochester, NY, USA) together with Dubravka Ugrešić. She received anual Award of the University of Sarajevo for results of Scientific/artistic work for 2021, and for 2023, and „Žarana Papić“ scholarship/stipend (Reconstruction Women's Fund, Belgrade, Republic of Serbia) for research and work on a doctoral thesis. Also, she is the member of CEEPUS Network: Women Writers in History (CEEPUS Europe), and The Association for Women in Slavic Studies (AWSS).

Abhiruchi Ranjan


Department of Political Science and History
 School of Social Sciences (BGR Campus)
 CHIRST (Deemed to be University) Bangalore
abhiruchi.ranjan@christuniversity.in
 ORCID: 0009-0003-3757-3048

TALKING BACK TO THE DIGITAL MANOSPHERE: The cinematic subversion of Patriarchal Control in Contemporary Indian Cinema

ABSTRACT:

This paper explores how recent Indian cinema, especially on Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms has emerged as a counter-discursive site that challenges the dominance of the male gaze and patriarchal containment in the online space, with particular attention to movie *The Great Indian Kitchen* (2021) and its Hindi language adaptation *Mrs.* (2024). It argues that these films — along with others such as *All We Imagine as Light* (2024), and *Laapata Ladies* (2024) — collectively constitute a cinematic turn toward a feminist visual language that decenters male subjectivity and disrupts the ‘dank meme’ space of online masculinity. This shift becomes particularly significant in the context of the expanding manosphere in India — a digital ecosystem that reasserts gendered hierarchies and celebrates women’s subjugation within the domestic sphere. Drawing on feminist film theory (Mulvey 1975; Doane 1982; hooks 1992), this paper contends that the emergence of such cinema offers a moment of cinematic and political rupture that talks back to the masculinist containment of women’s bodies, labor, and interiority in the social media ecosystem. The films, available on OTT platforms, refuse to aestheticize the domestic space or center the husband’s gaze, instead anchoring the narrative through the protagonist’s bodily exhaustion, repetitive labor, and growing alienation.

Keywords: manosphere, patriarchal control, cinematic subversion, online masculinity.



Abhiruchi Ranjan. Assistant Professor of Political Science with teaching and research experience in caste, gender, and political theory. The topics of her professional interest are: the intersection of gender, religion, cultural practices and state institutions' regulations. Currently her work is focused on gender inclusivity in menstrual leave policies, the intersection of gender and caste-religion dynamics in India, and ritual practices associated with menarche.

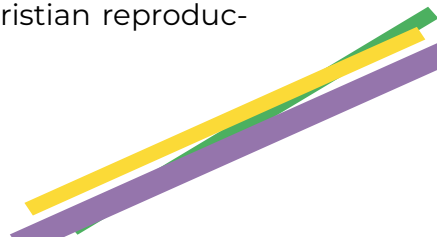
Erzsébet Barát

Gender Studies Department
Central European University
Vienna, Austria
TNT, Gender Studies Research Group
University of Szeged
Szeged, Hungary
zsazsa@lit.u-szeged.hu
barate@ceu.edu
ORCID: 0000-0002-7774-6471

SOLIDARITY BEYOND POLARIZATION

ABSTRACT:

It is emotionally and intellectually demanding to do one's research when stigmatized as the 'nation's enemy' in the state propaganda, which is endorsed by most of the population. The question to me since the announcement of the so-called "culture war" by the Hungarian Prime Minister in July 2018 is how to fight back the weaponization of the rhetoric of fear and legislation with anti-gender politics in its center? Fighting back, to me means above all, arguing in terms of a different logic or else we cannot debunk the hold of the hate rhetoric voiced in the name of "daring to speak up and tell the truth" – allegedly, protecting the 'sovereignty of the nation'. I propose a solidarity that brings together Hemming's (2012) affective solidarity that does not require sameness and Butler's (2020) ontological vulnerability that allows for an ethics of cohabitation that invites us to understand that all forms of life are relational. To support my argument, I reflect on the various government decrees in Hungary that, under the pretext of "emergency" in effect since 2015 to date, have continuously demonized the LGBTQI communities as the "gender lobby". I explore the overlap and so the shared vulnerability and interest of the fiercely polarized groups of 'woman', feminists, lesbians, transwomen who fight amongst themselves instead of against the regime's new ideal of a 'christian reproduc-



tive femininity' organizing the hetero feminization of familialism in the face of the critical potential of/by "gender", above all, that of gender variant people.

