

3 Queer and (Anti)Capitalism II¹

The Development of Capitalism and the Immiseration of People

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Global Capitalism

Before discussing gender and sexuality in their historical development under capitalist social relationships, we should define again what capitalism means – and that *the capitalism which became hegemonic* is to be investigated as a global system.

The basic condition for a capitalist economy – whether initially regionally-limited or, later, as a global system – is “the presence of larger masses of capital and labor power in the hands of commodity-producers”, as proclaimed by Karl Marx in the *Capital* chapter on primitive accumulation (MEW 23, 741). The capitalist can take *possession of labor power* by forcing people to hand over produced goods or by inducing them by other means to deliver him goods *in such a way that he can gain profit in their sale* – unequal exchange with those goods-producers is thus indispensable. The profit gained is then put to use to buy more labor power or products which will later make even more profit.

Historically, this was achieved especially by expropriating the labor power of people in rural areas, and then disposing the goods in distant urban centers of trade. For example, China in the sixteenth century exhibited such conditions, as the coastal strip increasingly benefited from long-distance trade and some people

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there became more prosperous, while the interior of the country was left behind (see Braudel 1986a, 653f).

Local manifestations of capitalist economy appeared in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries worldwide – in Japan, India and Arabia, and in some European cities like Venice, Florence, Genoa, Antwerp and Augsburg. However, at that time, none of these regions attained hegemony (compare the question of periodization: MEW 23, 743; Braudel 1986b, 57). Capitalism “had already developed as a subsystem, but not yet as a prevailing mode of production in those respective societies” (Fülberth 2008, 116). The merchants who operated as capitalists were constrained partly by political, social or moral beliefs, which conflicted with their actions (see Braudel 1986a, 645–654; Wallerstein 1984, 11). Up to a certain historical moment, the process of capitalist economization was repeatedly disturbed in one place or another.

In Europe, various cities periodically formed the centers of capitalist economies, profiting from trade relations with Arabia and India. Since the beginning of the 15th century – and ultimately central for the capitalist economic hegemony which was to emanate from Europe – this trade was primarily fostered through the implementation of colonial rule. *Colonialism first enabled the large-scale appropriation of people's labor power and the widespread trade of goods and humans.* European colonialism differentiated from previous tributary systems: while in the latter the interest of the violent invaders generally aimed to preserve local economies in order to extort a regular tribute, European colonial rule was accompanied with a destructive plundering of the colonized areas (see Brentjes 1963, 209f; Mamozai 1989 [1982], especially 39–58; Opitz [Ayim] 1997 [1986], 29ff). The anthropologist and activist Gloria Wekker of the Amsterdam-based black lesbian group *Sister Outsider* sums up these developments for the Netherlands in a clear and precise way:

“If one skimmed through the history of the ‘low countries by the sea’, one would find out that since the 15th century the very enterprising population flocked in all directions to find distribution areas for their trade, to ship slaves from west Africa to the New World, to plunder riches elsewhere, enabling the building of the edifice of canals which grace Amsterdam till today. Coffee, cocoa, gum, diamonds, sugar, cotton, pepper, wood, spices: all of this brought fortune to the Amsterdam markets. In the 17th century the Republic of the Seven United Netherlands reached a level of prosperity which made it the richest country in the world, and even today the Netherlands is among the richest countries of the world.

The trading fleet played a decisive role in this. The East India Company ruled over the world's seas, from the Cape of Good Hope to Japan, and her sister compa-

ny, the West Indies Company, controlled the area which later became ‘The Middle Passage’. As part of the expansion of the Dutch empire, the commercial fleet and the migrants bestowed upon themselves the right to exploit overseas territories as cheap producers of important raw materials and as distribution areas for goods produced in Europe” (Wekker 2012, 142f).

The significance of colonization, not least for regimes of gender and sexuality, is underemphasized in the current thought of the global North. It is still common to consider the implementation of capitalism as a local phenomenon limited to Europe. Thus, the causative starting point for global capitalism is neglected, and the ways in which the global North profits from the work of the people of the global South – and how they are inseparably related – are all obscured. Samir Amin (2012 [2010]) and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (2011 [2008]), two major Marxists theorists of the global South, both make reference to this context, without which gender and sexual relations in both the global North and in the global South are inadequately understood. But also in the German-speaking world, there have been very good global analyses since the early 1980s, in particular those of black women and women of color who intervened in white women’s/lesbians’ movements. Consequently, discussions about nationalist and racist exclusions gained momentum inside the women’s movement, while there is hardly such a problematization to be found in the white gay movement in Germany, nor among white men overall in the Federal Republic.

Martha Mamozai (1989 [1982]) and Katharina Oguntoye et al. (1997 [1986]) view German colonial history – and white German women’s participation in that history – from the perspective of capitalist social relations. Neval Gültekin opens the collection *Are We Really That Strange?* (1985) as follows:

“More than half of the world’s population consists of women. From the total hours of labor in the world, women carry two thirds of them with their labor power. Although we women do far more than half of the work, we only get a tenth of the world’s income and own less than one hundredth of the world’s wealth! [...] But the better economic and social position of women in western industrialized countries is only possible because the other half of the world’s population, women as men, suffer under total exploitation and oppression. Women in Europe, Japan and the USA are beneficiaries of this exploitation. They live at the expense of the remaining world’s population, but above all at the expense of its female population” (Gültekin 1985, 5).

Repositioning Marxism from its Head onto its Feet

“Marx is boundless,” says Amin. He breaks plainly with the idea that still shaped the Marxist works, that of a steady upward development, and that, once the capitalist stage has been reached, its abolishment already looms. Amin clearly opposes focusing on the capitalist center of the global North, also to be found in Marx’s writings. Rather, Amin urges for an analysis of capitalism as it historically came about and how it is today, namely a *global capitalism*. The global North and global South are indissolubly connected. The global North, the capitalist center, lives at the expense of the the global South, the periphery. Only through colonialism was the North able to rise to its central position and to reduce the South to the periphery.

With “Marx is boundless,” Amin thus does not depart from Marxist analysis. Rather, he makes clear that the work of Marx “is not a closed theory. Marx is *boundless* because the radical critique that he initiated is itself boundless, always incomplete, and must always be the object of its own critique (Marxism as formulated at a particular moment has to undergo a Marxist critique), must unceasingly enrich itself through radical critique, treating whatever novelties the real system produces as newly opened fields of knowledge” (Amin 2012 [2010], 11, emphasis in original).

Marxism remains toothless and its analysis falls behind if perspectives of the global North dominate and if the examination of gender and sexuality happens only in a restricted context. Without further development of Marxist theory – also and especially from the perspective of the global South – it is easy to ignore how white people in the North benefit from the work of the people of the South, especially women. Nor will it be clear just how sexual stereotypes and fantasies of the global North still function on the basis of colonialization of the global South and on the backs of black people and people of color, who are alternately construed as sexually desirable or threatening, or even as both at the same time.

It is therefore necessary to change the perspective so that Marxist criticism will be repositioned from its head onto its feet. It is necessary to understand how the work of the people appropriated and exploited as a work force by capitalists, leading to the wealth of the few and the poverty of many. The extremity of poverty is generated in the global South, where the workforce can be bought for at least a tenth of the price of labor in the global North. As Amin elaborates:

“The capitalists are always trying to increase the rate of surplus-value, and this contradictory tendency is what triumphs in the end. This is how I understand what

is meant by the 'law of accumulation' and the 'relative and absolute pauperization' by which it is manifested. Facts show the reality of this law – but on the scale of the world capitalist system, not on that of the imperialist centers considered in isolation; for whereas, at the center, real wages have risen gradually for the past century, parallel with the development of the productive forces, in the periphery the absolute pauperization of the producers exploited by capital has revealed itself in all its brutal reality. But it is there, precisely, that the pro-imperialist tendency among Marxists pulls up short. For it is from that point onward that Marxism becomes subversive" (Amin 2010, 48).

Amin is explicitly opposed to a divide of workers from the global North and the global South. But he demands that *internationalist* Marxist theories continue to be honed. The aim is to take account of the overexploitation of the labor force of the global South, which in both capitalist and partly in pre-capitalist-feudal forms is bound to the generation of value and profit. Let us speak of the "proletariat of the periphery, subjected to super-exploitation by virtue of the incomplete character of the capitalist structure, its historical subordination ..., and the disconnection derived from this between the price of its labor-power and the productivity of its labor" and how "the exploited peasantry of the periphery, sometimes subject to dual, articulated exploitation by pre-capitalist forms, ... are thus always super-exploited, and as a result the proletariat's principal potential ally" (ibid., 93).

Thus the *main contradiction* "does not exist between the periphery as a whole and the center as a whole", but rather between the proletariat and the peasantry of the periphery, on the one hand, and the imperialist capital of the center, on the other. The local capitalists of the periphery – who participate in the exploitation of both the peripheral proletariat and the peasantry, but who still depend on the center – and also the proletariat of the center could be located along with their interests between these two polarities. Amin deduces from this that the proletariat and peasantry of the global South comprise the most exploited form, "the tip of the spear of the revolutionary forces on the world scale" (ibid.). And on the other hand, the exploited in the global North are often unaware of their oppression, or they do not wish to fundamentally alter the societal arrangements of the overexploitation of workers in the global South from which they benefit.

So far, even in Marxist considerations, the situation of the periphery was overlooked while the development of productivity was seen as the motor of the emancipation of working people. However, the starting point should be the emancipation of people – and therefore Amin delivers an excellently elaborate

basis. Capitalism must be seen as a whole, the impact of colonialism should be precisely taken into account, and capitalist values, especially productivity and work-fetishism, must be abandoned. Even the socialist countries of the Eastern Bloc were guided by the values of constantly increasing productivity and thus by an unconditional work-fetishism, thereby forgetting the very basic points of Karl Marx. Amin rejects those Marxists who merely blame capitalism “only of not being able to carry forward the march of progress effectively enough”. He refers to the Marx who wanted a society created according to human needs, in which humans are not only bound to one activity, or are not essentially defined by it: “No one is exclusively an artist or a lathe-operator” (ibid., 45). Work for work’s sake, or for an abstract increase in productivity, is pointless – rather, it is necessary to always align oneself to the realization of human needs and judge increases of productivity as means to an end, achieving less work necessary for survival and thus creating more space for other activities. In addition to the link to Marx’s goal of social development, Amin emphasizes the ecological significance of this goal: necessarily and logically, in the sense of constant accumulation, capitalism careens toward the destruction of the ecological basis of human life (ibid., 84–93).

From this global perspective, it is worthwhile to look at gender and sexual relations. Looking at the example of rural exodus in the periphery and the burgeoning of urban spaces in cities with tens of millions of residents all within a short span of time, it becomes clear how this was generated by global capitalist social relations. The economically-entailed expulsion and deracination of people, and in its most extreme form, the ways of life of migrant workers, are shaped by current global capitalism (see Ngai 2010, 2013; see also Mamozai 1989 [1982], 105–118). The factory was only relocated: “It now exists in the mines, the fields, the bedroom and the backyard, in hidden paths, in garages, on the parking lots where day workers wait. It disgorges into the world and ... industrially produces countless groups of subalterns” (Steyerl 2011 [2008], 9f).

It is also clear that, through the forced quest for survival in which people have to travel long distances and live in slums, their family life is also influenced. Family associations come apart, cohabitation is primarily dependent on accommodation possibilities, leading many people to live in small spaces, without being able to choose with whom.

Investigations which only linger over the capitalist center without observing the periphery remain incomplete, even neglecting the most essential. It falls from view how people from the global North profit from the colonization of the South until today. Spivak sheds light on this in her work on the women of the global South, stressing how they are subjected to a double oppression, “through eco-

conomic exploitation as a result of imperialism and a forced subordination as a part the patriarchal system” (quoted in Castro Varela and Dhawan 2005, 58). This is tolerated or even sponsored by progressive movements of the global North. tolerated and partly even protected. Though Spivak directs her attention in particular to western feminism, the gay movement is minimally ripe for such critical examination. Spivak shows that the claim of western feminism to represent all women fails. If colonial and post-colonial conditions are not questioned, the emancipatory struggles benefit exclusively women of the global North. “International Feminism” is for Spivak primarily a discourse of the North, and its engagement with the women of the South is often nothing more than a paternalistic mission in the direction of the “poor” sisters in the “Third World” (Castro Varela and Dhawan 2005, 59). Apart from paternalistic tutelage, this discourse – often unintentionally – reproduces colonial images. Women of the South are constructed as needy creatures, while the women of the North appeared as liberators, as something better. Ultimately, such campaigns lead to the self-aggrandizement of the white women of the North.

In addition, the stereotypes emanating from the colonialization of the South, widespread through the global North, also mean that women of the South are being silenced. They are being prevented from effectively arguing their own position. The central example Spivak refers to is the Indian widow’s burning. While the widows were stylized from local patriarchy as the ‘protectors of tradition,’ they served the colonizers, and till today the western world, as a proof of the ‘barbaric’ oppression and ‘backwardness’ of India. A distinct struggle of women which serves neither of the two sides’ interests is not possible in such circumstances – both are silenced by this ‘predicament’ (see Spivak 2011 [2008]; see Steyerl 2011 [2008], 12).

Women in the South must always already lose when colonialism and the western construction of the Other for its own self-aggrandizement are not fundamentally surmounted. Basically, it seems that only self-organization from those at the periphery can lead to fundamental changes. For the global North, Spivak suggests: conscious perception and the unlearning of its own privileged position remain the basic conditions for enabling the speaking from an oppressed position – which will not always reproduce hegemonic stereotypes based on colonial patterns. And yet the possibility of speaking for oneself from an oppressed position is the basic condition for emancipatory change. There is no possible representation from a privileged perspective, much less a possible representation from a subaltern position, for instance, by intellectuals. Much more, representation always implies a hegemonic position and self-aggrandizement:

“The subaltern cannot speak. There is no virtue in global laundry lists with ‘woman’ as a pious item. Representation has not withered away. The female intellectual has a circumscribed task, which she must not disown with a flourish” (Spivak 2011 [2008], 106).

The Emergence of Gender Relations in Capitalism

In accordance with the historical nature of global capitalism, with its European origin, we now take a look at local changes in life and gender relations. It becomes clear how local and cultural peripheries became dependent of local centers of capitalist economization (the latter by the cultural immiseration of individuals and groups of people) – with negative effects for living conditions.

Feudal Order: The Peasant Family and Skilled Trades

Feudalism “is characterized by the relation of land-owning nobility and landless peasants,” (Fülberth 2008, 91) in which the peasants lived in serfdom. They were tied to the ‘soil’ – the piece of land that they cultivated for the landlords to whom it belonged and which secured their livelihood, which is to say, providing food to some extent, while at the same time holding the right to ‘corporeal punishment’. What distinguished the status of serfdom from slavery was the fact that serfs could not be sold.

From about the year 1000 onwards, peasants were given some other limited possibilities: nobles who owned land east of the Elbe river recruited peasants by securing them to a new legal relationship, cultivating the aristocrats’ land independently against the payment of fees and performing other chores. Such a relationship is named bondage, and not serfdom. The taxes were to be delivered in fixed numbers – peasants were allowed to keep anything which was produced above it. This resulted in an incentive for an increase in productivity; however, the surplus could still be extorted by the aristocrats (cf. *ibid.*, 92).

Some of the peasants west of the Elbe fled and bound themselves to nobles in the east. Through this movement in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, more and more masters in the west were forced to give up the form of serfdom relations in favor of lordship with bounded peasants. But the bondage, too, meant unfreedom, as peasants could only secure their livelihood on the basis of the cultivated land. In addition to the obligation to pay fees to the landlords,

peasants were also obliged to give donations for the clergy and provide other services.

