

Robert Kulpa and Joanna Mizielińska, *Introduction: Why Study Sexualities in Central and Eastern Europe?*, in *De-centering Western Sexualities: Central and Eastern European Perspectives*, ed. R.Kulpa and J.Mizielińska, Ashgate Publishing, 2011, pp. 1-23.

Robert Kulpa and Joanna Mizielińska, Introduction: Why Study Sexualities in Central and Eastern Europe

Although homosexuality in its many manifestations has been a significant factor in societies throughout the ages and across cultures, the real explosion of its politics and visibility has taken place after World War II and, arguably, in the 'West'. The vast amount of academic literature about sexuality is written from and in a Western (Anglo-American) context. However, even when considering the recent shift in queer studies towards embracing the margins and outskirts, de-centring the politics of geolocation, the growing amount of literature on non-Western cultures continues to concern mostly post-colonial 'far-flung' regions (Asia, Africa). There is still noticeably less work done about the West's 'neighbouring' countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). By introducing CEE as a 'European context' (somehow 'Western-ish' since 'European' tends to equal 'Western') we would like to pluralise and problematise the notion of 'Western/non-Western' sexualities (because of the stress on 'Central and Eastern' denotation). We do so because we believe that the dichotomy 'West/non-West' is mainly constructed on the basis of Anglo-American ways of experiencing sexuality, making the 'Western experience' the normative one, placed at the centre of narratives. The most straightforward aim of this book is, thus, to critically assess the current state of knowledge about sexualities outside the allpervasive framings of the 'West', and to focus on their expressions in the 'nearby' and still underexplored region of Central and

Eastern Europe. By doing so, we consider both categories, West and CEE, and show that it is virtually impossible to foreclose and homogenise them as any sort of coherent entity. *Sexuality and Post-Communist Studies* The 20 years after the fall of communism produced a vast amount of literature about the CEE region (among many others, see Rupnik 1999; Drulák 2001; Kymlicka and Opalski 2005; Shiraev and Shlapentokh 2002; Ekiert, Kubik and Vachudova 2007; Pleines and Fischer 2009).

However, we feel that post-communist studies are still predominantly political science studies, interested in transformations of political systems in the region; together with economics, these two disciplines form the dominant perspective. There is, however, a growing body of work about cultural and social re-evaluation of everyday life experiences in CEE, written from cultural studies perspectives; yet it still remains relatively small in comparison with economics and politics. When focusing specifically on CEE, one needs to acknowledge the existing and well-developed body of literature about women and feminism (e.g. Funk and Mueller 1993; Gal and Kligman 2000a, 2000b; Jähnert and et al. 2001; Johnson and Robinson 2007). However, hardly any of these positions undertakes the effort of scrutinising non-heterosexuality. It can be said that, contrary to the existing literature on gender and sexuality in the Western cultural context, the field of sexuality studies in (and about) CEE is in its infancy. The scarcity of work is clear. So far only a couple of publications (e.g. Štulhofer and Sandfort 2004; Kuhar and Takács 2007) have directly targeted the issue of homosexuality in the post-communist countries. There are a few other books that contain entries on a single country (e.g. Eder, Hall and Hekma 1999), books about CEE (or a particular country) that have a chapter on sexuality, among other issues (e.g. Flam 2001), or gender and lesbian and gay studies journals that occasionally publish articles concerning the region. It is not much, although of all the regions, Russia seems to stand out, with a fast growing scholarship (e.g. Essig 1999; Baer 2002, 2009; Stella 2007).

However it is not our aim here to present a comprehensive bibliography because this is well covered through the references at the end of each chapter. *CEE and Sexuality Studies* By introducing CEE as the geopolitical framework, we bring a 'new' area of examination into queer/sexuality studies. The epistemological focus on the hierarchies and dynamics of exchange between

West and CEE highlights power as one of the main categories, together with wider structural inequalities in the organisation of the world (the macro level). At the same time, the chapters explore the hegemonies of everyday life, e.g. lived experience of 'globalised/localised gay identities' (the micro level). In the spirit of an intersectional approach, we are convinced that by grouping chapters that deal with different national settings, both theoretically and empirically, we open up the platform for further study by constantly refocusing attention on different categories and issues, specific to each context. Consequently, this book highlights some underlying hierarchisations present within queer studies, and contributes to the discussion about the notion and meaning of 'queer'. In doing so, we join other voices calling for the de-centralisation and de-Westernisation of 'queer theory'. If, in a Western context, 'queer' is to somehow relate to (and presumably reject) identitarian politics of the 'Stonewall era', this volume asks what is left of 'queer' in the CEE context, where Stonewall never happened; where it stands as an empty signifier, a meaningless figure, and yet is still a pervasive and monumental reference. We hope that this book will help to unsettle Western perspectives in queer studies by providing new insights in discussions about what constitutes 'queer'. It brings together macro- and micro-level analysis, providing conceptual and empirical tools and arguments. It probes the boundaries of geographical regions, cultural practices, temporal narratives, discursive concepts and imagined locations.

The chapters collected in the book offer a perspective (or rather a range of perspectives) on non-normative sexualities that are relational and performative, temporal and 'geohistorical'. These sexualities remain in wider economies of global exchange of capital (cultural, social, financial, spatial and historical). We look at them at particular moments of 'post-communist transformation' and 'democratisation' as a site of tussles between hegemonic discourses in a transnational context of negotiation and resistance.

Outline of Chapters The chapters are grouped into two areas. The first consists of theoretical writings focusing on the transnational circulation of homosexualities and identities, and on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual/transgender (LGBT) politics in CEE. The second focuses on issues of intimacy, practising queer citizenship and kinship in CEE. All chapters question the relation of CEE to the West on various levels, and so proliferate the debate about 'transnational sexualities', 'global LGBT activism' and 'locality'. Joanna Mizielińska and Robert

Kulpa's chapter, "'Contemporary Peripheries": Queer Studies, Circulation of Knowledge and East/West Divide', creates a larger theoretical framework for the whole book.

By undertaking issues of the hegemony of time and space – as reflected in the Anglo-American production of knowledge, globalisation, post-socialist transformation and lesbian and gay studies – the chapter provides critical engagement with current trends in queer studies, especially of a post-colonial provenance. The authors aim to problematise and pluralise the notion of 'Western' sexuality and indicate its 'contemporal periphery' – i.e. mechanisms of 'Othering' CEE (e.g. by rendering it 'permanently transitional'/'post-communist'). The authors try to visualise their ideas of time by providing a graphical representation as two separate geopolitical-temporal modalities running parallel, where in 1989 one of them finishes and the other becomes universal for both. However, the authors contrast the Western 'time of sequence' with the Eastern 'time of coincidence' represented as a 'knotting' and 'looping' of time(s). Mizielińska and Kulpa use as an example sexual politics in CEE and try to organise the 'knotted temporality of CEE' into familiar stages and inscribe it into a particular history (here into a Western history of LGBTQ (queer) movements), simplifying it in order to make sense of it. However, they also ask a set of important questions: Does such 'unknotting' make sense, and for whom? What are the prerequisites to be able to understand it in either form? Why are certain models familiar to 'all'? Why will local narrations of lesbian and gay emancipation be seen as precisely 'local' and not 'universally' recognised? With this chapter, they want to undertake the task of questioning the power relations between 'West' and 'CEE', between Western queer academic scholarship and CEE theoretical insights, calling not only for the 'de-centralisation of queer theory', but also for greater attentiveness to spatial and temporal choices in doing so. Jelisaveta Blagojević, in her chapter 'Between Walls: Provincialism, Human Rights, Sexualities and Serbian Public Discourse on EU Integration', recalls the recent debate about the second national gay parade in Belgrade in 2009.

