Biuletyn
Polonistyczny

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The Bourgeois Public Discusses Art III: Transnational Media, Mediators and Art Practices in Central Europe

Typ wydarzenia: Konferencja
Miejscowość: Prague
Organizatorzy: Instytut Historii Sztuki Akademii Nauk Republiki Czeskiej (Ústav dějin umění), Instytut Literatury Czeskiej Akademii Nauk Republiki Czeskiej (Ústav pro českou literaturu)

This workshop seeks to explore the intricate relationship between the bourgeois public (Reinhart Koselleck, Jürgen Habermas) and literature and the arts, with a particular focus on the transnational role of the media, mediators and art practices in Central Europe from the late 18th century until the end of the 19th century.

Research into the bourgeois public has highlighted the crucial, transnational role of the media (Niklas Luhmann), as well as the linguistically stratified cultural landscape of Central Europe, in which debates around literature and art became the key to the formation of national identities and represent a unique nexus for the exploration of these developments (e.g. Deleuze – Guattari). Literature and the arts were discussed in the region both in relation to emerging communities in terms of their symbolic value and to the expressive possibilities of the arts that defined themselves in relation to the broader strata of society (Pierre Bourdieu). This was due to the development of a book market for key periodicals and the opening up of the media and institutions such as theatres, concert halls and art galleries to a wider public (Assa Briggs – Peter Burke). The media both unified and fragmented public culture in Central Europe (Pieter M. Judson). Art exhibitions, almanacs and cultural venues opened up the possibility of creating public spaces in which group opinions and stances could be expressed and become a basis for social identification/exclusion (Bruce Ferguson, Tony Bennett).

Although many of the media were closely associated with one particular art form and language, they can also be seen from a broader perspective as more complex actors in the contemporary negotiation of identities (e.g. the multilingualism of some theatres and printed publications, the inclusivity/exclusivity of exhibitions) or their intermedial and intercultural transfer. The insights that art history, music, literary studies and other disciplines have brought to these transnational media invite further discussion from a broader interdisciplinary perspective: nineteenth-

century audiences, or sub-audiences, may thus appear more cosmopolitan than previously perceived by recent scholarship (Katherine Arens). Did this apply across time to all or only selected art forms and genres? And what were the dynamics between them? At the same time, while the protagonists shaping the public space, often cultural translators (Pascale Casanova), had to formulate their positions in relation to the modernizing state, commercial interests, civic institutions and the dynamic cultural scene, what were their media strategies and to what extent were they transferable?

We seek a transnational perspective based on the methods of art and literary history, cultural and media history, and aesthetics and sociology, which will help us to shed light on the positions and emergence of the public aspect of art in the socially, linguistically, and nationally differentiated Central Europe of the long 19th century. In particular we focus on the following areas:

- the public for art and literature in Central Europe in the 19th century and its construction, in relation to the process of autonomisation and nationalization of arts and literature;

- institutions, the market and the media as agents in the formation and expression of group interests between the elitism of the upper classes and the opening up of culture and its spaces to wider publics;

- local and transregional media, their owners and protagonists, and the praxes involved in the formation of bourgeois publics in relation to European, local and national works of literature and arts;

- media language policy and cultural transfers between different media from a European and local perspective.

Submission guidelines: Please send your abstract of max. 1800 characters/250 words to dobias@ucl.cas.cz (Dalibor Dobiáš) and machalikova@udu.cas.cz (Pavla Machalíková) by April 30, 2025. You will be notified about the selection of submissions in May 2025. We expect the final papers to be 20 minutes long. The preferred language will be English.

The organizers offer accommodation and travel grants to selected participants without institutional background.

The workshop is a continuation of previous meetings on Central European art publics: https://www.udu.cas.cz/en/akce/mestanska-verejnost-diskutuje-oumeni; https://www.udu.cas.cz/en/akce/the-bourgeois-public-discusses-art-ii.

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(1806–1858)' (GA CR 23-05437S) and 'Spaces, Objects, Authors and Curators: Building a Cultural Public in the Czech Lands 1790–1918' (GA CR 24-12190S).

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Słowa kluczowe: art, media, literature, 19th century, 18th century, bourgeois, mediators