In addition to serfdom and bondage, there were in some regions, for example in Scandinavia, also ‘free’ peasants, who cultivated their own land and paid fees which resemble today’s land-leases. The peasant family is to be classified as a “patriarchal married family” (Tjaden-Steinhauer and Tjaden 2001, 123–130). The Christian religion added an important aspect to the suppression of women. Women were characterized as “the vessel of sin,” while men were only sinful when they surrendered to women (cf. Kuczynski 1963, 14). Whether this categorization had any meaning in the concrete living environment of the ordinary people – the peasants – is almost impossible to answer. Certainly, the peasant family (wife, husband and children) were all involved with work. It was a “production and consumption unit” (Füllberth 2008, 93; cf. Kuczynski 1963, 86f; Haug 2002), in which everyone contributed to the preservation of life. Often only the most miserable nutrition could be secured by the cooperation of all family members, but rarely was there also a small prosperity among the peasants (cf. Kuczynski 1963, 8f; Braudel, 1986a, 274–283). Eventually, many poor villages and regions were forced to accept “a higher birth rate and a lower marriage age” as they wished to produce a “relatively large numbers of workers” (Braudel 1986a, 272).

These “production and consumption units”, did not receive a ‘wage’ or anything comparable. Rather, they were given the bare minimum for survival (serfdom) or had to pay fixed or proportional fees (bondage and ‘free’ peasants), provided by the peasant family as a whole. Respectively, women were not neglected according to the severity of the work. As the social historian Jürgen Kuczynski writes:

“In the time of early feudalism, when there were hardly any cities and craft was essentially still directly tied to agriculture, the vast majority of women who supplied their labor power were maids, who were bound to some degree. The activity of such maidservants was extremely diverse ... ‘Beginning with sheep-herding and the dressing of flax, they had to help with the laundry. They were also used in the cultivation of the fields and all other rough work, such as milling the crops, heating the furnace, washing, and were also used in the barn ...’ We find women at the plow as well as at the hay harvest or at milking. In fact, there was hardly any agricultural work in this early period, however hard it may be, which women were not used for” (Kuczynski 1963, 7f).

Also in cities which were increasingly developing since the 11th century, women were given numerous possibilities, including crafts. Up to the 15th century, women

had the right to be a member of guilds – only in a few associations were there restrictions on women, or even their exclusion (see Books 1910, 14–23; Shoemaker 1927; Kuczynski 1963, 9ff). Women could thus act as foremen; more frequently, however, they were maids, whether they were bound or free. Bound maids received only food and clothing, while ‘free’ servants received a small payment (Kuczynski 1963, 11). And with this payment arises for the masters a “retrenchment potential” – according to the few available sources from the fifteenth century, women were paid clearly less than men (cf. *ibid.*, 12f).

After 1500 CE, the position of women changed greatly. More and more artisans were active in the cities, leading to overproduction. Thus, hindering the entry of newcomers to the guilds and limiting the passing down of craft from father to son were sought. Regulations, which coupled commercial activity with an obligation to engage in military service (of which women were excluded), had not previously detrimentally affected women in the guilds. Now, with reference to the non-possible military service, women were excluded from the trades. That concerned even tailoring, which now clearly defined what women could do and what was to be reserved for the male tailor (cf. *ibid.*, 13f).

Theoretical Reflection: From Communal Family Work to the Development of Decoupled ‘Gainful Employment’

Even if in the feudal social order patriarchal discrimination of women manifested, mainly founded on the Christian religion, it still did not mean a clear distribution of activities between women and men in peasant families. The fees which were to be given to the masters and the clergy never concerned “the individual peasants” (*ibid.*, 86ff), but rather referred to the piece of cultivated land managed by the whole family and which secured the diet and the overall maintenance of life. This situation in the feudal order resulted in the rare or hardly-existing possibility of different compensation for men and women. Under these conditions ‘gainful employment’ could not be detached from ‘domestic work’. Rather, it is to assume a *familial economy* or a *household economy*, “whereby under *household economy* we should understand the agricultural work on the farm as much as the spinning and weaving at home, in addition to cooking, children rearing, etc. ... In the countryside it was a matter of course that man and woman worked together. They married and had children, making work on the farm a prerequisite. Exactly the same applies to marriage in the case of craftsmen who become the master” (*ibid.*, 87).

When peasants were temporarily forced to go to work in the cities for wages,

this meant only in supplement to the land and to the family, and was by no means enough from which to survive (ibid., 88). Changes came first with the formation of manufactories (small factories), which were guided by profit-making and needed many workers. The first victims of the manufactories were the poorest in the society – the vagabonds, feudally bound women and men, and poor journeymen. The poor were forced to work in the manufactories.

“Many manufactories were swiftly populated as penal institutions for the sake of convenience and especially built by arrested beggars who were sentenced to forced labor ... In prison, lunatics, beggars, the feeble-minded, thieves, adulterers, child murderesses, children in need of education, and unruly servants had to work together for the employer – spinning wool, reeling silk, and dyeing and scraping pigmented trees” (ibid., 22f; see also ibid., 35f).

Similar compulsory institutions were the poor houses. Edmund White describes this in his biography of the French writer Jean Genet, who researched the living reality of such institutions for his novel *Querelle*, institutions which existed since the late medieval period, and their importance for the functioning of production – the aspiring great power of France forced strays and vagabonds at that time also as galley slaves onto ships. Genet sketched in *Querelle* the relevance of these conditions for the sexual relations between the male prisoners (see White 1993, 205ff). Such institutions were lucrative and coveted, as seen also in the high ‘redemption payments’. In 1723, the King of Prussia gave an edict, which forced all poor women who “were not fully utilized” – so, mainly beggars – to spin and deliver a weekly pound of wool for free (Kuczynski 1963, 23f). Kuczynski writes: “Compulsion and terror, terror and compulsion – that is the way of the woman from the street to the manufactory” (ibid., 24) – and of the capitalist order.

This finding is interesting in two ways. On the one hand, it is often overlooked in current scholarship that the constituent moments of the bourgeois-capitalist order are strongly shaped by violence (see MEW 23, 743). Thus it was not created by ‘incentives’ around ‘free wage workers,’ as some suggest today. Even today, compulsion is on the agenda at the global scale and even in the capitalist center – think on, for example, the obligation to work according to the Hartz legislation² or the conditions in so-called handicapped workshops. On the oth-

2 Translator’s note (CS): Voß here is referring to the social welfare reforms of 2002, which, like similar welfare-to-work reforms in the USA and UK, made benefit reception contingent on onerous participation in federally mandated labor programs and intrusive caseworker oversight.

er hand, manufactories and later technologically-advanced factories established themselves in the areas that from time immemorial are seen by privileged circles to belong to the “female spheres of activity”, like basketry.

The starting points of ‘industrialization’ were indeed the technical innovations in the weaving industry, which increased production output to such an extent that everything was undertaken to design the spinning mill more productively, initially by compulsion to work in this area (there were also soldiers who were compelled to spin, and spinning was also expected from their families), and eventually here also via technical innovations in the second half of the eighteenth century. In this sense both the manufactory as well as the factory were shaped at the beginning especially by women’s labor (see Haff 2002).

Spinning is also interesting for our subject in a different way: the scarcity of spinners finally led to an increase in the scope of influence of the free people working in this sector – that of those who were not held in compulsory institutions. They could improve their working conditions by leaving a manufactory with the worst working conditions, knowing they were probably able to find employment in a different place. The pay in this now ‘free wage labor’ became compatible. However, also here field restrictions were enacted at once by the rulers – keyword: coercion – which limited the free assessment of wages and the possibilities of workers to change between the manufactories (see Kuczynski 1963, 28ff).

These conditions were also found in the manufactories of other sectors of the economy, such as the porcelain manufactory and the so-called ‘putting-out system’ (in the latter, textiles and other commodities were produced by work-from-home and then centrally distributed by a central agent; the agent provided money or raw materials in advance, and the homeworkers were thus bound). In the manufactories there already appeared a significant difference between women and men. Women usually earned only a fraction of the men’s wages, often about 30 to 40 percent of it. Thus here began the distinction between sexes in a new, capitalistic way, to be inscribed into the living conditions of the poor (see Haug 2002; Weiss 2010).

In the initial guiding principle, that the working women and men who mainly cultivated a small patch of land now only obtained additional earnings through this wage labor, two competing ideas later prevailed amongst the privileged: 1) On the one hand, there was the patriarchal perspective that the man, unlike the women, has a family to feed, and this resulted in a difference in wages. This viewpoint could be used to establish a higher level ‘family wage’ for the men, but a small one as ‘additional earnings’ for the women (see *ibid.*). 2) On the other hand, the labor power of people under capitalism is a commodity for which the

employer has to spend only the absolutely necessary – anything else will diminish profits. According to Karl Marx the ‘value’ of labor power as a commodity is now to be determined, as follows, and, if necessary, is to be stipulated at this low-level by coercion:

“A certain mass of necessities must be consumed by a man to grow up and maintain his life. But the man, like the machine, will wear out, and must be replaced by another man. Besides the mass of necessities required for *his own* maintenance, he wants another amount of necessities to bring up a certain quota of children that are to replace him on the labor market and to perpetuate the race of laborers ... After what has been said, it will be seen that the *value of laboring power* is determined by the *value of the necessities* required to produce, develop, maintain, and perpetuate that laboring power” (MEW 16, 131f).

In addition to the simplest food and accommodation, some other questions arise for some of the workers, like training and qualification – the main point here is, however, that in the second of these competing perspectives, the wage of the labor force should be kept to the bare minimum. As Amin calls it, the “capitalists ... always try to increase the rate of surplus-value,” and thus effect the “relative and absolute pauperization” of the vast majority of humanity (Amin 2012 [2010], 45). If one groups together both perspectives, even from a bourgeois ideal of a ‘family wage’, for the man, is in decline. It proves much more lucrative for the employer to employ all members of the family, so that then four or five people together earn the ‘family wage’, which was previously earned by only a single labor power.

The more capitalism prevailed, the more this development became clear: where the wages were not so low that the entire family in the working class had to contribute for the maintenance of life, they were pressed down by the employers in the end of the eighteenth century and in the course of the nineteenth century (see, among others, Kuczynski 1963, 86ff; Working Group on Youth and Education 2010, 8ff, 34ff).

The downward spiral of wages is, of course, not a ‘natural law’ – especially through social struggles, minimum standards had been negotiated, which meant more than the simple preservation of labor power and its reproduction. Such struggles have been successful in the past – and some of them will be presented below. For the present theoretical reflection, a primary concern is, in what ways equal pay for equal work for women and men can become a reality. In fact, women of the working class consistently worked equally as hard as men. Their lower pay had nothing to do with the actual work done, but rather with the bourgeois arrange-

ment of additional earnings that they had to combine with the children for the man. This was justified in various ways by the rulers: 1) women were denied (initially totally negligible) training and promotion opportunities. They performed in manufactories and factories activities which were classified as preliminary work. 2) Different economic sectors were increasingly categorized either as ‘female’ or as ‘male.’ 3) The bourgeois talk about physical and physiological ‘female weakness’ in comparison to a postulated ‘male strength’ was transmitted to the working class and could ‘justify’ the unequal distribution of women and men to the individual economic sectors and their different remuneration (see Voß 2011b).

To this day, wage differences exist between women and men, as well as a different appreciation for sundry social and economic sectors. Following Marx’s assessment of labor power as a commodity, the same wage for activities might be possible if wages are reduced to the absolute minimum degree necessary. Women and men could receive in this way the same low wage. This would only suffice for the preservation of the labor force and their eventually necessary replacement. To force an increase of wages or a provision for old age, workers’ struggles are required. Depending on the strength of the struggle, a better life situation for the workers could be achieved – or, if the ‘fighting capacity’ of the worker is weak, the life situation again will deteriorate to the minimum necessary to maintain and reproduce the labor force (cf. Kuczynski 1963, 98ff). At this point, it should be pointed out that – as Amin explained – wage increases in the global North were achieved through struggles, but ultimately went at the expense of the global South. Through this oppressive situation, created by the North, it was impossible to carry out wage increases.

The Sexual Character of Wage Labor

“Though the family in the Middle Ages was already patriarchally structured and the man-as-house-manager was bestowed legal and social privileges, it was only with the changed conditions of production that the economic and ideological structures which pressured unemployed women into economic and emotional dependence on men were forged. With the separation between the private sphere and non-domestic production, the wife of the bourgeois – excluded from professional and political life – obtained the role of the faithful spouse, housewife, and mother. This disempowerment was idealized, whereupon, in the eighteenth century, the majority of women in Germany could not correspond to these new women’s ideals because they toiled in factories and manufactories” (Opitz [Ayim] 1997 [1986], 25).

With the imposition of the bourgeois-capitalist social order, a 'wage labor' emerges, detached to a certain degree from activities of other areas of life (see Wallerstein 1984, 19ff; Haug 2002). Whereas in the manufactories people were either initially forced to work or were feudally bound to a piece of land, in capitalism, free wage labor had imposed itself. This 'freedom' of the workers from their land had to be first enforced with violence, as for example, in Scotland, where peasant families were displaced from their small patches of land as the manufactories began to operate. To survive, the 'free wage workers' were, and still are, forced to sell the only thing they have: their labor power. For this, they get a wage that is sufficient to preserve themselves and their labor power (historically, and even up-to-now, often under miserable conditions). The employer buys the labor power to initially produce 'value', from which he can gain profit. Since most people are forced to offer their labor power, the employer can select the labor power of those who offer him the most affordable terms. The 'free wage workers' thus compete with each other – in particular, the demanded salary (in proportion to their recalcitrance and the level of qualification) decides whether they get employment and secure their preservation. Under these circumstances, employers could enforce the worst working conditions, initially and in large without restrictions. Working hours in workhouses and factories of up to 16 hours were often the rule, and only what was necessary for survival was granted. Also in other services, the circumstances were no better than for factory workers. Domestic servants had to be available whenever needed by their lords, that is, 24 hours a day (see, for example, Braun 1979 (1901), 209–431; Youth and Education 2010, 8ff, 34ff).

The free movement of workers between employment sectors could be legally limited by the ruling class – when, as stated above, the demand for spinners outnumbered the amount of available workers. Thus it was ensured that wages remained low. The current restriction of the free movement of workers by national borders has the similar object. While the ruling class can operate globally – guaranteed by free trade agreements, etc. – the free movement of those who are obliged to sell their labor power is curtailed, lest they flee the worst working and living conditions and sell their labor power in other geographic regions.

Further restrictions on freedom of movement between possible services persist in traditional ideals, rooted in age-old family ways of life, making it seem self-evident that man, woman and children live together. Till today, this makes it easier for the boss to enforce lower wages for women and children. After all, their earnings are only supplemental. Furthermore, the free movement of women is limited by this family relationship because they: 1) have to work in the environs of their place of residence, and 2) because of low wages (and through traditional

ideals and laws), they do not have the possibility to escape patriarchal conditions. This has a particularly productive effect for the profit of the employer.

However, these conditions become obstructive for the employer when relatively high wages are achieved through the fighting capacity of the workers and when not all family members have to be employed. This partly happened in the Federal Republic of Germany as the so-called ‘breadwinner model’ asserted itself and the man was allocated to perform the wage labor while the woman was kept unpaid at home to ensure the reproduction of the family and the man’s labor power (see Weiss 2010; Federici 2012). Such a way of life somehow restricts the sale of goods; the reproduction work is done in the families and the direct ‘valuation’ is set aside – to a certain extent the latter is, of course, also productive for the employer, since reproduction work does not enter his calculation of profit and loss as a cost factor (cf. for a good overview of feminist analyses: Haug 2002; Federici 2012).

It becomes clear that under certain social conditions within the prevailing capitalist order, it might appear reasonable to involve all men, women, and possibly even children in wage work. More labor power means more profit for the employer, since any ‘value’ ultimately arises from human activity. More wage workers also mean that: 1) not every person should receive a ‘family wage’; the wage can be negotiated for less, and 2) wage decreases arise as a result of increased competition among the workers for jobs or, rather, for their survival – as argued above, with Karl Marx and Samir Amin, i. e. when the workers pose a diminished fighting capacity – their wages sink to a minimum. Currently we can observe this development in the periphery, and it is in progress even in the capitalist centers, also in the Federal Republic of Germany. This development which tries to incorporate all people in wage work goes hand in hand with social developments which strongly emphasize the individual (see, for example, Kofler 2008 [1985]; Wagenknecht 2005; Sigusch 2005).

