



## REPORT FORM FOR NETWORK ACTIVITIES

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**Confidential**

### 1. Lead Applicant

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### Present appointment and employing institution

Honorary Research Fellow Teaching Fellow in Polish Studies 2008-2009 University College London School of Slavonic and East European Studies
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### Role in activity

Administrator, overall coordinator, assisted by Dr Urszula Chowaniec (Tampere University, Finland, and Jagiellonian University, Kraków)
CEELBAS appointed adviser: Dr Richard Mole (SSEES UCL)

### 2. Activity details

#### Type and title of activity

Thematic workshop: Poland Under Feminist Eyes: One-day Workshop on the Application of Feminist and Gender Perspectives to Polish Literature and Culture
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#### Location

UCL SSEES, 16 Taviton Street, Rooms 431 and 433
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#### Date

From: 5 November 2008	To: One day only
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Brief Description of activities carried out (please include or attach a confirmed list of participants)

Separate list of participants attached

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The one-day workshop consisted of thirteen presentations by a range of speakers from academic institutions in Britain, Poland and Finland. The programme was deliberately arranged giving speakers no more than 15-20 minutes, so that there could be maximum time for discussion from the floor. This was a successful strategy as all presentations were to the point, and there was lively participation from the audience. There was a total attendance of 53, including the speakers.

The first presentation of the workshop was by Professor Rosalind Marsh of Bath University, well-known to Russian studies, who talked about Polish feminism in the wider context of East European Studies. Ewa Krakowska (Poznań) raised the question to what extent Polish feminists have relied on west European models and theories and to what extent there is a Polish feminist 'tradition'; she also spoke of her own experience since the 1970s of the introduction into Polish academe of feminism and women's issues. Urszula Chowaniec spoke of how western theorists, such as Simone De Beauvoir, were introduced to the study and analysis of Polish literature and culture. Other speakers focused on more specific or narrower issues: anthropologist Grażyna Kubica (Jagiellonian University, first winner of the recently established Narcyza Żmichowska prize for her book Siostry Malinowskiego) spoke about one of the 'sisters' Maria Czaplicka; Grażyna Borkowska (IBL PAN) compared the feminisms of the two main nineteenth-century Polish women writers Narcyza Żmichowska and Eliza Orzeszkowa; Ursula Phillips (UCL SSEES) spoke of the different attitudes to women in writings by Adam Mickiewicz and Bolesław Prus; Elwira Grossman (Glasgow) discussed gender issues in contemporary Polish drama; Dorota Hołowiak (UCL SSEES) discussed how the Polish language reflects the lower status afforded culturally to women and the implications attached to the usage of both long-established and newly introduced feminine forms denoting e.g. women's professional status; Agnieszka Mrozik (IBL PAN) presented the recent activity of Manuela Gretkowska, both as a writer and as a politician (the Women's Party); Katarzyna Czeczot (IBL PAN) talked about Marta Dzido's Małż and the work of other contemporary feminist literary writers; Ewa Toniak (also IBL PAN) presented her recent book Olbrzymki (Giantesses) accompanied by a vivid powerpoint of illustrations; Ewa Mazierska (University of Central Lancashire) compared films by two female directors (Wanda Jakubowska and Anna Jadowska), also accompanied by a presentation of stills and a short film extract. Kirsi Kurkijärvi (Tampere) introduced the Tampere project, also briefly presented the recent book on Russian and Polish women writers Masquerade and Femininity edited by Urszula Chowaniec, Ursula Phillips and Marja Rytönen (Tampere, also present at the workshop). The day ended with a roundtable discussion chaired by Katarzyna Zechenter (UCL SSEES) and then a wine reception.

### **3. Achievement of stated aims and objectives**

Please summarise how the stated aims and objectives of the activities proposed have been achieved and how these have helped to further the aims and objectives of CEELBAS.

The over-riding aim to bring together scholars and postgraduate students working on aspects of Polish feminism in various cultural contexts (literary studies, anthropology, film studies, art history, linguistics) was certainly achieved. The papers were varied and illuminating and met with lively discussion from the audience. The level of participation and enthusiasm of the participants demonstrated not only that feminist theories and methodologies could be successfully applied to Polish culture, and that this has been a neglected interpretative tool, but also that this was a rare occasion for the participants (often working in isolation) to voice their interests and interpretations to a sympathetic audience, who took their concerns seriously. Although no paper (except the one on Gretkowska) directly addressed politics and social life, these topics were nevertheless present in most of the papers and in all the discussions. We believe it also paid off to have concentrated on feminism, as this meant the whole day was focused on women's representation – whereas the more general context of Gender Studies tends to marginalise specifically women's concerns.

