

# Postsocialist and Postcolonial Subjectivities from 1989

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A proposal that this text carries is to think about alliances and coalitions along two lines: post-socialism and post-colonialism.<sup>1</sup> Why do so?

Along the first line (post-socialism), we have treated the LGBTQI peoples and communities in the former eastern Europe as second and third class citizens and as well as specifically in the former Yugoslavia, because of the war in the Balkan in the 1990s, a constant process of marginalisation of ethnic minorities. Along the second line (post-colonialism), we have movements of racialised populations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

And in the space of the European Union (EU) we have political demands by the Black Diaspora citizens in Europe as well as the movements of heavily racialised non-citizens in Europe (refugees and paperless people), and suppressed minorities that were formed as being the labour (migrant) force that migrated to the West from the former Eastern Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, and before. It is important to state that post-Nazi Western Europe needed a reconstruction labour force after WWII, therefore the labour force came specifically from Turkey and the former Yugoslavia, as well as from the immiserated south of Europe, Italy, and from the 3 fascist dictatorships in Europe in existence after WWII, Spain, Portugal, and Greece.

To put it simply, if we are not able to question the relations between these two lines, and the open questions imposed onto this myriad of post-subjectivities through constantly imposed race and gender divisions and processes of racialisation and class antagonisms inside the hegemonic structures of (west) European nation states, we will not be able to think of alliances and coalitions in Europe.

Or to reformulate these questions differently, can queer politics in Europe and globally be seen without a more precise re-elaboration of the relation between queer and the categories of nationality and race? NO! What we can learn from the conceptualisation of queer, in relation to nation-state, geography and processes of racialisation—institutionalised, structural, and social racism(s)? A LOT!

In short, I am interested in talking about politics, labour-capital, race, and even about gender, certainly about another knowledge and politics that is transfeminist, migrant, politically subversive, and sexually transgressive. I propose to conceptualise global capitalism not as a coin, that has two sides, but as a Mobius strip, which is a surface with only one side and only one boundary component. In such a setting, I argue, there are at least 2 types of capitalism; if I refer to P. Preciado, there is a hot (punk) capitalism that is developing overwhelmingly in the “former” West and first capitalist world. The hot capitalism specific meaning is mostly semiotically-technologically organised. On the other side, there is a cold capitalism, a

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<sup>1</sup> The present text is a combination of the rethinking of a similar topic from the book Marina Gržinić and Šefik Tatić, *Necropolitics, Racialization, and Global Capitalism. Historicization of Biopolitics and Forensics of Politics, Art, and Life*, Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2014. The book has two parts and the first part is a

necropolitical that extracts its surplus value from non-mediated dispossessions, exclusions, looting, and death. We saw violence of unbelievable proportions against the LGBTQI people in the former eastern bloc in the former Yugoslavia: beatings, killings, as well the negation of their basic human rights. We also see on a daily (literally) basis corpses floating in the sea, corpses of those who want to enter the “former” Western Europe: refugees, people without papers, from Africa and Asia, people who drowned along the coasts of Italy, Malta, Greece, etc., and in the last period, more and more, near Libya.

Therefore on the one side, we have the hot “former West,” the once first capitalist world that is the Christian-capitalist patriarchal colonial and anti-Semitic regime of power, with its processes of financialisation and liberalism that goes hand in hand with inclusion in its necro capitalist (global neoliberal) though largely presented biopolitical matrix of power of all those who in the past were perceived as “others”: the non-heterosexual identities (although there is still a great discrimination of transsexuals and intersexuals). To be precise, this is not about a new “enlightened logic” of the “former West” being more civilised than the former East, but a process of new racialised discrimination that on the one hand includes all those until now seen as the “others” that were discriminated against in the past (the white gays and lesbians, queer as Western nation-state citizens) to produce, on the other hand, and at the same time, an infinite list of new Others in the West: migrants, refugees, sans-papiers, people and women of colour coming from other parts of the world, and religious backgrounds. Of course, the practices of inclusion in the West can bring the danger of reproducing homonormativity.

On the other side, and at the same place and time, we have the cold, Former East’s necropolitics, a brutal logic of violence, persecutions, discrimination, and racialisations in the former Eastern European space (the former Yugoslavia, Russia, and other post-Soviet countries, etc.). Biopolitics and necropolitics are working globally, though necropolitics’ functions (mostly in the so-called periphery) making surplus value by death and social death of any kind (with the value of life equalling zero), where non-mediated violence is present.

