QUEERING PARADIGMS 8

FUCKING SOLIDARITY:

PROGRAM
QUEERING CONCEPTS ON/FROM A POST-SOVIET PERSPECTIVE
Why and how we fuck (with) solidarity? And what’s so queer–feminist about it?

What is queer solidarity? What kind of solidarity is needed and is useful to our friends and comrades within the post–Soviet and/or post–colonial context? And how does what we, the white privileged western academics and activists as well as the migrants and refugees coming from post–Soviet and other spheres do now and did in the past, to meet these needs?

*Fucking Solidarity* wants to get some answers to these open questions, without assuming or attempting to find any final or undisputable answers.

We acknowledge and reflect on the critique of women of color, who have long uncovered the feminist proclamation of international sisterhood and solidarity, as a lie. bell hooks, Audre Lorde, Mikki Kendall, the Combahee River Collective have worked extensively on the tricky question of solidarity and white supremacy. Many women of the global South such as Chandra Talpade Mohanty (2003) or Breny Mendoza (2002) have written about the coloniality of global solidarity. Queer solidarity is equally guilty of white colonial hegemony, as the activist and performance group Dark Matter analyzed in their blog article »White Supremacy in (Queer) Palestine Solidarity Work.«

*Fucking Solidarity* wants to open a dialogue that faces the hegemonies of trans–national solidarity, while holding on to its promises. This endeavor is consciously hopeful as it is (self–) critical. We believe in solidarity as basis for support in the fight against oppression. We acknowledge the erotics of solidarity, the kick the act of solidarity can produce. Solidarity can be sexy. We want to fuck with solidarity, maybe fuck in solidarity, or simply fuck solidarity. However, we also acknowledge that much solidarity within the political left has established a colonial power dynamic — also full of erotic, sexual desires and power — where white North/ Western privilege headed out to ‘save’ women (Abu–Lughod 2013) and queers in the global South and East.

Solidarity must never be the cover for colonial oppression, white superiority or (sexual) exploitation. Solidarity cannot end where white privilege stops benefitting from offering solidarity. To end the colonial white power dynamics, the colonizer must
disappear, as the French philosopher of Tunisian–Jewish origin, Albert Memmi pointed out already in 1974. To put it differently, if our solidarity would really work, white North/Western privilege would end and North/Western solidarity towards the global South and East would no longer be needed. Many of us, then, would have to look for a different job (no development agencies needed, no international NGOs needed, no academic research of homophobia in the global East/South needed anymore, . . . ) or a different passion.

_Fucking Solidarity_, in looking especially, but not exclusively to the post–Soviet space, walks a difficult line; by choosing English and Russian as conference languages, we try to fight North/Western hegemony and yet understand one another. At the same time we are aware that Russian is a hegemonic and colonial language itself within the post–Soviet space, deeply interconnected with a (often denied) history and presence of violence, oppression, racism and cultural appropriation. We stand by our choice of languages unapologetically, but we also acknowledge our participation in the imperial structures of silencing other languages for the time of our conference.

Our language politics as well as our own heritage within or friendship with people from Russian–speaking communities throughout the post–Soviet spaces and the diaspora is additionally reflected within our program. The program reflects many privileges—from the privilege of being connected (to people in Vienna or the West in general), to that of economic means (Vienna is very expensive), academic knowledge (knowing how hard it is to learn the academic language of queer theory) or subcultural (activist) capital...

We surely did not reach many of Queer Trans* Inter* Black and People of Color from different contexts that should be part of this discussion. Also, some of our invited speakers were kept from attending due to national border regulations (fuck the fascist border regimes!) or financial issues.

We know that many of those limits we reached or created by our (white) ignorance and our conversation within the collective continues. But we are very happy that so many answered our call and managed to come. We are extremely exited about the many issues and topics the contributors present on.
Side notes of a post–Soviet migrant

Dear white North/Western academics, artists, and activists. We, the migrants among the organizers, feel like we have to address you separately and share a very important message for you: Fucking Solidarity is not a space that was created for you, so you can feel all cozy and safe and curious about us and our contexts. We will challenge you here and there, as you challenge us, every day, throughout our migrant every day realities. We might flip the script here and there or refuse to answer certain questions. Please respect this. This does not mean, however, that you are not welcome here, quite the opposite.

Please be aware of your privileges and your standpoint. Please think twice before taking space, asking questions, commenting, especially if it concerns other people’s experiences from a post–Soviet/ post–colonial context you are little familiar with. Or especially if you think that you are an expert on this context and know better.

We are not your research objects/subjects, not your field study, not your inspiration for greater activism or work. We don’t need to be saved, Enlighted or educated. We are also not the ones to educate you about »the real situation in XY« or to »provide more information and the context on XXX«. We are also not the screen upon which you can project your longings for an international fight against homophobia and for a joint queer iudentity/subjectivity. Tthere is also no collective migrant »we«, but many people and many stories. Please be respectful and keep this in mind.

Some final remarks

We highly appreciate the generosity with which some of the more privileged among shared their knowledge and privileges by translating papers, creating our wonderful poster and booklets, by giving money or by offering their labor in some other form. Without you, all this would have been impossible. There is not enough space in this introductory comment to list all the people, who make this grass–roots conference possible, but they are all remembered and highly appreciated.
The Fucking Solidarity Collective welcomes you to Vienna and wishes us all an exiting, challenging, thought-provoking and wonderful glittery time!

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Practicing queer-feminist anti-racist solidarity at our conference means ....

... »be careful with each other, so we can be dangerous together«: if you see or hear or encounter any disrespectful and discriminatory behaviour or any other form of foul play, please interfere and say something! Don’t look away, don’t ignore things that don’t feel right, ask for support and talk to others. You can always approach people of our conference team!

... that we respect pronouns and the way people express themselves. Please don’t assume anything and ask politely and thoughtfully if you are not sure how to address someone or pronounce someone’s name.

... that we try to make the space as accessible as possible. Barriers can arise from many things – complicated elitist language of your academic discipline, speaking too fast (especially as a native speaker) or, simply, your backpack blocking the hallway, so people using wheelchairs have a hard time getting around. Please be thoughtful of these little things. With the help of the many of you, we have prepared translations of the materials everybody presents, so you can read the summaries of the presentations and follow the conversation more easily.

Please support others with whisper translation and please don’t hesitate to ask others for translation!

... that we all respect the environment. So we bought only one plastic mineral water bottle per participant, which can and should be refilled. Viennese tap water is the best in the world. You can refill your bottle anywhere in the university building.

... that we recycle paper, metal, glass and plastic. You will find the different trashcans in the university buildings and if you don’t see them, you can always ask our conference team. We also tried to produce as little paper as possible. So if you bring your laptop or tablet to the conference, we will provide you with WIFI access and you will be able to download the program and all
the conference materials you might need. This helps us to save money and trees!

... that we use porcelain plates and silverware instead of paper and plastic. Of course, this stuff needs to be cleaned afterwards, to be reused again. We would highly appreciate your help with this. You will find water tabs and soap in all the conference rooms.

... our wonderful caterer Migrating Kitchen provides vegan (and a tiny bit vegetarian) food for our participants and guests. Please consider that all our conference participants are as hungry as you are. So please, don't be greedy and make sure that you will take only as much food as you can and will eat and won't throw anything away afterwards. Migrating Kitchen (http://migrating–kitchen.com/) is a project by refugees and migrants. They fight and cook for equal access to all spheres of social and political life for everyone. They are super nice and made a super special food for a very cheap price for us. So please support them and their cause and be nice to them :)

... because we tried to use all the money to provide travel reimbursements for all of those, who have less means than we do, we had to save in other place. So we borrowed a lot of stuff, including the name tags. Please return them before you leave the conference for good!

Finally, if you feel like you want to support the Fucking Solidarity project and help us re–distribute resources among the participants –we will have some donation boxes on the tables. The money will be given to participants, who had unexpected extra–costs with visa fees or who don't have enough money to pay for their metro pass and so forth...

Let's have a wonderful time together!
»REGISTRATION«

Wed 15:00 –16:00

Aula, Spitalgasse 2, Campus Hof 1

»OPENING.
THE FUCKING SOLIDARITY CREW SAYS WELCOME!«

Wed 16:00 –16:45
PANEL DISKUSION

»MIGRATION –ASYLUM –SOLIDARITY«

Wed 16:45 –18:30

Aula, Spitalgasse 2, Campus Hof 1

Moderation: »Queer Base–Welcome and Support for LGBTIQ Refugees«, Austria
Marty Huber

»Urgence Tchétchénie, Support Association for LGBT–Refugees from North Caucasus«, France
Elena Smirnova

»Fleeing Homophobia Research Project«, Belgium
Jan Beddeleem

»Kviro–Fon, Queer Space for Russian–speaking Refugees and Migrants in Berlin«, Germany
Xüsha Urmenic

»Queer Base – Welcome and Support for LGBTIQ Refugees«, Austria
Miky

»DANA Social Group«, Ethiopia/Austria
Negede Gebremeskel
Negotiating the Multiple Imaginaries around Pride in Estonia: (whose) Solidarity, (which) Community, (what) politics?

Raili Uibo, PhD Student, Södertörn University

Pride parade is an almost compulsory cultural institution in the homonational »old Europe«, but it does not have such a self-evident status in Estonia. After a short appearance of Pride marches between 2004 and 2007, it has been replaced with a cultural festival that takes place at the tri-annually rotating Baltic Pride. However, at the end of 2016 a group of loosely affiliated community members started mobilising towards re-organising a street parade after a 10-year break, wishing to claim access to public space and visibility on their own terms. Pride is thus an important nodal point where different political strategies and imaginaries clash and consolidate. Through looking into the history of Pride in Estonia, mapping the different actors and their often discrepant goals, tactics, their careful negotiations of relations within the community, the public as well as with the wider transnational queer community I try provide an incision into the current queer movement in Estonia. Which different cultural and political meanings does Pride evoke among the different actors? Which subjects become interpellated by the various Pride discourses? How do the movements consolidate around their notion of Pride? Which political projects are behind the various attempts of »bringing the community together«, either through mobilising for Pride parade or against it? Whose (queer) solidarity is it supposed to evoke?

Between Activism and Community: Study of LGBT*–Activism in Belarus

Hanna Stseryna, Bachelor of Communications, LGBT*–activist

This work is dedicated to the research of perception of Belarussian LGBT*–
activism by LGBT*-people in Belarus. The main purpose of the work is clarification of how Belarusian LGBT*-activism in represented in the narratives of the LGBT* people from district cities (case of Gomel region) that are not involved in activism. I studied this topic applying two qualitative methods: semi-structured interviews with LGBT*-people and analysis of web pages of Belarussian LGBT*-projects to reconstruct the agenda. The conclusions of the research can be distributed into several categories. Participants of the research don't trust LGBT activism. They define activism as a platform of opportunities of career development, earning money or emigration of activists, but not pure work for the sake of the community. There was also constructed dichotomy of West / not-West, in which the Western states take the dominating position and are told to be more comfortable for LGBT*, whereas Belarus is not. Small amount of Belarussian LGBT* initiatives was connected with a repressive political regime, and considered that activism will have more opportunities when the existing power changes.

I want to discuss, was it a failure or a success? I also want to talk about the push to solidarity in the movement. The concepts of solidarity and queerness seem at times to stand in opposition, solidarity on one hand seems to encompass a hierarchical character which requires different identities to stand aware against each other, which involves a policing of boundaries, basically who is there to help whom.

Feminist issues seem at times to have entered the political discourse, do we want this? Is it good to move away from the margins, at all? In a search for ways to be ok, on this, Spinoza proposes to pay attention to what the body can do, (bodies can also be things) to live according to the modification or variation produced in a body by an interaction with another body which increases or diminishes the body's power of activity. thus my proposal, is then to try to focus on the joyful affirmation of our own desire by walking away from things that makes us sad like facebook comments and forced protestation.