Key words: gender-ideology, culture war, gender variant people, affective solidarity, ethics of cohabitation

Erzsébet Barát. Recurring Visiting Associate Professor, the Department of Gender Studies, Central European University, Vienna since 2000. She earned her PhD in Social Linguistics from Lancaster University, UK in 2000. Her area of research and teaching are critical studies of discourse and queer and trans feminist theorizations of gender.

İrem Sumru Müftüoğlu (she/they)

Humboldt University

Berlin, Germany

irem.sumru.mueftueoglu@student.hu-berlin.de

ORCID: 0000-0002-5243-5853

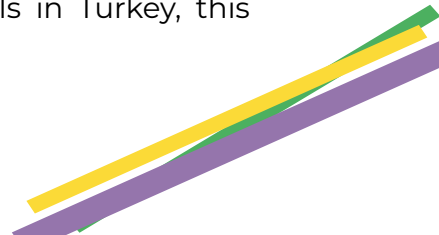
QUEER STRATEGIES AGAINST HATE SPEECH: The Politics of Vulnerability and Performative Resistance

ABSTRACT:

Drawing from my master's research, this study examines the performative strategies queer individuals create to resist and subvert hate speech based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Adopting a queer feminist perspective, I conceptualize vulnerability as a potential for performativity instead of considering hate speech solely through the lens of victimization.

In the context of increasing anti-gender discourses and the *hyper-visibility* of hate speech globally, this study explores the interplay between the macropolitical climate of discursive violence and the micro tensions of everyday life. I reveal two main themes through a narrative analysis of semi-structured in-depth interviews and fieldwork observations. First, I introduce the concept of *the ivory gaze*, illustrating how class positionality mediates one's ability to distance oneself from the injurious effects of hate speech. Second, I determine *endurance toolkits* that emerge from narratives of multidimensional discrimination, indicating the subversive potential of vulnerability. Hereby, I underscore the intersectionality of vulnerability, political agency, and performativity from a queer feminist theoretical framework.

In my presentation, I aim to demonstrate the potential to (trans)form vulnerability into resistance by supporting it with my findings from the fieldwork. By foregrounding the lived experiences of queer individuals in Turkey, this



study contributes to hate speech literature and queer resistance studies by shifting the focus from victimization to performative agency and affective resilience.

Keywords: hate speech, sexual orientation and gender identity, vulnerability, performativity

İrem Sumru Müftüoğlu is a researcher specializing in political sociology, social movements, and queer feminist theory. She is currently pursuing her second Master's degree in the Research Training Program in Social Sciences at Humboldt University Berlin. She holds an MA in Sociology from Boğaziçi University and BA degrees in Sociology and Philosophy from Istanbul University, Türkiye. In addition, she works as a project manager at the Danish Cultural Institute, where she focuses on the intersection of art, gender, and social change.

Marija Radoman

Faculty of Philosophy - Institute for Sociological Research
University of Belgrade
Belgrade, Serbia
marijarradoman@gmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0003-1589-3393

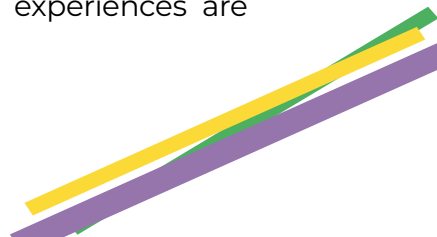
Aleksa Milanović

Faculty of media and communications
Singidunum University
Belgrade, Serbia
aleksa.milanovic@fmk.edu.rs
ORCID: 0009-0000-4414-3458

QUEER RESISTANCE AND SOCIETAL CHANGE: Student Protests in Serbia 2024/2025

ABSTRACT:

In this paper, we will present part of the data from the research on the 2024/2025 student protests, conducted by the Institute for Sociological Research – University of Belgrade. The focus of the research is on the experience of queer students during the protests. In Serbia, on November 1, 2024, following the collapse of a railway station canopy, which resulted in the deaths of 16 people, a wave of student and citizen protests erupted against corruption and dysfunctional institutions. To this day, the crisis in the country remains unresolved, and there have been the largest protests ever in Serbia. Students initiated these changes, and a key aspect of their struggle and citizen mobilisation lies in their specific modes of organising and decision-making as well as in their communal living on occupied faculties. Exploring the personal narratives of LGBTIQ+ students during protests enriches traditional social movement theories by focusing on the experiences of non-cisgender and non-heterosexual participants. The research employs qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews with 10 students from various faculties and universities. Their individual experiences are



analysed within the broader political context, focusing on two key dimensions: the motivations of queer students to join the protests and their personal stories of resistance.