In this sense, the question must arise why individualization, especially today, becomes so meaningful, and how this is on the one hand the prerequisite, while on the other hand is also the consequence of the current conditions of capitalist economization. Interesting for our discussion is the following description of the bourgeois-capitalist social order in *The Communist Manifesto* (1848):

“The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society ... Constant revolutionizing of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish

the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind" (MEW 4, 465).

Individualization, possibly associated with less sexual and gender discrimination, does not signify a breaking out of capitalist conditions. It is merely a variant of the conditions in which labor power at a given time can be best exploited. Less discrimination due to certain gender or sexual characteristics may be conducive for this goal (see, among others, Gültekin 1985, 5f; Wallerstein 1992 [1988], 131ff; Sigusch 2005).

In contrast to gender and sexual discrimination, racial discrimination is more difficult to resolve because the maintenance of national borders and the obstruction of the free movement of people are both fundamental for capitalism to regionally enforce bad and worst working conditions. With open borders people could eventually flee to places with better life and working conditions. The limitation of people's freedom of movement, as opposed to movements of free trade and capital flows, is an important condition for higher profit margins for the employer. To sustain such a system – and thus make workers fear each other and reckon borders as necessary – racism is a significant and beneficial variable for the current stage in the development of capitalism. This could change if the working and living conditions – in particular, wages – could equalize between different geographic regions. From a strictly capitalist view, people who are not racially discriminated against seemingly appear to be more productive.

Center and Periphery in Context: The Over-Exploitation of the Global South

As has already been pointed out, Marxist and queer-feminist analyses of the global North were up to now in many ways neglectful of how the global North and the global South are necessarily interwoven within capitalism. At the time it was possible for the capitalist to gain profit in global trade relations because he was privileged enough to own a ship and thus was able to obtain scarce goods from far away territories. This trading system, however, quickly will bring under his control an ever-increasing amount of labor power that will enable the new investment of the achieved profit, thus facilitating additional profits.

The appropriation of the labor power of many people did not only take place by forcing people in Europe into workhouses and creating always-larger quantities of goods through productivity increases, but rather especially through the colonialization of the rest of the world (see, among others, Davis 1982 [1981], 7ff; Mamozai 1989 [1982], 43ff, 107ff). This is thus shown conclusively by the ever-larger mechanical and industrial production of goods as productivity increases, entailing a continuously increasing generation of raw materials. Just like the described increase in productivity in the weaving industry meant that the productivity of the spinning mill had to be increased, both were equally dependent on plantations that produced always larger quantities of cotton. This was achieved, on the one hand, through the colonial subjection of ever-broader geographic areas and the appropriation of the labor power of the people, and, on the other hand, the territory of plantations was increasingly extended. The same applies to mines, in which the ores had to be won so as to be processed in increasingly bigger amounts. Currently speaking, the steady increase in the sale of car manufacturers like Volkswagen is self-evidently based on the continual expansion of the exploitation of ore mines through (poorly paid) workers. The success story of European industrialization was therefore bought by the enslavement of a large part of the world's population, whether through complete deprivation of humans by direct slavery or by their dependent employment and the extortion of the goods they produced (cf. Mamozai 1989 [1982], 43ff). As Marx puts it in *Capital*, "In fact, the veiled slavery of the wage workers in Europe needed, for its pedestal, slavery pure and simple in the new world" (MEW 23, 246).

Increasing sales figures of products and growth rates of the economy are always based on human labor power and its extensive exploitation. What Hito Steyerl vividly describes for contemporary relations applies to the global South as a whole – from the beginning of colonialization by the global North. Its factories are in particular "in the mines" and "in the fields" (Steyerl 2011 [2008], 9f). Regionally successful labor struggles have only brought forth profit increases in the interests of capitalists as not only the production of raw materials but also their factory processing was shifted to the global South (see Gültekin 1985; Ngai 2010; Ngai 2013). On the other hand, in the global North, greater orientation toward the service economy opened up other profit opportunities, which are being accompanied with lifestyles less 'factory' oriented.

A regional change in capitalist conditions with a greater orientation toward services, flexibility, individualization, and the stronger emphasis on creativity, leading to new techniques, printed books, cultural goods, etc. (see Wagenknecht 2005), always happen within the capitalist system on the basis that, elsewhere,

labor power is more thoroughly factory-like in organization and exploited (see Steyerl 2011 [2008], 9f; Ngai 2010; Ngai 2013). That, too, can be ‘individualized’ and by no means strictly occurs in fixed family circumstances (so many migrant workers do not live in ‘traditional family structures’), but it does mean ever-increasing exploitation of labor power and a stronger commitment of people to their labor power – and only this.

With all of this background, analysis and criticism must always be international. By now, discussions about wage discrimination of white women in the global North and the marginal pay and social disregard for female reproductive work have spread widely in white leftist and emancipatory circles (for an overview, see Federici 2012; Haug 2002; Weiss 2010). What comes more hesitantly into view is how black people and people of color in the global North are more extremely exploited through racist structures both in terms of labor and reproductive work. But it would be highly problematic to forget the global context: most of the reproductive labor for the labor force in the global North is done by people in the global South under miserable conditions and poor wages, producing raw materials, raw products and finished products.

Without, for example, the production of soy for meat or tofu schnitzels, without rice, corn, tomatoes, fruits and spices, without mined ore for the components of technical devices for evening-use such as TVs, dishwashers, computers, or the phone for tender or hasty communication, without toys, video game consoles or textiles, without the produced raw materials for electricity, and so forth, the reproductive labor of the global North would not have taken place the way it did. Only through the extreme exploitation of the global South does the current way of life in the global North succeed (see Gültekin, 1985). For if we share Amin’s assessment, “one sole value of labor power on the scale of globalized capitalism,” (Amin 2012 [2010], 85) then the relative prosperity, also of workers, in the global North (with their relative poverty in comparison with northern capitalists) is achieved through wage inequality and poorer wages and living conditions for the workers in the global South. Were the same wage per working hour paid in the South just as in the North (let’s say, for example, at 10€ per hour), the consequence would be an incredible impoverishment of the workers in the North, but they would no longer profit from the extreme exploitation of the labor power of the people of the South.

It is worth noting that in this historical review, we encounter time and again the importance of textiles – the importance of weaving, spinning and cotton production. This indicates that the basis of production of surplus value has not changed so fundamentally as it appears to some in the capitalist center. Rather,

it is still the raw production – the production of cotton, the cultivation of food, the extraction of ores and the production of building materials and carriers of energy – which is the indispensable basis of capitalist accumulation and at the same time the area in which the lowest wages and the worst living conditions obtain.

Successful struggles in the global North should then always happen in reference to the periphery – improvements in living conditions must be reckoned internationally. And, last but not least, the international perspective makes it clear that capitalism does not function in a just manner, that it always lives off the impoverishment within which the mass of people has to live. Acceptance and ‘trivialization’ of a ‘social market economy’ or a ‘green capitalism’ forget these global connections and the essence of capitalism, to steadily achieve more and more profit. Amin’s finding that labor force has the same value worldwide, that an unequal remuneration constitutes a massive racist discrimination, clearly brings into view that capitalism must be overcome effectively and globally, “for it is from that point onward that Marxism becomes subversive” (Amin 2012 [2010], 45).

Cultural Colonization – Gender and Sexuality in Focus

Colonialism means subjugation and plundering of vast parts of Asia, Africa and the Americas by Europe. Many millions of people were abducted by European colonial powers from Africa especially to the Americas, and there – enslaved – were forced to work especially on plantations and in households. This happened with no consideration for people’s lives: already with the kidnapping into slavery and during the marches to the shores, 30 to 50 percent of the abducted people died, and during the slave transports another 30 to 50 per cent of the remaining died. The rest were forced to work under miserable conditions with a poor diet. They were often punished drastically or even ferociously murdered for the slightest disobedience (see Brentjes 1963, 209ff; Mamozai 1989 [1982], 43–58, 119–124; Davis 1982 [1981], 14, 23f).

In the Federal Republic of Germany, it is common to underestimate Germany’s past and current role in the colonialization of the world (see Mamozai 1989 [1982]; Oguntoye et al. 1997 [1986]; Ha 2012 [2003], 57–63). German merchants and princes had already taken part in European colonial enterprises since the 16th century – among others, in 1528 German merchants sailed to India and Venezuela to become “the House Colony of the merchant and banking

house Welser” (Mamozai 1989 [1982], 11ff). Elector Friedrich Wilhelm von Brandenburg commanded the building of the Fortress *Groß-Friedrichsburg* in 1683 on the African ‘Gold Coast,’ “as the outpost of German colonial power” (ibid., 12).

No later than the 17th century, German merchants and princes were also involved in the slave trade (Walgenbach 2009 [2005], 378f; Mamozai 1989 [1982], 12ff). Finally, in 1871, when Germany achieved political unification, it procured itself colonies in Africa, Oceania and China. The living and working conditions were terrible – reports from the countries subjected to German rule in the beginning of the twentieth century are as following:

“The working conditions for the colonialized people were almost everywhere miserable: poor diet, inadequate health and medical care, corporal punishment and abuse, twelve-hour and longer working days, the lowest wages, all marked this system of exploitation ... In the protocols of the Board of the West-African Merchants Consortium from 1913 comes the following statement from the merchant Victor, noted on the occasion of his visit to Cameroon: ‘I cannot give any exact figures about mortality ... While I was in Cameroon last year, it was said that on the Tiko plantation, 50 or 75 percent of the workers had died in six months’” (Mamozai 1989, 1982).

German industry in particular profited from the exploitation of the workers in the parts of the world colonized by Germany and Europe for the production of raw materials, which were then used for manufacturing and industrial production. Among other things the German spinning and weaving industries demanded cotton in ever larger amounts. The main concern for the German colonialists was the functionalization of people into labor power. For the colonists, the ‘worker’s question’ was “how to physically subdue the workers, and to control their number, which was always too low because of resistance, high death rates and women’s refusal to give birth” (Mamozai 1989 [1982], 52). President of the Reich Paul von Hindenburg made clear even still in 1932 this connection between colonized regions and German industry: “Without colonies there is no security in terms of raw materials, without raw materials there is no industry, without industry no sufficient prosperity. That is why Germans must have colonies” (quoted in Mamozai 1989 [1982], 27; see also Opitz [Ayim] 1997 [1986], 29ff; Ha 2012 [2003], 68f, 72–81).

But German industry’s profiting is far from the only aspect of German participation in colonialism and its effects today. German science ‘explored’ the

colonies – and is central in the formulation of ‘exotic’ travel literature and the development of the racist distinctions between human beings (see, among others, Mamozai 1989 [1982], 60ff, 258ff; Walgenbach 2009 [2005], 378f). German natural scientist Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752–1840) was the first to propose a division of people into ‘races’. Later, this distinction became further entrenched, as people were murdered for scientific investigations, their skulls transported to Germany to be surveyed. Just in the Charité Berlin, 7000 skulls from such racist research remain stored. Only in autumn 2011 were the first skulls returned to Namibia (see Küpper 2011; Becker 2011). In the uprisings of the Herero and Nama in German South West Africa – today’s Namibia – 100,000 people were murdered.

Excursion 4: Genocide against the Herero and Nama – Excerpt from the Testimony of Manuel Timbu

“On our way back we stopped in Hamakari. There, near a hut, we saw an old Herero woman of about fifty, sixty, who was digging in the earth for wild onions. Von Trotha and his people were present. A soldier named König jumped from his horse and shot the woman in the middle of the forehead. Before he shot her, he said: ‘I will kill you.’ She looked up and said: ‘thank you.’ That night we slept in Hamakari. The next day we moved on and came across another woman, about thirty years old. She was also busy digging wild onions and did not acknowledge our presence. A soldier named Schilling approached her and shot her in the back. I was an eyewitness of everything I hereby report. In addition, I saw the bleeding bodies of hundreds of men, women and children who were lying along the road as we passed. They had all been killed by our vanguard. I was almost two years with the German troops and always with General von Trotha. I know of no case in which a prisoner was left alive” (Mamozai 1989 [1982], 121).

The description of physical and physiological differences between people is central to the racist subjugation of black people by white Europeans and white Germans. The people of colonized regions were described as ‘wild’ and ‘barbaric’, and here in particular gender and sexual stereotypes were constructed. Colonial scientific literature attributed to the colonized a lesser markedness of binary gender differences, a greater ‘feminization’ in particular of the men of the Orient (but also Jewish males in Europe), and a greater inclination to same-sex sexual contact.

In another context, they were constructed by colonial literature as ‘aggressive’, ‘promiscuous’ and ‘hyper-masculine’; black men were identified by whites as potential rapists and a threat for white women (compare with Said 2003 [1978]; Davis 1982 [1981], 88f, 165ff; El-Tayeb 2012 [2003], 130f; Castro Varela and Dhawan 2005b, 48f; AG Gender Killer 2005; Petzen 2011 [2005]).

Today racist attributions often take place more subtly. ‘Exotic’ is currently one of the central racist terms. Frequently found in travelogues, its use is to present geographic regions and their people as ‘other’ to be ‘discovered’ and ‘explored’ (Gleissner-Bonetti 2012). The stereotypes remain the same. Whites keep on attributing to black men either ‘hyper-masculinity’ or ‘feminization’ (see, among others, El-Tayeb 2012 [2003], 130f; Killer 2005; Petzen 2011 [2005]); white people – and now also explicitly white lesbians and gays (cf. Haritaworn, 2005; Petzen 2011 [2005]; Haritaworn, 2009; Yılmaz-Günay [ed.] 2011b) – present themselves as the ‘saviors’ of the ‘poor people’ of the global South who need to be rescued from ‘barbarism,’ protecting in particular black women and queers of color from black men. Therewith they carry forth the hegemonic narrative of colonialism. In the year 1990, the black German journalist and author Sheila Mysorekar retaliated against these aspirations:

“White feminists have made it unmistakably clear via experience – that is, black experience – with whom they primarily show solidarity: with white women, of course. “After all, we are all victims of sexism”. That’s right. No black feminist will dispute this fact. On the other hand, we are attacking what is behind this argument: *the hierarchization of oppression*. Black women are equally discriminated by sexism and racism. No repression is less worse than the other! ... Before I can unconditionally fight with white women against sexism, I demand them to face up to their racism. Otherwise, any solidarity remains superficial and questionable. This is also the case for cooperation with black men in the fight against racism. No black man can expect the solidarity of black women if he is not ready to fight his own sexism. This dispute must, however, be carried out by black people themselves – in this case among black Germans or foreigners in the Federal Republic of Germany. In this process support and exchange of experience are vital. But what we do not need are feminist surrogate mothers” (Mysorekar 1990, 22, emphasis in the original).

The activist, social scientist and philosopher Angela Davis shows in *Women, Race & Class* how the colonial narrative works. The situation of black women and men in society did not change after the emancipation of slaves in the US –

black people still had the worst jobs, particularly in agriculture and as domestic workers. Sexual abuse at the hands of the estate patriarch remained an ongoing threat for female domestic workers. In courts, their testimonies on sexual abuse were not believed to be true. Simultaneously and on the basis of these sexual assaults by white men, the myth of ‘amoral’ and ‘promiscuity’ of black women was established. These stereotypes were set against degrading service work in the white narrative: “Any white man of ‘decency’ would certainly cut his daughter’s throat before he permitted her to accept domestic employment” (Davis 1982 [1981], 89). The blame for sexual assaults and rape by white men was given to female domestic workers and, in turn, a warning was made to white women not to be active in such employment.

The power exercised in the US by whites against black men functioned similarly – and this also after the end of slavery. It required just one white woman to accuse a black man of rape, and he was de facto guilty, the verdict by the white court was only a formality – this if he was not already lynched by white men. The statements of black women and men were not believed in court. The literary scientist and feminist activist Tobe Levin, who teaches at universities in the US and at the university of Frankfurt am Main, researched how white women used this power over black men:

“The entire black community was terrorized *in the name of the white woman*. The one who supposedly raped a white woman was lynched ... With verbal accusations, every white woman could exercise power over the black group. The fact that in the overwhelming majority of lynching murders, no rape had actually happened, is known by the work of activists such as Ida B. Wells-Barnett” (Levin 1990, 62, emphasis in the original).