»8M strike: Allowing yourself to leave«

Rafa Wahl Herrera

I want to talk about the »international women*« momentum of 2017. Particularly on the call to strike in Poland and more particularly on the Latinamerican context.
Masking as a travel show but from an LGBT perspective, Gaycation by VICELAND is a popular TV show made for »exploring LGBTQ cultures around the world«, as it is said in its official logline. Gaycation may seem like an easy target to pick on. The show, created for amusement of Western audiences, has been rightly criticised numerous times for its neocolonial, simplistic and otherwise problematic view of LGBTQ+ lives of people around the globe. Still, we wanted to examine closely the politics of representation of this show in one particular instance, when Gaycation came to Ukraine. What lies behind the benevolent gesture of exploring and showing to the world the lives of the LGBTQ+ people in a war–torn Eastern European country? A number of unfortunate cliches and stereotypes that reinforce both global division of power and hierarchies inside Ukrainian LGBTQ+ community. To critically engage with the show we have decided to turn to the genre of so called »honest trailers«—parody trailers that by satirizing the show highlight its shortcomings. In the process we have collaborated with queers whose voices were excluded, underrepresented or misrepresented in the show. During our presentation we will screen an »honest trailer« of VICELAND Gaycation Ukraine and present a talk where we will discuss the process of creation of this trailer. We would like to share some details about how the idea of this format evolved, what challenges we faced during our work, as well as our reflections and conclusions.

»'Global Standards' and 'Internalized Coloniality': What Russian Feminists Think of 'The West'«

Vanya Solovey

The »Western« gaze on queers and feminists in postsocialist spaces has been shown to beobjectifying, erase difference, and re-produce clichés. While critical discussions of the»Western«-centric discourses on feminism in Eastern Europe have been both important and
necessary, I believe it no less important to de-center the »Western« perspective by examining the »East«/»West« relationship from an »Eastern« point of view: what do Russian feminists think of »Western« ones? Do they think of the »West« as a model of progress or are they critical of the »Western« cultural hegemony? Is the »West« important or interesting for them at all? To try and answer those questions, I draw on my current empirical research of grassroots feministmovements and scenes in several Russian cities. Their participants are people who live on the intersection of several discriminations and are mostly involved in activist projects aiming at consolidating local communities. In my presentation I will examine different Russian feminist perspectives on »the West« and discuss what they might mean for the relationship between »Western« and Russian feminisms and the possibility of a dialogue between them.

»Queer / feminist solidarities against the nationalism and the war: the case of Ukraine«

Olga Plakhotnik, Maria Mayerchyk

Ukrainian events of 2013—2017 (peaceful the EuroMaidan protests, violent the EuroMaidan conflicts, and following Russian military aggression towards Ukraine) pose new challenges to the feminist activism in Ukraine and beyond.

Our paper examines how the issues of identity and positionality, and the corresponding different modes of solidarity, constitute different answers to these challenges.

Firstly, we explore the colonial dimension of the Ukrainian situation. Whilst the significant part of Ukrainian feminist activism consider their positionality in terms of ‘anti-colonial struggle’ against the imperialist power of Russia, our study contests these claims and analyses the applicability of post-colonial, anti-colonial and decolonial theoretical frameworks to the Ukrainian context. We show how the rhetoric of anti-coloniality is used for justification of the ‘nationalist turn’ of the mainstream activist collectives.

Secondly, we analyse three key Western academic publications that are focussed on feminist activism at the Euromaidan. As Ukrainian scholars, we explore theoretical premises of these publications from queer-feminist perspective. Our findings show how the ‘Western view’ was imposed to the feminist initiatives of the Euromaidan, thus contributed to the reinforcement of the Western academic hegemony. In attempting to demonstrate a feminist solidarity through the full and uncritical support of the mainstream feminisms at the Euromaidan, the Western publications strengthens a nationalist temporality in feminist politics, reinforces the power imbalance in activist communities. Hereby, the case illuminates how a solidarity intention could conceal the ‘relations of ruling’ (Smith 1999) in a global feminist market.

The third part of the paper invites thinking together on the question ‘what kinds of queer / feminist solidarities can stop the war in Ukraine?’
From 1962 –1973 Dr Neil McConaghy built an internationally recognised career as the leading Australian practitioner of aversion therapy in the treatment of homosexuality, and in 1970 was a speaker on the panel at the American Psychiatric Association conference in San Francisco when gay liberation activists disrupted proceedings. McConaghy situated himself in the middle ranges of the Kinsey scale and a majority of his intimate encounters were with men. He also considered himself a Marxist and kept close association with Communist Party members. Though never a member himself, he was heavily influenced by the work of Russian physician Pavlov, whose theories and methods became the official doctrine of Soviet psychiatry after 1949. McConaghy developed an interest in using behaviour modification to «help» homosexual men and women after he was inspired by the work of Czechoslovakian psychiatrist, Dr Kurt Freund, a sympathiser with the social plight of sexual minorities who was active in law reform efforts in the early 1960s. This stands in contrast with the popular Western myth that any discussion or research into homosexuality was suppressed in state-socialist regimes. McConaghy's sympathies with Communism and the Pavlovian tradition had a strong influence on his approach to gay rights activists after 1970. Having previously encountered little opposition, the international solidarity in the emerging gay liberation movement prompted Australian activists to organise political opposition to aversion therapy after the disruption in San Francisco. In response, McConaghy organised a conference in 1973 called ‘Liberation Movements and Psychiatry’ in an attempt to open a dialogue with gay and women’s liberation activists.

This curious case offers a unique opportunity to appreciate not only the unexpected reaches of Soviet psychiatric influences in far-flung places like Australia, but also how the political sympathies of individual psychiatrists had unexpected outcomes during a time when homosexuality was listed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual as a mental illness, and in many
contexts was illegal as well. It also shows us that as historians and activists, it is only through solidarity – as distinct from paternalism informed by Cold War logic – that we can successfully improve our historical understandings about the history of LGBT movements in former state-socialist countries and their/our relationships with activists in other regions.

»Post-soviet Union Countries and the Emerging Solidarity of Parents of Queer People in Europe«

Sven Stabroth

One peculiar angle to look at queer solidarity in post-soviet union countries is the search for understanding, acceptance and support inside the family. Projects of parents of LGBT children were initiated by queer activists in Moldova, Russia and Ukraine. Taking up the role model of PFLAG – a concept of the global North/West – parents support groups started their work in Chisinau, Moscow and Kyiv. Initially driven from their children, soviet socialized parents started the journey to understand what it means to have a queer child after their coming out. By reuniting families at a micro level (which also implies to think and discuss queerness inside the family), new alliances among parents of LGBT children come up as potential advocacy for equality in their societies at the macro level, a broadening and strengthening of queer solidarity. In Ukraine the process resulted in the one and only legally recognized parents of LGBT children organization in one of the post soviet union countries. The organization is called TERGO. Despite of inspired by the (Western) best practice at the beginning, the Ukraininan model has been recognized by other former soviet union states like Belarus and Kyrgyzstan as own role model, which means that post soviet countries have been reshaping and creating such alliances according to their social realities.

In 2015, the process of exchange of experiences from West and East resulted in the idea to join forces of the parents initiatives in Europe together. A core team of parents of LGBT people and activists was built in 2016, and in February 2017 the European Network of Parents of LGBTQ+ people was formally born as initiative from parents and activists from East and Western Europe as an umbrella organization.

In this presentation, I would like to illustrate the parallel mutual process of forming TERGO and the European Network of Parents of LGBTQ+ people and the upcoming challenges and differences in the parents of LGBT movement. Differences we should take into account when speaking about Queer Solidarity.
Women’s couple alliances are one of the most invisible and underrated relationship forms in modern society unless they include sexual relationship as well. Nevertheless, there are many examples of women’s alliances in human history that were based on mutual economic, emotional and social support. For example, in the end of 19th–beginning of 20th century in the US a relationship between unmarried women that live together, share a household and take care of each other was called »Boston marriage« [1]. Nowadays similar relationships exist as well, but they are mostly invisible and the phenomenon itself is lacking a name. We argue that this cultural gap has to be filled in and that women’s alliances are a form of a human coexistence that has to take its place in the modern society and be represented.

We want to share our experiences as activists and present you our online-project »Live with your girlfriend« [2], that provides the users with information on such topics as women living together, Boston marriages and romantic friendship between women and is also used as a platform for connecting women that are interested in these kinds of relationship. Why is a form of relationship that appeared first in the beginning of the 19th century in the US so important in contemporary Russia? Who are the women that are interested in such a relationship? What are the reasons why women in Russia seek living together with other women? How does Russian society react to this relationship? During our presentation we will answer these questions and many more besides. We will also talk about the obstacles we faced as activists, present the examples of real contemporary Russian »Boston marriages« and our perspective on the role of women’s alliances in a broader feminist context.
In this short presentation I will analyze how the mechanisms revolving around reiterating personal experiences, activism and queer solidarity work in shaping two Romanian theatre plays: După Traian și Decebal. Din filele istoriei gay în România (After Trajan and Decebalus. Pages of Gay History in Romania, 2012) and Gadjo Dildo (2015). Both are constructed on personal experiences of LGBTQI+ persons in Romania, the first focusing on the communist period and the latter on the present. During the presentation, I aim to discuss whether and how the use of memory functions as a solidarity device, through the embodiment of personal stories.

The two plays are groundbreaking and singular even within the local alternative theatre scene. They unfold topics such as the criminalization of homosexuality in Romania and its consequences on a personal and professional level, discrimination of Roma persons (and, at a meta-level, discrimination of Roma queer persons felt both inside and outside the Roma community), and the historical systematic abuse queer persons had to face and continue to face in Romania. Gadjo Dildo’s strength relies also in its testimonial, unfiltered manner in which its three female performers use the telling of life stories. A lot of the lived experience of the Roma lesbian, one of the three characters, focuses on the homophobia present within her Roma community, and on general homophobia; the play addresses an issue which hasn’t been previously tackled by any cultural products in an intersectional manner: the way racism affects persons who identify both as LGBTQI+ and as Roma, and the fact that Roma (queer or heterosexual) persons may and do experience racism from Romanian queers.

After Trajan and Decebalus reflects the growing local need for knowledge regarding Romanian queer history. Certain voices within the community have been recently reacting against that absence of history and of queer narratives from before 1989. Most present-day LGBTQI+ activism has formed after 2007 (year of Romania’s entry in the European Union) either independently
or within ACCEPT, and usually the voices that are more present are those of young white men. Although valuable as an activist gesture, the play perpetuates this situation, and provides a telling case study on the limits and nuances of male solidarity within a context where the voices of queer women continue to be historically erased.

»'Ատատում 
In Flight: Singing Tricksters, Imposters, Masqueraders‘: An Instance of Post–Soviet Solidarity«

Nelli Sargsyan

How to practice horizontal and inclusive scholarship as solidarity? How do I maintain meaningful attunements to my fellow post–soviet anti–capitalists in Armenia, while currently based in the U.S. academy? In this presentation I focus on our most recent project titled Բացա(հա)տում In Flight: Singing Tricksters, Imposters, Masqueraders as a decolonial practice of solidarity when the Collective initiated a conversation with me as a researcher who in the past had always initiated conversations with the Collective. This was our way of practicing solidarity together in the face of decolonial feminist–identified scholars’ cooptation of practices termed decolonial and their failure to acknowledge fellow scholars and artists from the Global South as knowledge producers. Through our project with the QYC I offer a re-phrasing of my initial question: How to co-practice horizontal and inclusive collaborative scholarship as solidarity? This rephrasing allows me to situate this project in the inclusive and anti-hierarchical solidarity I came to learn about and practice with Armenia-based anti-capitalist and anti-racist feminists. By queering the conventions of genre, authorship of knowledge production, and (self-)critique, our collaborative project provides new openings for practicing solidarity, at the same time providing collective self-care. I share our experience of solidarity through a multi-genre performance, incorporating my auto-ethnographic reflections, our (QYC and my) theoretical analysis, images that QYC took, and a song that I will sing, to create the affective attunements that our own experience of solidarity as a decolonizing practice makes possible.

