

ESF Exploratory Workshop on

## Multiple Modernities of Same-Sex Sexuality in Nigeria

Maynooth (Ireland), 18-20<sup>th</sup> August, 2010

**Convened by:**  
**Dr. Íde Corley and Dr. Conrad Brunstrom**

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### SCIENTIFIC REPORT

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*Co-sponsored by*

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## 1. Executive summary

The Exploratory Workshop “Multiple Modernities of Same-Sex Sexuality in Nigeria” took place at the National University of Ireland Maynooth over three days from 18-20<sup>th</sup> August, 2010. 26 scholars attended including the Rapporteur for the European Science Foundation, Professor Naomi Segal whose contributions were warmly appreciated. Of the invited scholars, 22 came from 9 ESF member states and 4 from the U.S.A. (See section 6 for more statistical data. See also Appendix II for biographical notes on the participants.)

The workshop was held in the Crollly Room in St Mary’s House within the quiet environment of a nineteenth-century seminary on the university’s South Campus. For most sessions, participants were seated at tables arranged in a boardroom-style rectangle to facilitate direct and intensive discussion. Throughout the event, keynote speakers and panelists sat at one end of the room where a laptop and screen made Powerpoint and film presentations possible. The availability of a second room in the same building facilitated “break-out” small group work during the last session on the second day. Apart from the conference dinner on the final evening, which was held at a local restaurant, all meals were taken in a neo-gothic refectory within the same building, allowing conversations to proceed informally at the dining tables.

During the year in which the workshop was held, public debate about homosexuality in Africa became increasingly politicized; in the weeks and months preceding the workshop, the highly publicized arrests of male same-sex couples in a number of African states, including Malawi and Uganda, had been accompanied by outbreaks of anti-gay violence and by ever more vociferous appeals both locally and internationally for the implementation of sexual rights. The initial aim of the workshop, as outlined in the funding proposal, was to test the viability of rhetorical theory in untangling sociocultural and political debates about the “authenticity”—or opposedly, “imported” character—of same-sex sexuality in Nigeria. The final programme was arranged with attention both to the conditions of the grant and to the developments on the continent during the year.

It had proved difficult for the convenors to attract the targeted number of scholars from ESF member states with Nigerian expertise and/or life experience for reasons which are not entirely clear. While practical issues undoubtedly played a role, the topic of the workshop was also clearly a sensitive and relatively under-researched one. During its organization, links were formed to same-sex constituencies within Nigeria and it is hoped that further research will allow the group to work collaboratively with them.

In addition, the events of 2010 seemed to demand an expanded frame of reference to allow attention to newly apparent continental factors in the evolving debates within Nigeria. These included, for example, the roles of American Evangelical churches in promoting anti-homosexual legislation in East Africa; the reactive linking of monetary aid by the Swedish government to the implementation of sexual rights in Uganda; and the increasing attention of multinational news corporations to intimate relations on the continent more widely. The final workshop programme maintained the methodological goals and thematic trajectory of the initial one. But it also aimed to situate Nigerian issues more definitively within a broad international framework in order to incorporate regional and continental concerns and to allow comparisons with other postcolonial cultures where the imperatives of sovereignty and

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globalization may have similarly collided. Alongside the Nigerian national context, the range of contexts addressed by the final programme encompassed, for instance, the Soninke area of Cameroon, Czechoslovakia, Ireland, India, South Africa, North Africa and the Middle East, West Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

While a wide range of topics were treated in different panels that extended across the three-day duration of the event, questions about the definition, circulation, translation and reception of terminologies recurred during plenary discussion sessions with specific attention to what exists and takes place outside the purview of the state. A central concern was to find ways of recognizing and representing same-sex desire and practice in Nigeria and in other parts of the so-called developing world without, at the same time, condoning the unilateral dissemination of Western gender/sexual codes by means of universal rights instruments. Some researchers prioritized the histories of “real people” as potential contexts for exploring the multiplicities of cultures and bodily capacities. Others preferred to make recourse to queer theoretical models as a means of undoing the mechanisms which block our abilities to perceive human multiplicity. On the whole, however, it was agreed that African populations have tended to resist the idea that sexuality defines the whole person and that contemporary international LGBT discourses have not sufficiently addressed the complexities of African cultural responses to the sexual question. A qualified emphasis was placed on “the customary” in Africa as a potential archive of “other ways of doing things”.

Throughout the event, a related discussion took place concerning the relative appropriateness of LGBT politics in non-Western contexts where ongoing economic and social crises have sometimes given rise to scape-goating. It was noted that international LGBT affiliations may only be available to specific class and gender factions. Also, since homophobia often constitutes a cheap form of populist politics, it was recognized that organizing along identitarian lines may not always be the best answer to it. Other sets of relations that may elude gender/sexual categorization may need to be established in order to promote and protect sexual freedoms in globalizing contexts. To this end, it would be worth investigating “the rules of formation” for homophobic discourses and to situate this enquiry within a wide-ranging critique of the diverse forms of social exclusion in specific contexts. This would entail maintaining an ear to the silences in social debates within the contexts under examination. (See section 2 for potential examples.) Further research might therefore require methodological innovation to find ways of investigating areas of secrecy in comparative postcolonial contexts.

While the future of ESF mechanisms in 2011 was uncertain at the time of the workshop, the majority of the participants plan to continue to work collaboratively with a view to submitting further funding proposals. The convenor has established a password protected on-line bulletin board where the participants will continue to dialogue and share materials at <http://www.vocabulariesofsamesexcultures.org>. The website includes functions which may allow the participants to administer an on-line blog and to collect personal narratives on the topic of same-sex vocabularies should research funds become available to administer the blog in the future. Plans are also underway to publish an anthology of essays derived from the papers delivered at the workshop. (See section 3 for more details.)

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## 2. Scientific content of the event

The workshop gathered experts in eleven different disciplinary areas to explore how attention to the protocols of representation might shape social research on same-sex cultures. On the first day, two keynote lectures explored the potential value of rhetorical approaches to gender and sexual categories in universal and globalizing contexts. A series of panels across the three days were intended to test the viability of such approaches and to introduce possible alternatives. (See Appendix I for abstracts.) Roundtable discussions at the end of the first and second day allowed the participants to debate and synthesize the material presented during the day. The final session on the third day explored the possibilities for follow-up activities. Although fractures sometimes occurred, often along disciplinary lines, the workshop discussions were continuously lively and the group as a whole found them valuable and invigorating.

Following the introductions, Madhavi Menon opened the event with a challenging keynote lecture entitled “Indifference, or Queer Universalism”, which extended an argument set out in her recent monograph *Unhistorical Shakespeare* (2008) about the relations among identity, history and difference. The lecture set the French theorist Alain Badiou (b.1937) in conversation with the London-based Nigerian visual artist Yinka Shonibare MBE (b.1962) to consider the politics and ethics of being indifferent to social differences. Menon sought to question the identitarian strategies underlying international LGBT politics which, she argued, tend to enforce a law of particularity which deadens the desire for particularity. Within identitarian politics, she contended, valences, such as gender, sexual orientation, race and class, become predicates to knowledge in place of a more vibrant, inquiring version of the particular. Alternatively, the discursive category of “queerness” refuses a predicative anchor and dwells in its non-fulfillment. Queer indifference, she argued, would support political activism but not an activism based on specific identities; we need to find different sets of relations to support the claim for rights.

Her lecture was followed by a lively and, at times, heated discussion. There was concern that the paper proceeded at too cognitive a level and could be interpreted as impossibly utopian. Neville Hoad asked, for instance, what consequences queer universalism might have for the institution, including the university. Menon’s reply suggested that “queer universalism” pertains to recognition. It is not necessarily looking toward the future but requires us to perceive potentialities that already exist. A certain rhetorical mechanism has been put in place to make us think that we are what we are. Queer universalism aims to undo this rigid mode of thought in order to facilitate more intellectual and corporeal freedom.

Judit Takács worried that the lecture had voided the body. In her activist work, she said, she had come to recognize that sometimes bodies were hurt because they were regarded as “gay bodies”. Menon replied that the assumption of victimhood may be as problematic as aggression insofar as it tended to pathologize homosexual persons. Veronica Vasterling argued, nonetheless, that identitarian differences are necessary to frame a space for social interaction. Menon stressed, in response, that differences should not be regarded as startling or final. As a basis for political action, they are too restrictive; why should we be tempted to reduce ourselves to just one aspect of our identity when we can keep inhabiting different differences?

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The keynote was followed by two panels intended to explore the viability of Menon's prior work with the Shakespearean scholar Jonathan Goldberg in queer temporality studies for exploring sexual topics in Nigerian and other postcolonial contexts. The first panel "Unhistorical Humans" explored how desire complicates historicist efforts to narrate and authenticate sexual identities. Veronica Vasterling, in agreement with Menon, affirmed that teleology was a historical norm essential to the articulation of heteronormativity which had become more powerful by virtue of being unacknowledged. Aristotle had invented the word "teleology" to explain material objects and, in his writing, an end product may be adduced to explain, for instance, the choice of a structure or materials. Later, she maintained, the theory of teleology had assumed a more sinister aspect when applied to human populations. In evolutionary discourses, it had justified a re-interpretation of human history into a determinist story about the necessities of human nature, with disturbing consequences for our understandings of gender and sexuality. Judith Butler has sought to challenge evolutionary theory by querying the bioracial bases of multiculturalist discourses. However, Vasterling proposed that, in *Precarious Lives*, Butler has misapplied Jean Jacques Lyotard's observations about the precarious "inhuman-ness" of the human infant by substituting an alternative teleology of social and psychic survival for the evolutionary model.

Anna Borgos's paper picked up the critique of identitarian politics in Menon's work by challenging the historicist effort to recover prototypes of lesbian identity in pre-war Hungary. Focussing on Cécile Tormay (1876-1937), Sophie Török (1895-1955) and Sándor Vay (1859-1918), she emphasized the disparities among these three women's lives and politics, and asked the workshop to recognize how contemporary identitarian labels, such as "lesbian", may misrepresent the complexity of historical women's same-sex experiences. Her discussion encompassed an account of the Hungarian psychoanalyst Sándor Ferenczi's evolutionary theories of same-sex attraction—which posited a "third sex", beyond reproduction, whose function was to work and advance human progress—as an example of the phallacies of biologist thinking on desire.

Lene Bull Christiansen examined the gendered and sexual performance of the Zimbabwean MP, Jonathan Moyo, to argue, in a somewhat different vein, that the task of historicizing gender norms is an essential to understanding contemporary politics. With reference to a number of satirical Zimbabwean cartoons, she described gender as an important social mechanism for ascribing, legitimizing and maintaining power. However, she stressed, following Michel Foucault, that we need a non-fixed approach to gender analytics involving its ongoing conceptualization and the constant checking of models against historical developments.

A discussion ensued regarding the relevance of psychological terminology and theories of human development in understanding the desire for social identity. Luke Gibbons noted that psychology was perhaps the only discipline in which the language of progress and development pertaining to teleology persists. However, he added that historical teleologies conceptualize a movement from one stage to another whereas psychological theories of development posit that we carry each stage with us and leave nothing behind. Vasterling complicated this by adding that although Lyotard's writings sometimes recognize a developmental trajectory ("we do grow, we do learn to speak a language"), he emphasized human adaptive-ness in order to break open the teleological picture and to reveal our vulnerability and open-ness to institutional excesses. Neville Hoad added that the end point of human life is old age which might entail wisdom or, alternatively, a "recovery" of stupidity;

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teleological models, thus, involve processes of selection which provide the bases for their deconstruction.

A tangential discussion ensued about the social effects of Robert Mugabe's anti-gay rhetoric in Zimbabwe in the last two decades. Has homophobia risen in Zimbabwe or to what extent are national politics operating on a fantasy level with little or no relevance to people's lives? It was noted, with respect to earlier sodomy charges against Zimbabwe's first president, Canaan Banana, that homosexuality is a recurring and strategic trope in Zimbabwean political discourse which has been counterposed against "authentic" Zimbabwean identity, itself largely derivative of Christian models of morality. In this discourse, sexuality has not been conceived, in the Foucauldian sense, as a developmental and essential aspect of human life. Rather, as in Moyo's case, the figure of the gay has been made and unmade in different people.

The second panel, "Colonial Genealogies and the Subject of Desire" explored the relevance of genealogical models of identity drawn from Western traditions to African and other black contexts. Conrad Brunstrom considered the neo-slave narrative as a contemporary strategy of cultural differentiation and self-definition. The classic slave narratives of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century deploy a Western judicial paradigm, he noted, and their inclusion of official documentation adds an evidential dimension to the text. This may be contrasted with the poetry of Phyllis Wheatley, which frequently critiques the double standards of American liberal rhetoric by deploying the second line of a rhyming couplet to prevent closure and to introduce ambivalence by undoing what has been proffered in the first. While many contemporary neo-slave narratives have sought to recover the evidential nature of slave narratives towards cultural self-authentication, Brunstrom noted, he preferred the example of Aminatta Forna's *Ancestor Stones* (2006) as a fiction which recalls Phyllis Wheatley's strategies. Forna's fiction enacts gender crossings and transgressions which emphasize unfulfilment, or non-being.

