2 Queer and (Anti)Capitalism I[1]

Refusing Complicity: A Theoretical Introduction from an Activist Perspective

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> "The critique, the activism and the theoretical development of blacks and people of color have been, for decades, systematically elided, particularly as they do not further funding support and white careers. If it in fact seeks to be *social* and not particularistic, hegemony critique is thus permitted to be oblivious of neither itself nor history."
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> *Koray Yılmaz-Günay (2014)*

Why Speak of Capitalism? And How?

When *queer* arrived in the German-speaking world in the mid-1990s, talk was also spreading of neoliberal conditions which would threaten via "globalization". What was usually meant by this was the thorough economization of every domain of life, which in the meantime has advanced considerably. So far, in fact, that in light of a few years "deepening divisions of society, increasing economic inequality and the emergence of a new precariat have intensified the desire for capitalism critique within queer studies". However, it seldom expressed itself with this title, nor that of "anti-capitalism". Queer reflections on the theme instead likely announce themselves as "economy-critical". We have decided otherwise, for two reasons.

Firstly, regarding the contemporary debate over the "correct" reading of Karl Marx, the concept is closely linked to Michael Heinrich's critical *Kapital* lectures,

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1 Translated from the German by Christopher Sweetapple, with Yossi Bartal.

This article appeared in German as the first part of the book *Queer und (Anti-) Kapitalismus*, published by Schmetterling Verlag, Stuttgart, in 2013 (1st edition). The English-language copyright is held by Heinz-Jürgen Voß and Salih Alexander Wolter.

to which we owe many new insights. Central to his approach, however, stands the "monetary theory of value," which Marx is said to have advocated (Heinrich 2004, 62), whereas the received view showed above all that "the value of the commodity" represents "human labor per se" (Schleifstein 1972, 102). Post-colonial critics of capitalism, of whom we are especially concerned in this book, based themselves on the conventional interpretation. They take the international division of labor as their basis and see in racism and sexism no lesser contradictions as with the capital relation, thus a class antagonism "of the capitalists on one side, wage workers on the other" (MEW 23 [1867], 641). In short: feminist Gaytri Chakrovorty Spivak, even if she identifies as an "old-fashioned Marxist" rather than a deconstructionist (see Castro Varela/Dhawan 2005, 64, 57), importantly provides an emancipatory update to the much-maligned "traditional Marxism". However, we wish to avoid obscuring differences in an important theoretical question merely to find refuge under the label "economy-critique".

The second reason we prefer to call capitalism by name is precisely the arbitrariness with which this label is utilized for notions which directly contradict Heinrich's concern. His wish to demonstrate that "capitalism consists of systematic relations of domination" is dismissed by some authors from the white, queer-feminist spectrum as a "regulatory fiction" while they rhapsodize about "free zones" in which allegedly already, in the here and now, the good people – implicitly: people like us – can trade goods and services without any form of exploitation (for an example of this sort, see Ganz and Gerbig 2010).

This kind of "economy critique", which touts itself as "quite open," is in our view the opposite, casting its own horizon, "oblivious to itself and history," as an absolute. Following this view, the only thing in sight is how "we" best comport to a neoliberal logic, which in turn is then seen as a mere "exaggeration" of an economic system not fundamentally called into question. "Deconstruction" is called into service here for exactly that "presentism" which its founder, Jacques Derrida, subjected to a fundamental critique, invoking Karl Marx "in the name of another future and a conception of justice beyond presence" (Postone 1998).

But even as "alternative" white queers, Heinz-Jürgen and I remain – even if we happen to be precarious – the privileged within a neocolonial order and the established relations of domination which, whether desired or not, make us into accomplices in the "worlding" of global capitalism, to use Spivak's fitting phrase. Do the computers we need simply fall from the sky in order for us to make use of the great new possibilities of the "information society"? Of course only with our best not-capitalist intentions! Shouldn't our shared hacker-space become a start-up? Or must people perhaps mine ore? Which people? Where? Under which

conditions? Who constructs the things? How does the knowledge emerge which then spreads with the help of these devices? With whom, and how, do we share? And finally: which images of gender and sexuality are transported? Such questions have convinced us that real emancipation needs a perspective of society which inevitably must also be transnational and transcontinental.

This entirety around which everything circles we are therefore naming 'capitalism'. The view that capitalism is "nothing more than an 'economic system,'" is repudiated by, among others, historian Fernand Braudel at the end of his work about Europe's rise to a world economy, regarding such a claim as absurd, in light of the unresolvable entanglement between economy, the state, the military and culture (Braudel 1986b [1979], 698). Commonly, these areas are viewed in isolation from one another; in this case, on the other hand, their historically developed context is to be outlined in a brief, admittedly compressed, overview. In order not to lose sight of this context when facing many technical analyses, the political scientist Georg Fülberth has proposed the introduction of a new academic cross-discipline which, not by chance, should be called "capitalistics" (see Fülberth 2008, 7ff). This is because the present society *as a whole* corresponds to his definition of capitalism: its mode of functioning rests "on the extraction of profit and the resultant accumulation of the deployed means (capital)," and is characterized by an unequal exchange, meaning "market-mediated domination" (ibid., 12, 47).

Of course, forms of capitalist economic activity had developed elsewhere long before modern Europe – from China of the Song-Dynasty (10th–13th century C. E.) to the sphere of the pre-colonial Islamic lands in the epoch of 'our' Middle Ages (see Amin 2012 [2010], 103). And just as "the Occident" was inaugurated by "the profane use of reason ... in a word, science," and Latin-speaking thinkers were learning from "the Arabs" "that there could be a place on earth for a *happy life*" (Libera 2003 [1991], 87, 108; italics in original), so too did "anything in western capitalism of imported origin undoubtedly come from Islam" (Braudel 1986a [1979], 619). But these earlier societies had not considered – to summarize the European innovation with Marx – "the surplus-value-making as the last and sole purpose of humanity" (MEW 23 [1867], 782). According to sociologist Immanuel Wallerstein, first capitalism 'as we know it' brought about "the thrust towards the commodification of everything" (Wallerstein 1984 [1983], 10, 11).

Contemporary worldwide capitalism is already recognizable in the time of the so-called Reconquista, during the 15th century, and from the beginning it was globally oriented. Henri Pirenne, in his book *Europe's History*, described in which way Al-Andalus, the almost 700-year-old Muslim-Jewish-Catholic civilization on

the Iberian Peninsula, was destroyed by champions of the "Occident," who combined "religious commitment with actual profit-seeking as their motive for holy war". The "goal was not the conversion, rather the extermination or expulsion of the Mohammedans," even if they were baptized (Pirenne 1961 [1936], 465), and likewise the Jews were also dispossessed and banned from the country, while the converts among them were persecuted by the Inquisition (see the historical documents in Bernstein 1973, 43–48). For the prospective Spanish nation-state was to be not only religiously homogeneous, but also 'ethnically', namely, white: significant researchers see here the beginnings of modern racism and anti-Semitism (for an overview see Çetin 2012, 28f). At the same time, the European project for the colonization of the Americas began in 1492, soon served by the enslavement of millions of people abducted from Africa.

In the centuries to follow, the "successive incorporation of previously 'outside' regions" ensued – whereby "opposition between the ruling centers and the dominated peripheries ... has been ever produced, reproduced and further intensified" (Amin German introduction 2012, 9). "Still, despite this permanent asymmetry, capitalism is one and indivisible. Capitalism is not the United States and Germany, with India and Ethiopia only 'halfway' capitalist. Capitalism is the United States and India, Germany and Ethiopia, taken together" (ibid., 84). This is also the view of Wallerstein, for whom capitalism cannot be first talked about only when and where the capital relationship has become common. He rejects consideration of places such as England or the Caribbean Islands as specific "analytical units" each with their own 'production methods', when discussing "a historical system" which "has its origin in the Europe of the late 15th century" and "still covers the entire world" (Wallerstein 1984 [1983], 14). Rather, classes, ethnic or status groups, are phenomena of the global economy that cannot be properly analyzed so long as they are examined within national states (Wallerstein 1979, 10, 24).

The philosopher Étienne Balibar deepened the context in which Europe conquered the 'rest of the world' and invented its own 'nations'. While none of these nations has an "ethnic base" or corresponds to a "cultural community" (Balibar and Wallerstein 1992 [1988], 63) as a matter of fact, they wanted to be "ideally the 'whitest' in the competition for colonies," and thus constituted "the modern idea of a European or Western, supranational identity" (ibid., 56). Racism – which, to put it plainly, means nothing more than white supremacy – could "fall back on very old images of 'difference,' but this became functionally effective to this day only in the wake of capitalist expansion. In a dual movement of exclusion and inclusion, or "assimilation," racism was produced and reproduced within

the very space constituted by conquest and colonization with its concrete structures of administration, forced labor and sexual oppression". On "the heritage of colonialism," which is "in reality, a fluctuating combination of continued exteriorization and 'internal exclusion'" (ibid., 55) Germany also participates. Through the *Joint European Border Protection*, Germany enforces 'difference' outside its borders, with many deadly consequences for refugees, while internally upholding this difference through foreign-alien- and citizenship laws, as well as through the police practice of 'racial profiling', or the structurally inferior educational chances of children of immigrants not perceived as white and Christian – not to mention the almost incessant 'integration' debate with which a still white-German-dominated 'civil society' constantly reproduce alienation.

It is high time to understand the "Federal Republic of Germany as a (post)colonial entity", as black feminists already proposed in the 1980s (Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2001, 50 with reference to Oguntoye, Opitz [Ayim] and Schultz 1997 [1986]). We must finally confront Germany's colonial crimes throughout history and at the same time explicitly enlarge the historical framework with regard to labor migration into the country. It did not begin principally in the second half of the 20th century, but rather already in the so-called the *Gründerzeit* (Wilhelminian period) of 19th century, and it was already regulated by an 'immigration policy,' which, following the colonial pattern, strove for the maximal exploitation of 'foreign labor' for 'our' private economy (see Ha 2012 [2003]). Furthermore, it must be reckoned that in fully developed capitalism, racism still fulfills a necessary function – for, as Immanuel Wallerstein says, it is used for the "'ethnicization' of the working class" (Balibar/Wallerstein 1992, 1988). In the words of Koray Yılmaz-Günay, one of the initiators of queer-migrant self-organization in Germany: "The false whole cannot be understood without its analysis" (Bernhardt 2013 [Supplement]).

Likewise, according to Wallterstein, capitalism engendered sexism "necessarily," whereby, in turn, it cannot be contested that women, especially in Europe, had already been oppressed beforehand. However, the division of human beings into 'sexes' – like their hierarchicalization according to 'ethnic' or 'cultural' traits – functions as a justification of persistent inequality "inside the work-system" (Balibar and Wallerstein 1992 [1988], 46). Alongside sexism, conjoined from the outset with racism (Çetin 2012, 29f), comes "the devaluation of certain ages hand in hand". Thus general wage labor could be represented as something separable from domestic reproductive labor. Carried out mainly by women, children and the elderly worldwide, the latter is "dealt with as non-work". By which these tasks

"are neither in the numerator nor in the denominator of the calculation ... one can pretend" that they do not "produce any surplus value" (Balibar and Wallerstein 1992 [1988], 46f).

