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Balance Sheet

Theme 1: The situation of lesbians in 21st century capitalism

Introduction by Agathe (France)

Today's debate is the situation of lesbians in the 21st century. Internationally there are various situations and we won't be able to do a global analysis in this presentation. More precisely, I will speak about the situation among lesbians in the French context and Tyas will give theoretical elements on the oppression of lesbians in Indonesia.

In France, we have a contradictory situation for a country that is supposed to be progressive and advanced, or pretends to be. We have same sex marriage but we don't have the same rights as other European countries. Another important feature is the strong rise of conservative ideas as other countries in Europe that developed during the debate on same sex marriage. There's also a strong coming back of familial demands in the LGBT movement.

Where are we in France? Where is the situation of lesbians? The oppression of lesbians is structural and combines homophobia and sexism and does not disappear despite legal progress in equal rights. Homosexuality was decriminalized in 1992 but homophobia exists, physical aggression, violence, etc. These attacks have been rising recently since the debate on same sex marriage. Our sexualities are invisibilized. The last study on lesbophobia in 2014, 15% of lesbians declared having been physically attacked and 69% said they've experienced other forms of lesbophobia.

This year, the demands of the French LGBTI movement have been centered around equal rights and integrationist claims. Unlike the Lesbian movement of the 60s and 70s, which was strongly linked to the feminist movement and campaigned against patriarchy, the family and often against capitalism, the lesbian movement now follows the same adaptation politics of the rest of the LGBT movement following the AIDS years. Desire for equal rights, integration, safety centered around access to marriage, family, and procreation institutions which marked a return to traditionalist views. In 2013, lesbians as all homosexuals gained the wonderful right of getting married and adopting children, in theory. It did enable new rights, such as having an inheritance from a partner when they die, this right to marriage had mostly a symbolic importance rather than material. Eleven nationalities are still deprived of right to same sex marriage because of bilateral agreements with their countries of origin and other rights we still do not have. Same-sex marriage does not establish real rights equal between homosexuals and heterosexuals. Lesbians are still deprived of several rights mainly linked to procreation. Central demand is access to medically assisted procreation (MAP) for all women, lesbian, trans and single.

This demand took on more and more importance these past years and desire for rights re-centered around the family. Today in France, it is reserved for heterosexual couples whether married or not. Because lesbian relationships and sexuality escape men, lesbians are deprived of reproductive rights. We think it is state lesbophobia and sexism. This demand is important, it is also a feminist demand which is directly linked to the right of reproductive rights. There was a lesbian slogan that says we want MAPs so we can abort. It is also about recognizing a reality because lesbians already have kids in France and do it in whatever way they can even if the state forbids it. They go abroad which costs a lot of money. Others have home-made methods which can jeopardize their health. The state endangers the health of lesbians by refusing them appropriate healthcare. When we were debating same-sex marriage 3 or 4 years ago, a law was issued condemning the obstetricians and gynecologists who would give MAP to women to 5 years in prison and 75,000 euros fine. The government announced a few months ago that this law will be rejected, which is purely electoralist with elections coming up.

Also, women are forced to marry if they want to establish their rights in regard to their children—adoption is possible only if they're married. So, some women married, had kids, were forced to go to court in order to adopt their own kid. Some courts refused adoption which creates complicated legal situations.

The weight of right and left wing reactionary conservatives, particularly on the right makes it difficult to obtain those rights. We saw 4 years ago the emergence of a political movement called *Demonstration for All*, in reference to *Marriage for All* proposed by the government. 100,000s went to the streets to shout their anti-LGBT hatred and they falsely equated MAP and surrogacy. This movement pretended to be defending women and the ideal family in order to show how confident they're are. A month ago, during pride, a group of men came to the LGBT neighborhood and stripped one militant bar of its flag. Even after Orlando, though the police reinforced their presence in front of LGBT places, these guys came and did this.

Another reason why we lack rights is the policy of the Socialist Party which is becoming more and more right wing on this issue as others. For several years the SP promised MAP and betrayed this promise, until they finally announced that they won't give it. The PM announced this during a trip to the Vatican. The government was made weaker by right wing protests and argued it was too divisive to go further than same sex marriage. But they still claimed a progressive image even though they didn't meet these demands. Another reason why we didn't get MAP is that the French LGBT movement is divided, uncoordinated and dominated by reformism. The coalition, the Inter-LGBT that is the leadership of the movement has a reformist strategy and is led by cis-gay men which explains why after obtaining same-sex marriage they stopped fighting. Right after

Orlando, there was a threat for pride to be cancelled in Paris and the leadership of this coalition accepted that the route of the demonstration was seriously curtailed and heavily surrounded by police.

Lastly the lesbian movement is not very well organized. We have a lot of small collectives that do great things but don't last. We also have a coordination of lesbian organizations but it is quite isolated from the movement as it is against prostitution and surrogacy. The lesbian movement has weak links with feminist movement and it is difficult for feminist movement to embrace lesbian demands and advocate for them on a grand scale. It is important to see these last years that there is a growth of LGBT struggle and radical anti-capital trend in the movement. Within that current, lesbians and trans who were radicalized during this time were instrumental in the growth of the struggle again, even though they are not visible. We also tried to re-fund the movement with some kind of LGBT convention. It did not have many results but was a good thing to do. There is a mobilization that happens mostly in the press; doctors wrote a manifesto in the press for the right to MAP in reference to what happened in abortion rights in the 70s. There is an increasingly radicalized sector of LGBTIQ movement in which lesbians are more important, which is gaining confidence and taking initiatives and systematically linking trans and lesbian demands. There is a real will to not fragment the demands of those most oppressed of the movement. There is also the will to combine this with social and economic issues. There were pink blocks in demonstration against labor reform and the state of emergency.

Also, for the second time this year, we had a night pride which is contradictory and complementary to the official pride. It was more anti-racist and social rights march as well and there were many women and lesbians in it. We actively sought to build a radical block, women in pride in Paris, and other cities would like to do the same. Radical block gathered unions parties and orgs that wanted to oppose the government, it worked quite well. A lot of older activists said it won't work, but we had 2000 people in this radical block with a lot of lesbians. Demands against instrumentalizing lesbians in favor of the government, which is a very important success. We want to pursue this and continue doing street initiatives without the institutional movement and increase the balance of forces for lesbian and trans demands.

For LGBT movement, we need to reunite the movement and struggle against the division of the community and try to clarify the deep strategic disagreements that exist and the necessity of building strong links between lesbian and trans movements that are two segments always left aside. Within this movement, we need to build an anti-capitalist class struggle current and reinforce the idea that we need to overthrow the capitalist system because we won't end capitalism without ending heteropatriarchy. Right now, the

issue for us is how do we build a long-term LGBT movement that manages to go beyond the immediate family centered demands. How will we put these struggles in the center in a complicated political context—such as the state of emergency since November.

Introduction by Thyas (Indonesia)

In the history of Indonesian culture, homosexuality and practices that reflect a diversity of sexuality and gender identities are not new, nor a result of westernization. In Indonesia, there are many traditional local terms term for homosexual practices. This reflects the diversity of the culture. Javanese culture has the term Wandu (wanita dudu = 'not a woman') as a name for a man who dresses as a woman. Documentation about homosexuality can be found in the text of the Javanese kingdoms such as Babad and Lontar.

The Bugis people of South Sulawesi have five different gender identities; uruane (male), makunrai (female), calalai (women dressed as men), calabai (men dressed as women, bissu (gender neutral, two spirits). According to the La Galigo manuscript bissus have a very high authority and are deeply respected.

These examples illustrate that the native culture in Indonesia has a diversity of sexuality and gender identities. However, there are many lot of restraints and controls on sexuality.

Colonialism was a contributing factor to the destruction of this diversity of expressions. Colonialism cannot be described as only '3G deprivation' (gold, glory and gospel), because a characteristic of colonialism is the inauguration of a superior identity which also conquers epistemologically.

This practice is not to simply remove the existing episteme, but to study and then intervene to construct a dichotomy that not only counterposes colonizer and colonized, but also legitimizes superiority based on sex, gender, race, religion etc. through a certain kind of knowledge production. Take for the example of the discourse about binary dichotomy; male-female, moral-immoral, religious-pagan, normal-abnormal, modern-traditional. This dichotomous discourse was deliberately constructed by colonialism, not to civilize the colonized but rather to emphasize the superiority of one human over another.

Talking about lesbian identities, of course we understand that women experience multilayered oppression. Recognizing and understanding the oppression of human sexuality, and the link between the oppression of homosexuals and LGBTIQ and the

oppression of women are key issues for the liberation struggles of women and of LGBTIQ. In patriarchal society, women's bodies and standards of beauty, are regulated in the name of morality, religion and state policy. This gives many advantages to industrial capitalism. History shows that since the transfer of the ownership of the means of production from society into the hands of (male) individuals in agricultural community, women's bodies are not under the control of women themselves.

Capitalism today strategically uses patriarchy to exploit women's labor and subdue women as sexual object for the sake of enlarging capital. In capitalism, human sexuality is not a personal question. Patriarchal institutions are perpetuated by the (hetero, monogamous, patriarchal) "nuclear family". With the emergence of private property of the means of production and the formation of class-society, women become oppressed as they lose power over the production process. Heterosexuality was implanted as hegemonic ideology in order to maintain the continuity of the ruling classes.

