Homophobia and queer belonging in Hungary

Hadley Z. Renkin

Abstract: Violent attacks on gay and lesbian activities in the public sphere, coupled with verbal aggression against sexual minorities by right-wing politicians in Hungary and other postsocialist countries, illustrate the centrality of sexuality in questions of postsocialist transition. This article discusses the limits of current scholarly interpretations of homophobia in postsocialist countries. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork on LGBT activism in Hungary, it argues that by undertaking public projects that assert multiple forms of identity and community, LGBT people, although often portrayed as passive objects of the changing configurations of power of Hungary's transition, have raised a radical challenge to traditional imaginings of the boundaries between national and transnational meanings. It is this challenge—the proposal of a "queering" of belonging—to which right-wing, nationalist actors have responded with public violence.

Keywords: homophobia, Hungary, LGBT activism, national belonging, postsocialism

On 7 July 2007 the Gay Pride March in Budapest, Hungary was violently attacked by skinhead, neo-Nazi, and nationalist "counterdemonstrators." From the intersection of Dohány street on the city's Main Ring Road to the March's end on the bank of the Danube, the approximately 2,000 marchers were ceaselessly pelted with eggs, bottles, bags of sand, and at least two incendiary flares. Besides missiles, right-wing attackers, from youths to elderly women, hurled epithets such as "Filthy queers!" and "[Throw the] faggots into the Danube!" Some waved nationalist flags. Others, dressed in black uniforms, gave Nazi salutes. The violence did not end with the March; later that night gays and lesbians were assaulted as they returned home following the after-March celebrations. Eleven participants were beaten, at least two so badly that they were hospitalized. These attacks were repeated at the July 2008 March. This time, anti-gay forces were more numerous and organized. Thanks to the presence of thousands of police from all over Hungary, none of the participants was seriously injured. Nonetheless, the March suffered a constant rain of rocks, bottles, eggs (some filled with dye or caustic substances), fireworks, and flares; many participants likened the experience to being in a war.

With these attacks, sexuality has clearly emerged as one of the most salient forms of cul-

Focaal—European Journal of Anthropology 53 (2009): 20–37
doi:10.3167/fcl.2009.530102

tural-political difference in postsocialist Hungary. Although previous Pride Marches in Budapest had seen isolated, peaceful protests, the attacks of the last two summers have brought Hungary into conformity with a much-noted trend of violent, public homophobia that has recently appeared in almost all the countries of Eastern Europe. Over the last several years, Pride Marches in Poland, Serbia, Croatia, Romania, Latvia, and Russia have faced violent right-wing assaults.[1]

Such attacks have been accompanied by a noticeable escalation of openly homophobic rhetoric by major public figures. In Poland, for example, the country whose homophobia has attracted the most international notice, the then prime minister Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz openly asserted in 2005 that "homosexuality is contrary to nature" (cited in Graff 2006). Other Polish politicians have gone further, such as an MP for the right-wing League of Polish Families, who recommended "police batons" as the proper way to handle gay rights marchers (Amnesty International Report 2006, cited in O'Dwyer and Schwartz 2007) and current President Lech Kaczynski, who banned gay rights marches in Warsaw in both 2004 and 2005. In Latvia, too, powerful public and political figures have become increasingly open in expressing homophobic positions. In 2002 both Lutheran and Catholic archbishops contributed chapters to a book published by nationalist Aivars Garda, called "Homosexuality: Humanity's shame and ruin" (Schwartz 2005, Waitt 2005), while in 2005 the then prime minister, Aigars Kalvitis of the center-right People's Party, denounced Latvia's first Pride March as "unacceptable [in] a state based on Christian values" (cited in O'Dwyer and Schwartz 2007).

Hungarian politicians on the right, too, have become increasingly vociferous in attacks on lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgender (LGBT) people in the last several years.[2] One example that drew considerable public notice was the effort in 2001 by István Tárlos, mayor of Budapest's Third District, to ban LGBT people from the international music festival *PepsiSziget* (Pepsi Island), because they constituted "an unambiguous hazard" to the nation's youth.[3] Such remarks have been reinforced by recent statements by nationally known figures on the right, including László Surján, vice-president of the Christian Democratic Party (KNDP) and representative to the European Parliament, that Pride Marches are "provocative" actions (*Népszabadság Online,* 9 July 2007). Other right-wing politicians have labeled LGBT people "deviants" who "spread sickness throughout the Hungarian Nation,"[4] arguing that public Pride Marches require equally public counterdemonstration, "in order to protect our children, and in the interest of assuring the healthy development of our community."[5]

The significance of public homophobia has also been widely noted outside the right. The proliferation of stories about the attacks in the Hungarian press in the weeks following the 2007 and 2008 Pride Marches revealed that homophobia has come to be seen as a figure for more general cultural and political struggles. The political left has echoed this view, insisting that the attacks on the March threatened more than just gay people. Budapest's Head Mayor, Gábor Demszky of the liberal SzDSz (Association of Free Democrats), for example, saw them as reflective of Hungary itself, as broadly intolerant actions "in opposition to everything which the democratic countries of the world hold as normal."[6] Likewise, MSzP (Hungarian Socialist Party) representative Tímea Szabóné Müller warned such actions were "reminiscent of the darkest periods of human history."[7]

The pervasive nature of such attacks has also resulted in a small but rapidly growing body of scholarly analysis that has attempted to investigate why, and from what roots, such an apparently new and widespread phenomenon has arisen. In this article, I critically examine these discourses on postsocialist homophobia, and consider them in light of two of the most central Hungarian LGBT activist projects. My goal is to enrich prevailing explanations of the current trend of homophobia in postsocialist countries, and to increase our understandings of its complexities.

I argue that rather than being merely objects of innate hatreds, or primarily symbols of other tensions, as they are often seen to be in dominant accounts, it is also the concrete activist practices of LGBT people that have placed them at the center of postsocialist struggles over belonging and right-wing anger. Through the public projects they have undertaken over the last decade, LGBT people have contributed significantly to the broader cultural contests over identity and community which have strongly shaped Hungary's ongoing transformations. By using such projects to assert complex forms of selfhood and connection, Hungarian sexual minorities, although often portrayed as passive objects of the changing configurations of postsocialism, have radically challenged traditional imaginings of cultural belonging. In what I refer to as a "queering" of belonging, LGBT people have produced new, critical perspectives on the emerging structures of postsocialism, and powerful alternatives to their framing of the boundaries between national and transnational meanings. It is the far-reaching cultural implications of these practices, I contend, in addition to the symbolic meanings of LGBT people, to which right-wing nationalists have responded with such public hatred.

This article is based on ethnographic fieldwork with Hungary's LGBT community. I conducted research over a period of approximately twenty-seven months between 1999 and 2008. During this time, I took part in a wide range of community activities, including planning meetings of activist organizations, protests and public events, and informal gatherings. I conducted interviews with members of Budapest's main LGBT organizations, groups from smaller cities, and non-activists. I collected documents about the Hungarian LGBT movement and its history, including media materials, European and American scholarly research, and the publications and archival materials of LGBT activists. From 1999 until 2003, I participated in the Budapest Pride March every summer. I also took part in the 2007 and 2008 Marches, and in the days that followed attended discussions among LGBT people and others about the attacks and their meanings.