Judith Butler's decisive contribution to Queer Theory shows why this is so: "Gendered reading, interpreting and evaluating happens ... according to modes that have a broad consensus within society, but which require constant updating. It is accomplished via constant citation, seizing on and repeating these social modes" (Voß 2011, 14). Is it not dissimilar to how the "specific unequal relationship of racism, embedded into the institutions of the labor market, citizenship and cultural hegemony, is lived and understood within a racist knowledge," as the researcher of racism Mark Terkessidis writes (cited in Çetin 2012, 36). In both cases, it is about what Marx called the "religion of everyday life," (MEW 25 [1894], 838) that is, a "naturalization and reification of social relations" which "is a result of an image developed among the members of bourgeois society entirely by itself" (Heinrich 2004, 32). Marx's conclusions are drawn mainly for the categories of 'political economy', just as Butler had 'only' deconstructed the 'heterosexual matrix'. But, racism, gender and the generational relationships cannot be separately comprehended without considering the capitalist mode of production as well, just as vice versa, it cannot be figured out without taking sexism and racism into account.

That entirety – capitalism – seems to vanish into the background through a dense "interwovenness of inequalities" (Çetin 2012, 85). Yılmaz-Günay formulates the theoretical and political task that results from an emancipatory social commitment:

> "It is devastating that a lasting criticism is usually formulated only by the 'affected'. One of the paradoxical situations that concern me most is the decoupling of Marxist analysis, feminism, and racism critique. If a cleaning lady with a headscarf has never aroused any scandal, but literally every woman with a headscarf who wanted to become a teacher does, then we have to think together sexism, racism and class conditions in the analysis" (Bernhardt 2013).

Already more than two decades ago in the FRG, the radical left, among them imprisoned members of the urban guerrillas, deliberated their failure to deal with the complexity of a society in which there are different "historical and structurally-rooted power relations, which exist simultaneously in interpenetration and reciprocal stabilization. The (autonomous) left lacks a theory which encompasses all these struggles (or even a position which enables it to recognize them), as well as

the ability to determine the objective conditions which give these struggles causes and limits" (Viehmann et al. 1991 [1990]).

Published in 1990 with the title "Three to One: Class Contradiction, Racism, and Sexism," these authors were mainly problematizing a previously unquestioned basis of their convictions, namely the "privileges of their being white, their being German". They lamented that the "millions of immigrants and refugee women and men in the FRG ... were never proportionally represented in the '68 movement nor in the autonomous left," and yet they were assigned the blame for it. The writers had not recognized beforehand "that 'others' (according to sex, race, and class membership) have experiences of oppression and resistance, but experiences which are subjectively not accessible to us, and objectively only to a certain degree". But "friendship is based on respect. And that is exactly what many people do not have for the 'Turks', and they sense it very precisely" (ibid.).

While the "white left, in its entirety, [...] believed in a fairly universal, often rigid truth," the authors now observed that their "racial neutrality" had made the migrants "invisible". They called out their own

> "biased perceptions, distorted by racist white spots and Eurocentric angle of sight: with downsizing, it is not ('race' neutral) workers who fly into the streets, but instead the non-Germans; in the Trikont (which, in fact, should be differentiated much better than it is done here), does not starve a non-racialized underclass, but rather black poor people; there is the feminization of poverty, but there is first the 'turkification of poverty'; state violence doesn't strike ('race' neutral) at all those who pose opposition, but rather hits foreigners in the first instance, who get into more trouble and more jail. The list of examples could be elongated" (ibid.).

"Three to One" did not simply want to take into account a "racist (and sexist) division of the labor market, installed by capital," but rather to broach the topic "that racisms actually exist in the working class". "Eurocentric patterns of analysis" which tried to explain this "only as a result of capitalist insinuations or neo-Nazi ideology" were explicitly rejected. In contrast, it's a matter of "uncovering the connection between sexuality and domination; the criticism of all dichotomies (divisions) such as body/mind, nature/man (man); the critique of the concept of labor" (ibid.).

In retrospect, the paper shows recognizable weaknesses – perhaps the greatest is that even in the radical self-criticism, their perspective of what is the "center" still resonates such that "the demanded 'altruism'" in the approach to migrants functions thus quite paternalistically. Nevertheless, white German anti-capital-

ists, who were not expressly concerned with a simple 'summation of oppressions,' developed in this paper an 'intersectional approach' which will be declared as the "new paradigm" in the institutionalized social sciences in Germany only in the decade to follow. In contrast to many of the academic texts to follow, autonomous leftists already anticipated queer criticism of the overly schematic construction of identities from prefabricated structural elements. Instead, they contrive an image "of a net-shaped domination, in which each thread and knot is retained above and below, but no single cause, no chief contradiction is presupposed" (ibid.).

And yet "Three to One" came too late. The publication fell into the era of a radical change from which the "enemy in the shape of the West German system" would emerge transformed "at the tip of the new superpower of Europe to the greatest degree of familiarity". The authors had correctly forecast a great deal: "The capitalist exploitation in the country (especially in the barely-still-there-GDR) and the imperialist penetration are increasing with great strength. Although hardly conceivable, the exploitation of the Trikon will be exacerbated. Racisms change and become stronger overall. Against Turks, against Roma and Sinti, against Poles and Vietnamese and Mozambiqueans. White women are also to lose their positions and to be forced back into the invisibility of the proletarian job/housewife". No one in the white radical left was in a position to envision that the transition to this 'new world order' – instead of encountering considerable resistance – would be supported by a wave of German nationalist enthusiasm and accompanied by pogroms, even to the point that the demands of the racist mob could be implemented by an overwhelming parliamentary majority, as in 1993 in the case of the de facto abolition of the right to asylum. In view of the oppressive unity of the '*Volk* and the state' during these years, the radical left proved to be completely marginalized and no longer capable of getting its bearings.

At the same time, however, an autonomous feminist migrant left began to network in the Federal Republic, to which this kind theoretical effort had nothing new to offer. In a permanent and persistent debate with the women's movement of the white German majority, black and Jewish activists and women of color (see Excursion One on terms of self-designation), partly in close exchange with black feminists from the USA, had been working on postcoloniality and intersectionality since the 1980s. Their work far exceeds what is now published by well-established white academics under these headings, in terms of both political clarity as well as intellectual differentiation. In the subsequent essay, Heinz-Jürgen Voß will repeatedly revisit these foundational contributions. In the meantime, they were, and still are, widely ignored by German leftists, who, about the latter, the feminist migrant manifesto "We the Tightrope Walkers from 1994" put it:

"they blend into our liberation concepts, play themselves as benevolent patrons and reproduce and cement their privileges" (FeMigra 1994).

This text drew attention to numerous labor, housing, and anti-racist resistance struggles of migrants in Germany since the early 1970s, which were by and large – and differently than by the state power – ignored by the German left. Along with Spivak, the authors referred to a "feminism which is geopolitically situated at the place of work," and wanted to "clarify that racism and the international division of labor structure relations among women". At the center of their critique was the "national state idea in Western societies, especially in Germany". The "tendency to recognize these produced differences as cultural, in order to readily utilize them without disrupting the order of things" was debunked as disguised "objectification and oppression of migrants," which only seemingly contradicted rampant racism. The answer of the "tightrope walkers" to the then-just-emerging "multicultural" concepts was: "It is not just a question of granting migrant women a space to address their concerns, but also of questioning the privileges of German women. These (privileges) are produced through their inclusion in a national-racial community, which gives them (German women) access to power and to the public sphere" (ibid.).

At the very least, this also similarly applies to white, German gays. Partly in the aftermath of a development, which began in the US as early as 1973, and will be presented in more detail in the next section, the local gay movement of the 1990s focused on bourgeoisie respectability. Here as there, gays and lesbians calculated that if they "were constructed as analogous to an ethnic minority – that is, as a distinct and identifiable population, rather than a radical potentiality for all – lesbians and gays can demand recognition and equal rights within the existing social system" (Jagose 2001 [1996], 82). In the United States, white 'gays' had pushed their non-white protagonists out of their ranks, sometimes even violently, in order to subsequently advertise themselves as a community which struggles for equality based on the model of the black community. Here in Germany, one instead imagined oneself as a similar collective "like the Jews," who were wrongly expelled and persecuted by the *Volksgemeinschaft*, thereby attempting to forget the participation of "Aryans" who themselves had same-sex tendencies in the anti-Semitic mass murder (see Yılmaz-Günay and Wolter, 2013). In both cases, the courtship of the ruling politics was rewarded with manageable concessions, and the usage of 'gay rights' as well as of 'women's rights' was immediately declared an integral part of "western supranational identity" (Balibar [see above]).

What consequentially followed was "homonationalism," first coined by the theorist Jasbir Puar, a consolidated interplay between discursive and material strate-

gies of global white supremacy. Today, for example, the so-called Human Rights Campaign, the most influential US gay and lesbian organization, can quickly make 'Gay Marriage' a priority topic worldwide with the help of an Internet-spread icon – their work is financed by the largest military weapon producers in the United States (Thrasher 2013). Homonationalism, especially since September 11th, 2001, has been leveraged within 'western' subgroups, especially against migrants (see for a comprehensive overview Yılmaz-Günay 2011b) and has a system-stabilizing effect: "The right to belong seems redeemable ... such that a hierarchization of different segments of the population is not only condoned, but also actively supported; broad social emancipation must step back where the gay particular interest recognizes an opportunity for realization" (Yılmaz-Günay and Wolter 2013, 73).

The "Tightrope Walkers" turned against such tactics of divide and rule, and, seemingly paradoxically, pleaded for migrant self-organization. In fact, this society can only be changed by the organized interest of those who are most strongly repressed in it. This change might not benefit everyone, but clearly the vast majority, which is why, in supporting these groups unconditionally, meaning, on their own terms, we are in no way being unselfish. In the queer scene, the first to come together were the Turks, lesbians in Berlin since 1992 (İpekçioğlu 2007), gays and trans* in Berlin and in Cologne and other cities since the mid-1990s, and likewise the Afro-gays, Jewish queer associations as well as gay immigrants from Greece and other groups. In Berlin they evolved to self-determined working groups such as *LesMigraS* (Lesbian/bisexual migrants and black lesbians and trans * people) as part of Lesbian Counseling and the association *GLADT* (Gays & Lesbians from Turkey), which are today internationally well-connected while also influencing a growing segment of the local society: umbrella organizations such as the Berlin-Brandenburg Migration Council, with around 80 member organizations, or the Turkish Federation, have in the meantime absorbed queer momentum to a degree that unfortunately is unimaginable in the non-queer institutions of mainstream society.

Excursion 1: Political Nomenclature

Black/white

As a self-designation the word 'Black' is capitalized.

To this, author, artist and musician Noah Sow, in her very recommendable book *Deutschland Schwarzweiß: Everyday Racism*, adds:

> "Being Black is not what you really are, but rather stands for shared experiences that have been made in society. Whites can therefore not determine who is Black and who is not … Being Black does not necessarily mean being a migrant or the other way around. The fact that this discrimination does not revolve around foreignness is also clear in the experience of Black Germans which are equally affected" (Sow 2009, 26, 29).

On the other hand, whites (like us) are born with "an abundance of privileges that they have grown up with so self-evidently, that they do not even know that they exist" (ibid., 42). According to a definition by *GLADT*, 'white' is a

> "political term for people who are privileged because of physical characteristics (e. g. skin color) and social location (e. g. mainstream society), because they belong to a structure which allow access to health, education, the media, politics, science, etc. only to specific people" (*GLADT* 2009).