Norms of heterosexuality which are closely associated with the institution of patriarchy (which we know as 'family') gave birth to heterosexism that oppresses in all areas; politics, employment, education- up to and including the most intimate of aspects of daily life such as religion, culture, or other social relationships.

Sexual control results from the continued perpetuation of patriarchy and imposes heteronormativity. The patriarchal family is an institution that institutionalizes the oppression of women and the female reproductive function for the interest of capital accumulation.

Some examples of the exploitation of Indonesian lesbian women are the following situations:

- Forced marriages; 'all' women should marry → not being married is a stigma, so lesbians lead two lives; are married to men but also have same-sex relations.
- Corrective Rape is not uncommon, and is often committed by the next of kin of the victim.
- Lesbians must their identity in at work as homosexuality is rejected by society

Situation of the Movement

- There is little connection between the women's movement and the lesbian movement; heteronormativity is widely seen as part of patriarchal oppression.

- The LGBT movement is evolving and there are many emerging LGBT organizations. But it is not yet a widely supported movement, and the Left movements in Indonesia do not support the LGBT movement.

Political situation

- Indonesia is a predominantly Muslim country and is supposed to uphold the values of the 'family' and conservative sexuality. In Indonesia, there is no special law that prohibits LGBT but society is hostile. LGBT issues are always related to issue of sexual activity, the domain of religion and morals.
- Indonesia's political elite, whether they are democrats, moderates or conservatives, don't support LGBT's. They are all equally conservative. From the end of January 2016 until mid-March 2016, Indonesia saw a series of homophobic comments from state officials [1]. These comments had a considerable impact, many LGBT events were attacked, forcing people to organize in secret. The rejection of homosexuality in Indonesia of course has a negative impact on LGBT people and at the local level we see more regulation that attacks LGBT people.

There has never been true equality or freedom for the LGBTIQ community under capitalism.

The political struggle over the body is also a struggle against capitalism and against state control over the body. The struggle for the right over the body / sexuality exceeds identity struggles, and is a struggle to achieve a free human sexuality.

Discussion

Feminist demands in Indonesia focused on sexual violence (same as in Lebanon). In Lebanon, there is no 'lesbian community' or lesbian demands, lesbians are invisible in this way, but they purposefully adopt a strategy of 'ambiguous visibility' and are present in many political groups and movements across the board. It's important to get the whole of the feminist movement to see attacks on lesbians as attacks on all women.

In France, there are 2 questions that divide the feminist movement, the veil and prostitution. Because of this, there is one march on March 8 by the institutional movement against prostitution. Then there is another one which is in favor of supporting all women, sex workers and others...and in this current, we see many women and LGBTIQ persons. So, we see all these divisions in the LGBTIQ movement and they multiply. Some issues, such as surrogacy, are divisive but it is not a priority at the moment and doesn't divide us.

Some divisions are not necessary and we can have debates about them. There are also generational questions. On the divisions on sex work, this issue was mainly raised by trans people into the movement, and not through lesbians or feminism. Some critiques are the high focus on MAP at the expense of other health-related issues. We don't all agree on whether we should focus on family-centered demands or more anti-capitalism platform.

Theme 2: Trans/Intersex issues

Introduction by Alice (Portugal)

Firstly, I must start by saying that this intervention is made from the perspective of a white person from the North. I feel this is relevant because it was shaped by my experience, which would have been different were I positioned elsewhere in this axis of oppression. We must strive to decolonize our thoughts and discourses, and work so that our speeches and practices don't perpetuate colonialism. I consider it essential to remind myself of where exactly I come from, what privileges I possess and what limitations that brings to my understanding of the world.

Most of this intervention will consist of the analysis of cissexist and transphobic discursive practices and the need to fight them (especially within the queer community).

Definitions:

Cissexism- The systemic structure of oppression that holds cis bodies and identities as the norm, therefore privileging them.

Transphobia- Consequence of cissexism: the structure that sees trans bodies and identities as somehow "wrong", therefore striving to correct and/or delete them

On trans terminology, then:

I have a problem with the term "transsexual": it is a medical word, that perpetuates medical power over trans bodies. Some trans people may claim it, and I respect that, but in general, we should use the word trans when referring to trans people.

Analyzing speech in feminist contexts:

On reproductive rights, when addressing uterus-related demands (such as abortion or PMA) feminist movements tend to categorize the political subjects of this fight as "women". This discursive practice perpetuates symbolic transphobia, in two ways:

- Utilizing the word "woman" (in this context or others) to mean "cis woman" naturalizes the idea that trans women are not "actually" women
- Utilizing the word "woman" to mean "people with uterus" is transphobic towards trans Assigned Female At Birth (AFAB) individuals, excluding them from the fight for reproductive rights.

As a practical example: Portugal recently passed a law on MAP. The fight for this law was built on this binary discourse that excludes trans men and non-binary people with uterus' because it talks about "MPA for all women". The law passed mentions "MPA for all

women". Consequently, AFAB people with functioning uteruses who have changed their legal gender marker to "Male" and wish to access MPA are easily legally excluded because of the law's cissexist text.

We need to create a trans Inclusive discourse on reproductive rights

Throughout the debates in this seminar, I have heard the word "women" being used both to mean "women" and to mean "cis women". We must say exactly what we mean; this kind of speech practice has negative consequences. Let us not naturalize identities, let us free them instead.

On the Portuguese Gender Identity Law

Until 2011, the legal procedures regarding gender identity were similar to the standard of many countries (involving forced sterilization, genital surgery and proof of it, legal procedures and the agreement of a judge) in order to legally change one's gender marker.

In 2011, Portugal passed our "Lei da Identidade de Género" (Gender Identity Law), considered very progressive at the time, even on an international scale. It was the first law worldwide that did not require any kind of hormonal or surgical intervention to change your legal gender marker.

All the law demands for this change is a diagnosis of "gender dysphoria". This is in itself still a problem, maintaining pathologization (and consequently medical power) over trans bodies.

I worked with the Left Block, a left wing political party, to create a proposal to update the Gender Identity Law, built on the basis of self-determination and depathologization. I will focus on the technical and legal difficulties we encountered in this process.

It was easy to write depathologization and self-determination into the law. However, the attempt destroys the binary in this context was very difficult.

Example of binary in the Portuguese legal context (using an example related to health insurance):

A friend of mine, who is a trans man, wanted a hysterectomy. He went and had this hysterectomy in the private health sector. His insurance made it possible to was possible to argue that the removal was related to uterine pain (which existed), so the insurance covered it.

However, a problem surfaced, because this surgery (which is classified as “gynecology”) was marked specifically as something regarding to people marked as “female”. Since this friend had changed his legal status already, he was classified legally as “male”. The insurance refused to cover the costs of the surgery because his insurance was a “male” one. Through a legal fight, he was able to force the insurance company to cover the costs.

There is a Portuguese law about naming new born children that specifically states “the name cannot leave any ambiguity regarding the sex of the child”. This is accompanied by two lists of authorized names, “male” and “female”. Because of this regulation, we found it terribly difficult to conceptualize the possibility of adding a third gender marker.

The gender non-specific law we were trying to write, with language meant so that it could help anyone that wished to access this law, was not compatible with the whole Portuguese legal system (because it is built on a binary notion of gender, that is specifically encrusted in the law).

Our demands ended up being:

- Access to change of name and gender marker free of charge
- No one can be forced to undergo any kind of unwanted intervention, be it hormonal or surgical
- Anyone who wishes to access any kind of intervention, be it hormonal or surgical, has that right
- The access of anyone residing in Portugal to this law. In this case, it would be impossible to change name and/or gender in the legal papers of the country of origin for those without Portuguese nationality, but they can access medical treatment and name and gender change in their papers of residency. (sadly, this law probably could not cover those who are not “legally” in the country).
- The law mentions only “people”, and not “women” or “men”
- Prohibition of non-consent forced surgeries on intersex children

Introduction by Vreer (Netherlands)

In this introduction, I want to give a concise overview of some important issues in trans* struggles over the world, focusing on Europe wide but mostly the Netherlands. The reason for taking on the whole world is to give a more 'global' overview. Comrades from different regions will be most aware how the situation is in their region. People in different

regions have different issues; my issues are often not directly your issues and vice versa. On the other hand, there is a lot that connects us and trans* universally are - in all our differences - among the lowest valued social groups. We are among the most persecuted and killed groups with the least resources. Only in some regions on the map we can organize. The Americas, Europe, South-Eastern Africa, parts of East and South Asia. Factors influencing this are economic development, (partially alien) religious fundamentalism, political repression, wars, civil violence, hetero patriarchy, local agendas, imperialist interests (be they merely political or also material).

Up to now we know of some 2,200 killings of trans* people since 2009. The tip of the iceberg because the map has only reasonable amount of information from certain regions. Beyond that: how do you count, who do you count? Does the black queen who sees themselves as gay count as gay or trans? Are they seen anyway? And those of us who have no choice but staying hidden, as gay, homosexual or not even that?

There is no global unified trans* movement, not even a "QUILTBAG" movement. There are a couple of organizations that work only or explicitly on QUILTBAG rights, like ILGA and its regional chapters, GATE on trans* and inter*, ARC International. TGEU, on the side. Plus Amnesty, HRW, Outright Intl who all fight on the sort of global level. Rights based, UN focus. So, they were on NGO level behind the to be appointed Independent Expert on SOGIE (Sexual Orientation. Gender Identity and Expression) rights violations who will be appointed for three years. On these NGO levels, at least some ILGA chapters are active on regional political level to try and raise the protection levels for BRIE (Body, Relationship, Identity, Expression) reasons, mostly ILGA Europe, Pan Africa ILGA nowadays. Of ILGA N-America little is heard and ILGA Asia seems to be mostly doing regional capacity building. Like does ILGA-Europe and TGEU. Though the latter engage intensively in advocacy also.