Daniel Orrells examined how the theme of a classical education is deployed in the work of the nineteenth century Victorian writers, Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), Walter Pater (1839-1894) and John Addington Symonds (1840-1893), to "whiten" homosexual characters and to displace social accusations of lasciviousness and obscenity made against homosexual English men onto African and other colonized populations. The major works of these writers have been upheld as positive texts of gay liberation, Orrells observed, yet the colonial contexts of their production have been over-looked. In particular, he suggested, we must examine the consequences of their persistent defence of Victorian homosexual cultures with reference to grotesquely over-determined images of Victorian England's racial others, including African and Arab populations. Their efforts at self-legitimation also entailed a whitening of the Ancients themselves when Greek and Roman cultures were divorced from their wider Mediterranean contexts.

Íde Corley's paper showed conversely how Chinua Achebe's novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958) suppresses the history of same-sex (specifically, woman-to-woman) marriage in Igboland (Nigeria), in order to posit an authenticating, patriarchal origin for Pan-African nationalism in accord with contemporary world-historical models. She agreed with critics who suggest that Achebe's juxtaposition of oral/Igbo and written/Western narrative modes destabilizes colonial representations of African ways of life as simple and functional. Yet, she continued, critics have persistently read the novel's politics in simplifying and realist terms. This has

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occluded how the modernist strategy of mixing Igbo and English linguistic codes draws attention to the narrative itself as an aesthetic exercise in “the formation of forms” (Rancière). In a close reading of a passage containing the Igbo idiom *efulefu*, she showed how modernist language mixing facilitates a revision and re-articulation of African gender norms in the novel. She argued that aesthetic self-consciousness in Achebe’s writing subtly unmakes patriarchal masculinity and opens the way for a more overt queer politics in later Nigerian fictions.

Following this panel, an animated dialogue took place concerning the relevance of queer terminologies to Nigerian and other African contexts. Stephen Pierce initiated this discussion by asking whether queer theory could play a role in a “truly engaged dialogue” where even the term “queer” itself may be regarded as a meaningless abstraction, at best, or at worst, as foreign and offensive. Hoad concurred, asking offhandedly if queer temporality studies might be just another mechanism for globally disseminating “American slang”. Corley argued that the term “queer”, as she had deployed it, had an aesthetic rather than social provenance which called attention to the politics of forms used to reproduce and transmit the discourses of national difference. Achebe’s fiction debunked what Henry Louis Gates Jr. calls the “functional phallacy”—the idea that there is such a thing as “plain speech” (or words which refer only to their apparent referents) and that African cultures exemplify it. Proverbs and children’s folktales, for instance, may be used in his fiction to speak indirectly about sensitive topics. It is not important whether or not we use the term “queer”. Each culture carries within it the codes of its own interpretation. However, queer theory, in positing its own susceptibility to “the other” or “the foreign”, asks us to be responsive to these codes.

A separate discussion also took place regarding the status of Jews in the writings of Wilde and Pater. Orrells elaborated on the metonymic role of the figure of the Jew in the Victorian era in linking the internal other of the Victorian world to its altogether-others in the colonies through the trope of racial difference.

Following the two panels, Neville Hoad delivered the second keynote lecture, “Old Words, New Problems: Africa, Sexuality, Sex, Gender”, which focalized current questions about the status of Western gender paradigms in African sexuality studies by addressing the South African and international debates surrounding the recent gender-testing of the Olympic athlete, Caster Semenya. He described Semenya’s treatment not least as a form of symbolic violence which becomes recognizable as such when it is contextualized with reference to older historical controversies. These might include, for instance, the reception of Oscar Micheaux’s *God’s Stepchildren* (1938)—a film dealing with the “sin of miscegenation” in the U.S.A.—and the debates surrounding the repatriation in 2002 of the remains of Saartje Bartman—a Khoi-khoi slave woman who had been exhibited nude in colonial Europe during her lifetime. Hoad wished to ask, in concert with the Kenyan queer theorist, Kigura Machera, whether it is possible to discuss the Semenya affair without simultaneously spectacularizing the athlete in a way which recapitulates colonial strategies of gender and racial differentiation and subjugation. In addition, he asked, why the intersexed body, when applied to African populations, must always be read as an insult. The South African politician, Julius Malema, who shares a common sePedi background with Semenya, had ostensibly defended her by arguing that there was no word for “hermaphrodite” in the sePedi language and by inferring, in this way, that intersex does not exist among sePedi peoples. Hoad argued not only that the argument was erroneous but that it constituted a policing of dimorphous gender in African contexts. He also used Malema’s example to point to the phallacies of cultural

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nationalist arguments in support of LGBT politics. The task of translation can not be one of simple exchange, he insisted: it is not enough to claim that “we have a word for it; therefore, it can be ours too.” Instead, scholars need to observe the slippages between different linguistic categories in order to recognize massive internal differentiation in Africa.

To this end, Hoad proposed the investigation of “custom” rather than “tradition” as a priority for research; while tradition may be rigid and/or antiquarian, custom constitutes daily practice and may better allow researchers to observe the embodied complexities of African gender politics. Hoad finished his paper by calling attention to historically transgressive practices of resistance against colonialism in Africa, including, for instance, female genital flashing during the Igbo Women’s War (1929-1930). He also asked the workshop participants to pay more attention to “real examples” (as opposed to conceptual abstractions) in African sexuality studies so that we may better understand and facilitate the multiplicities of bodily capacity.

Following the panel, Elina Oinas initiated a discussion surrounding the ethics of attending to “real examples” in cases where the exemplary individuals—who might include Semenya and also, perhaps, Steven Monjeza and Tiwonge Chimbalanga, the Malawian couple who had been convicted for “indecent practices between males” in May 2010 but later pardoned—may not want press coverage and may otherwise shun public attention. It was noted that Semenya’s appearance in *You* magazine mitigated this issue somewhat in her particular case. Hoad noted that when certain cases were in the public domain, scholars must find ways not just of “speaking about” but of “speaking to” and hearing back from the effected persons or groups. This would require researchers who are based in the West to imagine accountability beyond the academy and outside of the requirements for professional credentializing.

With reference to Hoad’s argument against easy translations, Menon cautioned against the dangers of reifying linguistic difference when bilingualism and, consequently, translation were ways of life for many people. Hoad insisted, in response, that he was not interested in preserving languages in an antiquarian way; this was why he prioritized “custom” over “tradition”. Gibbon’s noted that literary traditions may be adduced, even so, to understand the postcolonial resistances to the kind of “progress” that may be advanced through top-down processes of translation. The turning points in many modernist texts, for instance, involve syntactical anomalies which register the irreducible presence of a different culture. Corley also asked whether it is dangerous to reify custom when Mahmoud Mamdani had shown in his book *Citizen and Subject* (1996) how notions of African custom had been invented and codified by colonialists in South Africa and other colonial contexts. Pierce added that, in many postcolonial African contexts, certain contests must be conducted in the idiom of custom but this did not necessarily render these more legitimate than others. He suggested that more slow, indepth ethnographies which examine the institutional modes by which customs are created are needed.

At the first roundtable that followed, it became clear that the group was concerned with thinking universality in ways which move away from the transcendental model and in relation to particular practices. There was ongoing debate about the relations among theoretical and customary vocabularies and empirical contexts. While Rudolf Gaudio admitted, for instance, that literary theoretical categories had been useful to him in his empirical work in social linguistics, he also worried about the reverse practice and suggested that “customary

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terminology” should not be divorced from empirical contexts. Others, including Gibbons, suggested instead that we need a metaphoric (rather than a form of dictionary literalism) for understanding processes of translation. The term “queer” itself had been a borrowing which did not pretend to have an original or empirical referent. Alternatively, Thomas Strong suggested that we consider queer theory itself as an empirical phenomenon and investigate how it circulates and where the flashpoints arise.

It was also recognized at the roundtable that the issue of attachment, arising from Vasterling’s comments on Judith Butler in the first panel during the morning, required further negotiation. Gibbons maintained that certain attachments are not replaceable and we move beyond them at our peril. Rooney instead brought attention to Butler’s suggestion that we acknowledge human vulnerability. While the social identities to which we attach ourselves may, for example, ensure our security and civil liberties, they are also often imposed. What would it mean to imagine being vulnerable and free of identity? From this discussion, it was recognized that instruments of law and social regulation, including social identities, may recapitulate conventional practices that cannot always be regulated and may be indeterminate in certain aspects. The abbreviated forms of some recent identitarian terms, including MSM (“Men who have sex with men”), recognizes, for instance, the hollowness of social categories. Thus, theoretical models and vocabularies, such as those introduced by Menon, may be required to address areas outside the purview of the law where deep and profound attachments may nonetheless occur.

The second day of the workshop began with a panel introducing anthropological perspectives on intimacy and sexual experience to the interdisciplinary group. Rachel Spronk began with a provocative argument about the necessity of bringing “flesh and blood” back into our analyses of sex. While post-structuralist theory had emphasized the decentering, anti-social forces of eroticism and did not explain the quotidian experience of living in a relationship, Foucauldian analyses—in their emphases on the connectedness of sex and social power—had focalized heteronormative and gay male relationships. Similarly AIDS prevention discourse has been a primarily masculine and patriarchally-inflected one, emphasizing sex as an act. Spronk pointed out that we have not yet accounted for the embeddedness of sexual relationships in larger areas of intimate life and, in particular, we have not adequately addressed the experiences of women in same-sex relationships. We need new methodologies to address the links between sexual and other forms of attachment that may be necessary for survival, including emotional bonds. Her new project on family histories in the middle belt of Nigeria aimed to address the gaps in the research by focussing on the role of the body and how the body is constitutive of being. This may involve investigating people’s motivations for having sex in an effort to understand how sexual experience constitutes the (gendered) self and body.

Anouka van Eerdewijk presented her findings on research conducted on the sexual practices of young heterosexual people in Dakar which had been undertaken with the aim of making policy recommendations. She noted that while her research focussed on a norm group, an understanding of the norms may be necessary for recognizing the cultural status and meanings of non-normative practices. Homosexuality and impotency are recurring themes among young heterosexual people in the Dakar context with repercussions for how the sexes interact: it had seemed to Eerdewijk, for instance, that young men only become socially recognized as men by penetrating women. At the same time, she argued, the hegemonic masculine ideal is not adequate to understanding the experiences and feelings

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of young heterosexual men, who may often feel vulnerable or out of control in sexual relationships. Where different kinds of sexual needs exist, they may tend to divide women into categories—girlfriends, “easy girls” (*rey*) and prostitutes—and enact different aspects of their sexuality with different women. Young women largely needed to negotiate these categories but had some agency in establishing the bases upon which they would have sex. Thus, Eerdewijk argued, an understanding of the micropolitics of sexual relationships is necessary for understanding the reproduction of social gender and sexual norms.

Berta Mendiguren took up some of the themes of Eerdewijk’s paper by arguing that AIDS prevention strategies must derive from a broad cultural understanding of the contexts in which sex takes place. Her researches among the Soninke in Mali and among a diasporic Soninke community in France indicated that same-sex practices are not necessarily viewed by this ethnic group as incompatible with broader communal imperatives. Mendiguren proposed that the Soninke culture conceives sexuality as sacred and that it articulates an imperative to “give life” and to “perpetuate the community”. However, Soninke institutions also make provisions for pleasure and enjoyment in the experience of sex. Certain forms of sexual education, for instance, encouraged erotic play among boys and same-sex relations were not regarded as a problem for the community.

Following the panel, a discussion ensued about the status of language in anthropological research. Menon opened the discussion by asking Spronk about the possible dangers of occluding the role of discourse in our conceptualisations of sex. Does the argument that we should not resort to theoretical vocabularies that may create truths that are at odds with realities on the ground not implicitly recognize how discourse frames sexual possibilities? Spronk conceded Menon’s point but suggested that it may be necessary, in this historical moment, to turn the methodological framework around. She intends to investigate how the experience of having sex relates to discourse. For instance, some male-bodied persons who identify as women articulate a need to assume specific sexual roles in order to constitute their identities as women. Spronk’s new research will investigate how people talk about what sex does to them physically : what meanings, derived from social frameworks, do people give to the bodily experience of sex? Also, what is the role of bodily practices in constituting a gendered sense of self?

Takács asked whether the panellists considered the choice of language as a medium for conducting interviews important: especially when dealing with the topic of intimacy, was a knowledge of an informant’s first language necessary? Eerdewijk noted that, while she had learned French for the purposes of her research in Dakar, it was nonetheless not the first language of her informants, most of whom were ethnic Wolofs. However, she thought her own evident discomfort with French was a possible boon to her research as the informants, noticing her difficulty, seemed to feel relatively at ease to express their own personal frailties and foibles. Thus, Eerdewijk proposed that we should not jump to easy conclusions about the role of language in facilitating research on intimacy.

The next panel was initially intended to explore the role of global visual media in constituting postcolonial intimacies. Gibbons opened the panel but had decided, based on the discussions of the first day, to change his topic and pick up the theme of terminology. He presented some passages from James Joyce’s *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) where a childhood encounter with same-sex possibilities is conveyed enigmatically as “queer”. The use of the term in this context was unusual because the novel’s publication

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preceded the rise of the gay right's movement and the public use of the term to describe homosexuality in Ireland. Joyce's fiction thus operated in a realm of social indeterminacy and potentiality. The theme of childhood in the novel exemplifies this and also suggests that the child internalizes adult categories well before s/he can understand them. Gibbons proposed that the artist's account of the socialization of the child into highly complex frameworks of feeling and thought suggests that our percepts are always already intercepted by language; recognizing the role of language in convoking and regulating desire, Joyce had adopted linguistic strategies of obliquity to advance an aesthetics of resistance. Gibbons thus used Joyce's example to endorse Menon's search for ways to value what may be particular or indeterminate in intimate relations, especially in postcolonial contexts where statist forms of regulation may be contrary to local conventions.