What prevailed in the arguments of the local authorities, and also those who declare themselves in favour of 'Europe, EU integration and human rights', was the conviction that sexual orientation is a private matter and 'should be kept

behind the [four] walls'. Accordingly, there are no reasons to demonstrate one's sexual preferences in public. The metaphor of 'the wall' helps Blagojević in analysing public discourse on human rights and sexuality in contemporary Serbian society. Additionally, she refers to the notion of the 'provincial mind', introduced by the Serbian philosopher Radomir Konstantinovic in *Filosofija palanke/Philosophy of the Provincial* (1981). Although predominantly targeting Serbian nationalism, Konstantinovic's criticism may equally be applied to any geopolitical location. 'Provincial mind' is a state of consciousness that may, and indeed does, occur everywhere. So by asking questions about sexuality, provincialism, the Balkans, the European Union (EU), Gay Pride, nation and nationalism, and homosexuality Blagojević explores some deeply intertwined, and thus not obvious and not much analysed connections between them. This chapter can be said to deal with provincialisms of every identitarian logic (of thinking and politics) that continue to haunt, like Marx's spectre, every idea of a 'community' (be it sexual, national or pan-national). In the third chapter, *Nations and Sexualities – 'West' and 'East'*, Robert Kulpa reflects on the recent flourishing of works about nations, nationalism and national identities in relation to homosexuality. Although recently there have been more attempts at discussing homosexuality and nationality (mainly within the domain of 'sexual citizenship'), overall surprisingly little has been written about the sexual underpinnings of nationalistic politics and about the nationalist dimension of gay politics.

Thus, the chapter's goal is to build up the theoretical relation between the literature on sexuality and on nationalism, reflect on their intrinsic connections and analyse any possible conjectural foundations on which further analytical work could be done. The author uses examples from CEE to round up his writing with empirical flesh and probing questions. Kulpa traces these relations of nation/al and sexual in the emerging discourses and uses of the geotemporal categories of 'progress', 'West' and 'East' and 'transition'. By doing so, he critically engages with some recent writings on the topic, and shows how neo-imperial politics of the 'West' may operate not only as a 'civilising' (and annihilating) mission but also as a 'pedagogical' (profiteering) one. The fourth chapter – 'A Short History of the Queer Time of "Post-Socialist" Romania, or Are We There Yet? Let's Ask Madonna', by Shannon Woodcock – maps the turbulent decades of contested activism and the practice of 'sexual rights' in Romania. By confronting rather underground and radical Romanian youth queering politics,

she highlights and critiques the pervasive European hegemonies of 'modernisation'. By the use of a simple term, 'Europeanisation', Woodcock manages to draw a sharp and uncompromising picture of powerful hegemonies and inequalities in relations between Romania and the EU. She shows how Western donors have continued to set the agenda for the funded development of an LGBT community in Romania, irrespective of the local cultural and historical context. The author uses recent queer writings about the processes of 'racialisation' of Otherness – at the expense of which the 'gay progressive' agenda of Western societies is funded – to analyse Romanian relations between sexual and ethnic minorities. In particular she shows how 'Western-like' 'pro-gay politics' is established through the exclusion and degradation of the Roma minority. In the chapter 'Travelling Ideas, Travelling Times: On the Temporalities of LGBT and Queer Politics in Poland and the "West"' Joanna Mizielińska writes on the translation of 'Western' ideas of LGBT and queer politics into a Polish context, and tries to show what is lost/gained throughout this process. First, she presents the recent Polish political scene and other examples of sexual politics in Poland. By doing so she aims to describe the limitations of queer (in) politics in Poland, but also to show some of the resistance actions performed by LGBT and feminist circles in Poland. She argues that queering politics can mean different things locally and that what can be described as an identity approach from a US perspective can have its queer face on the local level.

Therefore, she expands upon the already introduced concepts of the Western 'time of sequence' and the Eastern 'time of coincidence' and suggests that Polish LGBT activism cannot be categorised simply as 'identitarian' or 'queer' because it exists in a different geotemporality compared to the 'West'. She focuses on the Campaign Against Homophobia (CAH), the largest and best-known Polish LGBT organisation, and shows that in their choice of strategies and discourses one can see the queer mixture of ideas that represent various historical stages of Western LGBT activism. She suggests that one of the reasons is the 'temporal disjunction', a historical void, in which the CAH works. The 1990s mark the beginning of LGBT activism in Poland but not in the West. During that period Western ideas were unanimously applied without much attempt at understanding their cultural and historical context and functioning. At the end she reflects upon Anglo-American knowledge production and presents critical queer stances towards primarily American 'queer theory'. She points to the recent developments in the field of queer studies that show the

need for greater 'localisation' of sexual politics, contextualising it within local historical, geographical, political and linguistic contexts. Her chapter thus contributes towards opening the debate about the shape and meaning of 'queer' and its potential outside the Western context. Jon Binnie and Christian Klesse's chapter, 'Researching Transnational Activism around LGBTQ Activism in Central and Eastern Europe: Activist Solidarities and Spatial Imaginings', is based on an empirical research project on transnational activism around LGBT politics in Poland. Transnational activism has been a significant component of resistance against the banning of equality marches in 2005 and 2006, and against violent attacks by far-right groups and homophobic public discourse – all associated with the rise of the Law and Justice Party and the League of Polish Families.

The chapter considers the different understandings and conceptions of solidarity that motivate and inform transnational actions. For instance they discuss how notions of sameness and difference are articulated within these conceptions of solidarity, and are particularly concerned with exploring the affective dimensions of what Carol Gould has termed 'networked solidarities'. Finally the authors consider how sexuality can be theorised in relation to alternative conceptions of (transnational) solidarity within social and political theory. The next chapter, 'Rendering Gender in Lesbian Families: A Czech Case', by Kateřina Nedbálková, focuses on methods and strategies used by lesbian parents to construct and rework concepts of gender in their everyday practices. Considering still present social stigma and many instances of culturally sanctioned homophobia, the author examines how these redings are used for political legitimisation, social restriction, cultural stigmatisation or personal empowerment.

Another focus of this chapter concerns the academic scholarship about 'queer kinship' – in particular how concepts are 'framed' by social scientists re/researching lesbian and gay families. Nedbálková is especially interested in the interplay between regimes of knowledge, both at the level of personal lives and their academic theoretisation, and between Western 'non-normative kinship' scholarship and Czech realities. The chapter is based on ethnographic research of lesbian couples with children in the Czech Republic. Roman Kuhar, in the chapter 'The Heteronormative Panopticon and the Transparent Closet of the

Public Space in Slovenia', writes about the heteronormativity of public space in Slovenia and its repercussions in the everyday life of gays and lesbians. In the heteronormative geography of public space, where images of heterosexuality are omnipresent, and thus 'invisible', signs of homosexuality automatically present a disturbance to the system. The omnipresence/invisibility of heterosexual codes 'magnifies' homosexual ones, which are then immediately accompanied by potential threats of homophobic violence.

This chapter is also based on empirical results of the author's earlier research. The author suggests that the experiences of gays and lesbians in public space can be interpreted in the context of Foucault's elucidation of Bentham's panopticon and Hannah Arendt's 'Pariah/Parvenu' dichotomy. The panopticon, as Foucault explains, establishes self-surveillance whereby power is actually exercised by prisoners themselves. Similarly, the sense of 'being watched' experienced by Slovenian lesbians and gays in public spaces leads them to a self-performed surveillance of their own homosexuality; they 'abolish' their own expressions of sexuality during the time of being 'imprisoned' in the panopticon of public space (the 'transparent closet'). In their chapter 'Heteronormativity, Intimate Citizenship and the Regulation of SameSex Sexualities in Bulgaria', Sasha Roseneil and Mariya Stoilova aim to expand the theorisation of heteronormativity in Central and Eastern Europe by exploring the regulation of intimate citizenship in Bulgaria since the late 1960s.