Thanks to the successes that we have on several diplomatic levels and the lack of success and funding for others, the debate on queering human rights, queering the struggles and who is included in the universal we, whose bodies matter, which struggles are eligible (Butler), practically does not advance much beyond academic debate.

Where there is a - sort of - global fight, it is because the issues have a global aspect. Like the fight for replacement of gender identity issues in the International Classification of Diseases of the WHO, that needs to change the coming two years. Or earlier mentioned structural attention for LGBT discrimination and violence on the UN level. Intersex is not really part of that fight but on the other hand intersex activists are very good at using the UN treaty bodies to their advantage: France got three slaps in the face this year (CAT, CRC and CEDAW, children's rights treaty and women's rights convention), others get slapped by UNCAT, the anti-torture committee or even the CRPD, disability rights treaty.

Also, the fight against the conservative and religious backlash is a globalized one. While each region has its specific ways in which the backlash is pushed forward, the right is now strongly advancing its reactionary agenda wherever it can.

When I start looking at **Europe** - the 49 countries of the Council of Europe, the situation is very diverse. This has to do with issues like economic development, political will, strength of national movements, how ingrained transphobia is, how strong religion's influence on politics is, how well developed sexual and gender rights struggle. Let's be clear: nowhere trans* people are safe, no country on earth is absolutely safe. The Netherlands has had four killings among which two murders the last ten years. The UK, that was the first country to abolish the need for somatic medical interventions as a condition for legal gender recognition within the gender binary in 2004, is a hugely transphobic country. Malta has the best legislation in Europe since about a year, but when you're a black refugee and trans, life is still complicated.

The Council of Europe - set up as a post-war (WW2) human rights organization - has as best tool the ECvHR with the ECtHR as its defender, but the laws most important to trans people fall for a large part outside of the Council's jurisdiction: personal and family law. The ECtHR is only very slowly getting more progressive on privacy and non-discrimination, as magistrates grant countries a lot of interpretation space. Next to that its means for enforcements are rather weak. Only after the second term of non-fulfilment fines can be handed out and one is very hesitant in that, though the EU is worse because of its required unanimity. Policy wise things go pretty slow and often only non-enforceable measures get through. But still we get brilliant resolutions from PACE, the EU-Parliament supports trans* rights. Like in many places, you can get parliament on our side but government is not really interested.

Attempts to erase transgender from human rights legislation, and wider sexual orientation and gender identity are legion these days and the targeted backlash absolutely needs to be addressed strongly and swiftly. Since 2009 activists gather to regionally fight the backwardness but still the backlash is only getting stronger and we seem not to be able to effectively counter it. This has little to do with the arguments and everything with the diplomatic and financial power of the biggest protagonists of the backlash that do not get enough of a financial and diplomatic counter from the countries that can.

In Europe trans* struggles are mostly national, for decent gender recognition legislation and legal protections against violence and discrimination. 60% of trans women in the Fundamental Rights Agency survey on trans* in Europe report harassment in the workplace. Protections or not. Depending on the country the most urgent issues are legal gender recognition - more and more including "3d gender" options, protection against

violence (from civil society or the state), non-discrimination legislation that is enforced, access to good quality and non-judgmental nor prejudicial healthcare (both general and transition related). Transgender people appear to be the only group in Europe subject to legally prescribed, state-enforced sterilization, in 15 out of 28 EU countries. And there are still countries with utterly absurd measures like up to six weeks psychiatric quarantine, as in the Ukraine. More and more countries think of adopting the Swedish model on sex work or prohibit sex work anyway.

I see a stronger influence of the trans* and LGBT movements on governments at the European levels (EU and Council of Europe) which results in better policies for trans* people and LGBT persons in general. Both ILGA Europe and TGEU are really starting to do their work from an intersectional perspective. ILGA more cautiously than TGEU it seems. In the reader, you find a recent speech by TGEU ED Julia Ehrt indicating this. Nonetheless it will take some years before TGEU can take that up for real. Before trans* becomes mostly our specialty and we would speak out also directly against reactionary housing and workers politics.

Similar developments are not yet happening in the Netherlands. Here trans* politics is mostly engaging with state and civil society. Getting better legal gender recognition procedures, better employment situation (40% un- or under employment) and protection against discrimination.

The other issue is getting good transition supporting healthcare. The Gender Identity Clinic we have here is arrogant and does not listen to the users. Long waiting times are a familiar phenomenon and providers are known to be clinically skeptical towards non-binary identifications. Medical assistance is available to a limited extent, mostly for 'transsexuals' (gender migrants). The Amsterdam gender clinic strives for an oligopoly and does not sufficiently respect patients' rights. Thanks to (historically) early medicalization there is not much trans autonomy or radical consciousness.

QTI People of color are doubly invisible in the Netherlands: in their own ethnic communities and in the dominant white society. Other major problems include: violence against all LGBTIQ people (physical, social and psychological); huge racism among white LGBTIQ people against QTPOC, and widespread Islamophobia; discrimination on the labor market; invisibility of queers and gender non-conforming people. All these problems are aggravated by class. They are very much starting their own emancipation and mostly on a pretty low level. Rather a-political, more on a self-help level, pretty subaltern. Some QTPOC navigate the systems on their own or with their own community and are more active with other queer and racialization issues.

Outside a small queer scene, intersecting social justice issues are neglected by the movement in the Netherlands. Queer is small with a couple of events per year, like a racism month and the Queeristan festival. For a real queer struggle that respects its constituting groups, it is essential the cisqueers start taking up some feminist and anti-racist attitude of questioning their personal and social practices. To get some efficiency we would need some four to six Queeristans a year (where a lot of introspection and dialogues goes on) and the always necessary recruiting. And they would have to result in a broad radical movement.

Introduction by Loé (France)

This session is also about intersex people, that is to say, people born with sexual characteristics, primary, secondary, biological, genetic, which do not conform to binary standards sexes recognized by the medical profession. I will make a brief review of the concept of political identity, then explain some intersex realities, and finally I will return to the current struggles and how they relate with other fights.

1. Political identity:

It's important to begin by returning to the notion of political identity because it is a concept that is often removed when talking about intersex issues.

I am a member of the International Organization of intersex, the main international network of intersex people.

What I mean when I say that intersex, or intersex condition is not "per se" an identity? This is related to the definition of a political identity. If I am homosexual, or white, it is a political identity, because these criteria - our sexual orientation and melanin levels - are given a meaning in our social system. They work beyond their physical reality, at a political level - social, economic, symbolic, psychological This seems probably obvious but it's always useful to recall: these arbitrarily assigned values are created and held to legitimize the oppression and exploitation by which certain social groups receive material benefits at the expense of other groups.

So, a political identity is an identity that works politically, it is a feature we will consider as relevant to create discrimination, oppression or exploitation. It is also a starting point for struggles, since this is a collective oppression situation.

So is intersex. Intersex, contrary to what many would have you believe, is not a problem in itself. The lack of fitting to the standards of criteria for the two sexes only pose a problem

to the extent that society establishes gender and assigns criteria standards. In itself, intersex is not a medical problem and would not require specific treatment.

To summarize: intersex is a political identity because it stems from a system of oppression: the heteropatriarchal system. This system, as we know, is the appropriation of the body and the work of the social group of women by the social group of men. It is thus clear that it is absolutely necessary to decide (so to say) between what is a man (to be favored) and what is a woman (to be operated). The gray area that intersex people represent is a constant reminder that the heteropatriarchy is absolutely not a natural and biological, but a social construction. It is therefore necessary, in a heteropatriarchal view, to draw the line.

This is where the heart of the oppression of intersex is. Ongoing efforts and extreme violence to assign us to one sex or another, to maintain the myth of complementary and hierarchical binary gender. So, I repeat: intersex is a political identity, not a medical condition.

2. Intersex realities

It would be particularly wrong to consider intersex as a medical condition, when it is a social construction, because the term is actually an umbrella term. That is to say, it brings together very different realities. The first thing to point out is that it is important that non-intersex people (dyadic people) don't use the term "hermaphrodite". In humans, there is no recorded case of hermaphroditism, that is to say, person with two different "complete" genitals produced two different types of gametes.

To understand what intersex is, we must start by looking at what defines gender in contemporary medicine. There are several criteria: external genitals, visible at birth or which then develop in childhood and adolescence, and internal, secondary sexual characteristics: breasts, build, hair ... Hormone levels, due to the different activity or inactivity of certain glands, which can affect other organs, and then chromosomes.

There may be variations in each of these levels or several at a time. The characteristic of intersex is that these variations are congenital, that is to say included in our bodies and not subsequently caused by deliberate taking hormones or operations. There is an estimated 2% of intersex people in the world population. This figure means persons identified as such by the medical profession. According to a German study conducted by a medical team from 2005 to 2007, 81% of them will suffer one or more operations.

Of course, we are more than 2%. There are people who are not identified by the medical establishment or because they underwent operations which are not explicitly linked to intersex conditions (including surgeries on sexual organs). In medical classification, since 2006 we are placed among the "Disorders of Sex Development". This means that we are regarded as patients, while our bodies are no less healthy than others. The direct result is sometimes eugenics (selective abortion), and for those who live the "medical treatment" of our "pathologies".