Migrants

The term "migrant" was originally shaped as a term for political self-designation by *FeMigra, the Feminist Migrant of Frankfurt*, with which they wanted that "the history and politics of migration in Germany will gain center stage". According to their key text "Die Seiltänzer_innen" (English: "The Tightrope Walkers") from 1994, they had previously understood themselves "as Black women, that is, as women who suffer oppression, exploitation and exclusion not only through the lenses of sexism, but also through racist practices," albeit

> "the category of blackness could not grasp our specific experiences … On the one hand, our skin color is not black, and on the other hand this category does not reflect the reason for our presence in Germany. The term migrant, on the other hand, marks the step of immigration, which in part was made by our parents or by ourselves, but which, above all, underscores the political-social component of the socialization process. The example of migration shows the function of racism in the national and international division of labor" (FeMigra 1994).

But this concept has been swiftly expropriated by the politics and media of majority society. According to today's public discourse, 'migrants' are mainly "people with roots in the Muslim-majority countries or regions – in the German context, mainly Turks and Kurds as the largest group of migrants, followed by Arabs and Bosnians. In addition,

other people are also pigeonholed as 'migrants' due to their outward appearance, like Sinti, Roma or Black Germans. Obviously it is the view of the white German majority which decides who is being talked about" (Wolter and Yılmaz-Günay 2009, 38).

People of Color

The international term 'people of color' (abbreviated either PoC or poc) has replaced the term 'migrants' as the self-designation of people who define themselves as non-white in a political sense. Common variations are 'women of color' (WoC or woc) or 'queer people of color' (QPoC or qpoc), and any other terms can be made '-of color'.

In Germany, an early use of this terminology, in conjunction with the intersectional approach, is found in a call that Jin Haritaworn – as scientist and activist, one of the most important international trans*/qpoc voices – and *GLADT* co-founder Koray Yılmaz-Günay sent in April 2003 in English and German. They were invited to a Berlin conference on 'queer and ethnicity,' "directed exclusively at people who are queer of color, migrant, or Jewish," and "focused on intersections of racism, anti-Semitism, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia". The text stated, among other things, "in particular, we are looking for people who could share their experiences as queer migrants, Jewish or people of color in different organizations and movements". The event "should give the opportunity … to form networks and to explore ways of fighting oppression" (Haritaworn and Yılmaz-Günay 2003). Today, migrant self-organizations such as *GLADT* usually have some white members. They are equal members, but cannot just call themselves poc – instead, they are referred to as allies.

We could hardly better express our position as white queers than did Judith Butler in Berlin in June 2010, as she was to be honored with the so-called "Civil Courage Prize" of the official Gay Pride of the German capital. On the previous day, however, she had met with Berliner queer people of color, who had translated the concept of "'homonationalism' into German for the first time" (Haritaworn 2012, 47). They talked to her about the white gay establishment, which really wanted to award itself with the world-famous theorist. Perhaps they had informed her more precisely of the racist diatribes that some of these gentlemen had presented in the media for years; perhaps about the fake statistics and the ever-new "scientific studies" with which they were once again trying to prove the "culturally-induced violence" of migrants; perhaps also about the circulating pornographic phantasies with which these gentlemen slobber over the same "uncivilized". In any

case, Butler did not feel like receiving this prize after the conversation. Instead of accepting the prize on the big stage at the Brandenburg Gate in front of hundreds of thousands of partygoers, she refused, in an impressive statement, "complicity with racism" (Butler 2010). We believe that this was a much more fundamental critique of capitalism, as if, for example, than had she simply been "economically critical" against the "commercialization of the Pride".

From the Invention of Homosexuality to Gay Lifestyle

With the worldwide assertion of the capitalist mode of production, a model of thinking established itself "which claims to explain figures and being as a universal form," wrote the social scientist Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez, one of the "Tightrope Dancers" in the 1990s. According to her, on the basis of a "metaphysics that Spivak sees in the Occidental philosophical tradition, [...] an access to the world has become generalized, which could only prevail by the repression and marginalization of other modes of existence and interpretations" (Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2001, 37). The history of "male homosexuality" and its formation into an 'identity' with a worldwide recognition value verifies the correctness of this thesis – regardless of whether homosexuals are persecuted or have a political market value. "The process of curbing ambiguity through differentiation demands its sacrifices," states the Arabist Thomas Bauer in his critique of global sexual discourse. "An early such sacrifice is *friendship*" (Bauer 2011, 274, emphasis in original.).

In the course of the "Reconquista", a new evaluation of male-male eroticism began to assert itself. In Al-Andalus, as in the rest of the Islamic world, until at least the middle of the 19th century (see Bauer 2011, 290), it was regarded as a "fact which originates from humanity as such" (Klauda 2008, 51). Some of its physical forms of expression were punishable, though were hardly ever punished (compare to legal practice, ibid., 33–43). But now, in Europe, the "other form of power" that Michel Foucault spoke of in his unfinished, pioneering work of *History of Sexuality vol. 1,* pushed its way through. Compared to the earlier simple prohibition of certain acts, it is characterized by a differentiation "which is peculiarly no longer connected to specific actions, but to the subjects themselves" (ibid., 12). This goes back to Thomas Aquinas, the most influential Catholic theologian ever, who in the 13th century wanted to use the science acquired by Muslim thinkers and researchers to prove that the establishment of nature would confirm the reason of the doctrine of the Church. Since, however, the Sodomites apparently felt quite senseless pleasure in the forbidden, he provided them with

"a distinction deviating from the human species" (ibid., 68). In the high Middle Ages, the "unnatural" practices of the Muslims played an important role in the propaganda for the predatory European crusades of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (73f); under Christian tyranny in Spain all traces of Arabian sensuality were to be erased (see Goytisolo 1982 [1969], 65–70).

In contrast, the "anti-erotic onslaught" in France and the Protestant countries was later put forward "in the name of the new bourgeois ethics, which combats the 'animalistic' with the 'rational' concept of labor" (ibid., 67). We have seen how Wallerstein made clear the separation of a "feminine"-connoted domestic sphere from the (wage) labor system, formed by capitalism. It conceals the (reproductive) work mostly performed by women, but also by children and the elderly. As the man's wage outside of the house appears as a "value of his labor" rather than as a condition of the reproduction of his labor power (cf. Heinrich 2004, 94ff, on Marx's critique of the "wage form"). Although this "privacy" constituted as separate from the public domain retreated into the bookkeeping of capitalist enterprises, this separation seemed to the members of the emerging bourgeois society to be as 'natural' as the division of the world into competing nation-states, each with their own economic and trade balances. And it influenced the relationship between men who were no longer "mediated by the friend's body" – and thus the ever-present possibility of passionate friendship – "but instead by formal contractual relations in which individual emerged as competitors to communal wealth". While the "family … was constructed as an affective counter-pole to the business-like and increasingly impersonal relationships that prevailed in the domain of the masculine public," (Klauda 2008, 95) repressed homoeroticism sought its own spaces: the sociologist Georg Klauda convincingly described the formation of "gay" subcultures in some European cities as an effect of this development since the early eighteenth century (ibid., 86–98).

However, the "universality of Western rationality," wanting to convince itself of the "naturalness" of the gender and sexual relations of the West, still needed the "division which is the Orient" (Foucault cited by Bauer 2011, 268). In the 19th century, the Orientalist Richard Burton recruited this division, appropriate for the vast British colonial empire, to the "stodaic zone," a "fictitious geographical strip which … was de facto demarcated not by climatic conditions but by the flowering of 'inverted' lusts," and which stretched deeply into Africa from the Mediterranean, as well as South America and much of Asia (Klauda 2007). At that time, "the prerogative of interpretation of what was now called 'sexuality' had passed from religion to medicine," explains Bauer in his *Culture of Ambiguity*. The science now "naturally assumed that a tender kiss and rape during wartime

are one and the same domain of human nature" (Bauer 2011, 273f). On the basis of this assumption, and in light of the 'unruly' sex of the 'others', a clear distinction between solely two and exclusively complementary sexes was to be devised (see Voß 2011). As the cultural scientist Fatima El-Tayeb explains, the "rigorous application of the norms already tested in racial research ... finally let only the white, bourgeois, heterosexual man appear as completely normal ... Women whose behaviors were defined as deviant, such as lesbians and prostitutes, were also blamed for this degeneration, as well as men who did not adequately fulfill their roles, that is, gays. All of them – and often female workers, whose lacking bourgeois domestication as a whole made them suspect – were 'deviant' for the same reasons that made the savages 'deviant'" (El-Tayeb 2012 [2003], 131).

"Homosexuality" was defined as such first in 1869 – not by chance by a "doctor," Károly Mária Kertbeny (Karl-Maria Benkert), who argued that it was "innate and therefore subject only to the laws of nature, not to criminal law" (Jagose 2001 [1996], 38). The fact that heterosexuality was derived from homosexuality – that is, the norm results from deviation, rather than vice versa – confirms Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's core idea of "othering": "The marking of marginality first creates the position of the center" (Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2001, 38). This center, however, does not appear to require further explanation. On the other hand, researchers have been intensively researching homosexuality for more than a century. In his own book, Voß has traced how many new biological, medical and psychiatric studies are being conducted to investigate its 'causes'. In the process, both those who fight homosexuality and those who work for homosexual freedom were and are concerned with the question of its 'naturalness' (see also Voß 2013). In the course of time, a concept that was invented in a very concrete social situation in Europe – namely, the impending unification of the criminal legislation in Germany in the late 19th century – became a universally valid 'scientifically-proven truth'.

El-Tayeb, Klauda, and Thomas Bauer rightly draw a line from the former orientalist construction of lusty warm countries to today's prevalent picture, which represents the 'Islamic world' as anciently monotonous, and now depicted as prudish, hostile to women and homophobic. It is precisely the career of homoidentity that shows how precisely Spivak, with her reflection cited at the beginning of this chapter, encapsulates a fundamental mechanism of global capitalism, which contemporary German philosophers did not even recognize as a problem. Thus Karl-Otto Apel, who developed the concept of an "ideal communication community" analogously to Jürgen Habermas's "theory of free communication", was still optimistic in the early 1970s:

> "The difference between the language games of lifeforms has not disappeared, but it was, to some extant, outplayed through the – by all complexity still communicative and unifying – language game of science, or that of the technology of production, organization, and communication, which have grown out of its spirit ... Moreover, it is even probable that even the hardly translatable intimate areas of the different cultures or forms of life, because of the deepened knowledge about the different structures, at least in the sense of a practical understanding, for example an ethical political one, could be mutually interpretable" (Apel 1974, 1399, emphasis in the original).

The real transcontinental community of communication, however, is characterized by an epistemological violence, which builds on a "former economic text" – that of colonialist capitalism (Spivak 1988, 283). Accordingly, the interpretation is also one-sided: in the Islamic Republic of Iran, earrings worn by members of the Sufi fraternities since ancient times are now read as "gay" and their wearers are being prosecuted (Mahdjoubi 2003, 91) in the "Islamic Republic of Iran".

Postcolonial theory and queer theory have introduced a new generation of students in the German-speaking world to thinkers labeled as 'poststructuralist', thinkers who drew entirely different conclusions, more fruitful for a critique of capitalism, from the philosophic-linguistic turn in the 20th century, than did the academic establishment in the FRG of past decades. Perhaps even more enlightening might be to next take a closer at look the origins of being *queer*.