Apart from how white people inflicted lynchings, executions and long prison terms on black men and permanently justified the repression of black men and women based on sexual attributions after the end of slavery, the effects of this reach to this day. The white stereotypes of the ‘promiscuous black woman’ and the ‘hyper-masculine’ and ‘menacing black man’ persist and thus prevent or at least hamper anti-racist and anti-sexist struggles with white participants.

The Arabist Thomas Bauer explains European colonizers’ gender-sexual attributions of Arabia, explicitly specifying sexual conduct between men. The ‘world travelers’ from the West were apparently appalled by the interactions of Arab men among themselves. The naturalist and former engineer in the French military navy Charles Sonnini reported: “Love against nature ... constitutes the

pleasure, or said better, the infamy of the Egyptians ... To the disgrace of civilized nations, such degeneration is not foreign to them at all and is widespread in Egypt. The rich are as equally infected as the poor” (cf. Klauda 2008, 17f). The white gaze was shaped by such reports. Men in Arab countries were attributed by white men with ‘moral corruption’ and also ‘feminization’. At the same time, these views were also accepted by Arab scholars, and the Arab history appeared to them just as corrupted. Bauer says: “The European discourse of the Orient as stagnant, backward and decadent, which was to legitimize the European imperialist ventures, was eventually heard and received in the Middle East” (Bauer 2011, 305).

While Davis and Levin analyze the situation based on materials from the US and Bauer looks at the French and English colonizing gaze for the Arab lands, Martha Mamozai (1989 [1982]) and Katharina Walgenbach (2005) have researched in detail how the German colonialists inscribed stereotypical attributions to the colonized. Also big parts of the bourgeois women’s movement – consisting of white women – saw their mission in supporting the ‘civilization’ of people in the colonies; even parts of the Social Democratic Party viewed colonies and the subjugation of the people living there as important for the German Reich, also with stereotypical attributions. Looking at the founding of the women’s union, Lotte Hoppe retrospectively explained: “The time to found the federation was favorably chosen. The German woman is raised today under the compulsion of time and circumstances for public life, such that she cannot stand by any longer when it concerns such things of great value to our people, such as the colonies” (quoted in Walgenbach 2005, 143; compare Mamozai 1989 [1982], 135–157; Dietrich 2009 [2005]; Hoffrogge 2011, 167–180).

Gender and sexuality play important roles in the European justification for colonialization and the construction of black people and of people of color as ‘others’ compared to the white European colonizers. It is interesting to also take a look at the current descriptions with which military invasions are justified and with which people of color in the global North are being stigmatized. The political scientist Krista Hunt titled this renewed commitment of feminism to the enforcement of imperialist claims of power, analogously to the designation of the military-dependent journalist, as “embedded feminism” (Hunt 2006, 53; see also Engels and Gayer 2011, 18, 29). But at the beginning of the 21st century, it is no longer merely the “figure of the subaltern woman who needs to be emancipated” which is used to justify military interventions, rather “gays and lesbians are now stumbling more into imperial liberation rhetoric on the right as the left of the political spectrum” (Brunner 2011, 51; see in detail Puar 2008 [2007]; Harita-

worn et al. 2011 [2006]). Even such right-wing politicians who act against the dismantling of homosexual discrimination and the equality of women in working life use the arguments of gay, lesbian and women's liberation (cf. Yılmaz-Günay 2012). However, it strikes us as even more problematic that left-wing people support and advocate the "imperial liberation rhetoric" so massively.

The colonialist attributions still work today. Black and people of color are depreciated as 'the others' and marked as 'uncivilized,' while in the west, white men/gays and women/lesbians exalt themselves by the vilification of 'the others.' Only through this differentiation do the whites appear to themselves as 'civilized' – as a secondary effect, sexist discrimination and violence by whites and the west are whitewashed. The 'other' is constructed as menacing and, in the same breath, fetishized as desirable: "At the same time that the migrant is scolded for being pre-modern and unable to integrate, his supposed violent nature is fetishized in the mainstream German gay community as sexually irresistible. The colonialist imagination of the untamable primitive is despised in view of integration, but coveted as a sex partner; by no means should 'southerners' be civilized in the bedroom" (Petzen 2011 [2005], 40).

The Invention of (Homo-)Sexuality – and the Governing of People

Sexual acts between people in Europe were being homogenized and became objects of government – increasingly so with European modernity and the establishing of capitalist relations.

The problematizing of sexual acts had already occurred with the assertion of Christianity. The Christian point of view presents the sexual act between woman and man as problematic, that it should only be executed if it directly serves reproduction. Even then, pleasure must not be felt. Sexual acts which do not serve reproduction were stigmatized and prosecuted in church law as 'sodomy'. These included same-sex sexual acts, anal intercourse with the same- and the opposite sex and 'fornication' with animals. The problematizing of sexual acts in Christianity was accompanied with persistent speech about sexual activity. Central to this speech is the confession, which not only calls for the confession of pleasure in order to be emancipated from it, but also requires that sexual activities would be reported in detail. This assessment constitutes the starting point of Michel Foucault's studies on sexuality (Foucault 1983 [1976]; Klauda 2008, 11, 82ff).

With confession and the problematizing of sexual acts, the Church estab-

lished one of the central control and governmental practices, albeit with limited effectivity (Klauda 2008, 72). At the same time, the church ensured both the cohabitation of man, woman and children and sexual activity between woman and man to be considered as a matter of course. This was new in that respect, because in Greek and Roman antiquity same-sex sexual activity between people was not problematized. With the Christian coercion of confession, the ascertained passion (inclination) during the concrete act, and – in the case of ‘sodomy’ – the act itself became the content of the confession. On the other hand, it did not lead to a narrative style that a man, who once acted as a sodomite, now would always have to act as one. No regularity and no clear identity derived from such activities, and people were not defined by them. Also, the effects of the confession remained limited; numerous people confessed their “sins” only on their “death bed” (cf. Klauda 2008, 72).

Persecution on account of sodomy reached a greater magnitude at the end of the Middle Ages and in the early modern times, and it was only then that severe penalties or even the death penalty were increasingly enforced. But sodomy remained even then a broadly defined factual situation, which more likely defined a variety of activities than one clear term: “Masturbation, coitus with animals, thigh or anal intercourse with persons of both sexes, and, more rarely, also sexual vices between women” were considered as sodomy (Klauda 2008, 72). The church descriptions of sodomy were so abominable that many people just could not relate their life reality to it. Friendships, however, even very close and intimate ones, appeared as legitimate. Klauda writes with regard to intimacy between men:

“At the same time the figure of the sodomite in the Christian rhetoric gave out so monstrously, it became abstract to the lived environment like werewolves and witches. Friends could thus kiss, exchange affections, and make each other as ‘bed companions,’ without raising even the least suspicion” (Klauda 2008, 79).

Only with the beginning of the 18th century did this change fundamentally. Intense debates about masturbation began, and it was described as dangerous and as a vice. At the same time – for example, in London – societies were formed that explicitly declared war against the ‘vice’ of ‘sodomy’ and denounced thousands of people (cf. Klauda 2008, 82ff). It came to a wave of persecution to an extent hitherto unknown. Finally, in an increasingly medical discourse on same-sex sexual activity, especially among men, the signs with which anal intercourse could be clearly detected were discussed. The initially rather fuzzy offence which was

sodomy became ever-more disambiguated (see Voß 2013). Connected with this increasing problematizing, now even acts of close friendship were put under suspicion. Physical intimacy and affection between men were regarded as suspicious (this was less so for contact among women, because modern discourses largely denied the capacity of women for active sexual activity). In the mid-19th century, terms were finally coined that conceived ‘homosexuality’ in the sense of today’s use, that is, as a clearly outlined constituent of behavior – and, with particular importance for the German Reich and Austria-Hungary – it was defined as a criminal offense (see Klauda 2008, 82ff; Voß 2013).

It is striking that with the advent of the rigid identities ‘homosexuality,’ (and ‘heterosexuality’) an “unprecedented tightening of behaviors” follows, “which is now at the same time constructed and perceived as the expression of a deviant sexual identity” (Klauda 2008, 13). There is a surprising parallel between this tightening in the sexual arena and in the areas of activity of the people. While on the agricultural farm under the feudal order, all members of the family were included in all the different chores, with the transition to the workhouse and the factory, people were increasingly restricted to an activity that was more clearly defined and separated from other activities. The (increasingly uniformed) wage labor occupied almost the whole day; reproductive work was torn out and ensconced into another, non-remunerated domain. This results in a clearly identified division of the domains of daily life, wage labor here, and the remaining activities, including human intimacy, over there (see, for example, Haug 2002; also Opitz [Ayim] 1997 [1986], 24f).

It is also striking how bourgeois discourses of ‘vice’ and ‘degeneration’ of the 19th century were established as motives of the working population in the factories and mines. The privileged deemed ‘degeneration’ a threat among the miners, for example, which is why the sexes had to be separated from each other, and why women were not allowed to work downhole. Even those who were denouncing the bad working conditions of the proletariat referred to the ‘degenerating’ effects of the former (among others, MEW 2, 464f; Bebel 1950 [1879], 188–196; see also Kuczynski 1963, 112ff). These problematizations provide an indication of how significant discussions about meaningful human proximity and sexual activity were and how clearly they were linked to the reduction of people to workers. In the workhouse and the factory activities were functionalized and even breaks and visits to the toilet were narrowly restricted. Everything which interrupts ceaseless work was to be prohibited. This also applied to sexual acts, for which bourgeois fantasies about the possible behavior of the workers were central.

In the colonized zones, human proximity and sexual activity entered the limelight as goals of colonial rule: already for the time since the 16th century that European colonizers penalized same-sex sexual activities as ‘sodomy’ with executions have been verified. This happened regionally with different consistency (Beemyn 2007 [2006]; Wallace 2007 [2006], 250f). Laws and regulations against same-sex sexual activities mostly date back to the European colonizers, and they were ultimately nationally organized by the European colonial powers and their decrees. Since that time, and intensified since the nineteenth century, the colonizers affirmed their own supposed ‘civilized’ behavior and superiority by demarcating themselves against same-sex sexual acts and the other expressions of human intimacy of their colonial subjects (Walther 2008; Schmidt, 2008). For the colonizers, the exploitation of labor power was central, whether with enslavement, forced labor, or partially also with ‘free’ wage labor (to the smallest wages which were hardly sufficient for the preservation of life). Even more ruthless than in Europe, it was always about the “unconditional submission,” about “discipline, work performance” and also about the “recognition of a ‘German’ superiority and domination” (Mamozai 1989 [1982], 52). In the process, gender and family relationships were destroyed and replaced by the ideas of the European bourgeoisie: unless enslaved and exploited under direct compulsion, ‘free’ wage laborers were ‘generated’ by expulsion from their lands. As migrant labor spread, women received – if at all – lower wages than men; traditional labor division on the farms became women’s work through the absence of men; separation of wage labor and reproductive labor was carried out, etc. (Mamozai 1989 [1982], 108, 113ff; Joseph 1993, 78f). The “migrant workforce which became common and the houses which were separated by sex in the wake of this work” entailed new ways of life and also “new forms of same-sex relationships” (Wallace 2007 [2006], 260). In the mines or on the plantations, other negotiations for same-sex sexual activities were necessary than those before. These were by no means completely suppressed, but partly channeled by “rules,” in order to ensure “the proper functioning of the work processes” (ibid.).

Particular attention was paid by the German colonizers to reproduction, in order to provide sufficient workforce. Death rates were high (people were heavily mistreated or even killed for resistance by the white colonizers), and suicides piled up. Resistance against the colonizers was omnipresent and the ‘birth strike’ of the oppressed women proved to be especially effective. “With their decision not to give birth to slaves for the colonial power, the women apparently struck the central nerve of the colonists, who were desperately looking for ‘usable working material’” – and they were finally even offered incentives (Mamozai 1989 [1982],

52f; see also: Davis 1982) [1981], 11f). Although the demand for labor did not lead the German colonialists to reduce or even completely refrain from torture and executions of the exploited people, reproduction became a central field of intervention. There was compulsion and incentive; no less significant, however, were the changes of family relations with increasingly separate areas of activities in the life of women and men.

With the enforcement of migrant labor, forced labor and 'free' wage labor, family relations and lifestyles also changed. The revaluation of wage labor which was designated as masculine also meant the devaluation of and dependency of women, analogous to the European model. Simultaneously, people had to reach human intimacy otherwise – individually and far from familial structures (cf. Mamozai 1989 [1982], 113ff).

In Europe the functionalization of human beings, connected with increasing urbanization and the division of spheres of life, also showed its effects on same-sex sexual desire. Concrete living conditions go hand in hand with the interest of people who desire same-sex activities to meet at certain defined locations. 'Free wage labor,' an allocation and functionalization of the spheres of living and urbanization are accompanied with identitarian self-positioning. As with the passage into the workhouse and the factory, restrictive coercion and violence are only one side of the coin, even if at first they clearly outweigh. But on the one hand, people learn to behave in such a way that they are not exposed to sanctions. On the other hand, living conditions provide the framework for possible behavior.

Taken together and argued with Antonio Gramsci and Michel Foucault, it is not only about restrictive governing by compulsion, but by new forms of governmentality, especially constructed around *technologies of the self*. With capitalist relations, an interest for a sufficient stock of labor power rose also in Europe and – with the emerging national states – was reinforced by the interest for a population as large as possible in each country.

The reproduction of human beings, and since the end of the 19th century, also some physical and physiological characteristics – men of the proletariat should be particularly suitable for the military – increasingly became targets of government. Intimacy, friendship and sexual acts among men became militarily-sanctioned, and obedience was enforced (cf. Buchterkirchen 2011, 13–21). With the term *population politics*, following Foucault, the determination of people to wage labor, reproduction and national (especially military) interests is, by now, an important component of sociological and political science analyses (see Foucault 1977 [1975]; Foucault 1983 [1976]; Lemke 2007).

Disciplining, Taming, Extinction – The Role of Biology and Medicine

Against the background of the functionalization of people to labor power, a glance at biology and medicine is indispensable. These sciences are the authorities with which, in the bourgeois-capitalist society, the position of people and their social possibilities were and are determined. These disciplines were central to the racist and classist classification of people. Bourgeois scientists pointed out that people of color and people of the working class differ in their physical characteristics and intellectual abilities from white bourgeois women and men, lagging socially behind them. Their governing and exclusion from political participation and the enslavement of people of color in colonized regions were legitimized on the basis of biological and medical attributions (see Gould 1983 [1981]; AG Gender Killer 2005; AG against Racism 2009).

The ideal of the sciences was the white bourgeois man. Even the privileged bourgeois white woman was conceptualized as inferior to him, and her position, her social participation and her field of activities were circumscribed. Bourgeois women were (initially) thus generally excluded from the production of knowledge (see, for example, Honegger 1991; Schmersahl 1998; Voß 2010) – for people of the working class and for people from colonialized regions, exclusion ensued on the grounds of poverty or skin color.

Biology and medicine played central roles also concerning the problematization of sexual acts and the ‘invention’ of sexual identities. On the basis of these disciplines non-reproductive and especially same-sex sexual acts were problematized; even the corresponding desire gave rise to yet more and more detailed investigation and precautions. The interest of researchers in biology and medicine was aimed at clearly identifying and classifying sexual acts. People were ascribed with a personality structure only on the basis of one same-sex sexual act or the desire for it. The scientists argued about the ‘inherent’ or ‘acquired’ character of such desire and possible precautions. Eventually, numerous biologists and medical professionals speculated since the beginning of the discourse of homosexuality about how ‘homosexuality’ could be ‘prevented’ or the ‘affected’ people could be ‘cured’ or re-educated (see Voß 2013).