Unoma Azuah returned to the proposed theme of the panel by exploring the representation of lesbians in contemporary "Nollywood" (made-for-video Nigerian) film. She showed clips from two films—*Emotional Crack* (Dir. Lancelot Oduwa Imasuen, 2003) and *Women's Affair* (Dir. Andy Chukwu, 2003)—to argue that, while female same-sex desire is frequently represented and highly sensationalized in Nollywood film, it is also proscribed. The representation of lesbians, while evidently permitted, conforms to a heteronormative social imperative for "balance": when female same-sex desire is allowed expression, it is also disciplined. Frequently, lesbianism takes on supernatural proportions when the lesbian character is portrayed as a cultist with animalistic and psychotic tendencies. Alternatively, lesbian "excesses" may be attributed to what is portrayed as the gender-inappropriate successes of socially mobile women in a globalizing business environment.

Andrew van der Vlies followed Azuah's discussion by comparing the reception of two South African visual artists, Nicholas Hlobo (b. 1975) and Zanele Muholi (b. 1972). With the express permission of the artists, he showed Powerpoint slides of their work to introduce questions about the relations among sexuality, obscenity and African-ness in contemporary South African culture. Van der Vlies noted that Mulholi's photographic pieces may be described as documentary and polemical in character; they deploy spectacularization self-consciously as a strategically essentializing means to highlight "the fact of black lesbianism". Conversely, Hlobo's pieces tend towards abstraction. His opaque titles evoke the ambiguities of amaXhosa language and often require commentators to have recourse to him to explain the content of his art. Could the indeterminacy of Hlobo's (potentially sexual) content explain why his material had been allowed to circulate while Mulholi's had received censure? Or might it be more likely that gender was a factor in Mulholi's relative obscurity? And to what extent had Hlobo's deployment of "customary" amaXhosa elements protected him against any impending critique of the homosexual content in his work?

In the discussion that followed, questions arose about the relationships between popular and "high" art forms and the potential political effects of both. Hlobo's visual art was compared to the fiction of J. M. Coetzee which had been regarded by the apartheid regime as too intellectual to garner popular attention or to warrant social censure. Van der Vlies noted that while Hlobo was well known in art circles, he also expected to become "the second most famous amaXhosa man" (after Nelson Mandela). Would the attitude of the establishment change in this event? Gibbons proposed that the incendiary statement in Mulholi's work was contained in its form rather than in its content. Both Nollywood film and Mulholi's art represented lesbianism; what made the difference in Mulholi's case was that her female subjects were allowed to return the gaze of the camera. Mulholi's work thus contests certain

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generic and globalized forms of specularity applying to women. In response, Hoad cautioned that genre alone could not be adduced to solve questions related to state censorship and argued alternatively for a context specific analysis. Had Hlobo's success in international art markets softened the response of the state to the sexual content in his work, for instance? In a tangential point, Pierce noted that both Azuah's and Van der Vlies's presentations had pointed to the pleasure taken by popular audiences in homophobia. Scholars must try to account for pleasure when analysing the ideological means by which heteronormativity is reproduced.

Rudolf Gaudio opened the next panel on the possibilities of translation for LGBT politics by arguing that translation was a question not only of content and context but also of scale. To illustrate his point, he used the analogy of an encounter he had had with a Hausa-speaking man who had posed a question which Gaudio roughly translated as: "do you have women like that in your town?" He had been unsure how to answer the question not only because his interlocutor had pointed with his chin in the direction of another male-bodied Hausa person but also because he was unsure how the phrase "your town" signified? Did it refer to the part of Connecticut from which Gaudio came, or to the United States of America, or to Euro-American culture on a grand scale? Gaudio used this analogy as a segue to critique of the constitution of the workshop, specifically to protest the absence of Nigerians. (See section 1 for further details.) Any project of translation applied to Nigeria must be relevant to the way Nigerians live in their daily lives, he proposed. Thus, Nigerians needed to be consulted in the process.

Caroline Rooney and Julia Borossa began their joint presentation by distinguishing Robert Mugabe's performative homophobia from local Zimbabwean attitudes to same-sex relations. They expanded upon themes articulated earlier in the workshop by suggesting that African societies have generally been reluctant to describe sexuality as defining a whole person and this made the project of translating identitarian categories difficult. Zimbabwean writers, including Stanlake Samkange (1922-1988) and Tsitsi Dangarembga (b.1959), had conceived subjectivity as flexibly composed of feelings, desires and thoughts and had emphasized the mutuality of persons in being desiring beings. While such an attitude might also be exemplified by the Gay and Lesbian Association of Zimbabwe (GALZ)—which does not restrict membership based on nationality or sexual orientation—recent identity politics in Zimbabwe and more widely in Africa are serving to generate pariah status for same-sex groups.

To oppose the revival of an imperialist agenda in the form of "universal rights", Rooney and Borossa sought to recuperate Joseph Massad's argument in *Desiring Arabs* (2007) from accusations of "reverse orientalism". Rather than having reinforced a binary view of East-West relations as co-dependable, reversible and opposite, as some of his critics contended, they represented Massad as seeking an epistemology and taxonomy of sexualities that might facilitate a more engaged discussion between non-normative sexual constituencies in Africa and the West. Also, while Western binary frameworks position religion and sex as competitive opposites, Massad's theory of desire makes provisions for queer formations committed to Islam and might be helpful, for example, for illuminating the politics of Parvez Sharma's documentary film *A Jihad for Love* (2007).

Rooney and Borossa continued by indicating that a brokering of the category of "the human" was ongoing in LGBT and queer discourses and they expressed concern about Judith

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Butler's role in promoting a familial ideology in this process. In the West, homosexuals have conventionally been positioned outside of the family but the recent arguments in favour of gay marriage aim at constructing of new forms of "gay family" in order to permit gays and lesbians to gain "sufficient" normativity. Rooney and Borossa regarded this as a questionable form of intensified approximation and assimilation to the heteronormative norm involving the marking of homosexual persons as "almost the same but not quite" (Homi Bhabha). Butler, they suggested, has also insufficiently recognized the performative logic of the family as definitive of the West and its efforts to disseminate its gender and sexual codes through a homogenizing process of substitution and exchange.

Against a globalizing familial logic, Rooney and Borossa posited the value of queer resistance to the regiments of identity. Same-sex cultures, they suggested, have more typically cultivated diverse and non-conformist ways of living in groups which might be articulated in terms of Jacques Derrida's "politics of friendship". Recognition of homocultures could help generate a contrapuntal reading of the psychology of the Oedipal family that would challenge imperial processes. Towards this end, they distinguished "homopsychic" from "heteropsychic" approaches to life where the term "homopsychic" might describe queer efforts to break with the conservatism often implicit in universal rights discourses and to advance new possibilities for human groups.

In opening the discussion of this thought-provoking panel, Menon queried Gaudio's suggestion that Nigerians might have something more "authentic" to contribute to the discussion at the workshop than he—as a trained and experienced anthropologist—did himself. Did this position contradict his argument for translation which suggested that social identities are porous? Gaudio stressed that his comments were intended to be directed towards the promotion of equality at the level of the institution.

The discussion that followed this interchange positioned the debates about the possibilities and problems of translation within the broader economic and social contexts of globalization. Gaudio argued, for instance, that the co-dependent and binary differentiation of sexual populations in Nigeria had not stemmed only from the dissemination of heteronormative Western gender politics but was also related to economic globalization; a social intolerance of *dan daudu* parties (where effeminate men perform ritual dances for the entertainment of a crowd) in Northern Nigerian had become more evident since the reactive implementation of Sharia law in 2002, for instance. Brunstrom remarked that the increased attention to *dan daudu* may also reflect the needs of a globalizing heteronormativity to reinforce itself through the creation of stereotypes of "the other"; the issue that may require negotiation, then, was how visible or explicit homosexual practices were allowed to be.

With reference to Rooney and Borossa's paper, Hoad cautioned against the temptation to use theoretical arguments to ventriloquize a reversal of globalization and of its intrusive effects on intimate relations outside the West. Rooney reiterated in response that she and Borossa were seeking to initiate a conversation that would engage African forms of self-reference and self-conception in ways that would move beyond the familial logic of assimilation towards a politics of friendship. Although Hoad worried that it may not be possible to practice such a politics in circumstances where cultural forms might be untranslatable, Gaudio alternatively suggested that it may be possible to recognize different kinds of responses to sexual norms on the part of non-normative groups. While in the West, queer populations had been seeking recognition and rights, for instance, in Northern Nigeria,

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the *dan daudu* had more typically sought a space of privacy. His point perhaps recapitulated an argument made earlier by Rooney when she noted, by way of example, that queer African writers had not foregrounded sexuality in their biographies to the extent that “coming out” narratives had in the West.

The next session began with small group activity where the workshop was broken into four groups of six or seven participants each. Each group nominated a discussion leader and a correspondent. The task of the group was to identify four priorities for further research in the area of African or postcolonial sexuality studies. Following the break-out session, each correspondent reported back to the plenary group. The roundtable speakers were asked to streamline the correspondents’ reports and to comment on the viability of these preliminary proposals. During this session, potential research projects in the following areas were discussed :

- (i) Representation: To what extent is the translation of gender and sexual categories across cultures possible or desirable? It was agreed that this question might be addressed with a collaborative project that might generate personal narratives in a comparative context and with attention to local protocols of representation. Alternatively, or alongside this, an interdisciplinary group might seek to identify where the dynamics of translation and change are located: In abstractions? In texts? In art? In social contexts (or “with real people”)? In scholarship? In policy? In activist work?
- (ii) Institutions: What roles do specific institutions assume in the process of spatializing gender, in gender mainstreaming or in shaping the ways that different sexual constituencies establish themselves? An investigation of the ontological and historical status of specific institutional forms in relation to gender and sexual norms and conventions would be necessary.
- (iii) Human Rights: How and why are universal sexual rights discourses conceived and adopted or appropriated in different contexts, especially when communitarian subjectivities are prevalent? Also, what happens to the culture when a social group passes from one legal sphere into another? Such a project might entail a wider constituency of collaborators including members of NGOs, legal professionals and policy makers.
- (iv) Research Infrastructure: archival work and digitization would help to democratize the research in this area; the compilation of a bibliography would be especially useful.

For each of these topics, it was agreed that the exploration of the reverse influence of African and other non-Western cultures on the global West would be necessary to prevent a situation where what was unmarked would go as the norm. This might entail engagement with diasporic communities in the West and could constitute a project in and of itself. Such engagements would prevent researchers from documenting sexual practices in museum-like ways. The workshop participants also agreed that it would be important to incorporate methodological reflexivity and a shared sense of ethical responsibility to other collaborators into any future project. While the topic of biological/medical factors in sexual life was also raised during this session, it was generally not considered a priority for this group of researchers.

The first panel on the last day investigated research methodologies in a comparative context. Stephen Pierce began his paper by announcing substantial changes to his topic

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reflecting his engagement with the issue of terminology foregrounded in the previous days. He noted the recurrence of the “gay wedding” trope in newsmedia coverage of state crackdowns on various forms of same-sex sociality in Africa in recent years and suggested that the three most prevalent discourses for describing traditional modes of same-sex sociality were inadequate: these included instrumental social scientific paradigms, homophobic reactions (often voiced by news media) and universal human rights discourses (coupled with identitarian claims). He further observed that increasing anxiety about the presence of gays in Africa had not occurred alongside the emergence of same-sex communities. Instead, it had attended the upsurge of Evangelical Christianity and forms of Islam in the context of ongoing and devastating economic crises. In general terms, Pierce proposed, normative sexual culture is structuralist; but life tends to be more complex. Perhaps, then economic crisis draws attention to social contingencies which may be embodied in national discourses in the figures of same-sex couples. Pierce suggested that to counter self-legitimizing versions of Western universalism in the form of rights discourses, it would be important to explore how precarious same-sex communities in Africa establish forms of recognition that make intimacy and fulfilment possible. He also proposed that Charles Taylor’s account of multiculturalism in *The Politics of Recognition* may be useful for addressing the issue of sexual rights in communitarian contexts outside the West.

Manuela Ciotti’s paper described how, in field research on political participation in north India, she had encountered flirtatious behaviour that could have been interpreted either as flirtation or, at times, as a form of sexual harassment. However her informants’ gestures were interpreted, she argued, they registered a challenge to Western social histories of Third World women as docile victims. Her Indian informants sought to retrieve agency through marginal and transgressive modes of resistance but such forms of agency had not and could not be accounted for within the heteronormative framework of political economy. She therefore suggested that political economy requires provincialization along gender and sexual lines.