»Travesti Culturalism and Brazilian National Identity«

Dr. Bruno Cesar Barbosa

Several researchers corroborate the argument that the 1950s in the United States was central to the production of a new subject and phenomenon in the relationship between science and the media: the transsexual phenomenon. The creation of the concepts of transsexual and gender identity led to ongoing efforts to construct psychiatric classi-
fications to regulate the right to surgical procedures and hormonal treatments. The entry of these classifications into the ICD and the DSM from the 1980s produced a global spreading of concepts created in the US and European context, a »transglobalization«, regulating access to the body's transformations of sex through the concept of »transsexualism« and »gender identity disorder«. The conventions inscribed in the international manuals of psychopathology are references to doctors, psychologists and Brazilian public managers in the production of diagnoses and public policies. Although these manuals claim to be universal, there are significant differences in the way manual conventions are read and interpreted in different cultural contexts, especially if we think of their relationships with travesti category, which for some researchers and the social movement would retain typical characteristics of Brazilian culture. In this article, I analyse these peculiarities of the notion of travesti – what I call »travesti culturalism« – and its difference of transsexual in the Brazilian context.

»QUEER SOLIDARITY IN/AND THE ACADEMIA«

Fri 9:30 –11:00

Department of English and American Studies, Spitalgasse 2,

Campus Hof 8.3 | UE
»Queer Solidarity Still a Taboo! Problematizing the Monolithic and Essentialist Queering of Queer Studies in Pakistan«

Inayat Ullah, PhD Assistant Professor and In-charge PhD Program Department of Humanities Air University, Islamabad, Pakistan

On February 20, 2017, the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) issued a notice to HUM TV channel to give an explanation for airing an hour long telefilm on a Queer subject. The theme of homosexuality was played in the film by two females in a way that the message of their romantic relationship was not only completely implicit in presentation but was also devoid of any glimpse of adult content. In the notice, PEMRA states that the action is being taken due to a large number of complaints against the television channel for airing this play on homosexuality. In a situation like this, where the minutest of portrayals of any such counter narrative is dealt with in such a manner by such regulatory bodies, where anything running counter to the prevailing ideology is tagged as a taboo, does one still have the option of showing queer solidarity? In 1932, Professor Ahmed Ali launched the Progressive Writers Movement of India with the publication of his collection of short stories titled Angaaray (Embers) to critique the local values, but his book was banned by the government in 1933; later on, a female writer Ismat Chughtai shouldered the responsibility of writing on homosexuality in her short story Lihaaf (The Quilt) in 1942 but she was also summoned and reprimanded by the then Lahore Court; afterwards, Urdu literary legends like Saadat Hassan Manto faced the same fate of seeing his voice pressed and oppressed, and the process continues till the present day.

Ironically, when the Global North has taken a number of remarkable steps ahead in the field of queer solidarity, the consequences of even bringing queer topics to the limelight in the Global South have ironically been shunned as taboos, dealt with great distaste, and the doers tagged as heathens. During all these years, where did we go wrong in the Global South to the extent that Queer studies has been queered to the extent of subalternity? The present study investigates this question and deliberates ways to move forward.

Was I too queer to stay? Friendship and solidarities outside academia

Kaciano Gadelha, Postdoctoral Fellow Graduate Program in Arts Universidade Federal do Ceará, Brazil

This is about a very personal experience. An experience of coming back home, and the support one can find from unthinkable places and persons.
It is about a dream that it didn’t come true, a dream from a black queer student of living in the »North«, with all colonial contradictions, struggles and hopes involved around it. All has begun when I decided to not come back to my country after finishing my PhD in Germany. This decision was for me very personal and affective, having to do a lot with the new connections with friends, projects, relationships and desire; things that I consider that really matter, as for example, the fact of being part in a collective to curate an exhibition. The experience of being part in this collective, bringing local artists from the queer scene that were sharing with us, collaborating with us, this experience of sharing and collaborating moved me and pushed me to think critically of the demands the academic world puts on young scholars in terms of finding an academic position quickly and being productive. During this time I worked in a call center in Berlin and came to know many similar stories like mine. This pushed me a lot to suffer and to think about meritocracy as a form of oppression and silencing my body.

»Academic Solidarity in Queer and Postsocialist Studies: Interrogating the Points of Non-Intersection«

Alexandra Novitskaya, Stony Brook University, SUNY

This paper is a tentative look on the on-going ethnographic project that arose from the author’s awkward positionality of a researcher of post-socialist non-normative sexuality from within the theoretical and disciplinary framework of Women’s, Gender and Sexuality studies (WGSS). In North America, Eastern European, Eurasian, and Slavic (Area) Studies is not ‘queer’ enough, i.e. the scholars of the discipline are only beginning to consider non-heterosexualities as the legitimate subject of their inquiries. At the same time, the ‘queer side’ of Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies rarely looks in the direction of Eurasia and Eastern Europe, producing the effect of ‘non-belonging’ for the scholars oriented towards this geopolitical locale. Started as an ethnography of the two fields’ main professional gatherings—the annual ASEEES and NWSA conventions in the autumn 2016, this paper presents an account of the thematic intersections, or the lack of thereof, between the two disciplines. It addresses the lacunae, discrepancies and sites of disconnectedness between the two fields, drawing on the existing theories, and on the author’s observations and conversations with the academics active in both.
Today there is lack of diversity of identities in pop-culture. For years we have made do with the fact that all the most interesting adventures were taken by white cis hetero males, able-bodied and able-minded. We have to lead a long–lasted and steadfast struggle for every step in other direction. Those steps are small, and sometimes we even make a step back.

But pop-culture has a »hidden ground« –fan art based on popular series, movies and books. This is considered to be not real art. Sometimes it is condemned and prosecuted by authors of original pieces and copyright owners. Fan art gives almost no hope to become famous outside a small group of other fans. It is absolutely free of charge.

On the one hand, this kind of art originates from our normative pop culture, and partly learns from and even reinforces all ugly sides of culture. But on the other side, due to its marginal position, fan art gives the opportunity to discuss and disclose those ideas and identities, that seem to be innovative for mass media.

I suggest to talk about how and why fan art becomes the source of information about oneself and your one's identities, how it helps to figure out and find oneself.

Our presentation will be done in a form of a sketchy overview of Central Asian art history. There will be a slideshow arranged chronologically with the focus on representation of humans. What will interest us is how local identities have been constructed from 19 century's Russian ethnographical expeditions to contemporary performances and videos made in Kazakhstan. We will demonstrate changes in the ways local identities have been imagined during
last hundred years. This schematic historical overview is supposed to reveal intrinsic connections between ethnography and art in our region. It also will include examples of queer representations that resist normative pressure of national identity building.

»The Southern Butthole Manifesto«

Pêdra Costa

Pêdra Costa (Nova Iguaçu, 1978 Brazil) The Southern Butthole Manifesto Pêdra Costa presents a performative lecture through »The Southern Butthole Manifesto« as part of her work in progress »de_colon_isati on«. de_colon_isation is a live performance to create a space of intimacy and political claim through my body. From the Global South to the North, I use post-porn as a strategy of pleasure, aesthetics and politics. Failure and precariousness are words impregnated in my biography and artwork. Playing the artist asexhibitionist, I show performance art as a place to interact with the presence of the audience and disturb their gaze, through feelings, desire and empathy. The action merges to blur the social categories of public and private. »The butthole’s investigations are theoretical and practical, always. Theory is on the skin and the practice comes from life. The theory only exists if there is the experience. It only transforms itself if it goes through the body. The Southern Butthole is movement. The constraints and rigid systems of the body do not flow in these studies. We do not fight against anything. Our fights were always defeated. We already learned about this in the history of the world. We are Sorceresses and Healers. Our dance and our Ginga* is our fight, our way of Loving, playing, being in connection with our community. We are always collective, never individuals. The artfulness is the basis of our whole life against the colonizer’s project. Artfulness is not learned and taught. Our knowledge would never been recognized if they were not appropriated by white and/or Europeanized knowledge and bodies. Our voices are not audible. Thus, we have all the autonomy and authority to found such studies. Try as we might, we will never be authorized as a field of knowledge by whiteness. We do not need its approval! We move forward criticizing the “colonial fantasies” about our bodies and, specifically, butts. Our fierce criticism comes from our buttholes. Our butthole is our power. So many interdictions, religious and colonial fantasies about our butts. Anthropophagy does not unite us anymore. We already ate them as a condition violently imposed by the colonial civilizing education. Now we vomit them and we shit them. To the South of the world, to the butthole of the body.”
This paper demonstrates work in progress on the pernicious pathologisation and othering of older people within contemporary health and social care discourses. It explores how scaremongering about demographic changes to the balance of populations has led to the construction of growing older as a wholly negative experience for both older people themselves and contemporary societies. To date much work on Queer Ageing, and Queering Successful Ageing, has focused on individual identities and stigma (for example Hughes 2006); the identification of the discrete health and social care needs of LGBTQ older people (for example Fabbre 2017); or historical perspectives on the life course of LGBTQ people (for example Fredriksen-Goldsen & Mura co 2010). However, this paper aims to explore a more fundamental aspect of how ageing is viewed, constructed and objectified within contemporary political and social policy discourses. It explores current scaremongering health and social care discourses from a social justice and inequalities perspective and challenges the marginalisation of our older people into a single homogenised, dependent and costly group. It will also explore the paradoxical nature of public health discourses which require us to plan for our own healthy ageing in order to cost society less in terms of health care, and then view our increased longevity in negative terms. However, using data about projected demographic changes across different European regions (Creighton 2015) and data from research undertaken directly with older people (for example WRVS 2011) I will propose more socially inclusive ways of viewing later life.


»Researching the Can of Worms: Queer Methods, Gut Feelings and Memories of Soviet Childhood«

Daria Davydova, PhD Candidate, York University (Toronto, ON)

TRIGGER WARNING: mention of sexual assault, suicide, and depression!

This presentation discusses the kinds of queer knowledge, queer connections and queer solidarities that researcher’s affect and lived experience can bring to describing and understanding reality. Doing background research for my dissertation, which focuses on Russian sexual politics, queerness, diaspora and national (un)belonging, I experienced an unexpected emotional turmoil that brought up repressed memories of childhood sexual assault and harsh punishment for masturbation, as well as histories of queerness, poverty, HIV-positivity and suicide in my family. All this information, which my body and mind stored, negated and forgot, came flashing in front of me as I devoured literature on the Soviet and post-Soviet contexts of pathologizing sexuality and queer resistances in preparation for my ethnographic research. This turmoil culminated in a complete depressive paralysis during my fieldwork in St. Petersburg; I hid for a month inside of my aunt’s apartment, barely managing to get out and meet some potential respondents, completely unable to interview, record, collect and truly observe. Two years later, this debilitating experience of research failure calls for treating it if not as a direct object of my analysis, then at least as an informant originating from my own gut feelings. My ethnographic project, in part, turned into an autoethnographic affective excavation endeavour.