But naming and identifying affected not just the ambiguous sexual acts that were then put in clearly separable identities. Rather, a variety of features were concerned, which were not considered to be the norm. People were declared insane, ‘depression’, ‘hysteria’ and other ‘diseases’ now determined certain characteristics of people who strayed (too far) from the ideal of the white bourgeois

man (and the white bourgeois woman). This was significant for sex in relation to its ambiguity. If previously – for example, in the medieval Europe – people who recognizably combined female and male sexual characteristics were perceived as individual phenomena, of which the population and the different authorities were not particularly surprised (cf. Rolker 2013), the scientists of modern biology and medicine strove to classify their characteristics precisely, to discredit them as ‘deviations’ and ‘disturbances’ and to research the causes of their emergence. Here, too, scientists (later understood to include women scientists) pursued and continue to pursue the objective of extinction.

Understanding the processes of development should have allowed the manifestation of only sexual characteristics which corresponded to the bourgeois norm. Only ‘typical female’ or ‘typical male’ development was desired, and what did not correspond to the norm was to be terminated. The people who were born with non-normative genitals should be and are till today corrected with medical force (see, inter alia, Klöppel 2010; Voß 2010, 188ff; Voß 2012).

Thereby the sciences self-evidently proved themselves bound to society. They march in lockstep with the already described increasing of people’s functionalization, whereas reproductive characteristics and productivity were and still are central assessment criteria, by and large. Both direct compulsion by violence and restriction – with which people were first forced in workhouses, or to spin, and with which, for example, the wearing of counter-sexual clothing could be persecuted, as well as the emerging and solidifying bourgeois political and social relations, with their sciences, are all to be considered as variables for the development of norms.

Today, the practice possibilities of biological and medical norms become ever more visible in society. Central and publicly negotiated examples include psychiatry, in which non-conforming people are often simply locked away and sedated. Another example is the possibility of prenatal and pre-implantation diagnostics, with which embryos showing ‘abnormalities’ are selected based on a medical-technical apparatus and pregnant persons are advised, if applicable, to terminate their pregnancies.

Finally, the medical treatment program for the eradication of ambiguous sexual characteristics, which continues to lead to trauma and a need for lifelong medical treatment for the affected people, produced, as a byproduct, techniques with which people can come closer to their ideal biological sex. This trend continues to intensify under the impression of school books and advertising in which social norms are presented. Thus annually and alone in Germany thousands of cases of labia correction and penis enlargement are performed. Beauty operations,

which were initially used by women with regard to breasts and other body parts, are now directed also to the genitalia and orient themselves in particular to corresponding social norms (see consensus paper 2010; Vardi et al. 2008).

Pluralization of Identities in the Global North and the Orientation toward the Service Economy

In the contemporary global South, the extensive factory-like disciplining and correction of the people, their bodies and (sexual) activities takes place – current examples include the working conditions and the protests of mine workers in South Africa, and the dozens of suicides and protests due to the working conditions of the more than 1.2 million employees at the iPhone and iPad manufacturer Foxconn in China (see Ngai 2010; Ngai 2013). Meanwhile, for some decades it has become apparent that in the North, the persecution and criminalization of sexual activities previously considered problematic has been scaled back. Specifically, since the late 1960s, criminal regulations against the identitarian self-concept ‘homosexuality’ have been mitigated or abolished in parts of the western world. In the Federal Republic of Germany, paragraph 175 of the penal code, which interdicted male-to-male sexual acts, was loosened in 1969, and loosened and abolished in 1994 – aligning unified Germany to GDR law. In different ways it was also established that a proliferation of modes of desire loosened and multiplied identities (see, for example, Sigusch 2005). These developments are again interesting in light of the above descriptions about the functionalization of people. It was already made clear that the following view of Volkmar Sigusch falls too short:

“The free spaces were never so large and varied. The paradox is: the more brutal capitalism got rid of economic security and social justice, and thus produces un-freedom, the bigger the sexual and gender free spaces become. Obviously, it is quite irrelevant for the mechanisms of the profit- and rentier state what the individual is doing so long as they are only concerned with their sexual orientations, their gender habits, let alone with their small life worlds” (Sigusch 2005, 7).

While Sigusch assumes that it is *quite irrelevant* for capitalism what people do, it was clearly shown above how the functionalization of the spheres of life and of the activities of people had obvious productive effects in the interest of capitalist relations and went along with them. In this sense we should also look for

the rationale of current flexibilization and individualization of gender and sexual identities and ask why the rulers do not go against them with ordinances and persecutions. The interests are obvious.

The assembly line had increasingly served its time in the capitalist center and has been shifted to the global periphery. Instead, in the capitalist center the 'orientation to the service economy' increases, and flexibility and individuality are now in demand. The 'sexual revolution' achieved, among other things, that people's sexuality could increasingly become a commodity in the service of capitalist accumulation. 'Homosexuality' could not be managed as a direct goal of commodity production if it had continued to have been considered 'perverse' and punishable. Capitalism is all about gaining new profits, that is, incorporating always newer regions of the planet and human spheres of life as objects of commodity production. Nancy Peter Wagenknecht vividly explains profit and the limits of the pluralization of sexual relationships:

"The restrictive model was replaced by sexual individualization. Since the sixties, new social movements wrested rights and liberties from the old patriarchal model. As a result, numerous new role models, self-concepts and lifestyles were created. These changes often had the value of subjective emancipation – they bring about a 'plus' in freedom of action – but at the same time they are further regulated by the heterosexual matrix and retrieved from the rise of transnational high-tech capitalism. This mode of production is based, among other things, on individualization of its subjects (to exploit their individual creativity and prevent collective resistances) as well on the transformation of everything and everyone into goods, including human sensuality" (Wagenknecht 2005).

Because the changes remain within the existing pattern and homosexuality continues to be defined as 'deviation' from the 'norm', they are always quickly reversible. At the same time, as Leo Kofler clearly worked out, the increasing organization of even sexual activity as a commodity means that capitalist relations always encompass areas of human life as commodities, meaning, no longer are areas cast out into the reproductive sphere. (As some of the last areas, even organs and reproductive materials as well as dying are all being capitalistically claimed and made into the form of a commodity with the direct objective of capitalist profit interest.) Even the closest and most intimate experience is for the human being only still tangible in the grid of goods. Therewith not only the accumulation of capital, but also the deep internalization of capitalist relations, is promoted – to the point that they appear as inevitable, as 'without alternative':

“[The] presence of class society [stands] in the light of a ‘repressive desublimation’ ... this means: in the light of a ‘democratic’ apparent freedom, whose essence is, that it promises erotic – primarily sexual – liberties and formally also grants them, but only for the purpose of tying up the individual to the repressive order even more strongly through the psychological processes of internalization and identification, thus enabling the duration of the existing oppression” (Kofler 2008 [1985], 33).

Also at this point, a look at the further, international meaning is recommended: although the factory disciplining and taming of people in the global South happens due to the interest in the global North for ‘reasonably priced’ mobile devices, computers, food products and energy, people in the South stand accused of not living according to the now-emerging western (service) standards. Instead, the development in the North, which only became possible through the over-exploitation of people in the South, is introduced as a sign of its ‘civilized nature’ and turned against the South, on the one hand with stereotypes, on the other, with military means.

Fight for Change: From Proletarian Movements to Queer Activism

Improvements in living conditions have always had to be fought for. In this sense, the ideas of Foucault can only be accepted to a limited extent. He stated that already as of the end of the eighteenth century a social medicine had emerged, such that entrepreneurs were interested in the preservation of the labor power of the workers in their workhouses (Foucault 2003 [1974], 292; see Voß 2011, 41f). Experience reveals this as incorrect. Although discussions took place also among the privileged bourgeois about the wretched living conditions of the working population, the practice remained nonetheless unaffected. Only through social struggles of the workers’ movement and the proletarian women’s movement were improvements achieved in the reality of working people.

The workers’ movement and the proletarian women’s movements battled especially for the improvement of their living conditions (see for an overview Notz 2011; Hoffrogge 2011). Their demands were to provide sufficient wages for food and housing, to have tolerable working conditions and against conditions in which only a few profit from the work of the many. Looking at actual life conditions, one always comes across distress and misery. The reality of the workers: poor diet, cramped living (a whole family often lived in a small room or was

homeless), miserable hygienic conditions, common diseases, high child mortality, and a life expectancy of around 30 years. Against this background it is well understood that the proletarian women 's movement was much more concerned in changing these living conditions; it was only secondarily worried about political equality of women and men.

At the same time, sexist prejudices against women were more than visible in the workers' movement (see Hoffrogge 2011, 90–98). In that sense, the fact that women were represented only to a small extent in the workers' movements and the unions was not only a result of the Prussian prohibition of political activity of women, which still lasted until the beginning of the twentieth century. Rather, there was a chauvinistic presupposition on the part of men, which imputed the wage difference between women and men as the women's fault, considering them competitors and 'wage squeezers'. At the same time, the rights of women – and also of homosexuals – were nevertheless more in focus in the workers' movement, at least more than in other parties or in the bourgeois social spheres. Think, for example, of August Bebel's book *Women and Socialism* and his commitment in the Reichstag to abolish paragraph 175, which penalized homosexuality in the German Reich.

Bourgeois women, who had also been shaped by their concrete life circumstances, had other interests (see Notz 2011). For them exclusion from the sciences and from other important, prestigious and lucrative social spheres were more severe. They demanded – as did the workers – the right to vote and especially equal opportunities as bourgeois men in society. Some of them also saw the hardship of the workers and made it a subject of discussion, among others, and in a remarkable way, Bettine von Arnim and Lily Brown.

However, the bourgeois women's movement did not show noticeable support for the struggles of proletarian women; rather, in the same way as in the context of colonialism and slavery, it essentially adopted the same perspectives of bourgeois men rather than the oppressed. Simone de Beauvoir summarizes: "The bourgeois woman hangs on her chains because she hangs to her class's privileges ... She doesn't feel solidarity with the women of the working class: she stands much closer to her husband than to the textile workers. She makes his interests her own" (Beauvoir 2008 [1949], 155).

Just as working and upper-class women followed different interests in the first German women's movement, so too do we find in the second German women's movement a similar division. While the East German Constitution of 1949 pre-defined the equality of men and women, and in particular women's economic

independence, from the very beginning there were affronts against women in the FRG, despite the formal equality defined in the Constitution. Until 1977 a West German husband could terminate the work relationship of his wife if she neglected her familial ‘commitments’ (see also Münch, 1976)! Being an unmarried mother or a single parent in the FRG could lead to extreme social exclusion (illegitimate children were also discriminated against, for example, in the case of inheritance law). In the year 1969 *Der Spiegel* criticized and differentiated between the two German states: “It is true that the state of workers-and-farmers both ensures its citizens material as well as legal equality and pays, unlike in West Germany, ‘equal pay for equal work’ (socialist slogan), that it enables married couples to adopt the maiden name of the bride as a family name, and doesn’t discriminate against children conceived outside of marriage. But even these are no more than onsets of emancipation ...” (Spiegel 1969).

Towards the end of the 1960s, as resistance was organized, an awareness of being oppressed and having to fight for one’s rights spread among many women in West Germany. The two objectives of the feminist engagement were to end discrimination against women and to fight against the socially-spread (sexual) violence against women. They demanded equal access to all social spheres for women and men, as well as the distribution of reproductive labor and its recognition as work (see Notz 2011). The women demanded self-determination of their own life and body, receiving a boost from Maxi Wander’s publication *Good Morning, My Lovely. Protocols by Tape* (1977, GDR), in which – unprecedented in literature – biographical narratives of women received center stage. 19 women reported openly about their lives – both in the GDR as well as in the FRG, the book became a best-seller, encouraging women to document their own lives, and thereby recognize barriers and turning points in their own biographies.

Thus the cross-references between the German states played an important role. Until the 1980s they surfaced in various ways, as prominent women described how they became political active. In more recent versions of this narrative, such references are missing, while gender studies are ‘forgotten by history’. *Good Morning, My Lovely* had significance, especially in the FRG (including West Berlin). It also had an effect in the GDR. But the conflicts there were often different, especially in political bodies where women often took up positions and raised demands. Admittedly women were underrepresented with a share of about one third of the members of political bodies in the GDR. Also in the *Volkskammer* (the GDR’s parliament) from 1967 onwards, 30 percent of deputies were women, while the female proportion in the *Bundestag* of the FRG remained, up to 1987, in the single-digit percentage range (cf. for data comparison BRD

to GDR: Federal Ministry of the Interior for Family 2013; also, Trappe 1995). Although women were represented in the highest East German political bodies (Council of State, Council of Ministers and Politburo) to a lesser extent, their position in the democratic employee organizations was especially strong.

The proportion of women and men in the companies (Soviet: combines) and in the unions was equal, and women took leading positions in growing numbers. In the GDR changes were mainly negotiated in the intern committees: in all large companies, yearly reports over the activities for ‘women’s equality’ had to be submitted and targets accomplished – for example the increase in proportion of women in technical professions. Since the 1960s there were also critical evaluations (cf. Hieblinger 1967, 39–74, 130–144; for a good overview, see also Uhlmann 1968 [1961], especially 580ff; Stern and Boeck 1972; Trappe 1995). Possibilities for reconciling work and family life were promoted with a steady increase of child allowances and spaces in business kindergartens. The economic aspect is significant: it was plausibly easy in the GDR for a married woman to leave her husband in order to escape violence, whereas women in the FRG had to think first whether it would be economically possible.

A closer look at the GDR shows, however, that women were hardly represented in the most prestigious social positions, such as the higher levels of politics or the professorships at universities. Gender stereotypes as well as the (unremunerated) division of the reproductive labor continued to have a disadvantageous effect on women (see Hieblinger 1967 et al., 86f; Trappe 1995, 20ff). Women’s groups were formed also in the GDR, but they didn’t gain a common fighting consciousness to the same extent as in the west (see Kenawi 1995).

It is conspicuous how different the struggles in East and West Germany were for abortion rights. In West Germany, it was primarily the non-parliamentary opposition who led the fight – for example, with the self-outing in the *Stern* magazine with the title “I had an abortion”. This led finally to a legal regulation which kept abortion as a criminal offense not subject to prosecution. This contrasted with the legal development through negotiations inside the political bodies in the GDR. The intensive involvement of women at the legislative level led not only to the decriminalization of abortion, but also legalized it in the first trimester.

The battle against the criminalization of homosexuality was led since the 1970s with vigor, with clear differences between the GDR and FRG coming to light. In West Germany, the Nazi version of the paragraph 175, which criminalized same-sex sexual acts between men, endured. In the 1950s and 1960s, tens of thousands of men were convicted according to this Nazi version of the law –

making the Adenauer-era a dreadful period for gay men. It was not until 1969 that this paragraph was removed and same-sex sexual acts among male adults (initially over 21 years; from 1973 onwards, above 18 years) were exempted from punishment. There were still several hundred convictions every year under the paragraph, and still a few dozens in 1994, the year it was finally abolished. In the GDR from the start, the criminal code reverted back to the older version of the paragraph from the Weimer republic, according to which, only acts “likening to sexual intercourse” were punishable, and from 1957 the culpability of sexual acts among adult men was abolished (above 18 years). In 1988, the People’s Parliament decided to completely abolish the paragraph against homosexuality for men and women (since the 1968 legal reform, this became Paragraph 151), and they introduced the same protective age limits (16 years) for heterosexual and homosexual sexual acts. Finally, in 1994, the old federal states of the ‘United Germany’ adopted this approach and nullified paragraph 175.

These findings also enable an interesting perspective regarding the political struggles of movements: unlike the struggle to abolish punishment for abortion, a massive engagement of women in the streets and in political bodies took place, there was nothing comparable in relation to paragraph 175; rather, the activities of several individuals were significant. The legal changes in the FRG in 1969 were not achieved by the ‘gay movement’. It established itself only after the easing of the penal law. Michael Holy sums up the difference to the US gay movement, which was associated with riots: “While in Germany ... a reform of the criminal law paved the way for a radicalization of homosexuals, under completely different preconditions in the US, a spontaneous revolt triggered the radicalization of the gay and lesbian movement which already existed since the beginning of the 1960s” (Holy 2012, 43f).