Stonewall Revisited: A Short Movement History

When Judith Butler rejected the *Zivilcourage-Preis* of the Berlin Pride Parade, the attempt to completely assimilate the word *queer* into the gay mainstream temporarily failed. Thus, the word continues to have at least two meanings which partly contradict each other. On the one hand it serves as a collective label for everything that is "somehow not straight". For example, the concept appealed to a gay party functionary who apparently felt compelled to sometimes list other gender and sexual identities simply because it "includes as many people as possible" and "spares us of these abbreviated solecisms (LGBTTIQ). One doesn't forget anyone," (Siegessäule 2008). On the other hand, there is a reference to a sometimes very highly-formulated intellectual critique of the binary gender regime, a knowledge produced mainly in universities. In Germany, the "imbalance between a great interest in the theory and a comparatively meager political practice ... led

to the fact that queer, more than in English-speaking countries, adheres to the malodor of the academic, the aloof and the unworldly," (Woltersdorff 2003, 920). However, both usages have often in common an unreflective, white understanding, and in both cases, the interrelationship with capitalist conditions is still rarely interrogated. However, as Haritaworn points out, "Blacks and drag queens/trans* of color from the working class," who were already resisting the coercive system of heteronormativity in the 1960s, "called themselves 'queer', in differentiation from white middle-class gays and lesbians, long before the latter's academic descendants appropriated this identity" (Haritaworn 2005, 26).

Whitewashing started of the 'Queer Community' (cf. ibid.) at the hour of its birth. Already in August 1966 in San Francisco, where, shortly before, homeless queer youth joined forces in the self-help organization Vanguard, black trans* women and sex workers revolted at the Compton's Cafeteria Riot against police brutality (Stryker 2004, Baijko 2011). But with the yearly Gay Pride parades today in the metropolises of the 'western world', a later rebellion in New York City is being remembered – or, rather, the great tale of what was supposedly happening at Christopher Street in the Greenwich Village district at the end of June 1969 after it was expurgated by well-to-do gays of any references to class, 'race' and gender ambiguity (Gan 2007, 127; Monroe 2012).

According to reliable sources (especially Gan 2007, 131ff provides countless historical evidence), it went like this: in one of the usual raids, some visitors of the Stonewall Inn resisted the degrading identity controls. Next to white gays who wanted "to pick up boys of different races" there were in the club also lesbians and trans* of color (report Sylvia Rivera to Gan 2007, 131). As the resisting trans* and lesbians were to be taken away and were abused by the police officers (Gan 2007, 131f), more and more queers from the neighborhood gathered in front of the pub, among them the young homeless people who usually slept in the nearby park (Feinberg 1998; Monroe 2012). Molotov cocktails flew; during that night and the following nights were violent confrontations in the neighborhood; riot police were called in. It was the street youth and gender-variant people nearby – many of them working-class and of color – who were on the front lines of the confrontation. Those most targeted by police harassment, those most socially and economically marginalized, fought the fiercest (Gan 2007, 131; see also Monroe 2012).

Two of the Stonewall militants were transsexuals, noted Haritaworn (2005, 26): the only 17-year-old Latinx Sylvia Rivera, who had hustled already as a child (Feinberg 1998), and by her side, her eight-year older black girlfriend and 'big sister', Marsha P. Johnson (Gan 2007, 130f). Rivera is recalled today in gay histo-

riography as a "legendary veteran, [...] notable for helping to spark the event that ushered in the modern-day gay rights movement" (Matzner 2004). Johnson, who also worked as a drag-performer and was once photographed by star artist Andy Warhol, has even a certain posthumous underground cult status – the documentary *Pay It No Mind* from 2012 with original recordings was highly regarded. Immediately after the end of the street battles in Greenwich Village, both of them contributed significantly, as organizers and as activists, to the fact that the spontaneous rebellion could become one of the most successful political movements in modern times. That movement thanked them poorly during their lifetimes, to put it mildly.

Sylvia Rivera was one of the founders of the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) (see Bronski 2002) in the summer of 1969, whereby 'gay' in those first years after Stonewall quite obviously did not yet mean exclusively 'homosexual'. The group understood itself as part of a larger revolutionary context and formed the core of the queers, who at that time aimed "to change oppressive social structures". Similar to the lesbian feminists, they combined their engagement against male domination, racism and capitalism with "a constructionist understanding of sexuality," as Annamarie Jagose elaborated in her introduction to queer theory. Additionally, they advocated "a radical transformation of social values, arguing that gay liberation would be secured only after sex and gender categories had been eradicated" (Jagose 2001 [1996], 80). Like the entire *gay rights movement* which ultimately goes back to them (Gan 2007, 132; Monroe 2012), they were inspired by *Black Power*. Vice versa, in the summer of 1970, chairman of the *Black Panther* Huey Newton spoke out for a joint struggle with 'gays' and feminists (Newton 2002). When Rivera met with him the following year (Feinberg 1998), the GLF had already disappeared – but she also put all her energies in the activities of the more moderate organization *Gay Activists Alliance* (GAA), especially in the campaign for a *Gay Rights Bill* in New York City (Gan 2007, 135).

But the radical harmony of people with actually quite different social situations suggested by the overarching label 'gay' proved illusory – in the GAA, Sylvia Rivera endured racist, classist and transphobic bullying. A functionary of the association is quoted as saying the "General Membership" perceived her appearance as "frightening": "They're scared of people from the streets". In his research, pioneer of academic gay and lesbian studies, Martin Duberman, found that those activists, if "not shunning her darker skin, or sniggering at her disfluent, passionate English, then they were deploring her blunt anarchism as inimical to order, or denouncing her sashaying gait as offensive to womanhood" (quoted in Gan 2007, 133). For her part, Rivera remained in solidarity with the organization and did

whatever she could. Once, she was even arrested in the attempt to climb up the façade of City Hall in Manhattan, clad in drag and high-heeled shoes, in order to disrupt a City Council meeting which was to discuss the *Gay Rights Bill* behind closed doors (Wilkins 2002; Bronski 2002).

Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson also founded *STAR*, the *Street Transvestite* (now: *Transgender*) *Action Revolutionaries* in 1970, and are therefore also considered pioneers of the Transgender Movement (ibid.). In a commune in New York's Lower East Side, the two offered refuge and, as we would say today, 'empowerment' to homeless 'gays,' especially trans* women and homeless youth, sustaining this shelter for a while through 'hustling'. The *Young Lords*, a radical union of young Puerto Ricans, energized Rivera and accepted her as she was, even demonstrating against police repression in East Harlem district with her and Johnson under the *STAR* banner (see Feinberg 1998). She thus saw the necessity of self-organization of people of color to create safe places from the white majority society. Nevertheless, in the early 1970s she seems to have believed in something like a general queer awakening (see Gan 2007, 133), until 1973 when she, like all trans*folk, was expelled from the GAA because the *Gay Rights Bill* was thought to have better chances if the organization was represented by gender-conforming people (see Bronski 2002, who notes dryly that it still took until 1986 for the bill to be passed). What had begun under the *Gay Power* slogan, borrowed and modified from the Black Liberation Movement, had become an advocacy group of a self-styled, white, gay-lesbian middle class.

Sylvia Rivera attempted suicide in 1973 after she was attacked by white gays and declared persona non grata for imitating women in flyers spread by white lesbians on her way to the stage at an event commemorating the Christopher Street rebellion (Gan 2007, 133). She was living with drug addiction on the streets when she was 'rediscovered' by Duberman, who interviewed her for his *Stonewall* book, published in 1993. Regnant gay politics of the last two decades erased her from memory (see ibid., 127). The following year, she led the alternative New York *Gay Pride* of Stonewall veterans. They were to have have listened to the speeches of the new luminaries of the 'community' at the official parade of the 25th anniversary as 'survivors' of the insurrection. "We didn't survive it; we created it," was their self-confident answer (compare Stonewall, 25). The following winter, Rivera was barred from the Gay and Lesbian Center in Manhattan because she had vehemently demanded that homeless queers be able to sleep there on cold nights. In the end, she lived in a Brooklyn home for destitute trans*folks, dying of liver cancer in 2002. Still in the intensive care unit, a few hours before her death, she agitated against the agenda of the *Human Rights Campaign* (see Bron-

ski 2002). Marsha P. Johnson had already been found dead in 1992, a few days after the Pride Parade of that year, at the pier at the end of Christopher Street. It is still unclear whether it was a transphobic and/or racist murder. The investigations were resumed in December 2012.

The tragedy of 'our pioneers' cannot be reduced to the fact that in the early days of the movement "the idea of 'gender as a performance' had yet to be clearly articulated," as Michael Bronski, author of a *Queer History of the United States*, suggested in his compassionate obituary of Sylvia Rivera, clearly alluding to Butler's theoretical achievement (Bronski, 2002). Jessi Gan, author of the most important study written from an -of color perspective about Rivera, opposes such a simplification and appropriation. She points out that difference and hierarchy are also pervasive trans* concepts: Sylvia Rivera "was poor and Latina, while some transgender activists making political claims on the basis of her history are white and middle-class" (Gan 2007, 127). People are not affected by the "overlapping of queer and living as trans*, with racism, neoliberalism, gentrification" (Haritaworn 2012, 51) in the same ways. What is therefore 'tragic' is rather that many of 'us,' after the political awakening seemingly ushered in by the events in Christopher Street, were so quick to reestablish their bourgeois origin – gayness, lesbianness, and sometime later even trans*ness should also 'belong,' period. Perhaps even more tragic is the conformity to one's own privileged position as a 'subversive practice'.

In a clever little essay nearly ten years to the day after the Christopher Street rebellion, Edmund White, the representative writer of the white generation of Stonewall in the USA, inquired into the reasons why "the gay sadomasochist, although he belongs to the elite, poses as a blue-collar worker – truck driver, construction worker, phone technician", and yet secretly knows "that the lawyer would be the more daring and uninhibited lover". In order to explain this role-play, the author descends into bleak childhoods in which the Daddies always wore suits, blathered about "stock options," and "never scratched their deodorized crotches," while the "only naked torsos" were those of "construction workers ... out in the street". He refers to the "consequences of racial prejudice and sexism" visible everywhere, then cites hip French theory which hold that "class struggle goes to the heart of desire," and argues that with the sexual enactment of dominance and submission, the violence that governs our society is exorcised. But the idea that 'the gay sadomasochist' might be a real black worker was something White was incapable of thinking at the time (White 1996 [1979], 101ff; the quotation is of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari).

A decade further on in the United States, out of erstwhile 'Gay-Liberation,'

emerged, on the one hand, a budding *"pink economy"* into an "independent market niche". On the other hand, an institutionalized gay-lesbian lobby sought to "integrate" its clientele, struck at the time by the AIDS epidemic "into American distribution politics," especially by presenting gay men as an "eager-to-assimilate urban elite, longing for mainstream recognition" (Woltersdorff 2003, 914, italics in original). *Queer*, a critical-theoretical approach from the field of *gay and lesbian studies* first designated in 1991, rejected this trend (cf. Jagose 2001 [1996], 14, 160). More or less at the same time, under the same name, "a new form of alliance politics that emerged from varying social outsiders, which was thus also represented and symbolized as a 'rainbow coalition'". For example, in the face of AIDS, they addressed the catastrophic situation of people without health insurance or money for medical care – in the USA, it was non-whites "who traditionally belong to the poorer classes and who were particularly affected". In both the seminar and the streets, the aim was "to move those positions marginal to official identity politics into the center" (Woltersdorff 2003, 915).