In this presentation I want to consider my emotional experiences and the resulting »speculative ruminations« (Harper 2005) as central to understanding Soviet sexual history and contemporary queer resistances in Russia. I am a Russian woman born and raised in Lithuania, a queer activist, a migrant academic in North America, a sex worker with a Slavic face, and a depressive with experience of Soviet childhood. I want to ponder how these identities and my emotional experiences situate and destabilize »the self that is written and the self that writes«, as proposed by Morgensen in his text on Temporality, Rituals and the Everyday of Queerness.
relationality within solidarity (2015). As I am writing about queer resistances in Russia and Russian queer diasporas in North America I want to ask: What do I think I know and how I think I know it? How can I bridge my affective knowledge with queer activism in Russia and globally at the moment? Or are these feelings leading me completely astray foreclosing the possibility to describe and understand, as well as possibility for meaningful solidarity?

I would like to emphasize that I am cautious about presenting on potentially triggering topics in public. I do not intend to use detailed descriptions of traumatic events and will give full trigger warnings before my presentation, so that people could take care of themselves as they need.

»Erotic Solidarity: Queer Religious and Political Commentary in the 2016 Orthodox Calendar«

Melissa M. Wilcox

Since 2013 the Orthodox Calendar has produced erotic calendars, and increasingly also short films and merchandise ranging from art prints to mugs and t-shirts, in scenes and settings that evoke varying forms of Orthodox Christianity. Many of the images include actors dressed as priests, who may or may not actually be ordained Orthodox priests. What is important, the Calendar staff argue, is not whether these men actually are priests, but –as with the Pussy Riot debate... [the] discussions generated... in respect of the role of gay men in religious orders, corruption in organized religions, treatment of minorities by society, etc. In 2016, the Orthodox Calendar turned its attention to Russia. Featuring a cover shot in which male bodies in white lingerie pose seductively together, bearing the photo-shopped faces of Vladimir Putin and Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kyrill I, the calendar titled Sancta Paraphilia and its accompanying erotic video were designed as a visual and erotic commentary on the intertwined role of the Russian state and the Russian Orthodox Church in perpetuating the persecution of queer sexualities and genders. Yet this is not a simple secularist critique; many of those participating in the Orthodox Calendar are themselves Orthodox Christians. This paper explores the form, impact, and consumption of erotic queer activism in the Orthodox Calendar and the roles it plays in queer solidarity with Russian queer and transgender people.
Sergei Loban’s film Dust (Pyl’, shot in 2001, released in 2005) features one of the queerest heroes in post-Soviet Russian cinema. Neither child nor adult, ostensibly a man but dressed by the movie’s end as a woman, played by both the overweight, bespectacled Aleksei Podol’skii and bodybuilder Gleb Mikhailov, the character of Lyosha undergoes a postmodern bildungsroman, literally dematerializing in the film’s closing shots. Viewers inevitably ask whether Lyosha’s participation in a shady experiment engineered by the FSB makes him a victim of the state’s nefarious drive to produce obedient citizens with gender-conforming bodies, or a rebellious non-conformist who escapes and deconstructs the system from within. Whether seen as tragedy or comedy, Dust portrays its hero as a radically queer supplement that none of the film’s social regimes successfully incorporates. This paper uses Loban’s film and Lyosha’s queerness to interrogate the notion of queer performativity in post-Soviet Russia. Initially articulated by Western theorists, queer performativity takes the affect of shame as its point of departure and argues that performing queer identity destabilizes power relations of all types and generates contingent forms of subjectivity that resist compulsory heterosexuality. However, Dust’s representation of post-Soviet queerness fucks with this notion by showing how Lyosha encounters and incorporates multiple performative modes, which take him beyond shame to affects unexplored in the Western paradigm of queer performativity.
queer theory is not widely recognized in the social and political domain, it is relatively developed in the field of literary studies. This discrepancy is one of the factors which contribute to the specificity of queer perspective in Polish literary studies. I will argue that one of the reasons for this the relation is political situation in Poland, which - due to weak LGBT movement and the continued dominance of the heterosexual family model - renders queer activism unsuitable for the local context. However, queer perspective’s status is completely different in the field of Polish literary studies, which - having been long dominated by structuralism and formalism - still seem to favor concepts based on the developed and sophisticated theoretical background. Indeed, this theoretical basis of queer studies seems to be particularly valued (although the political potential of queer perspective is also mentioned in the works of Polish scholars) and contrasted with an allegedly less analytical and less complex character of gay and lesbian studies. In the second part of my presentation I will apply the above mentioned hypothesis to the selected works of Polish literary scholars (e.g. the works of Piotr Sobolczyk, Błażej Warkocki, Izabela Filipiak, and Tomasz Kaliściak). The aim of my analysis will be to present the specificity of queer criticism in Polish literary studies from various perspectives. Finally, I will refer to the current political situation in Poland, which - due to the conservatism of the governing party - renders the situation of Polish queer theory and activism even more difficult. This can be observed not only in society at large but also in the academia. I will conclude with some general and provisional observations on the situation and specificity of queer criticism in contemporary literary studies in Poland. I will not, however, dare to make any prognoses for the future - as queer theory is always unpredictable, isn’t it?

»American in Prague – Construction of nonstraight Eastern Masculinity in the early post-soviet Czech Republic Gay Porn Movies«

Jakub Polánka, Tereza Zvolská, Zuzana Pavelková

Significant part of a newly gained freedom in the early 90’s Czech Republic was an erotization of the public space and along with it, a rise of local porn industry. Specifically gay porn established quite quickly and set a certain prototype of a czech bel ami boy, which has been intensely gazed upon by westerners, who are, up until today, travelling to the Czech Republic, expecting the young looking lads hanging around in the streets. A company, called Bel Ami used quite a unique narration techniques, including a story being part of the picture, taking a now unimaginable length of a feature film. In a more relaxed (but nevertheless serious) spirit, this lecture will take the participants back to the 90’s Prague, as portrayed by a movie called An American in Prague. Discussion and group analysing will follow after the screening of selected parts.
»Solidary, but not quite Queer: Post Soviet Contacts between Russian and Western Gender Scholars«

Therese Garstenauer, Department of Economic and Social History, University of Vienna.

In addition to the current state and future perspective, as the call for papers indicates, it is also rewarding to look at the (more recent) history to highlight the conditions for queer studies taking hold in Russian academia. In my contribution I will focus on contacts between Russian and Western scholars in the field of Gender Studies from the early 1990s to the present. I take the perspective of social studies of social sciences and humanities with special emphasis on the international division of labour within the field, and the specific metageographical position of Russia. Gender Studies (under this name and others) emerged very early in post-soviet Russia, with the majority of research being on women (very rarely on men and masculinities), on their social, economic, and legal status, on violence and discrimination against them. Studies on sexualities only gradually became an object of scholarly investigation. Igor Kons books on the culture of sexuality and on same-sex-love in Russia from the late 1990s are considered classics in the history of homosexuality. Some research in lesbian studies (like »scattered stars in the sky forming neither the Milky Way nor even smaller constellations«, as Nadia Narrova has put it) has been published since the 2000s. Queer Studies are a rather new phenomenon in Russia, although Western researchers have been interested in „Queer Russia« for some decades (e.g. Dan Healey, Laurie Essig). Its place in academia is mainly in few progressively oriented organizations such as the European University or the Centre for Independent Research, both located in St. Petersburg. In my contribution I will discuss the preponderant unqueerness of most of the Russian-Western contacts in Gender Studies and try to find some explanations for it. I will also draw on interviews with Russian, US-American, Austrian, British and German scholars conducted by me between 2002 and 2008, to provide accounts of experiences of bewilderment as a result of contacts between Russian and Western gender scholars, the difficulties of organizing transnational joint research,
the difficulties of teaching queer studies in provincial universities and more.

»Are They Boundaries to Solidarity? Queer Migration, Activism, and Coalitional Possibilities in Germany and Ukraine«

Astrid Fellner, Eva Nossem

This paper deals with the relation of borders and queer identities, bodies, sexualities and the politics of (dis-)location in Germany, Ukraine and the U.S. From the porous interior boundaries of the Schengen space, the mass migration crisis challenging the external limits of the European Union, the post-soviet military conflict zones in Ukraine, to the militarization of the U.S.-Mexican border, it seems as if borders were being challenged everywhere at the current moment. With these problems the ideals of democracy and civil society have also come under fire. As borders change and the securitization of territories transforms and increases, so changes the control of the population and the bodies of citizens. In our paper, we would like to address the question of how the securitization of borders and acts of forced migration shape queer identities, bodies, sexualities and politics. Looking at some selected cultural examples which situate the constructions of sexual and queer identities within global processes of globalization, capitalism, and nationalism, we aim to explore how the formation of coalitional politics can shift the politics of dislocation to a politics of relocation. Starting from the intersections of queer and undocumented identities and experiences as manifested in the artwork of Julio Salgado (especially his »I Am Undocuqueer!« series, a collaborative project between Salgado and community activist groups such as the Undocumented Queer Youth Collective and the Queer Undocumented Immigrant Project in the U.S.), we want to look at the activities of the Germany-founded activist group »Queer Refugees for Pride« and »The Contact Group Munich Kiev Queer.« »Solidarity has no boundaries« – this is how the website of the Munich Kiev Queer titles their fight for global solidarity (see http://www.munichkievqueer.org/home/). Looking into the relations between bodies and borders and the different ways in which these groups attempt to develop new (re-)configurations of corpo-realities, we will also show how advocating for a global and embodied citizenship presents new forms of coalitional activism that in attempting to challenge current anti-immigration policies exposes the limits of solidarity. This paper therefore responds to academic gaps and social needs, attempting to broaden existing academic conceptualizations of the relations between queerness and borders, and presenting some tools which are necessary to respond to the urgent problematics arising out of these relations and their increasingly accelerating transformations (e.g. refugees who identify as LGBTIQ+, isn't it?)
Coloniality as the process resulting from colonialism has been thoroughly analyzed in the context of humanities and social sciences since 1980s. Coloniality implies the relationship of structural domination, suppression of agency, political and social hierarchies, hegemony of the subject and heterogeneity of object. The toolbox of postcolonial theory has proved analytical value in the analysis of the economic exchange and division of labour, feminist social movements, appropriation of experiences and codification of knowledge within them, production of cultural discourse about modernity and transnational relations. Albeit not always following the universalist tendency of enlightenment and modernity, sanctioned academic knowledge assumes the superiority of the Western academy, labeling the research from the developing countries as backward and at worst confining the non-Western subject to the role of a native informant. Much of paradigmatic critique of postcolonial theory developed as the result of work of non-western feminists, such as homogenisation of non-Western subject, reproduction, sexual division of labour, family, marriage, household, patriarchy, universal applicability. While postcolonial theory and post-imperial studies have influenced research of post-soviet scholars enriching it with notions of self-colonisation, Janus-faced empire, applying postcolonial theory to the relationship between people(s) in the Soviet Union has its limitations. For instance, the discourse on post-socialist modernity has rarely if ever included the fact that socialism produces the world’s most educated population in the region and secured more egalitarian society at some stages. Such recognition would interfere with the accepted distribution of global power and knowledge which has also been acknowledged and accepted by Russian gender scholars. Instead, East of Europe is (self)represented as the drag on the universal progress. Perpetual imbalance in financial support of education and research made it more likely that decisions about which gender issues are worthy of political organisation are decided by Western standards. I suggest that the potential of postcolonial theory in post-socialist studies and slavistics lies in the gender studies and women’s writing that offers a poignant example of coloniality in the Russian context as well as offers the critique. The power-dynamic within the international academy and solidarity has to be exposed and analyzed in order to overcome the limitations that has been imposed by it in order to produce emancipatory research and practices. In the end, when the shackles of epistemologies are cast aside, there remains an open question about the tools from the outside of the master’s toolbox that can be used to dismantle the triad of oppression.
In this contribution, I would like to present my current project concerned with constructions of femininity and masculinity on the blogs of Polish authors who do not identify (only) with the gender assigned at birth. In this project, I analyse 10 blogs of authors who identify as f/m, 10 blogs of those who identify as m/f, and one blog of a person who identifies as transgender.