The workshop also demonstrated that there is a common 'language' between the participants from Poland and from Britain and Finland. Due to the interest begun in the 1990s among feminist academics in Poland in western theory, and a parallel increase in using these tools among Western scholars researching the cultures of East and Central Europe, much common ground has been established. We see these developments as an outcome of the collapse of communism and the relative ease today of academic contacts. This experience might appear to contradict the somewhat negative and conservative attitudes to feminism in the contemporary Polish media, but in certain academic and cultural milieu, approaches have been proved to be much more open-minded and democratic, and open to new influences. We wish now to

build on this common understanding and to work together. A similar meeting in Poland has already been proposed (see box 7 below). At the same time, there was a keenness among certain participants to root Polish feminism in the Polish past, looking for a tradition of Polish feminism within Polish culture and literature itself – not just as an ‘import’ from Western Europe. The East-West debate was also therefore present in this form, and likewise warrants further research.

It was also our aim to encourage the participation of postgraduate students from within UCL and across the CEELBAS network. As is evident from the list of participants (see attachment) that this was successful in that several SSEES and UCL Gender Studies students attended; we had one from Oxford, and one from Manchester (the student due to come from Warwick was unable to come at the last minute). Some academic staff from CEELBAS networked universities also participated (from Bath and Oxford).

#### **4. Outcomes**

Please indicate the outcomes and ‘value for money’ of activities carried out.

Feedback received so far has been very positive. There was a definite sense that the workshop filled a gap in Polish studies, and a strong desire was expressed in the final roundtable discussion for cooperation between the speakers and participants to continue and for there to be a follow-up event. The possibility of such an event in Poland was also suggested. The possibility of publishing all the papers on the workshop’s webpage was discussed, as was the establishment of an e-journal. These ideas have already been taken up and discussed by the organisers along with certain participants (see box 7 below). The participation by the colleagues from Finland (the Tampere project on Russian and Polish Women’s Writing, [www.womenswriting.fi](http://www.womenswriting.fi)) was valuable, contributing a comparative perspective and also offering another dimension beyond the Polish-British for further cooperation; the Finnish colleagues had also contributed to designing the workshop’s webpage, which is a platform for academic networking, and had produced the workshop poster. This contribution was key to keeping down costs; no fee was charged by the Finnish colleagues for the extra work required on the designing and maintaining the workshop part of their webpage, or for designing the poster and flier (the hotel and flight for Kirsi Kurkijarvi were paid for out of savings elsewhere on the original budget, i.e. Elwira Grossman’s travel was paid by Glasgow, Katarzyna Czczot did not require the hotel accommodation).

A grant of £1000 was received from the Polish Cultural Institute. The £10.00 fee charged to participants not from UCL or other networked partners yielded £180.00.

Art historian Ewa Toniak (not included in the original budget) was entirely funded by the Adam Mickiewicz Institute. This addition to the programme was organised by the Polish Cultural Institute.

**5. Breakdown of total costs for workshops (please attach evidence of expenditure)**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<p><b>Key speakers (Travel, accommodation and subsistence)</b></p> <p>Travel, total £1092.59            Hotel, total expected £1353.60 [bill not yet received from Tavistock Hotel]            Subsistence, total £1012.60 [includes restaurant meal £410.25, wine reception £104.83, and UCLU lunch £497.62; lunch was provided for all participants]</p> <p>These prices are the actual prices inclusive of VAT [VAT also included in expected payment to Tavistock]</p>	£3458.79
<p><b>Postgraduate participation</b></p> <p>A number of pg students from UCL SSEES, UCL Gender Studies, LSE, SOAS and Birkbeck attended, as did individual pg students from City University, Oxford, Manchester and Glasgow.            No costs were associated with this, apart from the supply of the sandwich lunch and wine reception</p>	
<p><b>Room/equipment hire</b></p> <p>Rooms 431 and 433, Masaryk Room: no costs</p>	
<p><b>Administration costs</b></p>	£400.00
<p><b>Printing and publicity (including conference packs)</b></p> <p>The design of the webpage and the electronic dissemination of publicity did not incur any costs</p> <p>Printing of 20 copies of A3 sized coloured poster and 50 fliers £53.11            Printing of conference badges (printed badges for speakers, blank for other participants) £72.00            Photocopying (done in SSEES) £20.00</p>	£145.11
<p><b>Other (please specify)</b></p> <p>There were no other costs</p>	
<b>Total expenditure</b>	£4003.90
<b>Total contribution invoiced to CEELBAS</b>	

