Contents

4 Editor’s Note
Peter Scholten

8 Localizing Islam in Europe: Public Identity Politics and European Islam
Ahmet Yukleyen

15 The Extreme Goes Mainstream? Commercialized Right-Wing Extremism in Germany
Cynthia Miller-Idriss

Gender & Sexual Politics in European Studies

22 Gender and Sexual Politics: A Central Issue in European Studies
Isabelle Engeli and David Paternotte

26 State Feminism in Europe: A Transformation of Gender Relations
Amy Mazur and Dorothy McBride

33 Gendering Executive Attention: The Impact of Women’s Representation
Claire Annesley, Isabelle Engeli and Francesca Gains

41 Women and Gender in the Council for European Studies: Looking Back to the 1980s
Laura L. Frader and Siovahn A. Walker

44 Gender and EU Politics
Alison Woodward

51 Building Europe: The International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) and LGBT Activism in Central and Eastern Europe
Phillip Ayoub and David Paternotte
Contents cont’d

57 Why is Europe Lesbian and Gay Friendly?
   Angelia R. Wilson

64 Dangerous Encounters: Gender and Multiculturalism in Europe and Beyond
   Eléonore Lépinard

70 European Sexual Nationalisms: The Culturalization of Citizenship and the Sexual Politics of Belonging and Exclusion
   Paul Mepschen and Jan Willem Duyvendak

Sponsored Research

77 Two Stagings of Die Meistersinger and the Creation of a Soviet Audience
   Minou Arjomand

80 Provincializing the European Religious Landscape
   John D. Boy

84 Portugal, Early Modern Globalization and the Origins of the Global Drug Trade
   Benjamin Breen

89 Entangled European and Native Borderlands in Sixteenth-Century Florida
   Jonathan DeCoster

93 Carolingian Educational Strategies and Pastoral Care
   Laura Hohman

98 The Play in Ethics in Eugen Fink
   Catherine Homan

103 Crossroads of Musical Modernism: Brussels, 1918–1938
   Catherine Hughes
Contents cont’d

Casiana Ionita

111 Transgression and Transmission: Performance Art in Post-Soviet Moscow
Michelle Maydanchik

116 Theology as an Intellectual Tradition
Matthew Robinson

121 Cultivating Vitality: Examining the Experience of Aging for Italian Women in Midlife
Laura Vares
Following the successful Council for European Studies (CES) conference in Boston, this spring issue highlights some of the new work that is emerging in the field of European Studies. Besides two individual contributions and a number of research reports from CES fellows, the issue also includes a mini-forum from the Council’s youngest research network, the Gender and Sexuality Research Network.

First of all, in a time where somewhat stereotypical images of Islam govern in many parts of the world (including the country where I’m from, the Netherlands), Ahmet Yukleyen draws attention to the more dynamic ways in which Islam is practiced in his contribution, ‘Localizing Islam in Europe: Public Identity Politics and European Islam.’ Yukleyen challenges the argument that Islam is necessarily incompatible with liberal democracy, showing that Islam is evolving in diverse ways in specific settings. This also means, according to Yukleyen, that there is no single trend to one Euro-Islam, but perhaps rather to various European forms of Islam. To support his argument, he shows, among others, that Islamic organizations (such as Millî Görüş and the Young Turks of Europe) have in different countries and settings also developed different interpretations of Islam.

Secondly, Cynthia Miller-Idriss opens up the black box of extreme-right youth culture in Germany, in her contribution, ‘The Extreme Goes Mainstream? Commercialized Right-Wing Extremism in Germany’. Positioning herself in the literatures of youth culture as well as nationalism and identity, she focuses on the commercialization of right-wing consumer articles and clothing. Though many of us would be unaware of the symbolic meaning of some of these pieces when coming across one of them, Miller-Idriss has reconstructed the meaning of thousands of such articles.

This issue’s mini-forum, composed by guest Editors, Isabelle Engeli and David Paternotte, focuses on Gender and Sexuality research. The mini-forum gives us a first glance at the type of research we can expect from the Council’s newest research network, the Gender and Sexuality Research Network. The eight contributions by scholars from both sides of the Atlantic, as well as the introduction by Engeli and Paternotte themselves, provide a state-of-the-art review of sexuality and gender research within the field of European Studies and is an excellent starting point for scholars eager to learn more about this area.
I hope you enjoy reading this new issue of *Perspectives on Europe*, and don’t hesitate to contact the Council with comments or suggestions. In the effort to present engaging and accessible discussions of cutting edge research in European Studies we are always eager to benefit from the wealth of knowledge possessed by readers of *Perspectives on Europe*. And do keep an eye on the Council's website in the coming months – we’re currently working on a web-based forum for discussing books, special journal issues and other academic products in European Studies in a more interactive way...

Peter Scholten
Editor
20th International Conference of Europeanists
Amsterdam, The Netherlands • June 25-27, 2013

Crisis & Contingency: States of (In)stability

The current economic crisis of debt, the euro and unemployment takes place in a framework of highly dynamic creative and destructive processes occurring at various levels: globalization, heightened nationalisms, continued migration, shifting cultures, rising inequality, concerns over security, climate change, sustainable development, etc.

All of these transform definitions of Europe: of its geographical boundaries; of what institutions are needed to structure and resolve issues of policy and democracy; and of how Europe can and might interact with other parts of the world, from North America to revolutionary North Africa to the new powerhouses in Asia and Latin America. The intellectual challenge of grappling with these changes in our world provides the foundations for an exciting meeting, held in one of the founding capitals of a global Europe.

For more information consult our website:
www.councilforeuropeanstudies.org
Mellon-CES
Dissertation Completion Fellowships

The Council for European Studies (CES) invites eligible graduate students to apply for the 2013 Mellon-CES Dissertation Completion Fellowships. Funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, each fellowship includes a $25,000 stipend as well as assistance in securing reimbursements or waivers for up to $3500 in eligible health insurance and candidacy fees.

Winners of the Mellon-CES Dissertation Completion Fellowships are also expected to participate in a number of professional development activities organized by the Council for European Studies for the benefit of its fellows and designed to support early career development.

Eligibility: Mellon-CES Dissertation Completion Fellowships are intended to facilitate the timely completion of the doctoral degree by late-stage graduate students focused on topics in European Studies. To be eligible for the fellowship each applicant

- must be ABD and have no more than one full year of dissertation work remaining at the start of the fellowship year as certified by his or her dissertation advisor;
- must have exhausted the dissertation completion funding normally provided by his or her academic department or university;
- must be working on a topic within or substantially overlapping European Studies;
- must be enrolled in an institution that is a member of the CES Academic Consortium. (A full list of Academic Consortium member institution is provided on our website.)

Deadlines: Application period opens September 3, 2012. Applications are due, along with all supporting materials, on or before February 4, 2013.

For more information consult our website: www.councilforeuropeanstudies.org
This article examines how organized religious life among nearly 5 million Turkish Muslim immigrants contributes to the localization of Islam in Europe, which refers to the reinterpretation of Islamic texts (Quran and Hadith) in accordance with local conditions. Islam has universal religious principles, but Muslims practice them in particular times and places, which makes a level of blending with the local conditions inevitable. More specifically, localization involves a reinterpretation of Islam in accordance with the concerns and needs of Muslims while abiding by the laws of European states.

Adaptation of religious traditions to new environments is not novel; however, the localization of Islam in Europe receives particular attention because popular essentialist beliefs purport an inner incompatibility between Islam and Western, secular and liberal democracy. Some scholars suggest that Islam is the new ‘other’ of ‘the West’, in conflict with freedom, liberty and democracy. Political scientist Samuel Huntington suggests that global politics will be dominated by the ‘clash of civilizations’ and that Islam will replace Communism as the ‘other’ of the Western world. Historian Bernard Lewis supports these projections with historical evidence on an inner incompatibility between Islam and European society.


*Author may be contacted at: yukleyen@olemiss.edu
Perspectives on Europe • Spring 2012 42:1

and Western liberal democracy. He argues that the textual sources and historical development of Islam are inherently inimical to freedom, liberalism and democracy. This inner structure of Islam will not change over time and is not adaptive to Western liberal democracy. These arguments have taken root in public debates on Islam in Europe, especially in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks.

This article challenges the essentialist argument that Islam and liberal democracy are incompatible, and instead puts forth a contextual approach to examining how Muslim minorities practice Islam in Europe. This contextual approach acknowledges that Islam is a social phenomenon that becomes what its adherents make of it in each social context. The approach emphasizes the inner diversity and adaptability of Islam, particularly as it relates to modernity, liberalism and democracy. This does not suggest a total relativism, but instead a negotiation between the universal principles of Islam and the particular circumstances of Muslims.

European Islam: One or Many?

In the twentieth century, Muslim minorities emerged in Europe largely due to decolonization, labor migration, asylum from conflict and the pursuit of higher life standards. One million or more Muslims live in France, England, Germany and the Netherlands, and they are also present in the rest of Europe. Beginning in the 1960s, these countries imported labor from Southern Europe (i.e., Greece, Italy and Spain), Southeast Asia, North Africa and Turkey for reconstruction after the Second World War and to bolster the booming economies. As a result, there are now approximately 15 million Muslims in Western Europe.

These Muslims negotiate the universal and particular aspects of Islam in the European context. However, if this negotiation process is not detailed and empirically supported, the analysis of Islam’s development in Europe can be misleading. For instance, some scholars propose the emergence of a monolithic ‘Euro-Islam’, which is a form of Islam assimilated into the secular European public sphere. This ‘Euro-Islam’ limits itself to the private sphere, is pursued as an individual form of spirituality, and assures peaceful Muslim participation in European cultural pluralism. European political authorities support this model and call for the development of ‘French, German, or Dutch Islam’ in their respective countries.

European political authorities support this model and call for the development of ‘French, German, or Dutch Islam’ in their respective countries.

However, this is a normative projection, functioning as a ‘model for’ Muslims to adopt, rather than a descriptive or analytical ‘model of’ how Islam unfolds in Europe as a social phenomenon. There is limited empirical evidence to support the case for a secularized ‘Euro-Islam’. The normative and optimistic projection of a monolithic Euro-Islam has been defied with the persistence of radical voices, including violent acts committed in the name of Islam, such as the Madrid train bombings (2004), the London subway attacks (2005) and the murder of Dutch filmmaker Theo Van Gogh in the Netherlands (2004).

Who Speaks for Islam in Europe?

Neither the essentialist argument about the incompatibility between Islam and liberal democracy nor the rise of a monolithic and assimilated ‘Euro-Islam’ can account for the diverse religious experience of Muslims in Europe. Islam does not develop in a monolithic form. While the majority of Muslims and Islamic organizations

---

are tolerant, marginal Islamic organizations maintain radical views. Islam is neither inherently antagonistic to European values nor assimilated, as the term ‘Euro-Islam’ suggests, but is practiced in multiple ways, such as political Islamism, Sufism and Salafism. These competing forms of religiosity create an Islamic pluralism in the European public sphere.

These various forms of Islam are represented through Islamic organizations and their specific responses to their European settings. Even if the majority of Muslims and Islamic organizations are peaceful, marginal groups such as Jihadists are pro-violent in the name of Islam. Islamic organizations refer to clusters of associations, foundations, institutes, informal study circles, media outlets and educational institutions through which each interpretation of Islam is produced and disseminated. Even if an Islamic organization has limited support among Muslims, it can persist through the institutions mentioned above, which results in a diversity of Islamic interpretations in Europe.

Islamic organizations do not transplant religious extremism from their countries of origin, nor do they necessarily conform to all European liberal values. Rather, Islamic organizations play an intermediary role, negotiating between the social and religious needs of Muslims and government policies on immigrants and Muslims. The localization of Islam requires external factors such as multicultural policies that provide the ‘opportunity space’ for Islamic organizations and Muslim identity to be recognized within the public sphere. However, as the Dutch and British cases illustrate, multiculturalist policies alone can not guarantee the containment of pro-violence networks and Islamic organizations. Internal factors such as young leadership and religious activism play a role in the localization and politicization of Islamic organizations’ religious discourse.

This article examines how Muslim young leadership and Islamic activism localize their religious interpretations in Western Europe.

The ‘Young Turks’ of Europe

The children and grandchildren of first-generation immigrants from Muslim majority countries constitute the second and third generation Muslims hereafter referred to as the young Muslim generations. These young generations grew up and socialized in their European surrounding. They enjoyed better educational standards than their parents and have had more opportunities for upward mobility. Despite their better quality of life in comparison with their parent’s and grandparent’s experiences in the Netherlands, they lack the benefits that their non-immigrant peers enjoy. Unemployment among Turkish and Moroccan Muslims is two and a half to more than three times higher than the rate for native Dutch citizens with the same level of education. Nonetheless, Turkish Muslims have higher expectations than their parents. The first generation’s goals were to earn money to invest in their country of origin and eventually return home. They considered their move temporary and did not have much contact with Europeans outside of the workplace.

In addition, young generations of Sunni Muslims in the Netherlands have a greater attachment to the Netherlands than Turkey. The younger generations feel less connected to Turkey than the first-generation immigrants. Unlike their parents, they prefer spending their visits to Turkey on the beaches and at historical sites, rather than in the villages of their parents. They are more fluent in Dutch than Turkish. They are also more sensitive to social and institutional discrimination. Because of their high expectations for recognition and upward mobility, the younger generations have greater resentment and less tolerance for social

---


12 Ibid.
By the 1990s, after years of ambivalence about building their homes in Europe, Turkish immigrants realized that they were in Europe for good. Second-generation Muslims become oriented toward Dutch society. This recognition prompted questions about how to develop a religious identity that is compatible with their non-Muslim environment. The emergence of second-generation leaders in Islamic organizations in the Netherlands has changed the questions and concerns of Islamic organizations. New leadership redefines the focus of Muslim organizations in terms of their relationship to the larger society in Europe and not according to political debates in Turkey.

Islamic organizations provide religious and social services according to the needs and concerns of Muslim constituents. Before the 1980s, members of the first generation were founding places of worship and using Islamic organizations to influence politics in their countries of origin. They regarded Islamic organizations as a place for themselves to be secluded from the larger society. However, after the 1990s, with the emergence of the second generation, Muslims began asking for religious services that related to their European experiences, such as: passing on religious and cultural values to younger generations; garnering public recognition for Islam; and raising the socio-economic status of Muslims. They expected their financial support of Islamic organizations to return more directly themselves, rather than to a country they had lost hope of returning to.

The changing demands of the young generations changes the questions they ask to their religious authorities as well. In the 1980s, religious authorities did not permit buying houses with home loans, arguing that it violated Islamic prohibition of rib’a, or financial interest. However, in the 1990s, the plans for permanency increased and the pressure on imams and religious authorities to use home loans increased, which resulted in the reinterpretation of the rib’a prohibition. One of the arguments for the new ruling has been that it is a ‘necessity’, or darurah, to have a house. Most Muslims no longer question obtaining a bank loan as they settle in Europe and make it their new home.

Younger generations also acquired greater influence in the administration of Islamic organizations. Institutional representation of these organizations in the public sphere and vis-à-vis official authorities required skills that second generation immigrants had – language, education and knowledge about official procedures and paperwork. Second-generation Muslim leaders redefined the priorities of Islamic organizations’ priorities and worked to improve their position in Dutch society.

Nevertheless, young generations cannot easily gain leadership positions within Islamic organizations. First of all, age is an important sign of status, and it is challenging when young organizational leaders try to establish authority over whole communities. Moreover, second-generation Turkish Muslims are usually trained in fields like economics, medicine, law or engineering, rather than theology or religious studies. So, even if they are willing, they do not become religious experts as easily. The current leadership of Islamic organizations interprets Islamic sources and develops strategies of religious activism to serve ‘Europeized’ younger generations, on the one hand, and fulfill the official regulations for immigrant and religious institutionalization in the European public sphere, on the other. Islamic organizations also mobilize young followers as volunteers for their social and religious activities. Young followers shape and are shaped by Islamic organizations, and Islamic organizations develop multiple European forms of Islam to adapt to the

---


14 Ibid.
changes in their constituencies.

Islamic Activism for Integration

Islamic organizations engage in religious activism, which they call hizmet. Hizmet refers to serving the larger society, Muslim community and Islam, and it is the ultimate goal and socio-religious obligation for Islamic organizations. Islamic organizations vary in their choice of activities, target groups and strategies. Despite some overlap, each organization specializes in a primary field of activism that consumes most of its financial and human resources. The working principles of these various fields shape their Islamic interpretations and religious authorities in localizing Islam.

Major Turkish Islamic organizations provide religious and social services that promote the social, economic and cultural integration of Muslims. Millî Görüş works in the public sphere to get Islam accepted as equal to Judaism and Christianity. Each organization’s primary field of activism consumes most of its resources, thus creating group distinction and claims of superiority over other organizations. The differentiation among the Islamic organizations leads groups to justify their activities through the prioritization of a particular field of activism. Despite the commonalities, Islamic organizations are in competition with one another through their services and activities.

Hizmet: Serving God, Islam and the Community

Human resources of Islamic organizations largely depend on volunteers. Islamic organizations call all of their religious and social services hizmet. Rallying volunteers is a challenge, and Islamic organizations use concepts with cultural and religious meanings, such as hizmet, to recruit. Public debate exists regarding which type of activity is the best or most needed form of hizmet for Islam today and, specifically, for Muslims living in Europe. Islamic organizations give different answers and each group regards its answer as the best. In this way, it justifies its existence and raises funds through the services it provides to Muslims. This concept forms the basis of self-justification for the internal diversity of Muslims in Europe.

It legitimizes in religious terms the competition among Islamic organizations.

Hizmet also cuts across religious and secular divisions, because serving God, religion and society are all combined in this concept. In my conversation with activists, I asked them how giving math courses to young students could be considered a religious activity. They replied that an activist’s intention becomes the determinant of whether the activity is religious or non-religious. If one works with the intention of serving God and Islam, then teaching math is hizmet and a sacred activity.

Each Islamic organization focuses on a certain field of activism, and the most valuable form of hizmet changes according to current conditions. This is why the religious authority defines which type of hizmet is the most important at any given time and place. Next, I examine the role of Muslim youth and religious activism among the Turkish Islamic organizations in Europe to understand the localization of Islam in Europe. Here, I will provide a case of Islamic activism that promotes integration, defined as a process of becoming an accepted part of society (Penninx 2003).

Millî Görüş: Public Identity Politics and European Islam

Millî Görüş is a political Islamic movement founded in Turkey by Necmettin Erbakan in 1969. Erbakan’s political agenda was to use the democratic system to come to power and change public behavior to be in accordance with Islamic law. In 1996, the Millî Görüş movement came to power, but after two years the military establishment, the defenders of the laic regime in Turkey, pushed the Erbakan-led Welfare Party out of government. The Millî Görüş organization in Europe expedited reformulating its agenda in accordance with the needs of Muslims in Europe after the failure of the political Islamist project in Turkey.

Millî Görüş claims to have 87,000 members in Europe.15 After the 1990s, the expectations from

---

15 Oğuz Üçüncü, the General Secretary of Islamische Gemeinschaft Millî Görüş, European headquarters of Millî Görüş, gave this figure during the annual meeting on May
the followers of Milli Görüş shifted from changing politics in Turkey to responding to the new needs and priorities of Muslims as a settling immigrant community, such as getting their identity recognized in public life. The basis of Muslim identity politics is to be recognized as an equal community to other religions in Europe, such as Christianity and Judaism. They demand to be able to teach Islam in public schools in Germany, where other religions already teach their religions from a confessional point of view. The legal cases over the headscarf ban in France and Germany, the minaret ban in Switzerland and mosque-building controversies are examples of how Muslims want to be recognized as equal members of European society. Although these issues have caused stirs in public debates, they also testify that the priority of Muslims is to be accepted by their societies of residence rather than countries of origin. They demand to be included into the landscape of Europe and become visible.

This involvement in public life brings negotiations over controversial religious interpretations as well. For instance, weak players seek allies to gain political leverage in the public sphere. In the Dutch political arena, Milli Görüş searches for allies to defend the interests of the Muslim minority. These alliances are fraught with unknown risks and unanswerable questions. What are the limits of such alliances? Should they ally themselves with leftists, atheists or Muslim-friendly gay individuals? When young leaders of Milli Görüş posed these questions to Arif Ersoy, a professor from Turkey who has some clout within the Milli Görüş movement, he replied that there is no reason not to. A high religious authority from the North Federation added that if one reads the story of the Prophet Lut, a historical tribe that engaged in homosexual relationships, they were not destroyed because of their homosexuality, but because they forced the prophet’s visitors (angels sent by God) into homosexual relationships. Thus, the religious authority concluded, one can cooperate with homosexuals as long as they do not force anyone into homosexual relationships.

Mufti Ünye of North Milli Görüş told me about the discussion within the Islamische Gemeinschaft Milli Görüs (IGMG) fatwa council on the right of Muslim woman to marry non-Muslim men. In traditional Islamic law, men are allowed to marry non-Muslim women, but Muslim women are not allowed to marry non-Muslim men. According to the Mufti, the reasoning behind this rule has been that in a family where the mother is Muslim and the father is non-Muslim, the Muslim upbringing of children is not assured. However, he defended the right of Muslim women to marry non-Muslims, explaining that men previously had the last say in the upbringing of children, but this is no longer true. The women often have an equal say, if not more control than their husbands, and, in addition, educational institutions have a significant impact on the upbringing of children. Mufti Ünye concluded that under these circumstances it should be religiously permissible for Muslim women to marry non-Muslim men. He added that the debate within the council has not been settled, but that for now it has decided to promote the traditional rule of allowing only Muslim men and not women to marry non-Muslims.

This trend of reformation and increasing independence from Milli Görüş headquarters in Germany resulted in an administration change in Dutch Milli Görüş in 2007. Members of the reformist Dutch Milli Görüş left the organization for Turkey or other organizations in the Netherlands. The new administration is expected to be loyal to the German headquarters in their administrative and religious interpretations. So far, that seems to be the case. However, the experimental process

30, 2004, in Kerpen, Germany.

16 Interview, Amsterdam, February 24, 2004.

17 Interview, Amsterdam, February 24, 2004.
between 1998 and 2007 illustrates two important points. Firstly, Islamic organizations including Milli Görüş are responsive to state policies. German policies on immigrants and Islam have not given much room for the German Milli Görüş to adapt, but Dutch multiculturalism has just provided that. Secondly, although multicultural state policies are necessary for Islam to adapt, they are not sufficient.\textsuperscript{18} The internal struggle among Muslims and Islamic organizations illustrates that the young generation of Islamic leaders is interested in a \textit{modus vivendi} within the European public sphere.

\textbf{Conclusion}

Turkish Islamic organizations provide religious and social services to the Muslim community in Europe in multiple realms of their lives – Milli Görüş operates in the public and political sphere. Each field of activism has its own rules of engagement that socialize its participants. Activists in these various fields consequently learn different social techniques and strategies to serve the needs and concerns of Muslims in Europe, and in the process they reinterpret Islamic sources and make them relevant to Muslim presence in Europe. In the Dutch Milli Görüş, the former leadership had room to form and speak out on behalf of Islam in Europe. The rules of engagement in the public sphere lead the Milli Görüş leaders to form Islamic interpretations in order to subvert stereotypes of Islam as oppressive of women, intolerance and pro-violence.

The comparison among Turkish Islamic organizations suggests that those organizations that are most committed to the changing needs of Muslims – including the public recognition of Islamic institutions, youth education and pluralist Islamic discourse – and interested in accomplishing a non-confrontational relationship with state authorities will rise as the strongest among the religious organizations. The Dutch Milli Görüş had a comparative advantage because its fields of activism provide it with the dynamism to respond to the changing needs of Muslims. Thus, the more these religious organizations engage in local fields of activism, address the needs and concerns of new generations of Turkish Muslims, and bridge the Muslim community with larger European society, the more local their interpretation of Islam becomes. Although it may still be early to talk about a distinct ‘European Islam’, the diverse activism among Turkish Islamic organizations indicates that Islam is incrementally but surely localizing in Europe.

\textsuperscript{18} \textit{Ahmet Yukleyen, Localizing Islam in Europe: Turkish Islamic Communities in Germany and the Netherlands} (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2012).
The Extreme Goes Mainstream? Commercialized Right-Wing Extremism in Germany
Cynthia Miller-Idriss, New York University*

Introduction
The German right-wing extremist youth scene has undergone a radical transformation in the past decade, as youths have gravitated away from the singular, hard-edged skinhead style in favor of sophisticated, fashionable and highly-profitable commercial brands that deploy coded right-wing extremist symbols.1 While the style of each brand varies slightly, what they have in common – compared with the traditional skinhead ‘look’ of a black bomber jacket, camouflage fatigues and high black combat boots – is their similarity to other mainstream youth clothing styles. Absent the coded symbols, in other words, the new right-wing extremist brands are virtually indistinguishable in style from other clothing popular with youths.

Some of the commercial products exploit – and drive – the complex coding evident in the game-playing culture that characterizes the new right-wing scene,

---

1 I am grateful to the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, the German Academic Exchange Service/DAAD and NYU for financial support for the construction of the digital archive and preliminary fieldwork that undergirds this article, and to the staff and archivists at the Antifaschistisches Pressearchive und Bildungszentrum Berlin and EXIT-Germany and the archivists at the U.S. Library of Congress and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum for invaluable assistance and advice.

* Author may be contacted at: cmi1@nyu.edu
such as the Thor Steinar T-shirt with an image of a fox and the words ‘Desert Fox: Afrikakorps’ – codes that refer to the nickname of Erwin Rommel, who commanded German troops in North Africa during World War II. Others are more straightforward, like the T-shirt with the word ‘Aryan’ sold by Ansgar Aryan. The coding phenomena are not unique to German right-wing extremists, of course – prison gangs and other youth subcultural groups in the US and elsewhere, for example, have had a long history of using coded symbols. Nor is the coding an entirely contemporary phenomenon – many of the current codes in play, for example, are modified versions of Nazi symbols used in the Third Reich. And commercial right-wing products have been around for some time, from the Nazi Kitsch of the Third Reich to the patches, buttons, stickers and T-shirts for sale through mail-order flyers and brochures or at right-wing rock concerts in the 1980s and 1990s.

But something new and different is happening. By marrying right-wing ideology and symbols with popular culture and style in what some refer to as ‘high-quality Nazi clothing’, Thor Steinar – and similar commercial entities, such as Erik and Sons and Ansgar Aryan – have effectively transformed right-wing extremist subculture. Buying a bomber jacket, shaving one’s head and donning combat boots are no longer the ‘entry points’ to the right-wing scene.

Thor Steinar is widely recognized as a right-wing extremist brand; it is banned in Parliament, as well as in several stadiums, some schools and at least one university. The Office for the Protection of the Constitution (Verfassungsschutz) in Brandenburg contends that the Thor Steinar brand serves as a “scene-typical badge of recognition and demarcation.”

In a two-phase, long-term research project, I am analyzing German youth’s deployment of right-wing extremist codes, the commercialization of coded symbols, and the impact of public policy strategies meant to combat the phenomena, such as school bans of particular brands, logos and symbols. The following essay describes some of this research and its hypotheses.

Digital Archive

There is very little academic scholarship to date on the transformations in right-wing extremist symbols or their rapid commercialization throughout the past decade. The data analyzed in this paper come from a unique digital archive I created, which includes thousands of contemporary and historical images of Nazi and right-wing extremist propaganda, clothing and commercial products. The digital archive is enabling me to track the emergence of the right-wing extremist commercial scene and its use of symbols over time, and is the first phase in a multi-stage research project. In phase two (starting in late 2012), in-depth, mixed methods fieldwork will take place in two German schools with large populations of right-wing youths. In this essay, I discuss the digital archive only, since fieldwork for phase two has not yet begun.

The images in the digital archive are drawn from four main sources. First, historical images from the 1930s and 1940s are drawn from the special collections of confiscated prints, photographs and Nazi propaganda at the John W. Kluge Center at the US Library of Congress. Second, historical images from the 1930s and 1940s are drawn from the digitized collections housed at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, which include photographs of insignia of various Nazi groups, digitized slides...
from Hitler Youth propaganda films, and images of a wide variety of Nazi symbols on display at various events, such as an image of a Harvest Festival maypole decorated with Nazi symbols. Third, more recent historical images from the 1980s and 1990s, as well as contemporary images from the past decade, are drawn from the collections at the Anti-Fascist Press Archive and Educational Center in Berlin, which has an extensive historical archive and repository of right-wing extremist artifacts, including product catalogs, flyers, stationary, political brochures and other material objects on which logos and symbols are visible. The digital archive also includes screen shots of the websites of several commercial brands that sell right-wing extremist clothing and products, and digital images I captured on the street in Germany, including images, stickers, posters, graffiti, buttons, patches, banners, flags, clothing and other products I observed in locations such as subways, train stations and bus stops, public bathrooms, commercial stores and an anti-fascist rally. Finally, the digital archive includes thousands of contemporary images from the digitized collections of three professional German photographers who track the extreme right-wing throughout Germany, at neo-Nazi rallies and protest marches, as well as in everyday life settings (such as on license plates, at soccer games and on storefronts) and who gave me access to their archives. The digital archive, which enables me to track the explosion, fragmentation and commercialization of symbols among right-wing youth over time, is being coded and analyzed in Atlas.ti, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software program. The following sections describe four categories of codes I am analyzing.

Commercialized Codes and Symbols

The first category of symbols is what I call the historical and fantastical past. Here, youth and commercial entities appropriate symbols from the Third Reich (such as swastikas and modified swastikas), as well as from the mythical or fantastical past (such as Viking gods, runic letters and Celtic symbols). Thor Steinar, the largest and most successful right-wing extremist commercial brand, designs much of its clothing with Nordic references. Its product lines are rife with names such as the ‘Nordvendt’ jacket and the ‘Fjord’ cardigan; its store names (Tønsberg, Tromso, Larvik, Oseberg, Haugesund and, most recently, Brevik) are the names of Scandinavian towns; catalog images show blond, athletic men and women in a variety of settings that evoke or make direct Nordic references – sailboats, bridges, snowy ski slopes, glaciers and boatyards. Another popular brand, Erik and Sons, uses the Nordic spelling of Erik and the tagline ‘Viking Brand’ on its website and product catalogs, and also relies heavily on images of classic sailboats and coastal scenes in its catalogs. Erik and Sons sells T-shirts with the Danish flag and the words ‘Nordland’, along with a range of other Viking, Norse and Germanic mythological references. Historical references not drawn from Germanic and Norse mythology are also central. In addition to the use of modified banned symbols that are directly borrowed from the Nazi era, coded symbolic references to both the Third Reich and the colonial era abound in the commercialized clothing. More recent historical references are important as well; some of the commercialized symbols are coded with east German cultural elements, such as the phrase ‘Sport Frei’, which was a standard opening call to physical education class in East Germany and became appropriated, after unification, by right-wing soccer hooligans who answer the ‘Sport Frei’ that opens soccer matches with the call, ‘Heil Hitler’.