The goal of the study is to find out what femininity and masculinity actually is, and what being feminine and masculine means, to the study participants. Cues towards an understanding of these issues are believed to hide in the bloggers’ life narratives, descriptions of everyday experiences, stories about events big and small, not necessarily connected to their transition process. In accordance with participant action research principles, I have contacted all the examined blogs’ authors not only to ask them for permission to use their texts, but also to invite them to be my research partners. The project has two main parts: 1) analysis and interpretation of selected texts in cooperation with their authors, and 2) verification of results in collaboration with people not identifying (only) with their assigned gender (not necessarily the authors). This way, their questions, suggestions, wishes and perspectives are consulted, respected, and represented in the project. The project is thus embedded in an interdisciplinary framework informed by linguistics, digital media and communication studies, and anthropology. In terms of methodology, the project draws from corpus linguistics, critical discourse and narrative analysis and to an extent from critical ethnography. I hope to show that gender identity functions as an interpretive lens for the bloggers’ own attitudes and behaviours; at the same time, it is (perceived as) a mechanism of social control and violence. The hard-earned freedom to be one’s true self often turns out to be a trap, as social expectations and restrictions do not cease to apply. Stories of many bloggers
reflect the following—queer!—realization: »the struggle for the liberation of identities might be followed by a struggle for the liberation from identities« (Borgos 2007: 181)


Transqueerness: is it easy to be on the Verge?«

Egor Burtsev

What is transqueer? This is an identity on the edge. The identity of rejection. The identity not everybody is able to accept. During my presentation I will describe the borderline between the trans and the queer identity and the challenges we face while working with it.

1. Non-binary or binary?
2. Pan, hetero, homo, bi or queer sexuality?
4. Self-representation among equals and among others.
6. Transqueer in Russia. An identity that does not exist? Kilkogendery (sprat-genders) and pizdochpoki (cuntbangs). New Russian slang.
7. At home among strangers. A stranger among one’s own?

My presentation focuses on sociocultural, psychophilosophical and socioconstructivist aspects of transqueer identity seen from a perspective of a transqueer individual. The format of the presentation is a poster presentation. The poster will represent a number of easily accessible and unexpected images that describe the essence of transqueer identity and its critical and frontier meaning.

»Building Communities, Building up Advocacy in postsocialist Countries—the Czech Experience«

Dorian Klimáček, Viktor Heumann

While the whole Czech society was deeply impacted by decades of totalitarian socialism, gay and lesbian rights organisations were able to form fairly quickly and managed to meaningfully influence both the public opinion and policy. Is it merely a coincidence that trans rights groups are lagging behind? Is it the influence of doctors and the medical system? Or perhaps the greater enmity trans people face in Czech society, compared to LGB people? Trans*parent was formed out
of our need for solidarity and sharing. We were missing places, both physical and virtual, where the trans community could come together. And we were missing the community itself. The Czech society is not familiar with a strong (or maybe any) concept of self-advocacy. There is a disconnect between »average people« who are members of marginalized groups and the »experts« who are expected to establish marginalized group’s rights, and to put policy in place. Civil rights activists do not fit into these preconceptions; they are not considered experts nor are they considered »average people« and they are often mistrusted. The question of what trans people need is left to be answered by medical experts in the Czech Republic. Trans people often say that doctors »know better« and express the belief that the medical side of transition is as well handled as it can be (paradoxically while also often expressing the feeling that the system is deeply flawed). People strongly fear change in the medical and legal aspects of transition. Medical discourse in the Czech Republic approaches transition as a predetermined uniform process that doesn’t take individual preferences and needs into account. The individuality of both the person and the body is erased. In this open discussion we would like to share our experiences establishing an activist organization in a sort of societal vacuum and to invite others with similar or disparate experiences to share their ways of engaging, understanding and working with their community.
According to the Bulgarian Ministry of Health, as of May 2016, there are 2,283 registered people infected with HIV, and 72 percent of them are men who have sex with men, as 60 percent of these registered within the last 5 years. While homosexual men are the most affected group by HIV/AIDS, this group has not been included in the priorities of the national program for prevention of HIV/AIDS in Bulgaria. Main objective of this study is to examine how sexual life and sexual behavior is being affected by the emergence of HIV/AIDS, and to what extent this is changing the notions of sexual practices within three generations of MSM and how different measures for HIV prevention are accepted within the community and how relevant they are in Bulgarian context.

Semi-structured and face-to-face in-depth interviews form the core field methods of the project. The data is gathered in the period January 2015–August 2016 from sampling of 60 MSM living in Sofia, divided into three generations, i.e. three groups of 20 participants. The data is analyzed using «critical discourse analysis» with the support of the HYPER research software.

The results from the first study on HIV and MSM in Bulgaria show that:

1. HIV awareness remains extremely low among the studied groups due to the lack of political measures and proper sexual education;
2. The existing HIV campaigns have failed to reach their target due to the imposing of not completely relevant in Bulgaria gay identity and gay community approaches in their work;
3. The idea of «romantic love» is the most common reason for participating in unprotected sex;
4. Chem. sex has been experienced as a belonging to the Western gay scene.

While the risky sexual practices have dramatically increased in generational perspective, the rapidly increasing rate of HIV has not predefined the notions of gay community and gay identity significantly and HIV activism and in-
volvement in HIV prevention among MSM remain very low. Based on these results, urgent political measures and detailed further investigations are needed to prevent a very serious HIV crisis in Bulgaria. I intend to give a lecture in an interactive way, supported by a short video and pictures, and involving the participants in the discussions.

»Sustaining Life and Love Among Queer Ghanaians«

»K.O.« O’Mara

Little attention has been directed at working class and poor members of queer communities, especially in the Global South where attention remains focused on state and social persecution and human rights advocacy as the framework. As a result, LGBTIQ individuals in Africa tend to be portrayed without social class, and their only struggle a legal one for civil rights. This paper examines the economics of everyday life among queer urban Ghanaians who work predominantly in the informal sector and who weave together a ‘human infrastructure’ (Simone, 2004) of collaboration, income generation, and resource sharing. This infrastructure is rooted in queer ‘kin’ networks which LGBTIQ construct. I apply AbdouMaliq Simone’s notion of ‘people as infrastructure’ to establish one way to understand of how doubly marginalized people develop flexible ways of surviving economically which intersect with affectional ties. Although infrastructure commonly describes systems of highways, pipes, drains or wires which enable productivity and position people to deploy their labor, Simone extends the notion to people’s socio-economic activities characterized by flexible, mobile, and provisional intersections, e.g., dynamic combinations of spaces, persons, and practices.

Social exclusion and public hostility pushes individuals to collaborate with peers beyond their clan and ethnicity and imagined kin and blood kin which become a platform providing for and reproducing life in the city, creating income making actions which anchor their livelihoods and their transactions with one another. In part they create flexible alternate kin networks, e.g., sugar mommies, same-gender spouses, junior female brothers, gay sons, which facilitate income generation through self-employment in trade (food, textiles, crafts) and services (illegal currency trade, entertainment). Flexible networks and connections whether susu/loan officers, traders, foreign suppliers, musicians, IT specialists enlarge the platform. In sum, marginalized households, create an economy of collaborative practice which enable its members, informal sector workers, to support themselves, and construct ‘homes’ of affection and social networks which mitigate the precarity of living in urban Ghana.
As a result of the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, labor migration predominantly from the post-Soviet countries of Central Asia, i.e. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, has become an essential element of the Russian economy (Karachurina, 2013). Although all five countries mentioned above are secular states, most of their populations are practicing Muslims. This creates difficulties for the migrants, as Islamophobia is a growing sentiment in Russia. The Orthodox Church yields a strong influence and a Constitutional amendment introducing Orthodox values as »the basis of national and cultural originality of Russia« is under-discussed. This, together with the idea of whiteness as a basis of Russian national identity (Baum. 2006), which has been widely promoted in recent years, may lead to both religious and ethnic intolerance and hate crimes, as well as to the limitation of immigrants' rights and their access to legal protection. As worldwide, Russia has recently experienced vast feminization of migration flows. The presenter looks at the impact that such trends might have had on these female migrant domestic workers in Russia. On the one hand, with the rapid development of the service sector, in the recent years much more job opportunities have become available to these women. At the same time, the ongoing global economic crisis has led to the decline of the Russian real estate sector and the decrease of number of job places that it would traditionally provide to most male Central Asian migrants. Thus, quite often these women become 'breadwinners', which affects the traditional household formation. Furthermore, these women may face discrimination or oppression in their everyday life. In their case, it is not only nationality, ethnicity, religion or the status of migrant, quite often illegal, that should be examined –it is also their gender and sexuality. Based on the concept of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991), the presenter claims that in the case of female Central Asian workers, there is a certain intersection of the status of migrants and foreigners, and language barriers (structural intersectionality), the 'whiteness' of Russian feminist and LGBTQI movements and the patriarchal and quite often homophobic character of Muslim communities (political) and the specificity of the representation of these women in media (quite often, a negative one). The latter aspects may bring more limitations in terms of the female migrants' integration into the host society and require deep analysis.
The organizers of this roundtable come from different geographical, intellectual and political positions, but we all seek to foster a lively discussion of the intersection of race, ethnicity, and sexuality in the post-soviet sphere. Thematically, the roundtable will foreground the racial and ethnic dimensions of sexual politics in their current and historical manifestations. The conference theme is solidarity, and part of our discussion will reflect on the extent queer political activism intersects or builds solidarity with groups that seek racial/ethnic justice. Or, to what extent such activism supports modes of nationalism that reproduce xenophobic national discourses. Each speaker will give comments for approximately 5–7 minutes, providing key questions and provocations for a wider group discussion.

Ruthie Jenrbekova,  
Artist, Creoleax Centr, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

Saltanat Shoshanova,  
Art Historian, Berlin Humboldt University

Katja Kahlina,  
Marie Curie Fellow, University of Helsinki Hadley Renkin,  
Assistant Professor Central European University

Hadley Renkin,  
Assistant Professor, Central European University

Jennifer Suchland,  
Associate Professor, The Ohio State University
Translation and the Subaltern Queer: The Case of Kvir in Russia

Brian James Baer, Kent State University

In his book *Globalization of Sex* (2004), Jon Binnie levels some very pointed criticism at Dennis Altman’s *The Global Gay*, arguing that Altman presents the adoption of the dominant Western model of homosexuality in other parts of the world as a kind of »false consciousness,« casting those non-Western peoples as passive victims of U.S. cultural and economic imperialism. This reflects a broad tendency in postcolonial studies, Binnie asserts, whereby »subalternity tends to get translated into passivity and victimhood« (2004:71). Binnie calls for an approach to global sexuality studies that acknowledges the »allure« of that lifestyle for many queer individuals across the globe while also crediting those individuals with agency and subjectivity in »deploying and re-working symbols and images associated with the global gay to help fight their own struggles for self-determination, rights and resistance to violence and the production of spaces and territories« (2004:68). Although Binnie repeatedly invokes the metaphor of translation, he makes only three brief mentions in the entire book of the fact that the subjects of much of the research in global sexuality studies may not speak English or may not speak English as a first or preferred language. This paper addresses the general neglect of translation in Global Sexuality Studies by examining the role it plays in queer cultures outside the Global North as a way to carve out a site of enunciation within a discursive field dominated by Anglophone terms and concepts. Specifically, the paper will focus on covert and overt translations in the post-Soviet Russian magazine Kvir and on the website gay.ru. More broadly, the paper seeks to bring into dialogue concepts from Queer Theory and Translation Studies as a way to model cross-cultural and cross-linguistic scholarship on queer lives and queer writing, showing translation to be a productive site of negotiation between the local and global, national and foreign, offering subaltern queers a form of agency and creative engagement.
We’ve been drawn to this topic after being involved in the educational process at Russian universities. What we discovered was unspoken censorship. Students are softly pushed to certain “necessary” decisions in an atmosphere of seemingly discreet and gentle control that might look like it’s easy to avoid. Young people are compelled to accept a discourse of normativity; they are always kept an eye on, so that they don’t “splinter” and refuse normative gender frameworks, even if in their personal lives. The presentation titled “This lexicon is wrong!“ Ideological censorship in Russian humanities educational institutions today” was based on our interview with students and staff and notes that one of us had been taking for four spent at a pedagogical university (MSEU) and then at Maxim Gorky Institute of Literature and Creative Writing.

