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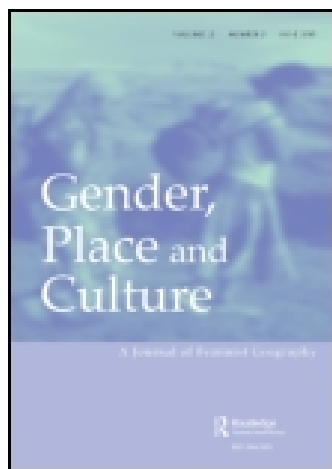
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## Western leveraged pedagogy of Central and Eastern Europe: discourses of homophobia, tolerance, and nationhood

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This article focuses on the relations between the two geo-temporal categories – Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and West/Europe – in discussions about sexual politics, homophobia, tolerance, and nationhood. It contributes to the existing literature about homonationalism and sexual nationalisms by introducing CEE to the debate's geographical *loci*, so far mostly invested in West/Europe and its relations to Islam. It argues that it is important to consider CEE in sexual nationalism debates because of its framing as the European (homophobic) Other in the emerging discourses of 'homoninclusive Europe'. This article introduces the concept of *leveraged pedagogy*, which captures the specificity of the West/Europe – CEE discourses of sexual liberation, advancement, and backwardness. *Leveraged pedagogy* is a hegemonic didactical relation where the CEE figures as an object of the West/European 'pedagogy', and is framed as permanently 'post-communist', 'in transition' (i.e. not liberal, not yet, not enough), and homophobic. Such 'taking care of' CEE, it is argued, is a form of cultural hegemony of the Western European liberal model of rights as the universal.

**Keywords:** *leveraged pedagogy*; homonationalism; sexual nationalism; Central and Eastern Europe; West; European parliament

### Introduction

In this article, I focus on the relations between two geo-temporal categories – 'Central and Eastern Europe' (CEE) and 'West/Europe' – in discussions about homophobia, tolerance, and nationhood. I remain in dialogue with (and in debt to) the existing theoretical literature about sexual nationalisms (Beverley 2004; Dickinson 1999; El-Tayeb 2011; Hayes 2000; Jivraj and De Jong 2011; Kuntsman and Miyake 2008; Mepschen, Duyvendak, and Tonkens 2010; Mosse 1985; Parker et al. 1992; Pryke 1998; Puar 2007; Sabsay 2012; Stychin 1997). By extending its geographical *loci*, which is so far mostly invested in West/Europe and its relations to 'Islam/Middle East', this article is a theoretical attempt at (re) introducing CEE into the dyad West – Islam, and broadening the existing debate. It is also a modest contribution to the steadily growing literature about sexualities in CEE (e.g. Baer 2009; Essig 1999; Flam 2001; Kuhar and Takács 2007; Kulpa and Mizielinska 2011; Long 1999; Mizielinska 2001; Stulhofer and Sandfort 2004; Torra 1998). It seems important to bring the CEE into focus in this theoretical context, because it is often framed as the European (homophobic) Other in the emerging discourses of 'homoninclusive European Nationhood'. (I use 'European' to indicate a predominant position of the European Union (EU) in influencing and defining the notion of Europe/European.) Therefore, such attention will help to problematise the existing understanding of relations between

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nationality and sexuality, and the raising processes of sexual nationalism in some Western European countries (notably the UK, France, the Netherlands, Germany, and Denmark).

I propose to describe the West/Europe – CEE relation using the concept of *leveraged pedagogy*, elaborated here on the basis of the analysis of the European Parliament (EP) resolutions, and build on the study of documentaries and activist discourses in another text (Kulpa 2012). In its simplest, this relationship can be understood as a didactical and cultural hegemonic relation of power, where the CEE figures as an object of West/European pedagogy. This discourse frames CEE as permanently ‘post-communist’, ‘in transition’ (i.e. not liberal, yet, enough), and, last but not least, homophobic. *Leveraged pedagogy* works as a ‘whip and carrot’: a condemnation, and also a promise of redemption, because of the geographical location and proximity to the self-proclaimed universality of West/Europe. I suggest CEE is somehow ‘European enough’ to be ‘taken care of’, but ‘not yet Western’ so as to be allowed into the ‘First World’ club. Yet I argue that this ‘taking care of’ CEE is a hegemonic deployment of the Western European liberal model of rights as the universal one (as in the ‘universal human rights’). To sustain this model as superior (self-essentialising of West/Europe as liberal), CEE is rendered as permanently ‘post-communist’ (i.e. catching up on an uneven slope of progressive distance/proximity from the peak of the West/Europe ideal).

Engaging with the notion of ‘pedagogy’ is important here, and my understanding of it is more aligned with the continental European use, where it encompasses a broad range of social and cultural practices, rather than with a much more narrowed, Anglo-Saxon tradition of equalising pedagogy with school education (Hämäläinen 2003; Petrie et al. 2009). Additionally, I remain influenced by the ‘critical pedagogy’ (Freire 2000; Freire and Araújo Freire 2004; Giroux 2011; Kincheloe 2008) approach to pedagogical, educational, social, and political practices. Paulo Freire in his influential book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2000), first published in 1968, analysed the dominant model of education and pedagogy as oppressive, colonising, and dehumanising in relation to imbalanced power and agency. He showed how the dominant didactical process (called the banking model) continues its investment in the replication of inequalities and social divisions. As an alternative, Freire proposed ‘dialogics’, that is ‘horizontal’ relations of cooperation, dialogue, and synthesis (Freire 2000).

