

European Bodies in the Making

Veranstalter: Lehrstuhl für Vergleichende Mitteleuropastudien, Europa-Universität Viadrina; Viadrina Center for Graduate Studies

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Bericht von: Paweł Lewicki, Lehrstuhl für Vergleichende Mitteleuropastudien, Europa-Universität Viadrina

Papers presented during the workshop discussed how „Europe“ shaped or shapes such categories as race, class and gender or sexuality and how these can be denoted on bodies. They also discussed how „Europe“ becomes „naturalized“ in bodies and how it shapes bodies' agency and impact the social and cultural worlds these bodies inhabit. Papers have shown that body contributes either to reproduction of „Europe“, or – as a metaphor – possibly creates spaces of change in Europe.

The workshop was opened by the President of the Europa-Universität Viadrina ALEXANDER WÖLL (Frankfurt an der Oder). The point of departure of Mr. Wöll's keynote speech was Larry Wolff's book „Inventing Eastern Europe“. Focusing on different productions of masculinity in Eastern Europe's literature, Mr. Wöll discussed the constant entanglements between „East“ and „West“ and tides of more integralist and more open attitudes in various Slavic literatures. In Russia the tendency to see masculinity within traditional gender roles was connected to high tides of particular and positive imagination about „Slavic culture“, when any departures from tradition were seen as coming from the „West“. A „Western“ body in West-Slavic languages was not seen as „Western“ and Wolff's marking of the „East“ as different does not hold when one starts to scrutinize the production of masculinities in West-Slavic literatures.

In the first session entitled „Embodied East and West“ LAURE GUILBERT (Frankfurt an der Oder) focused on dance between 1920s and 1940s. Her paper „Dance and body ideologies of the Interwar and the Cold War times in Europe: wars and heritages“ discussed how bodies may be exploited by totalitarian regimes to strengthen and legitimize their power. Dancing body becomes an arena

of ideological and political struggle, enabling also the expression of opposition to ideologies permeating the body. Ms. Guilbert showed also how these dance ideologies are reshaped and how they re-emerge in the post-totalitarian era.

The next paper „Embodying youth: representation of juvenile bodies in European teen magazines of the 1960s and 70s“ from ALINE MALDENER (Saarbrücken), focused on a Europe of the 60s and 70s and discussed youth beauty ideals and standards represented in German, French and British youth magazines. The Europeanization process of bodily representations and ideals went hand in hand with standardization across borders. These processes were stipulated by mass media and contributed to the emergence of new social and gender identities. The paper showed how affordable new cosmetics, new fabrics and new devices, enabled the emergence of a new type of body. It showed how „West“ inscribes itself on bodies through new consumption and economical settings.

Referring to Ms. Guilbert's paper about dance, the comment of JUTTA WIMMLER (Frankfurt an der Oder) pointed out a similar process occurring in pre WWII Austria, when mass festivals were organized that included dance to classical music from the time of Habsburg's Empire. Invoking romanticized greatness of the past should indicate that Austria is a country of high culture, elegance, and decency. Thus, in Austria dance and body discipline was also part of „invention of tradition“. Commenting on Ms. Maldener's paper, Ms. Wimpler underlined the material context of the production of standardized „European“ youth body and the fact that it emerged in Western Europe. Materiality and economy, mass consumption and chemical knowledge enabled the establishment of youth ideal opposed to the „Eastern“. The Cold War context and the materiality have to be considered in the analysis of „cultural differences“ and „European body“.

The next session „Body ideas between moralities“ included papers from CHRISTINA CHIKNAS as (New Brunswick) and IULIA ISSAYEVA (Nizhny Novgorod) and a comment from ANIKA KEINZ (Frankfurt an der Oder). What connected these

two papers was the discussion of ethical and moral imaginations expressed by the state, becoming visible in/on body. Ms. Chiknas presented a paper „Stay Healthy! Stay Beautiful! Stay Young!": Nation-Building, Consumption, and the Masquerading Body in Weimar Germany in which she discussed transformations of class structure and accompanying body practices in post WWI Germany. While she depicted the „masquerading body“ and various new forms of it's shaping, she also pointed out that these new bodies perpetuated social and cultural instabilities introduced by the economic and social upheaval. These processes stood in contrast to national policies that implied other ideas of what healthy and responsible body-shaping was and saw such new „masquerading body“ as a threat to national identity.

The paper from Iuliia Issayeva „Individual and Social Bodies in the Context of AIDS: New hermeneutic challenge to Body Studies“ discussed the HIV's and AIDS' „sickness texts“ among Russian and immigrant women from central Asia. While „sickness texts“ among immigrant women reproduced a moral and religious body ideal as opposed to „Western civilization“, the Russian „sickness text“ was based on medical knowledge and so called Safe Body Consumption Concept developed in Europe. Ms. Issayeva depicted how these two ideals clash in AIDS' „sickness texts“ and how such clash may legitimize the Russian migrant policies.