We believe it to be very important to discuss the pressure students experience at universities, which are known to have always been centres of solidarity for students and cradles of many revolutionary movements. We will point out details of current situation based on the two universities’ examples, discuss reasons for the lack of solidarity and possibilities for dialogue among students, and explore why engagement and support reversed to disunity and non-binding small talk without really hearing each other.

In recent years, with queer self-identity deployed in some parts of Russian youth, a confrontation rises among LGBT, as it is claimed that Russian mentality has its own path of development and the community is not mature enough or ready for a queer identity.

There are appeals to give up both the term and the non-binary as an obstacle in the way of struggle for human rights. The term itself is claimed to be wrong because of its ‘neutral status’ for a Russian ear, but in reality, normativity limits are dictated: queer individuals are expected to fit those limits, otherwise they are called ‘schismatics’, ‘destructive and ungrateful’, undermining LGBT-activists struggle. Invitations to think more about ‘collective interests and needs’ take us back to the epoch of collective responsibility and normativity, implying that it’s undesirable to be different together with accusations of ‘lack of class solidarity’.

The problem of solidarity among Russian LGBTQIA+ often appears to be the problem of intersectionality and ignoring queer individuals’ interests. Yet lesbian and gay activism cannot and should not take everyone’s interest into account, but it should recognise the existence of a variety of identities, dissimilarities, alternative viewpoints inside the anti-(hetero)normativity movement.

It is suggested that queer identity is regarded in modern psychology as the next step to liberate an individual
not just in sexuality (private sphere), but also in self-representation (public sphere), as a way to break the binary matrix. We’d like to show that the concept of queer has an enormous potential for society’s growth and development, as it targets the unleashing the unique positive potential there is in every human.

»LESBIAN IDENTITIES, LESBIAN LIVES, LESBIAN COMMUNITIES«

Sa 11:30 – 13:00
Department of English and American Studies, Spitalgasse 2,
Campus Hof 8.3 | UE

»In Search of a Space to Denounce Heterosexism in Queer Solidarity: ‘Lesbian Bisexual Feminists’ in Turkey«

Deniz Gedizlioğlu

Having developed within the post-Soviet context, LGBTI+ movement in Turkey has always been receiving various forms of support from EU-related institutions. However, this solidarity facilitated through NGOs in Turkey contributed to the perpetuation of asymmetric power relations within the LGBTI+ movement in which top-and-bottom form of relationship regulates not only the parties of so-called international solidarity, but also position of vertically organized local NGOs vis-à-vis grassroots LGBTI+ endeavors. Despite having a central role in constructing dynamics of power within the larger LGBTI+ movement in Turkey, this hierarchy still remains neglected by scholars or activists. Yet, activist organizations have recently started to emerge as counterexamples of this phenomenon in Istanbul, Turkey. I take one of these organizations, namely »Lesbian Bisexual Feminists« (Lezbifem in Turkish) as my case study to illustrate its conflicts and negotiations within this hierarchy. Through an ethnographical research, visual materials from demonstrations and activities of the group, I provide a detailed examination of Lezbifem. Through a critical analysis of the implicit concepts maintained by the current course of alliance
towards Turkey such as the proper form of LGBTI+ existence and LGBTI+ struggle as part of human rights, my paper deconstructs this hierarchical relationship affecting Turkish LGBTI+ movement. I argue that this hierarchy is essentially heterosexist since it adopts the male-dominated discourse of democracy and human rights. Consequently, an implicit ideal of a presentable LGBTI+ existence, which means educated, urban, and overwhelmingly gay male, remains intact, and it renders lesbians and trans-genders as dominated actors of the movement. While the authoritarian turn in Turkey makes it increasingly explicit that this liberal ideal is no longer efficient in terms of gaining approval from those who hold the power, it also opens a possibility for dominated actors to form a genuine solidarity among equals. In this context, I cite Lezbifem in Turkey as an example of such an effort to refuse heterosexism through transformation of solidarity. Focusing on this case, my paper also offers a proposal for an international movement of anti-hierarchical solidarity that also spans Post-Soviet spaces among the »losers« of the white cis-gender male dominated LGBTI+ space, namely a trans-lesbian feminist movement in order to denounce heterosexism in Queer Solidarity.

»Identity Politics and Lesbian Existence in Georgia«

Nukri Tabidze

The presentation is based on the studies (including the ones I co-authored: Soft Power of Russia in Georgia: homophobic, hetero-normative and misogynist discourse of elites; Reproductive Attitudes of Lesbian Women in Georgia) and on my experience and observations as a queer activist in Georgia. I want to outline how sexual politics of the state, business interests and civil rights activism present and construct lesbian identities in Georgia. The major questions I will address are: How the growing visibility and involvement of lesbian women and transgender people in the activism against homophobia, transphobia and misogyny has reshaped our struggle? By taking specific examples of queer activism (the demonstration on the 8th of March, 2017 in Georgia, Queer clubbing events in Tbilisi and study on political elite’s homophobic discourse) I would like to outline how these discourses and events sometimes contribute to, but at the same time create spaces for resistance and solidarity against patriarchal and neoliberal policies of the state.

»Dynamics of Patriarchal Body and Beauty Images in the Lesbian Community of Krasnoyarsk, Russia«

Masha Ulianova
»Queering Leisure: Politics of Body and Pleasure in a Brazilian Party Scene«

Gibran Teixeira Braga

This paper aims to present a scene of underground electronic music parties in São Paulo, Brazil. Such a scene is composed mostly of middle-class people, including, beyond the DJs, musicians and party producers, university students, artists, and professionals from the so-called creative economy. The parties gather people to dance and listen to music, use licit and illicit substances and flirt. Those parties are result of a wave of parties that have occupied public spaces in recent years, such as streets, squares and tunnels, raising questions about the use of time and the public space of the city. This scene has been expanding rapidly and occupying also closed spaces alternative to clubs such as porn cinemas, saunas, industrial sheds and deactivated factories. Loci of aesthetic and sensorial experiments, these parties present artistic performances that discuss issues about dissident bodies, gender, sexuality, race and class. With participants of diverse gender and sexual identities, they also raise questions on topics such as machismo and homophobia. One of the questions concerns female participation among artists and DJs, as well as the participation of non-heterosexual, trans and people of color. The growth of parties attracts an ever-widening audience and episodes of harassment of women by heterosexual men are also a focus of concern on the part of the actors in the scene. On the other hand, a drug-fuelled culture of pleasure, bliss and freedom brings closer straight and gay people in an unusual way in rather mainstream environments.

»Impact of the Sodomy Laws in the Caribbean Region«

Leonardo J Raznovich

This presentation is about an ongoing research project in which I am involved (sponsored by the ILANUD and the IBA – the latter TBC hopefully this week). The project’s purpose is to conduct a socio-legal analysis of the impact in the population at large of the sodomy laws still in force in 3 of the 10 remaining countries in the Caribbean region still criminalising homosexuality and to use this assessment as a tool to force these coun-
tries to repeal those laws. It does often escape people’s knowledge that the regulation of human sexuality was exported and imposed on the native inhabitants of the colonies of the British Empire under the argument of protecting the British conqueror/implanted population from the customs of the original inhabitants of the colonies, who had to be ‘Christianised’ under Christian uses and customs, including sexuality. The abolition in the United Kingdom in 1967 of the sodomy law came too late to benefit the colonies because by then most colonies had already become independent nations. The significance and success of this colonial legal transfer make the colonial British Empire mostly responsible for the criminal persecution of the LGBTQI community in most of the countries where this offence still exists today. The research of Enze Han and Joseph O’Mahoney, whose conclusions were published in 2014 in the Cambridge Review of International Affairs, analysed data from 185 countries and concluded that the former British colonies were more prone to include offences that criminalise sexual conduct between two consenting adults of the same sex, than former colonies of any other power or countries in general. Most of Latin America is a vivid example of this conclusion, as it is a part of world where sodomy laws are totally alien even to legal historians. This presentation offers an apposite insight into an ongoing research that has been long overdue, the success of which could have important and relevant socio and legal ramifications.

»The Emergence of Menstrual

Cups in Brazil: a Feminist Analysis of Online Discourses about Menstruation«

Joana Castañon de Carvalho, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro

Despite the fact that it is a central bodily-discursive phenomenon in the intersubjective construction of gender, menstruation is a topic that did not use to get a lot of attention in Brazilian online and offline feminist discussions. Furthermore, research has shown that Brazilian women’s experience of menstruation is shaped by practices of secrecy and shame (Sardenberg, 1994; Fáveri and Venson, 2007), thus endorsing patriarchal discourses of control over women and their bodies. Notwithstanding, although Brazilian society is mostly conservative and Catholic-oriented, there can be noticed a substantial rise in the discussion of menstruation-related themes, given to the growing popularisation of menstrual cups among some Brazilian women. Considering that, I analyse posts and comments from a Brazilian Facebook group about menstrual cups, aiming to discuss the role of discourses related to the use of the cup in the (re)construction of (some) Brazilian women’s experience of menstruating. I work under the premise that the emergence of new discourses concerning the experience of menstruation might contribute to the micro deconstruction of crystallised meanings that permeate women’s relationship with their bodies. Finally, drawing on Saba Mahmood (2005), I make a critique of my own analysis, challenging the liberal idea of freedom that might underlie it and pointing out a few matters to be considered in future research on the same theme.
In this panel we will discuss:

- how gender and sexuality have been impacted by whiteness and colonialism,
- how the worldwide sexed/gendered diversity is distilled into few uniform categories and
- how to decolonize Gender and Queer Studies maintaining resistance to heteropatriarchal oppression.

Gender is a very pervasive and fundamental way we separate and categorize human beings. We seem to need gender categories to make people intelligible. Most societies rely profoundly on a bi–gendered system and laws are developed along a binary heteronormative model. A multitude of local terminologies and classifications exists outside the logic of legal and medical forms of classification but are hardly recognized at all due to processes of colonialism and globalization. Therefore we have a look at the production and application of knowledge within ethnocentric white hegemonic power structures.

To this end, and with particular focus on neo/post/decolonial Africa, we ask how critical theory formation, empirical research and methodologies can do justice to IaoPoC (Indigenous and/or People of Colour) gender categorizations and their cultural complexity without reinforcing structures of white supremacy and to what extent Queer Feminism can develop post/decolonial ethics and solidarity in the face of (complicity with) heteropatriarchal oppression.


Thamar Klein

White gender classifications of the Global North more often than not serve as a default in the juridico–medico scapes of the Global South and erase local experiences and gender categories. I will discuss the power dynamics between global and local classificatory systems regarding South Africans who are defined as »trans«. Looking at the discursive production of particular kinds of gendered people through colonialism, apartheid and globalized medico–scapes, I will discuss the reification of (post)
colonial power through *white* gender classifications of the Global North.