With reference to the ethnography of “ritualized homosexuality” in Papua New Guinea, Tom Strong suggested that Lee Edelman’s account in *No Future* (2004) of the logic of futurity as constitutive of heteronormativity may not be always relevant outside the West. Anthropologists, he explained, have long debated the sexual status and meaning of the male initiation system in Papua New Guinea which requires boys to be inseminated so that they may grow into men. Alongside these rituals, a discourse of sociocorporeal constitution, elaborated in tropes of bone and stone, links what are sometimes described as “male insemination rites” to sexual health in adult men. Strong argued that the reproduction of the community is organized around different types of time entailing a polyphonous logic of reproduction. His paper pointed to the ways corporeal tropes could be used in promoting what he described as “same-sex reproduction”. He ended his paper by asking whether corporeal tropes could possibly replace identitarian categories in the promotion of global same-sex politics.

Kateřina Nedbálková’s paper addressed a cluster of issues in the research on women’s same-sex partnerships in the Czech Republic since the legalisation of same-sex partnerships in 2006. She noted that the children of same-sex couples were not legally recognized, placing both parents and children in a precarious position. In addition, while the research on same-sex households continuously compared them to heterosexual families, observation pointed to the difficulties of defining same-sex households in terms of

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heteronormative gender norms. Nedbálková pointed out that the current state of affairs was often psychologically harmful for women in same-sex relationships, some of whom may internalize homophobic accounts of lesbians as “subspecies” or “split personalities”. The inadequate legal provisions for same-sex households also potentially put their members in harm’s way—as, for instance, when women in same-sex relationships may be obliged to take extra-legal measures in order to have children.

Rachel Spronk opened the discussion of this panel’s presentations by asking if all four panellists could comment on whether or not, in their research in different contexts, they had found identitarian labels to have a middle-class provenance. Were the possibilities for making claims for legal resources or asylum circumscribed by class status and/or education? All except for Ciotti thought that this was empirically true; Ciotti noted that the women who had flirted with her otherwise lived heterosexual lives circumscribed by the caste system. Thus, different forms of social authority had to be negotiated in the north Indian context and possibly elsewhere.

During the discussion, it was also noted that globalizing identitarian politics often emerged in non-Western contexts hand-in-hand with an escalation of homophobia. Vasterling expanded on the idea proposed by Pierce that populist politics often involved the scape-goating of non-normative sexual constituencies to distract attention from potentially more contentious, economic and political problems. Thus, identitarian politics may not be the most astute answer to homophobia. Pierce noted that it would be worth investigating “the rules of formation” for homophobic discourses and to situate this investigation within a wide-ranging critique of anti-sociality. It would entail maintaining an ear to the silences: why for, instance, in the Nigerian context, had the homosexual proclivities of some members of the Sokoto Caliphate not generated social approbation in an otherwise apparently homophobic environment? Menon again insisted that we need to find alternative categories that elude gender/sexual categorization to prevent Western cultures from unilaterally disseminating their gender/sexual codes and to promote cultural and sexual freedoms in universal terms.

The workshop then moved to the final panel which addressed the topic of international sexual rights discourses within a comparative postcolonial framework. Judit Takács’s paper opened the panel by sketching a history of the legislation on sexuality in Hungary. She focussed, in particular, on the efforts of the Austrian-born writer and human rights activist, Karl-Maria Kertbeny (1824-1882) and his contemporary legacy in Hungary where he had lived for many decades. Kertbeny, she noted, had coined the word “homosexual” as a replacement for other degrading and criminalizing terms and had written a number of pamphlets to promote sexual rights. Contrary to Foucauldian definitions and readings of the term, Kertbeny had staunchly used it to challenge the notion of “innate” sexuality. Takács also described the ideological tensions that have emerged in Hungary when Kertbeny’s recuperation by the LGBT movement has coincided with supranational, “modernizing” strategies for integrating Hungary into the European Union. She finished her paper by turning to the topic of religion and suggesting that religious communities needed to be incorporated into the conversation about sexual freedoms: one third of LGBT persons interviewed in a recent survey in Hungary professed to being religious and another third had indicated that they had experienced prejudice within religious communities.

Sergio Baldi’s paper examined the legal status of homosexuality in Nigeria with attention to the continent-wide developments in 2010. While homosexuality was punishable by death in

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the Islamic region of Northern Nigeria, both same-sex practices and the alleged propagation of same-sex lifestyles were also punishable with a 5 year prison sentence in the South. In addition, he noted, the methods of “proving” homosexual relations are highly intrusive. Baldi’s paper entailed the observation that the Nigerian dictator Olusegun Obasanjo had played a part in separating British and Anglican African Churches so that it might be worth tracing the current debates on homosexuality within that church back to this nationalist intervention.

Elina Oinas’s paper began by noting and deploring that the international LGBT movement had been appropriated to supplement the so-called “war on terror” and the self-centred interests of Western security in East Africa. With reference to the controversies over the proposed Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda in 2009-2010, she argued that the supposedly progressive argument that Africans were bound by international human rights obligations to implement sexual rights had discounted Pan-African national independence and values. Homophobic constituencies in East Africa are confining their campaigns to groups with a physical presence on the continent and the oblique political argument that had been put forward, following the threat of cuts in international aid by the Swedish government, not to pass the bill but to “keep on being homophobic” anyway has further compromised modernity’s affective economy in East and Southern Africa. Attention must be paid, Oinas suggested, to the efforts of activists to reclaim the rights discourse as “truly African”. Drawing on her research on activist websites and the political speeches of the Ugandan Minister of Parliament, Sylvia Tamale, Oinas suggested that Western activists and scholars needed to find sophisticated ways to read new and innovative African rights discourses that, unlike international ones, have been founded on a social cohesion argument and allow engagement with local affective orders. Tamale, she proposed, has found socially persuasive ways to argue that the binary gender order “is not African” in the Ugandan context.

Following the final panel, a lively argument ensued over the relative political value of Tamale’s statements especially insofar as some of her statements had seemed to express disdain for homosexual practices. Could her strategies be regarded as respectful and enabling or did she pander too much to a conservative and homophobic constituency? Corley also worried about treating communitarian arguments as necessarily “more African” than others; while the Ugandan MP, David Bahati, had put forward such an argument in favour of his anti-homosexual bill, his model of community seemed to have been derived from the Western rhetoric of reproductive futurism as it has been described by Lee Edelman in *No Future*. Hoad further observed that the sexual question is reconfiguring communal geographies in Africa in unusual ways and suggested that researchers need to find more complicated methods for thinking about communal space. Imperial geographies are no longer what they appear to be: American Evangelical churches, he proposed, have been transforming the geographies of East African communities. Researchers need to find ways of de-concretizing space in such a way that neo-imperial processes in Africa become more recognizable and more legible. Right now, the vocabulary of homophobia is being imported to such an extent that it has become socially possible to hurt somebody on the basis of a grammatical construction. Conversely, the exercise of state sovereignty does not involve the sovereignty of all. It was on this quite urgent note that the discussion of research presentations at the workshop formally closed.

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### 3. Assessment of the results, contribution to the future direction of the field, outcome

The workshop allowed the participants to meet at the junctures of various disciplines in order to establish a common understanding of the historical and contemporary challenges attendant upon the current social crises to which sexual politics have been linked in Nigeria. It was established that the sexual question in Nigeria should not be treated in an isolated way on a national scale but should rather be connected to broader continental and global dynamics that would entail an account of how gender/sexual codes circulate globally.

The workshop discussions regarding terminology and translation were considered valuable and it was decided to prepare an anthology of essays for publication. A date for the submission of essays in 2011 has been established and a major academic publisher has expressed an interest in reviewing a proposal. The convenor has since set up a website at <http://vocabulariesofsamesexcultures.org> which includes an on-line password-protected bulletin board where materials will be shared with a view to re-evaluating and extending the arguments that took place during the workshop.

As a whole, the group found the event stimulating and invigorating and thank the European Science Foundation and our affiliates at the National University of Ireland Maynooth for their sponsorship. The convenors would also like to thank Jacek Kornak for valuable advice. There was considerable interest in the ESF-funded RAN and COST programmes and the group would like to submit a proposal to one of these programmes in the future if they remain in place. In the medium term, we intend to establish a research network which will allow us to visit different parts of Africa and other comparative postcolonial contexts and then to reconvene to compare uses of terminology in order to find out how things are translated back and forth. We consider it a priority to make links with academics based in Africa and to intensify our engagement with African forms of self-reference and self-conception. Researchers could collaboratively collect and analyze local literature and investigate local debates about gender/sexual terminologies. This would entail attention to local protocols of representation and require methodological innovation to find ways of conducting research on aspects of life that have been silenced. We could possible make an initial start with this project by establishing a blog area on the new website which may allow the members of of non-normative sexual communities in Africa and in other parts of the so-called developing world to contribute to our discussions should funding become available to administer such a blog.

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## 4. Final programme

**Wednesday, 18 August 2010**

08.30-9.30	<i>Breakfast in Pugin Hall</i>
08.30-10.00	<b>Arrival, registration and coffee</b>
10.00-10.15	<b>Welcome by Convenor</b> <b>Íde Corley</b> (NUI Maynooth, Ireland)
10.15-10.30	<b>Presentation of the European Science Foundation (ESF)</b> <b>Naomi Segal</b> (Standing Committee for the Humanities (SCH))
<b>10.30-11.45</b>	<b>Keynote Address 1</b>
10.30-11.15	<b>Indifference, or Queer Universalism</b> <b>Madhavi Menon</b> (American University, Washington DC, USA)
11.15-11.45	<b>Q&amp;A</b>
11.45-12.00	<i>Coffee / Tea Break; Morning Snacks</i>
<b>12.00-13.15</b>	<b>Panel 1: Unhistorical Humans</b>
12.00-12.15	<b>A Critical Inquiry into Teleological Conceptions of the Human</b> <b>Veronica Vasterling</b> (Radboud University, Nijmegen, Netherlands)
12.15-12.30	<b>The <i>Amor Lesbicus</i> in the Mirror of Pre-War Medical Literature in Hungary</b> <b>Anna Borgos</b> (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, Hungary)
12.30-12.45	<b>Reflections on Historicising Gender Analytics and Contemporary Sexual Politics in Zimbabwe</b> <b>Lene Bull Christiansen</b> (Roskilde University, Roskilde, Denmark)
12.45-13.15	<b>Q&amp;A</b>
13.15-14.30	<i>Lunch</i>
<b>14.30-15.45</b>	<b>Panel 2: Colonial Genealogies and the Subject of Desire</b>
14.30-14.45	<b>Third Passages and Queer Autobiography: 'Unhistoricised' Anti-Heteronormativity in Narratives of West Africa as a Point of Estranged Origin</b> <b>Conrad Brunström</b> (NUI Maynooth, Ireland)
14.45-15.00	<b>Race and Greek Love in Victorian Classics</b> <b>Daniel Orrells</b> (University of Warwick, Coventry, United Kingdom)
15.00-15.15	<b>Anti-Mimesis in the Extroverted Nigerian Novel</b> <b>Íde Corley</b> (NUI Maynooth, Ireland)
15.15-15.45	<b>Q&amp;A</b>
15.45-16.00	<i>Coffee / tea break</i>
<b>16.00-17.00</b>	<b>Keynote Address 2</b>
16.00-16.45	<b>Old Words, New Problems: Africa, Sexuality, Sex, Gender</b> <b>Neville Hoad</b> (University of Texas, Austin, USA)
16.45-17.00	<b>Q&amp;A</b>
<b>17.00-18.00</b>	<b>Roundtable 1: The Interface Between Theoretical and Empirical Research on Same-Sex Sexuality</b>

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**Julia Borossa** (Middlesex University, London, United Kingdom), **Rudolf Gaudio** (State University of New York, Purchase NY, USA), **Luke Gibbons** (NUI Maynooth, Ireland), **Caroline Rooney** (University of Kent, Canterbury, United Kingdom), **Rachel Spronk** (University of Amsterdam, Netherlands), **Thomas Strong** (NUI Maynooth, Ireland)

19.00 *Self-Service Dinner at Pugin Hall*

## Thursday, 19 August 2010

08.30-9.30 *Breakfast in Pugin Hall*

**9.30-10.45 Panel 3: Sexual Experience and Intimacy in West Africa: Anthropological Perspectives**

9.30-9.45 **Of Modernity, Sexuality and Desire: Intimacy as a Generative Concept**  
**Rachel Spronk** (University of Amsterdam, Netherlands)

9.45-10.00 **Gender Dynamics in Pre-Marital Heterosexuality in Dakar: Power Negotiations in Young People's Intimate Relationships**  
**Anouka van Eerdewijk** (Radboud University, Nijmegen, Netherlands)

10.00-10.15 **Gender Norms, History and Sociocultural Factors in Discourses of AIDS Prevention in Sub-Saharan Africa**  
**Berta Mendiguren** (Farapi S.L. Consultancy for Applied Anthropology, San Sebastián, Spain)

10.15-10.45 **Discussion**

10.45-11.15 *Coffee / Tea Break; Morning Snacks*

**11.00-12.15 Panel 4: Postcolonial Intimacies and Global Visual Cultures**

11.00-11.15 **Postcolonial Intimacies and Globalization**  
**Luke Gibbons** (NUI Maynooth, Ireland)

11.15-11.30 **The Video Closet: Nollywood's Gay Stories**  
**Unoma Azuah** (Lane College, Tennessee, USA)

11.30-11.45 **Umtshotsho/ Indawo Yami: Aesthetics and Politics in Two Contemporary South African Artists' Explorations of Same-Sex Sexuality**  
**Andrew van der Vlies** (Queen Mary, University of London, United Kingdom)