A second category of symbols is the use of alphanumeric codes, which abound on license plates, T-shirts, tattoos, and even giant Styrofoam letters in football stadium stands. The number 18 represents the first and eighth letters of the alphabet, AH, which in turn stand for Adolf Hitler, while 88 is used for HH (Heil Hitler). The number
28 is used for Blood and Honour, an organization which was banned until 2010. The number 14 is used in reference to the number of words in a quote from the late American Neonazi David Lane (“We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children.”) (see Michael 2009). The code 168:1, set up like a soccer score (168 to 1), refers to the number of victims of the Oklahoma City bombing versus the US government’s execution of Timothy McVeigh. ‘Kategorie C’ is a code co-opted from the German police, who track football hooligans and right-wing extremist youths and keep a list of those considered dangerous (‘category C’). Declaring oneself to be ‘Kategorie C’ thus conveys a willingness to be violent and a sense of pride and ownership in that designation. A wide variety of other numeric and alphabetical codes is also in play.

The third category of symbols is what I call the performance of pride. Elsewhere I have argued that German youths resist what they perceive to be a continuing taboo on national pride (Miller-Idriss 2009). The right-wing aggressively markets itself with national pride slogans, aiming to exploit the power that the concept has for disenfranchised youth. One right-wing group advertises a perfume called Walküre, describing it as “the flowery scent for today’s national woman,” and promising female customers that “with this perfume you are guaranteed to be attractive to every patriot.” Commercial products using national pride slogans typically pair the slogans with colors and scripts that evoke historical eras, such as the black-white-red colors of the North German Confederation, German Empire and Third Reich, as well as animals on coats of arms with pride slogans that imitate the imperial eagle of the German empire or the coat of arms eagle of the Third Reich (Kohlstruck 2005, 58–59). The most successful commercial right-wing extremist companies market with national pride in several ways. Some, like Ansgar Aryan, directly reference pride; the entity’s tagline on its website and product catalogs is ‘Patriotic Ink’. Others use the concept of the nation to foster a sense of belonging and identity, drawing on national references from the colonial era as well as more recent historical military references. Thor Steinar uses eagles and military and runic symbols to evoke historical national eras, particularly the Third Reich.

In the fourth category, transnational appropriation, I trace symbols that are borrowed from non-German movements as well as symbols used across national movements by right-wing and pan-Aryan extremists across the globe. Right-wing German youths display T-shirts with the symbols of the Ku Klux Klan, wear Palestinian scarves, wave banners referencing 9/11, and use the code 168:1. Here I also include the appropriation of non-extremist products that have been assigned new meaning, such as New Balance sneakers (because the capital N stands for Nazi) and Lonsdale T-shirts (because when worn with a half-zipped bomber jacket, they display four of the letters – NSDA – of Hitler’s party, NSDAP), as well as symbols and codes that are in languages other than German. The winter 2011–2012 Erik and Sons collection, for example, includes a women’s T-shirt (available in lilac or black background) with large block letters declaring ‘MY FAVORITE COLOR IS WHITE’, as well as a women’s T-shirt stating ‘Erik and Sons/For Viking Girls’, with the two phrases separated by a pair of bright blue wolf eyes.

Theoretical Mechanisms and Explanations

The popularity of coded symbols among right-wing extremist youth – and the recent successful commercialization of those symbols – likely has several explanations. I have been using
two sets of theoretical frameworks to generate working hypotheses, which I will explore in greater detail during interviews, observations and a survey of youths and teachers in two schools with high populations of right-wing youths. Space constraints here do not permit a full analysis of these frameworks, but I offer a brief discussion.

The first set of theoretical frameworks draws on scholarship on nationalism, identity, masculinities and branding. Using these literatures, I hypothesize that coded right-wing symbols are salient to youths because they strengthen a sense of belonging and identity. Symbols of nationhood may be increasingly important to youths who are negotiating an ever more multicultural Germany (Miller-Idriss 2009). Right-wing extremist commercial products’ use of codes drawing on Norse and Germanic mythology may help to foster a sense of connectedness and identity (see Schuppener 2007). Moreover, during stressful economic, political or social periods in a nation’s history, images of males and females may become increasingly idealized and romanticized (Kimmel 2005). For right-wing youths, hypermasculine symbols like the inflated biceps of Viking gods depicted in right-wing tattoos or the broad-shouldered sailors in Thor Steinar catalogs could reflect youth fantasies of a romantic, pure and untroubled past (also see Claus, Lehnert, and Müller 2010; Virchow 2010) and may facilitate a sense of bonding with other young men. Youth consumption of coded right-wing extremist brands might enable them to feel socially integrated and express both individual and group self-identification (Aronoczyk and Powers 2010; Bauman 2007). Symbols may provide a source of meaning in an otherwise overwhelming and disorienting world (Martin 1997), and a sense that youths are part of something larger, stronger and more powerful than themselves (Watts 2001). In this light, the consumption of coded commercial products helps to create a sense of community and belonging among fellow peers.

Another set of explanations rests less on the sense of identity and belonging of youths and more on elements of youth resistance and opposition to mainstream society. Here, I hypothesize that coded, commercialized symbols act as conduits of youth resistance to a perceived pressure to conform to societal expectations about what youth should be (Wallace and Kovacheva 1996). The expression and manipulation of symbolic codes – many of which are abhorred by the general public – thus create agency for youths who feel constrained by the adult world they are entering. The game-playing aspect of subverting bans may provide youths with a sense of power and secrecy. In light of the high economic disenfranchisement that characterizes the overwhelmingly male, working-class youths who comprise the bulk of memberships and affiliations in the German right-wing (see, e.g., Schnabel and Goldschmidt 1997), the display of banned and abhorrent right-wing extremist symbols may thus be a form of protest and youth resistance – of what Scott (1985) called “weapons of the weak.” Coding and the use of cryptic symbols could enable members of a group who feel powerless to exert control through protest, both by selectively disclosing and concealing aspects of their identity (Simi and Futrell 2009) and by manipulating symbols and coding in reaction to both the ‘hard’ repression of official bans and censorship and the ‘soft’ repression of stigma, ridicule or silencing (Linden and Klandermans 2006). Moreover – in a link to the literature on branding above – it might also be the very notion of resistance that appeals to youths; one of the most subtle and complexly-coded extremist brands, Reconquista, has a series of taglines flashing across the top of its commercial website, including the phrase ‘Widerstand ist anziehend’ (resistance is attractive). Reconquista thus uses the notion of resistance to market coded extremist clothing. In this light, resistance itself becomes commodified.

**Conclusion**

The rapid commercialization of right-wing consumer products and clothing, which is
successfully blending mainstream pop culture with right-wing symbols and ideology, is an astonishing development. The lack of scholarly analyses or empirical research on this phenomenon means that there is much that is unknown about the reasons for the popularity of these commercial brands, their connection to extremist ideology and behavior, and the impact of strategies meant to combat them (such as school bans of brands and symbols). Significant further qualitative and quantitative research with consumers and producers of right-wing extremist commercial products clearly is needed. Moreover, such a short essay has necessarily glossed over many of the subtle details of this transformation in right-wing extremist youth subculture that I explore in greater depth in the full study.

The analysis of the digital archive in conjunction with fieldwork with right-wing youth is critical, because it enables me to categorize and decode right-wing symbols and commercial products so that I can design interview schedules and survey instruments around the meaning of particular popular symbols and codes. Without the archive, I would likely overlook dozens of coded symbols, key images, and right-wing clothing and products that youths display and wear. The archive on its own is also inadequate, however, because the images alone cannot tell us why youths are utilizing these symbols, how they select which symbols to display, how they use and manipulate symbols in their everyday lives, or whether and how the consumption of symbols relates to extremist attitudes and violence. Interviews will also likely reveal additional symbols and codes that were not captured in the digital archive, either because they were overlooked by photographers or because the rapid nature of the transformation of symbols means that new ones are constantly emerging. The extreme right-wing has successfully utilized digital technologies in the commercialization and commodification of symbols; this project represents a first attempt to combine the same technologies with traditional empirical data-collection methods in an effort to understand this fascinating and disturbing phenomenon.

References
Agentur für soziale Perspektiven e.V. (Hg) 2009 and 2011. Versteckspiel: Lifestyle, Symbole und Codes von neonazistischen und extrem rechten Gruppen. Berlin: Agentur für soziale Perspektiven e.V.


Gender and Sexual Politics: A Central Issue for European Studies

Isabelle Engeli, University of Ottawa
David Paternotte, Fonds de la recherche scientifique/Université libre de Bruxelles*

A New CES Research Network

Gender and sexuality issues have been widely discussed in Europe throughout the past few decades. Most European societies, despite still important cross-country disparities, have undergone unprecedented social transformations. Facing claims by feminist, homosexual and other social movements, European states have started to acknowledge the gendered and/or sexualized nature of their actions. At the same time, the European Union (EU), the Council of Europe and other regional and global institutions have emerged as potential allies to social movements, while contributing to social and political convergence across the continent in a decisive way.

The academic world has not been immune, and works on gender and sexuality have proliferated, often adopting an interdisciplinary perspective. European studies are no exception and, as Laura Frader reminds us in her contribution, the Council for European Studies (CES) has welcomed gender papers since the first conferences. However, gender and sexuality issues long remained of secondary interest. This mini-forum emphasizes how the field of European Studies has transformed since the founding conferences. There are not only more research and more publications on gender and sexuality in Europe, but topics and approaches have also become much more diverse. Therefore,

* Authors may be contacted at: isabelle.engeli@uottawa.ca and david.paternotte@ulb.ac.be
the study of Europe would not be complete today without considering both gender and sexuality.

The main aim of this mini-forum of Perspectives on Europe is twofold. First, it sheds light on the diversity and the richness of two maturing bodies of scholarship. Indeed, the papers in the mini-forum demonstrate the vitality of research on gender and sexual politics in Europe and present some key features of current academic debates, often in a comparative perspective. Beyond emphasizing the core relevance of these two research lines, this mini-forum contributes to a dialogue between two bodies of research that have often matured in an independent way. Fostering academic dialogue, bringing scholars together to build up knowledge and contribute to the institutionalization of gender and sexuality studies are the core goals of the new CES Research Network on Gender and Sexuality Studies. This mini-forum is also the opportunity to celebrate the birth of the network and to contribute to the development of the vibrant gender and sexuality perspectives within the Council for European Studies community.

Launched in March 2012, the Gender and Sexuality Research Network brings together scholars working on gender and sexuality and aims to enhance research around a vast range of topics regarding gender and sexuality, across the various disciplines of the social sciences (anthropology, law, history, political science, sociology, etc.). While a strong regional emphasis is put on European countries and the EU, the research group also encourages comparative research that locates Europe or European countries in a transatlantic or international context. The Gender and Sexuality Research Network strongly supports diversity in methods and approaches. Although this mini-forum gathers mostly articles from sociology and political sciences, it advocates the need for interdisciplinary research and seeks to welcome a more diverse membership in the future.

The goals of the Gender and Sexuality Research Network include:

* Developing a strong network of scholars to stimulate collaborative work and joint publications;
* Encouraging panels on topics of interest to members; and
* Providing a platform where members from different countries and disciplines can strengthen intellectual ties and disseminate their work.1

The papers gathered in this mini-forum attempt to highlight the diversity of current academic debates while interrogating the specificity of gender and sexuality politics in Europe. Although exhaustivity is beyond the capacity of such a mini-forum, we have tried to present some key discussions in European Studies. This mini-forum includes European, North American, junior and more established authors, who all belong to the new Gender and Sexuality Research Network.

The papers, which often originate from comparative research projects, question the nature of Europe. The EU and other political and social actors have often claimed the uniqueness of Europe in terms of equality, social acceptance and even public policies. According to such account, there would be something distinctive about the region, confirming the specificity of Europe as

---

1 To learn more about or join the Gender and Sexuality Research Network, please consult the webpage of the network (www.councilforeuropeanstudies.org/research/research-networks/gender-sexuality) or contact the co-chairs directly at isabelle.engeli@uottawa.ca and david.paternotte@ulb.ac.be).
a space of shared values. The papers gathered here explore these claims in various ways, and all examine whether there is such a thing as a unique European flavor when it comes to gender and sexual politics. The first two papers examine the machinery of gender politics in Western Europe and explore how transformative policies can take place. The next three articles focus on the construction of Europe as a space of shared values about gender and sexuality. The last two articles bring these claims forward by examining current challenges in a context of increasing religious and cultural diversity.

Dorothy McBride and Amy Mazur’s paper draws on the outstanding scholarly contribution of the long-term international collaboration of the Research Network on Gender Politics and the State (RNGS) to discuss why, under which conditions and to what extent state feminism in Europe has substantially transformed gender relations, promoted women’s rights and challenged patriarchy through state action. They argue that while democratization has been widespread and transformative state feminism has occurred in most Western European countries, substantive change in gender relations still remains rare in government affairs.

Claire Annesley, Isabelle Engeli and Francesca Gains adopt a comparative perspective to assess the conditions under which gendering executive attention has occurred in Western Europe throughout the past few decades. Moving from the parliamentary arena to the executive one, their contribution sheds new light on the debated impact of women’s descriptive representation in political offices on the effective promotion of gender equality. They argue that while democratization has been widespread and transformative state feminism has occurred in most Western European countries, substantive change in gender relations still remains rare in government affairs.

Alison Woodward’s paper reflects on the interaction between the growth of gender studies as a discipline in Europe and the broadening of ambitions and achievements regarding the promotion of gender equality within the EU. She provides an important and challenging insight on the contribution of the gender perspective to a more fine-grained understanding of the European integration and its democratic legitimacy, but also on the implication of these institutional ties for the future of gender and politics research in Europe.

Phillip Ayoub and David Paternotte examine the importance of the idea of Europe in the history of transnational lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) activism and its influence in the expansion of LGBT activism in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Relying on a constructivist account of European identity construction, they highlight that founding activists did already consider Europe as a specific set of values, which would help them gain more rights across the continent. This visionary insight, which preceded any institutional design, became central when the movement started to develop itself in the CEE. There, it met the willingness of some local activists, who were looking for powerful means to expand their rights. This article shows the importance of civil society actors in building a European identity.

Answering to recurrent interrogations by American colleagues, Angelia Wilson’s paper attempts to define what makes Europe so unique when it comes to LGBT rights. Indeed, she has been regularly asked why Europe was doing better than the United States in terms of LGBT equality. In her contribution, which is based on a forthcoming book, she emphasizes the crucial role of the ‘political economy of care’, which is too often overlooked in discussions on LGBT politics. According to Wilson, this would be one of the main differences between Europe and the United States, and it would explain to a large extent recent European advances.

Eléonore Lépinard’s contribution sheds light on the complex relationship between gender equality, feminist movements and multiculturalism, which is currently crystallizing on
the Islamic veiling issue and other topics related to gender and Islam in Europe. Her paper discusses the dilemma posed by religious accommodation and the veiling issue to Western feminism on the basis of a comparison between France and Canada. Against accounts that oppose gender equality to the recognition of religious and cultural diversity, Lépinard emphasizes the serious consequences on European Muslim women that are emanating from the lack of intersectional perspective within the mainstream feminist movements as well as in public policies and political interventions. She also explores the challenges to European identity and its association to gender equality, as well as current changes in the regulation of religion across the region.

Finally, Paul Mepschen and Jan Willem Duyvendak’s article echoes Lépinard’s insights while examining current debates on LGBT politics in Europe. Discussing recent debates on the emergence of sexual nationalisms, it shows how a culturalization of citizenship, a fear of Islam and a normalization of homosexuality are all creating new exclusions across the continent. Relying on Dutch debates on homosexuality and integration of cultural minorities, the authors argue that gay rights and sexual freedom are increasingly turned on their head to stigmatize other parts of the population.
State Feminism in Europe: A Transformation of Gender Relations

Amy Mazur, Washington State University
Dorothy McBride, Florida Atlantic University*

Since the 1970s, governments in Western Europe have established dozens of government agencies with explicit goals of advancing the status of women and/or promoting gender equity. Such agencies as the 1975 Belgian Consultative Commission on the Status of Women, the Ministry of Woman’s Rights in the early 1980s in France, and the Italian Ministry for Equal Opportunities in the 1990s seemed to have the potential for becoming centers of subversion against male-dominated politics within the state. In 1995, the Research Network on Gender Politics and the State (RNGS) organized to find out just how important such women’s policy agencies, often called gender equality mechanisms, have been in promoting women’s status and challenging patriarchy through state action.¹ One of the major things RNGS did was to further develop and empirically apply the concept of state feminism. The network introduced the notion of movement state feminism, defined as the successful partnership between state gender mechanisms and women’s movement actors in gaining favorable policies and representation to promote movement goals. By opening the state to participation by new groups – women’s movement actors – and including their demands in policy, movement state feminism expands democratic descriptive and substantive representation within the state arena. Enhancing the presence of women’s movement actors is descriptive representation, and including ideas in government policy is substantive. Such changes in representation further the democratic goal of advancing a previously excluded group. The result has great

¹ For more on RNGS, go to http://libarts.wsu.edu/polisci/rngs/.

*Authors may be contacted at: dmcbrid6@fau.edu and mazur@wsu.edu
potential to put a dent in traditional gender relations.

While state feminism expands democratic opportunity, not all movement state feminist outcomes are themselves transformative. Some women’s movement goals with respect to state policy may be limited and narrow. Only alliances between feminist movement actors and feminist insider agencies – those that are influential in policy processes – have the potential to transform gender relations through enhanced representation, because only feminist actors explicitly demand the outcomes that challenge gender hierarchies inside and outside the state.

This essay reports on the pattern of both democratization and transformative state feminism found by the RNGS project in 11 Western European countries from the 1960s to the early 2000s. After a brief review of the evolution of the concept of state feminism and a summary of the RNGS project, we suggest that while democratization has been widespread and transformative state feminism has occurred in nearly every country at some time, substantive change in gender relations remains rare in government affairs.

Evolution of the Concept of State Feminism

The concept of state feminism developed in the context of changing relationships between women’s movements and states beginning in the 1970s. After the decline of grassroots autonomous protest against the state associated with the second wave, movement actors began to see the state more favorably as a way to overcome social and economic gender inequality. Scandinavian scholars named the growing interest in the idea that the polity could be women friendly as state feminism or ‘feminism from above’. While most Scandinavian scholars used the term to refer to some type of interaction between activists outside the state and sympathetic feminists inside the state, a few focused on women’s policy agencies (Dahlerup 1986; Nielsen 1983), but none offered a definition of feminism. Woman-friendly polity meant the smooth relationship for women between their family, working and public life.

It was not unusual for the Scandinavian gender scholars to see the state as a potential friend to women, but it was definitely a surprise when the Australian researchers, with an active tradition of feminist skepticism toward the state, began to challenge the idea that the state was an impenetrable patriarchal monolith and accepted the growing number of Australian women’s policy agencies in the 1980s. Work of Australian scholars Pringle and Watson (1992) and Franzway, Court and Connell (1989) challenged the claim of the monolithic patriarchal state by observing that states, in fact, comprise many different arenas for political and administrative action. Some, like women’s policy agencies, could be avenues for promoting a feminist agenda rather than enemies.

The RNGS Study and Conceptualization of State Feminism

In the 1990s, a group of European scholars started to look at the agencies forming in their countries. They contributed case studies of the origins of these relatively new agencies, their organization, and relation to women’s movements to the edited volume, Comparative State Feminism (McBride Stetson and Mazur 1995). This book was the first to use the concept of state feminism to refer explicitly to the activities of women’s policy agencies. At the same time, the comparative analysis
in the book was limited due to key problems with conceptualization and research design. RNGS was formed to address these weaknesses, to develop a more coherent and rigorous research design, and to pay closer attention to refining the concept of state feminism.

To carry out the RNGS research design, more than 40 experts on gender policy signed up to study more than 100 individual policy debates that took place between the 1960s and 2000s on abortion, job training, political representation, prostitution and priority topics of the 1990s (called ‘hot issues’). They studied these in one of 13 post-industrial democracies (Austria, Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United States). Completing the debates and reporting the results for each of the issues in the study took more than 10 years.3 These studies of separate issues used methods of process tracing and descriptive statistics. As the case studies were completed, the concept of state feminism was refined and the state feminism theoretical framework began to take shape. The framework combines features of the initial RNGS research design and research model with ongoing comparative analysis of policy debates, as well as insights from four bodies of theory: representation, social movements, institutionalization, and framing and policymaking.

The framework proposes that women’s movements are more likely to receive favorable responses from the state when they ally with women’s policy agencies. That alliance is observed first by looking for the extent to which there is agreement between actors and agencies on motivational and strategic frames expressed on the issue under consideration in a debate. Secondly, looking at the extent to which agencies gender the issue frames used by policy actors reveals the success of the agency as an ally. The strongest allies – which promote movement goals by gendering issue frames – are called insiders.4 The success of the women’s movement actors is found when the policy content at the end of the debate coincides with movement goals (a substantive outcome) and when movement actors are included as part of the policy sub-system at the end of the debate (a procedural – or descriptive – outcome).

When agency/movement alliances achieve these movement procedural and substantive goals, the result is movement state feminism; when insider agency/movement alliances achieve explicitly feminist movement procedural and substantive goals, the result is transformative state feminism. This delineation of two types of state feminism – movement and transformative – arises from the conceptualization of women’s movement and feminism in the framework. This conceptualization is, for many, one of the most important contributions of the RNGS state feminism framework; it offers, for the first time in comparative gender politics research, a tool to study women’s and feminist movements cross-nationally and throughout time. Briefly (see the full description in McBride and Mazur 2008), for the state feminism framework, the women’s movement is defined as having two components: the discourse developed by women as they contemplate their own gender consciousness in relation to society, and the actors – such as organizations, individuals and groups – are the focus of empirical research; they are identified as part of the women’s movement by their discourse.

Women’s movement discourse has three essential components: identity with women as a group; language that is explicitly gendered; and ideas that are expressed as women representing women. Feminist discourse has the same components, but is a subcategory that includes other features: the goal of changing the status of women in society

---

3 There are books that cover each of the issues published during this period: abortion (McBride Stetson 2001); job training (Mazur 2001); prostitution (Outshoorn 2004); political representation (Lovenduski et al. 2005); and ‘hot issues’ (Haussman and Sauer 2007).

4 RNGS developed a typology of women’s movement activities. The most successful type is the insider, and the other types are marginal, symbolic and anti-movement.
and politics and the challenge to gender-based hierarchies and structures of subordination of women. Just as the women’s movement actors are those who express movement discourse, the feminist movement actors are those who express feminist discourse; thus, the feminist movement is a subcategory of the women’s movement.

To summarize, the state feminism framework delineates two types of agency movement alliances: movement state feminism, where agencies help movement actors gain procedural and substantive responses, and transformative state feminism, where agencies successfully aid feminist movement actors to achieve feminist substantive and procedural responses. With the accumulation of both kinds of substantive and procedural success over time, governments become more democratic. Only with the accumulation of feminist success do gender relations in governments become transformed. The extent to which agencies were effective in promoting these outcomes shows the extent to which state feminism has promoted real change.

State Feminism, Democracy and Transformation in European Countries

Our book, The Politics of State Feminism: Innovation in Comparative Research (2010), reports on the entire RNGS project, the mixed methods approach and the state feminism theory. Here, we summarize our findings first on state feminism and democratization and then on the incidence of transformative state feminism in European countries of the study.

Overall, patterns of democratization due to the success of women’s movements vary, as does the usefulness of women’s policy agencies as allies. We divided the countries into three categories based on the rate of movement success over the range of debates and decades. Having an insider agency – central and influential in policy sub-systems where debates are won or lost – seems to be less important for countries with overall high success rates (67 percent – 100 percent). Among the three countries with the most women’s movement success throughout the period – Sweden, Austria and Italy – agencies were important only in Sweden, especially with the support of the dominant left-wing parties and unions. The women’s movement actors in Austria were able to rely on the effective support of the left-wing party, and Italy’s movement’s cohesion and solidarity in pursuit of demands for abortion rights and political representation explained their high ranking, regardless of any intervention from the women’s policy agencies.

Belgium, Ireland, Finland and Great Britain showed moderate rates of women’s movement success in the study (50 percent – 57 percent). For 3 of the 4, the alliance with an insider agency was important. In the Belgian debates it did not matter whether the women’s policy agency was an effective ally inside the state. In the others, insider agencies played a backup role. The backup role – which appeared as well in the overall theory of state feminism – means that when usually favorable conditions for success are not present in a particular debate, the presence of an insider agency took them over the top. For example, in Finland, a more open policy sub-system was enough to bring success for movement activists. But when that was not present in a debate, such as during the 1991–1993 debate regarding gender quotas, the Council for Equality meant the difference between success and failure.

In the countries classified as low success polities – Germany, France, Spain and Ireland – only between 11 percent and 33 percent of the debates showed successes for the women’s movement actors. Insider agencies turned out to be a major contributing factor to many of the successes they did have. In France, for example, only 3 of the 15 debates studied found movement success, but 100 percent of those were due to the influence and support of the ministries for women. Only 1 of the 9 debates studied in the Netherlands showed success; the lone successful debate was achieved with the alliance of the Department for
Coordination of Equality Policy.

The analysis of patterns of state feminism and democratization in European countries reflects the complexity of the contexts and conditions affecting the activities of women’s movement actors. Overall, women’s movement actors found success in 47 percent of the policy debates studied in European countries. Of these, 48 percent had insider agencies. In only a few of these cases did we find that the insider agencies were the most important factor leading to success, but in those cases, they played an essential function in expanding representation for women’s movement actors in that debate.

Transformative State Feminism in European Countries

Using the definition of feminism and feminist movement developed by RNGS and described earlier in this essay, we explore the extent to which alliances between feminist movement actors and feminist women’s policy agencies have changed gender hierarchies in policy and representation. Feminist perspectives and feminist agencies were not rare in the debates, but transformative state feminism was. Here, we summarize the cases and countries where feminist insider agencies helped actors to achieve feminist success comprising those cases of partial success – feminist policy outcomes or representation of feminist actors – and those cases achieving both, that is, complete transformative state feminism.

Such successful feminist alliances were observed in only 16 debates, or 17 percent of the 94 European debates studied. These successes were found in every country except Spain: three each for Austria and France, two for Finland and two for Sweden, and one each for Belgium, Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy and the Netherlands. Only one feminist outcome occurred in the 1970s. The others were evenly divided between the 1980s and 1990s. Feminist activists were successful at least once in debates on all of the issues, but more on those pertaining to political representation (4), prostitution (5) and abortion (4). Two debates on national top-priority issues, called ‘hot issues’, turned out feminist.

Although these cases don’t show a major shift in European domestic policy debates toward a transformation of gender relations in policy and process through state feminism, they do reveal the potential for women’s policy agencies to work from inside the state to undermine ingrained gendered hierarchies. In the area of political representation policy, the feminist outcomes produced policy that undermined sex discrimination in the civil service in Austria, established gender quotas for the legislature in Belgium, inserted a parity law in France, and secured an equal rights and representation law in Germany. In the 1980s, the Finnish Gender Equality Council declared that prostitution was a product of patriarchal culture and led the process of decriminalizing the act while maintaining penalties for pimping. In 1989, the Deputy Minister for Women’s Rights in France similarly argued that prostitution was sexual slavery and oppression of women; she was instrumental in defeating an effort to open state-run bordellos.

Transformative state feminism has been responsible for maintaining a feminist position with respect to abortion rights. For example, reflecting the feminist demand that women have a right to gain access to facilities for abortion, two Dutch agencies from within the Ministry of Health took up the feminist position that women should have abortions on demand, and ensured that the network of clinics and hospitals complied. The French Delegate Ministry for Rights of Woman successfully promoted the law that would
reimburse women for abortions; their goal was to challenge inequalities burdening women due to reproductive differences.

While it may be expected that transformations in gender relations in policy and process would be more likely in abortion and prostitution debates, we have also found that, while very rare, such changes are not impossible in areas that are not as clearly gendered. In the mid 1990s, for example, the Department of Equality and Law Reform in Ireland was effective in challenging barriers to equal participation in employment by focusing on bringing women into state training programs to mainstream equal opportunities.

Conclusion

The RNGS studies, through the collaboration of more than 40 researchers and the application of a common analytical framework, have provided valuable insights about democratic processes and gender issues in Western European countries and, more broadly speaking, post-industrial democracies. States have been responsive to demands from women’s movements, and often these women-friendly and feminist responses have been a product of alliances between women’s policy agencies and women’s movement actors. While women’s policy agencies are not essential ingredients in women’s movement success and enhanced representation across the board, they are important players and, in some countries, playing an important backup role when all else fails. We also see that European states are permeable to feminist ideas – the very embodiment of transformative change in gender relations that challenges the status quo – both in terms of the entry of feminist ideas and actors into state arenas and, in some situations, transformative state feminism. To be sure, the recipe for women’s movements success, state feminism and feminist state transformation is complex and often context specific, but we now know, thanks to RNGS, that European democracies have the capacity to transform gender relations by means of a complex ongoing process of women’s movement-gender machineries partnerships. As such, we can say that European democracies are becoming more democratic.

References


Introduction

The extent to which governments in Western Europe give attention to gender equality issues is relatively low, compared with other core issues of government. Nevertheless, there are numerous examples of gender equality-related issues that have reached the political agenda since the 1960s. In particular, the kind of gender equality demands that challenge the traditional sexual division of labor between men and women have received growing attention across Western Europe throughout this time, despite the fact that their cost and redistributive scope are likely to invoke considerable friction and resistance to policy change. This raises the question of when and why gender equality issues succeed in gaining executive attention and reach the government agenda for change.

This is particularly interesting because while a great deal of feminist research has investigated the ‘substantive representation of women’, that is, the link between rising female representation and gendered policy change (Lovenduski and Norris 1995), much of this work focuses on the rise of representation by women in Parliament and specific policy outcomes such as
domestic violence and abortion rights (Franceschet and Piscopo 2008; Swers 2005; Weldon 2002). Less is known about the start of the process of policy change, which entails feminist advocacy for gender policies securing executive attention (Kenney 2003).

Our research throughout the past three years has sought to address this question by exploiting the emergence of new datasets that code to a common codebook the extent to which different policy agendas receive parliamentary and executive attention indicated by the appearance of these policies agendas in official documents\(^1\). These data allow feminist policy scholars, for the first time, to track the development of feminist policy demands of various types, including those which challenge the sexual division of labor, as they gain executive attention across the countries participating in the project. We report here our findings on the relationship between parliamentary and executive female representation and the appearance of costly gender equality policies in government annual speeches in four Western European countries.

The Impact of Women’s Representation

A flourishing scholarship of gender and politics research examines the relationship between descriptive representation and substantive representation of women and investigates the extent to which the growing presence of women in political offices positively impacts on women-friendly policy outcomes. Research examining the link between women in legislatures and policy change has delivered mixed results. Several studies have pointed out that the presence of women, as individuals or as a group, in a variety of legislative settings is likely to exert a positive impact on women-friendly policy outcomes on a range of issues from child-care programs, maternity leave and family related issues to equal wage policies and political rights (see, for instance, Bratton and Ray 2002; Bonoli and Reber 2010; Kittilson 2008). On the contrary, Weldon (2002) did not identify any linear effect regarding the percentage of female state legislators on the likelihood to adopt policy regarding violence against women. In a similar vein, the analysis of Franceschet and Piscopo (2008) on the impact of political quota adoption on women representation in Argentina concludes that quotas do not favor women-friendly policy outcomes.