While some are made “equal” the “other” Others are left to die and are brutally abandoned. An illustrative case is the disaster on October 2013 when the death toll of African migrants who drowned (measured in hundreds of bodies in one single day) near the Italian island of Lampedusa was an additional confirmation of the alarming scale of the refugee crisis in the EU. Though the most perverse situation happened afterwards when Italian citizenship was given to these hundreds of dead bodies (but only in order that the Italian government and the EU could bury them in Italy—it was obviously cheaper than to send the dead bodies back to their countries of origin and to their respective families). The Italian government decided to prosecute the few who did survive as they had tried to illegally enter Italy and the EU. This is the clearest sign of the perverse and violent new attitude that Western Europe has toward human rights (after the West had been for decades heavily capitalising its democracy on it) and the occurrence of a new category of citizenship—*necropolitical citizenship*.

The colonial/racial division is applied to citizenship and we have two categories of citizenship: one is the category which I will name *biopolitical citizenship* (the EU “natural” nation-state citizens) and the other is *necropolitical citizenship* given to refugees and sans-papiers (paperless) after they die on EU soil. If in the hot, punk capitalism we are an oppressed group of zombified positions, all medicated and doped up, consuming sex as the *only* food in the time of austerity, in the cold former Eastern Europe under global capitalism we have blood, death, being beaten, and killed. Therefore, the *necropolitical turn* of dispossession and exploitation (part of the techno-sexual matrix of global capitalism today)

teaches us fully that neither gender nor sex are natural conditions of our lives, less so misery, dispossession, enslavement, and killings.

In this context what is important is the construction of the transmigrant and transfeminist queer movement where the so-called *not-right and not-quite* identities take advantage of the hot global capitalist pharmacopornography system of re/reproduction and of sex and labour in order to point the finger toward these divisions and politically radicalise both their and our positions.

## OVERKILL

The difference between biopolitics and necropolitics is very visible if we are to conceptualise a history of homophobic acts in the post-Yugoslav space. This space is not on another continent, somewhere out there, but here and now, in the middle of Fortress EU (or just Europe). The processes that are to be captured from drawing this homophobic history cannot simply be called *biopolitical* measures by respective nation-states for the protection of nation-state heterosexual rights. All over we saw the bodies of LGBTQI members who had been beaten and their lives threatened to the point that they were living under the constant threat of basic human rights being denied to them.

### Serbia

In 2001, Serbia's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer community (LGBTQ) attempted to hold the country's first Gay Pride in Belgrade. When the participants started to gather in one of Belgrade's principal squares, a huge crowd of opponents (right wing, fascist-orthodox organisations, and individuals) attacked the event, injuring several participants and stopping the march. The police were not prepared to suppress the riots or protect the Pride marchers. Non-governmental organisations and a number of public personalities criticised the assailants, the government and security officials. In 2009, a group of human rights activists announced their plans to organise a second Belgrade Pride. However, due to the heavy public threats of violence made by extreme right organisations, the Serbian Ministry of the Interior moved the location of the march out of the city centre thereby effectively banning the Pride. In October 2010, petrol bombs and rocks flew at the parade, after the authorities allowed it to go on, announcing that they would protect the participants. A presence of some thousands of policemen guided the way for 1,000 marchers; several policemen were injured; a few dozen people were arrested in the wake of their anti-gay violence.

In 2011, the interior ministry banned the Belgrade Pride Parade, allegedly because they saw the parade as an "obstruction of public transport, endangering health, public moral or safety of individuals and properties." Not a word from the Serbian Ministry of the Interior being preoccupied in this case with the obstruction of basic human rights. In 2013 it was the same. In 2017, Serbia that is caught in its proper impossibility to reflect the Balkan war in the 1990s, when the paramilitary Serbian units slaughtered 8000 men and boys of Muslim origin, expelled from Srebrenica and given to Ratko Mladić, is on its path toward the EU and ready to accept all possible "changes." The autocratic Serbian president in power Vučić installed Ana Brnabić as the first gay person, as well as the first woman, to lead the Serbian government in 2017. The parade passed smoothly in 2017. In the meantime, on the 22

November 2017 Mladić was sentenced by the ICTY to life in prison for 10 charges, one of genocide, five of crimes against humanity and four of violations of the laws or customs of war. More than 100,000 people were killed during the war in Bosnia, while as many as 50,000 women were raped.