Self-organization and a movement unfolded in West Germany from around 1969–70. The first *autonomous* gay group of the Federal Republic – the *Homosexual Action-Group Bochum* (HAG) – was founded in 1970 at the initiative of the lesbian Waltraud Z. (compare Leidinger 2011). Lesbians played a central role also in other gay initiatives, though in popular descriptions of the gay movement they often did not appear, as Christiane Leidinger (2011) has criticized. In addition, leisure groups, other homosexual associations and magazines were all founded (see Holy 2012). In 1971, the *Homosexual Action West Berlin* (HAW) was founded, which would prove to be of utmost importance for the movement.

Although it did not trigger the activities of the autonomous gay-lesbian movement, Rosa von Praunheim’s film *It Is Not The Homosexual Who Is Perverse, But The Society In Which He Lives* was quite significant. It was premiered at the Berlin

Film Festival in July 1971, followed by controversial discussions in the press. In January 1972, the film was programmed to be televised on the ARD channel: however, after pressure from the Bavarian broadcast association, it was banished to regional programming. Even this relocation led to great media attention and to the establishment of homosexual groups in different cities. The same applies to the screenings in regional cinemas. Where the film was shown, self-organized groups of gay and lesbian people were founded, which often dissolved quickly (39 groups and several magazines disappeared as early as 1974–75 [cf. Holy 2012, 49]). Finally, in 1973, the film was broadcast in the night program of the ARD (see Dennert et al., 2007b).

The respective groups were vigorously discussing emancipatory demands, often without reference to bourgeois law, concentrating more on radical social alternatives to capitalism. Gay pride demonstrations held under the Christopher Street Day name emerged also in West Germany against social discrimination and violence against lesbians, gays and ‘queens’ (See Dennert et al. 2007b; focusing on Berlin-Schöneberg, see: Wolter 2011). Self-organization quickly proved to be necessary, since, during the 1980s in connection with HIV and AIDS, gays became targets of incitement, with some politicians in the FRG even demanding their ghettoization in concentration camps. Through campaigns, but also because of empathetic politicians like the then-Minister of Health, Rita Süßmuth, such populist demands were rejected and instead public awareness campaigns – and AIDS aid organizations – were initiated. The stronger involvement of gay groups with the state also played a significant role, such that, from now on, institutionalized gay groups raised increasingly reformist demands instead of fundamental social criticism (Wolter 2011, 20ff; Raab 2011, 18f, 238f).

Lesbian groups did not benefit from professionalization through the AIDS aid organizations. They evolved more out of the socialist movement and the (socialist) women’s movement. The *Council for the Liberation of Women* (West Berlin) was founded in the spring of 1968, and among other things it criticized in September of that same year the men in the Socialist German Student Union (SDS) for their chauvinism. At the next delegates’ conference, the *Weiberrat* (Frankfurt) raised their demands through flyers. The leaflet text ends sharply: “FREE THE SOCIALIST EMINENCES FROM THEIR BOURGIOUS DICKS” (cited in Dennert et al. 2007b, 38, emphasis added in the original).

Some of women came out of the closet in 1972 as lesbians – and so one can assess the *Council for the Liberation of Women* as a first shot of lesbian self-organization. Also in West Berlin a group of lesbian women organized and joined forces with *Homosexual Action West Berlin* (HAW). In February 1973, 50 women from

the HAW protested against an anti-lesbian hate campaign of the *Bild* newspaper, and together with the men of the group they joined the May Day demonstration with banners. The women of the HAW understood themselves as part of the women's movement and were active independently of gay men. Both the *Lesbian Spring Meeting* as well as the *Lesbian Action Center* – which later formed into the *Lesbian Counseling Center* – trace back to the lesbians of the HAW. In 1974 a group of older lesbian women founded the group *L74*. In April 1972 there was also a demonstration of gays and lesbians in Münster, which was followed by more events, actions and demonstrations. Partially, the lesbians fought together with heterosexual women and partly with gay men, whereby lesbians were cast to the side more often, hence developing their own forms of action (for a good overview see Dennert et al. 2007 and 2007b).

In the GDR, the legal situation for gays was better, but there was barely any social visibility. The early improvements in the life of homosexuals in the GDR were more organized by the state and linked to traditions in which socialist movements – the SPD and the KPD fought against the legal culpability of homosexual acts. Among the socialist states, these developments were limited to the GDR and the republic of Poland. A fundamental change in society was not achieved with these state initiatives, and discrimination of lesbian and gay people, for example when looking for accommodation, organizing events or even by posting friendships adds in newspapers, stayed continuous even up to the 1980s (Gray 1988, 36).

In one of the interviews Jürgen Lemke conducted at the time, a respondent described: “I moved to this apartment in the early fifties. Before I moved in, the community policeman went from door to door and informed the young men who lived together: First backyard, in the middle, two flights of stairs, on the right, from the first of next month, one of those will move in. Be careful! I could not imagine a better advertisement. It took less than two weeks before I heard that first timid knocking on my door ...” (Lemke 1989, 30f). In addition, brain research was carried out on how to ‘cure’ homosexuality or ‘prevent’ it embryonically, although it wasn't actually used for treatment in the GDR, unlike the situation in West-Germany, where brain surgery for the ‘healing’ of homosexuality was practiced on people who were institutionalized (Voß 2013, 42ff). But also in the GDR, especially in the 1950s and '60s, people were psychiatrically or medically treated so they might forsake their homosexuality – which led to serious mental health damage for those affected by the treatment (see Thinius 2006; Brühl 2006).

Nevertheless, sociological surveys verify that the social acceptance of lesbians

and gays improved. While in 1980, 51 percent of students fully agreed with the statement, “Nobody should be discriminated against because of his homosexual tendencies”, in 1990, 84 percent of those polled answered correspondingly (Starke 2008, 11). As Siegfried Schnabl wrote in the sex education book *Man and Woman Intimately*, a bestseller in the GDR which dealt with the discrimination of mainstream society: “The exemption from punishment, however, remains a formal-legal matter, so long as homosexuals are morally discriminated, despised, whispered over, maliciously laughed at, with warnings issued against them or them being pitied like the sick. We have to respect their intimate sphere, their forms of partnering and their desired living arrangements, as they should respect ours, for they are equal members of society” (Schnabl 1979 [1969], 303).

Since the 1970s several gay and lesbian groups and initiatives in the GDR sprang up – the first were *Homosexual Interest Group Berlin* (HIB) in 1973 and the *Homosexual Self-help Group Leipzig* in 1976 (see Kenawi 1995, 223; Brühl 2006, 108f; Brühl 2013). The HIB developed a wide range of activities and wanted to roll out a sign saying: “We homosexuals of the capital welcome the participants of the Tenth World Youth Festival and support socialism in the GDR” at the closing event of the festival, but it was prevented by the security forces. They also petitioned different institutions, such as the police and the parliament. It was at their initiative that in 1976 Urania (The Society for the Dissemination of Scientific Knowledge) held a forum on the topic of homosexuality.

Since 1974 the HIB met in the villa of Charlotte von Mahlsdorf, where the Stasi suspected that conspiratory and subversive meetings took place. Finally, a GDR-wide lesbian meeting which was held there in 1978 was used as a pretext to forbid further meetings in the Mahlsdorf’s house. At first, the HIB fought back – their request to receive the status of an association was rejected, also numerous petitions which eventually led to a discussion in the cabinet did not have the desired result of achieving recognition by the state as a homosexual organization. Discouragement led to the group falling apart with only some parties being organized and some continuing to work on a change in consciousness (see Thinius, 2006; Brühl 2006). Since the late 1970s homosexuality also became a theme in art and literature, and since the 1980s, more groups emerged again (see in detail Brühl 2006, 2013). Partly lesbians and gay men worked together, and partly lesbian groups were founded within the framework of the emerging women’s movement (Kenawi 2008; cf. Kenawi 1995). In addition, since 1983, conferences with scientists and experts in their own cause jointly discussed and debated solutions (see, among others, Günther et al. 1986; Günther and Bach 1989; Hohmann 1991; Kenawi 1995). Jürgen Lemke’s quoted volume, *Gay Voic-*

es from East Germany (1989), as well the broadcast on youth radio *DT64 Man, Listen ... I am Homosexual* (1987), and the film *Coming Out* (directed by Heiner Carow), which was premiered in November 1989, all created a sensation.

As much as the GDR has been neglected in the study of the German 'homosexual movement' – which is why this has been discussed here in greater detail – often the work of women and queers of color is also overlooked. Focusing on lesbians in the GDR, Samirah Kenawi has clearly worked out how essential women were in pushing for change through their persistent engagement (Kenawi 2008). Also in the current studies on West Germany and West Berlin, the role of women in making homosexuality a social issue rarely comes into view, as for example through the controversies with the chauvinism of men in the SDS which led to the emergence of lesbian autonomous organizations (see Dennert et al. 2007, 2007b). The blank space considering the part of queers of color in the newer – white – historiography of the gay movement is at least as equally large. As much as one can trace back the central event for lesbians and gays, Christopher Street battles, initially to people of color (Haritaworn 2005), this also applies to other queer developments. Numerous struggles that eventually brought changes in both German states and from which in particular white gays could gain profit (cf. Wolter 2011; Raab 2011) were led by people who are also (and will be) discriminated against by the latter.

Furthermore, the liberation movement of black people – among others in the US and especially by women – were important stimuli for the fight against racism in German society which also affected queer-feminist struggles. Leading the way was Davis' book *Women, Race & Class*, in which she describes the history and struggles of black women in the US. First suppressed in slavery, their conditions did not fundamentally change after the hard-won abolition of slavery. Rather, working conditions remained the same, the 'advancement' to the white-dominated society remained for blacks mostly impossible, and they continued to be subjected to economic and also sexual exploitation via white people. This conditions till today the different organization and approaches of white women who belong to the dominant part of society, as well as black women. Since the end of the 19th century, racism intensified – whites committed lynch murders against black women and men. These were expressions of the institutionalized racist system. Davis describes the struggles that were necessary and that led to the nowadays self-evident situation in which people of different origin and skin color are formally and equally recognized as US citizens. At least that was achieved even though racism remains a massive problem today. It is also worth noting that

Davis, at the beginning of the 1980s, clearly shows how racism and class domination function together – on the grounds of racism, blacks received bad jobs and often miserable work and life conditions – and particularly affect women and can ultimately be traced to the colonial submission of black people. The possibilities of the people are thus determined by their differentiation along bourgeois patterns of racist, sexist and classist stereotypes (see Davis 1982 [1981]). In the Federal Republic of Germany even this small American matter, of course, that the citizens have different skin and hair colors, different religions and cultures, has not yet caught on with the white majority. Instead people of color in the FRG are still often designated by members of the majority as ‘foreign’, called ‘aliens’ and are asked to declare their country of origin – even by white leftists.

Racism in Germany – Reflections Provoked by Women of Color

“Racism is the linking of prejudice with institutional power. Contrary to the (comfortable) popular opinion, ‘dislike for’ or ‘malice against’ people or groups of people is not a precondition for racism. Racism is not a personal or political ‘attitude,’ but an institutionalized system in which social, economic, political and cultural relations operate for the preservation of white supremacy” (Noah Sow, cited in Arndt and Ofuatey-Alazard 2011, 37).

Colonialism, migration and racism are not often considered as historically intrinsic to Germany by many white Germans, who also shape the scientific context (Ha 2012 [2003], 57–63; El-Tayeb 2012 [2003], 130f; Castro Varela and Dhawan 2005, 11; Arndt and Ofuatey-Alazard 2011, 37ff, 121ff). Immigration is described as a feature since the early 1960s, when the Federal Republic of Germany recruited ‘guest workers’ and the GDR ‘contract workers.’ As the Berlin-based political scientist Kien Nghi Ha (Ha 2012 [2003]) observes in his research, even in the newer efforts of migration studies, historical references are especially neglected – and a distorted picture of immigration as a phenomena intrinsic to ‘modern’, democratic Germany is drawn. There is, however, little to no talk about immigration in the imperial period, or in the Weimar Republic, nor of *völkisch* nationalist ideas, the repercussions of German colonialism on Germany, nor of racism – all this, despite there existing clear continuities, both in terms of content as well as at the level of personnel. Thus, Konrad Adenauer, one of the founders of the *Colonial Work Group* – a consortium of many German colonial companies –

became the first Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949. Only in 1974 were the approximately twenty remaining German colonial companies liquidated by the German Bundestag (see Ha 2009 [2005], 111).

Even the concept of racism has been and still is avoided in Germany, a denial of the colonial past. Terms such as ‘xenophobia’ are rather used. In so doing, white Germans evade a structural analysis linking racism with the capitalist expansion of Europe – and especially Germany – and how is it founded on the segmentation of people based on biological and culturalist arguments (see, among others, Tesfa 1985, 34f; Opitz [Ayim] 1997 [1986], 23f; Çetin 2012). At the same time, they reject international scientific analyzes and answer: ‘hostility to strangers’ thus appears as a feature of small neo-Nazi groups, but not as a phenomenon in society as a whole, like racism.

Those analyses based on the work of Davis about the US should also be applied to Germany. Already in the *Kaiserreich* a migration policy was developed based on colonialism and biological racism (see especially Ha 2009) which relied on the temporary recruitment of workers especially for the agricultural work in Prussia. Their stay was limited, and workers were forced to leave with a “return order for the winter rest period” (Ha 2012 [2003], 67), marking Germany as a ‘non-immigration country. At the end of the nineteenth century Germany was second in the world only to the US as an importer of workers (ibid.). This kind of temporary work immigration combined ‘positive effects’: labor power was cheaply purchased; in winter and during crisis, workers could be sent away; and, because there was no need to provide for them, there were no benefits paid.

The immigration policy of the Federal Republic of Germany developed directly from these historical precursors (cf. Tesfa, 1985; Ha 2012 [2003]). This applies not only to the countries with which labor recruitment agreements were signed – the allied states of the first and/or second World Wars, the Ottoman Empire (Turkey), Italy and Spain (El Masrar 2010, 38f). This type of recruitment also built upon on the efforts of the imperial era, when workers were recruited with terminal contracts. Kien Nghi Ha writes,

“Since migrants are conceived as *workers of debased rights*, they should be the first to lose their precarious jobs and leave in phases of economic regression. On the one hand, the German side wanted to ‘export’ the unemployed, the sick or the old migrants in order to save the usual employers’ obligations at the expense of the foreign employees and their countries of origin. On the other hand, the jobs of the German workforce could be secured through this migrant buffer function” (Ha 2012 [2003], 70, emphasis in original).

Until today the recruitment policy inherently contains lower pay, worse working conditions, and the denial of the usual social benefits in the Federal Republic of Germany. At the same time, the dirtiest, most dangerous and most unpopular work is to be done by migrants. The “extreme exploitation of the migrant productive force” (Ha 2012 [2003], 72; see also Gültekin 1985) is the focal interest of the recruitment policy. And even the selection of people is purely based on profitability: “The physical and health conditions of the future young and strong workforce was thoroughly examined in their home countries via a systematic procedure – looked at in the mouth like a young horse and only let into the country when their fitness was beyond doubt” (El Masrar 2010, 37). The inhumane selection procedure of the recruited people becomes obvious from interviews and the description of the situation. Filiz Yüreklik described her own experience:

“It was awful. We had to get undressed down to our briefs and were examined by a German doctor. We stood in a row, and he looked at us like looking at a horse in the mouth, whether the teeth are healthy. After that we had to give blood and urine so they could determine if we were pregnant or diabetic” (cited in Ha 2012 [2003], 79).

In times of crisis, this concept became ‘enshrined’. Already during the recession in the late 1960s and in the 1970s, migrants were much more frequently affected by unemployment than people without a migration background. In the 1974–75 recession, for example, “migrants were dismissed percentage-wise four times (386%) more than Germans” (Ha 2012 [2003], 71). ‘Social peace’ and the legitimation of the capitalist system was to be stabilized in the Federal Republic of Germany, as before in the *Kaiserreich* and in the Weimar Republic, on the basis of the inclusion and exclusion of migrants. This was also achieved in times of crisis more clearly by depicting migrants as ‘strangers’ and ‘scapegoats’ – even in economically good times migrants were and are willfully put in this position (see Erel 2012 [2003]; Ferreira 2012 [2003]; Çetin 2012).