Concretely this means extremely numerous and invasive tests, genital mutilation, or even more invasive surgeries to remove portions of our genitals, sudden hormonal treatments based on testosterone or estrogen and progesterone to transform our bodies to make them conform to standard. It is often these very "treatments" that cause us the most pain and health problems.

These procedures are carried out generally before adulthood (as they relate to the birth, development of childhood and puberty) which means that an intersex person is unlikely to have given informed consent - and I repeat that there is no emergency or medical necessity - and their parents / themselves are often afraid of the doctors.

Other discrimination come into play: for the birth or adoption, for sports ...

Finally, the fact that for some people and some of us, we obviously *let out* of the binary gender causes stigmatization, social rejection, professional difficulties, emotional etc.

Account must be taken of all of this to understand the very high levels of depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, difficulty in having a satisfying emotional and sexual life, social isolation, suicide, hitting intersex people. Being treated like a monster, a "freak" since childhood or adolescence, when we build our identities, is never trivial.

Another element to keep in mind is that even if our bodies do not reflect the expected binary, we are always educated in this system so we were assigned a gender identity "man" or "woman." This fact is used as an argument for mutilation by those who claim to care about our welfare and our correspondence to the kind that we assigned. This is circular reasoning: because a girl is supposed to have sex like this, we must transform the sex of that child for her to be a girl. This is absurd, dishonest and criminal.

It therefore includes the problem of firm and legal assignments gender: intersex people who would later change their legal gender find themselves facing the same difficulties as trans people.

Finally, the last question is important for intersex realities: the one of our sexual orientations and our gender identities. The common experience of intersex is of medical invalidation of their bodies and their gender, so perhaps it is rarer (no statistics, this is a purely empirical interpretation) that we felt comfortable and legitimate in the gender that is assigned us - maybe we're less often cisgender. *I refer you to Article Hida Viloria and Dana Zzyym.* As to sexual orientation, it seems as diverse in our ranks as elsewhere.

3. Fighting and links with other struggles

The specificity of the struggle of intersexes is the relationship with non-consensual transformation of our bodies. Therefore, we often judge the progress of the rights of intersexes based on the laws on childhood genital mutilation. Thus, it is now that Malta is a leader with its Gender Identity, Gender Expression Characteristics and Sex Act of April 2015 which makes illegal any surgery based on social factors (not medical). Note also that the option of "third gender" as it is sometimes proposed is not considered satisfactory if it is made mandatory for intersex children. This is also why there is an international and internationalist dimension strong enough in the intersex activism.

Our networks are still low: it is mainly OII (international organization of intersex, which is divided by geographical areas (Francophonie, Spanish-speaking, USA, South Africa, China, Australia, Philippines, Europe, Belgium, Scandinavia, Italy, Germany, Great Britain, Netherlands, Austria...), the degree of structure is very variable and mainly operated in the network. We also have the International Intersex Forum Douarnenez, every year in June, and the International Intersex Forum supported by ILGA. We also rely on explicit recommendations against the mutilation of intersex persons set by the UN Committee against torture and inhuman treatment and the High Commissioner for human rights.

Finally, we see that intersex issues are articulated with other struggles and other important issues. On the medical side, on consent, they relate to the struggles for patient's rights, to disabled people, to the concept of a "healthy body" and to the concept of "mental health". On the legal side, about state, they are connected to the struggle of trans people to change civil status on request and to delete any mention of gender on official documents. In family and educational spheres, they relate to the oppression of children. Incidentally, they are also related to environmental struggles as endocrine disruptors may play an important role for intersex. Finally, in a general and theoretical sense, they are closely connected to feminism and abolition of heteropatriarchal genders.

So, there are three issues that could be discussed:

- What is the situation of intersex in different countries, and what is their relationship with the LGBT movements and struggles?
- How intersex situation can help us rethink sex and gender and how is that politically useful?
- How could your organization be involved in intersex frameworks especially internationally?

Theme 3: The role of LGBTIQ in the contemporary uprisings

Introduction by Nadja (Brazil)

The presentation started with a documentary titled <June> - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJqe9FF1CJo>

There have been gigantic demonstrations to fight for more social rights such as human mobility and political reform. We not only demanded genuine democracy but demonstrated against mega-events such as the World Cup and Olympic Games, pointing out that people have been made homeless by the greed of these projects.

The LGBTIQ movement in Brazil mobilized thousands of people to remove the protestant fundamentalist MP Marco Feliciano from power. We denounced the fact that the demands of the LGBTIQ movement was set aside by the popular governments of Lula and Dilma who have made political alliances with conservative parties to ensure their re-election, these alliances are dangerous for the working class as corruption and private economic interest are strengthened among the protestant fundamentalists. At the same time, many leftist organizations are leading the fight against religious fundamentalism in the congress.

The conservative sector became a fundamental piece of the institutional coup that happened recently against Dilma. This sector instrumentalized homophobia/transphobia and sexism to obtain a greater number of votes, and we have been the group that fought most in this country for these struggles in the past years.

The workers' party in government co-opted social movements to undermine mass demonstrations. This process did not only happen in Brazil but also throughout Latin America. Now we see a new generation of activists that didn't witness the PT when it was first born from the social struggles of the 1980's, and therefore don't have the same references to the old methods of mobilization. These activists came into activity at a time of dissatisfaction with a left government that never accomplished radical reforms to the unequal structure of Latin American societies.

In Brazil, this new generation includes a huge number of LGBT activists that we are all part of. I was a movement that went to the streets with the resources and political parties it had together with the feminist movement. We didn't just advance the debate that would become central to the political parties but we also advanced the understanding that the LGBT people and working class have common enemies.

As the sectors of the right started to undermine the direction of the movement, we set for the political direction that would follow. When the demonstrations were happening the LGBTIQ movement had an important role in the debate and discourse. Demonstrators replaced homophobic and sexist slogans with non-violent ones.

The complexity of political movements led by heterogeneous actors and only people who belong to political organizations have the right to express themselves.

The consolidation of the institutional coup is connected to the advance of other neo-liberal processes in Latin America such as in Argentina. The role of the LGBTIQ community is very important now. In Brazil, the PT government banned the development of policies for sexual diversity in schools.

The current scenario is that there is an interim president who refuses to receive any representations from LGBT people though Brazil is one of the most violent countries in the world for LGBTIQ people. Hundreds of people have died through hate crimes in the past few years. The life expectancy of Trans women is 35 years. There is also social violence.

The virtual arena is one of the most important aspects of our activism. It grows in times of democratic instability. Many young LGBTIQ activists have been formed in a process that takes place away from the influence of political parties.

The consolidation of our sexual identities also influences the way we do politics. In a country with high rate of femicide and killings of LGBTIQ people, especially trans, it is very difficult for lesbian women and black women and trans to have a say in politics, and as a result we experience deep divisions inside the movement. The movement is more and more fragmented in internal debates, and there are many issues around the right to speak and be heard. This issue is seen across political movements of LGBTIQ people worldwide.

Although there are no organized groups yet gay figures appear in the media with a European homonationalist discourse. However, PSOL has been consolidated as an unquestionable reference, we attract thousands of LGBTIQ activists who are trying to find a political space to organize. Our deputy is the only out gay politician in the country. Insurgencia is FI's section in Brazil and it is considered one of the only organizations that centralizes the issues of transphobia, intersection with eco-socialism and organizes elderly LGBTIQ communities. However, we still have a lot of challenges. Most importantly, we should not lose sight of the class struggle and the commitment to build a socialist society.

Introduction by Anthony (Lebanon)

This presentation will address the situation in the Middle East and North Africa (Lebanon, Syria and Egypt) during the uprisings, as it relates to the LGBTIQ movement and people. Throughout, I will be pointing to two directions of LGBTIQ visibility and discourses around sexual politics: One is the complicated process of visibility from the ground-up (such as with the presence of LGBTIQ organizations and people with non-conforming sexualities and genders in revolutionary movements) and another is a politics of visibility imposed by regimes through targeting, mediatizing and demonizing people with non-conforming sexualities and genders (such as with Sisi's regime in Egypt and ISIS's mediatized attacks on gay men in Syria).

Lebanon has the largest and most visible organizing from LGBTIQ and queer radical feminists as well as women's rights. Egypt has some organizations but not specifically LGBTIQ although there are many LGBTIQ activists who take part in the different movements. Whereas in Syria LGBTIQ organizing is the least visible, which has mostly to do with the Assad regime that prohibited organizing around sexuality and gender or any political organizing around social or economic issues.

In fact, the uprisings themselves, with the participation of queers and LGBTIQ, brought the question of sexuality and gender to the table. For example, in Egypt, sexual harassment and gang rape increased massively during a specific moment of the revolutionary process. Even though women in Egypt have organized for decades around the issues of sexual harassments and rape, this upsurge in gender-based violence during the uprisings led to new organizing and actions among the activists.

Women, LGBTIQ people and queers heavily participated in the mobilizations although not through visible LGBT organizations but as part of the revolutionary process. This is not to say that the revolution created a safe place or to give an idealized image of sexual liberation, but the participation of the working class in the revolution to remove the regime opened new spaces for people organizing from different perspectives.