More recently, this literature has moved on from an over-simplified interpretation of the ‘critical mass’ argument (Celis et al. 2008) that would expect decisive policy change to occur only once a certain threshold of women Members of Parliament (MPs) – say 30 percent – is reached. Recent research has problematized the idea that a greater number of female representatives will directly lead to a more effective substantive representation. Not all women share the same policy demands, and it might be the case that lone ‘critical actors’ are more important than the overall number of elected women (Childs 2004).

Although the focus of most research has been on parliamentary actors, a growing body of research has turned to examining how the feminization of executives impacts on the processing of policy demands. Scholars increasingly highlight the need for the focus to shift away from women in Parliament to include other sites and political actors (Celis et al. 2008; Mackay 2008). Feminist institutionalist analyses emphasize that it

---

1 See www.comparativeagendasproject.com. The authors would like to acknowledge and thank the country research teams for their assistance.
is necessary to identify which institutional settings wield political resources and power in a given political system to accurately assess the agenda-setting capacity of women in politics (Chappell and Hill 2006; Annesley and Gains 2010). In parliamentary democracies, political resources for agenda setting are increasingly controlled by the government and it may be the case that female executive actors, rather than female legislators, may be more successful in lobbying government (Annesley and Gains 2010; Atchinson and Down 2009).

The contradictory results flowing from research on women in Parliament and the need to examine the effect of women in government leads to two hypotheses, which we report on here. An increasing number of female representatives may increase overall parliamentary concerns about gender equality policies and constitute positive incentives for government in dedicating more attention to such issues. Our first hypothesis, therefore, posits that executives will pay more attention to gender equality issues as the number of female MPs rises (H1).

However, the key resources for agenda setting are controlled by government actors and it may be that female executive representatives are able to lobby more successfully for gender equality policies to receive limited government attention. Accordingly, our second hypothesis postulates that executives will pay more attention to gender equality issues as the number of female ministers rises (H2).

**Gendering Executive Agenda**

To test our hypotheses, we investigate the impact of women’s representation on gendering executive attention toward issues related to the sexual division of labor in four European countries that are all parliamentary democracies but that diverge in terms of gender regimes and social security systems: Denmark, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, from 1960 to 2007. We draw on new datasets on governmental agendas created within the Comparative Agendas Project (CAP) that use a common policy issues classification of government activities across political systems. The CAP data, thus, allow for comprehensive and reliable comparison across policy domains, countries and institutional settings (Baumgartner, Jones, and Wilkerson 2011). In this analysis, we rely on the government’s statements of policy priorities and commitments for the period 1961–2007 for our four countries taken from: the Queen’s ‘Speeches from the Throne’ for the United Kingdom (Jennings, Bevan, and John 2010) and the Netherlands (Breeman et al. 2009), the so-called ‘messages’ from the Swiss government (Varone et al., forthcoming) and the Prime Minister’s annual addresses to the Parliament in Denmark (Green-Pedersen 2007).

As the time period under investigation – 1961–2007 – is rather short and the overall promotion of gender equality regarding sexual division of labor is relatively limited, we conducted a pooled binomial logit model with bootstrapped standard errors (Efron and Tibshirani 1994; Kittel and Winner 2005). The dependent variable is coded ‘1’ in a given year when the promotion of gender equality regarding the sexual division of labor is mentioned at least once in the executive agenda, and ‘0’ otherwise. To measure women’s representation, we use the percentage of parliamentary seats occupied by female MPs in the lower or single House at the time when the speech

---

2 For a fuller exposition of determinants of gender-equality policy demands receiving government attention across a range of policy domains, see Annesley et al. 2010, and Annesley, Engeli, and Gains 2011.

3 See www.comparativeagendas.org.

4 More specifically, the issues addressing the sexual division of labor include (1) the promotion of women’s participation in the labor force, such as measures regarding minimum wage, part-time professional activities, and women’s access to vocational training and workforce development; (2) the eradication of gender discrimination at work, such as unequal pay; (3) the improvement of the gender balance between work and care activities through the development of child-care programs and the introduction of maternity/paternity/parental leave; as well as (4) the removal of discrimination against women in pension schemes and taxation.
Gender & Sexual Politics: A Central Issue in European Studies

was delivered. Female ministerial participation was computed as the percentage of female ministers (with or without portfolio) within a cabinet at the time of the speech.\(^5\)

Our first hypothesis is drawn from the contested argument that women’s increased formal representation in legislatures leads to substantive representation by prompting higher attention to issues related to gender equality on executive agendas. Our analysis lends some support to this hypothesis and suggests that women’s representation in Parliament matters for gaining more executive attention to the type of gender equality policy we examine here. (logit coefficient: 0.087 / bootstrapped standard error (s.e.): 0.41). Figure 1 plots the simulated predicted probabilities of the effect of women’s representation in Parliament on gendering the executive agenda (King et al. 2000). As Figure 1 shows, an increase in the number of female MPs significantly increases the likelihood of the presence of gender equality issues related to sex equality in the division of labor on executive agendas.

This result is very much in line with previous studies that have shown that women representatives have widened the legislative agenda to raise attention toward gender-related concerns in the United States, Western Europe and Latin America. It also confirms several research findings pointing out that a higher presence of women in Parliament enhances the likelihood of women-friendly policy outcomes regarding equality at work, child-care programs and maternity leave (Bratton and Ray 2002; Bonoli and Reber 2010; Kittilson 2008; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005; O’Regan 2000). Our analysis shows that increasing the number of women MPs not only impacts on gendering parliamentary agendas and related

---

\(^5\) To control for time dependence effect, i.e., when the occurrence of an event may increase the likelihood of subsequent events, we include cubic polynomial of time in the model (Carter and Signorino 2010). The logit coefficient in our model proves to be non-significant.

Figure 1: The effect of women’s representation in Parliament, simulated probabilities
policy outcomes, but also provides executives with strong incentives to gender their policy priorities, at least as far as equality at work and in caring responsibilities are concerned.

On the contrary, our findings reported here suggest that the feminization of executives seems not to exert any significant impact in gendering executive agendas (logit coefficient: -.042, bootstrapped s.e.: .023). This result appears somewhat puzzling at first sight. We expected that more women in Cabinet should increase the executive attention to gender equality issues. There are four possible explanations for this paradox: First, the feminization of executives tends to follow a slower and less linear progression than the feminization of the legislature. Indeed, the supply of women ministers is largely dependent upon a supply of representatives from the legislative arena in most political systems (Annesley and Gains 2010; Annesley et al. 2012). There is, therefore, a lagging effect. Second, in a similar vein to critiques of essentialist claims of substantive representation by increased numbers of women in legislatures, we argue that increasing the number of women in executive roles does not imply an automatic increase in the supply of feminist advocates. Third, cabinet nomination represents a selective process where members are selected by the head of the government to be in charge of a particular set of issues (Beckwith 2007; Annesley et al. 2012). Often women’s segregation in executives within low-key portfolios with limited resources acts to weaken their capacity to promote gender equality from inside. So while being in government tends to increase their potential agenda-setting power, women who are confined into small and scarcely resourced ministries will not be likely to impact on agendas outside the range of their limited portfolio. The result does not mean that some individual women ministers may not act as critical actors, and effectively lobby the Cabinet from the inside, as some single case studies have shown for particular policies at a particular point in time (Annesley 2010) – or that this situation is not dynamic. Nevertheless, there is not an overall statistically significant relationship between an increase in women’s presence as executives and governmental promotion of gender equality over time in the four countries that we have investigated here.

Finally, recent research has demonstrated a link between the likelihood of costly gender equality issues reaching the government agenda and the performance of the economy (Annesley and Gains 2012). It may be the case that executive actors are only able to find space for costly gender equality policy when the economy is growing.

Conclusion

Gender equality issues are relatively recent demands, and in the case of the promotion in the sexual division of labor, are potentially costly. Drawing on data from the comparative agendas project in four European democracies, our analysis makes a contribution to the existing scholarship on gender and agenda setting, and investigates patterns in gendering Western European executive attention.

We find some evidence of the strength of female representation as a political determinant in that there is a statistically significant relationship between the number of female representatives and the presence of gender-equality policy initiatives to address sex inequalities in paid and unpaid work on government agendas. The challenge to linking descriptive representation to substantive representation comes in part because...
of the contested claim that being female should relate to feminist policy goals or that women acting for women agree with one another. Although the statistical link between the number of female representatives and governmental attention to gender equality issues does not prove a causal relationship, our finding would support the idea that increasing female representation does increase advocacy for executive attention and reduce the cognitive friction on policy agenda change, at least in respect of the gender-equality policy area under examination here.

Our analysis, however, did not find strong support for the relationship between feminization of the executive and the likelihood of gender equality issues that address the sexual division of labor getting government attention. The lack of a relationship between feminization of the executive and gendered executive agendas suggests there is a time lag between the increase in ‘female’ and increasing ‘feminist’ representation and this representation feeding feminist advocacy in political executives.

This review provides a small exemplar of the way in which the use of the policy agenda data permits testing of hypotheses on engendering government agendas to allow for the possibility of putting ‘gender on the agenda’ and permitting a more detailed examination of the determinants of gender policy change, both of the type we discuss here (see also Annesley et al. 2010) and across a wider range of countries and policy domains (Annesley, Engeli, and Gains 2011).

References


Bonoli, Giuliano, and Frank Reber. 2010.


Reingold, Beth. 2000. Representing Women: Sex, Gender and Legislative Behavior in Arizona and California. Chapel Hill, NC:
University of North Carolina Press.


Women and Gender in the Council for European Studies:
Looking Back to the 1980s
Laura L. Frader, Northeastern University
Siovahn A. Walker, Council for European Studies

The Council for European Studies (CES) has long supported research on gender relations and welcomed the participation of women in its international conferences, fellowship programs and governance structures. However, like the broader society of which it is a part, the Council has not stood still on these issues. Rather, its commitment to the inclusion of women and support for the study of gender and sexuality has grown over time, driven forward by the efforts of individual Council members as well as the changing currents of academic research and broader societal patterns. The crucial moment of transition almost certainly occurred in the 1980s.

Founded in 1970, the Council for European Studies was overwhelmingly male-dominated in its first decade of existence. Between 1970 and 1979, women were all but absent from the Council’s leading governance committees and were consistently outnumbered in the ranks of fellowship winners by their male counterparts. True, women had some role in the lower level selection committees and research groups that organized much of the Council’s programming. However, even there the inclusion of women was rare and due almost entirely to the participation of a small cadre of pioneering young female academics in Political Science and History. For example, in the snapshot year of 1972, Lynn Lees represented the Council on a joint planning group with the Inter-University Consortium for Political Research (ICPR), Nancy Roelker chaired an ad hoc group on the practicability of establishing a center for American researchers in Paris, and a workshop proposal on “Male-Female Roles in Advanced Industrial Societies” submitted by Jean Lipman-Blumen was recommended for further action by the Executive Committee. But otherwise there was little female participation. Most well-established Europeanists at that time were male, and their dominance was reflected in the Council’s membership. Only among the office staff of the Council were women a clear majority.

By 1979, it was clear that things were changing. The First International Conference of Europeanists, held in Washington, D.C. in 1979, boasted 600 participants, many of whom were women speaking on topics pertaining to the study of women. For the Second International Conference, held in 1980 also in Washington, D.C., the Council made an active effort to encourage women’s participation by including Joyce Reigelhaupt (Anthropology, Sarah Lawrence College) on the Conference Committee and featuring a session dedicated to “The Politics of ‘Women’s’ Issues,” chaired by Anne Armstrong and Herbert H. Lehman. Elsewhere at the 1980 conference, Louise Tilly and Sheila Kammerman chaired and commented on a panel about family policy and population growth in Europe, while throughout the conference female scholars presented their work.

---

1 The single exception to this is Suzanne Berger who served a partial term (due to the early withdrawal of Donald Blackmer) during the 1971-1972 academic year.
2 Female CES fellowship winners in the Council’s earliest years (1970-1975) were often outnumbered by their male peers in ratios of 2:1. However, this lack of parity between male and female fellows was a clear consequence of the disproportionate applicant pool in which men also outnumbered women by roughly 2 to 1. As the gender ratios equalized in the applicant pool, so did the gender ratios of CES fellows.
3 In our snapshot year of 1972, the Council for European Studies employed four permanent staff members, three of whom were women: Stephen Blank (Executive Director), Marjorie Brenner (Director of Information Services), Kathleen Stoffel (Secretary) and Joe Ann Shavers (Accounting Officer).
on a variety of non-gender subjects. For example, some wrote about national economies and trade unions (Peggy Kahn), protest movements, politics and the state (Margaret Somers), experiments in social democratic management (Atina Grossman), and tax reform in Scandinavia (Barbara Haskell). Dorothy Nelkin and Yasmin Ergas presented papers alongside Alain Touraine on panels devoted to “Protest Movements and Actions Against the State;” on “Health Care Crises and State Intervention” (Deborah Stone, Rosemary Taylor, Lesley Doyal and Antoinette Chauvenet); on “Economic Development, Dependency, and Regionalism” (Jane Schneider and Sue Ellen Charlton), and Sylvia Bashevkin presented research on political attitudes of women in France, Canada and the US on a panel, “Legitimacy of Challenges to Legitimacy.” Yolande Cohen and Jane Jenson presented papers on the panel, “Protest Movements of the 1960s.”

The Third International Conference of Europeanists (1982) focused on the theme of “Periods and Cycles in Europe, Past and Present, and included a panel on “Women’s Position: Cyclical Change or Evolution?” proposed by Judith Friedlander and Rayna Rapp. The program also included panels on “Women and the Holocaust” with Gisela Bock, Judith Friedlander, Selma Leydesdorff and Marjan Schwegman; “Women and Public Power,” with Claudia Koonz, Mieke Aerts, Temma Kaplan and Karen Sachs. In 1985 (at its Fifth Conference), a panel on representations of rural life and regional identity included Susan Carol Rogers, Ellen Badone, Deborah Reed-Dannahay and Elizabeth Evans; Janice McCormack spoke on “Liberalism vs Socialism: What Difference Have They Made for the French Economy;” and Carol Schmid spoke on the Green party in West Germany. The panel, “Modified Biographies, Refashioned Identities, and Changing State Policies” included papers by Jane Jenson, Marion Estienne and Chiara Saraceno. Many others participated in panels throughout this conference and others.

This interest in women’s issues at the Council’s conferences continued throughout the 1980s and by the late 1980s had garnered such momentum that the Council began to insist on gender diversity at its international conferences (with, admittedly, varying degrees of success).

Still soon the Council’s commitment to the inclusion of women began to be felt at the level of organizational governance. In sharp contrast to the 1970s, women began to be represented in meaningful numbers on the Council’s governing Executive and Steering Committees—such pioneering Council members included Natalie Zemon Davis, Louise A. Tilly, Molly Nolan, Jane Schneider, Joan W. Scott, Victoria de Grazia, Glenda Rosenthal, Susan Tax-Freeman, Nancy Scheper-Hughes, Lynn Hollen Lees, Susan Carol Rogers and Theda Skocpol, among others. Furthermore, during the 1980s the Newsletters of the Council (during the Editorship of Marion A. Kaplan) actively took note of developments in the field of women’s studies and major research themes at conferences, including the place of women in the division of labor, at work and in collective action; the gender-based dimensions of social policies and welfare states; the place of women in political parties and political representation; women’s networks; and women’s movements generally. Scholars such as Louise Tilly, Temma Kaplan, Sonya Rose, Jane Jenson, Jean Quataert, Chiara Saraceno, Bianca Beccalli, Laura Balbo, Molly Nolan, Jane Caplan and Lois Kuter as well as many others presented their research on women and work and women’s changing identities.

The impact of women’s participation on the Council’s international conferences, its research and programming agenda and its governance structures was both rapid and profound. Thanks in part to the Council’s own early investments in its female fellowship winners, but most particularly to the active pioneering work of the generation of women Europeanists that came to the fore in the late 1970s and early 1980s, women were represented within the Council for European Studies at ratios of rough parity with their male peers by the early 1990s. And by 1998, the Council
for European Studies boasted its first female head, Victoria de Grazia, who became Chair in 1998 and who had been among the Council’s first cohort of fellowship winners in 1971.

The achievements of the 1980s were merely the beginning. Since then, the emergence of strong scholarly interest in the gender dimensions of the welfare state also brought new participants and new themes to the Council’s conferences as did the appearance of new political and social movements in Europe. At the institutional level, women continued to serve on the Executive Committee and to take a leading role in Council governance. Following Victoria de Grazia’s term as the first female Chair, other women took up the mantle of leadership, including Kathy Thelen, Michéle Lamont and Cathie Jo Martin. And with the founding of the Gender and Sexuality Research Network in 2011 (co-chaired by Isabelle Engeli and David Paternotte), the Council continues to demonstrate its commitment to both the study of gender and the meaningful inclusion of women in positions of leadership alongside their male peers.
Gender and European Union Politics
Alison Woodward, Vrije Universiteit Brussels*

Introduction

From a silken thread guaranteeing equal pay for equal work in the 1957 Treaty of Rome, the policy promoting gender equality in the European Union (EU) has taken on the proportions of a mythic achievement. Protections guaranteeing equal treatment in many sectors of society, and policy promoting equality between women and men cover the EU member states like a blanket. In terms of treaty law, directives and number of citizens affected, both the ambitions and the terrain covered by gender equality policy support an EU claim to be world best. One cannot understand EU integration without taking into account how gender relations have shaped it.

Gender in EU politics, both in the narrow sense of representation and political practice and in the broad sense in terms of policy and outcomes, is an obvious area for social scientific investigation. The growth of gender studies as a discipline and the broadening of ambitions and achievements of gender equality in the EU have gone hand in hand. The EU, in its sum as a major player in global politics and in its parts of member states and institutions, is an object for political study from a gender perspective. But, equally, the EU institutions have been agents in shaping that research. Through its ambitions to improve the position of women in science and stimulate gender research as a scientific field, as well as through its commissioning of targeted policy support research, the EU

*Author may be contacted at: Alison.Woodward@vub.ac.be
has underwritten the growth of a community of scholarship on gender and EU politics. The EU has been instrumental in stimulating the collection of empirical data on politics and policy from a gender perspective. This research has made evident the importance of changes in gender relations for the EU at large. Thanks to EU-financed research, both the role of the EU in changing gendered politics and the differential experiences of gender relations in countries varying from Sweden to Malta have become palpable.

As an indication of the size of the sector, there is now a biannual conference on gender and politics in the European Consortium of Political Research (ECPR) – next at the University Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona in March 2013 – that attracts more than 300 participants. Active gender and policy/politics networks exist in the European Sociological Association and in the ECPR (Dahlerup 2010). The European Journal of Women’s Studies is a dedicated journal on gender studies that includes frequent politics pieces. There are multiple book-length treatments on EU gender policy and politics (Beveridge and Velluti 2008; Kantola 2010; Abels and Mushaben 2012; Van der Vleuten 2007, etc.), and increasingly, textbooks on EU politics also offer dedicated chapters on gender and EU politics (Prügl 2007), although this is still the exception.

In the scope of this brief overview, only a few of the interesting trends and scholars can be mentioned. The focus is on recent work on a few themes referring specifically to the EU itself, but gender and politics scholars have illuminated all areas of EU politics, from agriculture to organized crime. Particularly important themes in terms of quantity of research and links to EU policy ambitions are the representation of women in decision-making, EU gender equality policies, the welfare state, and the impact of the EU gender experience internationally. These will be discussed briefly below.

**EU Politics and Gender – Women as New Players in Politics**

One facet of the ‘mythic’ status of gender equality as an EU achievement is the visible change in the face of EU political decision-making. EU politics is obviously gendered by the increasing presence women. The ambition to improve the number of women in decision-making is a key demand of the European Women’s movement and also took early pride of place in the EU Action Plans for gender equality. The development and exchange of ideas on how to increase the number of women in top decision-making positions stimulated the collection of data and research. In the 1990s, Europe took a leadership role in using targets and quotas in political parties and electoral systems.
One woman was appointed to the new top seats of the EU. Ultimately, Catherine Ashton was named in 2009 as High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

One of the mechanisms pushing change is the role of EU women’s policy machinery. The EU includes a number of dedicated institutions, including the Committee on Women’s Rights in the EP (FEMM) and the recently opened European Institute on Gender Equality. They act as watchdogs and stimulate progress on gender equality. Among other issues monitored is the presence of women in European national politics and in the institutions of the EU. A dedicated website\(^1\) provides statistics on the representation of women in all areas of decision-making, from business board rooms to non-governmental associations. Achievement in changing representation in the bureaucracy of the EU Commission itself has been closely watched and researched (Hafner-Burton and Pollack 2009).

Another important area of EU politics is its interaction with civil society (the women’s movement organizations). The EU women’s movement provides many illustrations of the potential role of civil society in transnational decision-making (Rolandsen Agustín 2011). Organizations such as the European Women’s Lobby (Strid 2009) keep the demand for parity in EU decision-making on the table, while explicitly expanding the agenda to go beyond women, employment and politics to issues such as violence and trafficking (Zippel 2006).

New Substance – Gender Equality Policy

The debate about whether the increase in the number of women involved in decision-making in the EU also leads to women-friendly political content is extremely difficult to investigate. However, even if the effectiveness of women’s agency remains a subject for further research (see Annesley, Engeli and Gains in this issue); it is abundantly clear that the EU is a source of models regarding policy. It has exported gender policy and models of gender equality machinery to the member states with explicit mechanisms, and is thus a clear example of Europeanization. The expansion of the EU from 12 to 27 member states occurred at a peak period in gender equality policy. The obligation to do gender mainstreaming and promote gender equality was part of the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) that was exported to all of the new member states. This generated non-discrimination law and positive duties as well as stimulating comparative data collection, indicators of gender equality and standard setting. Both the conceptualization of the links of these policies to feminist thinking (Squires 2007) and the actual impact of new policy instruments such as gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting or the open method of coordination provide illustrations of the EU’s reach and limits as policy entrepreneur. Gender mainstreaming, which requires that policy be screened to ensure that gender equality is promoted, is part of the EU’s treaty duties. Given that implementing gender mainstreaming is an extremely difficult task, following the progress of transmitting gender equality has been an important theme in EU funded research.

As part of the EU’s own effort to gender mainstream in its institutions and policies, the position of gender in EU-funded scientific research has been under the spotlight, both in terms of women in science and in terms of the inclusion of gender in scientific research content. The EU has played an important role in funding the creation of a scientific community that explores the intersections of gender and politics in member states. A number of major comparative European research projects have focused on varying facets of the changing substance of gender politics and policy in the EU and the mechanisms that have promoted this. The Research Network Gender Politics and the State collected quantitative and qualitative data on the roles of women’s policy machinery, the women’s movement and politics

in changing the debate and outcomes on issues ranging from abortion and prostitution to women’s representation and the labor market, with mainly European cases (McBride and Mazur 2010). The large projects MAGEEQ (Multiple Meanings of Gender Equality – A Critical Frame Analysis of Gender Policies in Europe) (Verloo 2007) and QUING (Quality in Gender+ Equality Policies)\(^2\) (Lombardo, Meier, and Verloo 2009; Lombardo and Forest 2012) looked deeply into the discourse and values reflected in the different national approaches to gender equality, as well as examining the evolution of discourse and practice in EU politics. FEMCIT (Gendered Citizenship in Multicultural Europe)\(^3\) considered the evolution of citizenship for women in all their diversity, including sexuality and ethnicity in different countries of Europe, taking insights from gender scholarship to develop more refined conceptions of citizenship, as well as providing valuable insights into national cases (Halsaa, Roseneil, and Sümer, forthcoming). The expansion of Europe and imposition of EU gender models in newer member states is an important theme that runs through all of these cross-national projects, and was the particular focus of EGG, the Enlargement, Gender and Governance project (Galligan, Clavero and Calloni 2008).

Another emerging theme is that of the diversity of women. In the wake of the EU Treaty of Amsterdam, which mandates combating discrimination on the grounds of race and ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, disability and gender, a restructuring of thinking about equality was spurred. While the differences between women in Europe have always been an issue, the concrete policy aspects of backgrounds of migration, sexual orientation and religion combined with gender have become palpable, and the politics around equality policy have been infused with concern for diversities and inequalities. The example of gender policy itself has become a model for other programs aiming to ‘mainstream’ equality. Especially influential has been the concept of intersectionality in legal and political studies (Schiek and Chege 2009), which has shaped the debate about multiple discriminations in the EU.

**The European Welfare State**

The European State is a welfare state, and care and politics go together. The welfare state is a fundamental construct in all EU member states, and an essential underpinning enabling women and men to play out their citizenship roles. A particular contribution from gender studies is the conceptual expansion of the idea of citizenship beyond political and economic citizenship to include social and intimate citizenship. In EU politics, women have been problematic players at times, showing disinterest or even fear. A particular concern for Nordic women, for example, has been about the role EU integration would have on welfare rights and the organization of care. Thus another major substantive field of research on gender and EU politics has been on the welfare state and its transformations in the Europeanization process and effects on gender relations in the economy and in the family (Guerrina 2005; Rubery 2008). Coupling this with citizenship crosses the lines between sociology and political studies. Theoretically, the idea of gender regimes (Walby 2004) in different countries in Europe becomes an important lighthouse in guiding research on changes due to European integration. Major collaborative research projects on the transformation of the welfare state and gendered citizenship and combinations of work and care reflect this (Lewis 2006; Lister et al. 2007).

**Gender Experience Internationally**

Finally, returning to the EU belief that gender equality is an exportable achievement, there is considerable research being done on EU in the international context. The EU has been an

---

\(^2\) QUING (Quality in Gender+ Equality Policies) may be visited at www.quing.eu.

\(^3\) FEMCIT (Gendered Citizenship in Multicultural Europe) may be visited at www.femcit.org.
important voice in gender policy development at the level of the United Nations. For example, the Beijing Platform for Action of 1995, which has become a major stimulator for such things as parity in politics and gender mainstreaming worldwide, was inspired by gender debate in Europe and the participation of EU policymakers in regional preparatory meetings. Gender equality policies such as gender mainstreaming, and models of gender relations formed in the EU are packaged and promoted by EU agencies and highly influential outside the EU framework. In the most recent EU Roadmaps for Equality between Women and Men (2006–2010) and Strategy for Equality between Women and Men (2010–2015), one of the priorities is pursuing gender equality with EU external partners. As a global power, gender justice is one of the things that the EU hopes to export. Through development aid and neighborhood and accession policy (Bretherton and Vogel 2008), EU models on gender infiltrate far beyond the borders of the 27.

Conclusion

This short sampler of four of the many topics being pursued today in terms of gender and EU politics demonstrates that the prism of gender offers new windows for investigating the process of EU integration and its democratic legitimacy. Current themes such as Europeanization, symbolic power and norms, citizenship, participation and democratic deficits, and certainly the role of intersections and identity in the construction of Europe are all reflected in ongoing gender and politics research in Europe. There is rich material for study of the mechanisms of transfer of both norms and policy, and also for the study of political participation, agency and representation. It is a shame that these insights are still so seldom integrated in general EU handbooks and training packages. Research will continue to be needed on the mechanisms of policy diffusion, descriptions and explanations of success, failure and stagnation in different settings and policy success. Given the explicit ambitions of the EU to export its gender model to other countries, there is also ample room for research in international relations. There are, of course, challenges as well. The role of the EU itself as a funder of gender and politics research is a dual-edged sword. The funds have been essential for establishing the field and providing access to the wider frame of Eastern and Central Europe. However, funding has the hidden cost of creating a gender research elite, and perhaps curtailing truly critical thinking. Broadening the frame of gender to include sexualities, masculinities and race is also a continuing challenge. For example, how do varieties of masculinity affect the EU’s political style and approach, such as its current neo-liberal focus and increasing fascination with security and defense issues? Such questions come too seldom under a gendered lens. The EU provides a moving target full of changing gendered relationships in a multinational setting. Seeing its politics through the prism of gender is an essential corrective to studies of European integration.

References


Beveridge, Fiona, and Samantha Velluti, eds. 2008. Gender and the Open Method of Coordination: Perspectives on Law, Governance and Equality in the EU. Surrey, UK: Ashgate.


FPCGS is the journal of the Conference Group on French Politics & Society. It is jointly sponsored by the Institute of French Studies at New York University and the Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies at Harvard University.

Editor: Herrick Chapman, New York University

FPCGS explores modern and contemporary France from the perspectives of the social sciences, history, and cultural analysis. It also examines the relationship of France to the larger world, especially Europe, the United States, and the former French Empire. The editors also welcome pieces on recent debates and events, as well as articles that explore the connections between French society and cultural expression of all sorts (such as art, film, literature, and popular culture). Issues devoted to a single theme appear from time to time. With refereed research articles, timely essays, and reviews of books in many disciplines, FPCGS provides a forum for learned opinion and the latest scholarship on France.

**RECENT ARTICLES**

◆ **Memory Troubles: Remembering the Occupation in Simone de Beauvoir’s Les Mandarins**, Susan Rubin Suleiman
◆ **Beauvoir, Kinsey, and Mid-Century Sex**, Judith G. Coffin
◆ **Ethics and Violence: Simone de Beauvoir, Djamila Bouacha, and the Algerian War**, Judith Surkis
◆ **The Death of Maternity? Simone de Beauvoir’s A Very Easy Death**, Christine McDonald
◆ **What Feminism?**, Alice A. Jardine
◆ **Globalization, the Confédération Paysanne, and Symbolic Power**, Sarah Waters

**RECENT SPECIAL ISSUES**

Special issue on Simone de Beauvoir: Engagements, Contexts, Reconsiderations.


Special issue on the Banlieues, guest edited by Frédéric Viguier.
Building Europe: The International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) and LGBT Activism in Central and Eastern Europe

Phillip Ayoub, Cornell University
David Paternotte, Fonds de la recherche scientifique/Université libre de Bruxelles*

Europe has long been a propitious region for transnational activism. Despite linguistic diversity, short geographic distances and efficient transport networks have incentivized activist collaboration across borders. Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) movements are no exception, and the first displays of transnational exchanges can be traced back to the nineteenth century, if not earlier. However, the more recent developments of modern technologies, cheap air travel and, especially, deepened multi-level governance structures, both through the Council of Europe (CoE) and the European Union (EU), have accentuated these historical trends. For LGBT activists, ‘Europe’ goes beyond strict institutional categories. The movement experience has been embedded in various institutions and connected through various transnational ties across the region as a geographical, political and (sometimes) cultural entity.

In this article, we emphasize the role played by transnational LGBT activists in building Europe, with a focus on their activism at the European level and on the ground in the Central and Eastern European Countries (the CEEC). We argue that these movements were inspired by specific ideas – democratic values and human rights responsibilities – about Europe, and that they tried to realize them through activism. We also posit that, in turn, this activism has contributed to the project of building Europe, mostly within political frameworks like the EU

*Authors may be contacted at: pma34@cornell.edu and dpatern@ulb.ac.be
and CoE, as well as to an inherent understanding that LGBT rights are by definition linked to the idea of contemporary European values. Adopting a constructivist approach to European identity construction, which recognizes that agents and structures are interacting and mutually constituted (Katzenstein 1996), we address two central issues: How do transnational LGBT activists represent Europe, and what kind of Europe are they building through their strategies and actions? In our story, LGBT civil society actors are nested in the normative macro-European structures. This environment, within which these actors function, is material, but also socially constructed. Europe is a normative framework that constitutes LGBT actors’ interests and strategies, and in turn these actors (re-)create European structures and institutions by linking them to LGBT rights.