11.45-12.15 **Discussion**

12.15-14.00 *Lunch*

**14.00-15.15 Panel 5: Recognizing, Interpreting and Translating Same-Sex Desires**

14.00-14.15 **Relatively Gay: Translating Nigerian Same-Sex Desires**  
**Rudolf Gaudio** (State University of New York, Purchase NY, USA)

14.15-14.45 **Same Sex Cultures and Pariah Formations in North Africa**  
**Caroline Rooney** (University of Kent, Canterbury, United Kingdom) and **Julia Borossa** (Middlesex University, London, United Kingdom)

14.45-15.15 **Discussion**

15.15-15.45 *Coffee / tea break*

**16.45-17.15 Roundtable 2: Scripting Same-Sex Sexualities in Nigeria**

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### ESF Exploratory Workshops

**Neville Hoad** (University of Texas, Austin, USA), **Madhavi Menon** (American University, Washington DC, USA), **Elina Oinas** (University of Turku, Turku, Finland), **Steven Pierce** (University of Manchester, United Kingdom), **Judit Takács** (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, Hungary), **Anouka Van Eerdewijck** (Radboud University, Nijmegen, Netherlands)

19.30 *Formal Dinner at Pugin Hall; Traditional Irish Music Performed by Whisht*

## Friday, 20 August 2010

08.30-9.30 *Breakfast in Pugin Hall*

**09.30-11.00 Panel 6: Research Methodologies in Cross-Cultural Perspective**

09.30-09.45 **Gender Out of Place: Sexuality and Identity in Northern Nigeria**  
**Steven Pierce** (University of Manchester, United Kingdom)

09.45-10.00 **Intimate Encounters, the Agency *in* and *of* Representation, and the Partiality of Gender Without Sexuality in India**  
**Manuela Ciotti** (University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom)

10.00-10.15 **The Subject of Sex in Melanesia: Notes on Comparisons Here and There**  
**Thomas Strong** (NUI Maynooth, Ireland)

10.15-10.30 **Contradictions in Researching Lesbian Families in the Czech Republic**  
**Kateřina Nedbálková** (Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic)

10.30-11.00 **Discussion**

11.00-11.15 *Coffee / Tea Break; Morning Snacks*

**11.15-12.30 Panel 7: Sexual Citizenship and International Human Rights Law**

11.30-11.45 **The International Legal Environment and the Changing Social Categorisation of Same-Sex Attraction in Hungary**  
**Judit Takács** (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, Hungary)

11.45-12.00 **Life in Danger? LGBT Movement in Nigeria**  
**Sergio Baldi** (Univeristà degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale", Naples, Italy)

12.00-12.15 **Redefining Tradition and Rights in the African Postcolony: Queering Dogs, Pigs and the International Alarm**  
**Elina Oinas** (University of Turku, Turku, Finland)

12.15-12.45 **Discussion**

12.45-14.30 *Lunch*

**14.30-17.00 Discussion of Follow-Up Activities**

14.30-14.50 **How to Maintain the Momentum Generated by an ESF Workshop? Possible Future Funding Opportunities**  
**Caroline Ang** (NUI Maynooth, Maynooth, Ireland)

14.50-17.00 **Plenary Discussion: Workshop Outputs and Future Collaborative Projects**

17.00 *End of Workshop*

8.30-10.00 *Dinner at The Avenues Restaurant*

10.30 *Departure*

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### ESF Exploratory Workshops

## 5. Final list of participants

### Convenor:

**Íde Corley** National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Ireland

### Co-Convenor:

**Conrad Brunström** National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Ireland

### ESF Representative:

**Naomi Segal** University of London, United Kingdom

### Participants:

**Caroline Ang** National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Ireland

**Unoma Azuah** Lane College, Tennessee, USA

**Sergio Baldi** Univeristà degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale", Naples, Italy

**Anna Borgos** Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Hungary

**Julia Borossa** Middlesex University, United Kingdom

**Lene Bull Christiansen** Roskilde University, Denmark

**Manuela Ciotti** University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

**Rudolf Gaudio** Purchase College, State University of New York, USA

**Luke Gibbons** National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Ireland

**Neville Hoad** University of Texas at Austin, USA

**Berta Mendiguren** Farapi S.L. Consultancy for Applied Anthropology, Spain

**Madhavi Menon** American University, USA

**Kateřina Nedbálková** Masaryk University, Czech Republic

**Elina Oinas** University of Turku, Finland

**Daniel Orrells** University of Warwick, United Kingdom

**Steven Pierce** University of Manchester, United Kingdom

**Caroline Rooney** University of Kent, United Kingdom

**Rachel Spronk** University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

**Thomas Strong** National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Ireland

**Judit Takács** Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Hungary

**Andrew van der Vlies** Queen Mary, University of London, United Kingdom

**Anouka van Eerdiwijk** Radboud University, The Netherlands

**Veronica Vasterling** Radboud University, The Netherlands

## 6. Statistical information on participants

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<b>M/F Repartition</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Total Number	9	16
<b>Nation of Origin by Institutional Affiliation</b>		
<i>ESF Member States</i>		
Czech Republic		1
Denmark		1
Finland		1
Spain		1
Hungary		2
Ireland	3	2
Italy	1	
The Netherlands		3
United Kingdom	3	3
<i>Non-ESF member States</i>		
USA	2	2
<b>Nation of Origin by Birth/Early Life Experience</b>		
<i>ESF Member States</i>		
Czech Republic		1
Denmark		1
Finland		1
Hungary		2
Italy	1	1
Ireland	1	1
The Netherlands	3	
Spain		1
United Kingdom	2	
<i>Non-ESF Member States</i>		
Canada		2
India		1
Nigeria		1
South Africa	2	
USA	3	
Zimbabwe		1
<b>Career Age</b>		
Early Career Scholar	1	6
Mid-Career	4	7
Well Established	4	2
Declined to Say		1
<b>Age</b>		

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30-39 years	3	6
40-49 years	4	8
50-59 years	1	1
60-69 years	1	
Declined to say		1
<b>Discipline</b>		
Anthropology	2	3
Classics	1	
Creative Writing		1
Development Studies		1
English	4	3
Hausa	1	
History	1	
Sociology		4
Philosophy		1
Psychology		1
Psychoanalysis		1
Research Support		1

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## Appendix I: Book of Abstracts

### Keynote Address 1

#### Indifference, or Queer Universalism

**Madhavi Menon** (American University, Washington DC, USA)

This paper organises itself around Alain Badiou's suggestion in *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism* that in the face of increasing claims of identitarian specificity, one might consider the politics and ethics of being "indifferent to difference." Instead of using difference as the basis for law or advocacy, what would it mean to think about indifference as the basis for a radical political universalism? And rather than returning to a notion of the universal as a veiled front for the dominant class, how might we explore the queerness that universalism allows us to theorise? "Indifference, or Queer Universalism" will also look at the art of Yinka Shonibare as an example of what a queer universalism might look like. Given how invested we are in the physical body as the basis on which to formulate identity, Shonibare's art and Badiou's theory allow us to complicate that realm of physical difference. In the process, they theorise a queer universalism that allows us also to complicate the grounds and consequences of identity.

### Panel 1: Unhistorical Humans

#### A Critical Inquiry into Teleological Conceptions of the Human

**Veronica Vasterling** (Radboud University, Nijmegen, Netherlands)

In my contribution I want to explore how "unhistoricist" methodology can be expanded to include a critical inquiry into teleological conceptions of humanness in the Western tradition of philosophy and science. While "unhistoricism" criticizes the transformation of the history of sexuality into a teleological progression of pre-modern to modern sexuality, an anthropology of "the inhuman" (Jean-Francois Lyotard) takes issue with the teleological closure of Western conceptions of human nature. Instead of developmental or, nowadays, evolutionary models of maturity and adaptedness, Lyotard emphasizes the "affectable" condition of human beings, our vulnerability to trauma and failure of mastery.

Another important aspect of teleological conceptions of the human is that the "telos", the defining and final definition of the human, is highly normative. According to the well known thesis of Judith Butler's work, sexuality is a crucial part of Western normative conceptions of the human. In contrast to Lyotard who elaborates a non-teleological conception of the human in his "anthropology of the inhuman", Butler suggests that a non-normative (and therefore also a non-teleological?) conception of the human is impossible.

Taking my cues from the work of Lyotard and Butler I will explore the question whether non-teleological and non-normative conceptions of the human are possible.

#### The *Amor Lesbicus* in the Mirror of Pre-War Medical Literature in Hungary

**Anna Borgos** (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, Hungary)

In my presentation, I'm going to explore the reception of lesbianism as represented in the psychiatric and psychoanalytic literature available in Hungary in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. This period is transitional in this sense, too: we can find pathologisation, searching for biologising explanations, as well as the first human rights and liberating discourses. Arguments about homosexuality are not interesting per se: attitudes toward the different forms of human sexuality condense and represent current and controversial problems of society.

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I also try to reflect on the differences of the one-time and contemporary categories for denominating same-sex attractions between women. For behind the different labels we can find different concepts of lesbianism and different historical approaches. One group of arguments claims that all historical women attracted to their own sex are fore-runners of today's lesbians—they just could not call themselves lesbian because they lacked a liberating and identity-creating discourse. Another system of arguments states that this “over-rehabilitating” attitude is ahistorical and generalizing, covering a whole series of shades and self-definitions developed in different social circumstances.

Taking some concrete examples from Hungary (the cases of Sándor Vay, Cécile Tormay and Sophie Török) I raise the problem that the term “lesbian” is precarious also from a psychological point of view. Lesbian identity is to a large extent a question of self-definition; it is problematic to apply it from outside and a posteriori for someone who never used that identity category for herself. On the other hand, we can argue that the confines of self-definition are largely determined by external possibilities and limits – that is insisting on one-time categories we disclose the real attractions again, featuring and reinforcing the oppressing norms themselves. Nevertheless, in my view, these socio-cultural determinations cannot be ignored either, in order to be able to look “behind” them.

### **Reflections on Historicising Gender Analytics and Contemporary Sexual Politics in Zimbabwe**

**Lene Bull Christiansen** (Roskilde University, Roskilde, Denmark)

A wide range of postcolonial thinkers, from Spivak and Bhabha to Stoler and Oyewūmí have drawn on, struggled with and renegotiated Foucauldian methodologies in order to accommodate historical readings of power relations in ‘the colonial’ and ‘the postcolonies’. Particularly gender and sexuality oriented analyses turn to Foucault for a framework for understanding gendered power relations.

This paper explores some of the challenges that I have faced in my analyses of contemporary Zimbabwean gendered politics of sexuality through a lens inspired by Foucauldian genealogy and postcolonial feminist critiques. This was an attempt to follow the historical construction of a gendered imagery of power, which in its multiple interconnected contemporary functions shape contemporary gendered power relations. And in doing so, focus on different modes of cultural and political discourse on gendered morality, norms, imaginaries and symbols with the aim of depicting the relations of gender and power in contemporary Zimbabwean society, and locating this in a genealogy of these relations of power.

With this paper, I discuss this historicising view on contemporary sex-gender politics, arguing for the possibility of seeing the present through history but also history through the present.

### **Panel 2: Colonial Genealogies and the Subject of Desire**

#### **Third Passages and Queer Autobiography: ‘Unhistoricised’ Anti-Heteronormativity in Narratives of West Africa as a Point of Estranged Origin**

**Conrad Brunström** (NUI Maynooth, Ireland)

Theoretical discussions of post-queer theory (such as are offered by, for example, David V. Ruffolo) may seek to install Deleuze in place of Foucault as the presiding genius of sexual potentialities (as opposed to possibilities) for the twenty-first century (a shift which Foucault would, paradoxically, have approved). Deleuze’s reimagining of Henri Bergson establishes a space-time continuum that deprivileges any historical claim to chart any so-called “development” of sexual identity (or indeed identity of any kind). Accordingly, the theoretical project of (post)queering historicism involves the unpicking of dominant teleologies that serve to inevitabilize (and therefore essentialize) present day categories.

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This paper will examine so-called "slave narratives" and the elusive (arguably futile) perceived need to assert "authenticity" in terms of a Nigerian experience of wholeness and origin. It will interrogate the controversy (led by Vincent Carretta) over renewed claims that Olaudah Equiano was born somewhere in the Carolinas and that his Nigerian origins are therefore "constructed". Following a brief survey of other comparable fashionings of third passage autobiography such as Phyllis Wheatley's, it will consider Laurence Hill's recent (2009) novel, *The Book of Negroes* which frankly acknowledges its status as a composite narrative and its Nigeria as a necessary but contingent construct.

Slave narratives, when subjected to a fully (or post) queer unhistorical critique preserve and transmit the experience of the intensity of physical transformation and bodily subjection and realignment, while (crucially) shedding the determinisms that limit the scope of future (or present) Nigerias.