The popularity of *queer* in the German-speaking world was perhaps due to the fact that – as the cultural studies scholar Volker Woltersdorff formulated ironically – the loan-word "does not immediately disclose the dirtiness which is hidden behind it" (ibid., 920). In the beginning it was frequently used here as a synonym for gay-lesbian co-operation: a 'we' that had begun to formulate itself in the Federal Republic after the German unification of 1990. Within the framework of the new definition of the nation, mostly gay male 'civil rights activists' then demanded to have 'our piece of the pie' – which they'd get. Queer associations, which had developed during the period of upheaval in East Germany (compare Jagose 2001, 188), were to be either coopted into the future *Lesbian and Gay Association* (LSVD) by western junior politicians on the way to 'gay power', or else they barely registered in the media (see Stedefeldt 1998). The same happened to lesbian organizations of the old FRG, who wanted to remain independent, while gay groups, more or less oriented to GDR socialism, dissolved. Today, the LSVD and the so-called Queer Nations Initiative claim to represent the diversity of a 'LGBTTIQ community'. In their names and consistent with the 'national integration plan' of the federal government, as the queer theorist Antke Engel criticizes, they formulate "demands on 'the' migrants ..., who are self-evidently neither lesbian, gay or transgender, nor entitled to the right to politically transform the ground rules of social coexistence" (Engel 2009, 41f).

At the same time, *queer* serves as the self-designation of a scene spread in local university towns, mostly of 'white-bread' young people who want to distinguish themselves from narrow-minded gays via a politically "reflected" academic jar-

gon – meanwhile reproducing the exclusions of their class through their habitus. It is not by chance that these circles also consider it 'difficult' to speak of capitalism.

Beyond Foucault? Capitalism and Relational Forms of the Sexual in Transition

The development of the gay-movement displays a pattern that Fernand Braudel recognized as fundamental for modern 'western' history. 'Culture' – in the broad sense of daily life and understanding – always offers capitalism both "support and contradiction" all in one. After intense demonstrations of protests, it positions itself afresh "almost always protective of the ruling order, a process from which capitalism draws some of its security" (Braudel 1986b [1979], 699).

Seeing that Queer Theory, above all, perceives in the neoliberal socio-economic transformation of the society "cultural politics as a field of intervention," as Engel writes (AG Queer Studies 2009, 106; cf. Engel 2009, 16ff), the culture concept must be qualified in order to be able to assess the relevance of this approach for practical capitalism critique. What proves precisely most fruitful – and, moreover, the closest to Karl Marx – and what most disturbs 'traditional' Marxists about queer theory: its "poststructuralist" legacy of the dissolution of the "subject". Marx saw the origin of this philosophical invention in the European bourgeois society of the eighteenth century, when for the first time "the various forms of the social cohesion confront the individual as merely means towards his private ends". He pointed out that "the epoch which produces this standpoint, ... is precisely the epoch of the most highly-developed social relations," and he found, "production by a solitary individual outside society ... is just as preposterous as the development of speech without individuals who live *together* and talk to one another. It is unnecessary to dwell upon this point further" (MEW 13 [1857], 615, emphasis in the original). However, 'our' culture does everything it can for us to dwell on this point. Queer Theory, precisely here, is substantially subversive.

In the beginning stood the attack on the proud subject of gay emancipation, led by Michel Foucault. He wrote that "marginalized sexual identities are not simply victims of the operations of power," but are "produced by those same operations" as power. Contrary to the simplistic "repressive hypothesis," oppression and resistance belong "to the same historical network" (according to Jagose 1996). As we have seen, this net was knotted in the 'West' in an interplay of domination, economy and sexuality and cast over the whole world. While Foucault's testimony

applied to the "homosexual," as he had developed in the hundred years between the 'scientific foundation' of his natural predisposition and the supposed beginning of his self-liberation, representatives of Queer Theory turn to the time after Stonewall. For example, Douglas Crimp rightly questions the belief that "upon our gayness, we built a political movement". "Wasn't it the other way around, an emergent political movement set the conditions for the formulation of a gay – rather than homosexual or homophile – identity?" (ibid., 80, emphasis in the original).

Accordingly, the realization that, more than ever, "queer, private-economic and state-images of ideas and discourses ... are not neatly separated from one another, but rather are integrally interwoven" (Engel 2009, 227f) is a common starting point for the queer theorists Nancy Peter Wagenknecht and Antke Engel, both of whom offer a different emphasis in their respective works of economic criticism. A contribution from the former makes it possible to present in what follows some theoretical concepts meaningful for critical queer thinking, inevitably condensed.

For Engel, Michel Foucault's "discourse-analytic approach," supplemented with insights from psychoanalysis, remains authoritative because it allows her to take the desired "reflexive distance from the circulating viewpoints" of the relationship between *queer* and neoliberalism (ibid., 30). On the other hand, Wagenknecht, in his reflections on "how the mode of production of transnational high-tech capitalism forms its sexual subjects," goes beyond the analytical framework the philosopher pushed with *dispositif*. This term means "a power structure ... that regulates the practices of knowledge production and modes of life". The *dispositif* is the result of power relations, which consists of a "multiplicity of won or lost struggles" and co-determines the "course and outcome of later conflicts" (Wagenknecht 2005). Although he advanced from pure discourse analysis to explain social change (compare Gasteiger 2008, 44f) Nancy Peter Wagenknecht argues that Foucault, on the one hand, "systematically underestimated" the role of "material production", and, on the other, did not sufficiently elaborate that the *dispositif* "is also a regulation of the organization of collective interests".

Wagenknecht, therefore, refers to considerations of Antonio Gramsci, who studied the "relational forms of the sexual" in his time in his extensive *Prison Notebooks* from the 1930s. His thinking demonstrates

> "that he does not see a single determinant force behind the economic, instead investigating how it interplays with and is shaped by other forces. Nonetheless, he

> makes it the starting-point of his reflections. In the texture of social production, individuals are assigned to gendered, racially-marked class positions, and thus belong to groups, 'each of which represents a function in production itself,' and which are put in relation to each other" (Wagenknecht 2005, quotation Gramsci VII, 1560).

As the leading thinker and co-founder of the Communist Party of Italy, imprisoned under the Fascist dictatorship, Gramsci pursued the question, why had Communists in the core countries of capitalism failed to build on the success of the socialist revolution in Russia? He saw the main difference in the fact that the state where the Bolsheviks could conquer it was "all"; in the 'West', on the other hand, it "was only an advanced trench, behind which lay a *robust chain* of fortresses and earthworks": *civil society* (Gramsci IV, 874). By means of its consensus, it carries with it the power of the state (ibid., 916) and can be distinguished methodically, but not organically, from "political society," i. e., the state directly exercising power (see Gramsci III, 498f; VII, 1566). This is not, therefore, a territory free of domination, in which people might engage with each other in a manner "civilized, and thus peaceably debated, unimpeded by gender hierarchy, class contradictions, racism, or similar evils". In fact, civil society is the "location of the struggle for hegemony" (Wagenknecht 2005).

Additionally, one should refer to the Marxist theorist, Louis Althusser, who had a major influence on queer theory (see Jagose 2001 [1996], 101–107). Following Antonio Gramsci, he outlined a "different reality that obviously stands on the side of the (oppressive) state apparatus, but does not merge with it," which he called *ideological state apparatuses* (*ISAs*). These correspond to Gramsci's 'civil society' and lay bare what Braudel understood with the term 'culture': Althusser distinguishes the ISAs of family and religious life, education and judiciary, parties and unions, the media and finally culture in the narrower sense, to which he also counted sport. In each of these institutions, "the qualification of labor power … is reproduced in the forms of ideological submission," and they all serve to "reproduce the productive relations, that is, the capitalist conditions of exploitation".

Ideology rarely declares itself as "ideological"; rather, it operates in praxis precisely because it appears that we are self-determined subjects. Althusser attempted to illustrate this with the concept of *interpellation*. Through it, "subjects" are "'recruited' from the mass of individuals, or these individuals are 'transformed' into subjects". He offers the much-cited example of the policeman who calls out on the street, "hey, you there!" – and all passersby immediately feel caught. The civic subject is thus a product of submission to the power of the police. According to the same pattern, a child, even before birth, is "appointed as a subject in and by

the specific familial ideological configuration in which it is 'expected' once it has been conceived," and then "it must 'find' 'its' place, i. e. become the gendered subject (boy or girl) which it already is in advance" (Althusser 1971 [1970]).

On the basis of the observations of Antonio Gramsci, Nancy Peter Wagenknecht traces the development of individual lifestyles under the banner of 'Fordism' in the USA "through the overlapping of mass production, mass consumption and mass culture (guided by a rapidly evolving cultural industry)". Gramsci saw "that the change in the mode of production" named after the American entrepreneur and anti-Semitic publicist Henry Ford "involved a complex, mediated and embedded puritanical impulse, which trained the male factory workers to use the full extent of their forces in assembly line work. A discipline of the body, and especially of sexuality, was necessary for this. Comparatively high wages made it possible for women to be turned into housewives," entrusted with the care for a small family and the "consumerist regeneration" of the male labor force (Wagenknecht 2005; cf. Gramsci III, 529–533; Gramsci IX, 2086–2095). This was, however, essentially a white arrangement: Wagenknecht points out that black men and women, as well as migrants, usually worked for worse wages in particularly labor-intensive sectors.

Fordism was founded as a "class compromise" between "large-scale industry and financial capital," on the one hand, and "white masculine skilled workers," represented by strong trade unions, on the other. It became also the dominant model in Western Europe, "administered by national welfare states," which at the same time supervised the observance of a gender regime "determined by rigid heterosexual norms". Wagenknecht attributes to the Fordist *dispositif* how the resistance of feminists and lesbians and gays to this regime also served "forms of representation of common interests in relatively homogeneous collective subjects". Their activities against patriarchy and compulsory heterosexuality had brought about a profound transformation of civil society in the 'Western' countries (Wagenknecht 2005). Observed from a Gramscian perspective, "in the sense that the political and cultural hegemony of a social group over society as a whole are regarded as an ethical content of the state," (Gramsci IV, 729) the 'sexual revolution' meant a flexibilization of social conventions, which accompanied the rearrangement of more flexible forms of capital accumulation in the 1970s, until finally the neoliberal termination of this class compromise was brought to an end by the owners of the means of production.

The sexual-political battles thus contributed "to the downfall of Fordism". But this did not lead to "a comprehensive liberation, but a contradictory chain of freedom gains with new hierarchies and restrictions, which are arranged ac-

cording to a new pattern of restrictions," says Wagenknecht. The current mode of production propagates 'diversity,' but is "further regulated by the heterosexual matrix". A new "form of discipline" reigns, which comes into being through self-conduct, and whose instruments are the old hierarchies believed to have been overcome by liberal equality, but which continue to exist under the surface, and which can be used to attack individuals at any time. This makes it possible to exploit 'difference' (i. e. the belonging to a lower level of the old hierarchical order) as a resource of creativity. It is, for the subject, a source of their inimitable individuality. But s/he must not go too far in their criticism of this hierarchy, lest s/he be replaced by another subject who makes it less difficult". On these conditions, some white gays and women, and occasionally even migrants, are allowed to 'rise' today – although Nancy Wagenknecht emphasizes that the latter and trans* frequently fall completely out of the system (Wagenknecht 2005).