In her comment, Anika Keinz pointed out to possible (post-) imperial dynamics in Russian migrant policies – when „threat“ is pushed onto „others“ from the outside. Here imperialism on two levels comes into light: in Safe Body Consumption Concept and in „traditional“ Russian body that is neither „Asian“ nor „European“, thus nor „religious“ nor „Western-modern“. In Ms. Issayeva's paper a tension between „Asian“ and „Russian“ is marked, but these categories are „contained“ geographically. These two papers discussed moral ideas that become inscribed on bodies and are part of struggles over what defines them. In these struggles, the state play significant role and recur on deeper genealogies that have either imperial (Soviet) pasts or imperial

(Nazi) futures.

The last session of the first day was titled „Transgressing dichotomies in epistemics and politics: Embodiment of Europe“ contained two papers: from DILYANA KIRYAKOVA-RYAN (Maynooth) and PAWEŁ LEWICKI (Frankfurt an der Oder). In her paper „From Europe as Body Politics to Europe as Embodiment of the Political: Civic initiatives as constituted and constitutive for Europeanization in Bulgaria“ Ms. Kiryakova-Ryan elaborated a theoretical framework for her research on Europeanization in Bulgaria. She discussed the shift from dichotomous construction of Europe in political body metaphor to more inclusive and „democratic“ metaphor of Europe as embodiment of the political. Such metaphor implies a mode of thinking about plurality that departs from non-differentiated towards more contingent collection of radically particular individuals constituting „Europe“. Such construction enables the emergence of space for the „other“ in European identity and beyond dichotomous thinking about European and non-European subject.

Paweł Lewicki in his paper „Successful EU civil servants from new member-state: embodiment of „Europeaness“ among Brusel's Eurocrats“ depicted the embodiment of a „real European“ habitus among Polish EU civil servants in Brussels. Focusing on bodily hexis of two successful individuals from Poland, he revealed the reproduction of stable dichotomy between „East“ and „West“ or old and new member-states, in which the „East“ is on a weaker cultural position. This, in turn, impedes the career possibilities of people from new member states. As he showed, a successful Pole should „wash out“ many traces of his „Polishness“ or maneuver between being „Polish“ and „European“.

In his comment, MICHAŁ BUCHOWSKI (Frankfurt an der Oder / Poznań) pointed out that both papers discuss the motive of hierarchies between „East“ and „West“ in Europe. While Mr. Lewicki's paper presented a rather stable hierarchy reproduction, Ms. Kiryakova-Ryan claimed a constant change in the metaphor of Europe inscribed in instability of meanings. Mr. Buchowski raised the question of the possibility of modification of hegemonic cultural norms and styles

in the EU-Commission and – on a more general level – whether the East/West hierarchy is persistent, or has there been shifts in these dichotomies?

On the second day, the first session „European Others in bodily representations“ contained two presentations. SYLVIA SADZINSKI (Linz) started her paper „Queering Bodies and Sexuality: Post-Porn in Europe“ with an explanation of a body in post-porn performances, in which it is an effect of different categorizations and hierarchizations. Post-Porn, as opposed to heteronormative „mainstream“ porn, through depicting bodies undefined in terms of gender and sex, tries to undermine the normalizations of gender, desire and body. Thus, post-porn, through „queering body“, represent non-binary gender, and non-hegemonic subjects indicating non-normative positions, destabilizing structures and social orders. However, post-porn is produced by and represents only white bodies – and in such way reproduces the imperial „Europe“. In such way it creates new kinds of homo- and heteronormativity that opens new hierarchization of non-Western bodies. Thus, post-porn is stabilizing old hierarchies and old norms and here (post) imperial dynamics become visible.

The second paper from JOANNA JURKIEWICZ (Berlin) with the title „Presence in absence: European „others“ in the work of Sven Johne and Judith Quax“ discussed works of two artists focusing on „migrant bodies“ in context of „migration crisis“. Ms. Jurkiewicz examined representations of refugees and their non-visibility in the above-mentioned artists' works that should underline the absence of refugees' bodies in the mass media and public sphere in Europe.