### **Race and Greek Love in Victorian Classics**

**Daniel Orrells** (University of Warwick, Coventry, United Kingdom)

For contemporary gay people, the moment Oscar Wilde spoke his love-that-not-dare-speak-its-name speech in the dock in 1895 was a profoundly important moment in gay history. But this moment has been nothing but controversial: Wilde has been touted as saint and martyr; and as a coward for defending his love in terms of Plato and Renaissance masters. Whatever our view about Wilde's speech act (was he coming out or not?), it has nevertheless been widely accepted inside the academy and beyond, that Victorian discussions of "Greek love" were nothing but euphemisms for modern homosexuality. Victorian classicists like John Addington Symonds and Walter Pater have become iconic for their explorations of homoeroticism, ancient and modern. Their reification of an essential gay identity, *avant la lettre*, has been registered as a positive step towards gay liberation. This Victorian identification with the past is, however, rarely viewed within its historical - that is to say, imperialist, colonialist - contexts. The Greek love that Wilde, Pater and Symonds conjugated was white as the marble that Victorian archaeologists whitewashed of ancient colouring.

My paper explores Pater's and Symonds's investment in making the ancient Greeks the same as them - in specifically racial terms. That is to say, homo-sexuality, the love of the same, came to be seen as a love of a racially, identical (white) Greece. The scholarly context for Victorian Classics is to be found in the work of the famous German historian and teacher of Leopold von Ranke, Karl Otfried Muller. It was Muller who first suggested, contrary to ancient, primary sources that ancient Greece had no significant cultural and racial links with ancient Egypt and Africa. Muller's examination of ancient pederasty, the context for Greek male education and love, becomes explicitly an all-white, all-European, non-African affair. Victorian male friendship and love could not - and cannot now - be viewed outside raciological contexts, which culminates in Wilde's "Dorian Gray" who becomes the archetypal "degenerate" and "dark" character.

### **Anti-Mimesis in the Extroverted Nigerian Novel**

**Íde Corley** (NUI Maynooth, Ireland)

This paper will argue that the modernist mixing of Igbo and Western gender elements in *Things Fall Apart* undoes the overtly binary structure of gender in the novel, drawing attention to earlier gender systems that did not strictly correlate social and biological sex. It is not that Achebe makes earlier gender paradigms available to a modern audience but that the anti-mimetic effect of modernist gender collage in the novel questions the status and legitimacy of patriarchal authority while simultaneously facilitating alternative strategies of cultural self-authorization. Thus, while Chimamanda Adichie derives sociocultural legitimacy by inscribing a bourgeois, filial relationship to Achebe's fiction in *Purple Hibiscus* and *Half of a Yellow Sun*, Chris Abani derives an unbinding, queer energy from the anti-mimetic failure of patriarchal origins in *Things Fall Apart* which he

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deploys in *Graceland* and *The Virgin of Flames* to challenge the biopolitical administration of globalizing cultures in Africa and in the United States.

## **Keynote Address 2**

### **Old Words, New Problems: Africa, sexuality, sex, gender**

**Neville Hoad** (University of Texas, Austin, USA)

This talk will investigate several recent controversies in sub-Saharan Africa where questions of liberal sexual norms collide with notions of African authenticity in terms of long and on-going colonial histories. Luise White has documented how the institution of heterosexual prostitution was central to the making of the city of Nairobi in the early twentieth century. Elsewhere in Africa and Asia, British juridical forms and norms struggled to recognize the sovereignty of local sexual and affective bonds and practices- often leaving their regulation in the hands of local religious and customary institutions. The bringing of such diverse parts of the world under a colonial legal regime was a patchwork enterprise at best, and the selective, sometimes strategic, sometimes haphazard implementation of this legal patchwork, meant that the identities, practices and desires of colonized peoples both persisted and changed. The irreducibility of the human body presents a further theoretical challenge in this terrain of proliferating complexity. How has sex/sexuality/gender acquired a central role in definitions of "Africanness" for such a wide variety of protagonists?

## **Panel 3: Sexual Experience and Intimacy in West Africa: Anthropological Perspectives**

### **Of Modernity, Sexuality and Desire: Intimacy as a Generative Concept**

**Rachel Spronk** (University of Amsterdam, Netherlands)

The purpose of the workshop is to rethink gender, sexuality and sexual orientation. This is an actual and pressing need because for various reasons sexuality in African societies continues to be framed by western conceptualizations. On the one hand, development and/or health studies tend to see sexuality either in terms of descent; of socio-economic alliance; or of an act that is de-erotized. On the other hand, post-structuralist theories of sexuality remain inadequate in analysing subjectivity primarily in terms of antagonism and/or subordination to normative structures. As a result, remarkably little has been written about the subjective experience of sex(uality) and the emotional bond between lovers. In this paper I will explore the possibilities for a different approach to gender, sexuality and identity by taking up intimacy as a generative concept. I will do so by focussing on the dual definition of intimacy, i.e. both as a close personal relationship between people and as a sexual relationship, to research the relation between people's emotions and their practices. Intimacy, therefore, is a good entry point for understanding people's experiences and aspirations, as well as their struggles with social expectations. I propose three central questions for sexuality research. One, how social and cultural processes enable people to explore existing and new terrain in sexuality. Two, how such people position themselves in relation to customary practice and expectations. Third, how these continuities and/or changes are reflected in their self-perceptions and bodily dispositions. In short, sexuality needs to be studied as an embodied practice.

### **Gender Dynamics in Pre-Marital Heterosexuality in Dakar: Power Negotiations in Young People's Intimate Relationships**

**Anouka van Eerdewijk** (Radboud University, Nijmegen, Netherlands)

In contemporary Dakar (Senegal), becoming a man implies becoming sexually active with girls and women. Homosexuality and impotency are conceived as threats to masculinity, and boys actively counter any suspicion against them in those directions. However, merely focusing on hegemonic male sexuality does not provide sufficient basis for understanding the doubts, embarrassments and

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insecurities boys experience; boys are not always in control of their intimate and sexual relations. Girls, on the other hand, do not fear any accusations of being lesbian, but are mainly driven by ensuring that they are not considered loose girls without morals. The understanding of virginity is however very specific and concerns vaginal sex; this leaves space for unmarried girls (and boys) to engage in anal, oral or other kinds of sexual acts while maintaining 'virginity'. The pressure to safeguard a virgin status, however, does not imply that girls do not exercise agency or pursue sexual satisfaction.

One-dimensional interpretations of the power dynamics in intimate heterosexual relationships tend to see men as being in control, and women as lacking agency. On the basis of the negotiations of female and male pre-marital sexuality that girls and boys are engaged in, I come to a multi-dimensional interpretation of the power dynamics in their intimate relations. I specifically look at the way the fragmentation of male sexuality interacts with the silencing of female desire. In doing so, I challenge the homogenizing reproduction of what often seem static hegemonic heterosexualities.

### **Gender Norms, History and Sociocultural Factors in Discourses of AIDS Prevention in Sub-Saharan Africa**

**Berta Mendiguren** (Farapi S.L. Consultancy for Applied Anthropology, San Sebastián, Spain)

This paper explores the importance of understanding gender norms, historical and sociocultural factors in order to consider the real and possible impact of AIDS campaigns in African context, especially campaigns developed by Occidental actors, sometimes described as "a new face of colonialism". In addition, it aims to use qualitative methodologies to understand, respect and if necessary transform local context.

### **Panel 4: Postcolonial Intimacies and Global Visual Cultures**

#### **Postcolonial Intimacies and Globalization**

**Luke Gibbons** (NUI Maynooth, Ireland)

In this paper I propose to examine postcolonial approaches to intimacy and desire, with particular reference to changing relations between word, image and intimacy in the transition to modernity. The need to name and classify expressions of sexuality has often more to do with power than desire, and with aspects of globalization that seek to permeate inner as well as outer life. La Rochefoucauld's aphorism that nobody would have fallen in love if they hadn't read about it first takes on a new currency in the contemporary world where both heterosexual and same-sex relations are under pressure to re-define themselves and conform to dominant western modes of representation.

#### **The Video Closet: Nollywood's Gay Stories**

**Unoma Azuah** (Lane College, Tennessee, USA)

Nollywood, the popular video-film industry of southern Nigeria, is now the world's second largest film industry. The films tend to be melodramatic tales of love, social mobility, and family conflict. Over the past two decades, video-films have become the dominant form of Nigerian popular culture, with more than 2,000 films being made each year. While most of the films, which must be approved by the Nigerian Censors Board, avoid taboo topics, a handful of films have dealt with issues of homosexuality. This paper surveys the small archive of gay-themed Nollywood films and examines the consistently negative portrayal of homosexuality. Based on interviews with filmmakers and members of the Censors Board, I discuss how state interests, religious views, market capitalism and the everyday reproduction of social norms all affect the representation of homosexuality in Nollywood. I argue that the Censor's Board insistence on "balanced" portrayals of homosexuality (i.e. all films treating the topic must show its repercussions) leads to films that gay audiences in Nigeria find to be unrealistic and unrepresentative of their lives. Films to be

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discussed include: *Emotional Crack*, *Beautiful Faces*, *My Last Wedding*, *Women's Affair*, *Girls Cot*, *End Times*, *The Corporate Maid*, *Irreplaceable*, and two yet-to-be released films, *Law 58* and *Mr. Ibu and Keziah*.

***Umtshotsho*<sup>1</sup> / *Indawo Yami*<sup>2</sup>: Aesthetics and Politics in Two Contemporary South African Artists' Explorations of Same-Sex Sexuality"**

**Andrew van der Vlies** (Queen Mary, University of London, United Kingdom)

This paper will consider the work of two young South African artists who explore same-sex desire and intimacy in two very different media, offering thoughts on the relevance of considering their respective practice—and reception—for studies of same-sex sexuality elsewhere in Africa. Nicholas Hlobo (b. 1975), winner of a prestigious national young artist award in 2009, makes sculptural objects from (amongst other things) wood, rubber, lace, and ribbon, exploring male same-sex desire and practice, and the suggestive commonalities between gay performativity and aspects of traditional practice in amaXhosa cultures (what Mark Gevisser calls 'the paradox of being both out in the open and under the covers – an insider and an outsider – in all the worlds he inhabits: Xhosa son, Eastern Cape homeboy, gay cosmopolitan, artworld rising star'<sup>3</sup>). Zanele Muholi (b. 1972) has garnered national and international awards and is well known for her intimate photographic portraits of black lesbians. Like Hlobo, Muholi is interested in visibility (and invisibility)—her aim is expressly to present 'positive imagery of black queers (especially lesbians) in South African society and beyond'.<sup>4</sup>

Muholi's work has recently occasioned a great deal of commentary in South Africa, in the wake of reports that South Africa's Minister of Arts and Culture had left the opening of an exhibition at Johannesburg's Constitution Hill in August 2009 after finding Muholi's work 'immoral, offensive and going against nation-building'.<sup>5</sup> Hlobo's work, less conventionally representational (but not wholly abstract), has attracted none of this approbation. I want to think in this short paper about the politics of these artists' very different praxis, about their relationship to cultural and material commodification of queer performance, and about the suggestiveness of the ethics and aesthetics of the representation of same-sex intimacy, desire, and performance in South Africa for other constituencies.

<sup>1</sup> The title of Nicholas Hlobo's 2009 exhibition at the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown, South Africa, referring to peer-regulated adolescent societies in traditional amaXhosa culture; *umtshotsho* rituals include mock fights, parties, and non-penetrative sex (*ukusoma*), often between boys.

<sup>2</sup> 'My space' or 'my place'. Title of Zanele Muholi's 2010 exhibition at the Michael Stevenson gallery in Cape Town, South Africa. See <<http://www.michaelstevenson.com/contemporary/exhibitions/muholi/index2010.htm>>.

<sup>3</sup> Mark Gevisser, 'Under Covers, Out in the Open: Nicholas Hlobo and Umtshotsho', in *Standard Bank Young Artist Award 2009: Nicholas Hlobo*, ed. Sophie Perryer (Cape Town: Michael Stevenson, 2009), 9-17, at 10.

<sup>4</sup> Zanele Muholi, on *Faces and Phases*, an exhibition in London 24 June—1 August 2010. See: "ZANELE MUHOLI: FACES AND PHASES", *Fred Gallery*, online <<http://www.fred-london.com/index.php?mode=exhibitions&id=68>>, accessed 4 June 2010.

<sup>5</sup> See Sally Evans, "Minister slams 'porn' exhibition: Minister refuses to open exhibition after she is given preview of photographs", *Times* (South Africa), 1 March 2010 <<http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/article332784.ece>>, and Evans, "Xingwana is 'conservative, reactionary'", *Times* (South Africa), 2 March 2010 <<http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/article334446.ece>>.

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## Panel 5: Recognizing, Interpreting and Translating Same-Sex Desires

### Relatively Gay: Translating Nigerian Same-Sex Desires

**Rudolf Gaudio** (State University of New York, Purchase NY, USA)

Discussions of same-sex sexuality in Africa are often framed in terms of—and get bogged down in—divergent normative claims about translatability: the idea that ‘gay,’ ‘lesbian,’ ‘homosexual’ or other discursive categories can or cannot (read: should or should not) be translated across time, space and cultural domains. The dichotomous nature of these debates refracts broader discourses about ‘tradition’ and ‘modernity’ that locate indigenous African cultural traditions in the pre-colonial period and treat European colonization as the most important (or only) factor affecting and transforming those traditions in the ‘modern’ era. This paper adduces ethnographic and archival evidence from Nigeria to critically examine such claims. My focus is on the ostensibly indigenous social category of ‘*yan daudu*,’ feminine men in the predominantly Muslim, Hausa-speaking region of northern Nigeria, and the ways that category label has been used and interpreted by different social actors, including Western and Nigerian academics and activists, from the mid-twentieth century through the present. My analysis draws on my anthropological study of ‘*yan daudu*’ (Gaudio 2009) and considers as well the (mostly informal) responses that this research has engendered among Nigerian and Western audiences.

