

TRANS LIBERATION, TRANS* EMBODIMENTS, AND DECENTRING RADICAL PRAXIS IN POLAND

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“I am often expected to sit down at the table with someone who would like to, if only symbolically, kill me. Or to see me on the margins of society. Increasingly, I refuse such confrontations. Because I already know what I need. And I am the one who dictates the terms of my life.”

Maja Heban (2023)

Objectives

1. **Explore** different **embodied practices** (e.g., self-care, tattooing and piercing, gender-affirming bodily modifications, sexual activities, medical transition, physical appearance, performance arts, non-sexual physical affection etc.) of Polish trans* people.
 - a) Paying attention to the ways **how communities reflect on these practices.**
2. **Examine ways of knowing** underpinning the ideas of gender diversity, gender dysphoria (as a clinical unit), and **how they shape** the ways that **trans* people in Poland understand** own **actions and embodiments.**

Objectives

3. **Understand** the rising role of **'trans-exclusionary feminist' thought** on the Polish debates about trans* lives.
4. **Understand meanings, values, and roles** that Polish trans* communities **attribute to their embodied practices**.
5. **Challenge** the current **dominance of Western-centric** (and even more specific, Anglophone) **understandings of gender diversity in trans* studies**, and **examine its relevance** in Eastern European, specifically, Polish contexts.

Aims

1. **Criticise, reflect on**, and contribute to **dismantling systems of oppression** through amplifying **named** trans voices, not only as an act of “giving back to the community”, but also to **foster hope** in times of uncertainty.
2. **Contribute** to developing **scholarship** and body of knowledge that **questions dominant, occidental paradigms** by **centring voices of trans* people** from Eastern Europe, while **reflecting on the geo-temporal contexts** of trans* lives and trans* bodies in Poland.
3. **Build a body of knowledge** about **emancipatory embodied** practices by providing a national case study of such practices.
4. **Build a body of knowledge useful for diverse stakeholders**, mainly Polish and international trans* communities, NGOs and policymakers.

“Our struggle for political emancipation has become understood as one progression within a broader process of class war, and our transitions as reshaping the demands of social reproduction.”

Jules Joanne Gleeson & Elle O'Rourke (2021:2)

“There’s nothing about
the academy that has
revolutionary desire.”
Joy James (2019)



Where's space
for ideology and values?

Source: <https://embeddingproject.org/resources/wheel-of-privilege-and-power/>

"I wish for myself and for you that we make others uncomfortable, controversial, make us think, and challenge what is established and thus transparent."
Ali Kopacz (2023)

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