Key words: Queer, student protests, social movements, LGBTIQ+ experiences.

Marija Radoman is a Research Associate at the Institute for Sociological Research, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade. She earned her degree in sociology at the same faculty, where she also completed her PhD in 2019 with a dissertation on same-sex partnerships in Belgrade. Her professional background includes over a decade of research experience in the fields of gender studies, youth value orientations, LGBTIQ rights, and research methodologies. She has a strong interest in feminist and queer theory, as well as in the study of social values and social movements.

Aleksa Milanović, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Media and Communications in Belgrade and the author of *Representation of Transgender Identities in Visual Arts* (2015) and *Media Construction of Other Body* (2019). He holds a PhD in Transdisciplinary Studies of Contemporary Arts and Media from the Singidunum University in Belgrade and an MA degree in Theory of Arts and Media from the University of Arts in Belgrade. He is engaged in scientific research work in which he mainly deals with body studies and gender studies in the field of transgender and queer studies, theorizing the discourse of different, non-normative genders by analyzing representations of transgender and other gender bodies within mass media, visual arts and popular culture. He has been involved in trans activism since 2008, when he volunteered for numerous activist organizations and informal activist groups working to promote LGBTIQ+ rights. He participated in the founding of regional TIGV NGO Trans Network Balkan in 2014, as well as Serbian Kolektiv Talas TIRV (Collective Wave TIGV) in 2020.

Poteko Kaja

Faculty of Sport
University of Ljubljana
Ljubljana, Slovenia
Kaja.Poteko@fsp.uni-lj.si
ORCID: 0000-0002-8794-0243

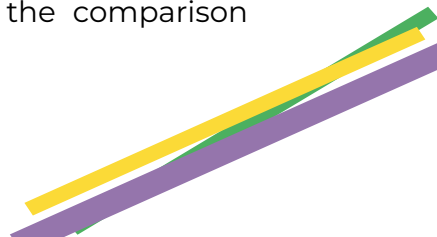
Perger Nina

Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Ljubljana
Ljubljana, Slovenia
Nina.Perger@fdv.uni-lj.si
ORCID: 0000-0003-4509-6029

FUELING THE FLAMES: SLOVENIAN MEDIA COVERAGE OF Gender Non-Normative Athletes in Times of Retraditionalization

ABSTRACT:

In most Western countries, sport is organized around the essentialist assumption that sex/gender are binary. As a result, it stubbornly persists as a social institution, which reinforces gender binary and naturalizes the hetero-patriarchal two-sex system, which demands clearly distinguishable gender expression. The field of sport in relation to gender is being increasingly exploited by reactionary social and political movements to fuel anti-gender moral panic and uphold normative gender ideals, while simultaneously creating significant barriers for gender-expansive athletes – such as trans, queer, and nonbinary individuals – and broadly, for gender non-normative athletes, who are often perceived as a “threat” to women’s sport. At the 2024 Paris Summer Olympic Games, Algerian boxer Imane Khelif and Taiwanese boxer Lin Yu-Ting experienced the effects of these efforts. In our presentation, we will analyze the media coverage of these athletes in Slovenian print media and online news websites, focusing particularly on the comparison



of coverage between conservative and non-conservative outlets. We will examine how the media framed Khelif and Yu-Ting, with a particular attention to the dominant media narratives. Our analysis will primarily focus on the question of problematization – of *what is made into a problem*, by *whom*, and *what* are the main *rationalities* justifying the problematization itself – when it comes to the interrelated issues of gender in the field of sport as made evident in the cases of Khelif and Yu-Ting. In this way, an insight will be gained into how media coverage add to the broader intensification of recent anti-gender mobilizations and broader conservative turns, fueling their flames rather than setting up and upholding the conditions allowing for informed publics.