Dominant views of homophobia in postsocialist discourse

Theories of homophobia within fields such as anthropology, lesbian and gay studies, and queer studies are myriad, and cover a wide range of approaches from psychological, to social-structural, to discursive and ethnographic analysis (Adam 1998; Boellstorff 2007; Wickberg 2000). Despite this rich theoretical background, however, analysts of the current wave of postsocialist homophobia in Eastern Europe have largely focused on interpretations that understand homophobia and its use by right-wing movements in three ways that, though illuminating in certain respects, nonetheless have crucial limitations.

Psychological Homophobia

The first of these approaches sees homophobia as essentially psychological in character, a deeply individual reaction grounded in personal fear of sexual "Others." In this view, expressions of homophobia result inevitably from the internal feelings of hatred and fear with which non-heteronormative sexualities are regarded by certain people. Homophobic reactions are unconscious and individual; their existence on the level of collective public action stems from the aggregation of individual attitudes.

This perspective was often expressed to me in remarks by LGBT Hungarians about both everyday forms of homophobia and attacks on Pride Marches, that, for example, "some people just hate us," or sarcastic claims that extreme expressions of homophobia reveal people's fears of their latent homosexual desires. Likewise, popular media reports often treat homophobia as a psychological reflex of certain people and social groups, typically uneducated workers and the unemployed, in response to the psychic pressures of socio-economic disaffection. More academic contributors to these discourses, which view homophobia in Eastern Europe primarily as the result of opportunistic politicians invoking "easily available targets" such as LGBT people to manipulate popular sentiment in order to gain the votes of such groups, depend on simi-

lar assumptions of an inevitably homophobic cultural background (e.g., Schwartz 2005).[8]

Such interpretations fail to address the underlying question of why homophobia serves as such an effective political tool, and why it is employed at certain moments and not others. Instead, these explanations of homophobia simply replicate long-standing condemnatory discourses that individualize and decontextualize social relations, such as those that figured the "authoritarian personality" as the key problem of the post–World War II political environment. They (re)instantiate the homophobe as an object of strictly psychological origin. Though they may account for one important aspect of homophobia—the powerful emotions that sustain it and its violent expressions—the understanding of homophobia as personal and psychological mystifies both its causes and consequences, removing it from the realm of the conscious and social, and preventing its analysis as a politically and culturally consequential phenomenon (Adam 1998; Wickberg 2000).

Heteronormative nationalism

In contrast, other interpretations of homophobia strive to see it as both the product of social and political relations, and consequential for them. Two of the most influential of these have centered on the internal cultural dynamics of nationalism and its constitution of community, and the tensions between national and transnational politics and communities.

Many analyses of postsocialist sexuality, for example, take homophobia to be a consequence of the hegemonic nationalist ideologies of postsocialist Eastern Europe. These approaches ground themselves in research into the historical connections between nationalism and sexuality, which argues that modern European projects of nation-building locate the homosexual as the constitutive internal Other of the heteronormative national subject (Mosse 1985). For nationalism, the proper member of the Nation is both heterosexual and reproductive. Seen as neither, LGBT people come to represent the Nation's Other. In this analysis, to be gay is to deny the Nation and its needs, and so to align oneself with its transnational enemies. Waitt (2005) thus finds Latvia's recent rise in homophobia to result from the post-Soviet resurgence of nationalism, and the consequent hegemony of heteronormative privilege. Similarly, Riszovannij (2001) identifies homophobia in Hungary during the 1990s as an effect of nationalism's cultural dominance.

These perspectives add greatly to our understanding of homophobia. They reveal that sexuality has long been integral to relations of power and politics in Eastern Europe (as elsewhere). They argue that central formations of postsocialist society are predicated on the position of LGBT people as Others within a historically rooted cultural politics. In so doing, they refute claims of homophobia's novelty. At the same time, however, interpretations of this kind obscure key aspects of homophobia in Eastern Europe. This is because the assumption that historical connections between national and sexual meanings directly structure their current relationships threatens to reify homophobia as a timeless and unchanging part of an equally timeless and unchanging nationalism. Homophobia thus ultimately requires no explanation: it is a static element inherent to any nationalism, which merely finds expression in particular practices, while remaining unaltered by changing contexts. Moreover, this interpretation of the relationship between nationalism and sexuality results in a simple binary opposition between nationalism and gayness, with vital consequences for understanding both sexual identity and politics: if you are a nationalist, you are homophobic; if you are a homosexual, you are anti-national. As this article shows, such constructions ignore the complex realities of postsocialist sexual politics.

Homophobia as anti-"Europe"

As do views which trace homophobia to the historical connections between nationalism and sexuality, the currently most influential interpretation of postsocialist homophobia emphasizes its public and political meanings, and is grounded in appreciation of nationalism's power in postsocialist contexts. Proponents of this view, how-

ever, argue that sexual minority identities and politics have become culturally and politically consequential in Eastern Europe because of their location within recent patterns of national-transnational tension. Specifically, LGBT people and politics are associated with the nation's transnational "Others"—primarily "Europe" and "the West." For Eric Fassin (2007), perceptions of LGBT people and their rights as the key foci of European Union efforts to promulgate Western European visions of "sexual democracy" are what stimulate defensive nationalist reactions against them. Likewise, Agnieszka Graff has argued that homophobic discourses and actions in Poland "can only be understood in their historical and political context—at the intersection of hopes and anxieties concerning Poland's place in the European Union" (2006: 435). These readings of homophobia see LGBT people through their symbolic meanings as "symptoms of modernity"—a modernity taken to be antagonistic to the Nation, properly located elsewhere (Bunzl 2004). This symbolic status renders them powerful sites of nationalist hatred.

This perspective resonates strongly with views expressed by Hungarian LGBT people. Following the 2007 and 2008 attacks, many asserted that neither the counterdemonstrations at the March, nor the violent attacks on LGBT people afterward, were really about "us" (i.e., sexual minorities), rather they were about "politics" in general. LGBT people and the Pride March, they argued, were merely pretexts for other political meanings. Like others, one lesbian activist pointed to the widening gap between rich and poor since Hungary's 2004 EU entry. She spoke of growing popular disillusionment with Hungary's government (a coalition of the Socialists and Free Democrats), as well as with both post-socialist politics and EU–Hungary relations. Others saw LGBT people as scapegoats for some people's anger at the EU's imposition of uniform social rules, including those mandating tolerance for sexual minorities, without providing uniform social and economic benefits.

These transnationalist interpretations provide crucial elements to our understanding of the complex meanings of postsocialist homophobia. Rather than assuming it to be irreducibly personal, or the past's ineluctable legacy, they tie it to postsocialism's transnational tensions, notably those between "Europe" and "the Nation" (Eglitis 2002; Verdery 1996). Viewing right-wing homophobia as a rejection of a perceived "moral colonialism" by Western Europe, they locate it within the larger frameworks of dominance and subordination currently shaping East European cultural politics. They thus allow us to see more clearly how homophobic attitudes and actions are embedded in specific social, economic, and political contexts.