I argue for the use of Freire’s critical pedagogical framework as an inspiration to think through, conceptualise, and influence hegemonic relations between the West/Europe and CEE, intertwined in discourses of tolerance, homophobia, and nationhood. In addition, the notion of *leveraged pedagogy* is stimulated and draws on the ‘balkanisation’ debates discussed below. However, I want to specifically narrow the focus of my concept to the field of sexuality and discourses of homophobia, tolerance, and gay (human) rights, that are, in my opinion, the latest addition to discursive practices of the West/Europe ‘educating’ CEE. I will return to this discussion and further conceptualisations of *leveraged pedagogy* later in the article.

In what follows, first, I discuss my understanding of the West/Europe and CEE. Then, I analyse the EP’s three resolutions about homophobia in Europe, highlighting the workings of power and discursive hegemony. Next, I discuss further the concept of *leveraged pedagogy*, especially in the context of (and in contrast to) recent debates around sexual nationalisms.

### Setting the scene: West/Europe, CEE, and the EU

To begin, it is important to explain my understanding of such highly contentious concepts as the ‘West’ and ‘CEE’. First, I want to highlight personal uneasiness about finding myself in the position, whereby approaching the topic of power relations and hegemonic discourses, I

need to re-establish them as such; thus necessarily re-creating what I seek to challenge. In addition, the 'West' indicates for me the USA, Europe, and the EU. However, the 'West' is also a notion that goes beyond them, this that cannot be named otherwise but the 'West'. 'West/Europe', on the other hand, indicates a more narrowed focus on the geographical Western European context, the concept of the Western Europe, the EU, and the idea of Europe (which, as I argue, is predominantly fused with the concept of the West). Nonetheless, the West, Europe, America, and the CEE are not only geographical denominators but also political, cultural, historical, and temporal categories. All of the above terms/concepts are highly ambiguous, and although they may at times point to specific geographical regions (e.g. CEE as 'east of Germany') or political institutions (e.g. West to the EU), they are ultimately contentious and indefinable. Thus, I purposefully use them in a multiplicity of existing understandings, which always differ and depend on the position of the authors, institutions, their location and access to material, and symbolic capital. Finally, the expression 'European community' stands for me in this article for 'EUropean Nationhood'. Nationhood here, however, does not necessarily have to be understood in narrow terms as a (institutionalised) nation-state, but relies more on the idea of Benedict Anderson's 'imagined community' (1991). Finally, the place of Russia needs to be noted as unique, in the relationship between the West/Europe and the East. Although it definitely could fall under the category of CEE, it has also its own more individualised relation to the West, which adds to the sense of ambiguity of categorical belonging.

The CEE is often framed in West/European discourses (among others: Bakic-Hayden 1995; Bjelić and Savić 2002; Forrester, Zaborowska, and Gapova 2004; Hammond 2004; Korte, Pirker, and Helff 2010; Kovačević 2008; Melegh 2006; Miklóssy and Korhonen 2010; Schulz-Forberg 2005; Todorova 1997; Wolff 1994). Delanty (1995) writes,

The idea of Europe remained the cultural model of the western core states. A major implication of this view is that the eastern frontier of Europe was above all a frontier of exclusion rather than of inclusion; it accelerated and intensified a process by which Europe became the mystique of the West. (Delanty 1995, 48)

Delanty summarises here how the West essentialises itself as Europe at the expense of the East. He brings forward the particular place and a role CEE played in these practices/discourses. Not as easily ostracised as the East (e.g. colonised cultures of Far and Middle East), due to its geo-location, yet equally not within the self-proclaimed and self-contained and *de facto*, western Europeaness – CEE is, as much as it introduces, ambiguity (and still to be explored subversiveness). Fluidity of borders between the two attempted designations, their porous character 'is one of the most important traits of East-West slope' (Melegh 2006, 36). This renders CEE as a sort of transition space, in between the *real* East and the *real* West. In the words of Wolff (1994, 13): 'Eastern Europe was located not as the antidote of civilization, not down in the depths of barbarism, but rather on the developmental scale that measured the distance between civilization and barbarism'. This ambiguity, ambivalence, equivocality, pliable rather than unfixable Otherness, and dormant possibility are crucial categories of CEE emerging from the West. And they serve as the framework of the most recent developments of the West/European discourses about the CEE as homophobic (but curable) space of Otherness. I suggest that the recent focus on sexuality and tolerance is a significant new adjustment, hence the suggestion of the new concept of *leveraged pedagogy*.

### **Leveraged pedagogy in EP's resolutions<sup>1</sup>**

The three chosen EP resolutions about homophobia in Europe (European Parliament [EP] 2006a, 2006b, 2007a) refer almost exclusively to CEE, even though they call upon Europe.

What I want to show below is the possibility of tracing in those documents the mechanisms of Othering described above in more general terms. I suggest that the Europeanness of CEE is questioned (if not denied) in these documents by showing a supposed lack of attachment to European values (implicitly identified as a set of the liberal traits of individualism, secularism, Enlightenment, and Modernity), and thus it is designated as (Eastern) Other (symptomatically brought about in the second resolution's call upon Russia). What emerges as an implicit consequence of the EP's critique of homophobia is disapproval but softened by a 'horizon of hope' (in the form of undisputable guidelines) that the EU paints for its new CEE members.

Firstly, it is important to recognise the role and power of the EP among other EU institutions. As a directly elected legislative body, together with the European Commission (EC) (executive) and the Council of Europe, it is one of the most influential legislative bodies not only in Europe but also in the world (EP 2007b). Although the Commission as the executive body has more direct impact on the actual working of the EU and its members, it is the EP to which the EC is accountable. So it is the EP that has the right and power to accept/reject the EC proposals, including the EU budget (thus impacting on the overall functioning of the EU). Furthermore, although the governing powers of the EU are differentially distributed among its institutions, prohibiting any of them the sole dominance (although this is arguable as well), it is clear from the EP self-presentation (*cf.* <http://ww.europal.europea.eu>) that the EP is a powerful EU institution in terms of shaping official discourses. In this, EP puts particular attention on human rights as one of its key preoccupations (and thus of the whole of the EU). Hence, (*italics words are mine*):

The European Parliament is a *defender* of human rights and democracy *in Europe and abroad*. The Charter of Fundamental Rights in the European Union sets out the civil, political, economic, and social rights of all individuals living on EU territory.