Key words: gender non-normative athletes, sport, media, anti-gender mobilizations, Slovenia

Kaja Poteko is an Assistant Professor and Researcher at the Faculty of Sport, University of Ljubljana. With a background in journalism and cultural studies, she holds a PhD in kinesiology with a specialization in the sociology of sport. Her research interests lie at the intersection of sociology, cultural studies and media studies, particularly in relation to sport, exercise and physical activity.

Nina Perger is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Sociology and a Research Associate at the Centre for Social Psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana. Her research interests include gender and sexuality, sociology of everyday life and social theory.

Özge KORKMAZ ŞAHBAZ

Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University

Ankara, Turkey

ozge.sahbaz@hbv.edu.tr

ORCID: 0009-0000-0590-3661

Hatice KOÇ

Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University

Ankara, Turkey

hatice.koc@hbv.edu.tr

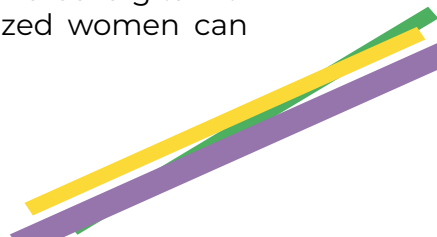
HOW PLATFORM ECONOMIES CAN SUPPORT WOMEN-LED COOPERATIVES AND ECONOMIC Resilience?

ABSTRACT:

Platform economies have the potential to support women-led cooperatives and enhance women's inclusion in the workforce by offering access to markets, flexible work opportunities, and digital tools. However, disadvantaged women—such as those with low education levels, limited digital literacy, and restricted access to technology—often face significant barriers to benefiting from these platforms. This paper explores how platform-based models can be adapted to better support women-led cooperatives while addressing the structural challenges that hinder the participation of disadvantaged women in digital economies.

Women-led cooperatives provide an essential support system, fostering collective economic participation and resource-sharing. However, many women in these cooperatives lack the necessary digital skills to effectively utilize platform economies. Without targeted training programs and accessible digital infrastructure, the risk of exclusion remains high.

This study highlights the need for capacity-building initiatives, affordable internet access, and tailored digital literacy programs to ensure that marginalized women can



effectively engage with digital platforms. Additionally, it examines the role of policy interventions and cooperative-led platform models in creating more inclusive economic opportunities.

While platform economies can enhance economic resilience for disadvantaged women, their effectiveness depends on addressing existing inequalities in access, skills, and financial resources. Without proactive measures to bridge the digital divide, platform economies risk reinforcing existing gender disparities rather than alleviating them. This paper calls for a more inclusive digital transition, where women-led cooperatives are equipped with the tools and knowledge necessary to fully participate in and benefit from the platform economy.

Keywords: Platform economies, women-led cooperatives, digital inclusion, economic resilience, gender disparities, digital literacy

Hatice KOÇ is Associate Professor at Ankara Hacı Bayram University in Ankara, Turkey. The focus of her research interest are women-s and family studies.

Özge KORKMAZ ŞAHBAZ is a P.hD. candidate and teaching assistant at Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli.University. Her research interest includes migration studies, identity studies, comparative politics, and Turkish politics.

Milica Resanović

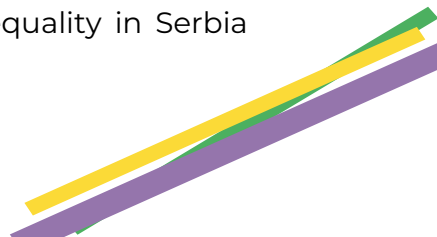
Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory
University of Belgrade
Belgrade, Serbia
milica.resanovic@ifdt.bg.ac.rs
ORCID: 0000-0002-0423-9014

Tijana Matijević

Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory
University of Belgrade
Belgrade, Serbia
tijana.matijevic@ifdt.bg.ac.rs
ORCID: 0009-0006-1058-7636