Their central argument is that the institutionalisation and regulation of intimacy in Bulgaria has been both implicitly and explicitly heteronormative. They also trace a number of shifts in legislation and policy, and the emergence of lesbian and gay activism, during the post-socialist period, which indicate an emergent challenge to the heteronormative framing of intimate citizenship. So, for example, they discuss how the socialist state regulated an individual's sexuality and reproductive behaviour through the promotion of marriage and procreation, and the penalising of those who did not have children. Further, they discuss the relaxation of state policing of intimate lives after 1989, the final revoking of laws criminalising homosexual acts, and the establishment of rights to non-discrimination and protection from violence. The authors explore two cases and argue that their importance goes beyond the protection of individuals concerned with discrimination; they had a larger cultural and

symbolic importance in a situation of rapid social change. Finally, the investigation goes into how LGBT groups are seeking to challenge the heteronormative regulation of intimacy. Alexander Lambevski, in his chapter 'Situating Intimate Citizenship in Macedonia: Emotional Navigation and Everyday Queer/Kvar Grounded Moralities', explores the 'democratisation' of intimate spheres of life in postsocialist Macedonia – from the difficult democratisation of intimate relationships and development of new sexual subjectivities, to the increased visibility of new intimate and sexual stories and ways of existence contesting traditional heterosexist and patriarchal models of sexual object choice.

These new arrangements are linked by membership in various complex and competing groups and communities, and thus marked by various degrees of solidarity, conflict and tension. Theoretically situated at the lesbian and gay/queer/feminist border, the chapter examines the fragile creation of multiple and overlapping intimate queer public spheres which single mothers, gays, lesbians, bisexuals, sexually liberated women and nontraditional heterosexual men occupy, and where they practise the politics of affinity and emancipation. By paying very close attention to actual lived situations of a small group of people, the chapter attempts to ground the rather abstract current debates on intimate and sexual citizenship by focusing on how these Macedonians confront ethical dilemmas arising from their non-normative sexuality and how they deal with them practically.

References

- Baer, Brian James. 2009. *Other Russias: Homosexuality and the Crisis of PostSoviet Identity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. ———. 2002. 'Russian Gays/Western Gaze: Mapping (Homo)Sexual Desire in Post-Soviet Russia'. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 8(4): 499– 521.
- Drulák, Petr. 2001. *National and European Identities in EU Enlargement: Views from Central and Eastern Europe*. Prague: Institute of International Relations.
- Eder, Franz, Lesley A. Hall and Gert Hekma, eds. 1999. *Sexual Cultures in Europe: Themes In Sexuality*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Ekiert, Grzegorz, Jan Kubik and Milada Anna Vachudova. 2007. 'Democracy in the Post-Communist World:

An Unending Quest?'. *East European Politics and Societies* 21(1): 7–30. Essig, Laurie. 1999. *Queer in Russia: A Story of Sex, Self, and the Other*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. Flam, Helena. 2001. *Pink, Purple, Green: Women's, Religious, Environmental and Gay/Lesbian Movements in Central Europe Today*. East European Monographs, no. 577. Boulder, CO/New York: East European Monographs/ Columbia University Press. Funk, Nanette and Magda Mueller. 1993. *Gender Politics and Post-Communism: Reflections from Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union*. London/NY: Routledge. Gal, Susan and Gail Kligman. 2000a. *The Politics of Gender after Socialism: A Comparative-Historical Essay*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. ———, eds. 2000b. *Reproducing Gender: Politics, Publics, and Everyday Life after Socialism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Jähnert, Gabriele et al., eds. 2001. *Gender in Transition in Eastern and Central Europe: Proceedings*. Berlin: Trafo. Johnson, Janet Elise and Jean C. Robinson, eds. 2007. *Living Gender after Communism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. Konstantinović, Radimir. 1981. *Filosofija palanke/Philosophy of the Provincial*. Belgrade: Nolit. Kuhar, R. and J. Magić. 2008. *Experiences and Perceptions of Homophobic Violence and Discrimination (Research Report)*. Ljubljana: Legebitra. Kuhar, Roman and Judit Takács, eds. 2007. *Beyond the Pink Curtain*. Ljubljana: Peace Institute, <http://www.policy.hu/takacs/books/isbn9616455459/#content>. Kymlicka, Will and Magdalena Opalski, eds. 2005. *Can Liberal Pluralism Be Exported? Western Political Theory and Ethnic Relations in Eastern Europe*. Oxford: Oxford Scholarship Online. Pleines, Heiko and Sabine Fischer, eds. 2009. *The EU and Central and Eastern Europe: Successes and Failures of Europeanization in Politics and Society*. Changing Europe. Stuttgart: Ibidem-Verlag. Rupnik, Jacques. 1999. 'The Postcommunist Divide'. *Journal of Democracy* 10(1): 57–62. Shiraev, Eric and Vladimir Shlapentokh, eds. 2002. *Fears in Post-Communist Society*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. Stella, Francesca. 2007. *The Right to Be Different? Sexual Citizenship and its Politics in PostSoviet Russia*. In *Gender, Equality and Difference During and After State Socialism*, ed. Rebecca Kay. Studies in Central and Eastern Europe. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. Štulhofer, Aleksandar and Theo Sandfort, eds. 2004. *Sexuality and Gender in PostCommunist Eastern Europe and Russia*. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press. Švab, A. and R. Kuhar. 2005. *The Unbearable Comfort of Privacy: Everyday Life of Gays and Lesbians*. Ljubljana: Peace Institute, <http://www.mirovni-institut.si/Publikacija/Detail/en/publikacija/The-Unbearable-Comfort-of-Privacy-The-Everyday-Life-of-Gays-and-Lesbians>.

Chapter 1 Joanna Mizielińska and Robert Kulpa, 'Contemporary Peripheries': Queer Studies, Circulation of Knowledge and East/West Divide

Hurley: Let me get this straight. All this already happened? Miles: Yes. H: So this conversation we're having right now, we already had it? M: Yes. H: Then, what I am going to say next? M: I don't know. H: Ha! Then your theory is wrong. M: For the thousandth time, you dingbat, the conversation already happened, but not for you and me. For you and me, it's happening right now. H: OK, answer me this. If all this already happened to me then why don't I remember any of it? M: Because once Ben turned that wheel, time isn't a straight line for us anymore. Our experience is in the past, and the future occurred before this experience right now. H: [silence] Say that again. M: Shoot me! Please? Please! H: Aha! I can't shoot you because if you die in 1977 then you'll never come back on the island on the freighter thirty years from now. M: I can die! Because I've already come to the island on the freighter. Any of us can die, because this is our present. H: But you said that Ben couldn't die because he still needs to grow up and become the leader of the Others. M: Because this is his past. H: But when we first captured Ben, and Sayid, like, tortured him, then why wouldn't he remember getting shot by the same guy, when he was a kid? M: [silence] Huh ... I haven't thought of that. H: Huh! ('Time travel' conversation between Hurley and Miles, *Lost*, season 5, episode 11.)