Such self-perception and self-presentation are, as I argue, ripe with consequences that go beyond the good will and respect to some idealised notions of 'democracy' and 'human rights', very much at the expense of the real bodies and lives of people who inhabit the 'subject positions' to which 'democracy' and 'human rights' are then 'applied' (Sabsay 2012).

The change in size and structure of the EU has an impact on the discursive formation of EU's self-image. Within the *Explaining Lisbon Treaty* document (EU 2009), structural adjustments soon became obvious and a range of other modifications and adaptations are still in process. The Treaty of Lisbon (and the previous attempts at creating the EU constitution) is a major example, if just one among many, of the EU's response to the enlargement. Ten new countries, mostly former communist and Central and Eastern European – which through centuries were framed as non-Western and Other – would significantly challenge the narrowness of Europeanness of the EU in its Western denomination. The year of the EU enlargement (2004) is thus a moment of dislocation, and I propose to read the EP's resolutions about homophobia as a response to it. I suggest these resolutions are the articulation of *social antagonism* (Laclau and Mouffe 2001) within the enlarged EU and an attempt at (re)establishing West/European liberal tradition as the universally defining (i.e. hegemonic) component of European Nationhood and the core of the EU. This is done by the effective deployment of *difference* and *equivalence* in the EP resolutions. This logic, according to David Howarth, is

the expansion of a discursive order by breaking existing chains of equivalence and incorporating the 'disarticulated' elements into the expanding formation. Whereas a project

principally employing the logic of equivalence seeks to divide social space by condensing meanings around two antagonist poles, a project mainly employing the logic of difference attempts to displace and weaken antagonisms, while endeavouring to relegate division to the margins of society. (2000, 107)

Around the same time, that is from 2004 to 2006, when the first resolution was passed, there was a noticeable and worrying rise of homophobic discourse (e.g. pride bans, or public calls for the so-called sodomy laws) in Russia (Stella 2007), Balkan states (Dérens 2006), Hungary (Renkin 2009), and in some other countries in CEE (Kuhar and Takács 2007). The EP resolutions, especially the rise of the populist, nationalist, and outspokenly homophobic right-wing political parties in Poland (*cf.* Gruszczynska 2009; Graff 2010; Mizielinska 2011) contributed as a catalyst in prompting the EP's response. In this context, I want to stress that the following critique of the West/European discourses othering CEE by relegation of homophobia as their innate state does not aim to deny its existence in CEE, nor to diminish its gravity. My purpose is to raise awareness that the institutional discourses of the West/Europe concerning itself and the CEE are out of balance. This imbalance of discursive power relegates the CEE to a subordinated position, while creating the impression of a supposedly more pure and less homophobic West/European core.

The first of three resolutions, *Homophobia in Europe* (EP 2006a), names no specific countries, but makes general statements about 'worrying events [that] have recently taken place in a number of Member States' (point C). It then follows with six examples of homophobia. All of them point to events that took place in some CEE countries and are specific enough to identify them as characteristic of these countries, and not of Western European countries (e.g. the banning of gay pride marches, the use of inflammatory language by leading political and religious leaders, or the prohibition of same-sex marriage laws).

Of the paragraphs that follow in the text, points E, F, and 12 are, in my opinion, crucial. They state that (*italics words are mine*):

E. Whereas same-sex partners in *some Member States* do not enjoy all of the rights and protections enjoyed by married opposite sex partners and consequently suffer discrimination and disadvantage,

F. Whereas at the same time *more countries in Europe* are moving towards enduring equal opportunities, inclusion and respect, and provide protection against discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation, gender expression and gender identity, and recognition of same-sex families,

(...)

12. [EP] Welcomes recent steps taken in *several Member States* to improve the position of LGBT people and resolves to organise a seminar for the exchange of good practice on 17 May 2006 (International Day Against Homophobia). (EP 2006a)

What is the significance of the statement that same-sex partners suffer discrimination in some Member States (E), 'whereas at the same time more countries in Europe are moving towards enduring equal opportunities' (F), while 'steps [are] taken in several Member States to improve the position of LGBT people' (12)? What exactly stands behind 'some', 'several', and 'more countries in Europe'? There were 'some' 13 Member States that at the time of passing the resolution (18 January 2006) did not provide recognition of same-sex partnerships, and 11 were the 'several' improving the position of lesbian, gay, bi, trans (LGBT) people, and even 'more' in Europe generally (presumably Europe=EU Plus). In this context – where 'some' is used in the paragraph that is counter-posed by the other



using ‘several’ and ‘more’ – I would suggest that ‘some’ indicates ‘fewer’ and ‘several’ denotes ‘more’ (than some), as well as a greater variability or distinctiveness in how they approach gay and lesbian rights. These fragile distinctions, otherwise almost impossible, since ‘some’ and ‘several’ have closely related meanings, are primarily strengthened by the use of ‘more’ in the same content–context as ‘several’, and the fact that bullet points F and 12 refer to a move towards pro-LGBT politics, while bullet point E refers towards anti-LGBT stances. These three paragraphs denote the movement from anti-LGBT towards pro-LGBT, a movement that is progressive, positive, and perhaps unavoidable, since it is suggested that it encompasses not only EU but also the whole of Europe. Interestingly, it happens even if the quantifiable measures, so much more valued within the EU structures, do not necessarily point in the same direction as the strategic deployment of key words in the text of the resolution (11 pro, 13 against to neutral).