On November 21 1995, the Dayton Peace Accords officially ended the three-and-a-half-year war, dividing Bosnia and Herzegovina into two semi-autonomous entities: the Bosniak-Croat “Federation” and the Bosnian Serb “Republika Srpska.” Today, Mladić’s vision of an ethnically cleansed Greater Serbia is a reality in the form of the Republika Srpska entity. Support for Mladić is widespread among Serbs in the Serbian entity and Serbia alike.<sup>2</sup> The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, ICTY, that was established by the United Nations Security Council on 25 May 1993, and concluded its work on 31 December 2017, charged 161 people with war crimes during the wars in the former Yugoslavia. The verdict was proved for 90 defendants, 19 were found not guilty and 13 cases transferred to courts in BIH, Serbia and Croatia. Asked how he commented on the fact that Serbian citizens were sentenced to 1024 years in prison at The Hague tribunal, while Croats got only 183, prosecutor Serge Brammertz pointed out that “the Serbs prompted war in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo” and that “Serbian leaders carried out terrible ethnic cleansing there.” Brammertz further recalled that “in several cases, Serbian leaders were found to be part of a joint criminal plan for crimes in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Kosovo, including Slobodan Milošević and Nikola Šainović.” He also stated “If, after judgments, leaders decide to deepen divisions and strengthen tensions, then they are still and enduringly responsible for the consequences.” Brammertz said as well that there was no evidence that at the time of the war more hundred thousand Serbs were the victims of the war as is claimed by Belgrade and Banja Luka. On the charge that no main Serbian politicians had taken part in the wars as was the case with the Croatians since, Brammertz stated that we should not forget that they were part of the wider criminal act, as was the case with Milošević and Šainović.<sup>3</sup>

## Slovenia

Although the first LGBT event in Slovenia took place almost thirty years ago, deep in the times of socialism, when in 1984 in Ljubljana the first coming-out public project called “Magnus” was organised (which was, in fact, the first *coming-out* in all of the former Eastern European States), the first pride parade in Slovenia was not organised until 2001, and it was the result of an immediate provocation by an incident in a Ljubljana café where a gay couple were asked to leave for being homosexual. Though vandalism and beatings targeting the LGBTQ population held sway in the new millennium and were repeated during the 2010s, the sign of

Slovenian society becoming more and more openly homophobic and transphobic happened in 2012, when Slovenians voted against the new Family Code. On 21 September 2009, the Government presented a draft of the new Family Code, which would allow same-sex couples to marry and adopt children. The bill went through a period of public debate until 1 November 2009. In December 2009, the Government considered amendments to the bill, which was expected to be voted on in 2010. On 17 December 2009, the Government approved the Family Code. It was submitted to the National Assembly on 21 December 2009. On 2 March 2010, the bill was approved by the Assembly in the first reading.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/11/ratko-mladic-ideology-lives-republika-srpska-171124101753453.html>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.delo.si/svet/globalno/glavni-haaski-tozilec-ni-zadovoljen-z-vec-oprostilnimi-sodbami.html>

On 24 January 2011, the Government announced its intention to change the bill before its final version was passed by the National Assembly. The amendments would be made due to the difficulty of passing the bill. Marriage would be defined as a union between a man and a woman, but same-sex registered partnerships would have all rights of marriage except joint adoption (stepchild adoption would be allowed).

On 7 April, the National Assembly's committee approved the amended bill on the second reading and sent it for a third reading. It passed its final reading on 16 June 2011. The new Family Code expanded provisions protecting the rights of children, such as outlawing corporal punishment, and expanded existing same-sex registered partnerships to have all the rights of married couples, except adoption (excluding stepchild adoption).

The new law was challenged on 1 September 2011 by a conservative popular movement "The Civil Initiative for the Family and Rights of Children," which called for a national referendum on the issue, and started gathering the requisite popular support. The Civil Initiative for the Family and the Rights of Children proposed the referendum to ban the new Family Code, "opposed same-sex unions and demanded the referendum out of respect for motherhood and fatherhood," which was allegedly a statement that would function as a "counter" statement to the proposed definition of family in the new Family Code, described as a "union of a child or children with one or two parents or guardians."

It was clearly presented in the debates (not exempted from an invigorated racist and homophobic rhetoric) that if accepted, the new Family Code would be the first comprehensive overhaul of family legislation in thirty-five years (the last one was approved in the 1970s). The Family Code was rejected in the referendum held on March 25 2012.