Hurley and Miles end their dialogue in confusion and uncertainty. The perplexity is caused not only by the heroes' current condition (i.e. travel in time from 2007? to 1977, with some short breaks at different times), but also by the usual way we conceptualise, theorise and memorise time. At the end of the

conversation, Miles, who seems to have understood the workings and mechanisms of time, admits otherwise. For a short moment we believe in his explanation/construction of temporality, but then again we get lost – lost in time, lost in translation of time, lost in time construction, lost in space ...? We all live ‘here and now’, but what do ‘here’ and ‘now’ mean – for you, for me, for us? How do we (re)construct them? What elements of a past are persistent in the present? In what form will the present survive into a future? What does it mean to live a certain time in the West?¹ What marks this time? What kind of expectations does it produce for/on its subjects? Everybody has their time, but is this time the same for all? And how is the common perception of time achieved? How is it constructed? What will become history, and what will remain forgotten forever? Unspoken? Unwritten? These are not new questions, and the reflection on time is perhaps one of the most persistent, troublesome topics, accompanying humankind throughout centuries of civilisation. But in this chapter we want to ponder about the time in a specific context of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), and its historical and current developments of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) movements and sexuality/queer studies.

What is important is to ask whether CEE’s LGBTQ’s ‘now and here’ is only a reflection of a much broader and older Western narrative. Do the movements develop along the same trajectories? And why does it matter to know? Protagonists of the *Lost* series find themselves not only lost in time, but also in space. The mysterious island on which they found themselves after the plane crash is a no-where no-place. As the narrative develops, we learn that it is somewhere – but the island’s ‘here’ placement is in fact its temporal ‘now’ harbouring. Time and space, in other words, are inseparable. Therefore, we also feel it is important to ask: if time of CEE is a little queer (a joy of word-play), where is CEE? Where is the West? How does ‘here’ of one of these myriad geo-referents correspond to/translated on to ‘(t)here’ of the other? Are the geographical boundaries of regions as fixed as their enclosed countries? Is it possible to establish a relation between ‘West’ and ‘CEE’, as between (respectively) ‘metropolis/centre’ and ‘colony/periphery’ (popular in post-colonial writings)? And considering that CEE is not (so far) a region of much interest to post-colonial theorists,² what would be the implications of such a juxtaposition of geographical regions and academic theories? We will reflect

on the construction and meaning of the 'West' and 'Central and Eastern Europe' later in this chapter.

That is not to say that there is no interest at all. We discuss this issue later. In this chapter we would like to outline a general theoretical framework for the whole book. Its primary goal (though one of many) is to question the construction and conceptualisation of sexuality and LGBTQ activism in contemporary Central and Eastern European countries. We consider how Western discourses/theories influence this process. How (as we suggest) does Western hegemonic imposition/dominance work in local contexts? Therefore, the question of CEE locality (local translation of politics and theories) plays a significant role in gathered analyses. This local geotemporal dimension of sexual politics problematises, usually taken for granted, the Western/(post-)colonial dichotomy and also the unified notion of 'Western activism', dominated by the Anglo-American model. Therefore, we want to scrutinise it and see to what extent it forecloses, marginalises and separates histories of LGBT movement and sexuality studies in CEE. This stance is obviously a particular enactment of reflection present in the field of 'queer studies' and, as we like to connect our work with this body of literature, we will begin by outlining our relation to queer studies.

As we progress, we expand our analysis of time and space, as introduced above. While doing so, we also take up the question of relations between post-colonial and post-communist studies, showing (with the ultimate example of the whole book) how the 'cross-contamination' of theories is one of the best queer studies practices we can think of. Geographies of Queer Studies There are many uses of the word 'queer', varying from context to context, within academic and activist circles. It may be an umbrella term for 'LGBT', or opposition to 'lesbian' and 'gay'; queer may be predominantly concerted with sexuality, or may stand for an intersectional approach; it may be another term for 'homo', or a non-identitarian category. The word might be meaningless in a non-English speaking context, or its notion may be differently shaped according to needs and conditions. In the Western context the history of queer is rooted in Aids politics and in the opposition to the gay liberation of the 'Stonewall era' (e.g. Jagose 1996; Phelan 1997).

In CEE countries, and also in some Nordic (Rosenberg 2008) and perhaps other non-Western countries, the term 'queer' is often used to express identity politics, and becomes a bone of contention/battle between local queer theorists (who know the academic narrative of 'queer vs LGBT' and are willing to preserve it) on the one hand, and on the other local communities and activists, who use the term as another, 'new' name for 'lesbian and gay' or often use it in the commercial context (e.g. TV series as *Queer As Folk* or *Queer Eye For a Straight Guy*). This volume shows localised meanings of these categories in CEE. Consequently, the authors will use the words 'queer', 'lesbian', 'gay', 'homosexual' or 'LGBT' differently, according to their specific needs and cultural uses. However, each author specifies the way they use these labels.

As such, this is already one of the ways this book contributes to queer studies – it offers the proliferation of perspectives on the meaning and application of the 'queer' category. If one evaluates this volume from the Western/Anglo-American queer perspective, one can rightly question the lack of articles dealing with transsexuality, bisexuality and its representation of non-normative sexualities outside homosexuality. There are many reasons for this. For example, a primary reason for not dealing with bisexuality and transsexuality relates to what we call a 'temporal disjunction'. Transgender activism in CEE only began to emerge since around 2007–2008. This might be one reason for the general lack of scholarship about transgender issues in/about the region. However, it also must be noted that unlike in the West – where transgender groups had a long history of struggle for inclusion and widening of lesbian and gay politics to 'LGBT politics' (Meyerowitz 2002; Stryker and Whittle 2006) – 'transgender' was included in lesbian and gay politics in CEE almost from the very beginning of these movements. Homosexual activism was self-labelled as 'LGBT', even if 'B' and 'T' were purely discursive invocations. This 'inclusion before coming into being' occurred because of different temporalities of West and CEE. As in many other spheres of life, activists in CEE adopted labels already in use in the West, even if these markers did not denote their new reality. So when the first lesbian and gay groups began to self-organise in the early 1990s, they looked at the Western models and their categories (LGBT), rather than trying to figure out their own terminology.

Another issue to be raised is the substitution of ‘sexualities’ from the title of the book with the primary focus on ‘homosexuality’ in its content. Actually, we believe that the book’s content develops and builds around the concept of ‘heteronormativity’ rather than ‘homosexuality’. Heteronormativity is not only an object of direct examination in some chapters (e.g. Roseneil and Stoilova, Lambevski) but also forms a viable and crucial backdrop of analysis in others (e.g. Blagojevic, Kuhar). This is already another way (focusing on heteronormativity as one of the major categories organising our contemporary lives, irrespective of geopolitical locations) in which this book contributes to the field of queer studies. Our Time Which Is Not Yours Is Not Ours: Sequence, Coincidence and Temporal Disjunction After the collapse of the ‘Iron Curtain’, CEE countries quite unanimously adopted a Western style of political and social engagement, without much questioning of its historical particularism and suitability for their context.

When lesbian and gay activism began to emerge in CEE, the West was already at the ‘queer’ stage, with a long history and plurality of models, forms of engagement, goals and structures. Conversely, the communist past of CEE built completely different social structures and modalities. This could be represented graphically as two separate geopolitical-temporal modalities (communism and capitalism) running parallel, where in 1989 one of them finishes (communism), and the other one becomes universal for both regions (capitalism). This is what Francis Fukuyama (1992) once called ‘the end of history’ – (neo-)liberal democracy and capitalism triumphing over decades of long struggle for dominance in world ideologies and politics. However, for the West the continuity was preserved and the ‘end of communism’/1989 may be placed as another event in the sequence of events. For CEE, this change was much sharper and more abrupt, literally bring the collapse of one world and the promise of a ‘(brave?) new world’ much more coincidentally than sequentially – ‘everything at once’. Indeed, it should be even more complicated, and represented as a constant ‘knotting’ and ‘looping’ of time(s) after 1989. This Western ‘time of sequence’ and CEE’s ‘time of coincidence’ might, therefore, look as shown in Figure 1.1. 3 We are fully aware that this drawing is a simplification or even a process of strengthening of what we call ‘Western time’. The way people in Western countries live/ experience/perceive their time

differs (within countries, but also in the way time is theorised). Also, as we want to show in this book 'Western/Eastern' division is highly problematic. In our opinion what is perceived as Western is dominated by AngloAmerican, or even just American thinking/theories.