Also use of the term Europe only in the entire resolution carries a certain significance. Since the resolution concerns only EU countries, which do not encompass the whole geographical area of the European continent, the suggestion that a proliferation of pro-LGBT attitudes in the EU is also continent-wide looks like an attempt to establish this particular stance as a hegemonic, all-encompassing shift in social attitudes. At the same time, since it is Europe that is associated with the pro-LGBT attitudes (which are a reflection of the values stemming from a liberal framework, including human rights, gay rights, individualism, progress, and equality), and within the EU the same attitudes are associated with the West/European countries, the symbolic re-signification of Europe as identical to Western Europe and the Western EU inevitably follows. I would suggest that the discursive strategy of the first EP’s resolution on homophobia upholds the significance of the West and liberal ideology in the notion of Europe and the EU. Thus, consequently, it makes the Central and Eastern European cultural context as associated with anti-LGBT attitudes questionable as ‘properly European’.

These processes of ostracism towards CEE are just hinted upon in the first resolution. The logic of difference and equivalence is not yet fully developed, although their rudiments can already be observed in the discursive practices, which homogenise the notions of West/Europe and CEE, and thus re-establish rather sharp divisions between them.

In the second resolution (EP 2006b), the discursive hegemonic practice dividing the European Nationhood into two worlds is at its most spectacular when the logic of equivalence is ordered. It polarises the conditions and outcomes of discursive reality around two oppositional centres of gravity by equalising various agents and discourses as common (while the only commonality they may share is some degree of opposition to the hegemonic instances deploying such logic of equivalence). Using Poland and Russia as the exemplification of troublesome homophobia in CEE is such case in point. The resolution when exemplifying homophobia in Europe gives the examples of Poland and Russia, somehow establishing them as inter-changeable signifiers. Of the two, however, ‘Russia’ is definitely a stronger referent (given its imperial history and perhaps present, political and economic power in international relations, cultural contribution to the world’s heritage, etc.) than ‘Poland’, hence it necessarily over-determines the core meaning of the evoked East. Russia, as an over-determinant signifier, defines the ‘Particular’ – an opposition (to the West/Europe) induced in this logic of equivalence laid out by the EP. Moreover, use of the Russian examples by the EU institution to highlight problems of Europe is at least troublesome, in that Russia is traditionally rendered in the European discourses as its Other and denied the status of European. Consequently, by equalising Russia and Poland, and thus extending to the whole Central and Eastern European EU

members, homophobia is made a CEE problem, problem of the Others. This in turn helps to crystallise the core of the West/Europe as non-extremist, hence rational and middle-centred, and as non-homophobic, hence respecting human rights values of tolerance, equality, liberty, and individuality. The polarisation of supposed values, attitudes, and problems, translated into geographically demarcated categories of CEE, and less often in the named West, is a crucial element of the struggle for the appropriation of the 'empty Universal' (Laclau 1996).

The figure of the 'empty Universal' is nothing else than West/Europe and the EU – two key signifiers, which, first after 1989 and then after 2004, were dislocated into the arena of antagonisms and tensions over the position of the 'West' as its main (thus definitional) component. Both EP resolutions may play, therefore, a crucial part in the utterance of interests and in the power plays between the EU members. The two resolutions seem to re-inscribe the West/European liberal tradition into the core meaning of the EU and Europe, and establish CEE as problematic in its Easternness within the borders of Europe.

The third resolution (EP 2007a), although again discursively evoking the whole of Europe, is predominantly about Poland. Of the 18 bullet points in the second part, 12 concern exclusively Poland, a further two do not name it, but indicate CEE/Poland. Only three points are general statements, and also, interestingly, there is one bullet point that recalls three individual cases from Italy, the UK, and the Netherlands. This third document develops along the same lines as the above two. The inclusion of just one point grouping three singled out (and individual) cases of homophobia in the whole of the West/Europe strengthens the vision that homophobia as a nation-wide problem is almost exclusively a predicament of the CEE-based EU members.

The total attention given to homophobia in CEE, and its noticeable invisibility in the West, should bring to our minds the feminist critique of the patriarchal organisation of the contemporary world. Various authors (e.g. de Beauvoir 1972; Bryson 2007; Fausto-Sterling 1992) in different ways have pointed out that one of the ways cultures render masculinity more important than femininity is by making man synonymous with human, an invisible point of reference, a pseudo-neutral and universal term (while naming woman as the Other). I suggest the same process happens in the three EP resolutions, which consequently point to and highlight CEE and implicitly, silently, and invisibly (re)build-in Western liberal tradition the centrifugal meaning of the European Nationhood. European values are associated with ideologies of the West/European liberal democracies (and neoliberal capitalist economy), with the West re-inscribing and re-enforcing the chain of equivalence, e.g. the West = Europe = EU = Tolerance = Non-violence, etc.

So far, I have argued that the EP's resolutions operate as the hegemonic discourse where European Nationhood is redefined as the (neo)liberal EU project, creating and demonising CEE for its Otherness. Quintessentially, the Europeanness of this region is questioned (if not denied) by showing a supposed lack of attachment to European values (of which homophobia is a symptom). It renders CEE as the (Eastern) Other (symptomatically brought about in the second resolution's call upon Russia). The whole process needs to be seen in the context of centuries long practices of creating, shaping, sustaining, and re-doing the boundaries and meanings of the West and the East in defining Europe, as indicated earlier in the article.

The resolutions themselves have a status of an alerting tool and thus offer also a horizon of hope. The 'condemnation' and 'astonishment' expressed in all resolutions make a strong case against certain practices, attitudes, and perspectives, deemed as mostly Eastern and 'not in tune' with the European tradition. This is not to say that the West/

Europe in these texts is praised; rather it is to highlight its absence from the critique. This absence, I suggest, is one of the discursive tools that puts more pressure on CEE and suggests that homophobia is more of a problem for CEE than for the West. The ‘horizon of hope’ would be to accept and actively promote Western European values. As the first point of the third resolution (EP 2007a) states: ‘[EP] [u]nderlines that the European Union is first and foremost a community of values, with respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law, equality and non-discrimination among its most cherished values’. Thus, EU member states are ‘urged’:

to step up the fight against homophobia through education, such as campaigns against homophobia in schools, in universities and in the media, as well as through administrative, judicial and legislative means.