### Same Sex Cultures and Pariah Formations in North Africa

**Caroline Rooney** (University of Kent, Canterbury, United Kingdom) and **Julia Borossa** (Middlesex University, London, United Kingdom)

This paper will explore and attempt to theorise the resistance to the categorisation of homosexuality in the context of North Africa with comparative reference to Southern Africa. It will identify this resistance through a consideration of literary texts and social accounts, and show how this material may be opened up to debate through critical perspectives offered by Foucault in his history of sexuality and by Joseph Massad in *Desiring Arabs*. Particular attention will be paid to Massad’s critique of how same sex cultures in North Africa and the Middle East are incited to define themselves in terms of Western same sex cultures and further attention will be paid to the ways in which Massad’s position has been insufficiently grasped by some of his critics. More broadly, the paper will attempt to engage with the question of how identity politics serves to generate pariah status.

## Panel 5: Research Methodologies in Cross-Cultural Perspective

### Gender Out of Place: Sexuality and Identity in Northern Nigeria

**Steven Pierce** (University of Manchester, United Kingdom)

Scholars from many perspective have warned against the too-easy attribution of contemporary western analytics to contexts in different spaces or times. And yet, strands of queer theory and neo-Lacanian feminism (for example) do provide insights of more general application. This paper considers the case of Hausa-speaking northern Nigeria, where an extremely strong normative code directs both gendered comportment and sexual behaviour while at the same time constituting a significant and socially recognized class of “deviants.” These include “independent women,” unmarried adults who are not living under male protection, and men and women who seek sexual and romantic relationships with members of their own gender. I argue that in Hausa culture there exists a set of normative binaries within which both “normal” and “abnormal” sexualities are ideologically constituted. In practice, however, even the “normal” fail to locate themselves within this structuralist grid. This dilemma, I suggest, may provide insight into how modern western analytic categories can be fruitfully applied to other contexts.

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### **Intimate Encounters, the Agency *in* and *of* Representation, and the Partiality of Gender Without Sexuality in India**

**Manuela Ciotti** (University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom)

This paper analyses the sexual innuendos, the 'irreverent' postures, and the sex talk which marked a number of ethnographic encounters with women in north India. While these encounters discursively *harassed* the anthropologist's interpretive categories, Indian women's 'excess of agency' established a mutual joking intimacy. Drawing on a body of literature from disciplines ranging from postcolonial studies, anthropology, history and gender, the paper shows how encounters radically subverted aspects of the representational history of women in colonial and postcolonial India. In turn, the resulting representational possibilities for Indian women engendered new ones for those women writing on them. Finally, encounters signalled the potential – and the urgent need - of research in the largely unknown terrain of sexuality in India – which would lead to rethink the semantics of gender - to investigate one of missing key elements in the study of Indian modernity.

In this respect, the paper constitutes a preliminary epistemological and empirical intervention towards a future research project titled: *'Mapping the history and present of sexuality in India: A global journey into the origins of an idea and back'* – which will include both a genealogy of knowledge and an ethnographic component. To this end, the paper aims to foster a South-South comparative debate on novel research directions on the sphere of sexuality as well as innovative methodological tools.

### **The Subject of Sex in Melanesia: Notes on Comparisons Here and There**

**Thomas Strong** (NUI Maynooth, Ireland)

In line with the workshop's aims to open up our vocabularies of (historical, cross-cultural) comparison, this paper engages the discussion of African/European sexualities from a third perspective: the ethnography of 'ritualized homosexuality' in Melanesia. Papua New Guinea has long troubled conventional Euro-American constructions of personhood, gender, and sexual practice in part because Papua New Guinean practices appeared to defy normative understandings of sexuality and the self.

Ethnographers have therefore struggled to innovate interpretive strategies for capturing the distinctiveness of PNG practices, while remaining mindful of the representational politics of 'difference' and 'otherness.' Shifting terms have reflected these difficulties, as have rival theoretical orientations.

Did Papua New Guineans practice 'ritualized homosexuality'? Or were male initiation rites better described as 'insemination rituals'? Did psychoanalytic interpretations illuminate -- or obscure -- the modes and meanings of Melanesian gender relations, sexual practice, and subjectivity? Debate regarding the interpretation of sexual practices in Melanesia, as elsewhere, was often locked into dialogue with Euro-American categories and concepts (including the very notion of 'sexuality').

Obliquely revisiting this discussion, this paper ventures to put Melanesian materials into constructive conversation with African ethnography, circumventing the Europe/Other axis that too frequently defines the shape of comparative analysis and description, especially regarding sexual practices and identities. A series of different points of recognition and identification perhaps come into view, constellated around terms such as 'vitality' and 'transaction' (rather than, say, 'sexuality' and 'identity'), shaping a different terrain on which to see the un/common humanity we all share.

### **Contradictions in Researching Lesbian Families in the Czech Republic**

**Kateřina Nedbálková** (Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic)

Based on a qualitative research, this paper explores the phenomenon of lesbian families in the Czech Republic. First, I focus on the often contradictory conceptualizations of lesbian and gay families in the social sciences and argue for a critical interpretative approach. The concepts and research developed and conducted primarily in the Anglo-Saxon countries were continuously confronted within my ethnographic field research of 16 lesbian couples who parent or plan to parent.

On general level, I am concerned with how women in lesbian families negotiate the notions of family, parenthood, kinship, community and gender. Contrary to the prevailing research findings, I argue that their social practice can be interpreted as distinctly gendered. Further, I explore how

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lesbians living in families meet and confront two stereotypes: the stereotype of the lesbian and the stereotype of the so-called normal family. The everyday presentation of lesbian families is described as a constant interplay between distancing themselves from the stigmatizing stereotypes attached to homosexuality and uncommonness of the family type, on one hand, and affirming their commonness, on the other hand.

## **Panel 6: Sexual Citizenship and International Human Rights Law**

### **The International Legal Environment and the Changing Social Categorisation of Same-Sex Attraction in Hungary”**

**Judit Takács** (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, Hungary)

Certain European authors raised their voice against the legal discrimination of homosexual men already from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and some of these early anti-discriminatory arguments, especially those of Károly Kertbeny, who coined the word 'homosexual' in 1868-69, emphasised in a very modern manner that the state should not intervene in the private lives of individuals. However, European legislation – and Hungarian law, also – soon became dominated by a “medicalised” model of homosexuality.

In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Hungarian law makers defined homosexuality as an “abnormal” biological phenomenon which at the same time – surprisingly – can be learnt, and this learning process can have dangerous consequences. By the end of the 1990s, the contradictions inherent in views of Hungarian legislation on homosexuality became apparent: in certain court cases, judges stayed the proceedings referring to provisions discriminating against same-sex relationships as being unconstitutional. The expectations of the international legal environment, especially those of the European Union, also projected the necessity of re-examining the discriminative legal treatment of same-sex relationships.

By examining the historically changing views on same-sex attraction reflected by Hungarian legislation we can find different versions of the social categorisation of homosexuality: it was defined as a sin until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as an illness until the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and later as a form of a somewhat dangerous social deviance. Therefore, same-sex attraction based lifestyles did not appear to be part of the choices reflected by Hungarian legislation for a very long time.

### **Life in Danger? LGBT Movement in Nigeria**

**Sergio Baldi** (Univeristà degli Studi di Napoli “L’Orientale”, Naples, Italy)

Nigerian homosexuals live in danger. There is a new law – recently introduced – which does not only criminalized homosexuality, but also every thing connected with it. As a reaction to it, a foundation called “Alliance Rights Nigeria” was born to fight for the rights of Nigerian homosexuals, lesbians, bisexuals and transsexuals- abr. LGTB. Many people in Nigeria can not imagine that there are homosexuals and lesbians in their country. It is not just a question of introducing a partner of the same sex to the family. Many Nigerians, would say that homosexuals are sinners who could attract the wrath of God over the society as in Sodom and Gomorrah. But, as in any other country, there are pros and cons. We know that there are homosexuals and lesbians, and also activists who work secretly against this common opinion of the Nigerian society. They aim to win influential politicians in the Parliament, who are willing to fight for their rights. In this paper, I will discuss topics on morals and sexuality as well as the position of the Church in Nigeria regarding homosexuality and lesbian movement.

### **Redefining Tradition and Rights in the African Postcolony: Queering Dogs, Pigs and the International Alarm**

**Elina Oinas** (University of Turku, Turku, Finland)

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This paper will discuss possibilities and openings for queer politics and sexualities in Africa, especially concerning the current debates on challenges to "tradition", culture and binary gender model, and its supposedly inherent heteronormativity. The starting point for the paper is the world-wide outburst of interest in the Ugandan case of legislation on homosexual acts. The paper examines different arguments used by different parties involved in the heated debates about the so-called homosexuality bill in Uganda, the Malawi arrests in May 2010, and several highly publicized political leaders' statements, including Jacob Zuma's, Robert Mugabe's and Morgan Zwangirai's. The international and local gay and human rights movements have not been the only ones to react, and governments', like the Swedish threats to cut development funding, add a larger political and economic dimension to the local debates about decency, sex and gender. What are the different discursive constructs of "Africa", "Africanness", rights and culture that are exploited in these rhetorics? How are gender, citizenship and sovereignty defined? Local actors' statements, media documents and international campaigns will be examined. The interests of the paper go beyond the theme of sexualities, as the paper examines uses of tradition, colonialism, sovereignty, donor rule and democracy in this uniquely specific yet surprisingly revealing debate.

### **Follow-Up Activities**

#### **How to Maintain the Momentum Generated by an ESF Workshop? Possible Future Funding Opportunities**

**Caroline Ang** (NUI Maynooth, Maynooth, Ireland)

How best to maintain the momentum generated by a productive and stimulating workshop? Additional funding can provide the means for future meetings, networking and research. We will explore current funding opportunities, which do exist, even in these difficult economic times, and we will discuss the potential next steps to take to continue to develop this area of work.

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## Appendix II: Biographical Notes on the Participants

**Caroline Ang** works in the Research Support Office at NUI Maynooth, helping researchers from all the disciplines find appropriate funding, develop their grant proposals and assist with grant submissions. Prior to working at NUIM, Caroline worked as Programmes Manager at the Dublin Molecular Medicine Centre, at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland in education and outreach, and as a Scientific Programme Officer at Science Foundation Ireland. Caroline received a PhD in neurobiology from The Rockefeller University in 2001, and an MSc from the University of Ottawa, and a BSc from the University of Toronto.

**Unoma Azuah** is a Nigerian writer working in the U.S. A. Formerly editor of *The Muse*—a journal of the Department of English, University of Nigeria, Nsukka—she received the Hellman/Hammett Human Rights grant for her writings on women's issues (1998), the Leonard Trawick Creative Writing Award (2000) and the Urban Spectrum National Best Novel award (2006) for her debut novel, *Sky-high Flames*. She currently teaches Composition and Creative Writing at Lane College, Jackson, Tennessee, USA. She has published poems, a novel and a collection of short stories called *The Length of Light*.

**Sergio Baldi** graduated in Political Sciences (1969), in Arabic (1972) and Swahili (1982); he received a Masters in African Affairs (Duquesne University, Pgh: 1975) and a PhD at INALCO (Paris 1983). He has conducted research in Tunisia (1968), Tanzania (1972-1973), the USA (as a Fulbright scholar), London, Paris, Nigeria and Cameroun and is currently a Full Professor at I.U.Orientale. He is a member of Istituto Italo-Africano (Rome), Société de Linguistique de Paris, the scientific board of Studi Magrebini (Naples) and Studies of the Department of African Languages and Cultures (Warsaw). Since 1987, he has been the International Coordinator for an ERASMUS Programme in Hausa and Sudanic Languages. His publications include *A Contribution to the Swahili Maritime Terminology* (Istituto Italo-Africano, Roma 1977), and *Dictionnaire des emprunts arabes dans les langues de l'Afrique de l'Ouest et en swahili*. Karthala DICTIONNAIRES ET LANGUES (2008).

**Anna Borgos** (1973) is a Psychologist and Women's Historian. She holds a PhD in Psychology is a fellow at the Research Institute for Psychology, Budapest. Her research field is situated at the borderland of psychoanalysis, gender studies and literary history; she has been exploring and publishing studies on Hungarian women intellectuals of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. She is also engaged in feminist and LGBT history and activism. She is a founding member of *Labrisz Lesbian Association*. She co-edited a volume of lesbian autobiographical writings, *Előhívott önarcképek: leszbikus nők önéletrajzi írásai (Developed Self-Portraits: Lesbian Women's Autobiographical Writings)*. Her first monograph, *Portrét a Másikról* (Portraits of the Other) was published in 2007.

**Julia Borossa** is the Principal Lecturer in Psychoanalysis and the Programme Leader of the MA in Psychoanalysis at Middlesex University. She has a B.A. in English (1982) and an M.A. in Comparative Literature (1988) from McGill University, Canada. She completed her PhD *Narratives of the Clinical Encounter and the Transmission of Psychoanalysis* in the Department of History and Philosophy of Science at Cambridge University (1995). Her books include *Saacute; ndor Ferenczi: Selected Writings* (Penguin 1999) and *Hysteria* (Icon Books, 2001) which has been translated into Spanish, Portuguese and Croatian. She is interested in the history of the psychoanalytic movement; clinical narratives; the institutionalisation and professionalisation of psychoanalysis; psychoanalysis and colonialism; trauma and narratives of endurance.