As the counter-revolutionary forces, in Egypt, started to take ground, massive violence (sexual harassment, gang rapes, etc...) erupted and this led LGBT people and women to shift their focus from overthrowing the regime to security. For example, during operation anti-Sexual Harassment, groups of activists divided into teams that worked together to ensure security and protection of protesters. Activists had to negotiate a space that suddenly became extremely violent towards women and people with non-conforming

sexualities and gender expressions. It is clear that as counter-revolutionary forces rose so did the attack on women and LGBTIQ people. To add to this, militants point out that the regime thugs would go down and instigate confrontations between protestors and the police.

The important question that this opens up is the role of LGBT and queer people during these confrontations and how that can quickly change and has to change from working against the regime to security and protection and how this undermines our ability to organize for our agenda. We could learn a lot from Egyptian comrades about strategies used on the ground.

In Syria, the situation is different but it is undeniable that issues of sexuality have been highly visible even if LGBTIQ organizations haven't. Women have been heavily participating in the protests even though public space is usually restricted for them (This includes working in safe houses, organizing dissidents and doing a lot of work that isn't so visible).

Reports have come in of a massive imprisonment of women and sex workers; one of the first populations targeted by the crackdown of the Assad regime. The latest appearance of sexual politics in Syria comes with ISIS and images of the Islamic State's attacks on women and people with non-conforming sexualities and gender expressions. The mass wave of sexual harassment meant to prevent and stop the participation of women in the revolutionary process and this was indicated by different reports.

Moving back to Egypt, during the time of Morsi, state attacks on queer people were not as prominent as under Mubarak nor similar to what we see now from attacks on gay baths to mass imprisonment and incarceration, but it's important to know that the Muslim Brotherhood's ability to perform such actions was not there. On the other hand, the military rule of Sissi shows a complete erasure of any kind of activism around sexuality and gender.

Targeted attacks on homosexuals and trans women and the mediatization of these attacks from the Egyptian state are in order to show the ruling regime as defender of the nation and the authority that protects society from western dissidence and immorality. In this case, it is not LGBT and queers who are bringing out visibility, it is the state that is making sexuality a political issue through attacking queers and mediatizing them. Sissi's regime acts out of a need to exert authority and control, including moral authority and control, and fear of moral criticism.

Concerning Islamic movements around the world: The analysis on ISIS is still very weak. We need to understand more why ISIS sensualizes the killing of gays so much and attempts to purge Syria and the Levant from these identities, and why it does it in this way. However, the main debate among socialists revolves around the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Muslim brotherhood is now being targeted by the government, they are experiencing massacre and incarceration. There is a tendency among some comrades to turn this defense against incarceration into an apologetic discourse in favor of the Muslim brotherhood. LGBT and the women's movement in this sense have not fed into this debate, in terms of how an alliance with the Muslim brotherhood may not be as critical of issues that have to do with women's struggle for liberation and issues and sexuality.

And we end with the Lebanese context. The problem here is whether we can even say that we have an LGBT movement in Lebanon. What we can see is a process of demobilization, de-legitimization and NGOization. Grass root initiatives have disappeared and there are today less space for LGBT and queers than there was 5 years ago.

Gay men's organizations (which call themselves LGBT organizations) have moved from mobilizing people towards giving them services, which is critical in a country with no access to public healthcare and with lots of policing, but it becomes very problematic when the movement turns into service provision and people are treated as beneficiaries. This is part of a larger discourse that claims that the Arab working class and the Lebanese working class is incapable of understanding issues (they're homophobic, transphobic and barbaric) of sexuality and gender. We can see signs that the overall strategy has been changed from above whereby some organizations strike deals with the sectarian ruling parties by treating one of them as more progressive than others to get support from the US department of state.

We have seen over the last year a revival of political organizing on sexuality in completely different spaces than we have seen before. This shows a positive side of the collapse of the older groups because this created a gap from which the will and desire to form political alliances and mobilize again in groups that propose a radical agenda on sexuality were born. In fact, the only united front, born out of the garbage movement, that took a very political stance and was vocal against Hezbollah was also the one that was the most radical in terms of sexuality issues.

Discussion

Discussion on the challenge in integrating gender and sexuality issues on the agenda of the left on one hand, and bringing class struggle to LGBTIQ organizations on the other. In many countries today, we cannot claim that an LGBT movement exists in the old sense. For example, in the 70s and 80s in Mexico, there was still an LGBT movement constantly making demands across different social struggles. It was not legitimized inside the worker's movement but it was recognized as an actor that participated in the struggle. However, this weakened with time. Today, LGBTIQ issues do not exist on the agenda of many organizations in the country. We cannot speak of LGBT movements outside the existing dynamics and relations with other social movements.

Relations with the Left have often been characterized by tension and lack of solidarity. For example, in France, the leftist movement can be described as virile with comrades often holding and chanting sexist and homophobic slogans. This has also been the case in Brazil and the Arab region during the uprisings. The Stalinist tradition still dominates leftist organizations in the Arab world, and the discourse on alienating the working class by bringing up sexuality and gender exists across the world and there is a lot to do to counter it. These dynamics also include occasional opportunistic use of LGBT issues inside leftist organizations. Comrades expressed frustration over invisibility and exclusion of LGBTs from workers' organizations, such as in Indonesia, and class struggles, such as France. This puts us, as LGBTIQ, in constant confrontation with supposed comrades, and we should devise strategies to claim our place inside these movements.

Many challenges are arising in Latin America with a conservative wave of protestant fundamentalism and neo-liberal policies sweeping across the continent. These have been threatening gains achieved by the LGBT movement as well as rights and benefits earned through other social struggles, which widely affect the LGBT community too. In addition, as class inequalities increase, the divisions inside the LGBT movement are also increasing.

Another challenge faced by LGBT movements in different countries was NGOization. Some saw this in terms of institutionalization and as an opportunity for more radical movements to be formed. Others expressed that this has led to the state co-opting movements, such as the feminist movement in Mexico. Another issue of NGOization is the process used by western countries to impose LGBT politics through funding. Imperialist politics in LGBT activism have also been mentioned with regards to asylum seeking which binds refugees to an LGBT framework and identities, in a process of LGBTization, and demands should be raised against this practice allowing refugees and asylum seekers the freedom to stay outside these categories and identities.

The issue of language and progressive politics was also addressed on the topic of trans issues, and the need to reach out to organizations that are active in the class struggle using a subtle and patient approach to introduce the vocabulary of trans oppression. Arab comrades spoke about the movement being aware of the need to speak in Arabic to be accessible to larger audiences and to speak to their own context, and the need to appropriate popular culture, and the language of mass media. When speaking about the working class, we should be aware that it doesn't represent one homogeneous entity external to our movement, our issues are the issues of the working class and that irrespective of the language used, we, the working class, have experienced oppression and understand it.

Theme 4: The relationship between imperialism and homophobia, the ways homonationalism and homophobia feed each other, and how this complicates LGBTIQ identities

Introduction by Tarek (Palestine)

[http://www.slideshare.net/Pinkwatching_Israel/pinkwashing-presentation-v20/4-
Conditions of Palestinians Palestinians living](http://www.slideshare.net/Pinkwatching_Israel/pinkwashing-presentation-v20/4-Conditions-of-Palestinians-Palestinians-living)

Introduction by Rodrigo (Brazil)

I will talk about the relationship between imperialism and national conservatisms (for example, evangelical fundamentalism in Brazil) and also reflect about homonationalism in the context of non-imperialist countries. I want to expose some contradictory dynamics that the crisis of capitalism leads to for LGBTIQ people, especially LGBTIQ people who think in a revolutionary left perspective.

The global economic crisis not only means the ruling class needs to deepen exploitation at work in order to restore profitability but also needs to dominate the bodies of the oppressed. In this context, the body appears as a privileged place of dispute, whose control means, ultimately, the real possibility of exercise of power. The most vulnerable bodies, women, LGBT, children and adolescents, latinos and black which are subject to different forms of oppression.

How it works?

On one side, new fundamentalisms and local conservatives are supported to the extent that neoliberalism weakens the presence of national states and favors the uncontrolled accumulation of capital.

On the other, imperialist powers act to assimilate the demands of the liberation movements (or what were once liberation movements), with the intention of reinstituting trust in liberal democracy, to create new divisions among the oppressed and to impose new values of the dominated people.

These two processes are not really disconnected: they feed each other and *also, they conflict in any way*.

Practically, how?

Imperialism, homonationalism and pink-washing

Last year in the USA we saw the recognition of same-sex marriage by the Supreme Court. It was a historic moment for the LGBTIQ movement in the USA, and perhaps around the world, as Facebook rainbow filters showed us. But this conquest was not consequence only of pressure by a social movement, or of the goodwill of the ruling party. It was also convenient for Barack Obama's government, not only domestically (since it's a good propaganda for the Democrats and cost almost nothing), stimulating a strong homonationalist reaction, but also the international arena, strengthening their pink-washing agenda in the third world. It's very complex, in many senses.

The mainstream LGBTIQ movement in USA praised Obama's government to the rooftops, while non-white LGBTIQ people, especially trans people, and specially trans immigrants latino people were being clearly excluded by Obama's administration with the support of some LGBTIQ groups. The expulsion of trans activist Jennicet Gutierrez who interrupted President Obama's speech the night before the final decision of Supreme Court, during a reception at the White House for mainstream LGBTIQ groups was a good example. When Jennicet asked Obama what he thought about the doubly illegal situation of latino trans people in USA, he said it was impolite come to his home to spoil the celebration and asked the police to remove her, while his gay guests laughed with him.