Excursion 5: “You are only accepted as a work horse or an exotic”

“My name is Inci. I came here to Germany without knowing a word of German. I wanted to study it, but I wasn’t given any opportunity. I had already bound myself in Turkey to working shifts, although I didn’t really know what that meant. Sure, they

translated the contract alright, we were about 100 people in the room and they read it out for us quickly, and we all had to sign it, but afterwards no one understood what we actually signed. After four months I did not feel well at all. I constantly had headaches and stomach pain. I just felt bad.

Then I decided to go back to Turkey. I went to my boss and told him I would very much like to return. He told me that it was impossible because I bound myself to stay here and work for a year. 'You got a plane ticket, you got a place in the dorm, and if you committed yourself for four years, then you will need to work four years, otherwise you have to pay for everything'. With this the pressure became even stronger. I now had no way out. Then I said, how about if I only work one shift now and then go to school and learn a little German so I can at least understand a little. The language is very important for contacts, and I cannot find any contacts. As an Oriental, you are only accepted as a work horse or an exotic, but not as a human being. Then he said 'No, you have already bound yourself in Turkey to work double shifts for at least a year', and I could not get out of it.

So without having a choice, I worked a double shift for a year, early shift and late shift. You can't learn German like that. The women sat together during the weekend and learned German for two hours, but that was not at all sufficient.

And when I went to a pub or anywhere else, my experience was always to be asked if I speak German. I could never communicate properly, and when someone talked to me, it was in such a manner that I just wanted to scream 'Why do you speak such bad German, speak to me in a way that I would at least learn the language correctly!'. That wore me out, and I got stomach pain, kidney pain, I was constantly at the doctor's. In the first year of my stay here I spent six months in hospital with all sorts of pain. But this wasn't accepted, and I wasn't taken seriously. I felt so bad. As a woman, as a sick woman, I was not accepted, not even in hospitals or by doctors. And I had such pain, abdominal pain, pain in the whole body, and I could never explain it right for the doctor. And I was also homesick and had strong mental pain, and the body also responded promptly. Everybody laughed at me, saying, 'Alas, she probably got her period, every woman has this pain and she is so pain sensitive.' I wanted to talk to someone about my pains. I was all alone in Germany. Now I want to jump a little.

In 1979 I returned to Germany. I had since had a daughter and was married to a German. I thought to myself, oh, now I can speak quite well, I felt better, because then I could speak German and be accepted as a person. So we went to Berlin. We temporarily had a room in a friend's flat. When I called then to look for an apartment, the first question was always the same: 'What is your nationality?' and when I said I was Turkish the answer was 'There are no apartments.' Then I had to say: I am married

to a German! 'Oh, then your husband should come, or your husband should call us'. I am not human. My husband is a human being because he is a German. And because he is a human being, and we are married maybe I also am ... half of human being. And then the constant tensions inside me and between me and my husband. On the street I did not feel comfortable. While looking for an apartment I got dressed with the most elegant clothes, I went with a taxi, trying to show that I am not *that* kind of Turk or foreigner. How could I do anything like that? People force you here, society compels me to show myself differently. But my body, my mental condition suffered from it. I don't know. I have had therapy for many years, and I still feel like the black Inci, like a Turk. I used to feel very discriminated against as a woman, in Turkey and also in other countries. As a woman, you are not accepted, but here, as a foreigner as well, this is worse, as a woman and as a foreigner"(quoted in Bargan et al. 1985, 55ff).

The basis for the permanently unequal treatment of migrants is anchored in German citizenship law, which denies citizenship for even second- or third-generation people with a migration background who live in the Federal Republic of Germany, and thus withholds from them basic civil rights and the possibilities of political participation (Erel 2012 [2003]; Ha 2012 [2003]). But here, too, the circle closes: although it was slightly amended though not fundamentally revised in the year 2000, the citizenship law traces back to the law of members of the *Reich* and the state from the year 1913. It is, therefore, fundamentally shaped by *völkisch*-nationalistic and racist ideas (see Ha 2012 [2003], 91). People are deeply entrenched as 'second class,' are economically exploited, but are prevented from political participation and thus from the possibility to improve their own position.

It thus also clearly shows that the social exclusion of people with migration backgrounds is nothing accidental nor something that simply springs from a resentment-laden population – nor even from a few neo-Nazis. Rather, the position of migrated people and their descendants proves to be explicitly institutional and guided by economic interests. If this context slips away, the important starting point of racist debates, which are particularly strong in times of economic crises, becomes invisible. In times of economic downturn, migrants thus come to be 'scapegoats' which 'flood' the labor market. Metaphors of 'flood' are used to depict migration as something menacing – and to obscure the structural background of the situation of migrated people and their descendants (Ratsch 1985; Kang 1990; Ha 2012 [2003]). At the same time, even here racist patterns with a long colonial tradition come to light, all too often charged with sexual and gender stereotypes (see El-Tayeb 2012 [2003]; Petzen 2011 [2005]; Wolter 2011 [2010]).

Against this background the situation of women appears to be much more difficult. This applies not only to wages, which are 20 percent lower even compared to those of male migrants (see Aufruf 1985). Also significant is the legal residence situation: since numerous women came to the Federal Republic of Germany in the course of family reunifications, they were and are denied an independent residence permit. Since 1981 – at the time still under the coalition of the SPD and FDP – the provisions of the residence law continued to worsen. Women were forced by the Foreigners Authority to stay married, even in cases of domestic violence. In the first years ‘subsequently unified dependents’ did not and do not possess a permanent and independent visa for the Federal Republic of Germany – they are dependent on their working partner, who must also prove that he can sustain the whole family from his employment. As early as 1985 Bargan et al. observed:

“Foreign families live under ever-increasing levels of existential fear. Regulations, ordinances, and aliens acts curtail the chances of survival in the FRG more and more, put people under unbearable pressure and create inescapable situations. The most dangerous and deleterious jobs are being given to foreigners, usually with disrespect of labor protection laws, and then disease is considered as a cause for deportation” (Bargan et al. 1985, 65).

This is why at the First Joint Women’s Congress in Frankfurt (1985) both black and white women demanded:

- independent residence and work visas for women regardless of family circumstances, and the abolition of Section 19 of the Employment Promotion Act;
- no limitation on the right of entry for spouses and children;
- no limitation on the freedom of marriage;
- immediate stop of deportations of women on grounds of husband’s return, separation from husband, social welfare, illness, death or imprisonment of the husband;
- international treaties for the protection of women and girls against sex-specific persecution and sexist violence (Ratsch 1985, 47).

Instead of improvements, the changing federal governments – beginning with the social democratic (SPD) and liberal (FDP) coalition – worsened the situation with a disingenuously-named “Law to Combat Forced Marriage and to Protect its Victims”. In 2011 the freeze period for an independent stay was even raised

from two to three years, followed by an independent visa of only one year. The same limits apply also in the case of bi-national same-sex partnerships, which exist since 2001. This puts the migrating person in a dependent position which they cannot escape, even if the partner is violent.

The situation of the ‘contract workers’ in the GDR was also not much different, considering the economic interests and the treatment of those recruited.

“Primarily young workers were recruited, because the GDR saw in them in the first place a kind of ‘human capital’ and therefore directly made sure that healthier, young and employable people would enter the country. Migrant workers in the GDR were often deployed in jobs that GDR citizens themselves refused to carry out and therefore were forced in part to do dirty and dangerous jobs” (Knoll 2011, 37).

Contract workers were recruited from the socialist ‘sister countries’: Bulgaria, Angola, Mozambique, Cuba, Mongolia and China. Contracts were signed which restricted their rights in the GDR and stipulated communal domiciles. The contracts were often made for the time of beyond seven years, after which the workers would have to return to their home countries; special provisions threatened deportation before the end of the contract, if for example a contract worker became pregnant (Piesche 2006; Knoll 2011). The GDR contract workers were centrally accommodated in shelters, far from the residential areas of the non-migrated population – also this resembles the situation in the BRD, where the contact between the immigrants and non-migrant population was first established through separate accommodation and employment in different shops (El Masrar 2010; Wolter 2011, 18).

Even the reasoning was similar – in its internal social debate as well as to the outside world, the GDR conventionalized itself as the ‘democratic Germany’, which, in contrast to West Germany, had broken with its Nazi past. The narrative of the FRG, on the other hand, became hegemonic: the FRG appeared as the ‘democratic Germany’ whereas the GDR was monolithic, unfree and undemocratic, and the cause of its racism and the pogroms which happened after 1990 are to be located in its structure (for example, Poutrus et al. 2002; critically, El-Tayeb 2012 [2003], 131f). Both readings throw a smoke screen over structural racism and deny the Nazi past. How else should the German state with its elites and the German society change in a short time from a murdering horde to adherents of democracy? The division of West and East made it easier to settle for the simplest explanations and prevents till today an effective process of coming

to grips with the Nazi past and the *völkisch*-nationalistic and colonial character of German society – thus obstructing an effective thematization of racism and the struggle against it (El-Tayeb 2012 [2003], 131f).

Even when the economic exploitability of migrants was central for the FRG, the former Nazi-judge and prime minister of Baden-Württemberg Hans Filbinger delighted over the “import of ... ‘young, fresh’ guest workers” (see Ha 2012 [2003], 70), this system was always oriented toward the return of the migrating workers in economically dire times. In such times companies carried out not ‘only’ a racist dismissal policy from the workplace; media and political discourses stirred up racist resentments as well. In July 1973 the title of *Der Spiegel* was: “The Turks are Coming – Save yourself if you can!” Since the crises of the 1970s the media has spread openly racist resentment in the FRG. Since 1981 the immigration regulations were aggravated by the socio-liberal (SPD/FDP) coalition. The government program of the Kohl government (CDU/FDP) in the early 1980s proclaimed that half of the migrant population in the Federal Republic of Germany should be expelled (see Ratsch 1985; Kang 1990). In 1990 the debate broke out again, with numerous publications, magazines and books appearing to discredited migrants and spread the image of the ‘flood’ of migrating workers to Germany and Europe (Ha 2012 [2003], 87).

In 1991, the CDU and CSU intensified this debate, all while neo-Nazis were increasingly and visibly occupying public spaces.

It was obvious for the white German majority in the West as in the East, who was ‘threatening’ and who is ‘threatened’. *Völkisch* nationalist stereotypes with clear conceptions – first physical, then later also increasingly cultural – of what constitutes the ‘German population,’ and who ‘infiltrates’ were preserved, used and fueled (see Ferreira 2012 [2003]; Erel 2012 [2003]; Petzen 2011 [2005], 28ff; explicitly for the GDR cf. Piesche 2006). Following this came a 3000-strong crowd clapping and cheering the neo-Nazis during the pogroms in August 1992 in Rostock-Lichtenhagen, which set ablaze the homes of families of Vietnamese origin. The crowd offered the neo-Nazis protection from the police, who were unable or unwilling to control the violence. Instead of clearly condemning the pogroms and finally understanding racism as a structural German problem and confronting it, the government instrumentalized the riots for their own racist campaigns. Thus, the then-Federal Minister of Interior, Rudolf Seiters, declared: “The attacks have shown that the current law is not sufficient. The main problem of the uncontrollable influx of economic refugees, mainly from Eastern Europe, can only be stopped with a tightening of the law” (Fischer 2007, 312). Seiter was

only one of the voices of German politicians across all the political camps who justified the violence of the neo-Nazis and the racism of the mainstream German population. The government coalition of the CDU and FDP, supported by the SPD, took advantage of the situation to “virtually abolish the right of asylum” in May 1993. The government also pushed through the European Union the Third-State-Regulation, which enabled the deportation of people who entered the FRG through a ‘safe third country’” back to that state. In the same week five women and girls died in a radical right-wing arson attack in Solingen (ibid.).

During the 1980s, with massive deterioration of the living conditions of people with migration backgrounds and people of color, resistance and self-consciousness were important for the foundation of groups of black women/lesbians and women/lesbians of color. Especially important were congresses, in which women/lesbians of color could position themselves and which were partially also open for white women. In July 1983, the first such Women’s Congress took place, in which over 1000 women came, followed by the publication *Are We So Strange? Foreign and German Women in Conversation* (1985). In 1986 the first publication appeared in which black German women presented together their experiences in Germany from an activist perspective: *Confessing Color: Afro-German Women on the Trail of Their History*. Not least significant for the self-organization of Afro-German women: the Berlin stay from 1984 to 1992 of the African-American writer and activist Audre Lorde (Gerund 2008; Piesche 2012). Women of color increasingly established groups. In 1984, the lesbian feminist *Shabbes Circle* was formed, in which Jewish and non-Jewish women dealt with antisemitism in the women’s movement and also grappled with questions of Jewish history (see Jacoby and Magiriba Lwanga 1990; Baader 1993).

Inspired by Audre Lorde, black women and lesbian activists founded in 1986 the group *ADEFRA* (Black Women in Germany) (see Piesche 2012). In 1992 the first German group of lesbians from Turkey was created in Berlin, in which the women networked and politically thematized racism, sexism and heterosexism (İpekçioğlu 2007).

The transition years of 1989–1990 and the early 1990s, which were perceived by white Germans as ‘moving’, were life-threatening for black people and people of color. The immensely overheated white and German-nationalist atmosphere is traceable from numerous essays – but it did not enter the hegemonic white view of the transition years at the time. In these accounts there is talk of celebrations. The many attacks and murders against black people and people of color are silenced or ‘trivialized’ as acts of East German neo-Nazis. In their article *183 Death Victims: Extreme Right-Wing and Racist Violence Since 1990* (2013), Aslan Erkol and No-

ra Winter have documented the names of the fatalities and the background of the attacks. The fact that the attacks and murders happened all over the country, that thousands of people applauded these attacks, that after the racist attacks the victims and not the white German perpetrators were blamed, all of this is obliterated from the hegemonic white 'transition history'. May Ayim, a West German speech therapist of Ghanaian origin and described her experiences in 1990:

"Since 1984 I live and work in West Berlin and I feel in this city more at home than anywhere else. Thanks to my indistinct sense of orientation, I get lost every day in the streets; however, in comparison to other cities in which I have lived and studied until now, Berlin was always a place where I felt quite at home. My skin color is not an extraordinary view in the streetscape; here I do not receive compliments every day for my good German, and I am only rarely in seminars, events or parties in which I am the only black person in the midst of an undefined number of whites. I have to explain myself often, but not constantly. I remember earlier times, in small West German cities, where I often felt under constant observation, always sickened under inquiry and questioning glances ...

In the first days after November 9th, 1989, I hardly noticed any immigrants or Afro-Germans in the streets, at least not the ones with darker skin color. I wondered how many Jewish people were on the street. By chance I came across a few Afro-Germans that I had met the year before in East Berlin, and we were happy to have more opportunities to meet. I was walking alone, wanting to inhale a bit of the general enthusiasm, sense the historical moment and share my reserved joy. Reserved, because of the imminent tightening in the legislation for immigrants and asylum-seekers I have heard of. Just like other black Germans and immigrants, I knew that even a German passport does not constitute an invitation to the East-West celebrations. We sensed that the upcoming inner-German unification will entail an increasing delimitation to the outside, an outside that would include us. We were not invited to join the party. As Chancellor Kohl phrased it, there was no room for everyone in the new 'We' in 'our own country'.

'Beat it negro, don't you have a home?'