Therefore, our aim is not only to recognise particularities of the CEE countries, usually 'put into one box', in this Americanised model, but we also want to problematise the notion of the 'West', which barely touches/reflects the experiences of the non-English speaking countries. Figure 1.1 Western 'time of sequence' and Eastern 'time of coincidence' may seem familiar to some. This might be because we have intended this representation of CEE time-knotting to resemble the 'figure-eight knot' or 'four knot' from the cover of Diana Fuss's seminal *Inside/Out* (1991). At the end of her introduction, she addresses this figure and writes about it in these words: This three-dimension geometrical domain, constituted by rings and matrices, loops and linkages, is nonetheless embodied, sexualized. The undecidability of this simple topology may be its greatest appeal, for it seems to signify at once an anal, a vaginal, a clitoral, a penile, and a testicular topography. The knot interlaces many orifices, many sites of pleasure, many libidinal economies. It visualises for us in the very simplicity of its openings and closures, its overs and unders, its ins and outs, the contortions and convolutions of any sexual identity formation. (Fuss 1991: 7) So the 'knotted time' not only represents the queer experience of CEE, but it is also an embodiment of sexual desires and pleasures. Thus, when we use the term 'queer time' for CEE, as opposed to 'straight time' of the West, it is not only a linguistic game we play upon various meanings of 'queer' and 'straight'. We also intend to highlight the erotic dimension of time, the oddly erotic experience of identity formation in CEE.

When in 1989 'the communist time' ended and the physical borders began to dismantle, the flow and exchange of material products and ideas really took over. The protuberance of clutching ideas, into which CEE was 'thrown', was far from a linear and progressively accumulative vision of time, which continued (exactly: continued!) to unfold in the West (or at least in its academic representation). Sexual politics in CEE may serve as an example. The strong assimilationist model of activism currently present in CEE, as some authors in this book show, could be read as 'stepping back in time' to 'Western homophile

times' of the 1950s and 1960s. Yet this 'going backward' is actually 'stepping forward' for lesbian and gay activists in CEE, if only because they can self-organise, which was not possible before 1989. Additionally, these 'homophile-like' claims of acceptance and assimilation may be attempted by 'jumping into the 1970s' and using some contestation strategies predominant at the time in America (and a handful of other countries). At the same time, other groups in CEE label themselves 'queer' and draw directly on 1990s Queer Nation events such as 'kiss-ins' in public spaces.

Therefore, the beginning of the 1990s for LGBT activists in CEE is truly a 'queer time': a time of mismatched models and realities, strategies and possibilities, understandings and uses, 'all at once'. It is the time when 'real' and 'fake', 'the original' and 'the copy' collapse into 'the same'/'the one'; and yet, nothing is the same, nothing is straight any more. (Had it ever been?) However, what we have just presented is already an attempt to 'untie the knot' and 'linearise' the present 'here and now' reality of CEE. It is done by categorising various activities, attitudes and approaches present all at once, as belonging to certain historical, sequential narratives. Thus in organising the 'knotted temporality into stages and inscribing it into a particular 'familiar' history (of Western history of LGBTQ movements) we already simplify it in order to make sense of it. But do we actually succeed? Does such 'unknotting' make sense, and for whom? And what are the prerequisites to be able to understand it in either form? In other words, we feel it is important to ask why certain models (notably Western/ American) are familiar to 'all' and perceived as 'The One' and not one of many; and why 'local' narrations of lesbian and gay emancipation will be seen as, precisely, 'local' and not 'universally' recognised. We follow postmodern historians who see history as a discursive narrative activity, a strongly (and irreversibly?) linear process that shapes cultures, political customs and social attitudes, and serves to maintain particular power relations (White 1990; Carr 1991; Jenkins 1991, 1997).

Thus, 'another stage in development' from the Western perspective, knots the time, as from the CEE perspective it is 'just a beginning'. Consequently, this disjunction/crossover has to become problematic for both Western and CEE people. It is troublesome for the latter, who are trying to 'catch up' with the West (although living in the 'common present', the feeling is of being sort of

'retarded', in the 'past'); but also for Western communities, who see CEE as 'lagging behind' or 'dragging the progress down' (equally here, CEE is seen as 'contemporary', but somehow 'hindered' and 'behind'). Discursively, it is forcing the 'Western present' as a 'CEE future' to be achieved. Consequently, the 'CEE present' is coerced as 'past', although since 1989, the 'CEE present' and 'Western present' are one. Paradoxically then, 'Western progressive narrative' unfolds into its own aporia. But since this would annihilate the very idea of 'Western progress', something else needs to be done; some mechanism needs to be deployed to differentiate the 'West' and 'CEE' as 'not at the same time'. So although the 'communist time' 'collapsed' into the Western narration, making it 'The One', CEE (or former 'communist time') and West are still discursively maintained as 'parallel' and separate.

This may seem paradoxical, but as Foucault (1998) noted, the use of opposite and apparently contradictory discourses by one discursive instance may not have to be that unusual. In his own words: 'Discourses are tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of force relations; there can exist different and even contradictory discourses within the same strategy; they can, on the contrary, circulate without changing their form from one strategy to another, opposing strategy' (Foucault 1998: 101–2). What is at stake here is power and hegemonic strategies of subordination. How then is the difference between CEE and West kept alive, while at the same time the smokescreen of its lack is deployed? Our proposition is to understand the constant reference to CEE as 'post-communist' as a technique aimed at rendering CEE as the 'other'. It is this constant 'transformation' through which CEE supposedly 'has been going' (present perfect continuous is much at home here) that allows the West to place itself 'above', as the mentoring force which CEE should look up to. How and who is to decide when the 'transition' ends? When the CEE will no longer have to 'transform' anything; when will it join the Western club?⁴ Of course there is no single instance, yet we somehow feel under the skin that the agency here is not belonging to CEE, that authority lies elsewhere. In a sense the West is always already 'post'. In this construction, whatever CEE became/is/will be, West had become/has already been/will have been. Central and Eastern Europe is a 'contemporary periphery' because it is 'European enough' (geographically), 'yet not enough advanced' to become Western (temporally).

This ‘temporal disjunction’ and the meaning of ‘time’/‘temporality’ and ‘history’/‘History’ are shaped by economic and political conditions. These, in turn, have clear gender and sexual underpinnings (Friedman 1997; Young 1997). The ‘hegemonic temporality of West’ is constructed as continuous and linear, progressive and ‘accumulative’ (from ‘old-primitive’ to ‘new-advanced’). As such it becomes clear that the contemporary Western notion of ‘time’ has underpinnings in classical liberal ideology of the individual in a progressive, future-oriented world (Adam 1995, 2004). Following Lee Edelman’s (2004) queer polemic that sparked discussions about queer rejecting such a temporal trajectory (‘anti-social turn’), this collection problematises this perspective. Edelman claims that queer should reject the hetero- and homonormative trajectory of a progressive futureoriented world symbolised by the figure of a child. However, he does not take into account that this turn for ‘no future’ has some *raison d’être* only in cultures that have ‘future’, are ‘future-oriented’, and in the privileged position of being able to ‘waste’ it.

