

Homosexuality and the Nation: Theorizing the Op-positionality*

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Abstract

This essay starts with the Cold War figuration of homosexuals as Communists, and parallels it with the 1930s Communist/socialist accusation of the Nazis/fascists as being homosexual, in order to refute any essentialist connections between homosexuality and either political stance. Instead, an overarching explanation is put forth to encompass both and view them as in effect consisting in the same politics of Othering the enemy in terms of sexuality, which only gets exasperated with the coming of the modern nation. This leads to a theorization of the overdetermined op-positionality between the nation and homosexuality, which is believed to be the real key issue here. However, there are cases (such as Quebec and Canada) in which the relation between the two seems to be not only less tense but rather affirmative—so they are also examined to decide whether they pose a contradiction to the above thesis. Throughout the whole essay, a series of fictional texts are also discussed for illustrations, including *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, *Strawberry and Chocolate*, *Hosanna*, *The Moor's Last Sigh*, and *Dogeaters*.

Keywords: Communism/socialism, Nazism/fascism, enemy, Latin America, Quebec/Canada

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Quite different from expectations, homosexuality, instead of being totally missing from the grand narratives of nation and nationalism, in fact frequently “figures” in them—though, fully in line with the expectation this time, negatively in most cases. Or we should say it “figurates” in them, since its presence is often allegorized into something else, mostly as the symbol of the Negative—a phenomenon I have theorized generally in a previous essay. In the present one I intend to go deeper by focusing on one particular aspect of this textual phenomenon, namely the representation of homosexuals as threats to the nation and thus their coding in national narratives as subversives, traitors, spies, and ultimately “aliens.” I will attempt a theoretical explanation for these adverse associations as an intervention to disarticulate this overdetermined op-positionality. For, as Anna Marie Smith insightfully points out in her intricate analysis of the British New Right discourse on issues of race and sexuality:

Rather than playing the evidence game by offering counter-truths, resistance discourses ought to analyse the conditions of effectiveness of truth claims. In the place of counter-truth claiming, we should engage in “symptomology,” an investigation of the structure, and the strengths and weaknesses, of the supporters’ truth-claiming discourse. Why was this expression of anxiety around homosexuality, in this particular form, at this particular juncture, so persuasive? [...] Why did the devotion of extensive official discourse to this conception of homosexuality, at this particular time, appear to be a legitimate exercise?¹

Homosexual Treason, Part I: The Anti-Communist Side

The dominant coding of the homosexual as national threat in its various embodiments has first come to our mind as an ideological formation that leads to political witch-hunts. The most (in)famous of which is no doubt the US government’s campaigns against homosexuals (first in the civil service) in the 1950s—i.e. at the height of the anti-Communist Cold War years—which is later known under the name of McCarthyism.² Since the 1950 Senate inquiry report

1 Smith’s sub-heading for the section which is begun by the passage quoted here is extremely relevant to the present essay: “Homosexuality as the subversive supplement: invader, seducer, monster, pretender” (196).

2 The account here is based mainly on D’Emilio’s article “The Homosexual Menace,” which offers a historical explanation, as well as the relevant chapter in his *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities* (40-53), which contains more details. For an even more detailed

Employment of Homosexuals and Other Sex Perverts in Government had formally concluded that “homosexuals should be excluded from government service,” “[t]he homosexual menace remained a theme of American political culture [...]. Right-wing organizations combined charges of Communist infiltration with accusations about sex offenders on the government payroll. [...] The pens of right-wing ideologues transformed homosexuality into an epidemic infecting the nation, actively spread by Communists to sap the strength of the next generation.”³ Not limited to the public sector, the impact of this governmental anti-homosexual/Communist witch-hunting spread widely out into the whole society, with ever more invasive surveillance into and even direct harassment of the lives of countless (homosexual) civilians.⁴

It was this political atmosphere that inspired quite a few textual representations which associate the homosexual with treacherous espionage, subversive communism, and even “alien” invasion. When speaking of the post-World War II textual phenomenon of homosexuality being represented only to be allegorized into something else, Gregory Woods mentions that, for instance, “such characters [i.e. homosexual ones] start to appear [...] in British spy fiction as the potential enemy within, *reds* not under the bed but in it together” (257; my emphasis). While Woods

account, see the latest monograph, David K. Johnson’s *The Lavender Scare*, which starts by disputing the nomination “McCarthyism”: the author regards this attribution/association of the “antigay purges” to/with McCarthy alone as misleading because it focuses on one person as the sole perpetrator and thus diverts our attention from the institutional aspect of the whole event (4-5).