[And further] To enact legislation to end discrimination faced by same-sex partners in the areas of inheritance, property arrangements, tenancies, pensions, tax, social security, etc. (EP 2006a)

There is also a possibility of some sort of penalty and discipline to be exercised, if the above recommendations are not implemented. For example,

[EP] requests the Polish authorities to facilitate the implementation of the Year of Equal Opportunities 2007, and requests the Commission to monitor the implementation of the Year, in particular the clause whereby funding is conditional on ensuring that all grounds for discrimination are addressed equally in the national programmes.

[EP] asks the Conference of Presidents to authorise the sending of a delegation to Poland on a fact-finding mission, with a view to obtaining a clear picture of the situation and entering into dialogue with all the parties concerned. (EP 2007a)

However, examples of good behaviour are also set in place:

[EP] welcomes recent steps taken in several Member States to improve the position of LGBT people and resolves to organise a seminar for the exchange of good practice on 17 May 2006 (International Day against Homophobia). (EP 2006a)

[As well as] [EP] welcomes the fact that the mass demonstrations organised in Antwerp and Paris to express public horror at the events referred to above and public support in the fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism were attended by thousands of people; welcomes also the demonstrations for tolerance in Poland and notably the warm welcome given to the 2006 Gay Pride parade in Warsaw. (EP 2006b)

It is important to recognise that the EP resolutions about homophobia are not only pointing a finger at CEE with disapproval, but also use a language of praise (although to a significantly lesser degree than the one of a demurral). This prompts me to consider these resolutions from a slightly different angle acknowledging some possible positive effects the discourse of the European Nationhood, CEE, and homophobia may have. Firstly, these resolutions raise the attention of the EU (and perhaps other) countries and their political actors to the issue of violence and intolerance motivated by non-normative sexualities. In any struggle against homophobia, or racism, or other forms of xenophobia, it is important to voice loudly the concerns of those minority groups that are in the most vulnerable positions to suffer from discrimination, and which most often are silenced. Thus, EP resolutions possibly facilitate the creation of an outlet for the LGBT activists to publicly address homophobia in their respective countries. In addition, these resolutions may ‘pay back’, in a quite literal, financial sense. Addressing homophobic intolerance, after having gained the official EP-level recognition as an ‘issue’, may be more likely recognised as a cause for financial support from the wealthy West/European donor-Samaritans (e.g. Soros Foundation, Ford Foundation, Böll Stiftung EU). Their money is important in supporting

still rather weak LGBT (and other) organisations in CEE (Císař and Vráblíková 2007; Richardson 2005). Yet still, it should also be kept in mind that although the EP resolutions may put more pressure on the national governments to tackle homophobia, or tone down outspoken politicians, the effect may as well be just the opposite. In Romania, for example, Woodcock (2011) argues that although there may be more funding available, it is mostly available upon acceptance of normative and (un)conditional terms. The money is accessible only after meeting the specific demands of the West/European donors and their West/European cultural expectations, which ignore the specificities of the local development and historical–national contexts (Woodcock 2011). Also Graff (2010) has suggested that EU discourses may play into the hands of those against whom they stand.

### Defining West/European *leveraged pedagogy* of CEE

Having analysed three resolutions of the EP about homophobia, I now want to return to the earlier introduced concept of *leveraged pedagogy* and discuss its usefulness in thinking about the discourses of homophobia and tolerance between West/Europe and CEE, especially after the EU enlargement in 2004. I suggest that although it was not the first enlargement of the EU, it was the most significant in terms of the constitution of what is understood as European in the EU compound. This enlargement blurred and undermined the self-evident Westernness in the EU's notion of Europe. I suggest that the EU reinvents itself as the European community (i.e. EUropean Nationhood) after 2004, to re-inscribe the West as synonymous with the EU, and then these both into the core notion of Europe. One area where this can be observed is the projection of homophobia onto CEE, and thus the implicit portrayal of West/EUrope as progressive and advanced in terms of sexual diversity acceptance, liberalism, and general advancement of a (or rather *the*) Modernity and a 'development'.

How do discussions around homosexuality, homophobia, xenophobia, nationhood, and nationalism (West/Europe and the Other/CEE) relate to the existing sexual nationalism debates about the same topics, but in relation to 'Islam'? Judith Butler in *Frames of War* (2009) analyses how West/Europe is discursively framed as a privileged sphere of Modernity, 'where sexual radicalism can and does take place. Often, but not always, the further claim is made that such a privileged site of radical freedom must be protected against the putative orthodoxies associated with new immigrant communities' (Butler 2009, 102). Butler uses the case of Dutch immigration policy and practice (Fassin 2010; Mepschen, Duyvendak, and Tonkens 2010; Jivraj and De Jong 2011), which confronts certain immigrants (notably those from the 'Middle East'), with images of homosexual couples. Immigrants' reactions and attitudes to these pictures are to measure progress and stages of Modernity, and hence acceptability. For the same reasons, immigrants from the EU or the USA do not have to take the same test, as presumably they are already Modern (enough) (Butler 2009, 105). These discursive practices frame 'Arabs', the 'Middle East', and 'Islam' as religious, pre-modern, and barbaric, needing to be civilised. In such discursive *dislocation*, West/Europe's supposed secularism, advancement, and tolerance emerge as its defining qualities. In this example, Butler (2009) shows how popular discourses about the relation of West/Europe to Islam evoke categories of civilisation and barbarism, plus life and death.

