

Forthcoming conference

GIRL, INTERRUPTED
Testimonies, Silences and Self-Censorship
in European Women's Life Writing

2nd edition

Cluj-Napoca, Romania, October 24-25, 2025

The Faculty of Letters, "Babeş-Bolyai" University
"Sextil Puşcariu" Institute, The Romanian Academy, Cluj Branch

Call for Papers

While Life Writing as an umbrella genre has been increasingly popular in both Eastern and Western Europe, it took longer for women's personal narratives, including memoirs, diaries or correspondence, to get the same attention. The conference aims to stir the interest of specialists in Life Writing, Literature, Memory and Trauma Studies, Gender and Youth Studies in Eastern and Western Europe in order to fill in the gap, and focus on what is becoming a literary boom phenomenon, as in the last decade female life writing accounts have become increasingly present or even dominating on the life writing book market, as a natural and long-expected compensation of historically silenced voices. Moreover, in the case of female authors, this recovery is even more significant in terms of testimonies and legacies because we are dealing with a category that, both as political prisoners and as a "secondary people" or "secondary nation" (Morar-Vulcu 2007) and gender, were silenced and it took longer than in the case of male authors to make their voice (and sometimes trauma testimony) heard.

The second edition of our forthcoming conference focuses on the specific aspects of youth and childhood as idealised in contrast to the experience of adulthood under the totalitarian regimes in Europe or, in other cases, interrupted or affected by historical traumas such as Communism or the Holocaust. We are interested in women's life writing accounts, and, similarly to the previous edition on what can be verbalised vs. what is being silenced, censored or self-censored in these narratives related to youth experience.

We welcome proposals on the following approaches, but not limited to:

- **Comparative and Interdisciplinary Perspectives and Challenges on European Women's Life-Writing. Testimony, Memory and Post-Memory**
- **“Paradise Lost”. Youth and Childhood in European Women's Life Writing**
- **“The Mirror Crack'd from Side to Side”. Trauma and Re(dis)covery**
- **“A Room of Her Own”. Privacy and Surveillance as reflected in Life-Writing**
- **Girls Unchained, Survival Stories. Memoirs of Political Interrogations and Imprisonment.**
- **Girls Uninterrupted. How Post-Communist Women's Life Writing Became Post-Communist Book Market Stars**
- **Long-Lasting Legacies. Unsilencing Endurance. Healing the Inner Child**

These are suggested topics, but we encourage innovative approaches and contributions on other related themes. We look forward to your responses and hope to create an interesting academic meeting and interesting debates on the complexity and significance of the issue of European women's Life-Writing on youth and childhood testimonies, their silences and persistent self-censorship.

- **Abstract submission deadline: April 30, 2025**
- **Notification of acceptance: May 20, 2025**
- **Onsite conference, Cluj-Napoca, Romania 24-25, October, 2025**

Please submit your 300-400 words abstract, your university affiliation and a short bio note to dr. Andrada Fătu-Tutoveanu (andrada.pintilescu@ubbcluj.ro). We look forward to receiving your interesting contributions and welcome you to Cluj. Once accepted, we will be happy to assist you with the practicalities and travel information. The conference will include a welcome cocktail, a city tour and a one day optional trip to discover Transylvania.