The proposed talk takes up the following questions: Whose experiences and identities are erased and whose are normalized by the globalization of the category trans*? How are individuals constrained in their ability to influence their legal gender instead of being enabled by the adoption of juridico–medical categories from the Global North? And finally, how could biopolitics be decolonized and queered?

The talk builds on one year of research carried out in South Africa as a member of the Law, Organisation, Science and Technology group at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle/Saale (Germany)

»Animism Revisited: An Africanist Perspective on Rhizomatic Queerness«

S.N. Nyeck, Ph.D.

Over the past two decades, Africa has played a key role in shaping an emerging human rights discourse over sexual rights and global queer activism. Scholarship and activism, however, heavily rely on a human rights framework that, although universally recognized, does not sufficiently highlight –when it does not suppress –Africa’s contribution to relational thought and praxis. Thus, while global solidarities bring closer ‘queered’ bodies, they simultaneously rely on Eurocentric thought at the expense of local knowledge. This contribution presents a radical project of imagination of an eco–queer self and society grounded in Animism as African »assemblage« simultaneously exhibiting and expelling fragments of coherence within the universal human rights discourse. Critical departures of the sort seek to ground queer theorizing in Africanist thought and praxis.

Intersectional Assemblages, Dilemmas and Betrayals: Trials and Tribulations of Queer–feminist Post/Decolonial Ethics and Solidarity

Professor Bee Scherer, Ph.D.

Queer–feminist resistance, solidarity and ethics necessarily address sexual and gender identity justice intersectionally in their complex interpellation with the messy wealth of identitarian markers inscribed onto individual bodies by normative discourses. Yet, is there a risk of a »cheap urban radicalism« (Spivak 2007:175) espoused by the privileged Queer (or queer–normative!) Theorist, »who can afford to reject ‘pragmatic' politics in favour of more ‘radical' interventions« (Dhawan 2016: 62)? I will explore queer–feminist post/colonial ethics by reflecting on universalised ‘Human Rights’ discourses, pragmatic and strategic essentialisms. Following Dhawan’s (2016: 58–62) critique of Puar (2007) and Massad (2007) I question the confl ation of any reproductive heteronorm with colonialism, demonstrating how some ‘privileged urban radicals’ in their rightful activist cause appear themselves complicit with forms of state–oppression. I propose a (re)orientation in queer–feminist ethics which is mindful of white privilege yet (pro)active in alliances against social injustice, focussing on concrete embodied suffering as pragmatic lynchpin for solidarity.
LECTURE PERFORMANCE

»Hey, Queers from Turkey, Central Asia is SEXY!«

Wed 18:45 | Aula, Spitalgasse 2, Campus Hof 1

Beren AZİZİ

Identity construction in Turkey based on «seemingly» antipode approaches such as rejection or reclaim the past over being a Western entity has been an influential force in shaping people’s collective memory that resulted in Turkish perception of Central Asians.

During the transition period from Ottoman Empire to nation-state Turkish Republic, both Turkish-Islamists, and, on the other opposing hand, the nationalist military-bureaucrats, in particular the Young Turks, have constructed the new national identity by combating the past. Firstly, between 1908–1950, a new exclusionist nationalist ideology was enjoined to society by demolishing Ottoman-Islamic past memory by the Young Turks.1 Secondly, from 1950 to current AKP-power, the Turkish-Islamists have fictionalized again the national identity by ignoring non-Sunni Islamic past.

Although these two approaches seem antipodes, they have a crucial motivation: Westernization by seeing Turkishness as an upper identity with hostility against Semitic-Asiatic races. Turkish-Islamists accept the Islamic past; however, this acceptance makes sense only with Anti-Arabism. On the other hand, secular Turks accept the pre-Islamic past which includes the Central Asian »Turkish« world; however, this acceptance makes sense only with presupposition about »Turkish« world, namely that they are all »less cool« »Turkish« people rather than equal Uzbek, Tajik, Kazakh, Kirgiz, Turkmen, Azerbajjani people.

Taking all of these conflicting interests into account, it is rather surprising that there have been no strong anti-nationalist movements until today in Turkey, as those two «seemingly» opposing sides have extremely polarized
the world of ideas over laicism and Islam. An example of a polarized laic debate, LGBT+ movement in Turkey, supported by white »beautiful« world, has also been nationalistic in the context of its unawareness to queer solidarity with non-Western queers.

Overall, during my lecture-performance, I want to outline the historical roots of nationalism in the Turkish LGBT+ movement, its obstructive effect on queer solidarity with Post-Soviet spaces, and how we can construct anti-nationalist queer solidarity as a solution by reorganizing our memory towards the new queer sense of »beauty«.

2010 İstanbul Pride


LECTURE PERFORMANCE

»Xcentral futureasia.
Introduction to Queer Magic Studies«

Wed 18:45 | Aula, Spitalgasse 2,
Campus Hof 1

Creolex cultural centr
(Maria Vilkovisky, Ruth Jenrbekova)

For last five years Maria and Ruthie have worked in Creolex centr—an imaginary institution for art and research. In first part of their presentation they will talk about their work and provide a short introduction into the field of queer magic studies. This is a new trans-disciplinary approach to understanding realities that are situated beyond direct observation or scientific registration and considered as nonexistent due to its inaccessibility for positivist cognition and control. In the second part of presentation Maria and Ruthie will share some results of their research in the form of improbable story received from otherworldly dimensions. This is a story of radical social transformations that took place in parallel Earth’s Central Asia (aka Transoxiana) during second half of 21 Century. Presenters will demonstrate excerpts from the Transoxiana Video Guide—a video made of materials transferred from the parallel Earth, which is approximately one hundred years ahead of ours. In the third part there will be a concise summary concerning the possible goals of queer magic studies and it's applications to our everyday reality: what does the concept of emancipation of the imaginary can mean and how one can stay in solidarity with something that does not yet exist.
**LUNCH READING**

»Monologue of a Runaway Chechen«

Thu 14:00 | Department of English and American Studies, Spitalgasse 2, Campus Hof 8.3 | **UE**

Elena Kostyuchenko

Elena Kostyuchenko is a Russian journalist and gay–rights activist. She is an investigative reporter for the newspaper Novaya Gazeta. She was the first journalist to report about Pussy Riot, and about the Zhanaozen massacre in 2011. She covered protests against the construction of a controversial 12-lane highway through the Khimki Forest, and exposed the presence of Russian fighters in the breakaway republics of Donetsk and Luhansk in Eastern Ukraine.« (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia).

»[In April 2017] the newspaper Novaya Gazeta reported that Chechen security forces have been cracking down on gays since the beginning of the year, rounding up more than 100 men, and killing several. The men are held in secret prisons and tortured into giving up the names and contact information of other gays living in the area. On April 13, Novaya Gazeta revealed that it has serious concerns about the safety of the locals who contributed to its bombshell report, as well as the safety of its entire newspaper staff.« (Meduza.io).

During this lunch reading Elena Kostyuchenko will share a statement she recorded from one of the Chechen men who reached out for help offered by the Russian LGBT Network.

**TRIGGER WARNING**
(descriptions of violence/abuse/torture/persecution)

**LECTURE PERFORMANCE**

»Queer Kinship or Queering Kinship: Points of Departure, Speculations on Methodology, and in Search for Artistic Practice and Language«

Thu 16:30 | Department of English and American Studies, Spitalgasse 2, Campus Hof 8.3 | **UE**

»Unwanted Organisation«
Masha Godovannaya, Polina Zaslavskaya, Daria Vorujubivaeva, Konstantin Shavlovskiy

qfaag »uo« began from affinity, from expanding the bonds of kinship–intimacy–domesticity–partnership that are not recognized by the law or by many: those not grounded in blood relationships. Later that evolved into a political stance and an [art] statement. [Pseudo] institutional formalization of that affinity was an attempt to work on different levels. We tried to work with ideas, far-fetched and unscientific, to work on the form: artistic, theoretical and performative. Together. We wanted to work not like many do in many places. We understood the political im
portance of cooperative production of »art« and thought that there could be a different approach to work: as to a collective equal labor. Reflecting on queer kinship is for each of us an attempt to redefine reality, a search for, and a development of, a new language; a field study of sorts. New relationships are predetermined by a new language, the search for which may sometimes end up in failure of those relationships; a failure of the reality of friendship and solidarity from which we began our journey of artistic efforts, theoretical inquiries, existential unrest and collective bodily practices. During the preparation for the Fucking Solidarity conference in Vienna, members of qfaag »uo« faced new challenges. An attempt to reflect on queer kinship and rethink their experience, already complete or still occurring, of collectivity and/or intimate living suddenly proved deeply personal for all parties involved. Nobody was prepared for that. Different temporalities, ideas of collectivity, tried and tested practices of collaboration, conventional professional concepts of division of labor and responsibilities, work hierarchies established outside of the group, as well as strong personality traits of each participant, unraveled a vulnerability of relationships based on affinity and, as became evident later on, shook the fragile foundation of the group by exposing the ugly face of old work mechanisms in new interactions. Performative antagonism entered spontaneously into work correspondence, and not only blurred the boundary between life and art but also demarcated new lines between the group members in regard to gender, power, collectivity and solidarity, relations[hip] and friendship, theory and practice. When we transcend our own social and gender boundaries, move into a new territory and explore it, we inevitably bring in and with ourselves a background that includes traumas of family, relationships, normativity, metamorphoses of sexuality and sociopolitical attitudes of the »old world«. From that fusion of personal and collective experiences erupted a conflict, an alienation discourse. How to break that conflict's logic and overcome it within a community of fluid, unstable identities? The upcoming lecture–performance is an attempt to transcend the conflict, the miscommunication, the sudden disconnection in a group that deliberately eschews (self-) description. This is our challenging and painful experiment in resistance that will need to be born (or die) here and now. A performative ceremony of living through antagonism may become an answer to these questions for all of us. Or it may not

LECTURE PERFORMANCE

»You come and you leave, we come and we leave, we come and you don’t leave, we come and wish we’d never leave, you have left already, or you never came.«
The film is shot in Nagorno Karabagh Republic—in Shushi, Stepanakert, Hadrut, Varazabun, Martakert in November 2015. It is based on the interviews with eleven wom*n. The interviews were given by wom*n who fought, who served as medical nurses, who were taken as hostages, whose husband or child were killed, who were children during the war. Presenting the experiences of their bodies, their feelings, memories wom*n are recording the common place through the notions of »liberation«, »peace«, »war«, »struggle«. By this film we attempted to identify everyday resistance of wom*n to patriarchal repression during imposed military context.

With English subtitles
Duration of the film: 1 hour 53 min.
Realization: the De collective, Armenia
Editing: Lusine Chergeshtyan
Armenia, 2016

FILM SCREENING

»recordless«

Thu 18:30 | Department of English and American Studies, Spitalgasse 2, Campus Hof 8.3 | UE

De collective

FILM SCREENING/ PERFORMANCE

Thu 17:15 | Department of English and American Studies, Spitalgassee 2, Campus Hof 8.3 | UE

Simona Dumitriu

I propose a lecture–performance about how local (romanian) activism started in the 90s (with solidarity groups in the west, Amnesty International, and a few letter exchanges), about the role (and the absence) of women and their her-stories from more mainstream local activism, and about how I live through my contemporary context and roam through western concepts and conferences made, at best, by the ones who chose western academia and became spokespersons for the others back home. And am I, the one back home, there by choice, by conjecture, am I just frustrated, how can I navigate the nationalist undertow in queer contexts, how should I deal with my local memory within queer cosmopolitanism?