The cultural-political meanings of LGBT people in Hungary are undeniably shaped in significant ways by these kinds of economic and political tensions. Openly homophobic statements and actions form part of a more general pattern of increasing right-wing activity in Hungarian politics, emerging from an increasingly venomous divide between the political right and left—a divide reflective of divergent views of Hungary's proper relationship to the EU. These tensions have been greatly exacerbated by the country's economic situation: until recently Hungary was experiencing strong economic growth, and considered an exemplar of post-socialist success. In the last several years, however, its economic condition has declined, and the country is now seen by many as worse off than other countries in the region. Many associate the change with Hungary's 2004 entry into the EU. The right's response to the situation has been publicly evident since October 2006 when, in response to leaked comments about the economy by Socialist Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány, right-wing activists occupied the area around parliament, conducting violent demonstrations and assaulting the state-run television station. Thus, there has been a great deal of general public protest by the Hungarian right, rooted in the perception that neither the governing coalition nor the EU have lived up to their (sometimes imagined) promises.

Yet to take these conditions, and reactions to them, as the primary explanation for homophobia is to beg the question of why LGBT people in particular have become the current scapegoats

for economic and political alienation. In order to account for the place of LGBT people at this crucial symbolic juncture, proponents of transnational explanations ultimately rely on the same assumption they attribute to the right-wing: that LGBT people are essentially transnational, more closely linked to "Europe" and "the West" than the Nation. As Graff has said of Poland, "participants use LGBT events to express their desire to fully participate in the new Europe, with its culture of tolerance and pluralism" (2006: 437).

Thus, although they expand our sense of the larger relationships and complex dynamics surrounding homophobia, these interpretations of homophobia as primarily the expression of national reaction against a transnational "Europe" or "West" retain important flaws; they too depend on assumptions of a fundamental opposition between national and transnational, with LGBT people positioned on one side of the divide, and their opponents on the other.

Consequently, and ironically, in figuring homophobia as an "anti-European" reaction, these views may reproduce orientalist perspectives of very long standing, reinscribing images of Eastern Europe as Western Europe's intolerant Other, and a space of resistance to "civilized" values (Wolff 1994). LGBT people appear here as a kind of "indicator species" for the postsocialist creation of inclusive society—for "normal" social progress. In one example, the emergence of organized sexual politics in Hungary and the status of LGBT rights "in the context of catching up with Europe, and joining the European Union, [become] a test for Hungarian democracy" (Riszovannij 2001: 159; see also Long 1999, Wallace-Lorencová 2003). Similarly, Graff (2006: 448) describes attitudes toward lesbians and gays as "the litmus test for Polish democracy." Such discourses cast the new, Eastern European EU member-states as politically and culturally "backward," insufficiently tolerant threats to the moral integrity of a more advanced, democratic "Europe." Like the psychologizing discourses discussed earlier, they imagine the (Eastern European, national) homophobic subject as merely the latest embodiment of antithesis to the (Western, transnational) properly tolerant, Liberal subject—again reinforcing the binary between the two (Adam 1998; Kitzinger 1987). Critically, this kind of Othering also functions to obscure the "West's" homophobia, directing attention from hegemonic intolerance there.

More importantly, however, by denying the significance of their actual presence at the center of homophobic violence, such explanations ultimately erase LGBT people per se from the issue entirely. In these interpretations homophobic attitudes and actions constitute a kind of metaphorical reaction, based on the belief that in Eastern Europe LGBT people are seen by their opponents primarily as key symbols for something else: the dominant transnational Other of EU or "West." It is thus not actually LGBT people themselves who are the objects of homophobia—who matter—but merely that which they represent.

Gays as the new Jews

In a common reading of homophobia that blends elements of the two previous interpretations, the notion that LGBT people are understood in postsocialist contexts primarily as symbolic representatives of other cultural tensions has led to the conclusion that LGBT people are merely the present moment's scapegoat of convenience.[9] Proponents of this view cite rhetorical similarities between older traditions of anti-Semitism and recent homophobic pronouncements, such as remarks by Polish Bishop Stanisław Stefanek about the 2004 Warsaw "Equality Parade," in which he warned of "a small number of specialized geniuses" who wish "to conquer the globe," and to create "moral ruin and the complete destruction of the family."[10] Such images of morally threatening conspiracy hark back to long-standing tropes of Jews as members of a global Cabal bent on undermining national survival. Similarly, at Budapest's 2007 Pride March many of the protestors' slogans mingled Jews and LGBT people in the same condemnatory breath. Skinheads and neo-Nazis displayed banners with sayings like "Pitchers have big ears—and big noses" (the Hungarian word for pitcher, *köcsög,* is a derogatory term for a gay man; a big

nose, of course, is a classic anti-Semitic stereotype). They also shouted phrases like, "soap factory" and "[Throw the] faggots into the Danube, and the Jews after them!"—both World War II references easily understood by any Hungarian. The first alludes to the Nazi concentration camps' use of rendered human fat to make soap, the second to the notorious practice of Hungarian fascists during the 1944 Siege of Budapest of rounding up Jews and taking them to the banks of the river, where they were shot and thrown in. These discursive parallels have led some analysts to suggest that LGBT people have become "substitutes" for Jews as representatives of the Nation's internal "Other" (e.g., Graff 2006).[11]

Although compelling, this notion of homophobia as a "replacement" for traditional Eastern European anti-Semitism ignores two important factors. First, homophobia is by no means new in Eastern Europe. As we have seen, long-standing forms of heteronormativity and homophobia mark many of the region's dominant cultural structures, including hegemonic nationalism. Furthermore, although many accounts treat the public and political visibility of homosexuality in Eastern Europe as something that has only appeared recently (e.g., for Poland, see Graff 2006), considerable evidence exists that not only is there a history of public presence and debate about LGBT people going back to the late 1980s and early 1990s in several postsocialist countries (see Essig 1999; Kliszczyński 2001; Long 1999; Renkin 2007a; Riszovannij 2001), but that homosexuality stood at the center of many debates about the Socialist project itself (Healey 2002; Rivkin-Fish 1999). Thus, LGBT people are hardly a newly stigmatized category. Second, anti-Semitism remains pervasive throughout Eastern Europe in both discourse and everyday practice, in ways often quite indistinguishable from historical antecedents.[12] The claim, then, that gays are the new Jews in postsocialist politics once again begs the question of why, in such strikingly visible, public fashion, LGBT people have become such significant targets of right-wing mobilization at this particular moment in time. Moreover, here too such discourses imagine postsocialist homophobia as essentially ahistorical: merely the latest manifestation of an inevitable xenophobia, directed now against Jews, now against gays. Once more homophobia is somehow not about LGBT people themselves at all.

In summary, although each of these discourses adds important elements to our understanding of postsocialist homophobia, they all, in my view, leave something critical out of the picture. Psychologizing explanations preclude consideration of homophobia's social meanings. Interpretations of nationalism as fundamentally heteronormative, or those that see homophobia as resulting from the association of LGBT people with "Europe" and "the West," or its conflation of LGBT people and Jews, treat the political-semiotic topography of the Nation—or the symbolic relations mediating the Nation's relationship to the transnational—as structurally fixed, and thus ahistorical: only the specific symbols change in different historical moments. Moreover, all erase LGBT people, and their action and agency, from the picture.

Practice and its implications

I want to suggest that we can address these limitations in current discourses on postsocialist homophobia, and add significantly to our understandings of its complex causes and meanings, by looking more closely at how LGBT people themselves are shaping and reshaping the structures of sentiment and power that surround them in postsocialist Eastern Europe. It is not enough, I argue, to consider how certain people are situated in systems of symbolic meaning—national or transnational—by others; it is essential to consider how people act concretely in these contexts to position themselves, and so produce their own cultural and political meanings.