We begin by outlining the emergence of transnational LGBT activism in Europe and show how it was inspired by a specific idea of Europe. Thereafter we shift our focus to the case of the CEEC to look at how this idea has been deployed in activism there, and subsequently how it cements LGBT rights as constitutive of European values.

Transnational LGBT Activism in Europe

The first attempts to build structured networks of LGBT groups across Europe occurred in the 1950s, when the Dutch COC (Cultuur- en Ontspannings Centrum) set up the International Committee for Sexual Equality (Rupp 2011). This initiative followed a long tradition of gay cosmopolitanism, and echoes the informal contacts between gay activists during the first half of the twentieth century. In the 1970s, radical movements also attempted to turn their informal exchanges into a more persistent transnational structure.

The first enduring transnational LGBT organization, however, only appeared in 1978, when the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA)\(^1\) was created in Coventry, United Kingdom. Despite its global vocation, the ILGA has always considered Europe among its main priorities, a phenomenon which was long reinforced by a mostly European membership. Indeed, the ILGA has always been inspired by a certain idea of Europe and, crucially, of its usefulness for the progress of LGBT rights. From the start, founding activists believed that Europe had a specific meaning in terms of democratic and human rights values. They also thought that European institutions (the EU and CoE), along with the United Nations, could eventually be used to increase pressure on reluctant states and gain rights from above.

Early ILGA activists viewed Europe as both a community of values and a strategic means with which to enhance their rights. Interestingly, this idea of Europe was not limited by an institutional design, but merged the European Economic Community (EEC) and the CoE into the same normative entity—an imagined and experienced community that enshrined certain fundamental rights for minority peoples. Mobilization was not yet facilitated by institutional opportunities at the time, and relied on a strong normative commitment about what Europe should be. While engaging the CoE may have been logical in the 1980s, engaging the EEC for these means was visionary for that time.

This double definition of Europe—both a normative and a strategic one—led to specific forms of collective action and strategies of mobilization, which from the start focused on institutional and reformist politics. The 1978 Coventry meeting was originally designed to prepare for the 1979 European elections, and to discuss the need for

---

\(^1\) The ILGA was called the International Gay Association until 1986.
an observatory status at the CoE – which the ILGA finally obtained in 1997. More surprisingly, contacts with the European Commission were also envisaged, candidates to the European Parliament elections were contacted, and the idea of an “all-party group of Euro-MPs favorable to gay rights” 2 – finally created in 1997 – was discussed. These strategies appeared to be fruitful, as the ILGA played an instrumental role in landmark decisions, such as the historic 1981 report on the discrimination of homosexuals approved by the CoE, the 1984 Squarcialupi Report, and 1994 Roth Report (the latter were both passed by the European Parliament).

This vision of Europe and the way it has inspired transnational activism across the continent became particularly visible when LGBT activists decided to establish a European umbrella organization, ILGA-Europe, in 1996. New political opportunities at the EU level – along with a separate process of regionalization and globalization of the ILGA – contributed to the birth of an exclusively European organization. The breakthrough 1994 Roth Report had been a success, and activists saw the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference on a new European treaty as an opportunity not to be missed. In contrast to the 1970s, strategies were now largely induced by institutional change, and the ILGA’s new orientation – building a close relationship with European institutions – was decisively responding to new European opportunities. The ILGA attained an advisory role when it became an official partner of the European Commission as a result of the Treaty of Amsterdam, and core funding has come from the EU since 2000. This institutionalized relationship has allowed ILGA-Europe to professionalize and develop into one of today’s most powerful and well-funded transnational LGBT groups worldwide.

The Project of a United Europe

The expansion of LGBT activism in the CEEC is a privileged case study that provides another angle from which to grasp the dynamics described above. Here, we will track this specific idea of Europe, and assess the ways it has inspired CEEC LGBT activism and how it is entrenched in the strategies of mobilization focused on institutional and reformist politics. Especially for LGBT advocacy organizations in this region, we argue that Europe provided not only a material resource, but also a normative frame for shaping and fueling mobilization. The idea of ‘Europe’ as both a community of values and a strategic means with which to enhance rights was key for LGBT activists. In what follows, we posit that by working within European networks and employing European discursive frames, LGBT activism in the CEEC also contributes to rebuilding the meaning of Europe, from the ground up.

LGBT activists in the CEEC have long been connected to an idea of Europe that embodies values of fundamental rights. While state-socialism was repressive of gay and lesbian activism, spaces for such activism existed to various degrees and in various forms across states in the region before 1989 (Chetaille 2011: 121–123). The presence and mobilization of the lesbian and gay movement was substantially more advanced in many ‘western’ European states, however, where the 1960s/1970s sexual revolution and the politicization of the HIV/AIDS crisis created a greater space for activism much earlier. Those ‘western’ states, within the auspices of the EU, the CoE and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, provided a natural arena for LGBT activists to develop ties, too. Especially after the fall of the Berlin Wall, activists in post-socialist states saw an opportunity to connect the advancement of LGBT recognition – both legally and socially – to European integration.

The ILGA established an East European Pool in 1981, regional meetings were organized between 1987 and 1996, and its first EU funding was dedicated to a project designed to foster democracy and civil society in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Russia. European activists wanted to include both ‘western’ and ‘eastern’ Europe within the same European organization when they

founded ILGA-Europe. Within that organization, they have developed various strategies to identify partners and to foster activism in both EU and non-EU post-socialist states (through capacity-building workshops, study visits, scholarships and access to funding, etc.). Since 2001, the organization has been running a network of national representatives, the EU network, which meets twice a year and fosters pan-European networking opportunities. Many activists in the CEEC – particularly those from Latvia, the former Yugoslavia, Poland and Romania – responded by integrating themselves at the macro-European level and joining even the earliest ILGA-Europe boards. Within the ramifications of a normative commitment to Europe, they did this because of the transnational support, the resources and the know-how it provided, and because they saw a discursive opportunity to frame the issue as a shared European one in their own domestic realms, where they linked furthering LGBT rights to the responsibilities associated with being part of modern Europe (Ayoub 2012). Europe provided the normative vantage point with which to associate the LGBT issue.

European LGBT solidarity across borders endowed the movement in the CEEC with various resources to promote the issue. Actors at major organizations, and smaller ones in the CEEC, had access to material resources for campaigns and projects through grant applications to ILGA-Europe, and sometimes directly to the European institutions. Organizational funding for campaigns and projects in the CEEC also came directly from other European states (particularly the Netherlands, Sweden, Great Britain and Norway), domestic organizations in those states and major international foundations, such as George Soros’ Open Society Institute. For example, in Poland, Campaign Against Homophobia’s ‘Let them See Us’ campaign – which involved 27 billboards showing same-sex couples holding hands – was funded in large part by the Dutch Embassy. A similar phenomenon took place in Romania, where the movement established itself in a challenging domestic context (same-sex relations were illegal until 1996 and an anti-gay propaganda law existed until 2000) with the aid of personal commitments by some expatriates, including US academic Scott Long and US Ambassador Michael Guest, and the support of transnational groups such as the ILGA, the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission and foreign embassies and international human rights foundations (Carstocea 2006).

Within and alongside Europe’s material resources, LGBT activists were often able to use the ‘idea of Europe’ to frame the LGBT issue as a European norm. As European institutions adopted a normative structure that advanced the visibility of the LGBT issues – by introducing the issue into the legal framework of member states – the activists involved in the CEEC developed frames that linked the issue to modernity and the responsibilities associated with being European. For EU and Council of Europe members, these frames legitimized the LGBT issue through the constitutive effect of shared membership in a European community. While the topic is often domestically opposed on the grounds of rejecting the imposition foreign states’ values, the incorporation of many the CEEC states into a common European community makes the issue less foreign. The ability to persuade is at its zenith

Within and alongside Europe’s material resources, LGBT activists were often able to use the ‘idea of Europe’ to frame the LGBT issue as a European norm.

3 Examples of this include the pressures from the Council of Europe, which led to the decriminalization of homosexual acts in countries such as Ireland, Romania and Cyprus, Article 13 of the Amsterdam Treaty, the 2000 Employment Anti-Discrimination Directive, the European Charter for Fundamental Rights, and the 1993 Copenhagen Criteria for accession.
when “the socializing agency or individual is an authoritative member of the in-group to which the target belongs or wants to belong,” and Europe has this advantage (Checkel 2006, 364).

For LGBT activists, framing LGBT issues in the language of ‘European’ democratic values was employed because Europe resonated in many CEEC member states at the time of the 2004 wave of accession (Ayoub 2012). Examples of this frame include the T-shirts worn at controversial LGBT demonstrations in Poland around the time of accession, which read ‘Europe = Tolerance’. In Poland, the Warsaw LGBT equality marches’ themes also used European frames. For example, 2006 and 2010 themes were ‘Culture of Diversity’ and ‘Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité’ (alluding to the French Revolution). Making the LGBT issue European is also apparent in addressing right-wing critics in the CEEC, as LGBT activists involved could reframe their message as one of European responsibilities. Since LGBT marches in Warsaw in 2005 and 2006 included many Germans – whose involvement in domestic affairs resonates poorly for historical reasons in the region – organizers purposely shifted attention away from the fact that Germans were protesting for LGBT rights by highlighting that Europeans were protesting for democratic values. Foreign visitors involved in CEEC demonstrations also say that they see their LGBT activism linked to their shared values, solidarity and responsibilities as Europeans. For example, Claudia Roth – a former member of the European Parliament, current co-chair of the German Green Party and a vocal voice for LGBT recognition – says that “among friends one must say what does not work, especially among member states of the EU” (interview 2011). Across the board, a frame of LGBT issues as European – and thus indirectly also Polish, Latvian, Hungarian, Slovenian, Romanian, and so on, because they are members of this shared community – is evident.

The fact that transnational activists so often call for mobilization of support and recognition of LGBT peoples in a language of European values and responsibilities suggests that they contribute to building Europe in a certain image from the ground up. Linking back to the first section on the ILGA, the work of CEEC activists suggests that ‘Europe’ is both a bottom-up and top-down process. While LGBT issues are linked to Europe’s normative structures from above, by using ‘Europe’ as an argument for demanding LGBT recognition from their states and societies, the activists on the ground in the CEEC subsequently, and indirectly, recreate the idea that Europe is united around the LGBT issue. In turn, the link between being European and accepting LGBT people is established, and the understanding of LGBT rights as a European value is further cemented.

Conclusion

In this piece, we argued that an idea of Europe is linked to LGBT activism, both at a transnational level and in the CEEC, through its role as a set of values and as a useful means with which to gain rights. We have shown this by exploring the visions and strategies developed by the ILGA and ILGA-Europe to realize the project of a united Europe. From the beginning, the ILGA had a clear vision of what Europe should be, and how it could contribute to the advancement of LGBT rights in national arenas. The founders’ insights were later strengthened through the establishment of ILGA-Europe to realize the project of a united Europe, which played a crucial part in the expansion of LGBT activism in the CEEC. We have found that the idea of Europe is equally pertinent to activism in this region, both as a resource and as a value. By linking LGBT rights so closely to Europe in their work, activists in the CEEC contribute to the project of building Europe as a set of values that adhere to those rights.

Such an understanding of Europe, as an imagined and an experienced community through time, has important implications. First, where there is no mass consensus around a European value-based identity in the public sphere (Díez Medrano 2009), we do recognize a link between LGBT rights and European values. In this sense, Europe appears both as a set of values and
normative commitments (shared and felt by ILGA and CEEC activists), and a strategic means by which to demand rights in various domestic realms. By discussing the contours of Europe that social actors imagine, we have shown that these beliefs – and, more importantly, the various ways they are embodied – further contribute to building Europe, an insight that is crucial for the future of European integration.

Second, this paper invites us to unpack the ‘special relationship’ that unites issues of sexuality and Europe, and, more specifically, the issue of LGBT rights in the construction of a common European identity. Scholars have studied the connections between sexuality and nationalism, a topic which has come into a new light due to the recent debates on ‘homonationalism’ (see Duyvendak and Mepschen in this issue). In an attempt to aid the building of a common European identity, European institutions have promoted the values of the LGBT activists they would endorse, decisively contributing to the expansion of activism further eastward. While this can be viewed as a social movement success, crucial questions remain. In particular, we must continue to question who and what is left out in this process. The expansion of LGBT activism in the CEEC reveals a complex politics of co-optation and a selective endorsement of claims and issues. Furthermore, as Carl Stychin (1998) argued, ‘national’ identities are often also constructed against an ‘other’. This leaves the question of who becomes LGBT-Europe’s ‘sexual other’, which could include EU countries (e.g., Poland) or neighbors (e.g., Russia or Turkey), or the construction of Muslim and immigrant communities as threats.

**References**

Ayoub, Phillip M. 2012. “Cooperative Transnationalism in Contemporary Europe: Europeanization and Political Opportunities for LGBT Mobilization in the European Union.” *European Political Science Review, CJO.*


Why is Europe Lesbian and Gay Friendly?
Angelia R. Wilson, University of Manchester*

I’m often asked this question by American academics and activists working hard to change the political culture in the US so that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered citizens can benefit from basic equality and human rights. How is it that so many European countries have policies that protect citizens from discrimination based on sexual orientation and recognize same-sex couples? Throughout the years, I have answered this question differently, depending on the latest research or current tenor of political debate. In this short piece here, I want to rehearse some potential answers to this question that have emerged in the relevant literature and to consider a narrative missing from that literature that has significant potential in framing a European-American comparative discussion. After reviewing four possible answers, I then explore how another narrative regarding political economies of care might bring to light nuances in such a comparative analysis.

How Friendly?
Before doing so, it is worth spending a moment defining ‘friendly’ as a term of policy assessment. First, policy literature, particularly that produced by feminists, uses phrases such as ‘women-friendly policy’ or ‘family friendly policy’ as a means by which to measure changes in policy and subsequent outcomes based on a binary gender rubric (Hernes 1987; Jones 1990; Borchorst and Siim 2002). Some employ the spirit of this friendliness to consider possible

*Author may be contacted at: angelia.r.wilson@manchester.ac.uk
policies that might lead to, in the words of Joni Lovenduski, a “feminization of politics” (2005). Such criteria considers to what extent a party or particular government 1) acts for women, 2) takes on women’s concerns into policy and/or 3) makes a difference to women’s lives. For the record, I can’t quite imagine a ‘homosexualization of politics’, although ‘queering’ policy, politics and the state seems to be a popular academic phrase that refers to a range of methodological and identity related issues (Roseneil 2004). In the course of investigating policies throughout the past half-century, it is evident that the primary concern of policymakers is with same-sex desire – criminalizing, regulating, tolerating or accepting it. Transgender issues appear occasionally on the political and judicial agenda, but, interestingly, these are most often kept separate from discussions of sexual activity and instead focus on a (misplaced) binary notion of moving from one gender to another. For the purposes of analysis of policy developments here, I will focus on policies pertaining only to same-sex desire, as these policies have shifted significantly in many European countries throughout the past 20 years.

Second, to be ‘friendly’ can mean so very many things. It may imply an empathetic mutual understanding of different positions and struggles. But it can also describe ‘Facebook friends’ or those that publicly smile and wave without ever really knowing, or caring. Friendly may be slightly better than tolerating, but the depth and extent of the relationship remains unclear and fluid. As such, posing the question in these terms does not necessarily imply that I consider policies in Europe as indicative of a lesbian and gay utopia, but rather an acknowledgement that much of contemporary policy shifts away from, for example, criminalization.

Finally, even if one is seen to be ‘friendly’ this does not imply that the sentiment is mutual. Some lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) citizens are not satisfied with current rhetoric in policy and political debates regarding constructions of sexual desire and identity categories. Most are all too aware of the extensive reach of the normative hand of the state in individual lives. Some see the expansion of policies, such as same-sex marriage, as more inclusive, while for others such expansion invokes caution. Carl Stychin, for example, worries about the potential complacency or conservatism that may result from a law that includes gay men and lesbians but continues to normalize (Stychin 2003). Normalization can lead to political complacency. “Same-sex sexual communities” – and I would add social science academics – “must themselves continue to be interrogated for their own exclusion and marginalizations (such as around race, gender and social class)” (Stychin 2003, 968). There is a tension in LGBT scholarship between those who are comfortable with such continual interrogation, those who are not, and those who believe it to be the end in itself. Outside the academy, there are plenty of LGBTs who advocate ‘friendly’ policies because they share in the values the policies articulate, or just because it makes their lives more liveable.

Possible Answers...

A quick survey of contemporary academic literature offers four key possible answers to the question posed. The first, most expertly captured in Jeffrey Weeks’s book, entitled The World We Have Won (2007), maintains that from the moment of the Stonewall Riots in New York in 1969, the ‘gay’ movement has made a significant impact on the cultures, politics and policies of the Western world. Familiar new social movement literature outlines the importance of key political moments where activists took to the streets demanding change. Likewise, historians and ethnographers compile moving accounts of activists organizing as a community in order to protect individuals from harm, and provide basic care, as the discovery of HIV/AIDS led to homophobic backlash, marginalization and, in some cases, the denial of medical care and welfare. In time, activists, now experienced in engaging with the institutions of the state, became
more professionalized in securing financing from non-profit organizations, in provision of care and services as well as in the art of political lobbying and rational, elite persuasion. For example, Ricardo Llamas and Fefa Vila note the development of a ‘homocracy’ from two fundamental aspects of Spanish activism: “an establishment of social centers” and “provision of social services around AIDS prevention and information hot lines” (Llamas and Vila 1999, 226–27). It is clear that the ‘gay movement’ matured and, now more inclusive of a range of non-heterosexual identities, has become a more sophisticated political actor in most Western democracies.

With such political professionalism developing in Western democracies, there began to emerge a few moments – brief and sporadic at first – in political discourse, in which a few leading politicians or local policymakers would take a risk by calling into question the traditional notions of equality, justice or rights – brave attempts to redefine the debate and raise the opportunity for a redefinition that was more inclusive of lesbian and gay citizens. As these moments increased, a second narrative emerged mapping these as indicators of an ideological shift. A few European countries were able to set the bar for good practice in non-discrimination and inclusivity to which others could aspire. Reflecting on these moments, Kees Waaldijk employs a policy developmental model that outlines how this shift might take place over time within any one country and how this might lead to increased policy sharing (1993). Others, such as Kelly Kollman and David Paternotte, map the reframing of human rights to include same-sex relationships as a global phenomenon (Kollman 2009; Tremblay, Paternotte, and Johnson 2011). This narrative suggests that an ideological shift does have its challengers. The history of modern political theory attests to the difficulty of agreeing on even the most basic values of liberal democracy. Within the LGBT academic community – just as within all philosophical discourse – the reaction to shifting values is often: “Whose justice? Which equality?” (Wilson 1993). Backlash to inclusivity in the Social Chapter, for example, continues to mark the European debate where social conservatives from the political right feel threatened by attempts to expand the umbrella of justice or rights to include non-heterosexual citizens. Arguably, for each of these ideological shifts there is a counter argument against new definitions of justice or equality. This opposition has been significant in each European country – those that are now more ‘friendly’ and those, such as Poland, which continue to be substantially less/un-friendly.

A third explanation points directly to the construction of the European Union (EU) as unique political terrain for introducing social change. To be sure, the construction of the EU did present windows of opportunity in which inclusive policies could be framed as economically beneficial. Developing social policy interventions was justified if member states’ laws were distorting competition or damaging the creation of economic union, for example, by inhibiting the free movement of labor (Hantrais 2000). Of course, social affairs were limited to the lowest common denominator of what was politically feasible and facilitated economic interdependency. The harmonization envisioned in Article 117 was understandable, as the six original signatory countries had similar welfare regimes; however, as member states increased, so did the social policy diversity. Despite this diversity, the subsidiary role of the EU institutions (Hix 2005), or a detailed European blueprint for social protection, what emerged throughout the decade that followed – by way of green and white papers on more specific social policy issues, social action programs and judgments in the ECJ – has been the fleshing out of fundamental values around fair treatment in employment, responsibility for public health, environmental protection and non-discrimination.1 The driving force behind these

---

incremental articulations of European social values continues to be economic competitiveness.

With regard to lesbian and gay friendliness, this third narrative regarding opportunities presented in the development of EU economic and social policies must be set against the structural difficulties that seem to undermine the coherent advancement of lesbian- and gay-friendly EU policies. On the one hand, the link between the commitment to economic integration and the need for social policies to facilitate it offers unique possibilities for policy development. For example, institutional conversations about employment, equal consideration under the law, and free movement of workers provide opportunities for discussing discrimination based on sexual orientation without directly confronting specific hostile national constituencies. Beck and others note the ample opportunities within the European solution to achieving social justice within a capitalist market system (see Beck, van der Maesen, and Walker 1998). However, the subsidiary nature of European institutions and the open method of coordination leave significant scope for national interpretation. Therefore, while there has been a creation of opportunities to discuss economic inclusion for lesbian and gay citizens, there is no guarantee of agreement on issues of social values, particularly beyond the remit of economic efficiency and competition (Berger 2004). Narratives about commitments to harmonization or expectations of the developing European Social Model must be balanced with a nuanced appreciation of the diversity of cultural values that may be at odds with the social inclusion of lesbian and gay citizens. Moreover, the expansion of the EU further challenges an assumption of shared social values. To that end, the ideological, historical and institutional context of the EU serves as only one part of the explanatory narratives about why Europe is lesbian and gay friendly.

A fourth narrative can be found in quantitative data regarding the shift in social attitudes towards gay men and lesbians, or as most often articulated in data sets, ‘homosexuality’. For example, the 2007 Pew Research Center Global Attitudes Project found that in Western Europe, “clear majorities say homosexuality is a way of life that should be accepted by society.” Similarly, longitudinal evidence is detailed in work such as the British Social Attitudes Survey, which found in 1983 that 62 percent thought homosexuality was always or mostly wrong, but by 2008 only 36 percent held this view. These data resonate with similar findings from the US tracking the shift in attitudes throughout time. In a PS: Political Science & Politics symposium on same-sex marriage, for example, Gary Segura summarizes this literature, noting that when “more respondents attribute homosexuality to nature, rather than nurture, opposition to same-sex marriage declines” (Segura 2005). Such attitudinal changes act as a precursor to and a justification for legislative and judicial intervention that supports inclusivity of lesbian and gay citizens. There is increasing evidence, then, suggesting that the advancement of friendly policies may be facilitated by changing social attitudes, and that these changes are particularly accommodating in Western Europe.

---

There is increasing evidence, then, suggesting that the advancement of friendly policies may be facilitated by changing social attitudes, and that these changes are particularly accommodating in Western Europe.

---


Perspectives on Europe
• Spring 2012 42:1

61

Western Europe.

Each of these possibilities provides a rational narrative that may help one articulate an answer to ‘Why is Europe lesbian and gay friendly?’ Arguably, there is more than one answer to the question. It seems most likely that it is the overlapping dynamics of multiple narratives that gives a contextualized picture of what is unique about some European countries in this particular area of policy development. However, I believe the literature seems to have one significant gap that, when addressed, could offer further explanation regarding the peculiarities of policy changes in Europe and, importantly, shed light on the differences between Western and Eastern European countries, as well as address the North-South divide. It is this missing narrative that I want to acknowledge briefly and indicate why it is fundamental to any explanatory analysis.

Political Economies of Care

What is noticeably absent from the above narratives is what has come to be a standard analytical lens for understanding the development of policies regulating family life: the political economy of care. For example, Mary Daly and Jane Lewis define the political economy of care as the dynamic of “how care as an activity is shaped by and in turn shapes social economic and political processes” where care as an activity sits at the “intersection of state, market and family (and voluntary sector) relations” (Daly and Lewis 2000, 296). However, taking gender as the determining factor in care analysis has mired much of the literature at the intersection of binary constructions of gender and, in particular, heterosexual negotiations of care. Undoubtedly, care is about gender relations, and given the predominance of heterosexuality, it is unsurprising that this is the focus of the majority of academic work. However, I think outside that particular box.

Employing the lens of the political economy of care takes the gaze beyond considerations of welfare and family policy in order to see that “the concept of social care is not exhausted by its utility for a gender focused analysis” (Daly and Lewis 2000, 296). Moreover, such an approach enables a consideration of the trajectories of change and the interrelations of the actors, or investors, in the provision of care. An analysis of the political economy of care has the potential to widen the research gaze to include the multitude of ways in which care is negotiated by various investors and the power dynamics of this negotiation beyond just the familiar rubrics of the welfare state and the division of labor in the heterosexual family. For example, considering the political economy of care enables an understanding of the transgressive potential of the state to redefine aspects of care, such as the family, when necessary to meet other political or economic goals. It sheds light on the potential to capitalize politically on the way in which the needs of welfare force the state to construct alternative settings for care, e.g., children’s care, elderly care, hospitals/hospices, housing shelters, etc., and to recognize alternative sources for care, e.g., the voluntary/faith-based sector as well as non-heterosexual families. As Daly and Lewis note, the potential of an analysis of the political economy of care is in “its capacity to capture trajectories of change in contemporary welfare states” and, in considering various investors in care, one can see that the “state assumes a central role but shares the limelight as (just) one agent of change” (Daly and Lewis 2000, 296). There are other agents of change, and many resisting change. This narrative captures that complexity as it manifests itself in the dynamics of care provision.

By considering the political economy of care as it manifests in various European countries, we can begin to locate a more nuanced understanding of how and why lesbian- and gay-friendly policies have developed, or not, and why they are largely in areas of family policy such as same-sex marriage, adoption, fostering, etc. One of the primary investors in care provision has been those working in the Christian tradition providing a direct safety net for children and the elderly, as
well as advocating values of social justice through state provision of services. In each European country this investment of values and finances has manifest itself differently. In Sweden, where state and church elites shared similar values and were themselves occasionally interchangeable, state care provision was understood historically as one expression of Christian charity. This is not a claim that the majority of the Swedish electorate is composed of fundamentalist Christians, nor to discount the impact of secularization in Europe. Despite that secularization, the involvement of the Christian church elites in both the provision of service and the setting of the values frame for the development of the welfare state cannot be underestimated. The historical involvement of Christian churches, particularly in post-World War II welfare settlements, and the resulting political economy of care in each country, is unique. However, one common factor is the normative interpretation of ‘the family’. When mapped closely, making use of literature from other areas of the discipline, such as religion and politics, one can see patterns emerge regarding the development of lesbian- and gay-friendly policies – and, equally importantly, in the unfriendly opposition to such policies. The role of Christian values – ranging from left-leaning social justice, Reformed Protestant individualism or social conservatism – in relation to the political economy of care gives a distinctive flavor to questions about how, why and under what circumstances policymakers are compelled, or not, to expand policies redefining the family to include same-sex couples.

As American and European academics and activists investigate the potential of policy sharing or strategic interventions, it is important not to underestimate the function of the political economy of care. In some cases, such as Spain, the overwhelming demographic shifts combined with an already residual welfare state – and the organization of lesbian and gay activists – engendered a fertile terrain for the expansion of the definition of ‘family’ and tapped into a reserve army of potential carers. In other cases, such as Italy, the historic investment of the Catholic Church in direct care provision and in culturally defining the heteronormative family model limits the political economy of care to a set of ‘pre-approved providers’ and, in so doing, marginalizes those providing care outside that model. These examples serve to encourage a more interdisciplinary approach to understanding this area of policy development and to contextualize the expansion of lesbian- and gay-friendly policies. Further considerations of the political economy of care will add nuance to interpretations of ‘friendliness’ and bring to light fundamental aspects of individual countries’ political culture that tell us exactly how deep that friendship may run.

Angelia R. Wilson’s book Why Europe is lesbian and gay friendly (and why America will never be) is to be published with SUNY Press in 2013.

References


There is probably not a more debated, and mediatized, issue in European feminist politics today than Islamic veiling in its multiple forms, from the simple headscarf to the full veil, and, by extension, other types of ‘religious’ practices all associated in public opinion with Islam, such as arranged/forced marriages, polygamy, or the use of Shari’a to solve family disputes. These debates classically oppose gender equality with multicultural accommodation, i.e., the accommodation of religious or cultural practices of minority/immigrant groups. Indeed, practices such as veiling are perceived by many Western women from the non-Muslim majority (but also within Muslim minorities) as inherently oppressing to women. From the perspective of many feminists, the presence of this symbol of gender inequality, and its potential diffusion in society, logically implies a risk of regression for all women’s rights, rights which have been only recently secured and are often under (budgetary) threat in many European countries.

Many Western feminist movements have long fought against religious

---

1 For an overview, see the special issue of *Ethnicities* on “The Rights of Women and the Crisis of Multiculturalism,” eds. Anne Phillips and Sawitri Saharso, vol. 8, no. 3 (2008), and *Politics, Religion and Gender: Framing and Regulating the Veil*, eds. Sieglinde Rosenberger and Birgit Sauer (New York: Routledge, 2012).

* Author may be contacted at: eleonore.lepinard@umontreal.ca
extremism or the influence of the Catholic Church on civil society and politics – France or Italy are good examples – and they understand their taking issue with veiling politics as yet another fight directed against a form of religious extremism which happens to be Islamic this time. In the context of current immigrant-integration politics, however, the stakes at play are higher than usual and should make us pause. Indeed, at a time when a return to a civic assimilationist concept of the nation – which makes it harder for immigrants to access European countries and later on to acquire citizenship, and which promotes cultural homogeneity rather than diversity – is growing throughout Europe, the opposition of gender equality and Islam, a religion widespread among immigrants, has immediate political currency and often has legal effects as well with the multiplication of legislative initiatives to ban forms of Islamic veiling.

The Multiculturalist Backlash ... In the Name of Women’s Rights

Nowadays, critics of a multiculturalist approach to immigration issues argue for restrictive regulations vis-à-vis Islamic religious practices in the name of women’s rights. Nationwide debates questioning the compatibility of Islam with Western culture and the prerequisites for inclusion of Muslim citizens and migrants in the national body politic focus on gendered symbols and gender relations. Gender equality has suddenly gained a new visibility and a new status: it is presented as a national achievement, a cultural specificity of Western democracies, and a new legal norm that should take precedence over the norm of religious freedom. How we define gender equality now determines who will be considered as capable of assimilating and what practices are or are not politically and socially desirable in Western societies.

The debate opposing feminism and multiculturalism is not new in feminist theory. It was launched in 1997 by the publication of Susan Moller Okin’s important essay, “Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?,” in which she argued that granting specific rights to minorities is detrimental to women’s individual rights because these rights generally favor a traditional, hence patriarchal, interpretation of a group’s culture. Many feminist scholars have criticized her essay, arguing, among other things, that the framing she proposed conflates culture and religion, de-historicizes cultural practices, obscures more pressing concerns about women’s inferior socio-economic status, fuels processes of racialization of minority cultures and racism, diverts attention from gender inequalities within the majority culture, and introduces relationships of power between women along racial lines.

