

Catholicism, Sexuality and Art in State-Socialist Poland

Catholicism, Sexuality and Art in State-Socialist Poland. The Case of Maria Pinińska-Bereś

dr hab. Agata Jakubowska, nagranie Seminarium Katorep #6

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Analysis of discourses dealing with female sexuality in state-socialist Poland rarely include visual materials (visual culture and artworks). Analysis of female artists' representations of female sexuality rarely perceive them as elements of then developing discussions on this theme. I want to propose a reflection on what researchers from such fields as anthropology, history, art history and visual culture studies, can offer each other in studies on their mutual subject of interest: women in state-socialist Poland.

I will present fragments of my research on one female avant-garde artist - Cracow-based sculptor Maria Pinińska-Bereś (1931-1999). Some of her artworks created in the 1960s and 1970s dealt with Catholic attitudes towards female sexuality. Only in the 1990s she admitted that the sources of these pieces laid in her personal history, which in a way turned them into intimate confessions. These artworks by Pinińska-Bereś, their reception and self-commentary that the artists added to them can be considered – I want to argue in my presentation – as enriching the image not only of intimate practices, but also of their articulation in the iconosphere of post/socialist Poland.

Agata Jakubowska - graduated in art history at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, where she worked until 2021. Currently employed at the Institute of Art History at the University of Warsaw. Author and editor of numerous publications on women's art, e.g. Multiple Portrait of Alina Szapocznikow's Oeuvre (in Polish, 2008); Alina Szapocznikow. Awkward Objects (ed., 2011) and Zofia Kulik: Methodology, My Love (ed. 2019); and the co-editor (with Katy Deepwell) of All-Women Art Spaces in Europe in the Long 1970s (2018).

She has just completed a monograph on Maria Pinińska-Bereś under the title Art and Emancipation of Women in Socialist Poland. The Case of Maria Pinińska-Bereś (in Polish, Warsaw University Press, under review). Currently she is conducting a research on transnational history of all-women exhibitions and runs a research seminar Narrating Art and Feminism: Eastern Europe and Latin America (together with prof. Andrea Giunta, Buenos Aires University, www.cah.wnks.uw.edu.pl) [3])

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Links

[1] <https://etnologia.uw.edu.pl/en/file/catholicism-sexuality-and-art-state-socialist-poland-case-maria-pininska-beres>

[2] <https://youtu.be/kYtetBSVVNc>

[3] <http://www.cah.wnks.uw.edu.pl>