My analysis here draws on anthropological and other theories of culture that privilege practice as the critical foundation for understanding social relations, structures of power and meaning, and their transformations. Theories of practice take social structure to be the consequence of the concrete practices of culturally embedded

actors, and see their agency as crucial to transformations of social process (Bourdieu 1977; deCerteau 1984; Ortner 1984). Recent work on postsocialist cultural politics also has paid close attention to how new meanings emerge from concrete cultural practices, and reshape the larger structures of personal, cultural, and political meanings within which they exist (Burawoy and Verdery 1999; Hann 2002; Lampland 2002). Foremost among these has been Verdery's (1999) trenchant exploration of how ritual practices surrounding "dead bodies" have been used throughout postsocialist Eastern Europe by diverse social groups to claim and contest cultural and political legitimacy. Emphasis on the centrality of concrete practice to establishing and resisting new cultural and political meanings, however, has largely been limited to the dominant categories of postsocialist analysis: ethnicity, religion, and economics. Sexuality, perhaps because it is so often seen as essential difference, has been almost entirely overlooked. Thus, these otherwise influential analyses have had little effect on interpretations of the politics of postsocialist homophobia.

Drawing from these theories, I propose that in order to understand the current surge in public homophobia in Eastern Europe, it is necessary to look at the concrete practices of LGBT people. I suggest that in Hungary it is their actual, on-the-ground activities, and not simply their location as hypostatized identity-objects within the symbolic terrains of either nationalism or transnational politics, that have resulted in their current positioning at the center of both homophobic reaction and broader cultural debates about belonging. This perspective can lead us to question the assumptions current discourses of homophobia make about the cultural and political affiliations of LGBT people, and to rethink their cultural meanings. It challenges current understandings—both right and left—of LGBT people and their identities and associations. It can also provide new insight into right-wing homophobia, allowing us to see it as a response to specific LGBT practices and claims, and thus not simply as either instinctive violence or blind reaction, but as an intervention in broader contests over postsocialist belonging. Doing so enables us to recognize, rather than deny, the agency of LGBT people to shape the cultural worlds in which they live, and to see them as active participants in such contests as well.

Viewing postsocialist homophobia in this way situates its analysis within broader criticisms of "transitology" that have emerged particularly in anthropology. These critiques have drawn attention to the ways in which dominant discourses of postsocialist "transitions" have figured them as literal transitions, in which once-socialist societies progress naturally and inevitably toward a known destination: Western-style multicultural democracy (Bernhard 2005). Resisting such teleological (and triumphalist) assumptions, anthropologists and other critics have argued that, nineteen years after the collapse of Eastern European socialism, the nature of postsocialist change remains highly contested, and continues to be worked out through the concrete practices of the region's inhabitants (Berdahl, Bunzl, and Lampland 2000; Burawoy and Verdery 1999).

Utilizing these critical perspectives to reframe analysis of postsocialist homophobia allows us to use the neglected domain of sexuality to cast new light on postsocialism's ongoing complexities. It is with this intent that I turn to the activist efforts of LGBT people in Hungary. I argue that by producing, in publicly meaningful ways, forms of identity that simultaneously claim national and transnational connections, LGBT activists propose their own competing vision for postsocialist Hungarian identity. This vision fundamentally challenges right-wing notions of identity and community and has contributed to the dramatic growth in public homophobia over the last several years, culminating in the attacks on the last two Pride Marches. Thus, it is not merely personal antipathy, or the automatic response of nationalism to its Other, or the shifting of anti-EU sentiment to a convenient target, which has led to the current rise in public homophobia, at least in Hungary. Rather, in addition to these factors, it is a rejection of the public practices of identity and

community that LGBT activists have deployed, and their implications for belonging.

Hungarian LGBT activism: Queering belonging

Hungary's organized sexual politics movement began early compared with most other Eastern European countries.[13] The country's first lesbian/gay organization, Lambda Homerosz, was founded in 1988, just before the collapse of the socialist government. Primarily a social group, some of its members soon founded a new organization, Szivárvány Társulás a Melegek Jogaiért (Rainbow Coalition for Gay Rights), specifically dedicated to fighting for LGBT rights. Denied official registration, Szivárvány quickly splintered, giving rise to smaller activist groups. By the early 1990s, a gay men's organization, Lambda Budapest, a telephone helpline and legal aid service, Háttér Társaság a Melegekért (Háttér Support Society for Gays), a legal aid service, Habeus Corpus Munkacsaport (the Habeus Corpus Workgroup), and in 1997 a lesbian group, Labrisz Leszbikus Egyesület (Labrys Lesbian Association), had emerged, all located in Budapest. Since then several organizations have been formed in smaller cities.[14]

The Budapest Pride March

These organizations have worked to support and strengthen LGBT identity and community in Hungary. Most significantly, since the late 1990s they have done so by using public events to construct complex forms of identity and belonging (Imre 2008; Renkin 2007a, 2007b, 2007c). The most important of these is the Budapest Pride March. The first such mass public demonstration by LGBT people in postsocialist Eastern Europe, the Pride March has grown from the 200 people who took part in the first March in 1997 to approximately 2,000 participants.[15]

The Pride March presents a complex picture of LGBT identity, community, and politics. Like other Pride Marches the world over, it is rife with the iconography of global gay identity. Marchers wave rainbow flags, wear pink triangles, and bear posters with slogans like "The Gay Family" and "Silence=Death." Drag queens in fancy cars and gyrating disco dancers adorn the parade. Even the March's scheduling conforms to global gay liturgy: its timing is carefully calculated to fit in with other European Pride Marches. These practices demonstrate the connections Hungarian LGBT people perceive between themselves and LGBT people and movements elsewhere. They create an image of the Pride March that strongly supports the ways such Marches are typically understood by both right-wing nationalists and analytical discourses of homophobia: as expressions of transnational identity and community.

Over the years, however, the Pride March has also asserted powerful claims to specifically national belonging. These have been made primarily through its use of public and nationally symbolic space. The first March in 1997 occurred in distinctly marginal space, emerging from one of the city's few gay bars to travel along the Korzó, a notorious gay cruising zone. Within a few years, however, the March had moved into Budapest's central public spaces, parading along major streets like Andrássy út, and traversing prominent locations in the city center, such as Deák tér. It also began to appropriate nationally symbolic spaces. In 2001, the March began next to Heroes' Square, Hungary's most symbolically potent national space, the site of foundational postsocialist public rituals such as the reburial of former prime minister Imre Nagy in 1989 (Gal 1990; Rév 1995; Verdery 1999). In 2002, the March not only began next to Heroes' Square, it also crossed the Danube on one of its most central and visible bridges, the Elizabeth Bridge. And in 2004, the March streamed over the river on the Lánchíd, or Chain Bridge, an iconic image of Budapest, reiterated ad infinitum in representations of the city, and a symbol of Hungarian national pride since the mid-nineteenth century. In these ways the Pride March has over time associated its participants with the spaces of a specifically Hungarian history, constructing LGBT people as legitimate inhabitants of national community.