A bill to legalise same-sex marriage was approved by the country's Parliament on 3 March 2015. However, it was rejected in a referendum on 20 December 2015. Slovenia's partnership law originally gave same-sex partners access to one another's pensions and property (Slovenia has recognised partnerships for same-sex couples since 23 July 2006), though since 24 February 2017 it has provided same-sex partners with all the legal rights of marriage, with the exception of joint adoption and in-vitro fertilisation. The reality is not cheerful at all, as we will have to think and think over the structure of Slovenian society and its 2 rejected referendums in a period of just 3 years and the rights given at the present moment to LGBTIQI people that are not fully rights (excluded is joint adoption and in vitro-fertilisation). All this shows that the country is deeply homophobic.

Along with these processes it is important to expose that in January 2017 Slovenia, a full EU member country, approved the amendments to its law on foreigners to enable police to seal the country's borders to illegal migrants for a limited period if needed.

## **Croatia**

In 2011, the Pride Parade in Split, Croatia, was met with a face of primitivism and violence that shocked many. The parade was surrounded by hundreds of very hostile citizens of Split who were shouting "Kill the fag," making the fascist salute with their right hands and continuing to throw stones and various objects. The situation was shameful for Croatia, who in 2011 signed the treaty of accession to become the twenty-eighth, member of the European Union. The status of same-sex relationships were first formally recognised in 2003 under a

law dealing with unregistered cohabitations. As a result of a 2013 referendum, Croatia's Constitution defines marriage solely as a union between a woman and man, effectively reinforcing the prohibition on same-sex marriage. Nevertheless, since the introduction of the Life Partnership Act in 2014, same-sex couples in Croatia have effectively enjoyed rights equal to heterosexual married couples in everything except adoption rights. However, separate legislation does provide same-sex couples with a mechanism similar to step-child adoption called "partner-guardianship." Croatia bans all discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

Croatia also did not go through its process of de-fascistisation as part of the history of WWII and not regarding the responsibility for the murderous politics of Bosnian Croat forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina's 1992–95 war. Immediately after the judge handed down a 20-year sentence to Slobodan Praljak, who was convicted as a war criminal at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) at the Hague, on November 29, 2017, the Croatian took a vial of cyanide, poisoning himself in front of the global TV audience during a live programme reporting from the tribunal. This act of performative cowardice and a pathetic overkill of himself in front the TV cameras, testifies of an impossibility to come to terms in order to apologise to the victims even after decades. But the horror epilogue was not his manifestative killing, but the post-mortem Praljak ceremony in Zagreb, Croatia. About 2,000 people, including two government ministers, filled the main concert hall in Zagreb on December 11 to attend the ceremony, while hundreds more crowded together into the building's entrance and hallways to watch on giant TV screens.

I will recontextualise these exposed relations with the statement pronounced by Suzana Tratnik as oral history in the feature length video-film documentary with the title *Relations. 25 years of the lesbian group ŠKUC-LL* that was conceived by the author of this text with members of the lesbian scene around the ŠKUC-LL in 2012 to celebrate then the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first publicly constituted lesbian section (LL) in the Student Culture Center (ŠKUC) in Ljubljana in the former Yugoslavia in 1987. Suzana Tratnik reflecting further on the reasons for such violence, on the production of second grade citizens in former Yugoslavia, and after in independent Slovenia, argues: "One thing has become clear to me: that the hatred of Others was previously seen as domestic violence. It was violence against homosexuals in the parks, against homosexuals seen as second-class citizens, as less valuable people. Such violence was therefore never reported, because homosexuals were ashamed. This is now very interesting to read about; a bunch of novels has appeared in the East, also a writer under a pseudonym from Belgrade, another from Poland. What was the life of gays like in the time of socialism? It was in the closet, literally in public toilets, meeting in parks, etc. In fact, when the coming out occurred, when these people were no longer satisfied with such a position, when they came out and said 'We are exactly just like you,' or, 'We are different and we have a right to this difference and still we want to be respected,' then this violent response began. Because in the East, there was no familiarity with this type of civil movement, there was no Black Movement as there had been in America, which made the situation there completely different. There was no women's movement, as it was said in fact that it was no longer needed. All these situations, plus some ideological closures, that ruled there. Still, on the other hand, I do not want to say that the West was open. And then the presence of the war, many years of war violence, horrible killings, rapes, etc., situations that

are not resolved, disastrous situations, wandering from court to court... the result is an explosive mixture and the situation therefore cannot be otherwise.”<sup>4</sup>

In 2011 Eric Stanley in his text “Near Life, Queer Death: Overkill and Ontological Capture?” reported on thousands of cases of mutilation of transgender people in the last decade (Stanley 2011). He calls this *overkill* as the transgender individuals are so mutilated that it transcends violence; actually, it is a fury of the transphobic situation. The point is that this is not just a single situation somewhere in some rural space but a reality here and now in the developed urban spaces. Achille Mbembe has provocatively asked, “But what does it mean to do violence to what is nothing?” in order to explain how the queer approximates physical violence that marks the edges of subjectivity itself (Mbembe quoted after Stanley 2011).

