

Editorial

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Introduction

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The French Research Center for Humanities and Social Sciences (CEFRES, Prague) is delighted to present the first issue of *Human Affairs* journal that the Center coordinated and thanks the Institute for Social Communication of the Slovak Academy of Sciences for inviting CEFRES to join the team of co-editors.

Founded in 1991 under the tutelage of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS), CEFRES' main mission is not only to foster cooperations between Central European and French academics but to enhance knowledge production in three research areas designed to address, in a transdisciplinary perspective, some of the questionings European research in Humanities and Social Sciences is devoting itself to. This yearly issue will present chosen outcomes of research activities led by CEFRES members and invited researchers. As such, this issue gathers two clusters of contributions reflecting two of the several projects led at CEFRES.

The first cluster of five articles presents research conducted within a program aiming to observe how the full-scale invasion of Ukraine challenges Humanities and Social Sciences. The studies presented in the section **“Rethink. Objects, models, and methods in Humanities and Social Sciences since the invasion of Ukraine”** reflect a range of questionings actualized by the current situation of Ukraine, not only a country at war, but a country, as defined by dr. Valeriya Korablyova in the “double blind spot between Russia and the EU”. They result from a program of fellowships devoted to Ukrainian researchers in Humanities and Social Sciences CEFRES has launched in 2022/2023 with its Platform partners, the Czech Academy of Sciences and Charles University in Prague. In the first two years we have managed to support jointly 41 scholars with non-residential scholarships in Prague and Berlin; as well as 13 fellows with residential stays in Czech Republic and in France with a total budget of circa 150.000 €. The program continues and a new call for 2025 is currently being finalized.

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In the first article, devoted to the transformation of scientific value itself, **Vadym Osin** uses sociology of scholarship and merchandising to come to terms with a phenomenon far from being limited to Ukraine, but usually let aside by scholars as an incurable by-effect of the academic and political competition: merchandization of academic degrees.

Facing the political use of the smooth narrative of modernization, **Igor Serdiuk** then sought to build a notion, namely the “quality of life”, encompassing both subjective and objectized data to reread historical sources, uncover their value and biases, and deconstruct their appropriation by the imperial discourse.

More topically, two following articles seize extreme social situations, isolation and human trafficking, the understanding of which has been challenged by the present situation. **Natalia Tsybuliak** enquires into the situation of displaced persons and scrutinizes the way isolation informs social fabrics, transforms social norms, and finally jeopardizes social building processes. Already looking ahead at what is awaiting social scientists in societies encompassing post-traumatic individuals, **Elina Paliichuk** uses the methods of linguistic modelization to show that subjectivity may be the mode of linguistic transmission able to convey the affects related to human trafficking and prevent vulnerability.

In the *Report* section, the last study of this first cluster is an “on the spot” enquiry devoted to the difficulties encountered by policies aiming at the protection of cultural heritage. **Dmytro Yanov** confronted legal norms – European as well as national ones – from their gaps and biases to the current difficulties in their embedding. Behind the unanimity around the goals of such policies, Yanov casts a crude light on the shortcomings present curators and future generations will cope with.

The second cluster of the issue proposes three articles resulting from the research project “**Displacements: Gendered-based Violence, Women’s Writing and Creative Practices in Modern Central and Southeastern Europe**“. This research was funded by a 4EU + European university alliance mini grant at CEFRES to confront the polysemic category of displacement/*dépaysement* (exile, disorientation, dislodgement...) with the literary and artistic trajectories of Central European women using a transnational and interdisciplinary approach.

We aimed at observing how the experience of gendered-based oppression fuels the literary and artistic practices of women from a region that has been torn between different imperial structures, marked by mass violence (the Holocaust, forced migrations, war crimes...) and where culture has always been permeated by a strong dialectical relationship between norms and transgressive gestures. The question of experiencing violence in its “familiar” forms at home was particularly scrutinized – in everyday environments of mothers and fathers, and other family members –, as well as in familiar milieus such as the church or school, as the institutions acting at the junction of the public and private spheres.

In the first article of the cluster **Hélène Martinelli** observes how Central-European women writers, in particular Zofia Nałkowska and Milena Jesenská, address the dynamics of familiar emancipation and sequestration, or even persecution. This attention to the tension between feminist thought and female condition is resumed by the metaphor of “killing the angel in the house” – the one haunting (not only) Victorian England and preventing women from having “a mind of their own” – made famous by Virginia Woolf.

Marcelina Obarska’s article scrutinizes the political uses of the melodrama genre on examples by the Polish playwright Maria Kuncewiczowa, a contemporary to Woolf and Nałkowska. Exploring how ‘theatrical microevents of the public sphere’ reveal fractures within dominant discourses, Obarska scrutinizes strategies for representing the subject of abortion in the Kuncewiczowa’s plays in an act of ulterior reparation. Since the questioning of gendered-based inequalities (and their violence) was the reason behind the refusal of the text by the critics at the time of its publication, it needs to be re-examined and challenged today to observe power and discourse dynamics in the background.

The last article of the cluster by **Erika Parotti** interrogates in turn the body submitted to destructive and self-destructive violence in the plays of the Belarusian contemporary author, Diana Balyko. Observing communicative violence – an internalized disposition or habitus which, in absence of institutions that can protect and represent the individual, takes over as the only form of communication – aims at denouncing the post-Soviet sociocultural context from a gendered perspective.

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