EVERYONE IS AFRAID OF GENDER: CURRENT CONTROVERSIES AND USES OF THE CONCEPT IN SERBIA

This panel critically examines contemporary debates surrounding the concept of gender in Serbia, focusing on the dynamics of anti-gender mobilizations and the widespread public fear of “gender ideology.” We begin by reconstructing the trajectory of anti-gender mobilization in Serbia, mapping key campaigns that have emerged around various issues, including opposition to educational programs addressing sexual violence, resistance to same-sex partnerships, efforts to cancel EuroPride, rejection of biology textbooks introducing gender concepts, and attempts to prevent the implementation of gender-sensitive language. Through these campaigns, the concept of gender has shifted from a nuanced academic term to a politically charged ideological symbol. We then analyze the discursive strategies employed by the key actors of anti-gender mobilizations, with a particular focus on the ways in which they produce and amplify fear. This panel’s analyses draw on a series of case studies covering debates in various social spheres, including academia, education, literature, culture, politics, law, and healthcare. The interpretation of discursive struggles over gender and gender equality in Serbia



across various spheres allows us to reconstruct how the symbolic landscape was formed, and in which ways gender and “gender ideology” are portrayed as a significant threat to the survival of society and the nation. It also sheds light on the actors who have contributed the most to this narrative, ultimately leading to the suspension of the implementation of the Gender Equality Law.

Key words: anti-gender mobilization, discursive strategies, fear production, controversies over gender equality, Serbia

Milica Resanović is a Research Fellow at the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory, University of Belgrade. She holds a BA, MA, and PhD in Sociology from the Faculty of Philosophy University of Belgrade, where she began her academic career as a researcher. Her research interests include cultural sociology, the sociology of literature, and gender studies. In her work, she has been focused on valuation and evaluation processes, and her recent research project was focused on how we define and evaluate worth and assign value in the field of literary production.

Tijana Matijević is a research fellow at the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory, University of Belgrade. She holds degrees in literary studies from the University of Belgrade and in Eastern European studies from the University of Bologna, and completed her PhD at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg with the dissertation *From Post-Yugoslavia to the Female Continent: A Feminist Reading of Post-Yugoslav Literature* (published by transcript Verlag in 2020). Her research explores the continuities between Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav literatures and cultures, the intersections of aesthetics and ideology, and the theoretical frameworks of the literary Left and feminist writing.

Marija Mandić


Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory
University of Belgrade
Belgrade, Serbia
marija.mandic@ifdt.bg.ac.rs
ORCID: 0000-0003-4593-212X

Jelena Ćeriman

Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory
University of Belgrade
Belgrade, Serbia
jelena.ceriman@ifdt.bg.ac.rs
ORCID: 0000-0002-3848-5926

GENDER-SENSITIVE LANGUAGE IN LEGAL AND PUBLIC DISCOURSE: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL ACTORS

Until the adoption of the Gender Equality Law in May 2021, gender-sensitive language (henceforth GSL) was the subject of scholarly works and polemics in the field of linguistics and feminist activism, but it did not attract the attention of the wider public. Public debates began on the eve of the adoption of the Law, which for the first time introduced GSL into Serbian legislation. Since this law stipulated that the provisions on GSL would enter into force three years after the law adoption – on June 1, 2024 – the public discussions became increasingly heated and polarizing, with the involvement of powerful social actors from the cultural and political life of Serbia. The Constitutional Court suspended the then Law on the Constitutional Review on June 27, 2024. The aim of the paper is to briefly outline the development of the legal norm of GSL in Serbian legislation, as well as to identify the main social actors and available public debates. Using critical discourse analysis, the paper analyses social actors who most criticized the introduction of GSL into the public sphere and contributed to the suspension of the Law, namely actors working in the state institutions liable for teaching and fostering



the Serbian language (Serbian linguists) and actors within the Serbian Orthodox Church. The paper points to the ambivalent and contradictory discourse of the state apparatus and argues that the discourse of actors who opposed the introduction of GSL takes on the features of moral panic and serves as the main trigger of a broader anti-gender mobilization.

Keywords: critical discourse analysis, critical analysis of social actors, gender-sensitive language, anti-gender discourse, Law on Gender Equality, Serbia, Serbian linguistics, Serbian Orthodox Church

Marija Mandić is a senior research fellow at the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory University of Belgrade. She was previously employed at the Institute for Balkan Studies SASA (2004–2022) and the Institute for the Serbian Language SASA (1999–2000). Marija Mandić has worked as a leader or associate on many international and national scientific projects. Her primary research interests include sociolinguistics, critical discourse studies, linguistic anthropology, the relation between discourse and social identity (ethnic, national, gender), minority languages of South-eastern Europe, social memory, Ottoman heritage, and cultural trauma.