## **RACE TROUBLE: TRANSFEMINISMAND DEHUMANIZATION**

It is clear that what global capitalism brings in front of us is a necessity to revisit globally racist, homophobic, and discriminatory processes, not as simple identity differences but as processes that are entangled with capital, new media technology and with the change of the mode of life under capital’s brutal modes of racialization and exploitation. Therefore I am interested to talk about politics and interventional politics, practices, and struggles that are transfeminist, transmigrant, and politically subversive. I am interested to conceptualize the place of race, nation-State, and migrants in queer theory and global necrocapitalism, asking where they stand inside a relation of power and subjugation, saying *Race Trouble: Transfeminism and Dehumanization*.

### **Dissident Feminisms**

I will discuss dissident feminisms that ask for disruption of the monolithic history of feminism that is heterosexual and white and is based on a defined subject of feminism that is supposedly a woman as a predefined biological reality (meaning based on a kind of a natural category of a woman). As such, dissident feminisms intervene in this history and present of monolithic feminism with positions that are marginalized causing antagonistic differentiations based on class, race and gender. These positions are marginalized in society in relation to a white majority in the Western world. Moreover, these positions, that are conceptualized as *minoritized* consists of people being migrants and refugees or paperless from Latin America, Africa, and former Eastern Europe, therefore coming from the perspective of European Union and Austria from minoritized geopolitical sectors. These people perform jobs which are seen as “minor” (that means that are seen simply to say as squalid within a hierarchy of a white middle class “decency”) and as well these jobs are abusive and exploitative in terms of basic life conditions of reproduction and economic benefits.

My thesis is that today minoritized women (and here I am making reference to the title of the text “Minoritized Women Effect a Transformation in Feminism” written by Luzenir Caixeta in 2011 [reprinted 2013]), are those migrants, transgender, sex workers, lesbians, etc., who are

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<sup>4</sup> See <http://grzinic-smid.si/?p=276>. The whole oral history exposed in the video-film is also recontextualised in Marina Gržinić, “Queer, politics, racism and resistance” in Jelisaveta Blagojević, Mirjana Stošić and Orli Fridman (eds.), *#political*, (Collectanea). Belgrade: Faculty of Media and Communications. 2017, pp. 299–318.

producing a transformation in and of feminism. This implies dissident movements inside feminism that transform its white, heterosexual, essentialized contextualization of feminism (based on features that are seen as naturally appertaining to a category that is named “woman”) into dissident feminisms (see that feminism is in plural!). Luzenir Caixeta, philosopher and theologian that works for *maiz. Autonomous Center of and for Migrant Women* in Linz, on health prevention, counseling and education of migrant sex workers, states that, [i]n recent years, a number of authors have become well known around the world who are of the opinion that the new feminism must go much further beyond the old demands of white, Western and heterosexual middle-class women for legal equality. Attention should be given to the women who have always been marginalized, and the causes leading to differentiation based on class, ethnicity and gender should be opposed. (Caixeta 2013, 146)

Reiterating the point further she subtitled a section in her aforementioned text straightforwardly with “Dissident Currents within Feminisms,” pointing directly to the essay by the Spanish philosopher Beatriz Preciado, “Report after Feminism: Women on the Margins” (2007).

Luzenir Caixeta in reference to P. Preciado argues that in opposition to a past feminism that developed its political discourse based on the division “between men (as dominators) and women (as victims), modern feminism is developing new political concepts and strategies for action that call into question what has previously been regarded as generally true: namely that the political subject of feminism [was] women—meaning women in their predefined biological reality, but especially women according to a certain notion: white, heterosexual, submissive and from the middle class” (Caixeta 2013, 146). Dissident feminisms stand in opposition “to a gray, normed and puritanical feminism, which sees in cultural, sexual or political distinctions a threat to its heterosexual and Eurocentric image of women” (Caixeta 2013, 147).

Until now I have addressed two questions (1) What do we understand as dissident feminisms? and (2) How do dissident feminisms intervene in history in general and the histories of feminism in particular? I will continue to present dissident feminist artistic positions whose main aims are to develop strategies to change the condition of artistic, social, political and economic reality in the historical moment in which the art practice takes place; intervening in order to exercise change and produce a demarcation within a certain space and on a public. I can delineate, and this is my thesis, at least two lines that are sometimes parallel, or in other situations, cross each other. The first line comes from dissident feminist artistic interventions whose positions “escape from the academia to flourish in audiovisual production, literary and performative action spaces” (Preciado 2013, 252).