Related to the described problems are those termed as 'homonationalism'. Although there is no set distinction between this and 'sexual nationalism' terms, and many users exchange them freely, I believe it would be useful to narrow the definition of 'homonationalism' to the lesbian and gay practices of nationalism. It would describe the

situation whereby national/ist ideologies are embraced by lesbian and gay communities, and in most cases, resulting in racist and xenophobic, especially Islamophobic, discourses, and practices of exclusion. So while ‘sexual nationalism’ would denote contemporary West/European nation-states’ practices and discourses of embracing ‘pro-gay’ discourse as part of their re-configurations of national identity, ‘homonationalism’ would describe national/ist and racist discourses among lesbian and gay communities. These are masked as a securitisation against homophobia (of supposedly mostly religious immigrants). The two processes of ‘sexual nationalisms’ and ‘homonationalisms’ are tightly weaved with/into each other and find legitimisation in each other claims ‘to save’ and ‘to be saved’.

One of the major criticisms of such Western tendencies has been provided by Massad (2002, 2007) in the analysis of the ‘Gay International’. Referring to the organisations like International Lesbian and Gay Association, or Human Rights Watch, Massad shows how these and similar organisations (ab)use the discourse of human rights to uphold the Western liberal ideas of ‘freedom’ and ‘tolerance’ and ‘gay rights’ around the globe. In doing so, argues Massad, they unfold tenets of cultural imperialism, as such discourses tend to ‘outsource’ the homophobia on the non-Western Others, without ever questioning the Western underpinning values of ‘liberalism’ and ‘subjectivity’. He writes, ‘the Gay International is destroying social and sexual configurations of desire in the interest of reproducing a world in its own image, one wherein its sexual categories and desires are safe from being questioned’ (Massad 2007, 189). Massad’s thought-provoking analysis clearly shows that ‘sexual nationalism’ and ‘homonationalism’ are two sides of the larger ongoing processes in West/Europe and beyond its geographical boundaries (and thus it may actually be rewarding to keep the definitional boundary between the two, slightly blurred). My argument here is that the relationship between the West/Europe and the CEE develops differently to that of the West/Europe – Islam, therefore I describe it with the new term of *leveraged pedagogy*.

The deployment of the sexual discourse by the West/Europe in relation to CEE diverges from that of Islam, in that the two geographical *loci* are not framed as the irreversible extremes. Also the status of CEE is much more ambiguous and unstable (in its Otherness) than that of the Islam as the Other. Homophobia of CEE in the dominant institutional West/European discourses (here exemplified by the EP resolutions) is a different condition to the homophobia of Islam. In the former case, homophobia is more like a curable malady, slowing down (rather than threatening) the West/European self-proclaimed advancement and Modernity. In the *leveraged pedagogical* gesture of the one who knows better, West/Europe reprimands CEE first, but then also promises to help in erasing ‘the issue’. But the help comes as a strongly conditioned, and an undisputable process that has little respect or interest in the local circumstances of why ‘the issue’ has arisen in the first place (Woodcock 2011) (or indeed, how the very notion of ‘the issue’ is framed). I argue that such framing of homophobia in the CEE is as much a consequence as a syndrome of CEE’s ambiguity, which in itself is a product of specific discursive practices and politics of West/Europe in the process of ‘inventing Europe’ (Delanty 1995). Not able to reject CEE as the absolute Other (as it does with Islam) due to the geographical, religious, and cultural proximity, and in the face of the EU enlargement, it is sexuality that provides a new arena for the revival of the West/European orientalism towards the CEE. Speaking here with, for example Haritaworn (2009), I argue that gay (human) rights became ostensibly marked as a litmus test of CEE progress towards the West/Europe. One of the main indicators of this progress or rather backwardness is homophobia, which is constructed as almost an innate, organic feature of CEE societies. Very much the same as ‘bloody nationalism’ was designated to be a CEE problem in the 1990s (Spencer and

Wollman 2002, 94–121). In this way, an implicit process of re-inscribing liberal individual values into the core notion of the Europe and EUropean Nationhood occurs. Here, I also recall David Kideckel's notion of 'Categorical Orientalism' (1996):

In Categorical Orientalism subjects retain their voice, though those voices that devalue their own lives, or at least those aspects of them organized by the state, have the greatest credence. Furthermore, the devaluation of Eastern life is not because 'they' are totally different, but rather because 'they' have fallen into difference over time. The Orientalist assumes the enduring difference between West and Orient. The Categorical Orientalist holds out the possibility of redemption for the fallen through capitalism, democracy, civil society, privatization, and the like.

I add that recently, also through the acceptance of the West/EUropean liberalism, Kideckel's discourse is increasingly defined in terms of inclusion of homosexuality into the national agenda (with provisions of legal regulations and discourse of tolerance), and seen as a status symbol on the civilisational slope of the progressive liberal Modernity of West/EUrope. Unfortunately, such self-perception as 'homoinclusive' translates (i.e. projects) homophobia onto CEE (or/and Islam).

To sum up, *leveraged pedagogy* is a discourse of unequally distributed power between the one that supposedly knows better, and assumes itself in the teaching and dominant positions (West/Europe), and that who is discursively overpowered, and is framed as backward, thus in need of being educated up (CEE) by the former. It is a leveraged relation of inequality, as the 'pedagogy' remains within the remit of a binary-oppositional framework, which is structurally fraught in that it sustains the vertical realities of inequality and power, resisting the acknowledgment of horizontal relationships of partnership. Calling upon Freire's model of 'critical pedagogy' (2000) helps us to understand why the claims of West/Europe to 'teach' CEE how to 'catch up' and defy homophobia, although well intended, recreate the very mechanisms of exclusion and condemnation, which is characteristic of homophobic discourses, the EP seeks to eradicate.