Jelena Čeriman is a Research Fellow at the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory of the University of Belgrade. Her current research is situated at the intersections of cultural and political sociology and include comparative interdisciplinary studies on family practices, social assistance and care in European countries, and studies of civil society in WB countries. She is engaged as a leader, associate or expert-consultant on many international scientific projects, such as Horizont 2020 EnTrust, Disobedient Democracy (DisDem), CircleU, UNIGEM. Čeriman is a recipient of a scholarship for engaged research in 2022/23 Using your rights: Empowering Serbian Minorities Through Their National Councils

Tijana Matijević

Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory

University of Belgrade


Belgrade, Serbia

tijana.matijevic@ifdt.bg.ac.rs

ORCID: 0009-0006-1058-7636

**CRITIQUE LACKING CRITICISM: RHETORIC OF
SERBIAN GENDER-CRITICAL FEMINISM**

I would like to analyse ideological connections and discursive analogies of global and local gender-critical feminisms, known also by their (arguably) pejorative abbreviation TERF. Gender-critical feminists focus on the issue of gender, i.e. the critique of gender, advocating the return to the unproblematic paradigm of sex (according to these authors), which translates unambiguous biological facts into unambiguous social and historical categories of female and male sexes. Critique of gender that takes place inside feminist movement (or on its platform) produces curious, if not alarming propositions and general rhetoric which simultaneously repeats and disrupts constitutive principles of feminist history, theory and politics. Although the reasons for opposing the concept of gender are not strictly anti-gender but are pointed in the direction of undermining/delegitimizing certain gender identities (i.e. transwomen), the effects of the shifts on the feminist scene are dangerously close to the effects made by the conservative and right-wing ideological anti-gender mobilization. This is one of the reasons their identification with feminism is problematic and often opposed. Finally, their attempt to articulate gender-critical feminism from a nominally left-wing position ends up, as the analysis shows, in a mere pseudo-Marxist rhetoric at the service of contemporary biologism. Gender-critical feminists make a contradictory cut with the traditions and values of feminism, wanting to instrumentalize it as a field of struggle meant exclusively for (biological) women.



Keywords: gender-critical feminism, rhetoric strategies, Marxist criticism

Tijana Matijević is a research fellow at the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory, University of Belgrade. She holds degrees in literary studies from the University of Belgrade and in Eastern European studies from the University of Bologna, and completed her PhD at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg with the dissertation *From Post-Yugoslavia to the Female Continent: A Feminist Reading of Post-Yugoslav Literature* (published by transcript Verlag in 2020). Her research explores the continuities between Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav literatures and cultures, the intersections of aesthetics and ideology, and the theoretical frameworks of the literary Left and feminist writing.

Aleksandra Knežević

Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory

University of Belgrade

Belgrade, Serbia


aleksandra.knezevic@ifdt.bg.ac.rs

ORCID: 0000-0003-3451-810X

GENDER AND THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD: REASSESSING BIOLOGICAL REDUCTIONISM

In this talk, I defend the role of social sciences in debates on sex and gender. I argue that issues related to gender, gender identity, sex, and sexual identity primarily fall within the domain of social sciences and that any biologization of these categories—even by those defending gender identities—is both epistemically and politically harmful. My argument engages with two recent public and academic controversies in Serbia concerning the censorship of scientific content in eighth-grade biology textbooks regarding gender. The first involves a panel at the Faculty of Philosophy, where biologist Aleksej Tarasjev invited philosophers of science to affirm his claim that science is value-neutral and that any feminist influence in science turns it into ideology. The second concerns a panel at the Media Center, where Miroslav Živić, president of the Serbian Biological Society, attempted to defend gender identities by arguing that sex-gender incongruence is fundamentally a biological phenomenon. I aim to clarify the confusion between biologists and sociologists regarding the nature and role of scientific methods. This misunderstanding, I argue, stems from outdated theories in the philosophy of science. On one side, some biologists and sociologists reduce gender identities to biological categories, falling into the trap of biological reductionism. On the other, some dismiss gender and gender identities altogether, seeking to undermine the scientific legitimacy of feminist social sciences, which—rightfully—are best suited to address these questions.