The tragic massacre on Pulse night club in Orlando this year showed us also who are the most vulnerable LGBTIQ persons in american society: black, latino and non-white persons from the working class. If you follow some alternative media on the USA you probably will read about the fear of latin and black gay community of new massacres and how nobody talk or cares about it, especially the government. We are seeing more and deepening class differences, race and gender among LGBTI people.

On Latino LGBTI Community in USA:

A newly released report by the UCLA's Williams Institute estimates that 1.4 million, or 4.3% of the Latino adults in the US identify as LGBT. The report was conducted, in part, to gain an understanding of the socioeconomic and family situation of LGBT Latinos in the country. Latino Post breaks down some of the report's other findings:

According to the research, areas with higher concentrations of Hispanics have more LGBT Latinos, the leading states being Texas, Nevada and California. Those same states, unfortunately, are states that tend to have fewer legal protections for LGBT people.

"While sometimes less visible in popular representations of LGBT people and families, Latinos make up a sizable portion of the LGBT population, **and they tend to live in**

Latino, as opposed to LGBT, communities," said co-author Gary J. Gates. The survey indicates that of the 1,419,200 LGBT Latinos in the US, roughly 30 percent of same-sex couples who live together also live in populations with high volumes of Latinos. Of those couples, 63% are interracial; one of the partners not being Latino.

LGBT Latinos have a higher rate of unemployment (14 percent) than "straight" Latinos (11 percent); though more LGBT Latinos have college degrees (26 percent) compared to their heterosexual counterparts (14 percent). And LGBT Latinos earn a higher median income.

Numbers about USA investments In the international arena, the USA claimed the right to interfere in the global south on questions of LGBT rights with the supposed justification of supporting LGBT people and making these more societies democratic. The United States has invested more than \$41 million to promote gay rights around the world, since 2012. Much of this money was intended for the countries of sub-Saharan Africa, information that reveals the importance of the continent to the US foreign policy,

Nigeria example If, on one hand, the financial and diplomatic assistance from northern countries have opened new opportunities for LGBT activism in developing countries, on the other, it has made local communities more vulnerable and ushered in a new cycle of violence. In some countries, excessive visibility caused by international aid has increased the levels of harassment and violence against LGBTIQ people.

In Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, passed a law in late 2014 which criminalizes sexual acts between people of the same sex and bans any organization supporting LGBTIQ rights. Activists have pointed out that the reaction from the Nigerian authorities was a direct response to US pressure on Nigeria (and other African countries to embrace a pro-LGBT agenda). This played into the hands, as it so often does of local groups, usually of religious origin, working to frame homosexuality as a Western way of life and therefore alien to African societies like Nigeria or Uganda.

USA, Latin America and Brazil: I don't have details about current investments by the USA in LGBTIQ movements in Latin America, though I know it exists. The peak of USA and international investments in Brazilian LGBTIQ movement was in the 1990s, during the rise of neoliberal governments. The USA has a very heavy imperialist influence in South America and their role is very ambiguous nowadays: for years, they have exported fundamentalist Protestant churches to Brazil, while at the same time reinforcing the gay market through multinational companies that promote the idea of an inclusive market. Today they don't talk about de coup d'état in Brazil, what this basically means is that they support the interim, homo-lesbo-transphobic government.

But at the same time, the USA continues injecting money into the LGBTIQ movement, that fights against fundamentalism and the interim government. Why are they backing both sides? We are not sure about the answer, but we think that this creates a very difficult situation for the LGBTIQ movement in Brazil and other poor countries: we are trying to survive squeezed between national conservatism and imperialist forces with ambiguous intentions. And it is a very hard position in which we take up the challenge to build a left and revolutionary alternative for LGBTIQ people.

One of the consequences of the US Supreme Court support for same sex marriage was a wave of thoughtless adulation by part of LGBTIQ Brazilian movement. They praised Obama and now support Hillary, though she changed her position about LGBTIQ issues. This leaves us rather isolated between a very conservative national government which is openly homo-lesbo-bi-transphobic and 2) a LGBTIQ movement more and more open to support our biggest imperialist enemy, whose oppress millions and millions of LGBTIQ people around the world, including latinos in the US itself.

Human Rights Campaign example: Why is the financial support of imperialist countries problematic? One of the main organizations who worked for the same sex marriage decision in the Supreme Court, Human Rights Campaign (HRC), has just received a donation of US\$ 3 million to defend "marriage equality" in third world countries. The money for this comes from "vulture funds" which operate on the basis of reselling debts on the international financial markets, resulting in more debt, dependence and impoverishment in poor countries. So, the Human Rights Campaign is the LGBT movement financed at the expense of the hunger, poverty and despair of thousands of people around the world with the aim of promoting the supposed democratic ideals of the USA.

Homonationalism in Brazil?

Homonationalism Concept: The instrumentalization of LGBT struggle by imperialist countries to reinforce the dominance of other people is not new. In her book "Homonationalism", Jasbir Puar points out that in some places in the world, especially in Europe, the homophobia was one of the small things, maybe the only thing, that stopped some gay people reaching dominant cultural privilege.

Pink-washing: National states capitalized that on that new reality, promoting equal rights for homosexuals as an inherent value of western democracies. As a result, we see white gay people involved in right wing racist and islamophobic parties, further marginalizing LGBTIQ migrants. In the same way, the Israeli state invests in supposedly pro-LGBT

propaganda (called *pinkwashing*) in order to justifying their war crimes and massacres of the Palestinian people, as Tareek explains.

Brazilian Homonationalism): In terms of the recent rise of homonationalist discourse in Brazil, which is mixed with a strong anti-communist discourse, it's too early to say that is the same as homonationalism in the imperialist countries.

With Brazil, we are talking about a country with a colonial past, with a very specific kind of colonialism, portuguese colonialism; Secondly because to talk about homonationalism we have to take in account the specificities of national identity in that place, and how that intersects with LGBTIQ identity. This requires a very complex analysis, which we have not yet developed

So that requires more thought, but there are some examples I can mention:

- The new generation of gay right wingers that present themselves in defense of Brazil and against the Worker's Party, the left and communism and LGBTIQ movement;
- The arrival of immigrants in Brazil and the development of an Haitian LGBTIQ association in São Paulo caused racist panic (black people in Brazil are caricatured as thieves)
- After small advances for LGBTIQ rights under the Lula and Dilma governments, sectors of the LGBTIQ movement blindly defend those governments despite the fact they also massacred indigenous peoples in defense of agribusiness, and worsened the lives of women, black people, young people and children, a kind of red homonationalism?

Conservatism: Disputing our bodies

The proliferation of new fascisms and fundamentalisms in some parts of the world are phenomena directly related to the processes of imperialistic assimilation. Against the uncontrollable rage of globalized capitalism, Marine Le Pen and her National Front evoke the strong state, a return to traditions and rejection of foreigners. In the face of dissolution of economical borders, a parallel, totalitarian and cross-border state, DAESH. In response to the political, social and economic crisis, the defense of the traditional family and Christian values from the new Brazilian government and of the religious sectors in the Brazilian National Congress;

In all these cases, **the politics of fear** (fear of the other, of the different, of the immigrant, of the Muslim, of the gay, of the transgender) are working to mobilize the reactionary ideas on the basis of supposed 'common sense'... This fear endorses the use of state

apparatus for the execution of openly authoritarian measures, oppressive, repressive and punitive addressed to the dissident' population; such measures seek less the elimination of those populations and more the possibility of enunciation of power on the bodies that constitute a certain territory.

The decolonial feminist theoretician Rita Laura Segato, born in Argentina, researcher on the subject of femicides in Mexico and currently teaching in Brazil, affirms that the intervention of the state on the body of the most vulnerable populations (women, LGBT, indigenous people) frequently does not have any moral foundation. It is to express the sovereign will of those that, through the state, generate the resources of a certain territory (or they intend to do him/it).

Le Pen: Marine Le Pen doesn't intend end illegal immigration to France, but to accumulate by the support of those that fear immigrants' presence in times of crisis. The migratory flows will continue with equal or larger intensity, but a more severe immigration politics gives space for her to raise the question of national security, to answer the xenophobic feelings of part of the population and puts thousands of migrants in an illegal and therefore insecure situation.

DAESH doesn't intend to eliminate homosexuality in the territories that it occupies (because they know that would not be possible), but to reinforce their power through exemplary punishment, that maintains hundreds, maybe thousands of homosexuals living under a regime of fear.

The religious sectors in the Brazilian National Congress do not intend to eliminate homosexual families when they approve a law to regulate what is considered a family in Brazil, but to show who has the power to legislate about our bodies. These conservative congressmen defend the "traditional family": actually, this is just the patriarchal family, which oppresses and keeps oppressed women, older people, children and LGBTIQ people, under a different name.

The debate about the criminalization of people with HIV in Brazil (such a law is now being discussed) is a good example of the politics of fear. The law intends to make the transmission of HIV criminal, and the amendment of Congressman Marco Tebaldi (PSDB, Social Democratic Party of Brazil, a right-wing party), would add not only where there is deceit but making every kind of transmission illegal... Such a law doesn't protect anybody, doesn't transform behavior and doesn't deal with the disease. It affirms a society divided between the sick and 'healthy', dangerous people and fearful people, criminals and innocents, giving new twists to the worst of the discourse when the disease was first discovered.

Conclusion of Rita Segatto's thought: The politics of fear is made not by controlling the inhabitants of a dominated territory, but exercising control over their bodies. A law that creates a Heterosexual Day Pride, if it's approved in the Brazilian National Congress, will just be to express who really has the power in Brazil: white, heterosexual, owners of lands and Christian men. In a capitalist and patriarchal society such as ours, the exercise of power depends on the subjugation of the bodies historically oppressed, that live in a country.