However, despite important criticisms at the theoretical level, Okin’s liberal feminist views that religious accommodation is detrimental to women are shared – with some variations, depending on the countries – by a wide majority of self-defined feminists in the Netherlands, Germany, France and Denmark, as well as in Québec, for instance. Some feminist organizations have been at the forefront of demands to legislate and ban headscarves in French public schools or the full veil in French streets, or to ban the reference to Shari’a in family arbitration procedures in Ontario, Canada. This active involvement in religious accommodation issues and, more broadly, immigrant-integration politics, deserves some scrutiny on the part of gender studies scholars but also students of immigrant-integration.

---


3 See Rosenberger and Sauer, *Politics, Religion and Gender*.

Feminist Movements and Islam: The Challenge of Intersectionality

From the perspective of gender studies, it is an important topic to explore, both at the theoretical and the empirical levels. Indeed, feminist organizations, born out of what has been called the ‘second-wave’ of feminist movements in the 1970s, are now confronted in a particularly pressing way to the question of including a diverse array of interests, identities and needs held by immigrant women and women of color. Can the usual software of feminist practice – focused on gender equality, bodily autonomy, universal rights for women and the fight to end violence against women – accommodate this new variety of identities? Is the immigrant experience, and more broadly, the experience of racialized women from minority groups in Europe soluble in Western feminism?

To ask this question is to ask whether Western feminism should be changed by its encounter with intersectionality. Intersectionality is a concept that has gained prominence in gender studies during the past decade. It designates the social location of minority women at the intersection of several axes of domination, such as gender and race (but also class, sexuality, disability or age), and calls for an approach that takes into account the simultaneity of these oppressions, which define a specific social experience. For instance, women of color are often doubly discriminated against in employment; they suffer specific forms of sexual harassment or stereotyping and intense forms of cultural marginalization. Intersectionality theory argues that the intersectional location of women of color means that they have a specific identity, which cannot be subsumed under by gender identity alone, and that they hold specific political interests which are under-represented in mainstream anti-racist or feminist movements.

For feminists, the critique runs deep, since intersectionality demands that gender identity – the core identity of feminist organizations and the source of solidarity among their members – not be prioritized over other identities that are also sources of oppression or marginalization (such as racial membership). So far, the few empirical studies that we have suggest that, with notable exceptions such as Britain, the answer of European feminists to the questions raised by intersectionality in the context of debates regarding religious accommodation is, generally but not always, a resounding no. In other words, feminists believe that gender identity comes first and that political platforms focusing on women’s universal rights are inclusive of minority women’s specific interests. This does not mean that mainstream feminists ignore that there are differences between women. Intersectionality between class and gender is often recognized by feminist organizations, for instance, with a special emphasis in their political platforms on the degradation of women’s paid labor and the feminization of poverty. The same is true for migration: many women’s organizations support migrant women’s struggle to have access to their rights and improve their legal status.

Hence, what really poses problems for mainstream feminists are Muslim women’s religious identity, and the practices that the identity entails. This is vividly illustrated by the French case.
This approach focusing on veiling as a patriarchal practice renders invisible the practical consequences of these bans for Muslim women who want to wear the veil. Indeed, the growing discrimination that veiled women face in employment, and the harassment that they experience in the French public space⁶ fall out of the picture. Whereas discrimination on the ground of religious belief is illegal, the situation of quasi-systemic discrimination in employment that veiled Muslim women experience is not identified by feminist organizations as a social problem that needs to be redressed, and is left out of their political platforms. Here the consequences of non-intersectional feminist approaches for European Muslim women appear clearly: whereas informal and formal prohibitions on veiling in workplaces amount to indirect discrimination adversely impacting women – a form of discrimination now made illegal thanks to European anti-discrimination directives – feminists have not be concerned with combating them in the name of gender equality. This lack of support in favor of Muslim women’s rights has direct implications: only very few women decide to press charges on the ground of religious discrimination, and discriminatory practices against veiled women are not perceived as socially or legally undesirable.

One could argue that France represents an extreme case. This might be so. However, the dilemma that religious accommodation and veiling issues poses for Western feminists is the same everywhere. Indeed, deep down, feminist debates about veiling are debates about the definition of women’s autonomy and emancipation, values at the core of Western feminist organizations’ identity and political commitment.⁷ Following the dominant conception, veiled women lack autonomy and should be educated to emancipate themselves. However, this dominant approach might prove unsatisfactory in de facto multicultural societies. Indeed, framing veiled Muslim women as an improper feminist subject implies excluding women who are already culturally and socially marginalized from the feminist project. Hence, it appears that many European feminist organizations have not yet taken stock of the manifold implications of intersectionality when it comes to Islam. It is therefore crucial to develop research to examine the variety of feminist practices of inclusion/exclusion of minority women in the European context in order to assess the transformations of feminist movements.

The Role of Feminist Organizations in Immigrant Integration

These issues are also of importance for scholars of immigrant integration. Indeed, feminist organizations are part and parcel of immigrant integration policies on the ground. Many of them help migrant women in their quest for a regular status, a home or a job. They also play an important role at the local level in mediating between families with an immigrant background and local authorities. Seldom explored is their role in relaying, or counteracting, official immigrant-integration policies and shaping immigrants’ path to integration. While they help immigrant women to apply for naturalization or residency, to navigate their way on the labor market or to obtain refugee status, do feminist organizations relay official discourses on integration, be it multiculturalist or civic-assimilationist, or do they disrupt restrictive

---

⁶ The only data we have, gathered by a non-profit organization, the Collectif contre l’Islamophobie en France, point to an increase, especially since 2008, with 152 acts (access discrimination, verbal attack or physical attack) against individuals, 115 of them specifically targeting women, in 2010; see CCIF Rapport annuel 2010.

immigration policies by giving their support to undocumented and/or unwelcomed female migrants?

Preliminary results from my comparative fieldwork exploring the attitudes of women’s rights organizations toward migrant women in France and Canada suggest that the picture is highly complex. In Canada, many migrant women have organized by themselves, creating organizations devoted to women from their community, largely conceived. Their priority is to help migrant women on their own terms and to address their specific needs. This might also imply a – successful – critique of mainstream women’s movements for not being attentive to the plight of migrant women, pressing them to include their priorities in their political platform (e.g., with immigration law and status). This form of feminist organizing has been supported by the official policy of multiculturalism in Canada and therefore also relays its main ideas: tolerance for diversity, self-organization of communities, and participation of immigrants in economic and political life as future Canadians.

In France, on the contrary, feminist organizations targeting migrant women are often born out of the mainstream women’s movement, rather than from migrant communities. Although in their daily practices they also help migrant women on their own terms, receiving women in their centers whatever their religious dress and practices, providing to them training and support, and helping them find the resources they need, their official discourse generally relays the dominant narrative of veiling as oppressive to women. Hence, Muslim women are included, as victims in need of help, but their identity and specific interests do not appear in the feminist movement’s political agenda. French non-governmental organizations focused on women’s rights tend to convey the idea that integrating in French society means renouncing the visibility of one’s religious identity.

Gender Equality vs. Religious Freedom: For a More Nuanced Approach

Finally, beyond feminist movements or immigrant integration policies, the opposition between gender and multiculturalism is also transforming the regulation of religion in Western liberal states. The encounter between gender equality and the regulation of Islam is in fact actively reshaping the boundaries of secularism in several European countries. Indeed, bans on veiling in various areas of social life – through judicial decisions or local regulations, such as in Switzerland or Italy, or through legislation, such as in France and Belgium – are redefining the content of secularism in general, and for Muslims in particular. With prohibitions, or, more rarely, accommodations, courts and legislators are determining which religious practices are acceptable in liberal states and which are not, thereby redrawing the line between state neutrality and religion.8

Partial bans on veiling tend to erase the visibility of Muslim religiosity within the public sphere, and to expand the state’s capacity to secularize not only the state’s apparatus but also the whole public sphere. For instance, until 2000, in France, from a legal point of view, state neutrality meant that the state must treat all religions equally and that public-school civil servants should not indoctrinate children with religious beliefs. Following the various political debates on the Muslim veil, this notion has been expanded to now imply that all civil servants cannot show their

---

religious identity while at work, and that even in
the public space, forms of religious visibility can
be threatening to the social order.\(^9\) Hence, in the
process of arbitrating through legislative bans the
supposed incompatibility between gender equality
and religious accommodation, the boundaries
of French secularism have been clearly redrawn
to favor an erasure of religious identities. Here
again, France might be exceptional in terms of the
breadth of its bans, however, these processes are
not exceptional and demand close scrutiny in order
to evaluate how secularism is being transformed
through multiple debates opposing gender and
multiculturalism.

Gender equality has become a core legal
and political value in Europe, in part thanks to the
process of European integration. The legitimation
of this value has been won the hard way by feminists
and must be preserved, but it seems important to
reflect on how it can be made inclusive of all women
and compatible with multicultural societies. The
Canadian case might offer some insights. Similar
debates pitting feminism against multiculturalism
are taking place in Canada, although in a much
minor key compared with Europe. They are dealt
with more even-handedly than in most European
polities, especially because some institutional and
legal features of the Canadian political system
have proven more amenable to mediating the
tension between gender equality and religious
accommodation. Among them is a case-by-case
approach, through the judiciary rather than
through legislative politics, which has proven more
flexible in assessing the compatibility of religious
practices with gender equality, and which refuses
to make a hierarchy between constitutional
principles such as religious freedom and gender
equality. It is only \textit{in concreto}, with each case
of potential incompatibility, that adjudication
is realized. This means that gender equality is
a central constitutional principle that must be
protected, but its absence or presence is evaluated
in a precise instance. Practices that might be
harmful to women are examined through their
concrete consequences, rather than evaluated
on the basis of their potential effects abstractly
imagined from the point of view of the majority.
This way of adjudicating over these difficult issues
avoids portraying all veiled Muslim women as
victims, but still allows for a careful examination
of gender equality issues. Moreover, Canadian
judges can rely on an extensive conception of
antidiscrimination, which makes it easier to make
visible indirect discrimination based on gender
in cases of restrictions of religious practices that
might affect disproportionately women.

This in not to say that Canada has reached a
perfect balance, and that it preserves both gender
equality and religious freedom. The balancing
exercise is a very difficult one, and evaluations of
the Canadian approach differ depending on one’s
political views. However, in an era of backlash
against multicultural values, Canada has managed
to hold to its political priority of respect for diversity
and promotion of inclusion, to resist interpretations
of secularism – which tend to limit religious
diversity – and to do so without abandoning its
commitment to gender equality. This has been an
intense journey for Canadian feminists, especially
in Québec, who wonder if the battle to avoid the
stigmatization of Islam is not detrimental to gender
equality. However, the open public debate and the
strong constitutional commitment to both values
of religious freedom and gender equality provide
safeguards to navigate these dangerous waters,
and offer interesting lessons to learn from for
European countries.

---
\(^9\) Éléonore Lépinard, “From Immigrants to Muslims? Shifting
Categories of the French Regime of Inclusion,” in \textit{Identity
Politics in the Public Sphere: Bringing Institutions Back In},
eds. Avigail Eisenberg and Will Kymlicka (Vancouver: UBC
European Sexual Nationalisms: The Culturalization of Citizenship and the Sexual Politics of Belonging and Exclusion

Paul Mepschen, University of Amsterdam
Jan Willem Duyvendak, University of Amsterdam*

A tumultuous conference in Amsterdam, early 2011, on Sexual Nationalisms: Gender, Sexuality and the Politics of Belonging in the New Europe, bore witness to the academic and political thorniness of the issues at stake. The conference, organized by the Amsterdam Research Center for Gender and Sexuality (ARC-GS) at the University of Amsterdam and the Institut de Recherche Interdisciplinaire sur les enjeux Sociaux (IRIS) at EHESS in Paris, brought together more than 80 scholars and hundreds of participants to discuss the entanglements and convergences of liberal and progressive feminist and gay rights politics with anti-immigration policies in Europe.

The Netherlands in European Perspective

The Dutch case, in our view, provides quintessential examples of the sexualization of European anxieties about cultural and religious diversity. In no other country have discourses of gay rights and sexual freedom played such a prominent role. These narratives are part and parcel of a wave of aversion to (public) Islam in Europe. Recent examples include legal measures against the burqa in Belgium and France (see Lépinard in this issue), the constitutional ban on minarets in Switzerland, the debates about the veil in various European countries,

* Authors may be contacted at: P.J.H.Mepschen@uva.nl and duyvendak@uva.nl
and the electoral rise of the explicitly anti-Muslim politician Geert Wilders and his Freedom Party in the Netherlands. Islam and multiculturalism have become subjects of heated debate in numerous European countries, including the UK, Denmark, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands. The convergence of gay rights discourses with these debates unveils a shift in the social location of gay politics in Europe. Gay issues have moved from the margins to the center of cultural imagination and have been recast as an ‘optic, and an operative technology’ in the production and disciplining of Muslim others (Puwar 2007, xiii). Cases of homophobia among Muslim citizens are highlighted, epitomized as archetypal, and cast within Orientalist narratives that underwrite the superiority of European secular modernity. To understand this new politics of sexual nationalism we highlight two developments (Mepschen et al. 2010): the rise of Islamophobia already discussed and the culturalization of citizenship. We briefly focus on these Europe-wide trends before turning to more specific, albeit not unique, characteristics of Dutch social history that may explain why the Netherlands is such an extreme case of sexual nationalism: the remarkable leeway given by the Dutch state to new social movements and hence the enduring influence of ‘the long 1960s’, the strong focus on individual and sexual freedom; and a far stretching, albeit limited, ‘normalization’ of gay sexuality in recent decades.

The Culturalization of Citizenship and the Rise ofIslamophobia

The ‘culturalization of citizenship’ in Western European societies denotes the increasing importance attached to culture and morality in shaping citizenship and integration policy (Duyvendak 2011; Geschiere 2009, 130–68; Schinkel 2008). It constitutes a deeply ingrained cultural essentialism that simplifies the social space by symbolically dividing society into distinct, internally homogeneous cultural entities, reducing opponents to a knowable and perceivable essence: his or her culture. This understanding of culture grounds a cultural protectionist outlook: a delineation of cultural diversity as problematic and perilous and a concomitant emphasis on the need to construct and defend European cultural heritage as an alternative to non-Western influence. The ‘sexualization of citizenship’ denotes a temporal politics shaping an imaginary of modern individualism versus subjectivities embedded in tradition, community and family. In order to criticize Muslims as backward and as enemies of European culture, gay rights are now heralded as if they have been the foundation of European culture for centuries.

Sexual Freedom and Secular Nostalgia

In recent decades, secular ideologies and moralities have gained great momentum in the Netherlands, and have become increasingly influential. As the religion scholar Peter van Roojen argues: “Dutch Christianity died when the collective, ritual and ir-reflexive religious practices in which it had articulated itself [...] gradually became less important in the lives of believers, in the wake of the popularization of the discourses and practices of the expressive and reflexive self" (2004, 22). This dynamic was part of a broader historical process of ‘de-pilarization’ – the crumbling of the hierarchically organized religious and socialist subcultures (‘pillars’) composed of their own media, schools, institutions and political parties. These pillars, which formed the basic mode of social organization in the country, faded away after the 1960s (Kennedy 1995). Virtually all institutions associated with the old order were attacked as traditional and authoritarian; de-pilarization and secularization were thus interpreted and delineated as a break from oppressive, paternalistic structures. In the process, the religious had become framed and seen as out of sync with progressive secular moralities: as ‘other’. Muslims have been the most conspicuous objects in recent years of what Sarah Bracke refers to as ‘secular nostalgia’ (2011). They are framed as trespassing on a secular
moral landscape, distorting the dream of a unified, secular and morally progressive nation (Duyvendak 2011).

Sexuality has been key in shaping this secular nostalgia. Compared with other Western European countries, the Dutch authorities’ corporatist and consensual style afforded greater political influence to the new social movements. The ‘long 1960s’ (Righart 1995) had far-reaching effects – especially in the realms of morality and sexuality – and led to the country’s ‘liberal’ policies on drugs, euthanasia, abortion and lesbian/gay rights. After an initial period of cultural polarization, large segments of the Dutch population have distanced themselves from moral traditionalism. The percentage of Dutch citizens who agree with the proposition that ‘homosexuality is normal’ and who support gay marriage exceeds that in other countries (Gerhards 2010). In this context, expressions of homophobia have increasingly been represented as ‘alien’ to secular, Dutch ‘traditions of tolerance’. This was aptly illustrated when Khalil El-Moumni, an imam working in Rotterdam, insisted on national television in May 2001 that homosexuality was a dangerous and contagious disease (Hekma 2002). The imam had tread on one of the cornerstones of Dutch cultural self-representation. The Dutch Minister of Integration grilled El-Moumni and other imams in a meeting in which ‘Dutch values were explained’. He and others stated that legal action against El-Moumni should not be ruled out. Sociologist Gert Hekma recalls that the Prime Minister used “the full 10 minutes of his weekly interview [...] to tell Muslims to respect the Dutch tolerance of homosexuality,” although the Prime Minister himself was clearly uncomfortable speaking about the issue in public (2002, 242).

In a poll on the website of a mainstream gay and lesbian monthly, 91 percent of respondents agreed that “newcomers should tolerate our tolerance or should leave” (Prins 2002, 15). A commentator in the populist daily De Telegraafargued that El-Moumni’s views could only be found in “the medieval deserts of North Africa.”

The discourse of Pim Fortuyn, whose ascent on the political stage took place shortly after the El-Moumni affair and – perhaps more significant – after 9/11, capitalized on the trope of sexual freedom as inherently Dutch and was pivotal in ingraining it deeper into the Dutch self-image. He described Islam as a backward culture and a threat to his personal way of life: “I refuse to start all over again with the emancipation of women and gays.” Fortuyn presented himself as a liberated gay man whose way of life and cultural gains were threatened by ‘backward’ Muslims and leftist immigration policies. Fortuyn successfully connected sexual liberation and secularization as markers of the modern, individualistic character of Dutch (national) culture and painted Muslims as trespassers on sacrosanct secular terrain.

**Dutch gay identity and politics have undergone a far-reaching process of ‘normalization’ that has stripped sexual politics of its deviant and radical character in a more profound way than in many other ‘Western’ countries.**

The Politics of Normalization

A third facet of Dutch social history is pertinent here: Dutch gay identity and politics have undergone a far-reaching process of ‘normalization’ that has stripped sexual politics of its deviant and radical character in a more profound way than in many other ‘Western’ countries (Duyvendak 1996). The Dutch gay community has been deeply affected by the emergence of what Lisa Duggan refers to as a ‘new homonormativity’ (2002): articulations of lesbian and gay identity that no longer threaten but replicate and underscore heteronormative assumptions and structures. This is an important
development within European and North American gay culture more generally (Duggan 2002; Seidman 2001). As various authors have shown, the rise of neo-liberalism and the commodification of gay culture and identity have played a central role in this (Bell and Binnie 2004; Duggan 2002; Richardson 2005). With the rise of neo-liberal capitalism in the 1980s, culture and identity became increasingly entwined with consumption, while gay men especially were discovered as affluent consumers. The commodification of gay identity and community that followed created a new kind of idealized gay persona. The campy, nonconformist gay man of the 1960s and 1970s counterculture transformed into a champion of bodily perfection, consumption and affluent individualism.

Gay culture and identity, with its focus on unattached, self-fashioining and self-regulating individuality, became folded into a discourse of neo-liberal citizenship. Migrants, on the other hand, have come to be framed as embodying the values and properties that in neo-liberal societies are delineated as problematic: their alleged piety and preference for community and tradition, and their relative social marginalization. To become ‘individual citizens’ in a post-industrial, neo-liberal society, old values had to be unlearned. Gay rights became the litmus test for this integration.

The role of neo-liberalism notwithstanding, in the Netherlands an ‘assimilationist’ strategy focusing on equal rights rather than ‘queerness’ or radical social change characterized the movement almost from its inception. “The Dutch gay and lesbian movement has accommodated itself to the parameters of the political, cultural and power balance” (Schuyf and Krouwel 1999, 161). Duyvendak (1996) has shown how, unlike in countries such as France and the United States, the Dutch state in the 1980s gave gay men a significant role in managing the HIV/AIDS crisis affecting their community. The radicalization of AIDS activism that shaped the French, US and other ‘queer’ movements played a very small role in the Netherlands, where radical articulations of queer activism remain marginal.

‘Normalization’ does not imply that heterosexual normativity has been surpassed (Seidman 2001). Rather, the popular representation of gay identity has changed from a deviant other to the mirror image of the ideal heterosexual: ‘Normalization is made possible because it simultaneously reproduces a dominant order […] legitimation through normalisation leaves in place the polluted status of marginal sexualities and all the norms that regulate our sexual intimate conduct’ (Seidman 2001, 326). Homonormativity produces “a politics that does not contest dominant heteronormative forms but upholds and sustains them” (Duggan 2002, 179). Paradoxically, it is the de-politicized character of Dutch gay identity, ‘anchored in domesticity and consumption’ (ibid.), which explains its entanglement with neo-nationalist and normative citizenship discourses. Dutch gay identity does not threaten heteronormativity, but in fact helps shape and reinforce the contours of ‘tolerant’ and ‘liberal’ Dutch national culture.

Conclusions

As argued, the rise of sexual nationalisms in Europe must be understood as part and parcel of the culturalization of citizenship and the concommittant politicization of home in Europe (cf. Duyvendak 2011; Holmes 2000). Processes of culturalization not only unfold in the form of the spectacular success of nationalist and anti-Muslim political parties like the Dutch PVV, the Danish Folkeparti, or the French Front National (Art 2011), but need to be understood more broadly as a zeitgeist, affecting and transforming political relations and policy within European nation-states at the level of immigration control, ‘integration’ policies, securitization and urban regulation. This discourse can be placed within a broader relational context, ‘neo-liberalism’, and be understood as part and parcel of the project to reinforce or restore the authority of state institutions over the production of (national) citizenship and political
subjectivity and the regulation of labor markets and urban marginality, just as this authority is “being undermined by the accelerating flows of money, capital, signs and people across national borders, and by the constricting of state action by supranational bodies and financial Capital” (Wacquant 2008, 76).

Movements for cultural protectionism have thus proliferated throughout Europe, including Western Europe, and have developed and popularized discourses that pit native, ‘autochthonous’ communities against outsiders with, allegedly, aberrant morals and devious intentions (Geschiere 2009; Schinkel 2008). In these discourses the world is represented as divided into different, inimical cultures, and the ‘national cultures’ of Europe are framed as in need of protection against the effects of globalization and immigration (Baumann 2007). Proponents of this new ‘culturism’ (Schinkel 2008) frame migrants as outsiders and emphasize a perceived need for their cultural education and their ‘integration’ in a Dutch, European or ‘modern’ moral universe. Muslim citizens have become the most conspicuous objects of these ‘discourses of alterity’ (Schinkel 2008). Indeed, the rise of neo-culturalism has gone hand in glove with the framing of Muslims as backward, intolerant and incongruous with ‘European’ secular modernity.

As Willem Schinkel argues, the very notion of ‘integration’ that is so central to this logic is what brings ‘society’ into being as a stable, delimited object. Integration discourse is, he argues, “one way to discursively demarcate the space occupied by ‘society’. The idea of a ‘Dutch society’ is fixed precisely through the production of a marker of ‘society’ vis-à-vis the ‘non-integrated’ ‘outside society’ that is part of the process of globalization unsettling the notion of ‘Dutch society’” (2011, 99). Following this approach, nationalism must be understood as a discourse of alterity, symbolically casting (post)migrants out as moral and sexual others, ‘non-integrated’ because of their alleged (universal) homophobia. The figure of the homophobic (post)migrant outsider thus symbolically demarcates the space occupied by the universally homo-tolerant insider.

From the point of view of both immigration and integration studies and the study of sexuality, it seems necessary to get beyond the ‘integration’ imperative. In a critique of Dutch homo-emancipation policy, which is often looked at as a model for sexuality politics, Suhraiya Jivraj and Anisa de Jong have recently warned against a reification of the Dutch model. They argue that the focus on speakability and visibility “fails to grapple with the complex subjectivities of diasporic queer Muslims” (Jivraj and De Jong 2011).

This is a solid critique. We argue that social researchers as well as policymakers and activists need to take seriously the diversity and complexity of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) cultures and the possibility that queer post-migrants might choose forms of sexual emancipation, of sexual freedom, that deviate from ‘modern’, ‘normative’ articulations (Wekker 2006). At the heart of this approach is a critique of exclusionary assumptions about Muslim and migrant sexualities, and of the temporal politics that has become entwined with progressive discourses.
References


Schuyf, Judith, and André Krouwel. 1999. “The


Nationalist, anti-Semitic, prone to megalomaniacal tantrums, Richard Wagner has long been seen as the proto-Nazi artist par excellence. But Wagner was also taken up in the early twentieth century by a far broader spectrum of artists and revolutionaries. With support from the Council for European Studies, I collected archival materials about stagings of Wagner in the early Soviet Union that I hope will deepen our understanding both of Wagner’s international reception and of the Soviet Union’s cultural politics in the late 1920s.

So far, there has been a good deal of scholarship about operas composed during the early decades of the Soviet Union, but less attention has been given to the ways in which canonical operas were reinterpreted. In some cases these presentations departed radically from the original operas and include fully re-written libretti — Tosca became The Last Days of the Commune and Meyerbeer’s The Huguenots became The Decembrists. In other cases, the shifts were more subtle. Among the materials that I found during my research in St. Petersburg were writings connected to two different stagings of Wagner’s Meistersinger. The first took place in 1926 and the second in 1932. Even though these two productions were staged only six years apart (and involved some of the same artists), there are drastic shifts in the interpretation of Wagner and Meistersinger.

The 1926 production of Meistersinger took place at the Kirov Theatre (known today as the Mariinsky Theatre). It was staged by director V. Rappaport and conducted by Vladimir Dranishnikov, with sets by Vladimir Dmitriev, a pupil of Meyerhold. The premiere of this opera took place on November 7, 1926 — the ninth anniversary of the October Revolution. The selection of this date for the premiere of Meistersinger underscores the importance of the premiere. This was not the
first time that a Wagner opera was selected to celebrate the revolution: on November 7, 1923, the Mariinsky held a gala performance of *Rienzi*.

The opera’s production team was intent on demonstrating the contemporary relevance of the opera to the Soviet Union. The day before the premiere, the production team circulated a short program book about the production. Igor Glebov’s introductory essay sets out the key themes of the production. He downplays the historical value of *Meistersinger* and argues that the historical element of the opera is not the reason for its importance outside of Germany. For Glebov, “the re-introduction of Meistersinger in our country can be defended with more substantive ideas than merely on the grounds of representing with bright colors the life of the singers and the artisans.”

Glebov also rejects any notion that Wagner’s Volk could be a prototype for an authentic Soviet community. He writes that Wagner’s Volk is “a romantic, theatrical character, whose presence is necessary for the resolution of conflicts in the comedy’s action, but not a real people.” The opera is thus important for Soviet audiences neither because it illuminates a historical shift from feudal toward a proto-capitalist society, nor because it presents an image of an organic community that the audience members should mimic.

The “more substantive idea” with which Glebov defends the reintroduction of *Meistersinger* to the Soviet Union is the theme of conflict between old and new art. *Meistersinger* tells the story of a knight, Walther von Stolzing. In order to win the hand of Eva, he enters a singing contest held by Nuremberg’s guild of master singers. In the first act, he sings a song before the judges that breaks every rule of the masters. Walther’s nemesis and competitor for Eva’s hand is Beckmesser, the town clerk who marks every departure from the rules of the masters on a slate. The cobbler Hans Sachs hears Walther’s song, takes an interest in him, and tutors Walther in composition. Walther wins the contest and the pedantic Beckmesser is rejected.

The 1926 production of *Meistersinger* focused on the fight between an old, stultified art, and fresh, revolutionary innovation. It was not the collective, but the revolutionary artist who was at the center of this production. The director, Rappaport, celebrates the change of aesthetic guard in his essay for the same program book, declaring, “the old generation dies, so do its songs, glory to the new generation and its art. Glory to change.” Rappaport goes further than merely celebrating the narrative of *Meistersinger*: he equates this particular staging of the opera with a new generation. He writes that his staging departs from “the prototype of Bayreuth, which is guarded by pedantic Wagnerians” because the creators of the production are seeking to “disclose the true Wagnerian spirit, which is alive and needed in our times.” The true Wagnerian spirit garners the power of Wagner’s own rebellion against tradition to reject stale ‘Wagnerian’ stagings.

Glebov’s essay attacks pedantic Wagnerians more directly, and sees the potential for them within the Leningrad audience. He writes:

Wagner may have well given himself the pleasure in imagining how the Beckmessers of the future, sitting in the theatre and listening to *Meistersinger*, would think of themselves as being on a higher level than those Beckmessers on the stage, and how Wagner’s art would be elevated and opposed as a classical model to the brave experiments of the knights of the new music. It is precisely this side of the action of *Meistersinger* – the ‘mirror of Beckmesserism’ – this makes the opera ever young and always necessary.

In Glebov’s analysis, a Soviet audience is not automatically immune to Beckmesserism. There is a danger that individuals in the audience would be pedantic critics of the spectacle. (Indeed, this may have come to pass: At least one reviewer compared this *Meistersinger* unfavorably with the
pre-Revolutionary staging of 1914, and criticized the set for “not carrying the viewer to ancient Nuremburg”.)\(^2\) For Glebov, Meistersinger is essential precisely because it holds a mirror up to pedantic critics. For Glebov, this was also personal. Igor Glebov was in fact the pseudonym used by the Soviet composer Boris Vladimirovich Asafyev, who certainly had an interest in connecting this production of Meistersinger to the necessity of fostering new music in the Soviet Union.

In its celebration of artistic genius and innovation, the production team of Meistersinger largely ignored the folk elements of the opera that in the same years was emphasized by German productions. At the same time, it did not see the crowd scenes or the people as depicted in the opera as ideal models for a proletarian audience to emulate. Rather, the team envisioned the audience as a group of individuals and critics – some possibly with Beckmesserian tendencies.

The 1932 production of Meistersinger at the Maly Theatre interpreted the opera very differently, even though it shared its set designer with the 1926 production (Dmitriev). The 1932 production commemorated the 50th anniversary of the composer’s death. It is telling that the Meistersinger was moved from an anniversary of the Revolution to an anniversary of more narrow aesthetic interest. In a pamphlet on Wagner published by the Maly Theatre in connection to this production, Wagner is no longer celebrated as the new heroic artist.\(^3\) Rather, the texts focus on his forsaking of revolutionary ideals after 1848, and his integration into the German bourgeoisie. Glebov, who seven years before had valorized Walther as the knight of new music, and connected Wagner to radical innovation, wrote a far more tempered article in this pamphlet that sticks to a comparison of Meistersinger with Tristan und Isolde and focuses on Wagner’s connections to the German tradition, particularly Mozart. Glebov concludes this 1933 essay by stating that with Meistersinger, “Wagner steps onto the solid soil of everyday reality and nationalism.”

