

Abstract for conference *Grounding Cosmopolitanism: Theory and practice through the prism of women's rights*, Bahcesehir University in Istanbul, Turkey, 18.03.2013 - 19.03.2013

Title New media activism: A consciousness-raising tool for the contemporary women's movement?

Speaker Vanda Cernohorska, Department of Sociology, Masaryk University, Czech Republic

My research explores new media activism as a contemporary feminist strategy. While recognizing the work of scholars focusing on the ways in which digital technologies interplay with the dynamics of social movements, I raise the following question: How do new media shape the face of the contemporary women's movement in transnational perspective? In contrast to analyses that focus solely on changes in modes of mobilization and forms of campaign strategies, I do not reduce my attention solely to the organizational effects of digital technologies. In other words, while bearing in mind the practical impact of new technologies when it comes to overcoming geographical, social, and economical borderlines of communication among the activists, I concentrate on the more symbolic or, better said, cultural level. If one calls digital technologies the consciousness-raising tool of 21st century then how does the expansion of feminist activism within cyberspace redefine the relationships between concepts such as global and local, personal and political, continuity and innovation? Researching new media (feminist/gender equality) activism from the perspective of cultural sociology could be, I argue, especially relevant in today's cosmopolitan reality. Moreover, while contrasting this rapidly expanding phenomenon with mainstream media which often describe women's movement as being "dead" or "dated", one can contribute to a discussion about the relationship between information/knowledge and empowerment.