The notion of ‘future’ in CEE was shaped differently and its vector does not have the same direction as the ‘Western future’. In the context of post-communist CEE, where people have just released themselves from the dominance of the USSR, that call of Western queer theory to ‘reject future’ and ‘embrace the negativity’ does not resonate with the needs, positions and opportunities of queer people in CEE. In fact it would be a kind of suicidal move to embrace the position that the majority of homophobic society has always already seen as the most appropriate for queers. Thus, by engaging with the discussion about temporality and the ‘anti-social turn’ in queer studies, this volume provides new insights about the other possible shapes of ‘queer temporalities’. So, in summary, we would like to ask whether it is possible to do ‘queer’ politics without the historical baggage. Is it possible to do non-identitarian politics (the Western model of queer) without first going through a stage of identity politics? Please note that Shannon Woodcock makes the similar claim in this volume. We were not aware of each other’s work before, hence this ‘coincidence’ of almost identical thoughts is even more telling and interesting. 5 This is why the book was criticised by lesbians, feminists and people of colour – for representing the privileged position of the white, middle-class man, who could afford to ‘fuck the future’. For a summary of this critique see Elizabeth Freeman’s Introduction to the GLQ special issue on time (Freeman 2007: 166–7; see also Halberstam 2008; Muñoz 2009).

As much as these are open questions without definite answers, what we want to suggest is that perhaps more important is the need to contextualise meanings and focus more on the ‘cultural translation’ of queer, conceptualising it each and every time anew. So, as Joanna Mizielińska argues in her chapter in this collection, we may realise that what is called ‘essentialist politics of identity’ in the Western context may very well function to bring close results to those of ‘Western queer’, if present or used in a non-Western (here CEE) context. East and West: Post-Colonial Relations of (Dis)placement There is an ongoing debate about what constitutes ‘colonialism’, ‘post-colonialism’, ‘neo-imperialism’ etc. (Loomba 1998; Chakrabarty 2007). There is also a growing body of work about queer post-colonial subjects (Patton and Sánchez-Eppler 2000; Hawley 2001a, 2001b; Cruz-Malavé and Manalansan 2002; Pitcher and Gunkel 2009) and sexuality and globalisation (Hennessy 2000; Altman 2001; Binnie 2004; Padilla 2007). It has become clear by now that post-colonial scholarship is an important field of reference for this book. Indeed, we are influenced by this body of work and use some of the key concepts in our own formulation of ideas and analyses. In a sense, we would like to see this project as an effect of merging post-communist and post-colonial studies.

This volume is an exploration of sexual politics in CEE (‘contemporary periphery’) in relation to the West (‘metropolis’). It contributes to post-colonial studies by problematising the category of ‘centre/metropolis/West’ by showing it as a relational and unstable concept. However, we have also noted that many works of post-colonial scholarship tend to bipolarise the centre–periphery relation. Often unintentionally ‘metropolitan centre’ is constructed as more or less unified and coherent, against which the pluralisation and diversification of ‘post-colonial periphery’ is done. Therefore, we join voices calling for wider coverage and scrutinisation of the metropolis, and not only of the colony (Mishra and Hodge 1991; Hulme 1995; Loomba 1998; Janion 2007). In particular, this collection shows how some geographical locations are under-theorised in post-colonial studies. The obsolete communist ‘Second World’ (contemporary Western relations with China, Korea and Cuba have developed more individualistic discourses) – remnants of which fall in CEE, located somewhere between the ‘developed countries’ of the ‘First World’ and ‘developing countries’ of the ‘Third World’ – disrupts the dyad centre–periphery.

As we have shown above, geographical, political, economic and temporal status of CEE puts it at times in either the first or the third class, and at times in both simultaneously. Consequently, we need to ask: where exactly does 'Central and Eastern Europe' locate itself? And where is 'West'? Does (geographical) being in 'Europe' automatically grant the privilege of belonging to the first-class 'Global North' club? Or does the process of 'catching up with (the idea of) West' make CEE more a part of the 'Global South'?

How global is 'Global'? The terms 'Global North/South' are relatively new and their use is just spreading; but do they really solve the problems imposed by previous hegemonic categories? What is the role of homosexuality and lesbian and gay activism in making, sustaining and transcending those divisions – especially in light of the resurgence of nationalist movements after 1989 and post '9/11'? As more and more scholars highlight (Duggan 1994; Beverley 2004; Puar 2007; Butler 2009), cultural attitudes and legal provisions for lesbian and gay people are becoming important factors in creating and maintaining modern divisions of 'Us' ('West', 'civilised', 'secular', 'liberal' and supposedly 'pro-gay') and 'Them' ('Orient', 'primitive', 'religious', 'fanatical' and consequently 'anti-gay'). This volume joins this discussion and shows another dimension of how this process works, not only in relation to 'West/Orient', but also 'West/CEE', which in our eyes is a much more problematic relation, not easily classifiable along the 'Us/Them', 'insider/ outsider' lines.

Additionally, the context of 'democratisation' of CEE, which in practice denotes installing some type of modern, liberal, democratic regime in politics and neo-liberal capitalism in economics, evokes recent works about consumerism, 'mercantilisation of sexuality' and the neo-liberal economy of sexual identities (e.g. D'Emilio 1993; Chasin 2000; Hennessy 2000; Duggan 2004; Woltersdorff 2007). This book contributes therefore to the some of the hottest debates in today's queer scholarship, offering new perspectives on the influence of market organisation and political regime for the formation of non-normative sexual identities and activism in the transnational context. What is 'Central and Eastern Europe'?⁶ There are many labels in use, denoting, describing and indicating what 'CEE' might be. There are geographical ones: East, Central Europe, Eastern Europe, Central and Eastern Europe, Balkans, Southern and Eastern Europe, or just Southern Europe. There are historical ones: post-

communist/former communist, post-Soviet/former Soviet, communist/Soviet satellite countries, former communist bloc, countries behind the former Iron Curtain. There are also political ones: post-authoritarian, emerging democracies, new democracies, transitional/transforming countries, developing democracies, consolidating democracies.

There is also a set of terms relating to the EU only: new members, second-wave enlargement countries, aspiring countries. And of course the use of these names is neither systematic nor consequential; they are all being used as parallels and as synonyms. The three types under which we have grouped them are only to highlight how geography, history, politics and time are the fabric of these categories. And since the labels are 6 What we present here is just a brief exercise. More comprehensive and in-depth analysis is to be found in a handful of works that attempt a post-colonially inspired analysis of 'CEE' and its relations to/with 'West' (see Todorova 1997; Moore 2001; Buchowski 2004; Kelertas 2006; Melegh 2006; Chari and Verdery 2009; Owczarzak 2009; Korek 2009).

Let us briefly discuss two examples. First: is Germany a part of CEE? Most people would say no. But eastern Germany, a former communist republic, is without doubt in a similar state of 'transition' as other former communist countries. Facing similar problems of unemployment, slow economy, social disappointment and intensified migration to big cities and western parts of the country, the only difference is that it is now officially part of 'one Germany', the 'correct one' (Western), and not an independent state. The process of 'unification of Germany' thus somehow erased the difference, erased the memory of Germany being a 'former communist' country, setting the boundaries of a 'post-communist world' east of Germany. There is no doubt that 'former communist bloc' was not a bloc at all, that there were significant differences between the USSR, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia and East Germany; and that there are equally significant differences between what they have become now. Yet still, these and all other countries in the region are thrown into one bag (with the discussed exception of 'Germany'), and often referred to as coherent, 'out there'. Second example: is Poland an 'Eastern European' country? The answer depends on who is asked. For Poles themselves, no; Poland is either simply a 'European' or a 'Central European' country. 'Eastern Europe' is outside Poland's eastern borders.