	£2823.90
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**6. Breakdown of total costs for projects (please attach evidence of expenditure)**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<b>Staff costs</b>	
<b>Equipment/technical costs</b>	
<b>Administration costs</b>	
<b>Other (please specify</b>	
<b>Total expenditure</b>	
<b>Total contribution invoiced to CEELBAS</b>	

## 7. Dissemination and further research

Please give details of dissemination of the outcomes of the workshop/project and any further research planned.

We have already established a new e-journal which will be disseminated through the workshop's page of the Tampere women's writing project: [www.womenswriting.fi/poland](http://www.womenswriting.fi/poland). The editorial board (five people) includes: Urszula Chowaniec (who will take the lead responsibility), Ursula Phillips, Marja Rytönen, Kirsi Kärkijärvi (both from Tampere/ specialists in Russian literature) and Asia Zgadzaj (PhD student, Birkbeck and SSEES). The first issue will be entitled 'Poland Under Feminist Eyes' – we have not decided whether this will continue to be the title, if we include the comparative dimension in future (which is our intention) clearly this will have to be revised. The first issue, due May 2009, will consist of revised versions of the workshop papers. The call for papers to the participants was sent on 10 December, deadline for submissions is 28 February, publication following editing will be in May. The e-journal will be in English. Papers will be between 6000 and 8000 words. It will be available free via this webpage. A blog was also set up prior to the workshop; this remains in place giving the opportunity for comments and discussion.

We are also considering follow-up events where the participants can meet again, and also reach a wider audience. Ewa Kraskowska (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań) expressed a serious interest in holding a similar one-day workshop in Poland. Ursula Phillips will meet with her and her colleagues in Poznań on 22 December to discuss this.

Ursula Phillips is considering holding another one-day event at UCL SSEES, perhaps in 2010 (the centenary of the death of Eliza Orzeszkowa), although the centenary would be the occasion rather than the reason for the event. The idea would be to have a keynote lecture on Orzeszkowa by a leading expert (such as Grażyna Borkowska, who interestingly roots Orzeszkowa's feminism in the pre-Partition *szlachta* traditions), and then cover a wider context in the other presentations, precisely on this variation of the East-West 'divide': Polish feminism considered as an 'import' and as a particular Polish tradition, thus contributing also to the debate on Polish as a European (universal) culture versus Polish particularism.

Meanwhile the associated research continues. The Tampere project is currently engaged on a second book (following *Masquerade and Femininity*, ed. Chowaniec, Phillips and Rytönen, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007), which will be entitled: *Mapping Experience*, and will again consist of contributions on both Russian and Polish literature, with a larger proportion this time of Polish over Russian material. Several of the workshop participants are contributing (Chowaniec, Phillips, Borkowska, Mrozik, Czeżot, Rytönen and Kärkijärvi), as well as other scholars not at the workshop. It is planned to complete the book by October/November 2009. Individual members of the project as well as other participants in the workshop also continue to publish their own material (articles and books – details can be provided, if required).

## 8. Signature and date

Applicant's signature

Ursula Phillips

Date:

12 December 2008

Institutional authorisation (if required)

Position:

Date:

Institutional CEELBAS Network Primary Contact

Date:

This form must be accompanied by an invoice from the applicant's institution, supported by receipts or other evidence of the expenditure incurred.

Please send the completed form to: CEELBAS Administrator, SSEES, UCL, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT and by email to: [ceelbas-network@ssees.ucl.ac.uk](mailto:ceelbas-network@ssees.ucl.ac.uk).

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**CEELBAS is a consortium of UCL,**  
University of Oxford and University of Birmingham



Arts & Humanities  
Research Council