The relation of *leveraged pedagogy* is possible due to the geographical, cultural, and religious proximity of CEE to the West/Europe (it is the Other, but more fluid and ambiguous, especially in contrast to Islam, which is framed as the ultimate Other). The relation of *leveraged pedagogy* is also a relation of the hegemonic temporality, where the West/Europe is rendered as more knowledgeable, consummate, older, wiser, and the CEE is rendered as naïve, younger, and inexperienced (specifically in human rights and liberal democracy). Therefore, as the time passes, the younger grow older, gain sophistication, and will eventually mature to be where the ideal of the West/EUrope is right now. But this expectation does not recognise the 'temporal disjunction' in which CEE's sexual politics and activism found itself after 1989 (Kulpa and Mizielska 2011). This evolutionary anticipation is hegemonic in that the CEE is required somehow to do in 20 years what has taken West/Europe some two centuries (e.g. to develop arguably stable, liberal democratic political organisations, economy, and society). There is an expectation from CEE to live 'right now' contemporary West/EUropean temporality and to partake in the common (Western) narration of liberalism, democracy, and rights. All this, however, happens in a void, uprooted from history. The expectation to 'catch up' ignores the past and expects the present and the future to be the same for both, West/Europe and CEE, as if the past did not shape and influence the present. In consequence, an inner tension within West/EUropean discourses emerges; an ambiguity within these discourses arises and undermines their own evolutionary narrative of progress. But there is also another question lurking in the shadows of the *leveraged pedagogy*. When the CEE manages to advance itself to the West/

European standards of gay (human) rights and tolerance, where will West/Europe be by then? It remains then a rhetorical question, whether CEE will have ever a chance to actually draw level with West/European ideals.

Moreover, certain parallels between the *leveraged pedagogy* and narrations of ‘saving women’ analysed from the post-colonial feminist perspective are interesting. Jo Doezema in her thought-provoking article *Ouch! Western Feminists’ ‘Wounded Attachment’ to the ‘Third World Prostitute’* writes,

[the] central argument in this article is that the ‘injured body’ of the ‘third world trafficking victim’ in the international feminist debates around trafficking in women serves as a powerful metaphor for advancing certain feminist interests, which cannot be assumed to be those of third world sex workers themselves. (2001, 17)

She further elaborates on the UK first-wave feminists’ portrayal of Indian women as ‘suffering bodies’ as a specific class and race-based division supporting colonialism and difference from the ‘saving bodies’ of white, British, and middle class women (Doezema 2001, 22). She concludes,

[in] the implicit equation set up by feminist abolitionists, the ‘suffering body’ of the Indian prostitute became that of all Indian women and stood for the condition of India as a whole (...). The ‘suffering body’ as metaphor for India established it unequivocally as backward and in need of rule (...). (2001, 25)

Doezema builds upon Wendy Brown’s concept of ‘injured identity’ and ‘wounded attachment’ (1993, 1995). For Brown they are symptoms and causes of infinite injury of identity politics. Here, a major shortcoming is the reliance on the memory of wound and injury, which serves as the pretext for a collective action of resentment. By substituting the suffering body of a third world prostitute with a suffering (homophobic and abused) body of CEE lesbian and gay person, and Western feminists with West/European officials, the usefulness of Doezema’s argument in the discussion over *leveraged pedagogy* becomes clear. Identity-based activism, according to Brown, is like scratching, thus replicating the wound, and it does not work towards the elimination of the conditions that caused the injury. Doezema shows how some Western feminists delegate their own problems and rely on the ‘suffering bodies’ of Other women – a position that recreates colonialism and inequality between the ‘privileged West’ and ‘deprived East’.

I argue that West/European discourses of tolerance and homophobia play an increasingly significant role in constructing the difference between the old West/European and new CEE members, in the quest for the EU’s self-ideal of European Community. In this process, Central and Eastern European lesbians and gays are portrayed as bodies suffering homophobia from their nationalist cultures/states and, importantly enough, are in the need of West/European intervention (for the more general account of similar narratives, see Bracke 2012). Consequently, the West/Europe emerges as advanced, sexually liberated, tolerant, and post-nationalist. It is possible because, as Brown writes,

[p]rotection codes are thus key technologies in regulating privileged women as well as intensifying the vulnerability and degradation of those on the unprotected side of the constructed divide between light and dark, wives and prostitutes, good girls and bad ones. (Brown 1995, 165)

*Leveraged pedagogy* is a patronising discourse of help and ‘taking care of’ on the unconditional terms of ‘saving bodies’ coming from the West/Europe. Such deployments of *us* and *them* delineating neat and sharp borders between ‘the West and the Rest’ (Hall 1992) always make me feel uneasy and awkward. Moreover, perhaps paradoxically (but only on the surface), such distribution always retains a degree of flexibility and ambiguity

as to the exact location of subjects. This flexibility helps to accommodate changing and relational configurations of power, dominance and submission, resistance, and hegemony. Yet, at the same time, no matter how flexible, such discourses never lose sight of which subjects are *proper* 'We' and (im)*proper* 'Them'.