In the UK and other Western European countries, ‘Central and Eastern Europe’ and ‘Eastern Europe’ are interchangeable, denoting the same. Thus, Poland is an ‘Eastern European’ country. But is it ‘postSoviet’? No – neither for Poles, nor for Western Europeans. But yes, from American point of view, where it is more common to use the ‘postSoviet/former Soviet’ label; whereas in Europe ‘postcommunist/former communist’ would be more popular.

Also the geographical designation ‘CEE’ seems to be more popular in a European rather than American context, where the historical/political categories prevail. (But then again, all of these are only our, the editors’, perceptions. And these are shaped by the fact that we share a Polish cultural upbringing, although Robert has chosen the UK as a place to live, and Joanna maintains relations with Nordic countries while working and living in Warsaw.) What is ‘West’? Similarly, it is important to ask: where is the ‘West’ to which we (and other authors in this book) refer? The answer is (not so) simple. ‘West’ is a myriad constellation, floating in a time-space of individual perceptions and ‘CEE’ idealisations. It is at times synonymous with ‘Europe’, sometimes more precisely to ‘European Union’, sometimes ‘Western Europe’; it denotes ‘Europe and America’ or only ‘America’ (and this in turn means solely the USA, although at times a shadowy and weak hint of Canada beams from underneath the colossal USA) or ‘Anglo-America’. ‘West’ is ‘liberalism and progress’, ‘West’ was ‘a promise of freedom’, ‘El Dorado’ –a dreamland of colourful prosperity; ‘here’ and ‘there’, perhaps (t)here; ‘West’ was/is where ‘we’ (CEE) want to be. Finally, ‘West’ is a normative ideal of ‘how things should be’. How to make sense of what is actually meant each time ‘West’ as a category is invoked – we do not know.

As much as we want to rationalise and categorically understand/understand through existing categories, we also feel (and it is precisely the feeling that we want to stress here) that none of the above explanatory terms ever fills the vessel of ‘West’ completely. We feel that even the most ‘precise’ denotation of ‘West’ (e.g. ‘EU’) always carries a suitcase (or just a small handbag, or even perhaps only a pocket) full of other labels, always echoing something else, in a never-ending chain of equivalence and relationality. What does it mean in the

context of queer studies, knowledge production and LGBT activism? Possibly, that for us ‘Western’ means ‘English’, ‘Anglo-American’. In fact, it should be narrowed even more to denote just ‘American’. During various presentations and discussions, we became increasingly aware of how much more our perception of English-speaking academy (‘Anglo-American’, as we used to call it) was persistently ‘Americanised’ than we initially thought ourselves.

So for example, while exploring ‘CEE’s temporal knotting’ in the earlier part of this chapter, we constructed a linear narrative of the lesbian and gay movement, calling it ‘Western narrative’ – it has to be noted and acknowledged that, for example, British scholars working in the field of histories of non-normative sexualities may not necessarily agree with it,⁷ and rightly so. However, what this situation of us, ‘non-Westerners’, labelling English literature about sexuality as ‘AngloAmerican’ (yet more American than British, and not even trying to think through the case of Australia) highlights is the actual workings of the hegemonic position of ‘America’/United States in the production and circulation of knowledge. And we, although critically engaged and presumably more aware of it, are not exempt from its conditioning – unfortunately and unwillingly, yet perhaps necessarily, reproducing at times these mechanisms of inequality ourselves. * * *

We are fully aware that the processes and mechanisms we criticise here are partially recreated in our own analysis when we make certain generalisations or, conversely, when being very particular, perhaps too much so to make sustainable claims. This seems an inevitable process of approaching own aporia in trying to ‘see behind’ (if it is possible at all). Self-reflection thus needs to be an indispensable element of any research dealing with discourse and power. We particularly owe a debt to a number of significant feminist works, all dealing with ‘new’ epistemologies of ‘situated knowledge(s)’ (e.g. Alarcon 1990; Minha 1990; Haraway 1997; Applebaum 2001; Presser 2005). However, we also feel that although risking some over- and 7 We would like to thank participants (especially Prof. Lynne Segal and Prof. Sasha Roseneil) of the ‘Beyond the Pink Curtain?’ seminar organised at Birkbeck Institute for Social Research, University of London, 22 January 2010, for drawing our attention to this issue.

Only by pushing the boundaries one can approach what is set aside of the core in hegemonic discursive practices, sparking discussion and enabling more diversified exchange of ideas and insights. Keeping all this in mind, what possible lesson one can draw from exercises we have carried out with 'West' and 'CEE'? Perhaps the conclusion is that since none of the markers can be perceived as stable, the 'West' and 'Central and Eastern Europe' are ultimately a phantasmagorical '(t)here and now'; two regions impossible to enclose within fixed boundaries, neither geographical, nor temporal-historical, nor political. 'West' and 'CEE' are thus relational concepts, and as such entail hierarchies of power, subversion, resistance and hope. Referring to 'CEE', as in the case of any other discursive practice, is not a value-free, or 'neutral', 'objective' practice. It already designates 'self' ('West'), policing and distinguishing it from the 'other' ('CEE'). Yet still, thanks to the variety of uses, flexibility and permeability, the opposite may occur.

By using and exchanging 'West' with 'European' and 'American', blurring of communities and cultures is intended, subverting established power hierarchies (West over CEE), carving a space for 'Central and East Europeans' to become part of the 'First World', 'just Europeans', club. Such practices subvert the core and re-render CEE as part of the 'European' 'self', and not its 'other'.⁸ And this is to leave Russia aside, with all its own narrative. Conclusion To summarise, we would like to repeat that this volume offers a new perspective on some crucial contemporary issues raised in queer studies. These are globalisation of sexual identities, circulation and power(s) of knowledge, strategies of acculturation and the translation of dominant approaches to a local (country-specific) level. We offer the theoretical figures of 'contemporary periphery', 'temporal disjunction/knotting' and 'time of sequence vs time of coincidence' as perhaps useful ways of thinking about CEE – 'European enough' (geographically), but 'not yet Western' (temporarily). Thus, we take a geotemporal rather than only a geopolitical approach, which we believe offers wider possibilities of understanding the current process of transmission of sexual identities and models of activism. We further try to problematise the very categories of 'West', 'CEE', 'centre/ metropolis', 'periphery/colony', 'First, Second and Third Worlds', and 'Global North or South', 'homo- and heterosexuality', 'queer', 'lesbian and gay', 'local and global', 'democratisation' and 'post-communist transformation', and lay the general framework for all other chapters gathered in this book.

And we leave aside the case of Russia, whose relation to the 'West' has its own, equally complicated, narrative.