- 3 D’Emilio, “Homosexual Menace” 59, 60. For some of the original documents and news articles, see Katz 91-119; Balsius and Phelan 241-51.
- 4 This widely circulated version of the homosexual being equated with the Communists in the Cold War years, however, has been disputed by Cindy Patton, who argues that “the place of queerness in the rhetoric of the post-World War II years is quite different.” She explains: “Both communist association and homosexuality were reasons for exclusion of aliens under immigration law. But queerness was not taken as a serious statement of political allegiance to some other world order” (“To Die For” 331). In an effort to challenge nationalism, Patton concludes by suggesting that the current understanding of what happened to lesbians and gay men at that time is a retrospective reinscription of pre-identitarian lesbian and gay history. She says, rather provocatively, “By creating an affective attachment to the very nation that has reviled us, the hagiographic incorporation of victims [...] of HUAC into *our history* helps secure our place as citizens. In articulating ourselves as unjustly deprived of civil rights, we participate in American citizenship, we respond to the desire that will assimilate us to the whole of the nation” (344-45). Despite all these critical insights, I am afraid Patton may adhere too much to the legal discourse to effect such a historicist revision, thus playing down the effect of popular association.

does not provide any illustrations, critics do find that, in many of Ian Fleming's James Bond novels (as well as their film adaptations), the villains are characterized as not interested in the opposite sex or simply homosexual. For example, in *From Russia, With Love* (1957; film version: 1963), "[t]he essential inhumanity of the Soviet state is figured with insistent sexuality by Rosa Klebb," whose "reputation for sadism is underwritten by her *lesbian* tendencies."⁵ In a fascinating study on the cinematic monster as queer, Harry M. Benshoff mentions that "monster invasion films," which as a genre flourished in the 1950s, "have most often been discussed as representative of Cold War fears: their monsters often unleashed by nuclear power, or else they can be understood to represent the fear of communist infiltration." But those films "with communist infiltration subtexts can also be read as allegories about the invisible homosexual—especially a film such as *I Married a Monster from Outer Space* (1958), in which a newly-wed husband [...], secretly a monster queer, finds it preferable to meet other strange men in the public park rather than stay at home with his wife."⁶

How did it happen—this link between the homosexual and the Communist, or lest we forget what the latter really stood for, the single political force that posed a threat to the US at that time because it called for what Cindy Patton aptly terms "some other world order" (see Note 4)? One contingent explanation readily suggests itself: as Robert J. Corber points out, "the founders of the Mattachine Society," the first post-war political organization for homosexuals, "were former members of the Communist party who used the Marxist notion of false consciousness to theorize gay and lesbian oppression. They embodied the link in Cold War political discourse between same-sex eroticism and communism, which no doubt accounts for their eventual expulsion from the Mattachine Society by members who were concerned that the homophile organization might appear subversive."⁷ Similarly, in the UK, it

5 Bold 174; my emphasis. Interestingly, Bold remarks: "The crucial trick is to separate this *alien* lesbianism and homosexuality from the hearty homosociality of the British establishment" (175; emphasis added). For, as Bold points out, the Bond novels exhibits rather strong homoeroticism.

6 Benshoff 128, 130-31. According to Robert J. Corber's reading, Alfred Hitchcock's films also enact such an articulation, albeit in a more insidious way: "By encouraging the male heterosexual spectator to identify with the hero of his film, Hitchcock threatened to reinforce rather than to counteract the instability of his sexual identity and in so doing to position him as 'the homosexual' who supposedly threatened national security. Hitchcock resorted to ratifying the homophobic categories of Cold War political discourse in order to suture the male heterosexual spectator's subjectivity" (14).