Thus, along with claims to global LGBT identity, community, and politics, the Pride March powerfully expresses national forms of identity and belonging. In contrast to the ways postsocialist LGBT marches are typically understood, therefore, the Budapest Pride March fuses national and transnational meanings. Other concrete statements by LGBT people at Pride Marches underscore this fusion. For example, the poster for the 2001 March bore the silhouetted image of a woman waving a rainbow flag over the Hungarian Parliament building. The poster proudly proclaimed one of the most famous verses of the renowned national poet Attila József: "*Édes hazám, fogadj szivedbe, hadd legyek* …!" (My sweet homeland, take me to your heart—let me be/exist!). Image and verse joined national yearnings with a sense of transnational gay triumph. Another poster carried in recent Marches stated simply: "*Magyar vagyok, Meleg vagyok, Ember vagyok*" (I am Hungarian, I am Gay, I am Human). These and many similar expressions document the multiple understandings of identity and community of Hungarian LGBT people. Like other Pride Marches, the Budapest March contributes in public, visible ways to cultural contests over belonging (Guss 2000). But it does so in a complex fashion, claiming both transnational bonds and belonging rooted specifically in the nation.

The Kertbeny Memorial

The annual Pride March draws the most notice of all LGBT events in Hungary. In recent years, however, LGBT activists have undertaken other public actions that contest dominant conceptions of identity and community. Among these, efforts to recover lesbian and gay histories have been particularly salient.[16] One such project commemorates a gay Hungarian ancestor, Károly Kertbeny, a writer, translator, researcher of homosexuality, and sexual rights activist who died in Budapest in 1882. Following the discovery of his unmarked grave in Budapest's national cemetery in 2001, Lambda Budapest and the gay magazine *Mások o*rganized the dedication of a new gravestone for Kertbeny; a memorial service is now held there every summer.

Like the Pride March, the Kertbeny memorial produces complex forms of belonging. The memorial clearly links Kertbeny, present-day LGBT people, and transnational LGBT identity, politics, and community. Speeches and writings by participants consistently assert Kertbeny's gay identity. They underscore the global nature of this gayness, stressing Kertbeny's participation in the international sexology movement of his time, particularly his globally influential coining of the terms "homosexual" and "heterosexual" (Takács 2003). The memorial also ties Hungarian LGBT people into transnational gay history and community practically, as it was explicitly intended to be not merely a local ritual, but a site of international gay "pilgrimage."[17]

At the same time, however, the memorial asserts the place of LGBT people within Hungarian history. Its speeches and writings also stress Kertbeny's Hungarianness, his involvement in Hungarian national literature, and his connections to central figures of the country's national-cultural myth, such as revered writers Sándor Petöfi and János Arany. Moreover, like the Pride March, the Kertbeny memorial also makes powerful statements about the presence of LGBT people in nationally significant space. Kertbeny's pink granite gravestone lies, and the annual memorial takes place, in Budapest's national cemetery, surrounded by the graves and mausoleums of Hungary's greatest heroes. The memorial's public recognition of him as a "gay ancestor" thus inserts LGBT people firmly within the symbolic genealogy of Hungarian national community.

Through these and a range of similar actions, LGBT people in Hungary have asserted themselves as active participants in the legitimating cultural narratives of postsocialist society, and thus striven to legitimate themselves as equal members of that society. In doing so, they have taken part in what has been widely recognized as a central element of postsocialist transformation: the reconfiguration of structures of cultural and political legitimacy, and thus of the new society's hierarchies of power (Eglitis 2002; Rév 1995; Verdery 1996, 1999). Critically, however, their assertions challenge typical understandings of LGBT people, and their organized

sexual-political movements as unequivocally aligned with transnational identities, communities, and politics, and therefore necessarily anti-national. Instead they highlight multiple connections and simultaneous belongings. These practices thus reconfigure postsocialist legitimacy in new ways, actively destabilizing the binary oppositions between homophobic/homosexual and nationalist/anti-national through which the meanings of LGBT people have typically been understood.[18]

Reactions to LGBT activism

These practices of belonging have been contentious and consequential, as have responses to them by Hungary's right-wing, even before the violent attacks of the past two summers. The history of such reactions contradicts the common view that public opposition to LGBT visibility is fundamentally new in postsocialist society, and that attacks on postsocialist Pride Marches are novel political phenomena (see Graff 2006). In the Hungarian case the public nature of homophobic reaction is not new, but has grown in size and visibility over the years, along with the public claims of the Pride March. What began as occasional signs and isolated catcalls in the late 1990s became organized, but still peaceful, groups of counterdemonstrators in 2003 and 2004. In 2007, these signs of collective protest erupted into violent attacks. Such a pattern of reactions suggests the increasingly contentious nature of LGBT presence in public spaces. As public actions in nationally significant spaces, these kinds of LGBT activism speak visibly to broader cultural contests over the boundaries of postsocialist belonging—who should be considered a proper member of Hungarian society and who should not.

Right-wing reactions to Pride Marches in Budapest demonstrate clear concern about such public presence and its significance for the boundaries of space and society. After the 2001 March, for example, a coalition of right-wing groups released a public statement, demanding that the Budapest Chief of Police no longer permit LGBT people "to march in Budapest's central streets and spaces." As they put it,

> "We consider it unacceptable that they can walk along Andrássy út, which was built for the millennium, and bears the values of the ancient world, as well as that the four famous historical statues of Kodály körönd must be witness to their placards. We protest against the fact that Heroes' Square—the place of our memorial celebrations of Hungarian history, where the statues of the outstanding personalities of our thousand-year history stand … is where these demonstrations … advertising a difference foreign to our national feelings, should take place."[19]

Displaying a strikingly similar spatial perspective, in its July 2004 headlines describing the Pride March, the right-wing newspaper *Magyar Nemzet* (Hungarian Nation) proclaimed "The city center belongs to the Gays", and that "Gays flood/overwhelm the main streets [of Budapest]." Here, LGBT presence in public and national space is clearly seen to possess profound implications for all belonging.

Yet for the right, it is not simply the presence of LGBT people in spaces where they should not be that is problematic, and fuels homophobic response, but the claims of combined national and transnational belonging they invoke there. A fascinating detail of the 2007 March demonstrates this. Unsurprisingly, throughout the March the attackers were infuriated by the presence of drag queens and scantily clad disco-dancers, and bombarded them with verbal abuse and projectiles. Widely recognized features of transnational gay iconography, these figures consistently draw right-wing ire. Yet the counterdemonstrators I observed that day were even more powerfully outraged by the sight of a slender young man with long blond hair, who in the midst of the March bore with great pride the Hungarian tricolor, embossed with the Kossuth seal—the national coat-of-arms.[20] His visible embodiment of a pride simultaneously gay and Hungarian, of connection to both the nation and to the world of global gay identity and politics, drew by far the strongest reaction that day:

a veritable storm of insults, spitting, and threats barely held back by the police line.

Such interpretations of the March's significance extend beyond the views of right-wing nationalists. Following the 2004 March, for example, one of Hungary's mainstream newspapers was so impressed by the implications of a mere 2,000 LGBT people appearing visibly in public space that it suggested that the Pride March represented another kind of Hungarian nation altogether: "an alternative 'normal Hungary'" (*Népszabadság Online,* 7 December 2004).

Action and rhetoric of this kind reveals that it is neither the character of LGBT people as ancient "enemies of the Nation," nor their symbolic position as stand-ins for the EU, the West, or cosmopolitan modernity, which is ultimately at stake for Hungary's anti-gay opposition. These reactions suggest that LBGT people are through their public actions proposing—and are understood by the Hungarian right, and others, as proposing—an alternative vision of Hungarian society, one which fundamentally defies its traditional boundaries of identity and community. By including themselves, as LGBT people, within Hungarian national-historical narrative, they challenge the traditionally heteronormative boundaries of national belonging, asserting that they too, although both "gay" and globally connected, are members of the Nation. Yet precisely because they insist on their identities as specifically Hungarian people within the frame of "global gay" practice, they confuse the notion that LGBT identity and politics are necessarily transnational; solely aligned with transnational identities and politics. The multiple senses of identity and community that their practices of belonging establish for Hungarian LGBT people thus subvert the binary opposition between national and transnational which grounds both homophobic oppression and its usual interpretations.