Keywords: gender, scientific method, biological reductionism, social sciences, feminist epistemology



Aleksandra Knežević is a doctoral student in anthropology at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade. She holds a BA in philosophy from the same faculty and an MA in philosophy from Central European University. Her doctoral research, *An Anthropological Analysis of Evolutionary Social Science Methods*, empirically investigates how evolutionary psychologists integrate evolutionary and anthropological explanations of human social behavior. Her areas of specialization include critical science studies, feminist philosophy of science, and the philosophy of the life sciences.

Zona Zarić


Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory
University of Belgrade
Belgrade, Serbia
zona.zaric@ifdt.bg.ac.rs
ORCID: 0000-0002-0425-4636

Liljana Pantović

Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory
University of Belgrade
Belgrade, Serbia
ljiljana.pantovic@ifdt.bg.ac.rs
ORCID: 0000-0002-2018-9643

WHAT DOES MEDICINE DO TO THE FEMALE BODY? AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY INTO THE CONCEPT OF OBSTETRIC VIOLENCE

This paper explores the concept of obstetric violence from anthropological and philosophical perspectives, addressing a significant yet often overlooked issue within women's healthcare. Obstetric violence, encompassing unethical and coercive medical practices during pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum care, highlights systemic failures in ensuring women's rights and bodily autonomy. Drawing on interdisciplinary insights, the authors examine the structural conditions that perpetuate this form of violence, linking it to broader issues of gender inequality, medical paternalism, and epistemic injustice. The paper emphasizes the importance of naming and recognizing obstetric violence as a crucial step in addressing this pervasive problem. Through anthropological analysis, the authors investigate cultural norms, power dynamics, and institutional practices that sustain harmful medical interventions, while the philosophical framework examines the ethical implications of informed consent, bodily integrity, and reproductive rights. By integrating these approaches, the paper advocates for a holistic understanding of obstetric violence that transcends individual misconduct to



reveal systemic patterns of abuse. The authors underscore the need for healthcare reforms that prioritize compassionate care, improved medical training, and strengthened legal frameworks to protect women's rights in clinical settings. The paper ultimately calls for a shift towards a multi-dimensional concept of patient safety that recognizes the psychological, emotional, and social dimensions of healthcare, aiming to foster a more humane and respectful environment for women during childbirth.

Keywords: Obstetric violence, Reproductive rights, Epistemic injustice, Medical paternalism, Anthropology of childbirth

Zona Zarić is a philosopher and Research Fellow at the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory, University of Belgrade. She obtained her PhD in political and moral philosophy at the École Normale Supérieure PSL in Paris (ED540, Archives Husserl UMR 8547), under the direction of Marc Crépon and Cynthia Fleury. Her thesis entitled : The Political Significance of Compassion, explores the manner in which compassion can be mobilised to promote a more inclusive society by drawing on the moral sensibilities of the broader culture. She works on issues of contemporary moral philosophy, critical theory and social justice.

Ljiljana Pantović holds a PhD in Anthropology (2019) from the University of Pittsburgh (USA). Since 2020, she has been employed as a Research Fellow at the Institute of Philosophy and Social Theory, where she works on issues of care, health, and gender in post-socialist Eastern Europe from an interdisciplinary perspective. She was the lead researcher of the project Closeness and Care: Care for the elderly in Serbia during the COVID19 pandemic (2021/2022), which was implemented with the support of the Open Society University Network (OSUN). Ljiljana has published several academic papers in prestigious academic journals and is the author of several book chapters.

CIP – Каталогизација у публикацији
Народна библиотека Србије, Београд

305(048)(0.034.2)

141.72(048)(0.034.2)

305:316.75(048)(0.034.2)