The second line of dissident feminist artistic interventions, I want to propose, is associated even more precisely with non-white feminists and activists who work directly with antiracism as well as post-colonial and decolonial positions. I make reference to names listed by Luzenir Caixeta that are critical positions by migrant women and Black women, such as Katharina Oguntoye,<sup>5</sup> May Ayim, FeMigra,<sup>6</sup> Lale Otyakmaz,<sup>7</sup> and Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Katharina Oguntoye is a historian and has influenced the Afro-German movement; she is a co-editor of the book *Showing Our Colors* (1986) and is the founding member of the “Initiative of Black People in Germany.”

<sup>6</sup> FeMigra (abbreviation for “Feminist Migrants”) in Germany is an activist women’s group mostly consisting of members with an academic background or who work in the social sector. They are also involved in strong networking activities with other ethnic, migrant, or Jewish women in Germany. FeMigra’s theoretical reflection



An important framework of reference for this development is the critique from Women of Color in the United States in the 1980s—including Combahee River Collective,<sup>9</sup> Cherrie L. Moraga, Gloria Anzaldúa,<sup>10</sup> bell hooks<sup>11</sup> and Angela Davis.<sup>12</sup>

Names that are a must simply because they present a cut into the histories and alliances are María Lugones, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak,<sup>13</sup> and Chandra Talpade Mohanty.

And last by not least, artists working in *maiz*. *Autonomous Center of and for Migrant Women* in Linz, principally Marissa Lôbo. I also expose in this context “The Research Group on Black Austrian History and Presence/Pamoja” from Vienna and their members: Araba Evelyn Johnston-Arthur, Belinda Kazeem, and Njideka Stephanie Iroh, among others.

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on how to act politically as feminist migrants is strongly influenced by the reception of poststructuralist, Black and post-colonial authors like Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Nira Yuval-Davis, Adrienne Rich, and Angela Davis.

<sup>7</sup> Lale Otyakmaz works at the University Duisburg-Essen on and with questions of diversity management.

<sup>8</sup> Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez works at the Institute of Sociology at the Justus-Liebig University Gießen (Germany) and is known for the book *Decolonizing European Sociology*. The book challenges the androcentric, colonial, and ethnocentric perspectives eminent in mainstream European sociology.

<sup>9</sup> The Combahee River Collective was a Black feminist Lesbian organization active in Boston from 1974 to 1980. They are perhaps best known for developing the Combahee River Collective Statement, a key document in the history of contemporary Black feminism and the development of the concepts of identity as used by political organizers and social theorists.

<sup>10</sup> Gloria Anzaldúa (1942–2004) was a scholar of Chicana cultural, feminist, and queer theory. Her best-known book, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987) is based on her life growing up on the Mexican-Texas border and incorporated her lifelong feelings of social and cultural marginalization into her work.

<sup>11</sup> Gloria Jean Watkins better known by her pen name bell hooks (written without capitals), is an American author, feminist, and social activist. Her writing focuses on the interconnectivity of race, capitalism, and gender and what she describes as their ability to produce and perpetuate systems of oppression and class domination. Primarily through a postmodern perspective, hooks has addressed race, class, and gender in education, art, history, sexuality, mass media, and feminism.

<sup>12</sup> Angela Davis is prominent American political activist, scholar, Communist and author. She emerged as a nationally prominent counterculture activist and radical in the 1960s, as a leader of the Communist Party USA, and had close relations with the Black Panther Party through her involvement in the Civil Rights to abolish the prison-industrial complex. Her research interests are feminism, African-American studies, critical theory, Marxism, popular music, social consciousness, and the philosophy and history of punishment and prisons. Her membership in the Communist Party led to Ronald Reagan’s request in 1969 to have her barred from teaching at any university in the State of California.

<sup>13</sup> Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak is prominent Indian literary theorist, philosopher and professor at Columbia University, New York, where she is a founding member of the school’s Institute for Comparative Literature and Society. Spivak is best known for her contemporary cultural and critical theories to challenge the “legacy of colonialism” and the way readers engage with literature and culture. She often focuses on the cultural texts of those who are marginalized by dominant western culture: the new im/migrant, the working class, women, and other positions of the subaltern. Her best known essay was published in the 1980s with the title “Can the Subaltern Speak?”; it is considered a founding text of postcolonialism.