7 Corber 230n19. For the Mattachine Society, its Communist background, and later anti-Communist development, see D'Emilio, "Dreams Deferred."

was the sensational defection to the Soviet and the revelation of several homosexual civil servants (Guy Burgess, Donald Maclean, Kim Philby, and Anthony Blunt) as Soviet spies in the 1950s and 1960s that confirmed such a link and inspired literary imaginations. For example: “The Bond novels exhibit a high level of nervousness about ‘the homosexual spies’ Burgess and Maclean; this narrative obsession can be read as part of the wider Cold War hysteria that conflated homosexuality and communism, and insisted that ‘perversion is synonymous with treason.’”⁸

Unsatisfied with such contingent links as personage and historical events, many have come up with stronger theories which seek to establish more innate connections between homosexuality and the enemy ideology of Communism. These theories range from the slightly speculative characterological to the more solidly based ideological. For one fascinating example of the former, Slavoj Žižek attributes Guy Burgess’s propensity for Communism to the “‘public school’ environment of the thirties,” where “the real terror is, rather, the unbearable pressure of enjoyment.” Žižek elaborates, “It is for *this* reason that Oxford and Cambridge in the thirties offered such a rich field for the KGB: not only because of the ‘guilt complex’ of rich students doing so well in the midst of the economic and social crisis, but above all because of this stuffy atmosphere of enjoyment, the very inertia of which creates an unbearable tension, a tension which could be dissolved only by ‘totalitarian’ appeal to *renunciation* of the enjoyment.”⁹ Yet a more solid base in fact can be readily found in the ideology and history of the Communist revolution in Russia. As noted

8 Bold 175. See Fred Sommer for a succinct account and Sinfield, *Literature* 76-77 for a contextual perspective. Basically, these four people all “held high-ranking, sensitive positions within British security agencies and the Foreign Office. Burgess and Maclean defected to the Soviet Union in 1951; Philby did the same in 1963. In 1964, Blunt, who was working as an art historian in London, admitted to British agents after lengthy interrogation that he had spied for the Soviet Union” (Fred Sommer 274).

However, the British situation, though similar, is a bit different from that of the US. As L. J. Moran persuasively argues, in the UK, “the idea of homosexuality as security risk gained significance and was used to secure American co-operation, to enable the U.K. to be a party, not only to important alliances, but also to have access to secret, particularly atomic, research. Here the State needed and promoted an idea of homosexuality-as-danger for the purpose of promoting international relations and establishing national security” (157-58). In other words, Moran seems to suggest, the UK government originally might not care that much for such a link but did it only to win the US approval.

9 Žižek 40-41. Interestingly, Žižek’s intricate explanation is not applicable only to one side but in effect stretches to the other, for he continues to say that “in Germany, it was Hitler who knew how to occupy the place of this appeal; in England, at least among the elite students, the KGB hunters were best versed in it.” See the following section.

by the editorial preface to Simon Karlinsky's pioneering article on Russian gay culture before and after the Bolshevik revolution: "The widespread belief that the Bolsheviks liberated Russia's homosexuals has long been a point of pride for gay leftists and a confirmation of the worst fears of those on the right who see an intrinsic and subversive link between communism and homosexuality" (347). Indeed, setting out to destroy the old order, Communism (or at least its libertarian side) used to entertain radical thoughts on issues of gender/sexuality;¹⁰ and after the Bolsheviks came to power in Russia, homosexuality was officially decriminalized in the 1922 first Soviet Russian criminal code as a part of its "comprehensive clearing away of the tsarist's regime's religious and reactionary regulation of sexuality."¹¹

Homosexual Treason, Part II: The Anti-Fascist Side

Only a decade later, at the turn of 1933 to 1934, homosexuality became recriminalized under Stalin, reportedly as a "response to the supposed discovery of *espionage* networks run by Nazi Germans infiltrating homosexual circles in Moscow, Leningrad, and other Soviet cities" (Healey, "Homosexual Existence" 349; my emphasis). Although the "emphasis on espionage" was dropped later, Healey says, "the new law was eventually presented to and by foreign communists as a measure to prevent infiltration by fascists, whose bourgeois degeneracy was infamous" (362; for more details, see his *Homosexual Desire* 184-96). Indeed in the law that was eventually passed, homosexuality was regarded not only as "a crime against public morality. It was now seen as a crime against the state" (Karlinsky 361-62).