The 1932 production focused on the historical elements of the opera, which Glebov had dismissed as secondary in 1926. Another program book connected to the 1932 production contains an essay by the director, Kaplan, entitled: “On the Staging of the Opera on the Soviet Stage.”\(^4\) In this essay, he focuses on the historical inaccuracies of Wagner’s opera. He argues that because Wagner approached the sixteenth century from the point of view of a nineteenth-century German bourgeois, he made crucial errors in the opera’s narrative. In Kaplan’s analysis, Wagner’s choice to make the bearer of innovation a knight was a mistake. Instead of being a knight, Walther should have been a ship captain, the representative of an emergent capitalist class. Kaplan uses the same language as the production team of 1926 in claiming that he reveals the true essence of Wagner’s opera in his staging, but in this case it is by “freeing his [Wagner’s] thought from that historical prejudice and distortion which were the result of his limited understanding of the historical reality of the sixteenth century.”

In 1932, the opera is no longer a mirror that shows reactionary critics in the audience an unflattering mirror image. Rather, the opera becomes a reflection of the correct historical interpretations of the sixteenth century. The effect sought is one of lightheartedness and comedy; it is not designed to prompt the same desire for constant innovation and revolutionary aesthetics in the audience as the production of 1926. The staging conceptions and ambitions for these two productions of Meistersinger are evidence of the shift in focus from revolutionary action to ideological correctness and stasis. The differences between these two productions also underscore the importance of archival research and attention to the staging decisions of individual directors.

\(^2\) П. Конский, «Не Всякая Премьера Собымие», Рабочий и театр, 1926, н. 46, 16 Ноября, с. 7.
\(^3\) «Рихард Вагнер 1813-1883» Малый оперный театр. Ленинград, 1933.
\(^4\) ЦГАЛИ ф. 92, оп. 1, дело 61.
In 1906, the famous German scholar Max Weber recorded the following episode from a trip to a remote town in Scotland:

This question [To what church do you belong?] reminds one of the typical Scotch *table d’hôte*, where a quarter of a century ago the continental European on Sundays almost always had to face the situation of a lady’s asking, “What service did you attend today?” ... In Portree (Skye) on one beautiful Sunday I faced this typical question and did not know any better way out than to remark: “I am a member of the *Badische Landeskirche* and could not find a chapel of my church in Portree.” The ladies were pleased and satisfied with the answer. “Oh, he doesn’t attend any service except that of his own denomination!” (Weber 1946: 303)

A century later, the humor in this episode can easily escape readers, especially if their frame of reference is North American society. The Badische Landeskirche, the established church in the southwest German region of Baden, is a catch-all category for Protestants in the region – whether Lutheran or Reformed – not a denomination individuals would feel any special attachment to. When he recorded this episode, Weber had recently returned from an extended stay in the United States, and the exchange with the Scottish ladies was meant to illustrate a crucial contrast between Anglo-American and continental European society to his German readers: the centrality of voluntary religious organizations in the former, and their virtual absence in the latter. Alexis de Tocqueville (2000) had long before emphasized the role of voluntary organizations in American civic life, but
Weber went one step further and foregrounded religious organizations as models par excellence of voluntary association (Scaff 2011). He regarded these forms of religious association (which, following his colleague Ernst Troeltsch, he referred to as sects) as incubators for and expressions of a peculiar mode of sociation. Sects are founded in large part on personal ties between their members, so they tend to be smaller and more rooted in a place than continental churches. In other words, there is something provincial about them, something not easily reconciled with the conditions of modern life in the metropolis. Weber believed that this exceptional cultural trait of the Anglo-American world was doomed to succumb to the ineluctable forces of bureaucratization, rationalization, secularization – in short, ‘Europeanization’ (Offe 2005). In Weber’s expectation, the religious landscape at the periphery, whether on the Isle of Skye or in the American states, would soon be dominated by the universalizing power of the center.

Today, things appear in a very different light. The ‘peripheral’ experiences from the Anglo-American world have survived, and in fact they have carried over to the presumed ‘center’ of the occident, continental Europe (Martin 2005). This has a number of different reasons, more than I can unpack in this brief report, but one important factor is the effort to establish new religious associations on the voluntary model as serious competitors to the historic churches (such as the German Landeskirchen) in the ‘religious market’. This effort is commonly referred to as ‘church planting’ by those involved in it. While growth in these associations, generally under the umbrella of evangelical denominations or nondenominational networks, has not been sufficient to offset declining membership in the older churches, it has nonetheless contributed to significant intra-Christian pluralization, resulting in significant qualitative, if not necessarily quantitative, changes (Kern 1997: 161–62; Micklethwait and Wooldridge 2009: 136).

It could seem, then, that contrary to Weber’s expectations, we are seeing an Americanization of the European religious landscape. In this report, I want to complicate this view of the changing geography of European religion on the basis of my research on the church-planting movement in the German metropolis. While Weber was wrong to expect the normativity of the continental European experience for the West (or the world as a whole), it does not follow that the obverse, namely the Americanization of Europe, occurred. Rather, the transformation of Europe’s religious landscape is testament to what the historian Philip Jenkins has called “the coming of global Christianity” (Jenkins 2002). To support this view – and to begin to understand how these dynamics play out in urban spaces – I present some evidence from semi-structured interviews I carried out with support from the Council for European Studies with church planters in Berlin and Hamburg in 2010. In addition to these interviews with church planters, I also interviewed experts based in Wuppertal and Berlin on church life, and conducted participant observation in numerous newly founded churches in Berlin, Hamburg and Munich. In what follows, I focus particularly on one of these interviews that indicates directions for further research on how church planting is reshaping the religious landscape in Europe.

* * *

I interviewed Soo-young (a pseudonym) in the offices of the church she works for. The offices adjoin a gallery space run by members of the congregation in a fashionable neighborhood close to the center of Berlin. Soo-young, a young woman in her early thirties, joined the staff of the church not long after it was founded – about five years prior to the interview – first as an intern, and later, after completing her theology degree, as an employee performing various pastoral duties in the congregation. The church’s congregation at the time numbered between 350 and 400 members, almost all in their twenties and thirties, university-
educated, and white. Soo-young’s biography and involvement in church-planting activities illustrate some of the various scales at play in the remaking of the geography of Christianity in Europe. A native of Berlin, Soo-young was born to Korean parents who initially came to West Germany as guest workers in the 1970s. Her parents became Christians in a Korean-speaking Presbyterian church in West Berlin, and later, when Soo-young and her sister were in their late teens, their parents moved to southwestern Russia to work as missionaries, leaving their daughters in the care of relatives in Berlin so they could finish their secondary schooling. After graduation, Soo-young moved to southern California to attend an evangelical Bible college for two years, taking courses in scripture, apologetics, missions and theology. Her studies at the Bible college complete, she stayed in southern California for another three years, working for a small, mostly Korean-American (but English-speaking) evangelical church. Soo-young then relocated to Germany to attend a private, non-denominational theological seminary. At the seminary, in the course of a lecture on church planting offered by a lecturer from Canada, Soo-young first heard about the plans two recent alumni of the seminary had to start a new church in the center of her hometown, and she immediately signaled her interest in getting involved to them.

Soo-young’s story indicates some of the complexities involved in the remaking of the religious landscape in Europe. It is not simply a matter of importing the Anglo-American form of religious association to Europe. To use a trope found in the work of Paul Gilroy (1993), her story has multiple routes and roots that are in tension with one another. There is the migration of her parents from Korea to West Germany, her voyage across the Atlantic, and finally her return to Germany. She is rooted in Berlin, her hometown; in the Christian church; and in Korean ethnic communities. Neither of these routes or these roots alone determines the ultimate outcome of her story. There is no stable center of gravity. This is something I found repeatedly in the course of my interviews with church planters. I usually started out the interview asking the respondent to draw a map of the most significant stations in her life. While the United States, Canada or Britain played a role in many of their narratives, these places never played a dominant role in the inception of new churches, only a supporting role. While it is risky to draw conclusions about macro-level changes based on such narratives, they suggest some of the ways in which the geography of Christianity is changing. Rather than a new normative center taking the place of what was once called ‘Christendom’, Christianity is being decentered. International migration and the deterritorialization of religious traditions appear as two very important factors in this process. According to a recent report by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life (2012), there are an estimated 13,170,000 Christian immigrants in the European Union who were born outside the European Union. As these immigrants continue to make their place in Europe’s religious landscape, the geography of Christianity will be further transformed.

Prior to joining the staff of the church plant in Berlin, Soo-young worked for its sister congregation in Frankfurt, another urban church also started by graduates of her seminary. Both congregations make a point of being part of a movement that supports the establishment of additional new churches in other urban contexts. They draw inspiration from the model of urban church planting put forward by the founding pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City, Tim Keller (Hooper 2009; Stafford 2009). In the early stages of the church-planting process, the new church plants rely on outside funding, often sourced in part from wealthier congregations in the United States, to sustain themselves, but they make a point of reducing the proportion of their budget covered by outside sources from year to year. The goal is for congregations to cover their
budget entirely through internal funding and to become self-sustaining. At the same time, they also dedicate more and more funds to support other church plants. Thus, a sizable part of the budget of Soo-young’s church in Berlin was dedicated to supporting two new church-planting projects – one in Hamburg and another in a different neighborhood of Berlin.

The result of this strategy is what might be called a rhizomorphic pattern of growth. Growth of new churches does not proceed from a common root or stem – a ‘command center’ such as the Vatican – but in a lateral manner. Again, this finding sheds some light on the manner in which Christianity is being de-centered. The diffusion of authority in voluntary religious associations makes it possible for any congregation to initiate new churches. In addition, the availability of financial support, even crossing international borders, further enables such religious entrepreneurialism.

In the course of my dissertation work, I am conducting further interviews and studying additional church-planting projects in hopes of building on these preliminary insights. My dissertation engages a series of frameworks, some of which are taken from sociology, others from neighboring disciplines. This puts me in dialogue with a wide array of thinkers trying to make sense of the place of religion in contemporary society. In addition to literature on global Christianity and de-territorialized religion, I seek to build on the sociology of missions and conversion, secularization theory, the lived religion approach, and the social thought of Georg Simmel.

References


Portugal, Early Modern Globalization and the Origins of the
Global Drug Trade

Benjamin Breen, University of Texas at Austin

The slaves, merchants and mariners of the Portuguese imperial world played a key role in bringing tea to Britain, coffee to Brazil, and chili peppers to India. Indeed, early modern Portuguese were globalizers par excellence. Portuguese mariners and their African slaves can be spied shimmying up ship ropes and perched on crow’s nests in sixteenth-century Japanese nanban screen paintings. Their bearded visages peer out from the famed Luso-African ivories of early modern West Africa. It was Portuguese mariners who first introduced tobacco and opium to China, paving the way for the breakdown of Chinese political autonomy during the Opium Wars. Perhaps even more significantly, potent tobacco and high-proof liquors from the plantations of colonial Brazil were used to purchase tens of thousands of human lives during the era of the Atlantic slave trade.

My dissertation research situates the medical and pharmaceutical legacy of Portugal’s imperial connections against this backdrop of ‘early modern globalization.’ I am specifically interested in how tropical remedies that had once existed in specific cultural and ecological contexts became objects of

---

global commerce and scientific controversy during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Most existing works on the early modern trade in drugs, medicines and spices have focused on the reception of these commodities among domestic European consumers, particularly urban elites in England, Spain, France and the Dutch Republic. Yet this approach tells only one part of a much larger story. My research suggests that non-European societies, such as those of Africa, south Asia and the South American interior, also embraced ‘exotic’ medicinal drugs over the course of the seventeenth century.

Why were drugs important in these colonial-era interactions? I believe that the history of drugs (defined as non-food consumables that physiologically alter mind or body) offers new insights on some of the defining features of the modern world, such as the rise of global commerce and the attendant expansion of the slave trade, and the development of empirical approaches to science and medicine. By tracing the itineraries of drugs as they circulated around the globe, we can uncover areas of human behavior that previous works on European colonial expansion have largely avoided. Drugs, like food, are ingested and processed by the human body, rendering them temporary, ephemeral and quotidian. Yet they can also exert powerful effects on individual sensory experience, cognition and health – effects that have made them enduring features of religious ritual, sociability and, above all, practices of medicine and healing. The subjective bodily experiences of caffeine and alcohol are familiar to many (perhaps most) adults in the world today. Yet it has gone largely unnoted that many of the other prized trade goods of the early modern era, from chocolate and nutmeg to cinchona (the botanical source for quinine), also possess psychoactive properties. In this regard, the history of drugs offers a uniquely intimate perspective on the larger patterns of early modern globalization because it bears directly upon the subjective sensory and mental experiences of individual consumers.

With the aid of a CES fellowship as well as several other grants, I’ve spent the past academic year conducting research in Portuguese archives. During this period I have been working with Inquisition trial records, government memoranda and printed medical texts relating to botanical exchanges, drug prospecting and indigenous medical practices in Amazonia and Portuguese Africa. One document I’ve found to be of particular interest is an accounting book kept from approximately 1738 to 1754 by a Lisbon apothecary named Manuel Ferreira de Castro. This battered but well-preserved clothbound volume appears to have been used by Ferreira de Castro to record the prices and weights of drugs he shipped to ports as far-flung as Rio de Janeiro and Luanda, Angola. The list of drugs he sold is dazzling in its variety, featuring substances that range from the prosaic to the exotic to the downright bizarre. A shipment that Ferreira de Castro dispatched to the city of Salvador de Bahia in Brazil in 1738, for instance, included the following: dragon’s blood, sarsaparilla, poppies, violet preserves, opium, ‘cinnamon water,’ elderberry flowers, cream of tartar, red coral, ‘incense of tears,’ powdered stag horn, spermaceti, marmalade, chicory root, brandy, dried cherries, rosemary, castor oil, and (in a macabre twist) powdered human skull.

3 To cite one example: the now-forgotten sister species of common tobacco, Nicotiana rustica, containing up to nine times more nicotine than the Nicotiana tabacum used by modern tobacco companies, was a prized trade good in the Portuguese Atlantic world. Early modern consumers not only smoked the plant, which rendered a powerfully dissociative buzz that would stagger any contemporary Camel smoker – they also chewed it, ground it into powder and snorted it, rubbed it into wounds, drank it in tonics, and delivered it via enemas.
4 Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Lisbon (AN/TT), Livros dos Feitos Findos, liv. 85, “Livro de Carregações de produtos de botica de Manuel Ferreira de Castro.”
5 Early modern physicians considered powdered skull, or cranium humanum, to be one of the most efficacious
Historians have typically interpreted such apothecary’s wares as economic commodities, an approach which is understandable given the fact that many early modern drugs – such as coffee, tea, alcoholic spirits and tobacco – remain extremely important components of contemporary world trade. Yet in the seventeenth century these familiar substances were anything but. Far from being the recreational diversions they are regarded as today, tobacco in Africa and liquor in indigenous American societies were all initially understood in medico-religious terms. Their abuse as recreational drugs was initially embedded within their function as medicines. And, as Ferreira de Castro’s list reminds us, along with these familiar drugs were several hundred considerably more exotic substances ranging from powdered skulls to coral. My findings suggest that state formation and consolidation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries ultimately altered the dynamics of the early modern drug trade by creating a legal distinction between pharmaceuticals (which were prepared or refined using the ‘rational’ methods of Enlightenment science) and illicit drugs, which retained damaging associations with non-Christian and non-Western cultural practices.

This expansion of the variety and scale of the global drug trade was closely linked to the ‘discovery’ of tropical nature by seventeenth-century natural philosophers, economic theorists and colonizers. Alfred Crosby and more recently Judith Carney have studied how sustained trade links between the Old and New Worlds allowed novel flora, fauna and microbes to circulate across the Atlantic basin in the decades following Columbus’ voyages. Yet it was not until the seventeenth century that Europeans began to record and attempt to manipulate these botanical exchanges in any systematic way. Most historians working on this subject have focused on the British, French or Spanish empires. The early modern Lusophone world, however, also harbored numerous ‘biological go-betweens’ who made decisive contributions to the global diffusion of transplanted plants, animals and germs. One such figure was Duarte Ribeiro de Macedo (1618–1680), Portuguese statesman and ambassador to the French court in the 1670s. In a diplomatic memoranda dated 1673, Macedo outlined an ambitious plan for the Portuguese crown to transplant key spices and drugs from the East Indies to Brazil, a move that he believed would cripple Dutch trade by circumventing their valuable monopolies on several East Indies plants.

Macedo’s proposal—to find drugs and spices growing in the Indian Ocean region that would take root in the tropical climate of Brazil—represented a new phase in the process by which Europeans theorized the tropics. Enlightenment natural philosophers increasingly began to recognize that treatments for epilepsy. The drug merchant John Jacob Berlu even believed that consuming “the Scull of a Man... [who] dieth a violent Death, (as War, or criminal Execution)” rendered these effects more potent. In a telling detail, he noted that “therefore, those of Ireland are here best esteemed.” John Jacob Berlu, The Treasury of Drugs Unlock’d (London, 1690), 35.


8 AN/TT, Manuscritos do Brasil 39, “Discurso sobre a Transplantação das Plantas de Especiarias da Asia para a América.”
lifeforms had not been relegated to discrete regions of the globe at the moment of Creation, but could in fact be artificially transplanted by humans and forced to take root in new climates. Furthermore, biodistribution of many plant families and genera across tropical, subtropical or temperate climactic zones meant that even if particular products were not precisely the same as ‘traditional’ ones, they were noticeably similar. For example, a 1710s French Jesuit, well-versed in the reports of Chinese medical practices that were beginning to flow into Europe at the time, was surprised to find that a subspecies of wild ginseng grew abundantly in the forests of Canada.9 Similarly, African slaves in North American and the West Indies began to formulate cures for snakebite utilizing New World plants from the same genus as ones found in Africa. Likewise, Duarte Ribero de Macedo noted that what he called ‘pepper’ (pipra) was found to grow in Africa and Brazil as well as the East Indies, as were ‘wild cinnamon’ and ‘wild cloves.’ Such instances of tropical transplantation – not only of plants themselves, but of knowledge, materials and even human beings – stand at the core of my project.

Another interesting figure involved in the Portuguese tropical drug trade was Francisco de Sá e Meneses, the Portuguese governor of the Estado do Maranhão in modern-day Brazil. In December 1683, de Sá wrote to his superiors in Lisbon regarding his attempts to make “discoveries … of new drugs” in the Amazon region. De Sá recounted that he had enlisted the aid of Tapuya Indians in locating a plant bark that he called china china or quina – now better known as cinchona, the botanical precursor to quinine. De Sá wrote that “when I came to this place I brought two small samples of china china.” These he exhibited to “the Indian leaders who had kin in the backlands [sertão]” and asked them to search for similar-looking plants in the forests. Despite bringing him “a great number of amargozas [‘bitters’ or medicinal barks],” de Sá did not believe that his Tapuya informants had succeeded in finding precisely the right plant. Since the botanical samples had been “lost,” he asked the Overseas Council in Lisbon to send him detailed illustrations of quina “painted with the colors of the trunk, the branches, the leaves and the fruit it bears” so he could exhibit these more accurate simulacra to the Tapuya. Without such aid, de Sá feared, “it will be very difficult to be certain of the tree, not knowing what name the Tapuyas have given it.”10

De Sá’s report suggests that the networks of knowledge, materials and labor involved in seventeenth-century drug discovery were more complex than some previous works on bioprospecting have assumed. Although de Sá solicited detailed images of quina from European artists, he needed these images to be visually comprehensible to indigenous Tapuya. His sample of quina may have been routed through Lisbon, but it likely originated in the only region where the plant was believed to grow in the seventeenth century – the province of Loja in the Viceroyalty of Peru. Bioprospecting for tropical drugs was thus an activity that relied on local knowledge, inland networks of indigenous labor and transimperial exchanges of materials, as well as on more familiar, and better-studied, maritime links between the imperial metropole in Europe and the New World colony.

What relevance does this seemingly somewhat obscure line of research have for contemporary Europe and the world at large? One answer was suggested to me by the layout of the city of Lisbon itself. In the Museu da Farmácia (Museum of Pharmacy) in Lisbon, tourists learn


10 Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Lisbon (AHU), Conselho Ultramarino, Para, caixa 3, doc. 219. Letter from Gov. Francisco de Sá e Meneses to Dom Pedro II, Belem do Para, 30 December 1683, “Carta do governador... sobre o descobrimento qu mandou fazer de drogas no sertão.”
about the storied history of the imperial drug and spice trade during the era of descobrimentos (discoveries), the fifteenth and sixteenth century epoch of maritime expansion that the Portuguese remain fond of eulogizing. Directly facing the Museu lies the Miradouro do Adamastor, a sunny plaza overlooking the River Tagus. Here, quite literally in the shadow of the Museum of Pharmacy, dealers in illicit drugs such as ecstasy and hashish ply their wares. The vast majority of these contemporary drug sellers are recent immigrants from Brazil and Lusophone Africa. Their personal trajectories have followed the old contours of the empire back to its imperial center; their drug-dealing activities form the contemporary mirror image to the world of apothecaries and colonial drug merchants my project seeks to document.

In a concluding chapter of my dissertation, I plan to draw some connections between these two worlds of the early modern drug trade and the politics of illegal drugs in the contemporary world. My findings suggest that these two realms may not be as distinct as they first appear: it is worth recalling that morphine, heroin and cocaine were all once legal pharmaceuticals marketed to ordinary consumers (the word ‘heroin’ is, in fact, a brand name trademarked by Bayer in 1898). By uncovering the early modern origins of the trade in exotic medicinal drugs, my project also traces connections between the world of multinational pharmaceutical companies and international drug cartels. This aim seems to me to be of some relevance in a contemporary Europe that is characterized both by its forward-looking industries (led in part by pharmaceutical companies like Merck, Bayer and GlaxoSmithKline) and by the continuing influence of its imperial past.
The Bibliothèque nationale de France contains several copies of an anonymous manuscript describing an intriguing early American colonial encounter. *La Reprinse de la Floride* details how in 1567 the French citizen Dominique de Gourgues took it upon himself to avenge the cruel execution of hundreds of French prisoners by Spanish soldiers in Florida two years earlier.\(^1\) Interestingly, while the manuscript praises the zeal and fearlessness of Gourgues, it also recognizes the extent to which his success depended on the participation of indigenous allies. Gourgues knew that the French colonists had befriended some of the local Timucuan Indians several years earlier, and he now expected them to willingly augment his slim numbers against the Spaniards. Indeed, as Gourgues anticipated, the Timucuan leader Saturiwa professed that he and his allies “had never ceased to love the French because of the good treatment they had received.”\(^2\) Because of their abiding friendship, Saturiwa and his allies provided the forces necessary to help Gourgues rout the Spaniards and liberate the Timucuans.

*La Reprinse de la Floride* takes the position that Saturiwa and his Timucuan allies joined Gourgues because of their longstanding

---

\(^1\) *La Reprinse de la Floride*, 1568, copies in Fonds Français 2145, 3884, 6124, 19899, 20794, 20994, and Nouvelles Acquisitions 14755, Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF).

\(^2\) *La Reprinse de la Floride*, 1568, Fonds Français 6124, f. 12 recto, BNF.
connection with the French and the abuse they received from the Spanish. But while Gourgues and other European sources depict a consistent loyalty between Saturiwa and the French, a careful reading of those same sources reveals that Saturiwa actually enjoyed ambivalent interactions with the Europeans, and that he actively reshaped the Franco-Spanish conflict to serve his own rivalries with other natives. Rather than interpreting the collaboration between Gourgues and Saturiwa as a subsidiary event in an essentially intra-European dispute, it should be seen as linking together Old World and New World political economies into a dynamic partnership. This tenuous alliance was one of many such relationships forged at the leading edge of colonial empires, and it serves as an example of how native and European politics became entangled in the borderlands separating both European empires and native societies. The Pre-dissertation Fellowship from the Council for European Studies afforded me the opportunity to take my first sample of the archives in London, Paris and Seville in search of a better understanding of these relationships in the early colonial American southeast.

Analysis of the Franco-Spanish clash in Florida has often emphasized its relationship to contemporaneous European conflicts. It fits neatly into the context of both the Hapsburg-Valois struggle, which pitted the ruling houses of Spain and France against one another intermittently throughout the first two-thirds of the sixteenth century, and the Wars of Religion between Catholics and Protestants that would dominate France for the remainder of the century. Spain’s hostility to Protestantism in Europe especially explains the vigor with which it attacked the French threat in Florida. Justifying why the Spanish captain-general Pedro Menéndez de Avilés chose to execute his prisoners despite their peaceful surrender, his chaplain bluntly noted that, “Since they were all Lutherans, his Lordship decided to condemn them all to death.” Menéndez’s slaughter of some 300 French captives has understandably become the defining moment of the conflict. This single event undoubtedly serves as an excellent illustration of how European conflicts were played out on a smaller scale at the periphery of empires, but an analysis of events in Florida also needs to take account of the unique setting and the indigenous people who participated in the conflict. Native allies played a significant role in the struggle, and hence, so did native political motivations.

A year before the massacre, in 1564, the French had established their colony in an area inhabited by dense populations of Timucua-speaking natives organized into several competing alliances. Of these, two were of paramount importance for the French: one alliance led by Saturiwa, and another led by his rival Outina. Though they spoke dialects of the same language and shared a similar culture, their rivalry arose from longstanding conflicts that pre-dated the arrival of the Europeans and helps to explain how Saturiwa and Outina chose to interact with would-be colonizers. Despite Gourgues’s characterization of the relationship between Saturiwa and the French as a steady alliance, in fact Saturiwa’s relationships with the French and Spanish vacillated. Saturiwa and Outina, however, remained consistently antagonistic toward each other.

When the French arrived in Florida in June 1564, both Saturiwa and Outina heavily recruited the newcomers as allies, a situation that the French leader, René Goulaine de Laudonnière, expected to manipulate to his own advantage. He planned to keep the Timucuans divided while avoiding entanglement in their conflicts, hoping thereby to exploit each of them without committing himself to

---


4 Francisco Lopez de Mendoza Grajales, “Memoria Del Buen Suçesso y Buen Viaje Que Dios Nuestro Señor Fue Servido De Dar a La Armada Que Salio De La Ciudad De Caliz Para La Prouinçia y Costa De La Florida . . .”, 1565, Patronato 19, R.17, f. 11 recto, Archivo General de Indias (AGI).
any one of them. To effect this strategy, he vowed military assistance to both Ouitina and Saturiwa while avoiding occasions to deliver on his promises. Eventually, though, his own soldiers persuaded him to fight on behalf of Ouitina against another enemy Timucuan, Potano. The chronicles of the conquests of Mexico and Peru had celebrated the conquistadors’ savvy in manipulating divisions among natives to their own ends, and the French soldiers proposed following the same strategy in Florida.\(^5\)

While the chronicles of the conquistadors seemed to offer successful examples of this method, it proved difficult to effectuate. The alliance with Ouitina alienated the French from Saturiwa and increased their dependence on Ouitina, particularly for food. As the colonists neared starvation, Laudonnière found himself losing the ability to manipulate the Timucuans, and soon the French were themselves being coerced into fighting and trading against their will. Tensions grew, and the relationship between the French and Ouitina degenerated into open warfare by the summer of 1565. Fortunately for the survival of the colony, the turnabout between Laudonnière and Ouitina enticed Saturiwa into seeking a rapprochement with the French shortly before the Spanish arrived in August of that year.\(^6\)

The timing of the arrival of the Spanish meant that the recent affiliation between Saturiwa and the French became essentialized as an enduring friendship. The Spanish massacre of the French colony’s involvement in the Timucuan borderlands partially accounts for the oversimplification of the French relationship with Saturiwa. Yet Saturiwa’s participation in the rivalry between France and Spain hardly ended with the arrival of Menéndez, and in fact he betrayed little discrimination in pursuing alliances, French or Spanish, capable of helping him against Ouitina and other Timucuan rivals. For example, Saturiwa declined to protect his purported French allies from the Spanish attack, although he was certainly aware of Spanish movements, and possibly even complicit in leading the Spaniards to the French fort. Furthermore, after watching the Spaniards supplant the French and establish a permanent colony, Saturiwa sought out an alliance with the newcomers and felt snubbed when the Spanish captain-general Menéndez, like Laudonnière before him, neglected


\(^6\) Ibid., 82 verso–94 recto; Stefano de Rojomonte, “Nueuas De La Florida De La Poblacion y Asiento Q[ue] Los Franceses an Hechos En Ella,” 1564, Patronato 19, R.14, f. 1 recto, AGI.
Saturiwa in favor of Outina. By the time Menéndez belatedly met with Saturiwa in April, 1567, the Spanish had already aligned themselves with Outina, leading Saturiwa to reveal bitterly that although he had often proclaimed his friendship with the Spanish, “he did not say it with a good heart, because he held all Christians as enemies.”

Far from being subsumed by the European conflict, Saturiwa dissimulated, engaged and withdrew from the Franco-Spanish clash in whatever manner he believed would best turn would-be colonists against his Timucuan rivals.

Now that we have looked more closely at the political dynamics that preceded the arrival of Dominique de Gourgues in 1567, we see that his alliance with Saturiwa emerged from a more complicated political situation than that described by La Reprinse de la Floride, or even that depicted by most scholars. Gourgues found Saturiwa a ready ally not because Saturiwa had become absorbed by the Franco-Spanish conflict, nor because he was especially faithful to his French friends, but because the Spanish were now allied with Outina. Saturiwa and the other Timucuans had repeatedly crafted their participation in the European rivalry to make it serve their own ends; Saturiwa had been both the ally and the enemy of the French, and now that the Spaniards had joined themselves to Outina, he welcomed a reunification with the French against a common enemy. What the author of the manuscript failed to understand was that the enemy in question was not the Spanish colony per se, but rather the newly formed Spanish-Outina alliance.

This attempt to deconstruct the alliance between Saturiwa and Dominique de Gourgues exemplifies several patterns that I have observed throughout the early colonial southeast. First, European colonists were aware of their own limitations and expected to rely on native assistance in establishing their colonies. They struggled simply to survive, much less project power, while the precedents of Mexico and Peru convinced them that they could exploit divisions among natives to achieve greater ambitions than they could by their force alone. Second, with few exceptions, native leaders involved themselves in early colonial ventures voluntarily because they believed they would be able to manage colonies and deploy them against their traditional rivals. These partnerships usually deteriorated very quickly, but they nonetheless proved crucial in allowing successful colonies to gain a foothold. Finally, though Europeans and natives both hoped to choose when to participate in each other’s political economies, expediency and exigency invariably entangled them to some degree. Colonizers no less than colonized found these dynamic relationships difficult to control.

---

7 “Memorial que hizo el Dr. Gonzalo Solís de Merás, de todas las jornadas y sucesos del Adelantado Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, su cuñado, y de la conquista de la Florida, y justicia que hizo en Juan Ribao y otros franceses,” printed in Eugenio Ruidíaz y Caravia, La Florida: Su Conquista y Colonización Por Pedro Menéndez De Avilés (Madrid: los hijos de J. A. García, 1893), 300–01.
Carolingian Educational Strategies and Pastoral Care
Laura A. Hohman, The Catholic University of America

The Carolingian elites, the leaders of the kingdom that dominated the west in the late eighth and ninth centuries, had ambitious goals: bolster ecclesiastical institutions, standardize church practices, and inspire true Christianization on all levels of society in an empire that spanned most of continental Europe. To further these efforts, they composed and compiled hundreds of sermons, many of which currently remain unexamined by scholars. My funding from the Council for European Studies’ Pre-dissertation Fellowship, endowed by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, gave me the opportunity to travel to Paris in the fall of 2011 to investigate several of these sermon manuscripts. During the time I spent in the reading room at the Bibliothèque Nationale, I was able to see how some of the sermons were preserved and to study their contents, which allowed me to develop an original approach to tackling these understudied but valuable texts.