Antke Engel proposes the concept of "projective integration," "in order to critically examine the functions of neoliberal diversity policies" (Engel 2009, 227), the latter which propagates "a positive, appreciative attitude toward difference ..., which appears usable as cultural capital and is no longer regarded as the 'entirely different' of a supposedly stable, autonomous self" (ibid., 42). In this way, on the one hand, "the reliability of the hegemonic normative horizon, to which assimilation and multiculturalism refer, is put into question, and the norm itself is subjected to proliferation" (ibid., 227). On the other hand, today "certain forms of homosexual and polymorphic existences ... could be figured as models of civil-society-, capitalist-citizenship". The author notices signs that "a new hegemonic consensus is emerging that calls into question a clear hetero/homo opposition and replaces it with an alliance between mainstream and minority politics to the neoliberal social project" (ibid., 43).

In her book of philosophical reflections on popular images of *queer* and economy, Engel chooses not to decide between the one or the other. For her, the possibility "to understand *queer* cultural politics as the product of neoliberal developments" does not rule out the possibility that they could be "written as a challenge to neoliberalism" (ibid., 19). She suggests that one could already say of Michel Foucault that he "anticipates the assertion of neoliberal dynamics – or even supported it against his own critical pretension". For he replaced "the understanding of bourgeois sexuality represented with the repressive hypothesis as one which follows the economy of deficits and the principles of scarcity" with a "consumerist image of continuous productivity and continual stimulus," similar to the "late-capitalist logic of permanent production of difference" (ibid., 30).

In fact, neoliberal discourses expedite "a pluralization of sexual subjectivities and forms of life … because they can epitomize an ideology of the free formability of one's own life, including body and self. Insofar as this decision-making power is praised as a 'liberation from repressive regulations,' it serves to translate social responsibility into self-responsibility and to make the principle of efficiency and the reduction of social security more palatable" (ibid., 26). At the same time, Engel knows that those for whom "the ideological figure of independence is not effective, because of racist or classist positionings, are banished from the space of representation" (ibid., 92). Exactly as Wagenknecht suspected, this means that, despite all of the paraded diversity, society is essentially still structured by the old inequalities from which the positioning of 'race,' class and (this too has not changed much) gender have been produced. These new invocations are proof of the fact that white queers – especially white gays – are now an integral part of mainstream society, which in general segregates itself less via heterosexuals against gays, but all the more via whites against people of color. Engel is well aware of the problem. In her book, she presents numerous examples of racism that prevails in German gay politics. But again and again, she pushes against the limits of what can be achieved by a queer cultural politics that regards "continual political dissidence" as self-worth (ibid., 35).

These are the limits of the actual power relations in Germany, where, for example, staged 'transformations' – whether in "SM scenarios or drag performances" – take place "in the private, semi-private or subcultural spaces," changing nothing (ibid., 94f). This is also the reason for the failure of the concept of "crossing". It comes to German-speaking queer theory from the publications of Pauline Boudry, Brigitta Kuster, and Renate Lorenz about 'sexual labor,' which incorporated the "many decades of feminist criticism of unpaid housework and relationship work and the gendered division of labor" and "which demanded not just a different understanding of reproductive labor," but rather demonstrated that working conditions "are fundamentally characterized by the fact that social requirements of femininity, masculinity and heterosexuality are translated into self-relations and social practices". With the artistic means of the performance, "non-thematized sexual labor is to be brought into the field of public visibility". Engel goes on to imagine a young black person "in an internet café in Namibia" discovering such an image online, who then could "appropriate it and devise their own phantasy scenario. But this does not mean that this person is in a position of power from which the capability of projection would also have the socio-political effect of being able to afford a projective integration" (ibid., 91f). This correct observation does not hide the fact that this 'integration' is obviously as

one-sidedly conceived as what mainstream gays propagate: Namibia should take up something devised by white German queer theorists. But why? And why not vice versa? Queer people of color rightly point out "that the anti-assimilationist currents of sexual politics do not exist beyond the imperialist project, and often even actively participate in it" (Haritaworn, Tauqir and Erdem 2011, 65).

Meanwhile, quite a few queer 'deconstructions' seem to presuppose the universal validity of the very white, middle-class norms they are against. Even within the 'western' sub-societies, these can only be regarded as obligatory, because a particular "critique of domination" effectively blocks other realities, just as they are suppressed by domination itself. Thus, for example, the 'tightrope walkers' pointed to Angela Davis, who criticized the demand for "wages for domestic labor" from the position of black feminism. As a sociologist, Davis had shown that "the gender-specific division of labor ... in slavery" constituted something different for the white women's movement. The "feminization" of black women was here determined "by their usefulness. They were genderless the moment the Master used them for certain activities. In the case of rape or the use of their childbearing ability, they were assigned a function as women". This resulted in a "completely different family image and therefore different gender relations" among black people (FeMigra 1994; cf. Davis 1982 [1981]). Similarly, the white gay 'collective subject' villainized those men who have sex with men without building this into a 'personality' and disdained (sub-)proletarian and/or migrant ways of life that permitted such uncomplicated sex.

The example of a "deconstruction" which ignores one's own privileged position and thus reinforces domination, is also provided by J. K. Gibson-Graham – two white feminists who, under this joint name, published the book *The End of Capitalism (As We Know It)* in 1996, viewed by Engel in a predominately positive light. Although it has not been translated into German, its core theses dominate local discussions of "queer-feminist economic criticism" (for a detailed critical presentation, see Sauter and Engel 2010). According to these theses, capitalism, which supposedly came to an end, is not the reality that has primarily been the subject of what Marxist criticism has known under this concept – since "*Das Kapital* analyzed (or 'deconstructed') the logic of capital" (Amin 2012 [2010], 117) – but is rather the critical insight. For, they argue, such a 'capitalism' does not exist at all; it is rather to be understood "similar to Judith Butler's conception of gender identity as a 'regulatory fiction'". Against this, at the very least, lies the objection that anyone who argues using "gender identity" is falsely explaining socially-induced inequality of human beings as naturally-given, while conversely using the

'capitalism' concept means to render recognizable – and, thereby changeable – the social structure that hides underneath the supposedly 'natural' order establishing inequality. Indeed, instead of real change, we are dealing here with the "counter-narrative to capitalocentric thinking beyond capitalist conditions of exploitation". Quite seriously, the thing that comes to the minds of theses "queer-feminist economics critics" is the example of the "male 'normal worker'" who "goes fishing in his spare time and is in an economic exchange process with his wife, who works as a reproductive laborer. We believe that this deconstructivist perspective of sexual and economic identities can lead to transformative practices". At the same time, it is argued that "commercial interests do not oppose non-normative ... identities any more per se, but rather virtually promote them". "The presence of gay neighborhoods" is said to be one of the decisive "location factors when it comes to luring the 'creative class' into a city" (Ganz and Gerbig 2010).

Instead of entering the impasse of a transfiguration of the ruling relations, Wagenknecht's analysis of the relationship between *queer* and (neo-liberal) capitalism enables us to advance. By linking Foucault's approach to that of Gramsci, queer-theoretical criticism of the subject reaches a level at which it could indeed become politically relevant, even more so if more than just Althusser's catchword 'interpellation' would be included in queer reflections. It is the level of *society* – understood by Karl Marx as "the whole set of activities of production, exchange and consumption the combined effect of which is perceptible to each person outside himself, as a 'natural' property of things," while in reality "this complex of activities produces social representations of objects at the same time as it produces representable objects". Whereupon the 'subject' is, together with 'his' conceptions of the world, itself one of these objects (Balibar 2013, 109f).

"Specters of Marx"

With the title of his worldwide bestseller *The End of History,* the liberal political scientist Francis Fukuyama delivered the slogan for the renewed vision, after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1992, of the "completion of history in bourgeois society ... His simple message is that the battle has come to an end. From now on, everything is as it is, and as it is, it is good" (Seibert 2000, 85f.). Fukuyama was referring to the philosopher Georg Wilhem Hegel, even though it is probably only a stubborn rumor that the latter had supposedly regarded such a blissful present state as already reached, when he examined the totality of the material conditions of life in which Prussia found itself in the 19th century, and, "following the exam-

ple of English and French thinkers of the eighteenth century, embraced the term 'civil society'" (MEW 13 [1859], 8). But Hegel could imagine a 'last synthesis' in which the contradictions of the world were abolished. His critical disciple Karl Marx, on the other hand, held the view that this "social formation" laid bare the social revolution on account of the impending antagonism of labor and capital, closing "the prehistory of human society accordingly" (ibid., 9).

According to the classical Marxist view, there is a "dialectic of productive forces and production relations" in the history of humanity (Schleifstein 1972, 71). These production relations "describe a whole system of social, economic relations, in particular the position of the different classes of society in the production process, which results from ... property relations" (ibid., 70). Through this "struggle of the classes, whose interests either coincide or conflict with the progress of the productive forces, the production relations adjust, in one way or another, more or less rapidly, to the level of the productive forces" (ibid.). In its traditional reading, historical materialism was used to distinguish the consecutive ages of primitive society, slavery society, feudalism, and 'capitalism'; it was supposedly even permitted, according to Marx and Lenin, under whose leadership the Soviet Union was founded, "to portray the development of social formation as a process of natural history" (ibid., 72). This was to be replaced by socialism/communism as a fifth and final stage (cf. ibid., 71). For, according to Marxist analysis, under capitalism and its forced technical progress, the contradiction is exacerbated between the social character of labor and the private ownership of the means of production, by which capital concentrates in fewer hands. The capitalist relations of production, which had initially stimulated the development of productive forces, would thus become their "chains" to be cast off (MEW 13 [1859], 9). But Karl Marx's envisioned transition of historical stages through the victory of working men in class struggle remains, following the defeat of what was begun by Lenin, yet to come.

In lieu of this, many 'western' leftists, in those ensuing 'five short, passionate, joyful, enigmatic years,' as Michel Foucault described the period between 1965 and 1970, began to depart "from the class concept, which was revived in the protest movements of the sixties as a central category for social analysis ... As a result, newly emerging political and social movements turn to single issues, while theory building takes a deconstructive/postmodern turn. Both political praxis (in the form of the various New Social Movements) and (political) theory consummate a significant cultural turn" (Klinger and Knapp 2005). And so it seemed, as Georg Fülberth captured in his *Little History of Capitalism,* that after the 'global triumph of neoliberalism,' there was hardly any fundamental resistance to the sys-

tem. He established as a fact that neither the New Social Movements, to which he counts "the newly-significant women's movement," nor nationalist guerrillas in various parts of the world, nor "militancy invoking Islam": "None of these movements had the goal of overcoming capitalism. This was a completely new situation in the history of its (capitalism) industrial phase" (Fülberth 2008, 294f).

The self-complacent "'soft totalitarianism' of liberal democracy" (Seibert 2000, 86), which Francis Fukuyama sought to justify philosophically, was unexpectedly objected to, with reference to Marx, by Jacques Derrida, a prominent representative of the 'postmodern' thought which 'orthodox' Marxists are fond of putting under the general suspicion of "intellectual complicity" and encouraging the adaption to existing conditions. This side is especially against Derrida's "normative (dis-)orientation on the principles of 'disorder or irreducible disarray,'" which is so important for Queer Theory: "Without reference to the possibility of social change, criticism can degenerate into a domination-compliant gesture" (Seppmann 2010; for the significance of Derrida for Queer Theory, compare Woltersdorff 2003, 916f; Voß 2010, 24f). But it was Jacques Derrida in 1993 – when this seemed least opportune – who opposed those who marched in "lockstep rhythm" intoned by "the same old story," that Karl Marx and communism were allegedly "dead, very dead". In his book *Specters of Marx*, the philosopher stated: "a dogmatism is attempting to install its worldwide hegemony in paradoxical and suspect conditions," and he contradicted the "*dominant* discourse ... on the subject of Marx's work and thought" (Derrida 2004 [1994], 78, emphasis in original).