### Closing remarks

In this article, I have analysed the EP resolutions about homophobia, and on this basis I proposed to term the cultural hegemony of West/Europe over the CEE, *leveraged pedagogy*. Rooted in the old Western European discourses of 'balkanisation' and Orientalism, this relation ostracises and Others CEE as innately homophobic, and as the ambiguous time-place 'just about' ready to enter the West/European liberal Modernity of supposedly progressive sexual politics and pro-gay tolerance. However, because the relation has more to do with patronising than some form of pedagogy, it differs to that of the West/Europe and Islam. The latter is mostly centred with discourses of 'defence' against a supposedly homophobic migrant Other ('Islam') and forced induction of 'human rights' on other non-European geo-cultural contexts. The West/Europe frames the CEE as permanently 'transitioning' towards the West/Europe ideal on the uneven and steep slopes of 'post-communist transformations'. The hegemonic position of the West/Europe in its supposed advancement is taken for granted, a trajectory of modernist civilisation set-up, all CEE needs to do is to let itself be educated in the powerful pedagogical gesture of the West/European Modernity. A clear example of such attitudes is echoed by Tanja, from Amsterdam's LGBT organisation COC, in the documentary *Rainbow's End* (dir. Hick and Jentsch 2006): 'We in Europe and the West have achieved tolerance, and maybe we can spread it, help them, so that they can accept it more easily'. It gets more complicated, though, when such patronising attitudes masquerade as a form of almost compulsory 'ethical obligation to help out', expressed by Peter Tatchell in the same film:

Western lesbian and gay movement have the duty and responsibility to show the solidarity with the fledging gay and lesbian movement in those countries. And we also believe that we have the duty to help queers who are fleeing persecution in those countries, to bring them to a place of safety.<sup>2</sup>

There is, however, an unanswered question haunting such discourses of *leveraged pedagogy*. How is it possible to ensure that a good thing – to help others in need, to be in non-patronising solidarity with them – will not become a manifestation of the moral superiority of those capable of help? How might it be possible to ensure that it will not become a hegemonic and orientalising manifestation of power relations between the 'West and the Rest'?

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### Notes

1. I am aware of the methodological limitations that selective discursive-textual reading of only three documents bears in terms of representativeness and wider applicability. What I am interested in, in this article, is the exploration of the *problematic* and I believe that these three resolutions are problematically *ambiguous* in their formulations. Moreover, ambiguity is



problematic, because it may be read from a variety of perspectives. And this is exactly the opportunity I want to explore here, offering just one, among many possible, readings of ambiguity inscribed in these documents, perhaps to the point of proving myself problematic.

2. For further analysis of five documentaries about sexual politics and homophobia in the West and CEE, see Kulpa (2012).

### Notes on contributor

Robert Kulpa obtained his Ph.D. in Psychosocial Studies from the Birkbeck College, University of London, UK. His thesis explored discourses of nationhood and homosexuality in the context of 'post-communist transformations' in Poland. Following on from this, Robert engaged in the study of local and global politics of sexuality, nationhood, and non-normative identities as interlaced with discourses of geography and temporality, concepts of 'West'/Europe and the 'Rest'/Central and Eastern Europe, 'modernity', 'progress', and 'backwardness'. He is particularly interested in the cultural translation of queer studies, and in examining the use of post-colonial theories and methodologies to the study of 'post-communism' and the idea of 'Europe'. Together with Joanna Mizielinska, Robert edited the book *De-Centring Western Sexualities: Central and Eastern Perspectives* (Ashgate 2011), as well as various articles and book chapters. For further details about Robert's research and publications, please visit [www.robertkulpa.com](http://www.robertkulpa.com) or write to Email: [roberto@kulpa.org.uk](mailto:roberto@kulpa.org.uk)

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## ABSTRACT TRANSLATIONS

### La pedagogía influida por el Occidente de la Europa central y oriental: discursos de homofobia, tolerancia y nacionalidad

Este artículo se centra en las relaciones entre dos categorías geotemporales – Europa Central y Oriental (ECO) y Occidente/Europa – en las discusiones sobre la política sexual, la homofobia, la tolerancia y la nacionalidad. Contribuye a la literatura existente sobre el homonacionalismo y los nacionalismos sexuales al introducir ECO a los sitios geográficos del debate, hasta ahora mayormente invertido en Occidente/Europa y sus relaciones con el Islam. Propone que es importante considerar ECO en los debates de nacionalismo sexual debido a su construcción como el Otro Europeo (homofóbico) en los discursos emergentes de una "Europa homoinclusiva". El artículo introduce el concepto de pedagogía influida (leveraged pedagogy), el cual captura la especificidad de los discursos de liberación, avance y atraso sexual del Occidente/Europa – ECO. La pedagogía influida es una relación didáctica hegemónica donde la ECO aparece como un objeto de la "pedagogía" del Occidente/Europa, y está enmarcada como permanentemente "post-comunista", "en transición" (esto es, no liberal, no todavía, no lo suficiente), y homofóbica. Esta manera de "cuidar a" ECO, se argumenta, es una forma de hegemonía del modelo UEuropeo occidental liberal de derechos como el universal.

**Palabras claves:** pedagogía influida; homonacionalismo; nacionalismo sexual; Europa Central y Oriental; Parlamento Europeo

### 西方对中东欧的檣杆教学法：恐同症、容忍和国族论述

本文在性政治、恐同症、包容与国族的讨论中，聚焦两个地理时间范畴——中东欧（CEE）以及西方 / 欧洲之间的关系。本文透过将中东欧引介至目前大幅关注西方 / 欧洲与伊斯兰关系之辩论的地理所在地，对既有的同性国族主义与性国族主义文献做出贡献。本文主张，在性国族主义的辩论中考量中东欧是相当重要的，因为它们在浮现的“接纳同性恋的欧洲”论述中，被框架为（恐同的）欧洲他者。

本文引入槓杆教学法之概念，以此捕捉“西方 / 欧洲—中东欧”中性解放、进步与落后论述的特殊性。槓杆教学法是一组霸权的训育关系，其中中东欧被描绘成西方 / 欧洲“教育”的对象，并被永久地设想为处于“后社会主义”、“转变中”的状态（例如：不自由、不太自由，或是不够自由）并且惧怕同性恋者。本文主张，此般“照顾中东欧”是西欧视权力为普适性的自由主义模式下的文化霸权形式。

**关键词：**槓杆教学法；同性国族主义；性国族主义；中东欧；西方；欧洲议会