

Invitation to workshop sessions: Women's intellectual history, care, and social thought

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Almost two decades ago, Hilda L. Smith pointed to what she called the paradigmatic separation between women intellectuals and intellectual history, arguing that intellectual historians have failed to include the discussion on gender and women. More recently, Ben Griffin argued that there was still **a gap in the field of women's intellectual history**, noting that the predominant focus in gender history had been on "what women did rather than what they thought". While detailed studies exist of women's activities in different organizations and political parties especially in relation to care, substantially less has been said about their **intellectual references** and the ways these women **conceptualized their public engagement and social work**. This is the case also for the recent studies on women's social action, including the projects developed in the framework of the **COST Action Who Cares in Europe?**; while much is being written on women's practices, their intellectual references, outputs, as well as their relationship towards the politics of naming (i.e. identification with or a refusal of the label of "feminism") are often put aside. The cause for this might be the lack of discussions about the methodological approaches to women's intellectual history, which seek for a rethinking of conventionally practiced intellectual history and the history of thought, still predominantly focusing on (Western, male) canonical thinkers.

Following the recent gradual rise of interest in women in intellectual history and women's feminist, international, social, economic and political thought, this call invites **scholars of intellectual history and/or women's history to reflect on women's intellectual history by specifically focusing on women's social thought and care (broadly intended) as a testing ground**. What kind of Europe emerges when gender, intellectual, and social action histories meet? How can the sources usually researched for the history of women's social action be interpreted for the purposes of writing intellectual history of social thought? What are the other sources useful for this endeavour? How can we rethink the canon of the political and social for the purpose of the advance of the field of women's intellectual history?

In order to bring these discussions forward, and to foster a dialogue between gender-sensible approaches to intellectual history and history of care, this workshop will bring together members of two already existing networks:

- COST Action 'Who Cares in Europe?', particularly the members of its Working Group 4, which "maps the intellectual and ethical traditions – e.g., social Catholicism, socialism, paternalism, feminism – that have been at the basis of social policies across Europe, their spatial trajectories, the influences, entanglements and adaptations among them,"
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- The Intellectual History in East Central Europe network, an informal research network of early career researchers who focus on intellectual history. As a part of this network, a research working group on women's intellectual history has been meeting online since February 2021. <https://intellectualhistoryece.wordpress.com/467-2/>.

Imagined as a continuation of the conversation held so far, and an expansion of both the Action's WG4 and IH in ECE working group, the upcoming series of sessions will **connect the topics of social action and care (broadly intended) with the approaches to social thought and women's intellectual history.**

THE FORM OF THE WORKSHOP: 2-hours sessions will be held once a month from September 2022 to March 2023. This series is imagined as a space where the participants can present their own research. The presentations will be combined with investigations of methodological and theoretical issues of writing women's intellectual history (for this second part, the presenter suggests one reading related to the presentation itself, which can serve as a basis for discussion). The presentations need not be developed papers, but rather presentations of work-in-progress. **The primary aim of the workshop is to gather researchers interested in pursuing this topic; more specific plans (ex. journal issue) will be made later on, depending on the interest of the participants.**

Should you be interested to join the workshops, please write to the convenor by June 10, 2022. Presenting on the workshop is not a requirement for participation, so please indicate whether you would be interested to present, or only be an active participant. Please also add a couple of sentences about why you are interested to join and how this aligns to your previous research.

After the deadline for participation notice (June 10), the imagined timeline is:

September 5, deadline for the presentation titles.

Third week of September: the initial session based on relevant readings, to start the discussion.

November 2022 – March 2023, once a month: presentation sessions.

Selected bibliography:

Berenice A Carroll, "The Politics of Originality: the class system of the intellect," *Journal of Women's History* 2, no. 2 (1990): 136–163;

Hilda L. Smith, "Women Intellectuals and Intellectual History: their paradigmatic separation," *Women's History Review* 16, No. 3 (July 2007): 353–368;

Hilda L. Smith, "Women's History as Intellectual History: A Perspective on the Journal of Women's History," *Journal of Women's History*, Volume 20, Number 1 (Spring 2008): 26–32.

Rachel Foxley, "Gender and Intellectual History," in *Palgrave Advances in Intellectual History*, eds. Richard Whatmore and Brian Young (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 189–209;

Richard Whatmore, *What is Intellectual History?* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015);

Balazs Trencsenyi, Michal Kopeček, Luka Lisjak Gabrijelčić, Maria Falina, Monika Baar and Maciej Janowski, *A history of modern political thought in East Central Europe, Volume II. negotiating modernity in the 'short twentieth century' and beyond, Part I: 1918-1968*, 81-83, 123, 140-141, 240-241 (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018);

Ben Griffin, "From Histories of Intellectual Women to Women's Intellectual History," *Journal of Victorian Culture* 24, no. 1 (2019): 130–133;

Patricia Owens and Katharina Rietzler, *Women's International Thought. A New History* (2021, Cambridge University Press);

Valeska Huber, Tamson Pietsch and Katharina Rietzler, "Women's International Thought and the New Professions, 1900–1940", *Modern Intellectual History* 18 (2021): 121–145;

Sarah Dunstan and Patricia Owens, "Claudia Jones, International Thinker", *Modern Intellectual History* 18 (2021), 1–24.