PERFORMANCE

»Otilia’s Enigma«

Thu 18:30 | Department of English and American Studies, Spitalgasse 2, Campus Hof 8.3 | UE

De collective

Fri 20:00 | Alois Wagner Saal, C3 Bibliothek / Frauensolidarität Sensengasse 3

Alexandra Tatar
The performance will interrogate the mythical construction of cis-women eastern European bodies and affinities, using the tools of western beauty concepts and behavioral expectations. The cosmetic and pornographic gaze appropriated through the new cultural invasion after the fall of communism (television, women’s magazine, pop culture, and nightclubs) will be critically questioned. Selling/Promoting/Creating the ‘beautiful, but cheap’ brand will be seen in its ‘integrity’ as a heterotopic space in Romanian society, where through beauty–availability formula, access to a westernized lifestyle is granted. Consuming the other only works if that other fits the phantasy of the other (heteronormative, patriarchal), in other words if it knows to play its role. In the performance, I will work with an inventory of beauty debris (tools to construct) from my personal archive, which will then be consumed (although nobody eats anymore!) in an attempt to create a body using the ‘mamaia style’ bible. Mamaia style being a touristic promotion campaign from 2014, promoting the Romanian seaside, through a sexist content, as a place where you ‘get what you want’, even if you have to ‘hunt it down’. of the conflict

WORKSHOP

»After Citizenship«

Su 9:30 | Department of English and American Studies, Spitalgasse 2, Campus Hof 8.3 | SR

Tereza Zvolská, Zuzana Pavelkov

LUNCH DISCUSSION

»(Pathologo)anatomy of solidarity«

Su 14:30 | Department of English and American Studies, Spitalgasse 2, Campus Hof 8.3 | UE

Feminist library FemInfoteka, Petersburg, Russia

Feminist library FemInfoteka is a horizontal queer feminist project. It is 6 years of labour. Collective of 7 persons. More than 400 books and zines. 2 of these zines we made by ourself. Actually even more than only us ourself –around 20 people were involved. And actually there is even no way to count
how many people are involved in the creating the library collection. So FemInfoteka is a nothing else but a result of solidarity, including the one between regions and activists generations. The collection started from a flock of zines in colour paper covers, a present from another Infoteka. Since then the collection was growing, among others, by the books of the Petersburg Center for Gender Issues, Moscow Center of Gender Studies, feminist collectives from Bishkek and infoshops from Leipzig. And it's only if we talk about institutionalized collectives. A bunch of books and zines was donated to FemInfoteka by its readers and even by one bookshop. In Spring 2016 FemInfoteka moved into a small room in the very center of Petersburg and became open for the wide audience. This room is located in the activist space, which is aiming no general political line and is welcoming for the very different activists. So from the March 2016 we organized about 15 events – not only in our room, but also in other cities and countries – presentations of books and zines, film screenings, workshops. And the library got more than 100 visitors. As far as we are occupied by a project in the field of infrastructural activism, solidarity and the mutual aid affects us strongly. We are sure what solidarity in activists groups creates the very base for them, especially in the projects which works on infrastructure. But does any solidarity work well? And how it works? And what are the hidden pitfalls? We guess what these questions can be interesting not only for participants of the other similar infrastructural projects, but to the people from the wide range of activist groups and initiatives who experience the (non)solidarity.

THEATER PIECE

»conciliators«

Su 17:30 | Department of English and American Studies, Spitalgasse 2, Campus Hof 8.3 | UE

Dan Fedoseev, Friedrich Chernyshev, Natal’ya Blok, Marina Usmanova

This play was written under the influence of a prolonged conflict in the Ukrainian trans–community, divided into those, who favor the depataglization of transgenderity and simplification of the passport sex changing procedure, and those, who believe that only a medical diagnosis and clear criteria of transsexuality will give transgender people without financial means the opportunity for future free of charge operations. Each opinion is supported by arguments and personal pain. However, conflicting parties aren’t in the spotlight. At the center of attention are »conciliators« – cisgender people with an expert position (mainly LGBT activists) which trying to »reconcile« the parties, but not even understand themselves the essence of the conflict
EXHIBITION OPENING

»Fucking Solidarity: queering concepts on/from a Post–Soviet perspective«

Thu 20:00 – open end
Drinks & Snacks and Tour through the exhibition

In the depth of the politics of experience*

In the depth of the politics of experience, a creative response to the artworks of the exhibition and conference participants is my attempt at »freediving« in the complex theme of solidarity. I would like to discuss what creativity can do with oppression and how oppression and the intersection of discriminations influences creativity; about the boundaries of solidarity and the possibility of their blurring.

I was born by the sea, in a place where now peace combines with the shadows of the war. I remember the first time I opened my eyes under water: Suddenly Four green walls around me, And the light was shimmering through the surface, It was a different world, and I was a part of it. For as long as my breath could last. These days, I was thinking about creativity as depth – How the surface of life is revealed and what is beneath it. How the experience is brought out and how it blends with you – With your body, your eyes, your mind. We can call it art, or politics, or life, or a hundred of other words. The problem for me is not in the words, or the number of languages, but in who and what is saying, who and what can and wants to hear.

I think that when Anna says ‘Let her speak’, it is a political gesture. It is about the fact that when you are ‘her’, you are in a specific place, and it is not only ‘in the kitchen’. It is about a place in the lives of others. About the way we are taught not to hear important things, if they are spoken by ‘her’. We can call it sexism, internal misogyny, explain with complex terms, but ‘Let her speak’, is of course, not only about this, it is also about something else. It is about people who give you their oxygen when you are suffocating. It is about those who are sitting beside you and waiting, while you are catching breath. It is about those with whom we live, with whom we share feelings, life and words: »I want have as much self-confidence, as she does«. It is about best friend Liza, who will simply say: ‘You are cool and sweet’. Solidarity as a gift of interconnection – does it resonate or not? Resonance – as a quite trembling inside, to listen and to hear.
»Artistic Gender and Sexual Dissent and Constructing Communities«

an introduction by Siajvo Pivnichne

With art contributions from:

Roberta Orlando

»Equality«

Over the past six years I have dedicated my research to the LGBTI rights worldwide. Starting from my artistic interest in artworks, performances and actions for the LGBTI community, I have gained experience as interdisciplinary artist and human rights defender. In particular, I was interested in getting to know the LGBTI realities of European countries in person. In this way, the truth showed continuously, despite laws and protection for LGBTI persons. Through my research I ask: what defines a sexual orientation as legal? Which characteristics define male and female genders? Why are two people holding hands perceived as more dangerous than two people holding weapons? Respecting the existence and safety of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons is an intrinsic part of human rights. However, 71 countries in the world still apply severe penalties against these communities, with it even being punishable by death in some countries. I grew up with the image of a falling wall, and I have continued to be interested in finding new ways for tearing down the walls of our societies. Most of all when people are persecuted or not recognised because of their sexual ori-

entation and gender identity.
— Roberta Orlando develops her artistic research through video, photography, performance and sound. A big part of her works is dedicated to social, cultural, environmental and political issues, human rights and equality in particular. She obtains notable recognition at international level and she collaborates with major multimedia events worldwide. She works with visual and performative arts across Europe and beyond. http://r0inconnu.blogspot.com

Vladimir Opsenica

»The Theater of Capitalist Brutality«

Exhibition of documentary photographs present the activities of the informal activist group »The Theater of Capitalist Brutality« conducted in Belgrade (Serbia) during 2016 and 2017. The group was created by Uros Jovanovic. Author of the photographs is vladimir opsenica. When performing is replaced with a loan, a blank check, art is reduced to its own parody, and ultimately it disappears. It disappears by being transformed into almost the opposite idea. (Jacques Camatte) The idea of the one and only true art, the one of which Brecht dreams, the one that is not paid for and that was created by artists who were not paid for it - at this moment presents a necessity in order to achieve a creative power in the country that we live in, established and created as a result of bloody wars during the 90s Yugoslavia, where the primary accumulation of capital took place. What needs to destroyed today isthe Totality. The demystification of power and manipulations of the system are no longer sufficient. The
threatened in their daily lives requires going beyond demystification. We need to create different lives. If time is money, as Benjamin Franklin said and capitalists accepted it as their maxim, we should make our free time a gift to each other as artists and humans.

This is our Fucking & Queering solidarity!

— Vladimir Opsenica is a member of queer-activist group 3a3or, project team member of Antifascist Union of Serbia (SAFS) and member of non-formal activist group »The Theatre of Capitalist Brutality«. As a graphic designer realized many years of cooperation with NGOs Gayten-LGBT, Center for Queer Studies and the Association RAINBOW, and worked / cooperated with organizations Labris (Lesbian Human Rights), Reconstruction Women’s Fund, the Association of Young Roma Serbia, the Serbian Red Cross, Forum Syd, UNHCR, Cultural center Rex, SKC (Students’ Cultural Center), Free zone Festival, International Festival Days of Organs, BITEF theater, BITEF Festival, Festival Culturescapes Balkans, the departments of gender studies at the University of Vienna and Charles University, European Alternatives...

Hagra

»A Guide to the Cooperation with Allies«

— Hagra is a Russian queer artist. While he started working under this name in 2012, it was only after the first exhibition in 2013 that he has started to consider pursuing the professional career of an artist. His main activities are carried out in the Internet. Although he does not limit his work to any particular topic, and draws everything that catches his eye, the current social and political environment drove Hagra to focus on the issues of sexual orientation and sexuality in general, gender, and social stratification.

Participation in exhibitions:

Feminist Pencil—2, Moscow & Oslo, 2013
kvir_feminist_actziya, Vienna, 2014
Queere Lebensweisen, Hildesheim, 2014
Feminist (art) critics, Minsk, 2014
Zack! Boom! Bang! Feministische queere commix, Hannover, 2015
The Work of Love, The Queer of Labor, Stanford, 2017

Hagra’s works could also be seen on the cover of Queer-sexuality: policies and practices, Minsk, 2014; and in series of posters for the Trans*queer prosvet project, 2016.

Web: www.hagra.ru

Adelinaa

»TRACES«

— Adelinaa is an artist based in paris. She was born in almaty (kazakhstan), and studied in saint-petersburg. Now she works in a collective of french artists in paris –Q scorbut (scorbut.eu) Uroš Jovanović Adelinaa makes illustrations, posters, paintings, graphics, textiles, murals, street art. (adelinaa.eu) she is also a member of the
»feminfoteka« feminist library based in saint-petersburg.

Current expos & projects:
In vitro gallery »le rencontre en sommeil«, 38 bd raspail, paris street art » le rencontre en sommeil«, 32 bd raspail gender blur (collaboration with lena smirno) -

https://genderblurblog.wordpress.com/

Uroš Jovanović
— Uroš Jovanović, anarcho-communist activist. Graduated theater directing at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade. After graduation performances Andromache (Jean Racine) he was banned from working in theaters in Serbia. For five years he worked as a football coach until he returned art with women’s trilogy of plays that were dedicated to Marilyn Monroe, Sonja Savic and Gabriela Mistral. For two years working on the project »The Theater of Capitalist Brutality«, which is not considered art more anarcho-communist activism.

Lena Smirno
— Lena Smirno is a feminist and LGBTQ+ activist. She leaves and doing her PhD in Paris. She wants to see herself as a writer, sometimes as poet. She is interested at feminist writing, street art, naïve paintings, and the multiple forms of contestations and challenges of normativities.

Anna Varnavskaya,
— Anna Varnavskaya, activist, beginner artist from Russia, Novosibirsk.

Siajvo
— Siajvo was born in Ukraine, does art research and is member of the ‘Zboku’ online initiative (https://www.facebook.com/zbokuart) devoted to the search for creative works that intentionally step aside of the norm, and of the context that can form different forms of resistance.