Of course, I don't want to forget the material perspective of the debate. I'm sure we have also material reasons to explain why capitalism oppresses and exploits women, LGBTIQ people, native american, immigrants, young and children. As our french comrades said about the Loi Travail in France, oppressed sectors of society are the most affected sectors of working class when workers' rights are under attack. We are being attacked more and more in material ways, we are becoming more vulnerable because bourgeois need to restore the profitability of capitalism. So, I prefer talk about this intimate relationship between material and symbolic aspects of oppression and exploitation and how they feed each other.

The LGBT movement embraces the state apparatus

Sarah Schulman argues that the assimilation of the LGBT agenda by the imperialist countries is also due, partly, to the changes happened in our movement, that assumed, starting from the 1990s, a legalistic agenda based on the achievements of rights. The movement for gay liberation of the 1960s, had the objective of the transformation of society which was based on gender patterns and normative sexuality. The growth of neoliberalism and the development of AIDS meant that the focus shifted to putting demands on the state.

The emergence of new leaderships which departed from the ideals of sexual liberation in favor of a greater gay respectability and the search for protective structures (state, family) able to surpass the abandonment experienced in the peak of the AIDS epidemic, favored the creation of a gay rights agenda. In other words, the fight stopped having as objective the transformation of a hetero-cissexist society to look for equality of rights inside a deeply unequal society... as if it were possible.

How to resist?

It is imperative that the LGBTIQ movement reevaluates its strategies. Combating internal inequalities would be a good beginning; recognizing that there are privileged sectors on

the basis of class, race, gender and nationality. It's also important to work in a way that allows everyone to participate fully, that prioritizes campaigns of real international solidarity, and moves away from a strictly legalistic framework for our demands character.

All these debates are fundamental to recover the radical spirit of the Stonewall movement in. It is necessary to understand the LGBT struggle as part of a wider rebellion process, against a system that does not hesitate in using our bodies as shields in their endless battles.

Introduction by Peter (Netherlands)

The term homonationalism was coined by Jasbir Puar, a queer theorist from a South Asian (Sikh) background who lives in New York and teaches at a university nearby. Her book *Terrorist Assemblages* used the concept particularly to describe the wave of patriotism in US LGBTIQ communities after 9/11, and the sexual abuses it helped justify during (for example) the US occupation of Iraq. Puar has played a good role particularly in BDS organizing in solidarity with Palestine, but has also sometimes taken some distance from organizing and described the concept of homonationalism as simply a 'critique of modernity'. Fortunately, I think by now the concept has been much more broadly adopted and is widely understood in an anti-imperialist sense.

The point of my introduction will be to show that European homonationalism not only targets and stigmatizes people in countries dominated by imperialism, but also cuts major divides in Europe itself and has a big impact in this region. We can see one sign of this by looking at this year's pride marches in Europe. They have been taking place under the shadow of a threat, born of the recent terrorist attacks in Western Europe (Paris, Brussels and now Germany) and the slaughter in the nightclub Pulse in Orlando. We are being urged not to give in to fear, while at the same time we're told that undisclosed security precautions are being taken. The route of the Paris pride march was drastically shortened, supposedly for security reasons. It's not clear whether the attack in Orlando was genuinely motivated by devotion to the cause of religious fundamentalism or was more the product of anger and anguish about the attacker's life and sexuality. But still, it could be just a matter of time before a similarly murderous anti-LGBTI attack takes place in Europe.

Europe boasts that it's the best place in the world to be lesbian, gay, bi or trans. So how did we get to this point? I think our situation as European queers is rooted, at least in part, in the crisis of the European Union's own project, which goes back to contradictions that were inherent in the project from the start.

The Italian comrade Enzo Traverso points out that 8 May 1945, a founding moment of a new Europe, sowed deep divisions in the historical memory of Europe's citizens and subjects. Celebrated in France as a day of victory over fascism, 8 May is remembered among Algerians as a day when returning French troops massacred Algerians in the city of Sétif. For Eastern Europeans, May 1945 was the eve of the triumph of Stalinism and the beginning of long decades of subjugation. These divisions between triumphant democratic Europe and embattled colonial Europe and between Western and Eastern Europe are now having repercussions for LGBTI people who have recently become identified as peculiarly European.

Since 1997, when the Treaty of Amsterdam mandated the European Union to combat discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, LGBTI Europeans have benefited from legal gains resulting from EU Directives or pressure. Yet in these same years the EU has acted as an instrument of the neoliberal offensive, producing growing inequality and spreading crises. In this situation, LGBTIQ people have fallen victim to anti-EU resentment and resurgent nationalism. Not everywhere: Spain and Portugal for example have still seen rising popular acceptance of LGBTI rights even as their peoples have suffered from EU-imposed austerity – largely I think because sexual liberation started to gain popularity in those countries when the dictatorships fell in the 1970s, before the EU became much of a factor. But in a number of other regions and communities where the EU and its dominant Western European member states are resented, LGBTIQ people too are targets of resentment.

For example, among people originating from Europe's former African and Muslim-majority colonies, some people have been rejecting the European model of lesbian/gay emancipation. Houria Bouteldja of the French Party of the Natives of the Republic (*Parti des indigènes de la République*, PIR) caused stormy debates in 2012-13 when she refused to champion the 'white agenda' of same-sex marriage. And it's too simplistic to typecast Bouteldja as a Muslim homophobe. She argued that while there are same-sex practices in French immigrant neighborhoods, they do not imply the existence of a universal gay identity. She rejected the charge that a refusal to come out is evidence of homophobia. Instead she portrayed many LGBT immigrants' choice for a cross-sex marriage, with either a straight or closeted lesbian/gay partner, as a legitimate act in defense of a family and community order threatened by racism in many forms. Unlike issues of unemployment, police harassment, discrimination and housing, Bouteldja declared, same-sex marriage 'does not concern me' as an immigrant. Few immigrants showed up for the big demonstrations for or against same-sex marriage, she said, because they knew that even if it passed its impact in immigrant neighborhoods would be minimal.

Even if we as LGBTIQ revolutionaries don't agree with her, Bouteldja and her organization are not alone. Another French person of immigrant origin, Madjid Ben Chikh, has different views; in a public response to her, he rejected the invisibility that Bouteldja would impose on him as a gay man. And yet he too endorsed her dismissal of the 'white' gay agenda.

A similar dynamic has been at work in many of the Eastern European countries admitted to the EU in 2004 and 2007. Before the 1990s, none of these countries had ever had anything like the extensive Western European gay commercial scene or community organizations. The restoration of capitalism made the development of a gay scene possible, in neoliberal conditions of rapidly increasing inequality – so that Prague for example became a center of Western European gay sex tourism, and Eastern European male sex workers began appearing in Western European cities like Amsterdam. At the same time, the EU and its member states funded a new gay civil society in its own image. And the EU put political pressure on Eastern European governments to model their legislation on a Western European homonormative pattern. In the cynical words of LGBTIQ activist Scott Long – there's also an article of his in the reading for yesterday about Egypt – Eastern European governments see the EU as 'a rich eccentric uncle' whose 'every crotchet must be humored', even if this means improving the treatment of 'homosexuals or other nonexistent creatures'.

All this has brought many benefits to Eastern European LGBTI people. At the same time, it has helped reactionary nationalists like the Polish Catholic right, who are homophobic for many reasons, to manipulate popular resentment of the arrogant West to promote anti-LGBTI campaigns. LGBTI marches have been banned in countries including Latvia, Moldova, Poland, Russia and Serbia, or violently attacked by the far right, often with police connivance, where they have been officially permitted. And well-intentioned Western European solidarity can sometimes backfire, and reinforce the image of Eastern European LGBTI people as alien. The first Moscow Gay Pride in 2006 consisted for example – according to an international trade union observer – of 'a handful of Russians supported by foreign elected officials and gay activists'. At least one Russian LGBT leader, Nikolay Alekseyev, has warned that calls to boycott Russia to protest the 2013 law against 'gay propaganda' risk having the same effect of fueling repression.

So sexuality serves as a marker today between Western and Eastern Europe. Catholic and Orthodox churches and political currents linked to them are capitalizing on resentments among Eastern Europeans of the consequences of capitalist restoration and neoliberal inequality, with LGBTI people as favored targets. In this climate, violence against Eastern European lesbian/gay pride events has been partly the work of neo-fascist groups who believe that the EU is 'run by "fags"'.

Both in Eastern Europe and in communities of immigrant origin in Western Europe, anti-LGBTIQ prejudice, however vicious the forms it takes, needs to be seen as partly a form of resistance to what Jasbir Puar has called ‘homonationalism’: the instrumentalization of LGBTI rights as a tool of imperial domination. Images of exuberant gay sexuality and celebration have been enlisted as icons of the kind of freedom the so-called ‘West’ has to offer, by contrast with the backwardness and repression that are attributed to Eastern Europe, to the Islamic world, and to immigrants. And many LGBTI people have embraced this iconography. The upshot of this homonationalism, or at least its intended upshot, is what’s been called a ‘seemingly seamless articulation of queerness with an imperial nation state’, particularly but not only in countries like the Netherlands and Denmark. And this identification with the imperial nation-state can become poisonous when it leads white LGBTI Europeans to see people of Muslim origin, independently of any positions individuals take on LGBTI issues.