The unbearable queerness of being

The rise in public homophobia in postsocialist Eastern Europe, and liberal responses to it, have made it abundantly clear that despite predictions of the inevitable withering away of nationalism and the nation-state, the emergence of inclusive, democratic societies, the end of history, and the triumph of transnational community (Bernhard 2005, Fukuyama 1992), the dominance of postsocialist cultural politics by a perceived antagonism between the Nation and its Others (whether other nations, Europe, or the world) has become more powerful, rather than less so, following the 2004 expansion of the European Union. The crucial question, however, is how different people and groups have in actual practice responded to this situation, and attempted to negotiate new positions within it. In contrast to dominant views of sexual politics, I suggest that the vision of identity and community proposed by LGBT people in Hungary poses a dramatic challenge to this antagonism. Through events like the Pride March and the Kertbeny memorial service, Hungary's LGBT community consistently constructs boundaries of belonging whose contours, by embracing both national and transnational meanings, fundamentally defy assumptions of their necessary opposition, and undermine assumptions of the inevitability of the borders between them.

This approach to questions of identity and community resonates closely with the claims of queer theoretical analysis. Emerging in the early 1990s as a critique of both heteronormative hegemony and lesbian and gay dependence on identity politics, queer theory strove to confront dominant Euro-American cultural assumptions of the fundamental nature of distinctions between identity categories such as heterosexual and homosexual. Challenging notions that sexual identities are stable and distinct, queer theorists argued that sexual identities, like all others, are multiple, provisional, and fluid, and that to claim or act otherwise reinforces restrictive identity regimes (Butler 1991; Sedgwick 1990; Seidman 1996). Queer theorists thus sought to deconstruct the "grid of cultural intelligibility" through which Euro-American understandings of sexual identities, practices, and politics are organized (Butler 1991).

A key element of queer theory's critique was its implications for identity politics. In particu-

lar, queer theorists drew attention to the consequences of sexual politics grounded in clearly demarcated categories of identity. They argued that such politics were necessarily exclusionary of forms of sexual difference that did not neatly fit into their established categories. Such concerns led to a radically different notion of politics. This new "queer" politics strove to account for the ways people in actual practice experience and express multiple alignments of selfhood and desire, by recognizing shifting "subjectivities" rather than stable "identities." "Queering" thus came to refer not simply to the proposal of an "alternative" within existing systems of sexual-political meaning and possibility, but to a radical challenge to and refusal of such systems and their founding assumptions (Berlant and Freeman 1992; Boellstorff 2007; Warner 1993).

The sexual politics developed by Hungarian LGBT people demands cultural legitimacy precisely by asserting connections of history, self, and community rooted equally in domains still considered exclusive in dominant postsocialist discourses: the national and the transnational. In doing so, it also erases the boundaries that define these domains' opposition. More than simply a competing discourse, this vision contests the very terms of the relationship within which the Nation, its transnational Others, and their respective inhabitants are typically seen to operate. Such a challenge to dominant conceptions of the boundaries of postsocialist identity and community, I suggest, represents a fundamental queering of both those boundaries and the cultural-political investments they organize—a queering of belonging itself.

In this light it is revealing that homophobic reactions to the combining of national and transnational meanings by postsocialist Pride Marches have not been limited to Hungary. Similarly powerful responses by right-wing nationalists to assertions of multiple identity by LGBT people have occurred in other countries. In Poznan in 2005, for example, Polish LGBT activists attempted to begin their Equality March at a key national site, a monument to the county's short-lived uprising in 1956, only to be forcibly prevented by nationalists (Graff 2007). Similarly, at the 2006 Moscow Pride March, when LGBT activists attempted to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Red Square to demonstrate their participation in Russian national history, police immediately broke up the March, arresting its leaders.[21] Here too then, as in Hungary, it appears to be not the purely transnational character of LGBT people, but their simultaneous claims to both national and transnational meanings, that provoke the most violent and repressive responses.[22]

Conclusion

In her study of the reactions of environmental activists in Hungary to threats to the well-being of the Danube and Tisza rivers, Krista Harper (2005) examines how activists negotiated their identities and practices in ways that produced a complex balance between understandings grounded in national discourses and perspectives shared with international environmental discourses. Similarly, Lisa Rofel (2007) suggests that new forms of sexual subjectivity, with new cultural meanings, are emerging in postsocialist China as people strive to balance desires for national belonging with senses of connection to "global" gay meanings.

These analyses of the complex interweavings of national and transnational meanings by local actors have as yet had little impact on interpretations of postsocialist sexual politics and homophobia. Yet the actions of LGBT people in Hungary reflect similar desires, responses, and strategies. As sexual minorities traditionally excluded from full membership in national community, many LGBT people in Hungary are understandably skeptical about dominant notions of national identity and community as primary organizing principles of society. Like other Hungarians, however, they also feel deeply embedded in cultural traditions that privilege national identity and community as ways of understanding their relationships to other people, countries, and the world. Moreover, their experiences of the postsocialist period have often underscored the painful specificities of being

Hungarian in a world in which economic, political, and cultural power and prestige are located elsewhere. In such a situation, it is understandable that they strive to express senses of belonging that recognize their multiple positioning. Thus, despite sometimes profound tensions between these notions of identity and community, the balance between them that LGBT people express reflects a powerful sense of dual habitation, in which people see themselves as participants in both simultaneously, rather than having to choose between mutually exclusive categories of belonging.

This analysis suggests that it is insufficient to see Hungarian (or other postsocialist) LGBT people only as the symbolic representatives of other tensions, national or transnational, as do current discourses of postsocialist homophobia. Although such symbolic status has clearly become part of their current cultural meaning, seeing them primarily in these terms leads to their abstraction as a kind of "indicator species" for the production of democracy, civil society, and a truly "European" civilization, or the triumph of tolerant, liberal transnationalism over illiberal nationalism. Such an interpretation, as noted earlier, rests not only on assumptions of an irreducible distinction between the two, but also on a radical erasure of LGBT people themselves. In contrast, I have argued that we should see concretely; that we must look at the practices of LGBT people and the cultural-political meanings they produce. Doing so, I suggest, would allow us to see LGBT people in Eastern Europe as agents, as active negotiators of the contentious but generative ambiguities of postsocialist experience. Seen in this way, their conceptions and practices may enable us to pose fundamental challenges to modes, still dominant in "West" as well as "East," of imagining the relationships between people, states, and places, and reproducing exclusionary boundaries between national and transnational identities and communities.

If this is so, it is surely no surprise that LGBT people have become such potent targets of nationalist hatred. By embracing the changing conditions that make multiple forms of identity and community possible, they are constructing themselves as everything that the standard bearers of the right most fear: an embracing of those ambiguities; a publicly visible repudiation of the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion that constitute nationalism's foundational ideology and practice. In this sense, the queer belonging proposed by LGBT people in Hungary does not just envision an alternative set of these boundaries; it denies their very conditions of possibility.

