Universität Basel

Philosophisch-Historische Fakultät

Producing Feminist and Queer Knowledge from (Semi-)Peripheries: Power, Positionality, and Epistemic Justice

URIS Workshop

13 November 2026, 9.30–16.00



URIS Ukrainian Research in Switzerland

Programme · 13 November 2026

Venue: Europa-Institut, Orangerie, Riehenstrasse 154
(located in the garden behind the main building)

How is feminist and queer knowledge produced from and about regions often positioned as academic, political, or epistemic "peripheries"? This roundtable brings together scholars working across Central and Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus, and Central Asia to reflect on the opportunities, tensions, and inequalities that shape contemporary knowledge production.

Through two interconnected discussions, participants will examine the challenges of researching gender and sexuality in and from the so-called peripheries within predominantly Western academic institutions, as well as the ethical and methodological dilemmas surrounding extractivism, representation, and collaboration in transnational research. The event aims to foster critical dialogue on power, positionality, and more equitable approaches to feminist and queer scholarship across regions and disciplines.

09.30 – 10.00	Welcome coffee and registration
10.00 – 10.15	**Welcome and Opening** Maryna Shevtsova & Anna Dobrowolska
10.15 – 12.00	**Panel 1. Researching Gender and Sexuality from the (Semi-) Periphery: Navigating Western Academia**
12.00–12.15	Short break
12.15 – 13.30	**Keynote: Feminist Epistemic Resistance in CEE after Russia's Invasion of Ukraine** Míla O'Sullivan, Institute of International Relations Prague
13.30 – 14.30	Lunch break (lunch served at the spot)
14.30 – 16.00	**Panel 2: Beyond Extraction: Ethics, Collaboration, and Knowledge Production**

Panel 1: Researching Gender and Sexuality from the (Semi-) Periphery: Navigating Western Academia

Speakers: Maryna Shevtsova (KU Leuven/University of Basel), Yuliia Soroka (N.V. Karazin Kharkiv National University/Geneva Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies), Míla O'Sullivan (Institute of International Relations Prague) .

Chair: Leandra Bias (University of Fribourg)

This discussion explores the opportunities and constraints faced by scholars working on Central and Eastern Europe and other semi-peripheral contexts within Western academic institutions. Participants will reflect on questions of visibility, legitimacy, intellectual translation, academic hierarchies, and the politics of representing regions often positioned at the margins of dominant knowledge product.

Panel 2: Beyond Extraction: Ethics, Collaboration, and Knowledge Production

Speakers: Agnieszka Fal-Dutra Santos (Geneva Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies), Yuliia Mieriemova (University of Southern Denmark), Oleksandra Tarkhanova (University of St.Gallen).

Chair: Anna Dobrowolska (University of Basel)

Drawing on experiences from Central-Eastern Europe, Latin America, and beyond, this panel examines how researchers navigate extractivist dynamics in academic knowledge production. The discussion will focus on ethical collaboration, unequal research partnerships, representation, authorship, and possibilities for more reciprocal and accountable forms of feminist and queer scholarship.

KEYNOTE

Feminist Epistemic Resistance in CEE after Russia's Invasion of Ukraine

This seminar talk focuses on feminist knowledge production in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) in the context of Russia's war against Ukraine. It positions Europe's East, often treated as an epistemic (semi-)periphery, as a site of theoretical and political knowledge rather than merely an object of analysis. It asks: What becomes visible about war when dominant geopolitical frameworks are unsettled and the situated knowledge of feminists in CEE is centred?

The talk explores how the war has made long-unaddressed inter-imperial legacies increasingly visible, including epistemic imperialism, the marginalisation of Ukrainian and CEE voices, and the continued privileging of Russia-centred perspectives. Drawing on Russia's weaponisation of gender, the transnationalisation of anti-gender politics, and feminist responses to militarisation and war, it examines how these dynamics are experienced, contested and theorised within the region. It also discusses feminist resistance to epistemic marginalisation. The talk argues that situated feminist wartime knowledge is central to understanding how Russia's colonial and patriarchal legacies shape and sustain the gendered war, while also revealing broader transformations in geopolitics, authoritarianism and militarisation.



Míla O'Sullivan is a Senior Researcher at the Institute of International Relations Prague. Her research focuses on feminist approaches to security and foreign policy, particularly in relation to Ukraine and Central and Eastern Europe. She is co-editor of Feminist Perspectives on Peace, Security and War, forthcoming with Routledge in 2027.

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