In her comment to Ms. Sadzinski's paper MARIETTA KESTING (Berlin) referred to Peggy Phelan who remarked that not every visibility equals power (as in the example of post-porn, naked white women would then rule the world). As Ms. Kesting also claimed, a more intersectional approach would have made it possible to reveal more invisibilities than that of non-white women's body. Also a term homonationalism coined by Jasbir Puar would have made the historical and Euro-centric genealogies of the hier-

archies post-porn creates more apparent. Regarding Joanna Jurkiewicz's paper, Ms. Kesting suggested that it would have been desirable to dwell more on the connection between „tourists“ and „refugees“ / „migrants“ in the works of discussed artists. As both papers discuss visibility / non-visibility where white young, pretty, abled body remains a norm, Ms. Kesting points out that while one wants to make one identity visible, one has to be careful not to delegitimize and de-visualize other identities.

Finally, the last session under the title „Governing Mobile Bodies in Europe“ included papers from CLEOVI MOSUELA (Bielefeld) and VICTOR TROFIMOV (Frankfurt an der Oder) and a comment from GIOVANNI PICKER (Frankfurt an der Oder). Cleovi Mosuela's paper „Aged bodies and ideal migrant bodies: The recruitment of Filipino nurses to Germany“ analyzed cultural premises of German migrant policies in recruitment of health care workers from Philippines. Her paper has shown the Europeanization of bodies and its „Others“ in transnational neoliberal discourses. She has shown how discourse of development is inscribed on Philippine workers' bodies by making enterprising individuals out of them.

Victor Trofimov's paper „Bodies in Making: (Re-)producing symbolic inequalities within the Daytime Center for Male Sex Workers in Berlin“ discussed different strategies applied by male sex-workers from Romania and Bulgaria in Berlin's daytime center, to negotiate their gender, sexual and ethnic identity. These strategies and tactics are applied in order to maintain hegemony and privileged position over others in the center. These struggles depict wider dynamics between imaginations of „East“ and „West“ of Europe.

In his comment, Giovanni Picker underlined that the first paper (Philippine nurses) was a good example of anthropology of policy. Mr. Picker pointed out that it would benefit from a streamlining work adopting the framework of governmentality and subject-making state-driven processes. The second paper was an outstandingly sensitive ethnographic account of intimate lives of sex workers in Berlin and as such it was a solid contribution to the discussion of contemporary sex-

ualities and their embeddedness in capitalist labor relations.

In the final discussion closing the workshop the participants stipulated the need of detailed analysis of different processes of re-emergence of „Europe“ in and on bodies. It has been underlined that the interrelation of the two concepts contributes to their analytical and empirical applicability into the study of „Europe“ and of the different social and cultural consequences it evokes on bodies and in spaces these bodies inhabit.

Conference Overview:

Opening – Michał Buchowski, Paweł Lewicki

Keynote Speech - Alexander Wöll, The President of the Europa-Universität Viadrina,

Session I: Embodied East and West

Laure Guilbert (EUV): Dance and body ideologies of the Interwar and the Cold war times in Europe: wars and heritages

Aline Maldener (Universität des Saarlandes): Embodying youth: representation of juvenile bodies in European teen magazines of the 1960s and 70s

Comment: Jutta Wimpler (EUV)

Session II: Body Ideas Between Moralities

Christina Chiknas (Rutgers): „Stay Healthy! Stay Beautiful! Stay Young!“: Nation-Building, Consumption, and the Masquerading Body in Weimar Germany

Iulia Issayeva (Niznyj Novgorod State Medical Academy): Individual and Social Bodies in the Context of AIDS: New hermeneutic challenge to Body Studies

Comment: Anika Keinz (EUV)

Session III: Transgressing dichotomies in epistemics and politics: Embodiment of Europe

Dilyana Kiryakova-Ryan (National University of Ireland Maynooth): Becoming political: civic initiatives as constituted and constitutive for Europeanization in Bulgaria

Paweł Lewicki (EUV): Successful EU civil servants from new member-state: embodiment of „Europeaness“ among Brussel's Eurocrats

Comment: Michał Buchowski (EUV)

Session IV: European Others in bodily representations

Sylvia Sadzinski (Universität Linz): Queering Bodies and Sexuality. Post-Porn in Europe

Joanna Jurkiewicz (Berlin): Presence in absence: European „others“ in the work of Sven Johne and Judith Quax

Comment: Marietta Kesting (HU-Berlin)

Session VI: Governing Mobile Bodies in Europe

Cleovi Mosuela (Universität Bielefeld): Aged bodies and ideal migrant bodies: The recruitment of Filipino nurses to Germany

Victor Trofimov (EUV): Bodies in Making: (Re-)producing symbolic inequalities within the Daytime Center for Male Sex Workers in Berlin

Comment: Giovanni Picker (EUV)

Session VII: Reflections on entanglements between Europe and Body

Chair: Michał Buchowski and Werner Schiffauer

Discussants: all participants

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