For the first time since I lived in Berlin, I had to protect myself almost daily, against blunt insults, hostile looks and openly racist defamations. I started again to be on the look-out for the faces of black people while going shopping or using the public transportation. A friend holding her Afro-German daughter on her lap in the urban train was told: "we don't need people like you here anymore. We are more than enough". A ten-year-old African boy was pushed out of the full subway to make room for a white German ..." (Ayim 2012, 55f)

These descriptions are missing from the accounts of white people about the transition years. Unsurprisingly there were also very few white people who joined the anti-racist demonstrations in the beginning of the 1990s following the attacks and the tightening of the Aliens Act (Ayim 2012, 59). Thus, from the beginning of the 1990s, there was even more need for self-organization and activism. Women/lesbians built upon the approaches of the 1980s. Especially immigrant congresses formed the basis for new alliances and supported and enabled the further thematization of the situation of blacks and Jewish lesbian women (see Ani et al. 2007, 297). As a result, racism among white women/lesbians could be approached. The women affected by racism confronted white Germans in the women/lesbian movement and made exclusions and racism visible and treatable, so that, there today, racism is at least the subject of discussion. In contrast, reflections upon racism and nationalism in the white, majority German gay male scene have yet to meaningfully occur.

Through the struggle self-organization, racism has been put on the table in several areas of society, enabling the struggle against it. Yet, this activism is still limited to subcultures and does reach the necessary breadth in the white society and white scientific institutions (FeMigra 1994; Kilomba 2009).

So it is unsurprising that central social developments are neither initiated nor even accompanied by white (scientific) institutions. The interventions continue to be made on a voluntary basis and often precariously, for example, by people who organize themselves in NGOs in order to receive some financial support. This imposed fundraising leads to only temporary support and thus to drastic institutional control over these groups. New – and queer – perspectives continue to come especially from self-organization such as *ADEFRA*, *LeSMigras* (Lesbian/bisexual migrant and black lesbians and trans*) and *GLADT* (Gay and Lesbians from Turkey), and often from trans*.

‘All of It’: Contemporary Political Struggles

Many on the left have arrived at the position that *queer* anti-capitalist activism is of utmost importance. The different stages of queer history and theory-formation are more than suitable towards this end: *queer* struggles were directed against violent attacks by state institutions – the police – and were entangled with economic issues. In New York’s Christopher Street, as before in San Francisco, it was especially homeless youth, working class folks, trans*, and drag queens of color who fought with great intensity. Middle-class gays and lesbians, who would lat-

er be integrated into the system, positioned themselves on the other side – that of the police and state power – by forbidding queer homeless youth and Sylvia Rivera entrance to the Lesbian and Gay Center in the winter's cold. With that, they escalated the verbal, and in part, physical attacks against trans* persons of color, emanating out of the gay and lesbian scene to a new and life-threatening level.

A similar division of interests has been developing for years in Germany. Homelessness, suicide attempts and suicide are particularly common among queer adolescents. 18 percent of lesbian and gay teenagers reported at least one suicide attempt (Senate Administration Berlin [eds.] 1999; see also Council of Europe 2011, 106f). Studies of trans* individuals indicate that more than 30 percent of trans* adolescents attempted suicide (Council of Europe 2011, 106f). Trans* people experience massive mental and physical violations in contemporary society, both by non-state actors such as transphobic people, and directly organized by the state, for instance through the institutional promotion of exclusionary sexual dualism and the pathologization of trans* identities through the medical system (Allex 2012). Whereas predominantly trans* people, drag queens and cis* women were the most active groups fighting for gay liberation in the US, as well as in West and East Germany of the 1970s and 1980s, a massive transition also occurred. Today white middle-class cis* men dominate gay politics and pursue their own interests. Their aim is that white middle class gays could share all the privilege heterosexual white cis* men of the middle-class enjoy in society – poor gays, women, people of color, intersex and gender-nonconforming people all continue to be discriminated against.

This is shown in the actions of the largest German gay association, the LSVD, which has almost exclusively campaigned for the participation of gays (and lesbians) in marital privileges. By contrast, it only rarely addressed sexism, transphobia, and racism in German society – and among gays and lesbians. It even occasionally took racist positions regarding queers of color. The so-called “victim counseling” organization Maneo goes in a similar direction and is a central racist actor, perpetuating colonial clichés. On the one side, the “threatened” white gay man is portrayed, and on the other side and in the colonial tradition, the image of the “other” is presented (see Yılmaz-Günay (ed.) 2011b; Wolter 2011). Maneo tries explicitly to produce the corresponding data – in press releases and at events, the Maneo employee Bastian Finke surmised a particular aggression of people of color against white gays, even though their own database did not provide any evidence for this assumption (nor does it stand up to methodological statistic standards) (see also Ruder 2011 [2007]; Buchterkirchen 2007; Blech 2009).

The production of and adherence to clear identities is pivotal for the functioning of racism through the LSVD and Maneco: white, gay, middle-class is threatened by black, hetero and poor. The racist aggravations going on in Berlin can also be observed in the nationwide magazines of the gay community. Racist covers like “Turks out!” with the subtitle “Coming out in two cultures,” (*Siegessäule*, November 2003), “Poland is not yet lost ...” (*respekt*, March 2006), and “HIV infections: black prospects for next year” – with a Black person wearing a Santa Claus hat as ‘cover illustration’ (*exit*, December 2008), at least raised some critical reactions. Still, on a regular basis, contributions appear which perpetuate the racist and nationalist German grand narrative, in which gays and cis* women from the white and Christian-atheistic mainstream society are supposedly threatened by the “other”, whereby especially Muslims are depicted as dangerous.

This procedure reverses the blame. It distracts from the exclusions in the gay scene in which it is now standard to disallow women into many venues, contrary to the Anti-Discrimination Law. Repeatedly, people of color are denied entry to gay clubs. A report in *Siegessäule* from July 2010 about the gay club Connection confirmed this, after repeated racist incidents in the gay scene in Berlin Schöneberg: “the developments that Asians are not allowed into certain gay establishments in Schöneberg are not new,” (*Siegessäule Online*, July 2010). Sexual preferences of the white clientele, which are influenced not least by colonial imputations, are even cited as a legitimate pretext for racial discrimination. An employee of Connection explained the incident in an interview: “Unfortunately many guests don’t come when there are too many Asians in the club. We try to make it right for everyone,” (*ibid.*). Who are the welcomed “guests” and who is excluded is obvious (Wolter 2010).

In the meantime, discrimination became the basic pillar of gay subculture and is obviously so accepted, that the operators of gay locations are not even making an effort to hide this. A new level of escalation was reached through influential white gays, who supported the participation of the right-wing extremist party *Pro Cologne* at the Cologne pride parade. Olaf Alp, the publisher of the gay magazines *blu*, *rik*, *gab*, *exit*, *hinnerk* and *leo* as well as operator of the radio show *blu.fm* and the manager of the influential and popular dating portal for gay men *gayromeo.com*, argued for the participation of the right-wing extremist group and expressed racist and, in particular, anti-Muslim resentment (Blech 2013). Another exclusion should be named: poor people often have no chance to enter locations because of the admission fee, except when they possess certain characteristics particularly attractive for the ‘guests’ and club operators, such as youth or desirable masculine or feminine features.

Some white German gays are currently aiming to be recognized by mainstream society. Their homosexuality should no longer be regarded as a flaw; rather, they want to stand on the winners' side in the hegemonic discourses. This interest expresses itself graphically when the cover of the gay magazine *binnerk* shows a big map of Germany in the national colors with the title "Top 100 homosexuals who move Germany" (*binnerk* May 2006) or when during the foundation of a Magnus Hirschfeld Institute of the Berlin initiative *Queer Nations* expresses its desire "that in a few years the Federal President will inaugurate this institution. The signal would then be clear: Germany is a liberal country, one that values homosexuality and protects lesbians and gays" (Initiative Queer Nations 2013 [2006]). That only a few people are meant by this, while queers of color, trans* people and homeless queers continue to be discriminated against and refugees are not protected but threatened by a restrictive asylum legislation and racism in Germany – all of this is not only ignored but even partly supported. In the political groups of gay, trans* and drag queens of the 1970s and 1980s the activists did not want to be represented or legitimated by the institutions of German statehood. They instead opposed repressive statehood and opposed capitalism and its state institutions and demanded a just social order.

There are different causes as to how positions previously not linked to emancipatory struggles have become dominant, addressed especially in works of the women/lesbian movement. Referring to the 'gay movement', an important point is that after the most dangerous struggles were over, the activism became much more attractive for white bourgeois gay men, who could now dominate the further battles and demands. The dangerous and infringing struggles were mainly led by people for whom living conditions were intolerable, a situation which existed especially for people who were affected by several factors of social exclusion, such as class, sexism and gender-dualist norms and racism. Their demands were adequately far-reaching and aimed at new, just social relationships. They formulated radical positions attacking the state, nationalism and the restrictive gender model. With increasing recognition, however, the people who took a more dominant role where the ones asking to be fully a part of the state and to remove disadvantages, which denied the participation in lucrative and prestigious positions in bourgeois society. Consequently, the demands since then have been significantly confined to 'marriage' and tax and inheritance benefits.

In the women/lesbian movement, the turn in its activism was already thoroughly discussed.

Here again, especially since the 1980s, a shift away from radical demands on

the state, its institutions and categories were visible and instead positions were asserted favoring an integration of the demands of the women/lesbian movement to hegemonic state policy.

Also in this case, some were increasingly concerned with participation in lucrative and prestigious positions, and a few even expressed the perspective that participation of women in the military constitutes emancipation. Ilona Bubeck sums up the developments in her essay 'A new bourgeois women's movement?' (Bubeck 1993) She discerns dependencies of women's organizations, which would eventually also influence their demands and inner structure, and encouraged them to address class issues more forcefully. Bubeck writes:

"This corresponds to the tendency to found or expand women's organizations, for which the state provides money and paid positions. The political motivation and social necessity of a women's organization play in the consideration of a subordinate role. The new motto is: jobs at any price! Did the state not partly achieve thereby what it wanted – that women's organizations are created, which it is willing to support (and with which it can also cast a friendly image for itself) rather than, vice versa, women's political organizations would assert their funding? Was it not about outfoxing the state instead of obeying it? But some women seem to profit from obeying, and organizations fell exactly into this trap. Some better paid persons took their place, with the result that the policy and structure of the organizations completely change ... Today, posts in women's organizations are nothing more than a job serving as a necessary step or even a springboard for the development of personal careers. This would not be objectionable if this attitude wouldn't totally change the policy and function of these organizations and serve for the exclusion or lesser payment of poorer and less qualified women ... The discussions in the seventies about the dangers that an integration of women's organizations (and leftist alternative projects) entail seem to have been forgotten" (ibid.).

Exactly this seems to be a central point for activist struggles: oppositional activities and organizations are legalized and integrated by the state if they become strong enough. Financial resources and posts, which initially promise more opportunities for the organization, alternate within a few years into institutional pressure, preventing an overly critical positioning. Finally, numerous projects censor themselves to avoid conflicts with institutions – also with regard to the effects on the employees. Political activists are divided because discussions about 'realpolitik' are always taking place within the limits imposed by funding on the one side and radical criticism on the other, which must be negotiated.

This integration effort by state institutions came on display in the history of the squatters' movements of the 1990s in Erfurt (East Germany): whereas 'un-registered' squatting actions had to deal with massive police operations, the aim of later legalizations of squats by the authorities was the integration of the 'delinquents' into the legal order, in particular the maintenance of the right to property, and in addition dividing and marginalizing the most radical people (Meyerbeer and Späth 2012). To autonomously occupy empty houses and thus selectively putting into question the central basis of capitalist society – the right to property – obviously roused massive resistance from the state.

Queer activism is from the beginning – since the battles of Sylvia Rivera, Marsha P. Johnson, of trans* persons of color, people of the working class, homeless youth – centrally linked with the fight against capitalist property rights, repressive state power and racism. Currently, this becomes obvious through the involvement of queers of color in the battles against gentrification in Berlin, New York or Istanbul. Exactly when people do not let themselves be divided into groups or identities, but instead when many people with different backgrounds are active together, it becomes clear that demonstrations, strikes, blockades of house evictions, etc. with thousands of participants are possible.

Joint political actions are not possible without conflict within the movements, since racist and antisemitic divisions of human beings continue to have an effect also within activist groups and alliances. It is more dangerous for some people than for others to struggle in such movements, often resulting in injuries. Also in these movements dominant and exclusive – white – positions must be repeatedly addressed. The privileged must reflect their presuppositions and work to dismantle them. On the other hand, as Haritaworn has said, the “demand, which is usually put on unruly minoritized people, to ally with majoritized people of all political positions” is problematic because it “denies the pain, the risk and the danger that is associated with approaching your oppressors only to be pushed back again, to be patronized or demonized” (2005, 32).

Coalition is therefore a constant challenge: especially for minoritized people. And left-wing white activists should be aware that in many cases they have internalized colonial, racist, anti-Semitic and sexist positions. They – and this also includes the authors of this book – must work to recognize these positions in order to overcome them. This can begin with an interest in the perspectives of minoritized people. In that sense we have to acknowledge the work of queers of colors and the black women's movement for the positions presented in this book. From our perspective, it is not enough just to recognize that one is speaking from

a privileged position. It is about listening, reading and constantly positioning yourself in solidarity with P. o.C, their organizations and respecting their right to define the situation.

With this book we would like to encourage this process, after noticing that also among white queers the positions and essays of minoritized people are hardly known. We ourselves present here the outcome of a discussion process, which came into being through the recommendations, suggestions, critique and conversations with/from acquaintances and good friends who shared their insights about the functioning of capitalism through the segmentation of people. We would like to thank especially Christopher Sweetapple, Koray Yılmaz-Günay, Ralf Bucherkirchen and Zülfukar Çetin. Heinz-Jürgen was especially helped by the many good discussions in seminars and after lectures. Nonetheless, only we authors (i. e. Salih Alexander Wolter and Heinz-Jürgen Voß) are responsible for the present essays, and any criticism should be directed at us alone.

We were partially surprised by the intensity of violence and the forcible omission of important protagonists of queer struggles from white queer historiography, even though we were somehow prepared, knowing of racist and transphobic incidents in lesbian, gay and queer subcultures. We did not expect, for example, the levels of 'whitewashing' and clear gender identity of the *gay liberation movement* and the concrete psychologically and physically violent and ultimately even life-threatening impact on the protagonists – including Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson.

Here it is the responsibility of critical queer activism to keep on naming the actual events of queer history – in order to prevent 'whitewashing' and the disciplining of gender identity. Some recent developments make us optimistic that today's fights for a just society might be successful. Beside the increasingly deep analysis of the functioning of (neoliberal) capitalist conditions, in particular actions undertaken in many places unfold and often connect a local action level with international exchange.

The fights of trans* and inter* bring together concrete local protests with international cooperation. The cross-border cooperation has made it possible for the regulation of 'coerced sterilization' of transsexuals in Sweden to be reversed. In Germany, the critique of the violent and traumatizing sex-assignment procedures on intersexed minors could at least become visible at the institutional level through the interventions of international organizations which were called in by inter* self-organizations. Locally, internationally and in a non-institutional manner, the fight against the pathologization of trans* and inter* shows many successes.

This is where “modern” society is touched to the core: medicine and biology, their definitional power with their ever so extensive effect on the division of people, being fundamentally attacked. This critique could be sustained and furthered if it were to not only deal with sexual assignments but also, from an understanding of the functioning of capitalism, were it to criticize how the division of people occurs along racist lines, to reveal the attacks on classes and bodies and to name the sorting and selection of people according to their exploitability. That this understanding characterizes protests is made clear from overreaching coalitions in the political actions against gentrification and the global battles against the social effects of the crises of capitalism and evermore repressive state violence.

While people who come from economically secured conditions can often and usually without risk return to a bourgeois-secure existence when the struggles are unsuccessful, this is not the case for many people of the working class, trans* and queers of color. They have no such possibilities of retreat, and the struggles usually are a necessity for them due to an existentially intolerable situation. In the struggles, and even more so when they are unsuccessful, they are the first victims of repressive state measures. Not only because the economically precarious often fight in the front row, but in particular because of these uncertain starting points, they thus must substantially determine the direction of the fighting. Following Spivak, Davis and Crenshaw – if developed in such way, political struggles for a just, non-discriminatory and thus necessarily non-capitalist society could be successful.

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3 This bibliography is the translation of the bibliography of the entire *Queer and (Anti-)Capitalism*, that is, both part one (Wolter) and part two (Voß).

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