

In 1971, the American Catholic sex educators Dr. Jack Willke and his wife Barbara published a book entitled *Handbook on abortion*. The *Handbook* was amongst the first pro-life publications to contain images of preterm-born children paired with graphic photographs of aborted fetuses. It also pioneered in appealing to science, rather than religion, to construct an anti-abortion argument. In 1972, the Willkes elaborated a brochure entitled *Life or death*, composed almost exclusively of the *Handbook's* images. This change of format facilitated their circulation, the aim of which was to win support for the "pro-life" case during the moment of unprecedented liberalization of state abortion laws, and, from 1973 onward, on federal level in the US. By the mid-1980s, the *Handbook* had sold over a million copies in the US and had been translated to several languages, and the visual resources it contained circulated transnationally not only within pro-life materials but also in the print media.

In 1975, *Handbook on abortion* was first published in Spain, but an emblematic image included in both the book and the brochure, known as *Tiny Feet* because of its alleged representation of human feet at 10 weeks' gestation had been published in *Tribuna Médica*, a Spanish magazine for physicians in 1974, to illustrate an anti-abortion dossier. While the *Handbook* was not published in Polish until 1990, the same fetal feet image was used to illustrate a debate on abortion and women's right in a Polish youth magazine *ITD* in 1973; the Polish Catholic Intelligentsia Club in Warsaw owned *Life and Death* brochure at least since 1975. In Ireland, images from the *Handbook* were widely utilized by pro-life activists in propaganda and posters from the early 1980s during campaigns around the referendum on the eighth amendment. In addition, the Willkes visited Ireland on several occasions in the early 1980s to give lectures on abortion while their organization Right to Life hosted six Irish pro-life students on an internship in the summer of 1983. The trajectories of the *Handbook* and its authors in these three countries situated at the periphery of continental and political ("Western") Europe suggest that the nascent "pro-life" rhetoric based on science and fetal images circulated at and from the margins of Europe, where it was received, transformed, collaged and re-circulated to shape the politics, as well as public perception and representation of abortion and the unborn in their local and transnational contexts.

This project examines the intersecting histories of pro-life activism in three European countries: Spain, Ireland and Poland since the 1970s (the beginning of anti-abortion movement in the three case countries) till the 1990s. We explore the histories of pro-life organizations, their repertoires of collective action and cultures of contention. We study trajectories of activists, as well as their motivations and meanings attached to their grassroots and political activity. We are also interested in broader pro-life discourses and practices, and especially ways these discourses and practices operated in the realms of science and politics.

The project draws on the framework on comparative and transfer history to single out three country cases with shared predominance of the Catholic religion amongst its citizens, strong, albeit changing (and in different directions) social and political position of the Catholic Church and the ongoing social controversy and legal changes with regards to abortion during the time frame this project explores. Looking at the local pro-life cultures situated at the margins of Europe, and paying attention to their local interconnections and transnational links, will illuminate the global pro-life histories, for which North America has been considered the metropole, from new and unexpected angles. Such interconnected local approach will allow us to test and challenge the cultural hegemony of American pro-life activism while also illuminating the nuances of these three local contexts politically and geographically located at the margins of Europe, understood as consolidating EU.

We will pursue our research goals through archival research in Spain, Ireland, and Poland. We will also create oral history interviews with pro-life activists. We will analyze print and visual media (including the press, books, brochures, photographs and films), both general and produced specifically by the pro-life movements, as well as parliamentary records and bibliographical narratives.

The significance of this research lays in the fact that it will historically ground present-day controversies linked to reproductive rights in Spain, Ireland, and Poland, contributing to local and global histories of medicine and health, social and cultural history, sociology of social movements (including the conservative movements). We expect to publish a special issue, an edited collection, and comparative articles in leading academic journals in disciplines such as history, history of medicine and women's and gender studies. We will also present preliminary results during leading international conferences and popularize our research amongst the general public through interviews, popular articles, and blog posts.