Acknowledgments

I thank Jill Owczarzak and Agnieszka Kościańska for organizing the original European Association of Social Anthropologists panel that led to this special section. Thanks also go to Jill for her many helpful comments, and to the two anonymous reviewers. I am grateful to Guntra Aistara for comments on earlier drafts, and to Brian Porter for his support of my work on this topic. An earlier version of this article was presented at the symposium "New Lines of Tolerance and Intolerance in Europe," held at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, December 2007.

Hadley Z. Renkin received his PhD in Anthropology from the University of Michigan in 2007. He is currently a Faculty Fellow in Anthropology and International Studies at Colby College. His research focuses on gender, sexuality, and cultural citizenship in postsocialist Hungary, and on homophobia throughout postsocialist Eastern Europe. He has also conducted work on sexuality and belonging in Latvia.
E-mail: hrenkin@colby.edu.
Mailing address: Department of Anthropology, Colby College, 4700 Mayflower Hill, Waterville, ME 04901, USA.

Notes

1. Since the summer of 2008, it is unfortunately possible to add the Czech Republic and Bul-

garia to this list. It should be noted that not all public demonstrations promoting sexual minority rights and acceptance in these countries are called "Pride" Marches. In Poland and in Latvia the terms "Equality" or "Tolerance" March, or Parade, have been employed instead (indeed, in 2008 the name of the Hungarian March was changed to the "Gay Dignity March" [Meleg Méltóság Menet]). I use the general term "Pride March" here for convenience.

2. I use the term "right-wing" to refer to groups, such as the Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom (Movement for a Better Hungary [Jobbik]; formed in 2003), directly involved in anti-gay, anti-Roma, and anti-Jewish actions, as well as other groups and individuals engaging in such activities. I resist terms such as "extreme nationalists" or "far-right," believing this minimizes their presence, and obscures the perspectives they share with—and the tacit support they typically receive from—established political groups such as the main Hungarian opposition party Fidesz (formerly the Alliance of Young Democrats, now Hungarian Civic Union). I use the term "right" to refer to these established groups to highlight the continuum of socially conservative values on which these groups stand, and their shared understanding of the centrality to Hungarian social and political life of the Nation. I employ the abbreviation "LGBT" to emphasize the involvement of a range of sexual minority identities in these situations—an inclusion not always recognized within postsocialist (or other) sexual politics movements. In Hungary, for example, almost all "gay" people I know identify themselves as "lesbian" or "gay," with a very small minority identifying as bisexual. Only in the last few years has there been any visibility within the LGBT community for transgender people (cf. Takács 2006). I intentionally avoid the term "queer," sometimes used to refer to postsocialist sexual identities and politics, because almost none of the LGBT people I know use the word—or its closest Hungarian equivalent, *buzi*— to describe themselves.
3. Letter from Mayor István Tarlós to PepsiSziget kft, 3 July 2001, author's files.
4. Péter Tóth, the Jobbik's Szeged branch vice-president, cited in *Népszabadság Online,* 14 July 2007.
5. "Everyone bring a camera! The Jobbik take to the street against gays," *Magyar Távirati Iroda* (Hungarian News Agency), 29 June 2007, http://www.hirszerzo.hu/cikk.mindenki_hozzon_magaval_egy_kamerat_melegek_ellen_vonul_utcara_a_jobbik.38891.html.
6. Demszky: "If necessary, I too am Jewish, Gypsy, and gay," *Hírszerző.* 9 August 2007, http://www.hirszerzo.hu/cikk.demszky_ha_kell_magam_is_zsido_cigany_es_meleg_vagyok.39658.html.
7. "No five-party statement about the gay festival," *Hírszerző információ,* 9 July, 2007. http://www.hirszerzo.hu/cikk.nem_lesz_otparti_nyilatkozat_a_melegfesztivalrol.39679.html.
8. A more sophisticated version of this "political manipulation" argument depends on a similar assumption, discussed below, that LGBT people are inevitable symbolic representatives of an imperial, anti-national "Europe" or "West."
9. See, for example, the debate held in Warsaw in 2006 by Amnesty International, titled "Are Lesbians Poland's New Jews?" (Graff 2006: 445).
10. *Gazeta Wyborcza,* 25 June 2006. I thank Brian Porter-Szűcs for bringing Stefanek's words to my attention.
11. Other scholars have suggested that in certain contexts they similarly serve to replace other national Others, such as ethnic Russians in Latvia (Schwartz 2005).
12. See, for example, the *New York Times* article, "Simmering anti-semitism mars a vibrant Hungary," 7 May 2008, http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/07/arts/design/07anti.html?sq=anti-semitism%20hungary&st=nyt&adxnnl=1&scp=1&adxnnlx=1210346245-gPKmXRjaRhTh9tfjpZu30g.
13. Only Slovenia's sexual politics movement seems to have begun earlier; its first organization formed in 1984 (Roman Kuhar, personal communication). In Hungary, of course, as in many countries in Eastern Europe, informal activities and building of LGBT community long preceded the development of organized sexual politics.
14. Budapest remains overwhelmingly dominant in sexual politics in Hungary, particularly in terms of the public visibility of LGBT people and activism.
15. Although this can hardly compare to Western European or North American Pride Marches, until very recently (with the addition of large numbers of Western European and American visitors to Marches in places like Poland and Russia) it was the largest in Eastern Europe.

16. Several such projects have now been undertaken by both lesbian and gay men's organizations in Hungary. For reasons of space I examine only one here. For other projects, especially those pursued by lesbians, see Imre 2008, Renkin 2007b.
17. "Adakozz a melegemlékmű létrehozásához!" (Donate to the establishment of a gay memorial!), December 16, 2001, http://www.pride.hu.
18. It is true that at a number of key moments in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries groups such as gays, Jews, and others, in response to the Othering of nationalists, strove to assert national identities, loyalties, and connections, while maintaining senses of identity extending beyond the nation (see, for example, Mosse 1985). However, there are critical differences between such efforts and those of present-day Hungarian LGBT activists. The most significant here is the level of sustained, concrete public action of present-day activists and thus the ability of their claims to engage with broader cultural debates.
19. Joint press release by the Hungarian Political Prisoners' Collective, the Political Convict Community, the Historical Justice Committee, and the Proven Hungarian Freedom-Fighters' World Collective, *Magyar Távirati Iroda* (Hungarian News Agency), July 2001.
20. The Kossuth seal was the national coat-of-arms of Hungary's brief moment of national independence from Habsburg rule in 1848–49, and is a powerful icon of the country's national-historical myth. The seal was reinstated, after much debate, as the country's coat-of-arms after the collapse of socialism in 1989. To bear it on a flag emphasizes a far more emphatically national sentiment than that expressed by the tricolor alone.
21. "Banned Moscow gay rally broken up," BBC, 27 May 2006, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/5023466.stm.
22. Making such claims to national history, identity, and community may have a problematic side as well; I do not mean to suggest that any politics, even a "queer" one, is ever free of power. As I have noted elsewhere (Renkin 2007a), assertions of national belonging may reinforce the established criteria of such belonging, thus strengthening the exclusion of other Others without the ability (or desire) to make their own claims. I would argue that this is unlikely in this case, however, precisely because of the ways in which national and transnational belonging are asserted simultaneously in these projects. This dual claim, it seems to me, precludes the potential exclusivity of either category. It is this, indeed, which makes it "queer"—LGBT claims to national belonging alone are not.