I am working to uncover how early medieval pastors were trained and what they were to teach to the laity by conducting a case study analysis of Carolingian educational manuscripts from the ninth century with a focus on those that contain sermons. This is a particularly interesting topic because of the co-dependence and yet disconnect between the elites
and local leaders in the Carolingian period. The Carolingian reformers, who were leading bishops, abbots and scholars, needed local pastors in their efforts to spread and promote orthodox Christianity in the empire at large. The local pastors, however, had to be educated and trained for such a task. In response to this problem, the reformers crafted practical and educational compilations on pastoral care to provide resources and models for pastors.

I am examining a variety of manuscripts that were meant to be teaching collections for rural pastors who lived outside the cultural hubs of the empire and functioned in an undeveloped parish system but were on the front lines of spreading reform to the laity.1 My goal is twofold: first, to flesh out what strategies the reformers used in educating local pastors to be agents of Christianization through the materials assembled or created for these manuscripts and second, to reflect on how those pastors may have then articulated the Christian faith to the general population. To that end, I am investigating what sorts of texts the reformers thought were appropriate and essential for pastors to know, how complex theology was articulated, how pastoral care was modeled and how classic texts were excerpted.

Within this study of Carolingian manuals, I place a particular emphasis on the sermon texts that these compilations contain. I am arguing that the reformers viewed sermons as the most effective medium through which they could model pastoral care, and that sermons are the most direct link scholars have to the beliefs and practices of the unrepresented laity. As previous scholarship has shown, it is clear that the Carolingians valued sermons as important tools in the trickle-down of reform ideals; hundreds of them have survived and were spread throughout the empire; legislation required that sermons be preached regularly and in a language and style that the common people could understand. Since they presented compact, practical and orthodox lessons on a variety of Christian living themes, they were the perfect means through which reformers could disseminate the fundamentals of true Christian beliefs, and I am proposing that the sermons that were placed into educational texts were particularly vital. These sermons complemented the other materials in the manuals and were written, compiled or copied as the models for pastors to follow. As a result, they can uniquely reveal what kind of material the reformers thought was most important for pastors to be able to explain, what topics were being presented to the lay people, and how this information was to be articulated.

With the funding I received from the Council for European Studies, this past fall I was able to transcribe and translate Paris, BN lat. 2328, a ninth century, Carolingian instructional text containing excerpts of the church fathers, theological treatises, a baptismal instruction, a saint’s life, and nine legible sermons.2 It was written in southern France at the beginning of the ninth century and was compiled by an anonymous scribe. The first half of the manuscript is made up of two well-known religious texts, Isidore’s *Three Books of Sentences* and Alcuin’s treatise on the virtues and vices. In the end, there are 10 sermons divided by a saint’s life; 5 of the sermons have been partially edited, 4 have never been studied and the tenth, on the back of the last folio, is illegible.

Since returning from Paris, I have been examining how Carolingian educational strategies were implemented for the dissemination of reform through an examination of these nine sermons and an investigation on how they react to Alcuin’s treatise on the virtues and vices, specifically

---


regarding his interpretation of greed. Five of the sermons are what I have termed ‘moral sermons’ because they consist of exhortations about good, Christian behaviors. The other four I am categorizing as ‘exegetical sermons’ because they are based on the close allegorical analysis of a Biblical narrative. Although these sermons take a different rhetorical and methodological approach, they address similar themes. They explain that Christians need to be concerned not only with avoiding evil, but also with actively doing good. Although ascetic ideals of living in moderation, undergoing suffering and committing to fasting are addressed in the sermons, the most emphasized good behaviors are the discipline of committing Christian truths about the gospel to memory and the act of charity through the giving of alms. Not only do alms aid the poor and needy, they help the giver, who will be paid back by God with eternal rewards. In the end, the joys of heaven and the horrors of hell are established as powerful motivators for righteous living on earth.

From my research, a number of Carolingian strategies for religious education are seen to emerge. For one, the Carolingians used classic texts but excerpted and changed them in a way that made them more easily accessible. This point is particularly important since scholars have often dismissed Carolingian sermons for being mere derivative copies. While many of the sermons in this manual are heavily dependent on those of St. Augustine and Caesarius of Arles, they all do contain much that is original. For example, Sermon 6, the exegetical sermon on the Samaritan Moses receiving and transmitting the Law of God on Mount Sinai. From the Moutier-Grandval Bible, illuminated at the Abbey of St. Martin, Tours, c. 840.
Woman, is closely based on Augustine’s *De diversis questionibus octoginta tribus*. In this compilation, however, Augustine’s text is cut off and an original conclusion is added in that mentions another living water reference – Jesus’ spit that made mud and healed a blind man in John 9. This new conclusion ties the two stories together and argues that due to Adam’s sin, all are spiritually blind to the truth unless Christ intervenes. While the beginning of the sermon follows Augustine’s complex allegorical analysis that reveals the intricate beauty of Scripture, the original conclusion intends to make sure the gospel is the lasting message in the memory of the pastor and his future listeners.

By looking at the interrelationships between these sermons, further strategies for educating local pastors are revealed. For one, the sermons functioned almost like pre-penitentials. While penitentials were sets of rules for doling out the correct penance for specific sins, these sermons had the task of first explaining sins. By pointing out the good behaviors that should be present and the bad behaviors that should be reprimanded, these sermons taught pastors how to encourage virtuous living and recognize sins of all types. In addition, the eternal rewards and consequences associated with good and bad works, rather than earthly penance, were offered as the ultimate motivators for pious listeners to respond to and remember.

Along the same lines, these sermons also provided pastors with simple and creative ways of understanding and articulating the basics of orthodox theology. They taught about the character of God and the essential facets of the gospel, as well as provided a summary of the progress of redemption that linked both the Old and New Testaments. These teachings, however, were concise and tied to the sermon’s theme, creating theological lessons that would have been easy for pastors to understand, memorize and then teach. The sermons emphasized the use of creeds, with one sermon including the full text of the Apostles’ Creed, and repeated language to solidify Christian living principles in the memories of the listeners. In addition, they offered a diversity of ways in which to teach this information. By combining moral and exegetical sermons, this compilation provided models with differing methodological approaches to Bible study and sermon making. While the moral sermons gathered Biblical references around a theme, the exegetical sermons analyzed the hidden layers of meaning within a particular passage and urged pastors to analyze the details of Scripture with care and through meditation.

In comparison to these sermons, which taught pastors how to teach the laity about Christian living and modeled ways in which to do so, this manuscript compilation also contained a treatise on virtues and vices that was written by Alcuin of York, one of the most important reformers of the Carolingian renaissance. Although treatises on virtues and vices were generally written to instruct a monastic audience how to guard against internalized sins of the heart, Alcuin addressed his work to Wido – a powerful count.3 Alcuin’s treatise was an instant success – it was copied by his contemporaries and continued to be circulated for centuries to come. The section that was most often referenced and copied was his section on greed, which was specifically contrasted to Christian acts of charity, especially alms.4 According to Alcuin, greed is an insatiable, excessive desire to acquire, possess or retain wealth; he likened the greedy to a person with dropsy who is filled with fluid but still longs to drink. Here, Alcuin did not forbid the possession of material wealth, but emphasized that avarice is the immoderate obsession with wealth and that a Christian can combat greed by caring more for others.5

5 Richard Newhauser, *The Early History of Greed: The Sin of Avarice in Early Medieval Thought and Literature* (Cam-
I am arguing that the inclusion of this treatise reveals another component to the reformers’ educational strategies, in that the reformers wanted pastors in training to have a basic knowledge of church tradition and scholarship. Alcuin’s discussion of the ways in which the virtues and vices combat and counteract each other would have been the perfect source to include for pastors who needed to understand the underpinnings of behaviors – both good and bad. In addition, making pastors familiar with Alcuin’s particularly popular section on greed and charity would have been a fitting complement to the similar themes raised in the nine sermons about the importance of alms and charity. When placed together in this manuscript, perhaps the compiler wanted pastors to understand Alcuin’s theology for their own education but, as shown in the sermon examples, know how to articulate the essence of this information to their flocks without using theological terms and indulging in rhetorical tropes.

This brief overview is meant to demonstrate how these compilations were intentionally and creatively put together to teach pastoral care. Although my research is still very much in the preliminary stage, it appears as if these educational compilations were expecting even rural pastors to tackle allegorical interpretations of Scripture, understand the warring pulls of virtues and vices on the soul, and use contemplative, rhetorical materials to educate themselves as spiritual leaders of a flock. As I continue to examine the varied texts in this manuscript and then extend my case study to include other examples of ninth-century Carolingian educational texts, I will seek to analyze the genre as a whole and pinpoint more characteristics of Carolingian pastoral care. In the end, I believe that this sort of research project is important because the reform movement and educational system were the lasting legacies of the Carolingians and the instructional texts that the reformers created and dispersed throughout the empire were one of the main factors in their success.

The Play in Ethics in Eugen Fink

Catherine Homan, Emory University

Through support from the CES Pre-dissertation Fellowship, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, I was able to conduct dissertation research at the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg and the Eugen-Fink-Archiv in Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany, during the fall of 2011. I was able to devote a significant amount of time researching, studying and discussing the work of the twentieth-century German philosopher and educator, Eugen Fink. My dissertation project suggests that previous philosophical conceptions of the ethical subject are inadequate, for they champion a person who is a rational, autonomous individual while ignoring the role that relationships, communities and other forms of knowledge play in moral development and ethical considerations. I argue that the philosophy of Eugen Fink is key to a fuller and richer understanding of the ethical subject.

Central to Eugen Fink’s distinctive understanding of the context of ethical engagement is his way of thinking about being in the world. From Fink’s perspective we can see that Western metaphysics, and contemporary philosophical ethics, has forgotten the world. In its attempt to achieve objectivity, metaphysics has sought a vantage point that could be a view from nowhere. Fink seeks to radicalize understanding the world, and thus to radicalize the ethical subject as being in the world. For Fink, ethics is...
fundamentally situated, communal and playful rather than merely rational. To be ethical requires knowing where we stand in the world, and thus requires being both in relation with others and open to the world. In this openness we are neither merely passive nor masters of our lives, but active participants in the play of the world. Fink maps contours of situated human experience that must be included in discussions of ethics. I suggest that by emphasizing play, Fink allows for a more complex picture of the ethical self as characterized by playful openness, and so accounts for her being in the world and with others. Not only is there something ethical that belongs to playful behavior, but there is also a playful dimension to ethics that deserves greater attention.

The world is more original than beings, objects and subjects, for it is only from out of the open totality of the world that these things could come to appearance. In everyday life, though, this relation remains in the background. The world is essentially hidden from us, yet our relation to this world is fundamentally intimate and familiar. Humans have the ability to express the totality of the world symbolically, which occurs most fully in play. Play is symbolon, i.e., a fragment. The symbol as part simultaneously expresses the whole to which it belongs. While humans may have no direct relationship to the world totality as such, this totality still shines forth in symbolic play.

The world is itself constant play between creation and destruction. The world is the playspace of being. Human play is a basic feature of existence, but it differs significantly from other activities, for it seeks no end outside of itself. Although play does not have an external goal, it is not purposeless or random, and this play is taken seriously. At the same time, play is still a curious mix of reality and unreality. A new world is created through play; a ‘strange oasis’ from everyday life is experienced. Play interrupts everyday life, yet it enables us to engage in that life meaningfully.
of life, is not calculated. It is something done already, not thoughtlessly, but in our very attunement and openness. To be ethical is to attune ourselves and remain open to the world, to play.

Furthermore, Fink argues that the fundamental mode of being in the world is not merely one of openness, but one of understanding. This need not be a matter of logic or concepts, however. Fink defines understanding as the most basic capacity to make sense of and move about the world, such that there is a mutual relationship between understanding and being in the world. The mistake of philosophy from Plato forward is to champion self-consciousness and theoretical knowledge over understanding. Thus one of the largest contributions Fink makes to philosophy is his insistence on the possibility for knowledge beyond the theoretical. Indeed, play itself is a mode of understanding. Although play interrupts everyday life, it at the same time returns us to that life by enabling us to engage in new possibilities and understanding and also to participate in the play of the world.

Fink insists that to be human always to be with others, meaning we never exist as isolated individuals but are always in relationships with others. Thus, being human is also always to understand and interpret being with others. Only in light of this understanding can one understand herself. However, “Sociality is not the after effect of simultaneous existence of many people – it is a central structure of human being as such.”3 We can speak of individuals only because there is already a structure of sociality, not the other way around. Characterizations of the subject such as those from Plato, Descartes and Kant have also undergirded ethical theory for most of the history of philosophy, yet I argue that their conceptions of ethical subjects are also too individualist and subjective, as well as at odds with how we generally find ourselves in

---

the world. By insisting on the worldliness of the subject, Fink’s self-designated radicalization also prompts a reconsideration, if not a radicalization, of ethics.

What I found particularly interesting in my research was the intersection of Fink’s beliefs as both a philosopher and professor of education, for it brings to light considerations still relevant today in discussions of the value of humanistic education and the role of colleges and universities. Fink suggests that education provides the possibility for such a radicalization. Upbringing and education are inextricably connected to nature, the world, and freedom. The problem, says Fink, is that although contemporary pedagogy provides many different accounts of the human, we have lost sight of what the human actually is. The primary reason for pedagogy’s shortcoming is its insistence on becoming a science rather than seeing itself as a philosophical practice, meaning thinking itself is a kind of practice. Pedagogy as science attempts to assert its independence and self-sufficiency, but in so doing, it removes the possibility of accounting for those things, such as philosophy and religion, that provide any meaning. True pedagogy, that is, pedagogy that understands itself as a practice and as philosophy, cannot be a science, for science, which can deal only in particulars and decisions, has no space for this movement of freedom. Pedagogy in this greater sense must ask the questions of being, must concern itself with the understanding of the world, if it is to avoid nihilism. In this sense, then, upbringing and philosophy stand in a mutual relationship. Not only can we have a philosophical upbringing, but we are also brought up – educated – through philosophizing. Fink further claims that pedagogy must be rooted in philosophy, which must itself be rooted in the world.4

Based on my research, I argue that the upshot of Fink’s analysis of upbringing is evident when we consider the moral dimension of upbringing. For Fink, no longer can we consider morality as something that can be thought outside of the world. Morality involves a response, an orientation toward the world, the cosmos. When philosophy defines the human as a rational animal or, as Fink deems, a ‘centaur’, then this relationship to the world is lost. The human half, which is the rational half, is the side associated with morality, particularly as morality is associated with rational autonomy and with overcoming desires. The animal half is associated with impulses, urges and basic desires. Thus to become fully moral persons is to seek to rid ourselves of the animal component, to rid ourselves of the relation to nature. Nature is something to be neutralized.

For Fink, however, such a position is untenable, for to separate the human from nature and the world is to get rid of the human. Rather, humans are world beings, and to develop ethically is not to be a rational, autonomous agent, but to understand one’s self in relation to the world. The reason for this is because the human is a world being. Rather than animal rationale, the human is ens cosmologicum. To understand one’s self as a world being is to understand one’s position in the world. Here Fink traces Sitte, morality, to Sitz or Wohnsitz, meaning that morality concerns how one lives and dwells in the world. Again, this also points to the relationship between morality and the community, as Sitte suggests both customs and morals. To relate oneself to the world is to relate to others.

Recent discussions in areas such as feminism and disability studies illustrate the difficulties faced when we define the ethical subject as a rational, autonomous individual. The roles of community,

---

4 Ibid., 53.
interdependence and care are ignored. Persons, such as those with cognitive disabilities, are denied moral status. It is my hope that Fink might contribute to such discussions. I argue that Fink presents a more thorough account of the ethical subject, namely one that can appear only through her being in the world, can be understood only in light of her being with others, and whose ethical comportment is a matter of attunement and openness rather than mastery. This attunement is not passive, but requires the active responsibility of throwing back what one has caught, as well as preserving the otherness of the others and the world while still maintaining a relation to them. This understanding of persons that asserts the primacy of relationality above all else, avoids the pitfalls of other theorists. For Fink, to be a person, to be ethical is to be vulnerable, but also capable of love, death and play. Reason is important, but not definitive. Fink enables us to see that ethical life need not be about universal rules or control or an “I think” or “I feel”; instead ethics becomes a matter of “We play.”
Crossroads of Musical Modernism: Brussels, 1918–1938

Catherine A. Hughes, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

The generous support of the Council for European Studies Pre-dissertation Fellowship, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, allowed me to travel to Brussels in May and June of 2011 to conduct preliminary archival research for my dissertation. My research focuses on the efforts of the cultural elite in Brussels to establish their city as a center for the performance of the newest art music between the world wars. A fascinating group of patrons, institutional directors and concert organizers brought many of the foremost composers of the period to Belgium. Alban Berg, Paul Hindemith, Darius Milhaud, Igor Stravinsky and many others attended premieres of their works in Brussels. Performances of their different styles of music made Brussels a crossroads for the distinct French, German and Russian conceptions of musical modernism, and openness to this wide variety of new music became a hallmark of the city’s cultural identity. While scholars have studied the role that patrons played in Brussels at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, musicologists treat the importance of musical modernism in Brussels between the wars only superficially. By developing a nuanced view of the role of modern music in the city during this period, my dissertation examines the ways in which smaller European cultural centers approached new music, fostered cosmopolitanism and established identities distinct from those of dominant
international cities, especially Paris, London and Vienna.¹

My research contributes new perspectives to the study of art music between the world wars. First, the performance in Brussels of repertoires representing a variety of nationalist and modern styles offers important insight into the coexistence of multiple sets of aesthetic values that complicate the current discourse on musical modernism.² Second, my work enriches current conceptions of the role of patrons, concert organizers and institutional directors in the development of musical modernism. Third, it exposes a remarkable paradox at the heart of the Belgian expression of nationalism: the cultural elite considered the performance of foreign music a key part of Belgian national identity. An examination of this paradox will contribute to current discussions in musicology about processes of cross-cultural exchange, cultural appropriation and cosmopolitanism.³

1 Breckenridge, Pollack, Bhabha and Chakrabarty define cosmopolitanism as “ways of living at home abroad or abroad at home.” A cosmopolitan center is one in which the dominant culture is one of openness to the foreign; where residents seek ways to “live abroad at home” through the exploration of selected aspects of foreign culture while retaining an identity that is separate from these foreign cultures. Carol A. Breckenridge et al., “Cosmopolitanisms,” in Cosmopolitanism (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 5–8.


3 Many of the key features of national identity that Benedict Anderson identifies in his influential Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism do not readily apply to the process of identity construction in Belgium. The cultural and linguistic divide between Flanders in the north and Francophone Wallonia in the south resulted in a distinct separation between the cultural and political identities in Belgium. A divide between the largely Francophone bourgeoisie, even in the Flemish cities of Ghent and Antwerp, and the Flemish-speaking working classes further complicates discussion of Belgian national identity as it relates to language. In the 1920s, these discrepancies resulted in political debates and new legislation to regulate the use of language and to define the rights of self-governance for the Flemish and Walloon regions. Carl A. Strikwerda, A House Divided: Catholics, Socialists, and Flemish Nationalists in Nineteenth-Century Belgium (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1997); Kas Desprez and Louis Vos, eds., Nationalism in Belgium: Shifting Identities 1780–1995 (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998).
he looked to expand musical tastes in Brussels beyond the established pre-war composers who were featured in concerts organized by the Belgian pre-war impresario Octave Maus. He used Maus’s work as a model for his own concert series, the Concerts Pro Arte, which was founded in 1921. Collaer organized the premieres of many new chamber works for his concerts. The programs presented music that exhibited a variety of new compositional approaches, from Darius Milhaud’s use of polytonality and jazz, to Paul Hindemith’s complex counterpoint, and from Igor Stravinsky’s neoclassicism to Arnold Schoenberg’s serialism.

Collaer’s concerts had a profound impact on the construction of Belgian musical identity. Composers across Europe acknowledged the Concerts Pro Arte as a key venue for the performance of the most experimental of new works. The concerts also exposed the directors of the Théâtre de la Monnaie, the Conservatoire Royal de Bruxelles and the Palais des Beaux-Arts to a wide range of new musical styles. Many performances of new works at these institutions were the result of Collaer’s mediation between foreign composers whose works appeared on Pro Arte programs and Belgian patrons.

Henry Le Bœuf, a lawyer by training, arranged for the performance of many new symphonic works that were too large for Collaer’s chamber music concerts. Under Le Bœuf’s direction, the new Société Philharmonique offered performances of a wide variety of music, including the world premiere of Stravinsky’s *Symphonie de psaumes* in 1930 and symphonic works by Debussy, Ravel, Scriabin and Prokofiev that were not yet part of standard concert repertory. Le Bœuf’s extensive correspondence and publications reveal his ambitions to make Brussels a center for modern art of many different styles. He envisioned the new Palais des Beaux-Arts, the home of the Société Philharmonique, as an international meeting place for artists, and worked diligently to ensure that Belgian musical life would be represented in international music journals.

---

4 The Fonds Paul et Elsa Collaer at the Bibliothèque Royale Albert Ier in Brussels houses Collaer’s correspondence from 1926 until his death in 1989. The collection also includes all of his publications on modern music, early music, and his ethnographic studies of music in Flanders and Africa. The Paul Collaer Archives at the Royal Museum for Central Africa, in Tervuren, Belgium, also contains some correspondence and essays from the interwar years.

5 Maus served as the secretary of the independent artistic group Les XX, and later as director of La Libre Esthétique. The concerts he organized each year were given in the galleries where these groups exhibited a wide variety of paintings, sculpture and decorative art by Belgian and international artists. In collaboration with the French composer Vincent d’Indy and the Belgian violinist Eugène Ysaÿe, Maus introduced Belgian audiences to key pre-war French composers, including Claude Debussy and Ernest Chausson. Maus’s wife, Madeleine Octave Maus, published a retrospective study of Maus’s time with Les XX and La Libre Esthétique, focusing on his dedication to supporting new art. *Trente années de lutte pour l’art: Les XX et La Libre Esthétique, 1884–1914* (Brussels: Lebeer Hossmann, 1980).

6 On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the concert series, Collaer published a commemorative book that includes a brief description of his goals for these performances, lists of financial backers, and each concert program that the organization presented between 1931 and 1932. *Les Concerts Pro Arte. Xe anniversaire. Bruxelles. 1921–1932* (Brussels: Palais des Beaux-Arts, Société Symphonique de Bruxelles, 1931).

7 Darius Milhaud, for example, published his essay, “Ce que je dois à la Belgique” in the Belgian *Bulletin de la Classe des Beaux-Arts* 5 no. 56 (1974), in which he credits Collaer and the Concerts Pro Arte for the dissemination of many of his most important works of the 1920s and 1930s.

8 The *Cahiers de Belgique* dedicated a special issue to the inauguration of the Palais des Beaux-Arts in June 1928. Le Bœuf’s letter at the beginning of this issue outlines his vision...
Each chapter of my dissertation examines the contributions of one member of the Belgian cultural elite to the musical life in Brussels. In addition to Collaer and Le Bœuf, I am concentrating on two of their contemporaries, Corneil de Thoran and Queen Élisabeth. De Thoran, director at the Théâtre de la Monnaie, created new productions of many of the most important operas composed between the wars, by French, German and Belgian composers. Queen Élisabeth established the Chapelle de la Reine Élisabeth and the Concours Reine Élisabeth to support the cultivation of young composers and performers from Belgium and foreign countries. Shaped by the internal political changes for the building as a cultural center. The journal continued to print reviews of both symphonic and chamber concerts at the Palais throughout the 1930s. Le Bœuf engaged in an extensive correspondence with Henri Prunières, the editor of La Revue musicale. Prunières solicited Le Bœuf’s help to secure Belgian subscribers and request Belgian musicians to contribute essays and reviews. Le Bœuf embraced the project enthusiastically, and advocated for a more complete representation of Belgium in the journal. These letters are housed at the Bibliothèque Royale Albert Ier (Mus Ms 4147/XXI/1–218).

and the ambitions that Belgian leaders had to establish their capital as a global center after the war, the enthusiasm that these four individuals had for the newest art music was essential in the process of identity formation for the city as a cosmopolitan center that was open to the newest trends in modern music. By showing the ways in which each of the four members of the Bruxellois cultural elite supported music between the world wars, my dissertation expands the musicological conception of the relationships among national identity, modernist musical aesthetics, and cosmopolitanism between the world wars.
The Pre-Dissertation Fellowship from the Council for European Studies (CES) allowed me to spend the summer of 2011 in Paris, researching the ways in which French republicans attempted to appropriate cinema in the mid-1910s and throughout the 1920s. For this research, I drew on a wide range of print sources (magazines, pamphlets, correspondence) and films, held by the Bibliothèque nationale de France, especially the Département des Arts du Spectacle, the Cinémathèque française and the Centre National du cinéma et de l’image animée. My goal was to gain a better understanding of the key players and institutions that worked to redefine cinema as a tool for teaching, both in schools and in various programs aimed at students and their families. Throughout this process, I distinguished between two types of pedagogical cinema: instructional (short non-fictional films screened in schools) and educational (fictional and semi-fictional films of varying lengths shown in a range of institutions such as city halls, factories and school amphitheaters).

Republican supporters of these two types of cinema believed that film did not have to be the ‘corrupting’ spectacle decried by journalists and government officials in the early 1900s. After initially
subscribing to this view, republicans began to see during World War I that cinema could in fact help with their propaganda efforts, drumming up popular support for the war by showing audiences a very controlled glimpse of what happened on the front. It is no coincidence, then, that the idea of instructional cinema began to be developed during the war. In 1916, the Minister of Public Instruction, mathematician Paul Painlevé, announced that a special extra-parliamentary commission would begin to study the possible uses of cinema in schools. This commission, which came to be known as the Bessou commission, was made up of politicians, film industry professionals and teachers from different branches of the school system.

While the work of the Bessou commission was the first official institutional attempt to integrate cinema into the school system, the idea of instructional cinema had been circulating for a few years as a new addition to the widely spread practice of visual instruction through still images and magic lanterns. The final Bessou report praised such early independent promoters of cinema as elementary school teacher Adrien Collette, high school teacher of natural sciences Emile Brucker, and a number of other educators who used the new medium in vocational training classes and university lectures. The commission found these early examples so convincing that it recommended the expansion of instructional cinema to all levels, encouraging teachers to use it whenever it could enhance students’ comprehension of their daily lessons. Though generally enthusiastic in its description of the positive effects of instructional cinema, the report also offered a few caveats meant to preempt common critiques of the commission’s project.1 First and foremost, it repeatedly stated that the moving images should not do the work of the teacher but only serve as an auxiliary device, a prop like any other. Instructional films would not completely replace still images, but rather work as their complement whenever they would be more enlightening, for instance in the study of geography and of natural sciences.

Most importantly, all instructional films had to be non-fictional. Advocates of instructional cinema stayed away from fictional films because the commission considered that the only way to legitimize the introduction of this medium in the classroom was to deny its entertainment function.2 To those who insisted that such a distinction was not tenable because any film had a certain entertainment value, it replied that using film in the classroom would not take away from the seriousness of the curriculum but would make it more accessible to all students. According to an often-repeated argument, most children had a visual imagination; catering to their needs by projecting moving images meant that even the laziest students could follow along and absorb what they saw.3 This type of discourse reworked a common idea in the early decades of cinema that cast the new medium as the democratizing spectacle par excellence because people from all countries could understand the moving images and would thus come to better know each other.

In practical terms, the report encouraged the Ministry of Public Instruction and interested teachers to work closely with film companies in order to produce appropriate films in line with the curriculum and to make small affordable projectors for classroom use. The most important

---
2 This point is emphasized in primary sources and in analyses of pedagogical cinema such as Christophe Gauthier, “Au risque du spectacle: Les projections cinématographiques en milieu scolaire dans les années 1920,” in Cinéma pédagogique et scientifique. À la redécouverte des archives, ed. Béatrice de Pastre-Robert, Monique Dubost, and Françoise Massit-Folléa (Lyon: ENS Éditions, 2004), 73–98, esp. 91.
companies, Pathé and Gaumont, both of which had representatives sitting on the Bessou commission, eagerly cooperated with educators. When the Pathé Baby projector came out in 1922, it was advertised as perfect for schools. To back it up, the Pathé Baby film catalog included a wide range of pedagogical shorts for a variety of subjects, while the magazine _Le Cinéma chez soi, revue illustrée du cinématographe de la famille et de l’école_ worked as an extended advertisement for these films.⁴ Their strategy paid off – most schools chose the 9.5mm or 16mm Pathé Baby format because it was cheaper and easier to handle than the 35mm format. Gaumont too created a _cinemathèque d’enseignement_, which included new pictures made especially for their _Encyclopédie_ program and older short-subject films from the late 1900s that could be used for geography lessons or vocational training. Jean Benoit-Lévy, an enterprising filmmaker and producer who came from a family deeply committed to republican causes, took the lead in 1922 by creating _l’Édition française cinématographique_, a new company that catered specifically to the needs of educators. To support those teachers interested in using instructional films, the Ministry of Public Instruction offered partial subventions for purchasing projectors. It also worked with the Pedagogical Museum to put together a catalog of free films lent to schools upon request. Other institutions such as the Cinémathèque de la ville de Paris and that of Saint-Etienne, the Ministry of Agriculture, as well as the Ministry of Health had their own collections of films that teachers could borrow for their lessons.⁵ These efforts, however, never seemed to be enough; the demand for films constantly exceeded the supply and teachers clamored for more support from the government. The state’s involvement in instructional cinema had legitimized it and enshrined it as a particular genre.

The fact that French republican pedagogues only allowed non-fictional films into the classroom suggests that rather than tackling the issues brought up by fiction films, particularly the problem of imitation and the ambiguity of the moving image, they preferred to avoid them altogether. By contrast, proponents of educational cinema were more open to fiction films and expressed their interest in screening all types of motion pictures as long as they could be integrated into their stated goal of bringing “education, information, and entertainment” [“éducation, documentation, distraction”] to every corner of France.⁶ Film historians Raymond Borde and Charles Perrin have argued that this openness to fiction had to do with the fact that one of the most enthusiastic advocates of educational cinema, Gustave Cauvin, was not a teacher but a social activist.⁷ Cauvin founded the first Office of Educational Cinema in Lyon in 1921, worked as its president until it was shut down during World War II, and then revived it for a few more years. Legally, the office was a non-governmental association, but its creation would not have been possible without the moral and financial support of influential Lyon-based politicians such as Edouard Herriot, who held various governmental posts during this period, and Joseph Brenier, senator and Vice President of the Ligue de l’Enseignement. Within a few years, the Lyon Office became a model for an entire network and by 1930 there were eight regional offices scattered throughout France in cities such as Nancy, Paris and Alger.