Derrida presented a picture of urgent relevance in face of the triumphal cry of the ideologues of a 'new world order': "Marx remains an immigrant *chez nous* ... still a clandestine immigrant, as he was all his life" (ibid., emphasis in original). Jacques Derrida wrote these lines in the time of the pogroms, when people of color were murdered everywhere in the 'reunited' Germany, and which have yet to be even slightly recognized. He noticed the contempt which the new discourse had for what Fukuyama calls, without much fuss, "the Islamic world," and he harshly judged the exclusionary remarks of the political scientist: "It reveals the water in which this discourse consolidates its alloy of intolerance and confusion" (ibid., 90). In view of the concrete circumstances under which it was assumed that the history of bourgeois society was completed, he passionately pleaded not to make the unwanted Karl Marx "an illegal alien, or, what always risks coming down to the same thing, ... to assimilate him so as to stop frightening oneself (making oneself fear) with him. He is not part of the family, but one should not send him back, once again, him too, to the border" (ibid., 238).

The founder of 'deconstruction' confessed that this strategy of subversion – the incessant questioning of all the assumptions that make the overcoming of domination seem unthinkable, and the destabilization of the allegedly rigid concepts in which it (domination) manifests itself – "has never had any sense or interest, in my view at least, except as a radicalization, which is to say also *in the tradition* of a certain Marxism" (ibid., emphasis in original). He spoke of a "spirit of Marxism which I will never be ready to renounce" and specifically meant "not only the critical idea," but also "a certain emancipatory and *messianic* affirmation, a certain experience of the Promises" (ibid., 126, emphasis in original). The deconstructive thinking which mattered to him "has always pointed out the irreducibility of affirmation and therefore of the promise, as well as the undeconstructibility, of a certain idea of justice" (ibid., 127). Despite his perhaps unclear 'religious' terminology, Derrida explained: "all men and women, all over the earth, are today, to a certain extent, the heirs of Marx and Marxism. That is ... they are heirs of the absolute singularity of a project – or of a promise – which has a philosophical and scientific form" (ibid., 113). And he oriented practically-politically to the continued attempt to realize it. For "a promise must promise to be kept, that is, not to remain 'spiritual' or 'abstract', but to produce events, new effective forms of action, practice, organization, and so forth" (ibid., 111–2).
Through Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's ideally-matched translation of the linguistic-philosophical primary work of Jacques Derrida into English, deconstruction become internationally known in the 1970s. But with his book on Karl Marx, the "old-fashioned Marxist" found herself not entirely satisfied. Derrida had not considered "the central arguments on industrial capitalism" in *Das Kapital*. "Marx' statement that the worker produces capital because he is the one who is responsible for the added-value with his labor power was amplified by Spivak to the effect that it is the 'Third World' which produces not just the wealth, but also the possibilities of the cultural self-representation of the North" (Castro Varela and Dhawan 2005, 65f).

Spivak, in her "debate with Derrida on Marx ... focuses on the exploitation of the female body in the Third World, where subaltern women secure the preservation of global production," and covers with her Marxist interventions, among other things, ignorance in Western theory production with respect to racism and sexism" (ibid., 65). This leads to the question of the entanglement and simultaneity of different power relations – even if for Spivak, the economic interest remains fundamental. As already quoted, she wrote in one of her most famous essays that the "epistemic violence" of imperialism supplements a "former economic text" (Spivak 1988, 283).

Excursion 2: Karl Marx on Colonialism

According to Marx' view, "the struggles of the Western proletariat for economic equality and emancipation in the nineteenth century represented a political interest in the whole of mankind, which palpably did not include disenfranchised groups like colonized subjects" (Castro Varela and Dhawan 2005, 64). Similarly, "traditional Marxism" often ignored how "the colonial power constellations were traversed by racist structures". Again and again, "anticolonial intellectuals … faced the challenge to revisit and expand the Marxist concept of class struggle" (ibid., 16).

The author of *Capital* left Europe only once: in the spring of 1882, a year before his death, he visited the then-French colony of Algeria. The letters he writes to his daughters and to Friedrich Engels literally reproduce entire paragraphs from the forerunner of the Guide Bleu. Immediately confronted with the reality of a North African country under European rule, Marx, as the writer Juan Goytisolo puts it, develops an "almost systematic denial of direct observation, the need to rely on the documented to tell personal experience … Whether a lack of trust in his observation or laziness, or because of his lack of sympathy to the subject, he subordinate his own point of view to the authority of a rubber-stamped text": namely, a guide popular with the bourgeoisie of colonial power (Goytisolo in Sievernich and Budde 1989, 127).

Decades before that, Karl Marx had shown that, just as the ruling class he fought against, he was convinced of a European mission in the non-white world, even if he assumed that ultimately it would have different results than the pioneers of imperialism planned. In a series of articles on the British colonial rule in India, he claimed that society there had "no history at all, at least no known history." In the country, there were" gentle natives" which the "Arabs, Turks, Tartars, Moguls, who had successively overrun India" could not regenerate because of "the barbarian conquerors being, by an eternal law of history, conquered themselves by the superior civilization of their subjects. The British were the first superior conquerors, and they … destroyed it by breaking up the native communities, by uprooting the native industry". On the other hand, they made it possible for the people of India to "accommodate themselves to entirely new labor, acquiring the requisite knowledge of machinery". If we look at the railroad, the "the electric telegraph", "the native army, organized and trained by the British drill-sergeant" – "self-emancipation", and possibly socialism, no longer seem too remote. (MEW 9 [1853], 220–226). Obviously, the idea of progress is deeply interwoven here with racism.

Quite different is the account in the end of *Volume One* of *Capital*, which states: "The prelude of the revolution that laid the foundation of the capitalist mode of

production was played in the last third of the 15th and the first decade of the 16th centuries". In the famous chapter on "primitive accumulation," Marx describes the violence with which brutally enforced what today appears to us as an economic and cultural 'normalcy', namely, that the men, "*free* in the *double* sense" – free of both property and open coercion – "must become the sellers of themselves" (MEW 23 [1867], 743). When we recognize "the requirements of that mode of production as a self-evident laws of nature" (ibid., 765), we therefore accept the results of a history which "is written in the annals of mankind in letters of *blood and fire*" (ibid., 743). Whereby "the discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the aboriginal population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black-skins, signalized the rosy dawn of the era of capitalist production" (ibid., 779).

Marx portrays the unprecedented atrocities of the white conquerors, but also notes, "in fact, the veiled slavery of the wage workers in Europe needed, for its pedestal, slavery pure and simple in the new world" (ibid., 787). In colonialism he thus recognizes a presupposition, and not merely, as post-colonial criticism sometimes too harshly judges, a "side-effect of global capitalism" (Castro Varela and Dhawan 2005, 16).

Nevertheless, what Rosa Luxemburg had already criticized is true: "For Marx, these processes are incidental, illustrating merely the genesis of capital, its first appearance in the world", for his analysis of capitalism "in its full maturity"; however, he ignores persistent colonial structures (Luxemburg, 1975 [1913], 313). But even for Luxembourg, a capitalist society can only be mentioned when the capital relation has become general – not "in the colonial countries", where there are the "most peculiar combinations between the modern wage system and primitive authority" (ibid., 312). Capitalism is always in need of regions not yet fully developed, and "depends in all respects on non-capitalist strata and social organizations" (ibid., 314). If the entire world were capitalist, it would collapse (for a critique of Luxemburg's theory of imperialism, see Fülbert 2008, 308ff; Amin 2012 [2010], 23f).

This prediction has not been confirmed. Marxist theorists of the "globalized law of value" assume that there is today a global capitalism with a "hierarchical structuring – itself globalized – of the prices of labor-power" (Amin 2012, 13). According to Samir Amin, the consensus across segments of society in the global North relies "on profits deriving from imperialist rent", i. e., the over-exploitation of working people in the South. "The advance posts of the Northern peoples are dependent on defeat of the imperialist states in their confrontation with the Southern nations" (ibid., 98f).

Intersectionality, or, Sociality and the Directly Affected

During an interview with a German magazine, Angela Davis, for good reason in light of the events at the time, emphasized that "of upmost importance is to respect the leadership position of those who are directly affected" (Dorn 2010). The legendary Black Power activist, communist and feminist hailed Judith Butler for using the stage given to her by the Berlin Pride Parade organizers in 2010 to distance herself from the complicity with racism, of which she accused the city's leading gay and lesbian organizations. Davis emphasized that "not only has she refused to accept the award for Civil Courage, she also said that the award is due to the queer people of color organizations who are trying to develop integrative and intersectional strategies by combining anti-racist with anti-homophobic strategies". In that regard, she summoned the position of radical women of color in the US in the late 1960s and early 1970s. "We argued that a commitment to the feminist struggle was impossible without considering which role does racism and classism play ... Nowadays it is very difficult to find a person, male or female or transgender, who defines himself as a feminist and does not recognize that it is not simply an issue of gender, but also about class, 'race,' disability, social environment and other topics" (ibid.).

With her study *Women, Race & Class* it was Davis herself who has given the term 'intersectionality' substance even before it was invented (see Davis 1982 [1981]). Already the title *Women, Race, & Class* calls forth the three fundamental categories which intersectional approaches take to be entwined with one another. Unfortunately, this work was scarcely acknowledged by the established specialists in Germany, who discovered the concept of intersectionality only in the 21st century and who now speak of the "new paradigm of gender research," whose "theoretical and methodological implications go far beyond feminist discourse" (Klinger and Knapp 2005).

In local overviews of the concept, the origins of intersectionality in American black feminism are usually vaguely discussed, and the black jurist Kimberlé Crenshaw – who worked with Angela Davis politically – is mentioned by name. In 1989 she was the first to use the image of the *intersection of streets* to draw attention to the problem of overlapping, different "*patterns of subordination,*" stressing the need for anti-discriminatory legislation to escape "categories conceived as mutually exclusive concepts" (Walgenbach 2007, 48, emphasis in original).

Crenshaw deals with a number of legal procedures, a synopsis of her analyses clearly showing her complex understanding of intersectionality (see Walgenbach 2012). In one such example, female black workers who were denied promotion by

General Motors could not successfully assert either racist or sexist discrimination in court because the company demonstrated that white women and black men had advancement opportunities (compare with Barkanmaz in GLADT 2009). In this case, two 'characteristics' recognized by themselves as a 'basis for discrimination' – i. e. as a non-legitimate "justification" for unequal treatment (cf. Çetin 2012, 97) – are applied to a group of persons, reinforcing each other and strengthening one another in the process. But a logic which treats these characteristics independently, or even plays them against each other, dismembers these persons into separate objects of investigation, in this case with the result that they apparently cannot be discriminated against, neither as women nor as black, since women and blacks are treated "equally". The basis for this line of reasoning is the white man as an 'unmarked norm,' while the black women are composed of the halves, coming up, in both cases, empty handed. Or more concretely, to remain with the example, consider the case of black women *workers*. Because a further – structural – unequal treatment is evidently the prerequisite for their depicted situation, but it does not, however, come to light as a "basis for discrimination": there are the people who have to sell their labor power in the car factory, and those who live on the surplus value which the factory produces. In another trial against General Motors analyzed by Kimberlé Crenshaw, it was particularly clear how the bourgeois "equal rights for all" can serve to continue the history of oppression. This time, black women workers lost because, in the course of upcoming mass dismissals in the 1970s, only the duration of the employment was used to decide who was going be fired – what was not considered consequently was that the company did not employ any black women in the preceding decades due to then still-legal racial segregation (see Walgenbach 2012).