Ironically this time (in fact it was two decades earlier than the Cold War) it became the fascists/Nazis, the arch-enemy of the Communists/socialists, rather than the Communists/socialists themselves who were accused as being homosexual.¹² And as said above, the main conflicts happened in Germany, where the German

10 The other side, adopted by Lenin, is the "scientific" agenda of rationalization, which might no longer consider "sodomy" a sin but instead regard homosexuality a pathology; for this view, see Healey, *Homosexual Desire* 111-14; "Homosexual Existence" 352-54.

11 Healey, "Homosexual Existence" 349. For a more complete account of the legislation process and the law, see Healey, *Homosexual Desire* 115-24. Some other explanations of this link can be found in the pioneering essay by Simon Shepherd: "Gay Sex Spy Orgy: The State's Need for Queers," which in effect points to a general theory of the sort I propose in the following.

12 The same case also happened in the US during the Second World War, when a scandalous incident of suspected homosexual prostitution was linked to *Nazi* espionage back then (see Murphy).

Communist Party (KDP) used to support the cause of homosexual decriminalization but in 1932 joined the attack on the quickly ascending Nazi as homosexual.¹³ An attack that was aggravated by the Reichstag (the German parliament) fire:

When ex-Communist Marinus van der Lubbe was arrested after the Berlin Reichstag fire on the night of 29 February 1933, Nazi seized on his political ties to blame international Communism for the attack. In response, the Communist International exploited the fact of van der Lubbe's homosexuality in a resonant campaign to disassociate him from the left. A widely distributed book by a collective of exiled German Communists accused van der Lubbe of being in the pay of the Nazi Party and under the sexual and moral influence of SA leader Ernst Röhm. Homosexuals were branded as violent, unreliable, and morally degenerate in this tract and in the war of words within the left, and between left and right, that it generated. (Healey, *Homosexual Desire* 183)

This is regarded as the origin of “the communist myth of a Nazi-homosexual conspiracy against the oppositional left” (Sieg 95); as the Soviet writer Maxim Gorky reported in a 1934 speech: “In Germany a saying goes around: exterminate the homosexuals and you will eradicate fascism.”¹⁴ Again ironically enough, no sooner had this myth established itself and prompted the regression of Soviet state policy to disastrous results for homosexuals, than the supposed culprit, the Nazi Party, came to power in Germany and began its ruthless persecution of homosexuals (see Haerberle; Plant; Marshall).

Nevertheless in the leftist “critical” thinking, a long tradition of what Andrew Hewitt theorizes as the “homo-fascism” was started. Just like the Cold War homosexualization of Communists, there are also quite a few texts that figure the fascist/Nazi as homosexual. Some of the most famous are (interestingly, all Italian): Roberto Rossellini's film *Rome, Open City* (1945), Alberto Moravia's novel *The Conformist* (1951; film adaptation by Bernardo Bertolucci in 1971), and Luchino

13 Hewitt 20; Healey, *Homosexual Desire* 185. For an account that traces the (German) left's all-the-way-through support of the homosexual movement and substantiates the connection between the homosexual and the Nazi Party, see Herzer; an opposite view is held by Harry Oosterhuis, who asserts that “[p]rejudices against homosexuality were part and parcel of socialist thinking” (227).

14 Qtd. in Sieg 93. A seemingly more direct translation goes like this: “There is already a sarcastic saying: ‘Destroy homosexuality and fascism will disappear’” (Blasius and Phelan 215).