These offices functioned like film lending libraries: they designed a range of programs and sent them to their subscribers, most of whom were teachers and self-proclaimed “friends of the secular school” who believed in the mission of popular education. In 1929, the Lyon Office

---


⁵ The annual directory _Le Tout Cinema_ listed all such lending institutions with their contact information.


reported receiving 915 requests for its programs, followed by Lille with 730 and Alger with 500. There were free programs for teachers who wanted to organize screenings for their students after class or on Thursdays (a day off), and four additional types of paying programs that included some short-subject documentaries, educational films and old motion pictures. When these commercial pictures finished their theatrical run and were no longer profitable on the market, the offices bought inexpensive copies which they then circulated for several years. The motion pictures they distributed included comedies with Charlie Chaplin, the dog Rintintin and the young Jackie Coogan; other American films like D.W. Griffith’s *The Birth of a Nation* and Robert Flaherty’s *Moana*; and some productions by filmmakers associated with the French or the international avant-garde such as Germaine Dulac, Jean Epstein and Carl Theodor Dreyer. My broader project analyzes the intricacies of these choices and concludes that the Offices of Educational Cinema negotiated a sometimes uneasy working relationship between the avant-garde and republican ideology.

The dissertation chapter based on this research aims to demonstrate that while viewers of instructional cinema learned a specific way of deciphering and describing films, especially non-fiction, spectators of educational cinema were encouraged to have an emotional response only to those motion pictures that idealized the family and equated the personal with the social. These divergent attempts to define the viewer threw into sharp relief the difficulty of fine-tuning the balance between reason and emotion, a balance taken to be crucial to the strength of the Third Republic. In his study on the invention of the social sphere as a counterpart to the political sphere, Jacques Donzelot has argued that republicans created a new set of social policies, usually designated as ‘solidarism’, in order to contain the eruption of political passions into the public sphere because they were well aware of the effects that such eruptions had during the Second Republic and in the first years of the Third. To govern efficiently, they needed to find a way to ensure that citizens were both rationally and emotionally committed to this particular political regime so that they would not contribute to new upheavals. This explains why republicans also carefully attempted to calibrate the traits of their ideal film spectator, who had to be self-reliant enough to rationalize the meaning of the moving image but also vulnerable to the pathos of officially sanctioned films. Their model spectator was a model citizen.

CES’s generous funding of my summer research has thus helped me lay the groundwork for a dissertation chapter. It also allowed me to consult several documents that will be crucial to subsequent chapters dealing with how the Catholics and Communists used cinema for their own pedagogical projects in response to the republicans’ strategy.

---


9 In the first years of the offices these programs cost 50, 80, 110 and 150 francs, according to Cauvin’s annual reports; my account draws on the reports preserved at the Bibliothèque du Film quoted throughout this chapter and on the short film *L’Office régional du cinéma éducateur de Lyon*, 1928.

10 I am referring here to the lists offered by Cauvin in his annual reports and to the more complete list put together by Borde and Perrin in *Les Offices du cinéma éducateur*, 43–54. The actual catalogs circulated by the Offices do not seem to have survived.


12 Scholars have recently begun to explore the connection between politics and emotions in the Third Republic. See, for instance, Judith Surkis, *Sexing the Citizen: Morality and Masculinity in France, 1870–1920* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), for an analysis of the ways in which the Republic attempted to govern through affect, controlling the emotional and sexual lives of its citizens.
Transgression and Transmission:
Performance Art in Post-Soviet Moscow

Michelle Maydanchik, University of Chicago

With the generous support of a Council for European Studies (CES) Pre-Dissertation Fellowship funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, I conducted preliminary archival work related to my dissertation on performance art in post-Soviet Moscow. My dissertation focuses on Moscow Actionism — a violent and spectacular strain of performance art that emerged in Moscow during the early 1990s. It examines Actionist performances such as Oleg Kulik’s impersonations of a rabid dog, Aleksandr Brener’s vandalizations of exhibited artworks, and Anatoly Osmolovsky’s orchestrations of obstructive rallies in Moscow’s public spaces in light of the conditions of possibility for post-Soviet artists who, for the first time after decades of Soviet-era seclusion, sought to present and promote their art within a global network
of galleries, museums and publications. During my research trip to Moscow, I compiled primary source materials such as photographic documentation, filmic records, written accounts and mass media reproductions of post-Soviet performance art that I located in libraries, state archives and contemporary art institutions. The majority of my research was conducted at the National Center for Contemporary Art, a research organization dedicated to recent Russian art. The National Center for Contemporary Art’s library contains numerous exhibition catalogs, books and journals pertaining to Russian art since 1950, while its archive and mediatheque house a large variety of press clippings, invitations, artist files, digital catalogue raisonnés and audio-visual records of performances, exhibitions, interviews, symposia and lectures that took place in Moscow during the 1980s and 1990s. I also made use of the Russian State Library and the State Public Historical Library, where I examined news articles about Moscow Actionist performances and tracked the rise of sensationalism in Russian mass culture using periodicals published during glasnost and the early post-Soviet period. Lastly, I familiarized myself with the current state of contemporary art in Moscow and the institutional transfigurations triggered by art practices of the 1980s and 1990s at spaces such as the Moscow Museum of Modern Art, the Winzavod Center for Contemporary Art, the Tretyakov Gallery on Krymsky Val, and the Stella Art Foundation.

Using the materials made available by the fieldwork funded by CES, I integrated formal and iconographic analyses of Moscow Actionist performances with close readings of historical, sociological, anthropological and economic accounts of the circumstances surrounding the emergence of these works in post-Soviet Moscow. At the same time, my pre-dissertation research confirmed the necessity of also carefully evaluating Actionist performances’ entanglements with global market and media systems. The research I conducted on my trip specifically supports the argument of what I envision to be my dissertation’s first chapter, which will focus on early Actionist performances taking place in Moscow. This chapter will explore how Moscow Actionist artists overcame their ‘provincial’ position in post-Soviet Russia by employing mass media to engage with and assimilate into the transnational structures that have dominated the reception, distribution and legitimation of contemporary art since the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Moscow Actionism emerged shortly after the troubled formation of the Russian Federation. In late December of 1991, after 69 years of Soviet rule, the USSR legally ceased to exist and its socialist system was dismantled. By the end of the decade, Russia would become a full-fledged consumer society, but the time between the dissolution of the USSR and the Russian Federation’s economic reemergence marked an uneasy moment between ideologies. The hasty and mismanaged transformation from a command economy to a market-based system with private ownership thrust the populace into the worst depression endured by an industrial country, culminating in rampant inflation; a scarcity of essential goods; a sharp rise in homelessness, alcoholism, drug consumption, crime and suicide rates; unchecked corruption among the new oligarch class; and the loss of health, education and social services.1 These factors set into motion the gradual disintegration of the nation’s social infrastructure, until the disorder quietly underlying late-Soviet

life exploded into an anarchic, violent spectacle.

Moscow Actionist performances have most frequently been understood as naturalistic reflections of the chaos that erupted on the streets of Russia following Soviet collapse or as radical reactions to the humiliations of the post-Socialist geopolitical order. However, while the transgressive and antagonistic quality of Actionist work certainly resonated with the turbulent socio-political climate surrounding it, the archival materials that I studied in Moscow trouble the notion that post-Soviet artists acted as conduits for the traumas of recent Russian history or that Actionist performances were acts of rebellion against the cultural values of the West. My examination of videos of performances, media reports in both domestic and international publications, and writings by Moscow Actionist artists indicated that the spectacular nature of this work was instead a strategic response to post-Soviet artists’ marginal situation within an international artworld context.

Throughout the Soviet period, private networks of production and reception supported unofficial artistic practice while official artists worked within state-run structures. In the 1990s, the small-scale underground artworlds of the Soviet era evaporated as the elimination of state-sponsored Socialist Realism also invalidated any justification for its alternative, leaving post-Soviet artists with no local frameworks for circulating art. At the same time, Russian artists found themselves in a position of extreme social and economic marginality with regard to the global artworld of the 1990s. Post-Soviet artists understood their provincialism to be the result of a profound lack of domestic structures for professional legitimation, such as elite exhibition spaces, addressable publics, commodity markets, fields of discourse and, most crucially, educational structures. As technical abilities were supplanted

2 While the term ‘provincial’ has derogatory connotations, I use it to refer to what art historian Terry Smith has described by a focus on theoretical and cultural competences in the decades following World War II, art schools became increasingly central to the process of artistic professionalization. Today, art schools train students to be practiced, identifiable artists not through the development of manual skills but by familiarizing these students with the specialized languages, conventions and values of the field of contemporary art.

The Moscow Actionists compensated for their provincial condition by inventively manipulating mass media formats. In doing so, they ensured their works’ dissemination to as broad an audience as possible through newspapers, tabloids and magazines, as well as their social and institutional legitimization as professional artists. My fieldwork in Moscow uncovered imagery confirming the presence of large contingents of press reporters and photographers at many Actionist performances. Relatedly, I discovered numerous press clippings confirming that the mass media was a crucial outlet for the presentation of these works. I interpret such documentary materials as evidence that the raucous, spectacular quality of Moscow Actionist performances was intended to make them mediagenic, rather than reflective or subversive. Transgression generated scandal, which courted publicity. Performance artists and scholars have traditionally rejected reproduction as an attempt to integrate the immediacy of live art into consumable cultural forms, but Moscow Actionist performances were not orchestrated as “an attitude of subservience to an externally imposed hierarchy of cultural values” resulting from “the projection of the New York art world as the metropolitan center for art by ever other art world.” Though the artworld witnessed a geographical diffusion of market, institutional and discursive power out of New York by the 1990s, artists working in peripheral sites such as Moscow still experienced provincialism in relation to the newly global network of metropolitan centers comprising the contemporary art scene. Terry Smith, “The Provincialism Problem,” Artforum 13 (September 1974), 54.
look of tabloid photos, Actionist performances reinforced their status as artistic products to a 1990s art scene that was increasingly characterized by spectacle, and in which the boundaries between art and mass cultural forms were blurring. Strategies of scandal were applied first by the historical European avant-gardes and again by neo-avant-garde artists of the 1960s, but sensationalism re-entered the foreground of artistic practices in the 1990s. While previously an anti-art mode by which avant-garde artists provoked adversarial audience participation and demonstrated an anti-establishment stance, in the 1990s scandal became a leading means of artistic promotion and legitimation. Instead of transgressing cultural boundaries, the Moscow Actionists were enacting the conventions and competencies that governed the international artworld of the 1990s. In this way, the shocking nature of Actionist performances legitimated post-Soviet artists as participating professionals within the field of contemporary art, while still directly addressing a native context.

The pre-dissertation research supported by the CES significantly furthered the conceptualization of my dissertation project, as well as my progress toward constructing a new understanding of the most significant post-Soviet artists, offering the first sustained analysis situating recent Russian art in its newly global context, and building a more complex understanding of performance art by dislocating it from narrow associations with transgression. Performance – understood as both an artistic medium and a broader theoretical construct – has most often been invoked as a subversive mode that challenges institutionalization, marketability and societal norms. My dissertation’s argument is that, within both late-Soviet culture and advanced global capitalism, performance is most accurately described as a mechanism of assimilation and standardization.

\[\text{3 For more on chernukha, see Eliot Borenstein’s Overkill: Sex and Violence in Contemporary Russian Popular Culture, Alexander Genis’s “Perestroika as a Shift in Literary Paradigm” in Russian Postmodernism: New Perspectives on Post-Soviet Culture, and Seth Graham’s “Chernukha in Russian Film” in Studies in Slavic Cultures 1.}\]
I am currently continuing my research by exploring Moscow Actionist performances in relation to both late-Soviet society and late-capitalist economic trends through additional archival work and interviews with artists and artworld professionals. In the late-Soviet era, citizens were no longer expected to believe in Socialism, but were still required to perform its ideological norms by speaking in authoritarian language, participating in political rituals and voting in favor of resolutions at party meetings. In addition to being a pervasive and punitive characteristic of late-Soviet life, performance is also central to post-Fordist capitalism, wherein the industrial object has been replaced by the immaterial production of performative commodities such as services, images and affects. Using the findings that I first accessed with the help of my fellowship, my dissertation will posit that, situated at the intersection between these two socio-economic systems, the Moscow Actionists deployed performance as a technique for participating in the new economic order, as well as the market and media structures of the artworld that accompanied it.
Introduction to the Problematic: Breaking the Association between Theology and Religious Life

Academic theology in many European countries has long had close ties with official church bodies. However, academic theology is not simply the work of religious people facilitating religious life. Official ties notwithstanding, many very prominent German protestant theologians have for a long time understood the work of theology as an intellectual task, abiding by standard academic norms, and offering a distinct kind of analysis to the overall academic enterprise.

In this paper, I introduce a tradition in German theology that roots theology on the ground, as a study of practices of communication of individual religious experience. In the first part of the paper, I discuss how its intersubjective understanding of the communication of religious experience leads to the development of historical and then empirical methods as the primary mode of theological procedure. In the second part of the paper, I focus on the attention paid to ways people form total conceptions of reality in the communication of their individual experiences of fragmentation and dependence. I conclude by reflecting on the intellectual contribution of theology to the wider academic enterprise.

I have selected three representative figures in German academic theology whose work resists a simplistic association of theology and religious life: Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834), Ernst Troeltsch (1865–1923) and Wilhelm Gräb (1948–). Schleiermacher is a rather gigantic figure on the landscape of modern German thought. For present interests, it is sufficient to note that he is referred to by detractors and followers alike as the ‘Father of Modern Theology’,¹ and he was a highly original

Ernst Troeltsch started life as a theologian but moved increasingly toward philosophy. He felt compelled to embed theology in history and to set theology alongside the study of world religions. He devoted a large part of his career to the philosophy of history and the problem of the relativity of values. Wilhelm Gräb is a contemporary theologian who follows in the tradition of Schleiermacher and Troeltsch. His main area of theology is ‘practical theology’, by which is meant not the application of religious beliefs to daily life but, rather, the use of theology to analyze and interpret culture and society. I take these


4 Troeltsch’s classic piece on this topic is his *The Absoluteness of Christianity and the History of Religions*, trans. James Luther Adams (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1971). But he also wrote a massive and comprehensive critique of historicism in *Der Historismus und seine Probleme*, vol. 3 of *Gesammelte Schriften* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1922). Troeltsch had intended a second, constructive volume to follow *Der Historismus*, but died before he was able to complete it. What work he had done in preparation for the second volume may be found in Ernst Troeltsch, *Christian Thought: Its History and Application*, ed. Baron F. von Hugel (London 1923), republished by Meridian in 1957.


experience in order for communication of those experiences to take place. Without communication, the experiences of individuals remain unreflected and thus unable to be incorporated into their self-understandings. Finally, theology must be historical, for, inasmuch as it begins at the point of communication of individual religious experience, theology approaches or meets the individual at a particular historical place and time. Theology then tries to trace connections between historical expressions of faith over time. In Schleiermacher’s model, doctrine is indeed part of theology but is not the object of theological study. Instead, theology primarily devotes its attention to religious communication between individuals, forming communities and continuing on through time.

Ernst Troeltsch accepted Schleiermacher’s understanding of theology as a historical discipline, and he began to draw out the implications of this historical requirement. In short, Troeltsch argued that for theology to hold to historical standards of inquiry entailed an epistemological revision of theological procedure, leading theology to take on empirical methodologies.

In what Troeltsch called “the modern view of history,” every idea must be able to be subjected to critique; all historical phenomena must bear some analogy to one another; and all historical phenomena must be interconnected. These three principles revise theology’s epistemological orientation and call it to use historical-empirical methods in its work of organizing and presenting religious self-understandings. The method Troeltsch found appropriate to this understanding of theology was the sociology of religion, and he produced his most well-known work precisely in this genre. In that book, The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches, Troeltsch conducts a sociological survey of the development of Christian thought and the formation of the different Christian traditions vis-à-vis Christianity’s interaction with the political and philosophical influences with which it has integrated itself throughout its history.

Conceptually, this is the halfway point of the paper. In summary, Schleiermacher’s and Troeltsch’s conception of theology as the conceptualization of individual and group religious self-understanding using historical-empirical methods suggests that it may be necessary to reevaluate the popular understanding of theology as religious people involved in the facilitation of religious life. For we have in Schleiermacher and Troeltsch an approach to theology that seems to observe the empirical and critical expectations of any academic discipline. I now turn to the question of whether theology might, not merely be ‘allowed’ as a form of intellectual inquiry, but have something distinct of its own to offer to the academic enterprise.

**Part Two – From Troeltsch to Gräb: Theology as Socio-Cultural Analysis of Forms of Communicating Total Conceptions of Reality**

Troeltsch was no historical positivist. Though he felt theology needed to be more historically rigorous, he nevertheless recognized immediately that the criteria for deciphering history are not self-evident. To identify some event, person or idea as ‘important’ is a judgment, and the values that validate the judgment are relative to the person making the identification. How can values be reasonably and responsibly used to evaluate history when they are themselves contingent historical products? Since individuals, communities and states do have to make decisions, values funded by a total conception of reality are necessary for deeming one course of action better than another. The historical-empirical work of critique, comparison and arrangement requires that one understand to the best of one’s ability the

---

9 Ernst Troeltsch, The Absoluteness of Christianity, ch. 1.

10 Ernst Troeltsch, “Historical and Dogmatic Method in Theology,” in Religion in History, 12ff.


total conceptions of reality that have prompted people to prefer certain paths over others.

What does all of this mean for theology? We observe that, with Troeltsch, theological methods acquired an empirical, sociological orientation. But then he also sought to approach the interpretation of sociological data through analysis of the role of values and total conceptions of reality – the senses and symbols of fullness that people and scholars use to assign some unity to their experience. Theology has an interest in how people formulate and express meaning in the world – individually, communally and societally.

This brings me to my final figure, Wilhelm Gräb. Gräb follows in the tradition of Schleiermacher and Troeltsch, but builds on them, developing a conception of theology that relies on and therefore highly values a pluralism of religious forms and perspectives.

Gräb urges that a historically grounded, empirically conducted theology seeking to understand people’s sense of the real must attend closely to the particularities of present culture and society. He argues in agreement with Habermas’s post-secularism thesis that religion continues to play an active role in modern societies. On the one hand, religion persists as a strong influence in inter- and intra-cultural relationships. The ‘disenchantment’ aspect of secularization theses has so far turned out to be incorrect. On the other hand, religion has indeed differentiated within many societies to a large extent. The significant consequence of this differentiation is that, while religion has lost a degree of influence in certain areas such as state institutions, it has proliferated through cultural-aesthetic forms.

Gräb regards pursuits of fulfillment and language of ultimacy as religious, and he finds these present to a large extent even in western societies where participation in traditional forms of religious life have greatly diminished. He lists as examples: Internet communities, heightened attention to health and wellness, sports arenas and audio-visual culture. It is important to understand that Gräb is not saying, “See, people really are still looking for God.” Rather, it makes more sense to interpret Gräb on this point within the tradition of Troeltsch and Schleiermacher. Namely, pursuits of ‘fulfillment’ by individuals or groups and language of ultimacy bespeak the interest people have in interconnecting their fragmentary experiences in life together into a whole, or wholes, that can stabilize the experience of life and thus help to develop self-understanding.

As with Schleiermacher, the emphasis is on the communication of individual experience in historical-empirical settings and examining and interconnecting those experiences with one another. The experience of life is plural, fragmentary and filled with contingencies. With the experience of the contingency of one’s life comes an awareness

---

13 Troeltsch gives no final word on theology per se. Troeltsch’s own theological position must be assembled from various parts of his writings. He did write in his lectures on Christian Glaubenslehre concerning his position in relation to Schleiermacher’s that “no other theologian stays as close to Schleiermacher’s method and approach” as he took himself to. Ernst Troeltsch, The Christian Faith, ed. Gertrud von le Fort, trans. Garrett E. Paul (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991), 113.


16 The main source to consult on this point is Gräb’s rather large book, Sinn Fürs Unendliche: Religion in der Mediengesellschaft (Gütersloh: Chr. Kaiser/Gütersloher Verlagshaus GmbH, 2002).
of one’s deep dependence on contingent things – and even of the contingency of that awareness! Gräb does not judge this to be a nihilistic situation, nor does he conjure from his analysis some God-shaped hole in humanity. Rather, he simply argues that the feeling of dependence that people experience in their lives gives them a fundamental drive to communicate with and connect to others – to, again, begin to connect the pieces of their experience into a whole.

Theological method therefore becomes analysis of the ways people engage in these synthesizing efforts. Key to Gräb’s diagnosis of the religious situation of modern, differentiated society is that most of these experiences take place outside of traditional religious structures and, indeed, are being best theorized by non-religious institutions. If theology analyzes the communication practices of individuals and groups in synthesizing their experiences, then, so reasons Gräb, theology must begin to incorporate a diversity of different cultural idioms and perspectives. Theology needs to look to film, the arts in general, sport, politics and so on for the varieties of interconnectedness that are presented in these places. Moreover, theology ought to cultivate the pluralism and the experimental nature of these social forms as being precisely the thing that makes it possible for people to express their experiences. For only in this way is communication possible. And Gräb interprets communication as reconciliation, renewal and salvation for humanity.

Conclusion

Schleiermacher revolutionized theology at the beginning of the nineteenth century by planting its feet firmly on the ground. Theology does not come from God, but facilitates communications among people presenting their encounters with God or other religious reality. From Schleiermacher, Troeltsch took a methodological lesson: As a ground-up work, theology ought to employ historical and indeed empirical methods. Gräb agrees with Troeltsch on this point. More explicitly than Troeltsch did, however, Gräb also takes from Schleiermacher an existential-hermeneutical point: When people give expression to their experience of a religious reality, they are expressing total conceptions of reality, a sense for how life’s contingency and fragmentariness all hold together. In order for the historical-empirical work to be possible, theology must develop an awareness and understanding of people’s views of entirety.

The first part of the paper outlined an understanding of theology wherein theology does not expect special epistemological privileges. It proceeds methodologically according to the same rules as any academic discipline in the modern university. The second part of the paper discussed an understanding of theology as the fostering of a critical discourse of presenting and analyzing people’s operating understandings of reality. While the former point may seem like simply an *apologia* for theology, the latter point raises an important, if provocative issue for the modern university: Where in the university today can researchers and students alike critically present and evaluate their own metaphysical commitments? Students are often unaware that they even hold anything like ultimate commitments, while scholars are expected to hide them. But, surely, this obstructs deep understanding of ourselves individually and corporately. Theology that is committed to historical and empirical research and attuned to forms of communicating entirety is well positioned to participate in conducting this research in the university today.

---


Cultivating Vitality: Examining the Experience of Aging for Italian Women in Midlife

Láura A.M. Vares, Brown University

Introduction

By 2030, nearly 1 of every 8 people worldwide will be 65 or older, and in most countries, women can anticipate living longer than men. Italy, with Japan, has the highest proportion of ‘old’ people; as of 2006, 20 percent of its total population was 65 or older. In Italy, as in other developed countries, the increased probability of living a long, healthy life is opening unprecedented social and economic opportunities — and challenges — for people at different points in the life course, formerly marked by well-established chronological transitions between education, work, family and retirement. This demographic shift, and the associated social changes, is coinciding with and disrupting deep-seated ideological beliefs about gender relations, the responsibilities of kinship and the onset of old age. Many European governments are now struggling to reconcile the social and economic balance sheets of pensions, social welfare, debts and austerity measures, putting aging at the center of heated political debates. However, there remains little inquiry into understanding how older Europeans, including Italians, experience entry into this uncertain era of retirement, particularly as they challenge previously validated and established expectations of old age.

This dissonance is especially visible in the lives of ‘women of a certain age’, who have fulfilled the daily responsibilities of childrearing and are now
chronologically poised to be close guardians of grandchildren, as well as primary care providers for elderly parents. Under the pervasive influence of Catholic ideology, in which women are the centers of families and the guardians of kinship, Italian women have historically been the principal providers of family care (Ginsborg 2003). Nonetheless, compared with their mothers at the same age, women who came of age in the socially turbulent and transformative years of the 1960s and 1970s have new opportunities available to them. They occupy an unprecedented demographic and social space between the two traditionally recognized age-specific gender roles of mother and grandmother. Moreover, as a result of the Italian feminist movement, this cohort, born circa 1945–1955, was the first to successfully challenge the patriarchal legal system, negotiating the boundaries between fulfilling familial responsibilities and prioritizing their own careers and interests. Today, many of these women are in their mid-50s to mid-60s, and their experiences are particularly instructive of how deep-seated cultural beliefs permeate current discourses about aging and gender.

With the Council for European Studies Predissertation Fellowship, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon, I traveled to Rome in the winter of 2011–2012 for three months to conduct life-history interviews with women in this age cohort. My preliminary study compares two groups of women in different class positions. My research primarily focuses on the decade of chronological years before age 65 because it immediately precedes official, as well as socially significant markers associated with retirement, often used as a proxy for entering old age. Both groups are representative of various important populations within Italy’s class structure: white-collar professionals, salaried civil servants and small business entrepreneurs. In Italy, the occupationally differentiated middle class, often referred to in the plural (ceti medi), has historically been at the vanguard of adopting new lifestyle choices and initiating changes in social norms. According to historian Paul Ginsborg, by the end of the twentieth century, the ceti medi comprised “the central and decisive block in Italian society” (Ginsborg 2003, 66). During the same period, the working class became increasingly fragmented; the decline in large, Fordist factories that had been the center of working class political power gave way to a growing number of service workers who often work without the security provided by organized labor (Ibid., 54).

The purpose of my research is to consider how women in this juncture of midlife negotiate the tension between the constraints of conventional expectations about familial responsibilities, aging and gender, and the unprecedented opportunities that accompany the demographic shift toward longevity. The desire of these ‘women of a certain age’ to redefine and recast the meaning of their social vitality as they grow older highlights changing practices in the reproduction of intergenerational ties and kinship. The ethnographic fieldwork for this project consisted primarily of extensive participant observation and life-history interviews with women in the two groups; each group consists of approximately 20–30 women. One group largely consists of women who have already retired, and...
form part of a traditional folk choir. They come from middle- and upper-class socio-economic backgrounds, and previously worked as white-collar professionals and salaried civil servants, such as teachers. The other group consists of working- and middle-class women who are the proprietors of different individual stalls at a market where they sell products ranging from foodstuff and household goods to clothing. I attended weekly choir practices and other events with one group, and consistently went to the market 3–4 days a week for 2–4 hours at a time to speak with the other group. After conducting preliminary interviews with members of each group to assess availability and accessibility, I conducted life-history interviews with six women from each group. I met with each individual woman 3–4 times for 2–3 hours at a time.

The individual interviews were successful. Women spoke at length about how they perceive their own life experiences to be different from or similar to their mothers’ experiences at the same age. Conversations addressed changes in Italian familial and social norms vis-à-vis the behavior of and expectations for older women. During interviews, women also shared their thoughts regarding the Italian feminist movement of the 1970s, ranging from whether they believe the movement had an impact on their personal life decisions to how they perceive the success of the movement in hindsight. For instance, many spoke about changes in their rapport with current and former spouses. Finally, women also talked about how they think Italian society perceives older women today, as well as the impact of the current economic crisis on their expectations for retirement. As I move into the dissertation phase of my research, I will focus on how some of these women conceptualize and practice their sense of autonomy. ‘Essere autonoma’, or to be autonomous, is an expression that many women used to describe the values they consider important in their lives, as well as the differences they perceive between their daily practices and those of their mothers at the same age.

**Ethnography**

For this report, I will specifically reference comments made by two women, one from each group. Their names have been changed to protect their identities. Ester was born in 1952; she is currently 59, is legally married and has two adult children (ages 36 and 25). She married in 1974 when she was 22 and her husband was 24. As the middle child of three siblings and the only girl, Ester did not have very many liberties while growing up. After finishing high school, she worked as a bookkeeper and quit her job when she got married. Ester describes her husband as a good financial provider who took “many liberties” throughout the course of their marriage. She was a housewife until 2000, when she began selling sewing goods at a market stall owned by a family member. That year, at the age of 48, after a few years of personal struggle (in marriage, as well as with the death of her father), Ester decided that she needed to work to stay sane. She remembers the day she began to work, and cites it as the beginning of her emancipation: “I didn’t want to separate [from her husband], but I needed something for me.” Regarding her familial responsibilities, she continues,

*When I began to work, my husband said that I was hurting my family, that I was abandoning my children. My mother said that I would drive my husband further away. I didn’t know how to do anything outside of my house; I was a housewife [like her mother had been]. I only used the car to run errands. I didn’t use a bus or the metro. I didn’t have any examples to follow. My mother was a simple woman.***

As we discuss her perspective on aging, Ester emphasizes what she perceives to be the benefits of growing older: “It’s not true that you confront the world at 25–30; you lack life experience. I no longer care about growing older; growing older has given me strength.”

Graza was born in 1947; she is 64, is legally separated from her husband, and also has two
adult children (ages 40 and 32). She married in 1971 when she was 24 and her husband was 26. She is the eldest of two daughters and earned her university degree in biology in 1971. Graza was already pregnant with her first daughter when she married. Graza’s parents were not strict. She and her husband met in high school, and they often vacationed together. When she began college, and before she got pregnant, Graza wanted to study medicine. However, the length of time needed to earn the degree ran contrary to her and her boyfriend’s plans to marry as soon as they graduated. While discussing her choice to study biology, instead of medicine, she muses, “You know, I just thought about this for the first time in many years. This is actually the principle reason I didn’t study medicine.” Graza retired in 2000 at the age of 53. Like Ester, Graza also explains that her husband took a number of liberties during their marriage, including fathering an unrecognized, illegitimate child in the early 1980s.

As we discuss her decision to stay in the marriage after she learned of the affair, she emphasizes, “It never occurred to me to leave him. It was my duty to stay. I had to be with my family.” She continues,

In high school, I was always with Michael [now her separated husband]. When he came back on leave from military service, I got pregnant. I hadn’t yet graduated from university and was not married. This certainly wasn’t the norm at the time. My mother offered to take me to Switzerland to get an abortion. I said no, and declared my independence. I was kicked out of the house, and moved in with Michael’s family. We were married in April, and I graduated from university in July.

She left her husband in 2006, after 35 years of marriage. In explaining her decision to leave, she states, “He never took responsibility for his actions [i.e., the child he had fathered].”

Both Ester and Graza consider themselves to be autonomous, independent women, albeit with some modifications in their relationships with their husbands. When I ask Ester why she continues to stay in her marriage, she responds, “My husband was ... is a hard worker, and a good provider. He had a difficult life; if he loses me, he will become a barbone [loosely translated, a long-bearded good-for-nothing].” Graza also remains closely tied to her separated husband. Although he began living with another woman a few months after she left, Michael bought the house that Graza currently lives in for her. Moreover, when she found her own place, she paid the rent for the first year, and he paid it for the remainder of the period that she rented. She states, “He is happy that he was able to make up for his mistakes. It’s payback; I think it’s my moral right. He still remains very attached to me.” She concludes, “I consider myself on the road to growing old, which for me means finally knowing what makes me happy.”

My goal with this preliminary research, as well as with my dissertation, is to capture the nuances that accompany the demographic shift toward longevity in Italian society. I pay particular attention to the social changes that have transpired throughout the past 40 years with respect to older women. By Italian standards these ‘women of a certain age’ would have been considered already old a generation ago. These examples provide a window onto evolving perceptions of gendered and familial responsibilities, as well as the process of aging, in the latter half of the life cycle.

References