References

Adam, Barry D. 1998. Theorizing Homophobia. *Sexualities* 1 (4): 387–404.

Berdahl, Daphne, Matti Bunzl, and Martha Lampland, eds. 2000. *Altering states: Ethnographies of transition in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Berlant, Lauren, and Elizabeth Freeman. 1992. Queer nationality. *Boundary 2* 19 (1): 149–80.

Bernhard, Michael. 2005. *Institutions and the fate of democracy: Germany and Poland in the twentieth century.* Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Boellstorff, Tom. 2007. *A coincidence of desires: Anthropology, queer studies, Indonesia.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1977. *Outline of a theory of practice.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bunzl, Matti. 2004. *Symptoms of modernity: Jews and queers in late-twentieth-century Vienna.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Burawoy, Michael, and Katherine Verdery, eds. 1999. *Uncertain transition: Ethnographies of change in the postsocialist world.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Butler, Judith. 1991. Imitation and gender insubordination. In *Inside/Out: Lesbian theories/Gay theories,* ed. Diana Fuss, 13–31. London: Routledge.

de Certeau, Michel. 1984. *The practice of everyday life.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Eglitis, Daina Stukuls. 2002. *Imagining the nation: History, modernity, and revolution in Latvia.* University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Essig, Laurie. 1999. *Queer in Russia: A story of self, sex, and the other.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Fassin, Eric. 2007. Our heterosexual culture and their homophobic cultures: Two versions of European sexual democracy. Paper presented at the American Anthropological Association annual meeting, San Francisco, December.

Fukuyama, Francis. 1992. *The end of history and the last man.* New York: Free Press.

Gal, Susan. 1990. Ritual and public discourse in socialist Hungary: Nagy Imre's funeral. Paper presented at the American Anthropological Association annual meeting, New Orleans, November.

Graff, Agnieszka. 2006. We are (not all) homophobes: A report from Poland. *Feminist Studies* 32 (2): 434–51.

———. 2007. Untitled paper presented at the University of Michigan, Center for Russian and East European Studies Symposium on "New Lines of Tolerance and Intolerance in Europe." December.

Guss, David M. 2000. *The festive state: Ethnicity and nationalism as cultural performance.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hann, Chris, ed. 2002. *Postsocialism: Ideals, ideologies, and practices in Eurasia.* New York: Routledge.

Harper, Krista. 2005. 'Wild capitalism' and 'ecocolonialism': A tale of two rivers. *American Anthropologist* 107 (2): 221–233.

Healey, Dan. 2002. Homosexual existence and existing socialism: New light on the repression of male homosexuality in Stalinist Russia. *GLQ: A journal of lesbian and gay studies* 8 (3): 349–78.

Imre, Anikó. 2008. Lesbian Nationalism. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 33(2): 255–82.

Kitzinger, Celia. 1987. *The social construction of Lesbianism.* London: Sage.

Kliszczyński, Krzysztof. 2001. A child of a young democracy: The Polish gay movement, 1989–1999. In *Pink, purple, green: Women's, religious, environmental, and gay/lesbian movements in Central Europe today,* ed. Helena Flam, 161–68. Boulder, CO: East European Monographs.

Lampland, Martha. 2002. The advantages of being collectivized: Cooperative farm managers in the postsocialist economy. In *Postsocialism: Ideas, ideologies, and practices in Europe and Asia,* ed. Chris Hann, 29–56. London: Routledge.

Long, Scott. 1999. Gay and lesbian movements in Eastern Europe: Romania, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. In *The global emergence of Gay and Lesbian politics: National imprints of a worldwide movement,* ed. Barry Adam, Jan Willem Duyvendak, and Andre Krouwel, 242–65. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Mosse, George. 1985. *Nationalism and sexuality: Middle class morality and sexual norms in modern Europe.* Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

O'Dwyer, Conor, and Katrina Z.S. Schwartz. 2007. Return to (illiberal) diversity? Anti-gay politics and minority rights after EU enlargement. Paper presented at the Post-Communist Politics and Economics Workshop, Davis Center, Harvard University, March.

Ortner, Sherry. 1984. Theory in anthropology since the sixties. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 26 (1): 126–66.

Renkin, Hadley Z. 2007a. *Ambiguous identities, ambiguous transitions: Lesbians, gays, and the sexual politics of citizenship in Postsocialist Hungary.* PhD diss., University of Michigan.

———. 2007b. Predecessors and pilgrims: Lesbian history-making and belonging in postsocialist Hungary. In *Beyond the pink curtain: The everyday life of GLBT people in Eastern Europe,* ed. Judit Takács and Roman Kuhar, 269–86. Ljubljana: Slovenia: Peace Institute.

———. 2007c. Skeletons in the national closet: Sexuality, history, and the ambiguities of belonging in post-socialist Hungary. In *Nation in formation: Inclusion and exclusion in Central and Eastern Europe,* Studies in Russia and Eastern Europe, ed. Jana Nahodilova, Chris Gerry, Catherine Baker, and Barbara Madaj. London: SSEES, University College London.

Rév, István. 1995. Parallel autopsies. *Representations* 49: 15–39.

Riszovannij, Mihály. 2001. Self-articulation of the gay and lesbian movement in Hungary after 1989. In *Pink, purple, green: Women's, religious, environmental and gay/lesbian movements in Central Europe today,* ed. Helena Flam, 150–60. Boulder, CO: East European Monographs.

Rivkin-Fish, Michele. 1999. Sexuality education in Russia: Defining pleasure and danger for a fledgling democratic society. *Social Science and Medicine* 49 (6): 801–14.

Rofel, Lisa. 2007. *Desiring china: experiments in neoliberalism, sexuality, and public culture.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Schwartz, Katrina Z. S. 2005. Gay rights: United in hostility. *Transitions Online,* 26 September. http://www.ceeol.com/aspx/issuedetails.aspx?issueid=aa00b6e3-462b-4cb9-b384-d2cd8ac63df0&articleId=a03f7cf2-5560-4aec-bff4-28874c746f48.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. 1990. *Epistemology of the closet.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Seidman, Steven. 1996. *Queer theory/sociology.* Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

Takács, Judit. 2003. A homoszexualitás mint magyar találmány—Kertbeny Károly (homo)szexológiai munkássága." In *Nők és férfiak: avagy a nemek története,* ed. Láczay Magdolna, 392–400. Nyíregyháza: Nyíregyházi Főiskola Gazdaságtudományi Kar.

———. 2006. *A Lélek Műtétei: Transzszexuálisok az egészségügyi-szociális ellátórendszerben.* Budapest: Új Mandátum Kiadó.

Verdery, Katherine. 1996. *What was socialism and what comes next?* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

———. 1999. *The political lives of dead bodies: Reburial and postsocialist change.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Waitt, Gordon. 2005. Sexual citizenship in Latvia: Geographies of the Latvian closet. *Social and Cultural Geography* 6 (2): 161–81.

Wallace-Lorencová, Viera. 2003. Queering civil society in Postsocialist Slovakia. *Anthropology of East Europe Review* 21 (2): 103–11.

Warner, Michael, ed. 1993. *Fear of a queer planet.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Wickberg, Daniel. 2000. Homophobia: On the Cultural History of an Idea. *Critical Inquiry* 27 (1): 42–57.

Wolff, Larry. 1994. *Inventing Eastern Europe: The map of civilization on the mind of the Enlightenment.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.