In countries like the Netherlands, right-wing forces have shown since 2001 how Islamophobia can be used to win right-wing influence in mainstream lesbian/gay organizations and among LGBTI people. There is a vicious circle of escalating antagonism at work. On the one hand, you have the new homonationalism of LGBTI communities. On the other hand, what can by analogy be called ‘heteronationalism’: the adoption of anti-LGBTIQ attitudes as an expression of insurgent national, ethnic and/or religious identity. This is similar to what Rodrigo said in his article for the reading: that fundamentalisms and fascisms are two sides of the same coin – although the European Islamophobic right is far broader than just fascists.

If we’re going to make sense of this vicious cycle of homonationalism and heteronationalism, we have to take account of Europe’s everyday racism, the ongoing reality of imperialism, and the ways that queers are caught up in these dynamics. And the kind of repressive measures and ethnic and religious polarization we are seeing in Europe today – the French comrades have talked about the state of emergency in their country – do nothing to protect innocent civilians, queer or straight. On the contrary, measures like this fan the flames of conflict and resentment.

What LGBTIQ response could help break the vicious circle of homonationalism and heteronationalism? In a word: solidarity. Meaning queer activism in defense of civil rights, against all forms of prejudice, against neoliberalism – and ultimately against patriarchal capitalism, which is at the root of them all.

Homonationalism needs to be more broadly understood as one dimension of ‘homonormativity’, as Lisa Duggan defined it over a decade ago. We’re indebted to

Duggan for the connection she made between the imposition of a lesbian/gay norm and the neoliberal society we've been living in for the last 35 years. She showed that homonormativity, within the overarching framework of a heteronormative society, has a class dimension: it reflects the ways that a layer of lesbian/gay people are adapting in order to occupy a secure niche within the neoliberal order. It also has a gender dimension: the integration of some lesbians and gays into the existing family institution through same-sex marriage and adoption, in the context of the privatization of care in neoliberal societies. It has a racial dimension, in the context of the growing racialization of social relations in a time of crisis. Finally, at a time when whole regions are being ejected from the global neoliberal economy, the material basis of homonationalism is the integration of normalized LGBTI people into the dominant nation-states. This is why the fight against homonormativity, neoliberalism and capitalism the best antidote to both homonationalism and heteronationalism in Europe.

Discussion

Discussion on the usefulness of LGBT identity in Arab countries given the trend towards homonationalism in global south countries and the shift to the right in the global north. Comrades responded that although the dangers of LGBTQI identity are great, we should be cautious about throwing out everything from the past. Agency and self-organization are still important and other identifiers. Example of anti-pinkwashing banner in a broad LGBTIQ march was given. Might more international black and Arab networking be possible against homonormativity? Comrades spoke about using LGBTIQ framework to be understood and as a compromise. An alternative expression like MOGII (marginalized orientations and gender identities and intersex) may be useful but isn't publicly understood. How can we stop the cycle of homonationalism and homophobia? Not just by showing that LGBTIQ people exist outside the West, but also, crucially, by organizing visibly against homonationalism. Homophobia was an imperialist export product. 'Queer' can mean many different things, but one thing it can mean is an individual response to structural problems. Other comrades stated that we don't want to impose inappropriate LGBTIQ identities, but we also don't want to fragment struggles. We want unity in diversity.

Brazilian comrades discussed the Brazilian myth of the fusion of three races (white/black/indigenous), which has been used to whitewash racial violence and oppression and explained how gender and sexual nonconformists have been erased from all this discourse and history. While homonationalism is Brazilian state policy, conservative parties persist in rejecting identities and denying social rights – and still right-wing LGBTIQ people join their ranks. Fourth international can work on homonationalism in the global south.

Comrades from Mexico mentioned that traditional indigenous form of gender and sexual nonconformity in Mexico aren't trans or intersex or LGBTIQ, so what movement could be built with them? Homonationalism in Mexico is meant for foreigners, but domestically it's fine to be macho in a country of hunger and murders. For the LGBTIQ movement to focus on marriage is worse than useless; we need a different movement for people living precarious lives who are not integrated into the existing movement.

Report from the non-mixed women and trans* inclusive meeting:

The women's meeting discussed the dynamics in the main meeting and expressed concern. The discussion following the presentation did not focus on the questions raised by the presenters. We did not make best use of the session. The questions raised by Thyas' presentation in particular were very rich and yet were a bit ignored. There was no sense either of giving more space to women in the debate which we felt there should have been

We need more transparency about who is on list to speak - felt that women had been passed over in discussion on lesbians but this wasn't obvious in a way that gave us the capacity to intervene to change it because no list. Agreed to propose co-chairs to make this more possible - and nominate people for next session now. Proposed two women from global south to redress balance as it had been.

The suggestion was that it would be better to have non-mixed meetings before their respective sessions in order for people to attend with a collective agency on the discussion.

Report from the non-mixed trans and intersex meeting:

Contextualization of the meeting (and of the debate on trans and intersex issues in this seminar)

In the LGBT seminar of 2014, it was felt by trans and intersex comrades that there was a lack of information (and some misinformation) regarding these themes. This need to share information with our comrades comes from wanting to know we are all on the struggle together, hand in hand, and that some issues are not left behind. Because of this, the decision to hold a Trans and Intersex debate in this seminar was made.

Because of the derailing of the debate on "Lesbians in the XXIst Century", and fearing something similar might occur in the Trans and Intersex debate, we had this meeting before the beginning of our debate in order to prepare and make more precise what we wanted to share and debate.

Topics discussed in the Meeting

The lack of inclusivity of Trans and Intersex notions within the IVth International
We discussed how the IVth official discursive practices are often binary and not trans nor

intersex inclusive. Specifically, and as an example to this, we discussed the IVth “LGBT Resolution”, through the analysis and proposal for reformulation contributed by Vreer.

We believe this formal and technical inclusion in the texts is a first step on the road to make the IVth a safe environment for Trans and Intersex comrades wishing to be part of the struggles the IVth addresses.

Internal mechanics of Trans Communities

On debating our different contexts and personal interactions with trans communities, we analyzed how cissexism and cisnormativity influence trans people and the internal functioning of our communities. How cisnormativity makes it so that transitioning and “passing” (being seen as cis) become important milestones amongst trans people, to the point that those who do not necessarily wish to conform to these standards feel peer-pressured into them. How normativity infiltrates our communities and reproduces within them. How this can be especially oppressive for intersex trans people who don’t wish or cannot have this type of procedure. We also talked about the phenomenon of trans activists who after achieving their desired goals of transition, conform to a life being read as cis and give up any kind of activist work.

Note: We are raising the fact that only comrades from the first world/developed capitalist countries/North participated in this trans and intersex only meeting. That must lead us to question our definitions of terms, since the seminar was in a majority with comrades from the South.

Report from the non-mixed Global South Meeting:

Eastern Europe and Central Europe should be included when we talk of the ‘south’ because it is not an imperialist Western Region.

Not having translation to and from Portuguese makes things very difficult for comrades from Brazil where the percentage of people who speak a second language is low. Can this be addressed for future meetings? Also issues about how familiar some of the translators were with our political terminology and whether therefore some points got lost in translation.

Look at whether it would be possible to have these seminars somewhere other than Europe or to have a ‘global south’ seminar.

Concern that some remarks have been made during the seminar discussions which implied we were talking about ‘charity’ towards movements in the south rather than

working "with" comrades of the same political organization. We need to be careful not to appropriate this kind of colonial discourse.

Balance Sheet

Everybody shared their thoughts.

Positives -

International discussion means sharing different experiences, sharing strategies
Large and diverse group - majority of women
Solidarity actions with struggles in Brazil, Mexico
Exploration of links between LGBTIQ politics and class struggle
Several people mentioned homonationalism discussion
Mostly created space where everyone could speak
Non-mixed meetings very valuable
Confidence to make more demands back home on our organizations

Room for improvement

Organizing team didn't discuss with those preparing introductions enough - led to different expectations of how we would work
Organization of practical tasks through volunteers may have reinforced gender stereotypes
Find ways to share information about our contexts in advance
More possibility to discuss theory (and not assume we have common frameworks)
Women's caucus should have been before discussion on lesbians

For the future

We want another seminar, but we cannot say when it is possible to have another one because of the timetable for the world congress is not yet known
Can we make the next seminar longer so the discussions can be deeper, there can be reading time built in and also free time?
Can we reach out to participants from Africa and have better representation from Latin America
Find a way to share written info on our countries and situations in advance
Use FI list to share concrete information about struggles in our countries on an ongoing basis
We want to explore the possibility of building a wider network between some of the LGBTIQ, feminist, anti-racist organizations we are involved in, some of the left parties of which we are members, which could build better and more extensive international solidarity with our struggles.
Not enough time to see if we have a common concept of this so needs more discussion

Suggested themes for next seminar

Sexual gender repression; Neoliberalism; Precarity; Health, social care and mental health; The Right; Sex work and the left; LGBT workers

Decisions:

Agreed to ask FI set up a LGBTIQ commission
Organizing team for next seminar consists of Rodrigo, Vreer, Anthony, Loé, Olivia, Terry, Cesar, Irving, Mafer and hopefully Nina, Sergio, Evelyn and Ghassan and Tarek if they agree (they did). Will all work to make division of labor in the group transparent

Project team for the network: Vreer, Loé, Terry, Mafer, Rodrigo, Solen, Cesar, Raquel