References

- Adam, Barbara. 1995. *Timewatch: The Social Analysis of Time*. Cambridge: Polity Press. ———. 2004. *Time*. Cambridge/Malden, MA: Polity Press.
- Alarcon, Linda. 1990. 'The Theoretical Subjects of That Bridge Called My Back and Anglo-American Feminism'. In *Making Face, Making Soul = Haciendo Caras: Creative And Critical Perspectives by Feminists Of Color*, ed. Gloria Anzaldúa. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Foundation Books.
- Altman, Dennis. 2001. 'Global Gaze/Global Gays'. In *Sexual Identities, Queer Politics*, ed. Mark Blasius. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Applebaum, Barbara. 2001. 'Locating Onself, Self 'I'-dentification and the Trouble with Moral Agency'. *Philosophy of Education Yearbook*. <http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/EPS/PES-Yearbook/2001/applebaum%2001.pdf>.
- Beverley, John. 2004. 'Queering the Nation: Same Thoughts on Empire, Nationalism, and Multiculturalism Today'. In *Empire & Terror: Nationalism/ Postnationalism in the New Millennium*, ed. Begoña Aretxaga. Center for Basque Studies Conference Papers, series no. 1. Reno: Center for Basque Studies, University of Nevada.
- Binnie, Jon. 2004. *The Globalization of Sexuality*. London: Sage.
- Buchowski, Michał. 2004. 'Hierarchies of Knowledge in Central-Eastern European Anthropology'. *Anthropology of East Europe Review* 22, no. 2. http://condor.depaul.edu/~rrotenbe/aer/aer22_2.html.
- Butler, Judith. 2009. *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* London: Verso.
- Carr, David. 1991. *Time, Narrative, and History*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Chakrabarty, Dipesh. 2007. *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (new edition). Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Chari, Sharad and Katherine Verdery. 2009. 'Thinking Between the Posts: Postcolonialism, Postsocialism, and Ethnography After the Cold War'. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51, no. 1: 6–34.
- Chasin, Alexandra. 2000. *Selling Out: The Gay and Lesbian Movement Goes to Market*. New York: St Martin's Press.
- Cruz-Malavé, Arnaldo and Martin Manalansan, eds. 2002. *Queer Globalizations: Citizenship and the Afterlife of Colonialism*. New York: New York University Press.
- D'Emilio, John. 1993. 'Capitalism and Gay Identity'. In *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*, eds Henry Abelove, Michele Aina Barale and David M. Halperin. London: Routledge.

Duggan, Lisa. 1994. 'Queering the State'. *Social Text*, no. 39 (summer): 1–14. ——. 2004. *The Twilight of Equality: Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics, and the Attack on Democracy*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Edelman, Lee. 2004. *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*. Series Q. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Foucault, Michael. 1998. *The History of Sexuality*. Vol. 1: *The Will to Knowledge*. London: Penguin.

Freeman, Elizabeth. 2007. 'Introduction'. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 13, no. 2: 159–76.

Friedman, Susan Stanford. 1997. 'Making History: Reflections on Feminism, Narrative, and Desire'. In *The Postmodern History Reader*, ed. Keith Jenkins. London: Routledge.

Fukuyama, Francis. 1992. *The End of History and the Last Man*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Fuss, Diana, ed. 1991. *Inside/Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories*. New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall.

Halberstam, Judith. 2008. 'The AntiSocial Turn in Queer Studies'. *Graduate Journal of Social Science* 5, no. 2. *Queer Methodologies* (December): 140–56.

Haraway, Donna Jeanne. 1997. *ModestWitness@SecondMillennium.FemaleMan - MeetsOncoMouse: Feminism and Technoscience*. New York: Routledge.

Hawley, John C., ed. 2001a. *Postcolonial and Queer Theories: Intersections and Essays*. *Contributions to the Study of World Literature*, no. 101. Westport, C T: Greenwood Press. ———, ed. 2001b. *Postcolonial, Queer: Theoretical Intersections*. SUNY series, *Explorations in Postcolonial Studies*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Hennessy, Rosema. 2000. *Profit and Pleasure: Sexual Identities in Late Capitalism*. London: Routledge.

Hulme, Peter. 1995. 'Including America'. *Ariel*, no. 26(1): 117–23.

Jagose, Annamarie. 1996. *Queer Theory: An Introduction*. New York: New York University Press.

Janion, Maria. 2007. *Niesamowita Słowiańszczyzna: Fantazmaty Literatry*. Krakow: Wydawnictwo Literackie.

Jenkins, Keith. 1991. *Re-thinking History* (2nd edn). London: Routledge. ———, ed. 1997. *The Postmodern History Reader*. London: Routledge.

Kelertas, Violeta, ed. 2006. *Baltic Postcolonialism*. Amsterdam/New York: Rodopi.

Korek, Janusz. 2009. 'Central and Eastern Europe from a Postcolonial Perspective'. *The Postcolonial Europe*. http://postcolonial-europe.eu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=60%3A-central-and-easterneurope-from-a-postcolonial-perspective&catid=35%3Aessays&Itemid=54&lang=en.

Loomba, Ania. 1998. *Colonialism-Postcolonialism*. London; New York: Routledge.

Melegh, Attila. 2006. *On the East-West Slope: Globalization, Nationalism, Racism and Discourses on Central and Eastern Europe*. Budapest: Central European University Press.

Meyerowitz, Joanne J. 2002. *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States*. Cambridge, M A: Harvard University Press.

Minh-ha, Trinh T. 1990. 'Not You/Like You: Post-Colonial Women and the Interlocking Questions of Identity and Difference'. In *Making Face, Making Soul = Haciendo Caras: Creative and Critical Perspectives by Feminists of Color*, ed. Gloria Anzaldúa. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Foundation Books.

Mishra, Vijay and Bob Hodge. 1991. 'What is Post(-)Colonialism?' *Textual Practice* 5, no. 3: 399.

Moore, David Chioni. 2001. 'Is the Post- in Postcolonial the Post- in Post-Soviet? Toward a Global Postcolonial Critique'. *PMLA* 116, no. 1: 111–28.

Muñoz, José Esteban. 2009. *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*. New York: New York University Press.

Owczarzak, Jill. 2009. 'Introduction: Postcolonial Studies and Postsocialism in Eastern Europe'. *Focaal* 2009 (spring): 3–19.

Padilla, Mark, ed. 2007. *Love and Globalization: Transformations of Intimacy in the Contemporary World*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.

Patton, Cindy and Benigno Sánchez-Eppler, eds. 2000. *Queer Diasporas*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Phelan, Shane, ed. 1997. *Playing with Fire: Queer Politics, Queer Theories*. New York: Routledge.

Pitcher, Ben and Henriette Gunkel. 2009. 'Editorial: Racism in the Closet – Interrogating Postcolonial Sexuality'. *Darkmatter Journal* (6 May). <http://www.darkmatter101.org/site/2008/05/02/racism-in-the-closet-interrogatingpostcolonial-sexuality/>.

Presser, Lois. 2005. 'Negotiating Power and Narrative in Research: Implications for Feminist Methodology'. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 30, no. 4 (1 June): 2067–90. doi:10.1086/428424.

Puar, Jasbir K. 2007. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Rosenberg, Tiina. 2008. 'Locally Queer. A Note on the Feminist Genealogy of Queer Theory'. *Graduate Journal of Social Science* 5, no. 2. *Queer Methodologies* (December). <http://gjss.org/images/stories/volumes/5/2/0805.2a02rosenberg.pdf>.

Stryker, Susan and Stephen Whittle, eds. 2006. *The Transgender Studies Reader*. New York: Routledge.

Todorova, Mariia Nikolaeva. 1997. *Imagining the Balkans*. New York: Oxford University Press.

White, Hayden. 1990. *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Woltersdorff, Volker. 2007. 'Neoliberalism and its Homophobic Discontents'. *InterAlia: A Journal of Queer Studies*, no. 2. http://www.interalia.org.pl/en/artykuly/2007_2/06_neoliberalism_and_its_homophobic_discontents_1.htm.

Young, Robert. 1997. 'White Mythologies: Writing History and the West'. In *The Postmodern History Reader*, ed. Keith Jenkins. London/New York: Routledge.