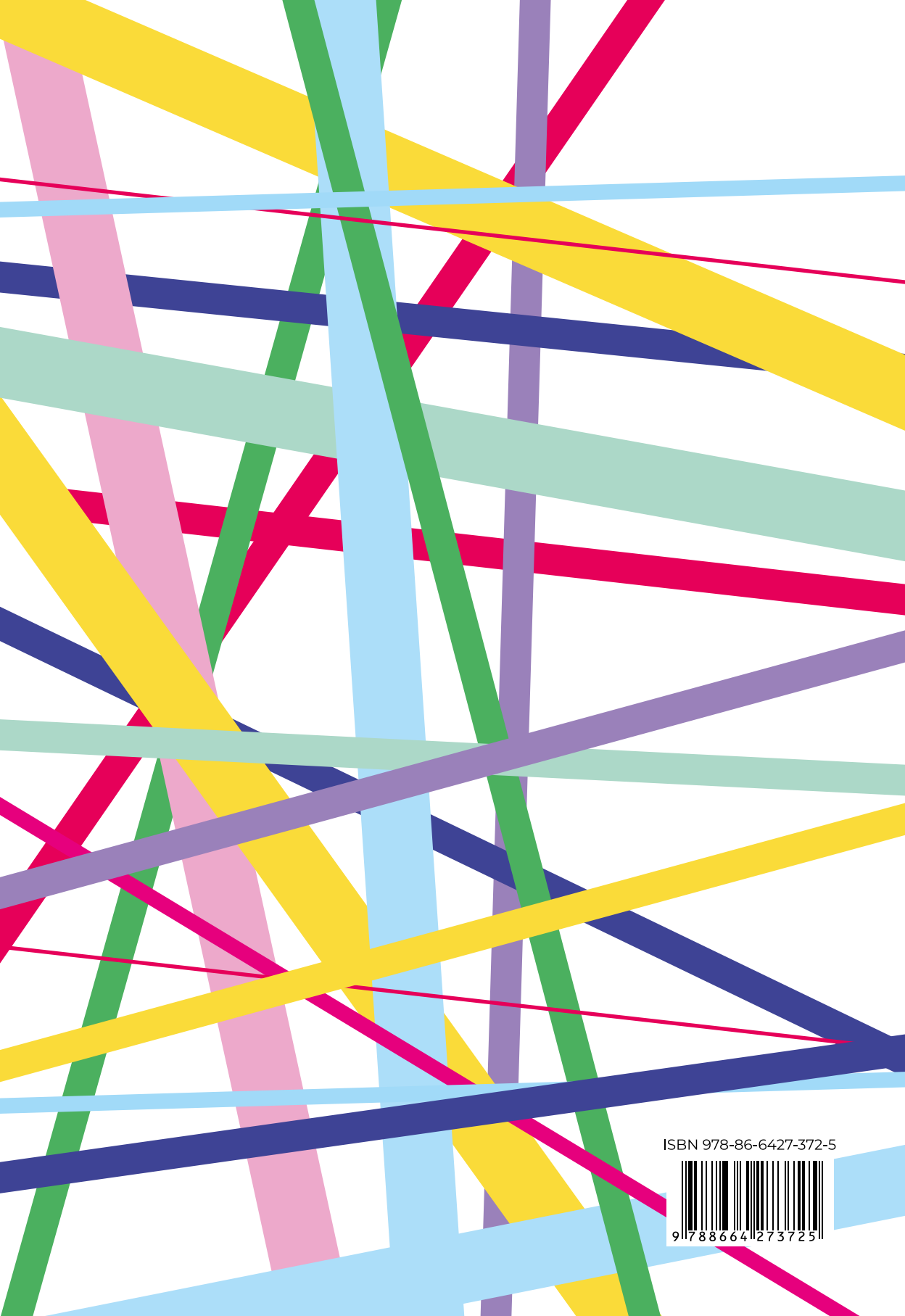
CHALLENGING gender frontiers [Elektronski izvor] :
societal, legal, medical, and artistic discourses and practices
of emerging gender identities : book of abstracts : Belgrade,
September 5–6, 2025 / [edited by Isidora Jarić and Andrija
Golubović]. – Belgrade : University, Faculty of Philosophy,
2025 (Belgrade : Dosije studio).
– 1 elektronski optički disk (CD-ROM) ; 12 cm

Sistemska zahtevi: Nisu navedeni. – Nasl. sa naslovnog ekrana.
– Tiraž 50.

ISBN 978-86-6427-372-5

- а) Родни идентитет — Апстракти
- б) Студије рода — Апстракти
- в) Феминизам — Апстракти

COBISS.SR-ID 172372489



ISBN 978-86-6427-372-5



9 788664 127372 5