## Why are These Positions Important?

A very good case of the importance of such a work is the life and poetry of May Ayim (1960–1996) who was an Afro-German poet, educator, and activist. Margaret Catherine MacCarroll argues in her MA thesis “May Ayim: A Woman in the Margin of German Society” defended in 2005 at the Florida State University, College of Arts and Sciences that “although there is a long history of dark-skinned people living in Germany, this study focuses primarily on the period after World War II and examines concepts of culture, race and ethnicity in order to determine what role these concepts play in the experiences of Afro-Germans like Ayim” (MacCarroll 2005, 3).

MacCarroll exposes that Ayim’s life was marked by a sense of displacement without belonging as she tried desperately to find her place in German and African society, and continues that in order “to better understand the atmosphere in which Ayim was raised there will be an ensuing discussion of Germany’s history of racism with particular emphasis on the time period shortly after World War II, the time in which Ayim was born”(MacCarroll 2005, 3).

What is important for this and other dissident positions is that they cannot be contained only in an artistic field but in order to capture their importance and the way they radically intervene in art we have firstly to dismantle a standard division of art disciplines and secondly constantly take into consideration a wide social, political and economic context of art. Therefore Ayim’s tragic life and powerful art cannot be understood outside the genealogy of racism in Germany as exposed by MacCarroll in “*Negerhuren to Mischlingskinder to Afro-Deutsche*” [N\*whores to mongrel children to Afro-Germans] (MacCarroll 2005, 3); a form of racism that did not vanish but was “just” modified. The same processes can be detected in Austrian society.

If I continue in this line of reasoning then Cherríe L. Moraga is perhaps best known for co-editing, with Gloria Anzaldúa, the anthology of feminist thought *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* in 1981 (first edition). Her work is important for establishing a context of work for Chicana feminists and other feminists of color, and among scholars working in Chicano Studies and for the foundation of Third Wave Feminism or Third World Feminism in the United States.

María Lugones is an Argentinian scholar, philosopher, and feminist, who teaches at Binghamton University in New York. Lugones reworked the term “Colonial Matrix of Power,” coined at the end of the 1990s by the Peruvian theorist Aníbal Quijano who used it to identify structures of power, control, and hegemony that emerged during colonialism and are reproduced in the present. Quijano talks about gender as biological but Lugones contends precisely that gender is a social construction. She coined the concept *Colonial/Modern Gender System* (Lugones 2007) to refer to the binary gender system as patriarchal and heterosexual organization of relations. She argues that gender itself is a violent colonial introduction, consistently and contemporarily used to destroy peoples, cosmologies, and communities as the building ground of the “civilized” West.

The Spanish colonizers introduced a gender formation system based on *heterosexuality*, a key term for Lugones (appearing in the title of her seminal text from 2007), and referring to a system that only accepts opposite-sex attraction, opposite-sex relationships, and excludes homosexuality. The “oppressive colonial gender arrangements” or “oppressive organizations

of life” which remained from colonialism have inherently naturalized a gender dichotomy. The same is true for what we have in Africa or in the Former Eastern Europe, that in opposition to the “civilized” West that today is emancipating itself with Queer, the East and the South are pushed to embrace a colonial/modern gender system that is a brutal system built on homophobic and transphobic violent attacks.

Chandra Talpade Mohanty, another prominent voice of dissident feminisms, proposes in her article “Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses” (Mohanty 1984), a shift not only from gender, but also from ethnicity, and thus proposes an anti-white-centrism. She develops the shift by making a reference to Teresa de Lauretis, who developed an anti-hetero-centrism. Mohanty develops a criticism of hegemonic Western scholarship on a big scale in general and of the colonialism in Western feminist scholarship in particular.

If I talk of very recent artistic practices then we have to name Marissa Lôbo, born in Brazil, who lives and works in Austria and is a Black activist and a member of *maiz. Autonomous Center of and for Migrant Women* in Linz. One of Lôbo’s most impressive projects is *Iron Mask, White Torture*, performance and installation, conceived by Marissa Lôbo in 2010. It was presented at the group exhibition “Where do we go from here?” at Secession, in Vienna in 2010. The installation and performance are important as they develop a relation to the role of “empowerment,” “agency.” and “choice” in terms of who speaks, and what is the role of de/colonial epistemology as well as about the role of art institutions such as galleries, museums, etc.