**Conrad Brunström** is a Lecturer in English at the National University of Ireland at Maynooth. He is the author of two books on eighteenth-century poetry (*William Cowper*, 2004) and rhetoric (*Thomas Sheridan*, 2010) and has taught and published within Queer Studies with a particular theoretical interest in the works of Eve Sedgwick, Judith Butler and Thomas Laqueur. His most recent post-Sedgwickian formulation muses on the logic that if homosocial behaviour reinforces heteronormativity, then perhaps heterosocial behaviour stimulates anti-heteronormative formulations. He is a member of the Cambridge based "Queer People" group and has been developing projects on anti-heteronormativity in poetry, the theatre and (most recently) sport.

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**Lene Bull Christiansen** is a post doctoral fellow in the Department of Society and Globalisation at Roskilde University in Denmark. Her research interests include postcolonial theory, Zimbabwean history, gender and sexuality in Africa, gender and politics, nationalism and African literature. She has most recently completed a PhD thesis entitled *Gendering the Nation: Negotiations of Gender, Power and Culture in Zimbabwe, 2004-2008* and published "In Our Culture...": How Debates about Zimbabwe's Domestic Violence Law Became a Culture Struggle" along with many other articles.

**Manuela Ciotti** is a Social Anthropologist who has carried out extensive ethnographic fieldwork in north India. Her research interests include modernity, gender and politics, and sexuality amongst others. She is the author of *Retro-Modern India. Forging the Low-Caste Self* (Routledge 2010), *Political Agency and Gender in India: Women, Dalits and Subalterns Between the Nation and Its 'Others'* (forthcoming Routledge), and *Femininities and Masculinities in Indian Politics: Essays on Gender Archetypes, Leadership and Activism* (forthcoming Berghahn Books). Ciotti's focus on South Asian Studies is intertwined with her interests on epistemologies of difference and representation; converging on this, a monograph provisionally entitled *Producing Knowledge in Late Modernity: Lessons from India* is under preparation. She is currently a visiting fellow at the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) in Leiden.

**Íde Corley** is a Lecturer in English at the National University of Ireland at Maynooth. She has published a number of essays and reviews on Pan-African literary and political cultures in peer-reviewed journals including *Interventions*, *Modern Language Studies* and the *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*. She is currently completing a monograph, entitled *In the Place of the Father: Patriarchy, Psychoanalysis and Pan-Africanism*, which examines the founding myths of patriarchal origins that shaped nationalist ideologies in Africa. In 1995-96, she was a Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Zimbabwe, Harare, and she recently contributed to a radio panel discussion of homosexual rights in Zimbabwe for *Newstalk, National Independent Radio*, Ireland.

**Anouka van Eerdewijk** is a Lecturer and Researcher at the Centre for International Development Issues at Radboud University, Nijmegen. Her research focuses on gender, sexual and reproductive rights and health in Sub-Saharan Africa. She is the author of *The ABC of Unsafe Sex: Gendered Sexualities of Young People in Dakar*, a study which attempts a critique of the prevailing medical and demographic perspectives by investigating how safe sex practices are actually embedded in a sociocultural context of sexuality in which gender is crucial. Her research focuses on the meaning and gendered nature of the "scripts" on virginity, sexual experience, sexual [self] control, provocation and how young people can shape and reshape these gendered scripts in their lives.

**Rudolf Gaudio** is a Professor of Anthropology at Purchase College, State University of New York. Building on his long-term research on language and society in Africa and elsewhere, his research now pays attention to media, popular culture, and public policy as well. He recently published a book, *Allah Made Us: Sexual Outlaws in an Islamic African City* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), which is about feminine men in northern Nigeria. His newest research focuses on Nigerian Pidgin (a language that combines words and grammar from English and various African languages) and the way it is being used by migrants to Nigeria's capital city as well as in hip-hop music, film, and other popular media.

**Luke Gibbons** is Professor of Irish Literary and Cultural Studies in NUI Maynooth. He has taught previously at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana, and Dublin City University. His interests range from film and literature to the visual arts, questions of aesthetics, politics and cultural history, and contemporary debates on post-colonialism. Among his publications are *Gaelic Gothic: Race, Colonialism and Irish Culture* (2004), *Edmund Burke and Ireland: Aesthetics, Politics and the Colonial Sublime 1750-1850* (2003), *The Quiet Man* (2002), *Transformations in Irish Culture* (1996), and (with Kevin Rockett and John Hill) *Cinema in Ireland* (1988), the first academic study of Irish cinema. He was a contributing editor to *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing* (1991: General Editor, Seamus Deane) and has also co-edited (with Peadar Kirby and Michael Cronin)

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*Reinventing Ireland: Culture, Society and the Global Economy* (2002), and (with Dudley Andrew) *The Theatre of Irish Cinema* (2002).

**Neville Hoad** is Associate Professor of English at the University of Texas at Austin. He is interested in nineteenth-century British literature, Victorian anthropology and sexology, Darwin and social Darwinism, feminism in imperialism, anglophone postcolonial literature and theory, South African literature, critical race studies, queer theory, and international human rights law, among other subjects. He is the author of *African Intimacies: Race, Homosexuality, and Globalization* (2007), and the co-editor of *Sex and Politics in South Africa: Equality/the Gay and Lesbian Movement/the Struggle* (2005).

**Berta Mendiguren** is a Doctor in Medical Anthropology and holds a Masters in International Cooperation and a Masters in Health Anthropology and Social Work. Her thesis, which obtained the Extraordinary Prize of Doctorate 2007 of the Rovira i Virgili University (Catalonia), focused on immigration, medicine and social change in Mali. Areas of investigation and teaching include Health (especially SSR and VIH-SIDA), Health and Social Protection Systems, Gender, and Human Development in Africa, migrations and (Co) development. She is affiliated with FARAPI, a university spin-off company founded by a team of professionals from the field of social anthropology doing Applied Anthropology. She participates in international networks on Africa and/or Health such as GEA, ARDA, SACUDA and REDAM.

**Madhavi Menon** is Associate Professor of Literature at American University. She is the author of *Wanton Words: Rhetoric and Sexuality in English Renaissance Drama* (University of Toronto Press, 2004), which explores how Renaissance rhetoric manuals encounter and present desire; and of *Unhistorical Shakespeare: Queer Theory in Shakespearean Literature and Film* (Palgrave, 2008), a polemical inquiry into the methodologies within which we study desire. She is also the editor of *Shakespeare: A Queer Companion to The Complete Works of Shakespeare* (Duke UP, 2010), which is the first book to put queer theory in conversation with every one of Shakespeare's poems and plays. She teaches classes on queer theory, literary theory, Renaissance literature, and drama and is currently working on a new study entitled *Queer Universalism: Shakespeare and Indifference*.

**Kateřina Nedbálková** is an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Social Studies, Division of Gender studies in Masaryk University. She specialises in gender studies; social construction of sexuality and deviation; feminist criminology; and prison service. She has recently researched lesbian families in the Czech Republic and how they negotiate the notion of family, parenthood, kinship, community and gender. She focused on the often contradictory conceptualizations of lesbian and gay families in social sciences and argued for critical interpretative approach.

**Elina Oinas** a Lecturer in Sociology at the University of Turku, Finland. She has been a visiting scholar at the Women and Gender Studies Departments at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa (2002, 2003) and the University of California, Berkeley (2005-2006). She is author of *Making Sense of the Teenage Body: Sociological Perspectives on Girls, Changing Bodies, and Knowledge* (Abo Akademi U P, 2001) and of a number of articles on agency, empowerment and victimhood in feminist writings on HIV and gender in Africa. She is also co-editor of the *Nordic Journal of Women's Studies*.

**Daniel Orrells** is interested in all areas of Greek and Latin literature. His research specifically focuses on marginalised genres of Greek Literature and Reception (the interaction between ancient literature and contemporary literary theory, philosophy and psychoanalysis). His forthcoming book examines the history of the understanding of ancient and modern sexualities between 1750 and 1930. Forthcoming articles discuss: the work of gender studies in reading ancient Greek comedy and mime; the placement of Winckelmann in the history of Art History; the centrality of antiquity in considering the intellectual relationship between Freud and Derrida. Projects in the pipeline include a monograph on the poetry-book of Herodas. Daniel has just co-supervised a doctoral dissertation on the classical tradition in the novels of Toni Morrison and is currently supervising doctoral research on the reception of Greek tragedy in eighteenth-century opera. His publications include *Classical Culture and Modern Masculinity* (Forthcoming) Oxford

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University Press. *Sex: Antiquity and Its Legacy* (IB Tauris/OUP, 2010)

**Steven Pierce** is a Lecturer in History at the University of Manchester. His first book, *Farmers and the State in Colonial Kano: Land Tenure and the Legal Imagination* (Indiana UP, 2005) is a study of the colonial government of northern Nigeria, looking at the way in which rights in land became the primary idiom for governing small-scale farmers. With Anupama Rao, he has co-edited *Discipline and the Other Body: Correction, Corporeality, Colonialism*, a collection of essays which examines the relationship between bodily violence and categories of difference such as race, religion, and gender, tracing the intimate relationship between strategies of governance and often-intertwined discourses of humanitarianism and bigotry. His most recent work focuses on the history of humanitarianism and human rights.

**Caroline Rooney** is Director for the Centre for Colonial and Postcolonial Research at the University of Kent. Her most recent book *Decolonising Gender* (Routledge, 2007) offers a critique of the performative reifications of language and gender from a postcolonial perspective, showing how poetic realist writing endeavours to engage in non-essentialist affirmations of the collective beyond identity politics. Her previous book, *African Literature, Animism and Politics* (Routledge, 2000), explores the positing of an unthinkable Africa in colonial discourse and further explores how African literature reflects and may be inflected by a consciousness of African philosophy. She has long-standing theoretical interests in deconstruction and psychoanalysis, with articles in this area published in the *Oxford Literary Review* and *Angelaki*.

**Rachel Spronk** is Assistant Professor in Anthropology at the University of Amsterdam. She works at the intersection of anthropology, gender and sexuality studies, and postcolonial studies. Her research interests include sex(uality) and gender, love and eroticism, modernity and globalisation. Her previous research focused on the love and sexual relationships of young urban professionals in Nairobi, Kenya. In her future research, she will study shifts in the practices and imagination of intimacy and how this related to the notion of modern personhood from an intergenerational perspective, in Nigeria. Rachel has published about sexual pleasure, sexuality & media, cosmopolitanism and sexuality, and more. Her book entitled *Ambiguous Pleasures. Sexuality and Middle Class Self-definitions in Nairobi* is forthcoming with Berghahn Publishers.

**Thomas Strong** is a Lecturer in Sociocultural Anthropology at NUI Maynooth. Ethnographic analysis of transfusion medicine, artificial organ technologies, and perceptions of HIV risk in the United States led him to dissertation research on ideologies of blood, body, and social change in the highlands of Papua New Guinea. Other work has concerned the ethos of 'drama' and the norms of sex-seeking in a culturally diverse group of young gay men in San Francisco, California. Strong is presently pursuing new research on the public presence and social future of people with HIV in East Africa.

**Judit Takács** is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, responsible for leading research teams and conducting independent research on gender issues and family practices, social exclusion/inclusion of LGBT people, AIDS prevention, anti-discrimination and equal treatment policies (See: <http://www.policy.hu/takacs/pdf-lib/cv.pdf>.) She is the author of the ILGA-Europe – IGLYO report on the *Social Exclusion of LGBT Youth in Europe*; the *How to Put Equality into Practice? Anti-discrimination and Equal Treatment Policymaking and LGBT People*; and co-editor of the *Beyond the Pink Curtain: Everyday Life of LGBT People in Eastern Europe* (More information on her publications can be found at <http://www.policy.hu/takacs/publications.php>.)

**Veronica Vasterling** is a Lecturer in Philosophy at the Institute for Gender Studies at Radboud University, Nijmegen. She was a Fulbright PhD student at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, and translator (German-English) for the US Justice Department in Washington (1984-86). With a stipend from the Dutch Research Council (NWO), she wrote a dissertation on Heidegger (1989-1993), and, in 1998, she helped establish a philosophical library in Jinja, Uganda. Her books

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include *Practicing Interdisciplinarity in Gender Studies* (2006) and *Feministische Phänomenologie und Hermeneutik*, edited with Silvia Stoller and Linda Fisher (2002). She has also published numerous articles on feminist phenomenology and hermeneutics, political theory, embodiment and identity and psychoanalytical theory in journals such as *Human Studies* and the *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*.

**Andrew van der Vlies** was born in South Africa and educated there and at the University of Oxford (DPhil, 2005). He works on South African and postcolonial print and text cultures (*South African Textual Cultures*, Manchester UP, 2007; assoc. ed. of the *Oxford Companion to the Book*, 2010) and South African literature and culture. He has published widely on South African writers and literary cultures. He is currently beginning work on a project on aesthetics, politics, and performance in relation to ideas of the obscene in post-apartheid South Africa, to which this paper relates. He has taught at the University of Sheffield (2005-10) and Queen Mary, University of London (2010-).

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