

Call for Papers
for a special journal issue to be submitted to *History of European Ideas*
Subverting Hierarchies through Women's Intellectual History
in Eastern Europe in the Long Twentieth Century

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In Eastern Europe, the long twentieth century—the period roughly between the 1890s and the 2000s—was marked by struggles for women's rights, abruptly changing gender regimes, and a maelstrom of diverse as well as often monolithically dominant *-isms*. In these various contexts, women intervened into various male-centered discourses from a women-centered position, while writing, thinking, and arguing about processes of emancipation, education, (forced) modernization, the break with the traditional rural community, and many other themes which speak not only toward European but global processes too. As a recent collection of texts and contexts from the history of feminism and women's rights in East Central Europe has shown, women's interventions in the public sphere encompassed topics including war, sexuality, and the politicization of motherhood, to name only three.¹ Yet, women from Central and Eastern Europe still remain marginal in the fields of European and global intellectual history, falling between the cracks of studies on the Western part of the Northern hemisphere, but also those, still largely male-dominated, of Central and Eastern Europe and even of the Global South. This omission means that the contributions of women from Eastern and Central Europe remain largely absent—not only in relation to the experience of the decades-long emancipation project of real existing socialism, but also in terms of longer-term negotiations with other ideologies such as agrarianism, nationalism, and anarchism, as well as the ways in which identity and belonging have been shaped by migration and shifting borders in this post-imperial space. These dynamics make the region specific and relevant *as a region on a global scale*.

This special journal issue examines women's intellectual history in Central and Eastern Europe throughout the long twentieth century. However, rather than merely addressing an existing gap, it seeks to challenge and redefine the field as such by engaging with carefully selected case studies of women's political thought in the region. The inclusion of women from Central and Eastern Europe into intellectual historical investigations means revisiting the gender of who produces intellectual discourses worthy of attention, from where they can speak, and through which fora (i.e. type of sources) they communicate. In this context, rethinking the methodology of intellectual history from the perspective of Eastern and Central European women can help us think about research in intellectual history beyond the traditionally practiced methods. Even more importantly, this also means thinking beyond traditionally used sources, a call articulated for decades by intellectual historians of women's thought.

¹ Zsófia Lóránd, Adela Hîncu, Jovana Mihajlović Trbovc, and Katarzyna Stańczak-Wiślicz, eds., *Texts and Contexts from the History of Feminism and Women's Rights: East Central Europe, Second Half of the Twentieth Century* (Budapest–New York: Central European University Press, 2024).

This journal issue identifies and hence engages with two major tasks. Women's intellectual history must reflect upon the existing power-structures that have shaped the interpretation of material and so canonized some texts and dismissed others, namely on the basis of gender and region. Archival sources must be brought back into the methodological framework of intellectual history. This also means opening up the field to new genres of texts, as well as new understandings of text- and knowledge-production, such as the collaborative processes behind textual genesis. In this context, this collection of articles contributes to the ongoing scholarly effort to challenge the hierarchy of gender while additionally seeking to subvert two enduring hierarchies that have traditionally shaped intellectual history: hierarchies of regions and hierarchies of sources.

We invite papers focusing on women's thought from / in Eastern and Central Europe (including émigré histories) in the long twentieth century (1890–2000) that engage with methods and approaches from intellectual history and the history of political thought.

Please send proposals, which include an **abstract** (max. 1 page) **with a short bibliography** (including references to theory and methods) of your planned paper and a **short CV**, by **April 17, 2026**, to the following address: heressee.zeitgeschichte@univie.ac.at

Contributors will receive a longer concept paper which outlines the intellectual scope of the special journal issue as well as further practical guidance. An initial **online meeting of all contributors and editors is scheduled for mid-June 2026** and will provide the opportunity to workshop papers before **the deadline for finished papers: October 15, 2026**.



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