Another project by Marissa Lôbo is the video performance and lecture with the title “Safer sex? Fuck Europe, here I am to stay, Super puta Praderstern” (2013). This work exposes, as stated by Marissa Lôbo, colonial desire and violence, otherness, sexuality, racialized bodies, counter-aesthetics, migrant-precarious bodies, migrant identity, sex work, society’s double morals, the regime of Western body politics, and white supremacy.

Another key project/position in the Austrian context is the “Research Group on Black Austrian History and Presence/Pamoja” with representatives as Araba Evelyn Johnston-Arthur, Belinda Kazeem, Njideka Stephanie Iroh, among others. The pan-African movement in Austria called “Pamoja” brought together young Africans in Austria to fight for their rights and against racism in Europe. The starting point of the group was the violent historical presences of (neo) colonial representations in Austria. The group works with gendered images that according to Araba Evelyn Johnston-Arthur and in reference to Stuart Hall, completely repress any existence of “homemade” neo-colonial imagery in Germany and Austria.<sup>14</sup>

The “Research Group on Black Austrian History and Presence” connects its work to Black, migrant, feminist, postcolonial theorists in German-speaking countries such as Fatima El-Tayeb, Maisha Maureen Eggers, May Ayim, Nicola Lauré Al-Samarai, Encarnación Gutiérrez

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<sup>14</sup> The references are coming from Araba Evelyn Johnston-Arthur who is a social justice activist based in Vienna, born to a Ghanaian family. Johnston-Arthur, as reported by Kali TV, managed to co-found a pan-African movement in Austria called “Pamoja,” which brought together young Africans in Austria to fight for their rights and against racism in Europe. Published online March 26, 2013, at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sliXyjOJ9U&feature=youtu.be>

Rodríguez, Grada Kilomba,<sup>15</sup> and Audre Lorde.<sup>16</sup> The group works to recover suppressed knowledge about Black Austrian history, creating new spaces and thereby situating Black people in Austria differently, namely from a Black perspective that situates itself beyond voyeuristic depictions of the “exotic other.”

In short and in conclusion, why and how to connect the Balkan and ethnicity through queering. A good answer is coming from Stanimir Panayotov and his text “Necropolitics in the East” in the book, volume of selected texts with the title *Border Thinking. Disassembling Histories of Racialized Violence* (forthcoming in 2018).<sup>17</sup> In the very last part of his text that from its starts rethinks alliances as possibility to share vocabularies, and to establish lines of common struggle he states: “the work on Balkanism needs the return of “class” as racialization to survey ethnicity-as-race as a continuity. Something of a merger between (...) Gržinić’s necropolitics can be sensed in El-Tayeb’s proposal of “queering of ethnicity”: “A queering, or ‘creolizing’ of theory, if you will, that works on the intersections of concepts and disciplines, opens the potential of expressing exactly the positionality deemed impossible in dominant European discourses, namely that of Europeans of color.” Panayotov continues that “the contact zone between Gržinić and El-Tayeb (...) is not an academic contest to mark CEE as colonial, but as racist colonial. For if the colonial analytic crumbles each time under silently racialized class and ethnicity, then what is the use of “de-provincializing Europe”?”<sup>18</sup>

Dissident feminisms (in plural) dismantle the one sided history of feminism and put at its center the struggle against normative, discriminative, patriarchal, and racist society of tomorrow that has at its core capitalist neoliberal subjugations based on of exploitation, dispossession, racialization, and privatization. Dissident feminisms in fact opens a way to rethink alliances and transgeopolitical communities.

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<sup>15</sup> See Grada Kilomba’s book *Plantation Memories. Episodes of Everyday Racism* (2008) that deconstructs the normality of racism, making visible what is often made invisible. The book is described as essential to anyone interested in Black studies, postcolonial studies, critical whiteness, gender studies, and psychoanalysis.

<sup>16</sup> Audre Lorde (1934–1992) was a Caribbean-American writer and civil rights activist. She described herself as “Black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet,” that dedicated both her life and work to confronting and addressing the injustices of racism, sexism, and homophobia.

<sup>17</sup> See Marina Gržinić, ed., *Border Thinking. Disassembling Histories of Racialized Violence* Publication Series of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Vol 21., and Sternberg Press, Berlin, forthcoming in 2018.

<sup>18</sup> Stanimir Panayotov refers in his text (forthcoming 2018) in *Border Thinking*, to my part of the book coauthored with Šefik Tatlić and to the text by Fatima El-Tayeb, “Creolizing Europe,” *Manifesta Journal*, no. 17 (2015): 9–12.

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