This internationally-acclaimed lawyer continues the political struggle of radical black feminists by means of her investigations into the gaps of anti-discrimination legislation, which came first only through the effortful struggle of radical black feminists with other means. In light of the relative success of the civil rights movement, she considers it a mistake to undervalue insurgent groups such as the *Black Panthers* compared to reformist movements, since, in the end, these reformists benefit from the insurrection of such groups (see Crenshaw 1995 [1988], 121). On the other hand, with reference to Gramsci, she defends her decision to conduct her struggle within the legal realm against the accusation of nourishing illusions of a capitalist state constituted by racism and sexism. On the basis of Gramsci's analysis of the importance of civil society in the West, he recommended to communists "the *passing from the war of maneuver (frontal attack) to the war of position in the political field as well*" (Gramsci IV, 816, emphasis in original). Crenshaw

agrees with his view: precisely because the ideology of this society plays too great a role for a direct attack on the ruling class to be immediately successful, it is necessary to move within the ideological apparatuses and expand their possibilities in order to gradually "create a counter-hegemony" (Crenshaw 1995 [1988], 119).

Deconstruction protects against the danger of falling prey to ideology on this arduous path. Crenshaw recalls with Derrida that the foundation of 'western' thinking is the continuous formation of pairs of opposites, the "other" being simultaneously constructed as the inferior (ibid., 113). Thus, as we saw, this is how racism and sexism function, this is how Orientalism functions, and this is exactly how homophobia functions, which is "inseparably linked to the identity of homo/hetero-binarism and is irremovable from this basis" (Klauda 2008, 26). Only those who keep in mind that none of these dichotomies are ever "natural" nor unchangeable can, at the same time, "take account of the current needs of human beings (in doing so also effectively counteracting current disadvantages and violence) and ... hold open the goal of a better society in the future" (Voß 2011, 15). Meanwhile, the tendency "in German-language Gender Studies to reduce the work of Crenshaw to the metaphor of the intersection" meets with opposition, particularly with regard to the accompanying "depoliticizing decoupling of intersectionality from its original contexts" (Walgenbach 2012).

As the jurist Cengiz Barskanmaz describes, Crenshaw's work has had a major influence on the debates on internationally-binding anti-discrimination policies (Barskanmaz in GLADT 2009). In comparison, the Federal Republic of Germany is clearly backwards: the 'General Equal Treatment Act,' which came into force only in 2006, categorizes only six out of thirteen baseis for discrimination prohibited by the EU Charter – "class-specific discrimination is not included" (Çetin 2011, 105). This is at the same time structurally racist, insofar as the German economy and the ruling politics have, for decades, "conceptualized migrants as *workers of debased rights*" (Ha 2012 [2003], 70, emphasis in original) and thereby subjected generations to state-enforced "immiseration and marginalization" (cf. ibid., 72).

However, the increasing globalization of civil society not only makes it possible to demand in other places the results of struggles oppressed groups won in a particular country – such groups occasionally are able to strengthen their position via continuous conflicts with the help of supranational institutions. For example, the intervention of UN committees has made it possible to problematize gender-based intrusion against intersexed minors in Germany (see Voß 2012, 20). On the other hand, the International Convention which eliminated homosexuality from the catalog of diseases in 1991 (cf. Voß 2013, 67f) did not yet lead German law to cease classifying people along their sexual practices. In this sense, it would

be welcome if the "policies of international health organizations, which as part of their global awareness-raising work in the field of AIDS now consciously refrain from using the word *gays* and instead use the neutral formulation *men who have sex with men* (MSM)" would also be established in Germany. Unfortunately, standing in the way of this is an influential, mainly gay-male lobby who "conceives the formation of a self-confident homosexual identity as part of a process of western emancipation" (Klauda 2008, 133).

Butler was referring to such ideas when she said in 2010 that in order to combine the fight against homophobia with the fight against racism, it was not enough to "include groups like GLADT ... and LesMigraS actively. It also means to orient oneself to these groups, to understand how a struggle against homophobia can look without supporting racist stereotypes and policies against migrants. If the movement does not succeed with this, then it falls prey to nationalism and European racism and ultimately supports justifications that legitimize wars" (Hamann 2010).

Since the 1970s and 1980s, about the same time as Jewish women were protesting against antisemitic elements in the "anti-patriarchal" discourse, black women also began to break critically and theoretically from mainstream German-speaking feminism (see Oguntoye et al. 1986). They described "racism and sexism as interrelated and simultaneously acting forms of violent oppression and discrimination" (Erel et al., 2007, 241). With these contributions, which were "for a long time not taken seriously" by white German women (Walgenbach 2012), the formation of intersectional theory in Germany began. Soon the first scientific interventions of migrant women followed, which were clearly situated in a concrete political context. Gülşen Aktaş illuminated in her essay, *Turkish Women are like a Shadow,* the manner in which residency status played a role in their experiences of violence, and thereby achieved substantial improvements for women's shelters (see Aktaş 1993).

The academic institutions of Germany have for many years not only sealed themselves off from critical thinking of local people of color; they have also considered the debates in the USA on the interdependencies of gender, class and race as irrelevant for Germany. For example, it was and is still sometimes today claimed that the word "class" refers in English to a social "status" rather than the German "class concept" (see Beceren 2008, 25) – not a very valid claim in view of the fact that the most important US-American intersectional theorists explicitly refer to Marxist concepts. On the other hand, where the term *race* is declared taboo in view of the history of German fascism (cf. ibid., 26 and 35f), Theodor W. Adorno already replied: "The noble word 'culture' replaces the proscribed term 'race'

though it remains a mere disguise for the brutal claim to domination" (quoted from ibid., 26f). As an explanation for the hesitant reception of intersectionality in the field of higher education, the evidence suggests that the generally reduced status of people of color in Germany is shown in their slight influence upon the so-called "sciences of reality" once described by Max Weber (cf. ibid., 34).

At the beginning of December 2012, the OECD presented its 'first International Integration Report'. An analysis by the Federal Center for Civic Education stated, "as with PISA 2000, the differences in the performance of migrant children ... are, above all, a reflection of the social selectivity of the German school system" (Rebeggiani 2012; cf. Voß 2011, 19f, 45f). The study also showed that in Germany "the highly qualified immigrant children, who are already very few in numbers, are also disadvantage in the labor market". Their employment rate was "below that of highly qualified Germans without a migration background. Also, they work in a job for which they are overqualified more often than Germans without a migrant background". In addition, "the descendants of immigrants are more underrepresented in the public sector then in almost any other OECD country" (Rebeggiani 2012). Against the backdrop of such accessibility conditions, it seems almost cynical when white German social scientists idealize their privileged view from the protected space of the university as a critically theoretical "external perspective on a whole", as though this alone would allow "the phenomena of injustice and inequality as characteristics of the societal structure to be reckoned" (Klinger and Knapp 2005).

Indeed, the sociologist Cornelia Klinger rightly thinks it is "useless to point to the overlapping or intercrossing aspects of class, race and gender in the individual worlds of experience without indicating how and by which means, class, race and sex are constituted as social categories" (Klinger 2003, 25). But this does not preclude a detailed examination of "how individuals are affected by their belonging to a gender, a class or an ethnicity, and which experiences they make with it" (Klinger and Knapp 2005). Especially not when those who carry out such examinations are the ones who are themselves directly affected. Umut Erel, Jin Haritaworn, Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez, and Christian Klesse have turned against the abstract view of categorical interrelations in a pointed criticism of the preoccupation with intersectionality in the German academic establishment and demanded that "a textual analysis must always integrate an analysis of material conditions". Investigations that do not take into account specific experience of oppression – and therefore do not have to contribute to the urgently necessary redefinition of the category 'class' – are not only useless, but possibly "even dangerous ... by posing a randomness of social differences, which can be used well against emancipatory

knowledge production" (Erel et al., 2008, 245f). In contrast, social scientists of color systematically evaluated interviews, which they had conducted with affected persons, and thus were able to present experience-rich intersectional analyzes of contemporary society, as they are indispensable to the course of emancipatory politics. Examples are Meryem Ertop 's work on gender-specific violence and structural exclusion (see Ertop 2008) and Zülfukar Çetin's brilliant study *Homophobia and Islamophobia,* about binational gay couples in Berlin (see Çetin 2012).

Kimberlé Crenshaw defined intersectionality as "linking contemporary politics and postmodern theory" (Crenshaw 1995 [1991], 378). In Germany, her concept has been taken up and developed especially by queer people of color. People of color who were socialized in Germany, such as Fatima El-Tayeb, Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez and Jin Haritaworn, who are among the most internationally widely discussed theorists in the cross-section of *queer*, post-colonial and intersectional theories, each teach at renowned British and North American universities. Transnational and transcontinental networking became an advantage for local queer people of color in their struggles, strengthened them with the necessary theoretical competence, and helped them to gain influence overall to shape their political orientation in the sense of a social orientation. Since Jin Haritaworn and Koray Yılmaz-Günay called for "queer migrant, Jewish or people of color" to form "networks and to investigate ways of fighting oppression," (see Excursion 1) experiences from queer-migrant resistance to a seemingly overwhelming ideology, which consistently reproduces racism and sexism and thus keeps capitalism alive, has been pooled together and become utilizable for people of color in a much wider circle.

Nobody deters 'us' from learning from queer people of color.

Excursion 3: "Take a Look at the Power of Social Enforcement"

Referring to the studies of the Bielefeld Institute for Interdisciplinary Conflict and Violence Research, Koray Yılmaz-Günay speaks about "group-focused enmity" which take shapes in different ways. But it is neither theoretically nor practically meaningful to regard individual ideologemes, "which assert not only an otherness, but also a different value of certain ways of life" separately from each other. For example, there is an obvious link between "the construction of gender within any given society and the lack of acceptance of same-sex life … both analytically and in the sense of successful prevention", which is why "de facto, it is not possible to regard homophobia detached from sexism and transphobia".

Likewise, in the face of "a largely ethnicized and religionized debate over homo-

phobia … it is imperative to have a common consideration of and approach to anti-racism and anti-homophobia". In order to speak about the social layers of discrimination and violence, we need not only take formations of (dichotomous) large groups into consideration, such as "Germans – non-Germans, men – women, heterosexuals – homosexuals", each hierarchized with their specific valuations of characteristics. Instead, we must also examine the "power of social enforcement".

"In order to be socially effective, prejudices need a powerful layer of support for institutions that create groups and facts beyond personal attitudes and behavior," says Yılmaz-Günay, citing as examples "the creation of curricula, publications, scientific research, political or trade union representation, the issuing of laws and regulations, the decision on state and non-state grants, human resource and personnel development policies, etc." Moreover, "it is irrelevant whether this class is numerically a majority or a minority in society. The decisive factor is its powerful position that allows for social enforcement" (Yılmaz-Günay 2011a).

Author

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