Visconti's film *The Damned* (1969).¹⁵ Yet instead of recapitulating the "links" between homosexuality and fascism as represented in these texts and theorized at many other places (see Hewitt for a critical discussion), in the following I decide to turn around and reflect upon the accuser, namely the socialist/Communist, in order to locate *here* the hostility towards homosexuality. For this purpose, I choose to focus on two texts that seek to negotiate just such an issue: Argentine writer Manuel Puig's internationally renowned novel *Kiss of the Spider Woman* (originally published in 1976 and also adapted into a popular film in 1985), and the unprecedented, positive Cuban film about homosexuality: *Strawberry and Chocolate* (*Fresa y chocolate*; rel. 1993).

Despite its great popularity, *Kiss of the Spider Woman* in effect proves to be a difficult text for critical interpretation not only due to its formalistic peculiarities—such as long insertions of film stories and many academic-style footnotes—but also because most critics struggle to find a suitable contextual and/or intertextual framework to situate it as a relatable act of enunciation. Both of these difficulties, I believe, can be solved to a considerable degree if we situate the novel squarely within the problematic delineated here. Set in an Argentine prison cell in 1975, the central action of *Kiss of the Spider Woman* pivots on the evolvement of the unlikely comradeship (and love) between two cellmates, i.e. the homosexual Molina and a Marxist political activist named Valentin. Although many critics have recognized that, at the beginning of the novel, these two characters appear to be the exact "opposite" of each other—for example, as Lucille Kerr puts it, they represent "two sets of theories and practices (the one political, the other sexual)" (185)—most critics still interpret this op-positionality in the most abstract terms. I want to argue, however, this very op-positionality in fact should be best understood within the conceptual framework set out above, as that between homosexuality and socialism as a political ideology hostile to it.¹⁶

15 While the first text figures a lesbian, the rest are all gay (except for *The Conformist*, which also contains a lesbian). For a reading of Moravia's *The Conformist* in terms of "homo-fascism," see Hewitt 245-85. See also Sieg for East German examples.

16 There is an attempt, for example by Santiago Colás, to situate the novel within Argentina's political condition at that time. For, since 1973, Argentina had become increasingly right-wing and was eventually subject to a military coup in 1976 (for a succinct account see Colás 100-17). Hence Colás suggests that "Puig's novel seems prophetically to confront this reality, though its publication coincided only with the beginning of the *Proceso* [i.e. the military rule]" (76)—for Puig had already gone on exile by this time and the novel was published in Barcelona. This may explain why Valentin is set out to be imprisoned in the first place, but it is clearly not the right-wing oppression that Puig deals with in the novel. Actually, I see Valentin's imprisonment as a dramatic

Puig obviously has a full grasp of the polemic involved here, for no sooner have their relationship been introduced than we are shown the fundamental conflict between their respective stances. As Valentin enjoys the fantastic food prepared by Molina, he nevertheless develops a conscience problem as the political doctrine in which he believes has no place for “life enjoyment,” which is practiced by Molina and supposedly embodied by his (homo)sexuality. Thus Valentin proclaims: “Social revolution, that’s what’s important, and gratifying the senses is only secondary. While the struggle goes on, and it’ll probably go on for the rest of my life, it’s not right for me to cultivate any kind of sensual gratification” (27-28). Whereas this reflects the puritanical tendency of socialism which is taken to be one of the causes for its aversion to any kinds of non-reproductive sex (the most representative of which is of course homosexuality), Molina, on the other hand, is stereotypically characterized as so devoted to the pleasure principle of desire and fantasy that he even subscribes to the Nazi/fascist aesthetics of one film he recounts to Valentin (recounting the films reportedly seen by Molina is their main form of pastime). Molina even suspends his political judgment about who the traitor and the patriot are in the anti-Nazi struggle, much to Valentin’s anger.

All these clearly bespeak an acute awareness and a direct tackle of the problem involved, i.e. the socialist/Communist hostility towards homosexuality. And a clearer evidence can be found in the authorial footnotes to the text, one of which mentions exactly the de- and then re-criminalization of homosexuality in the Soviet as focused above.¹⁷ In fact, in the academic-styled footnotes, which are regarded as a formalistic peculiarity in such a work of fiction, this op-positionality between homosexuality and the left is very much the main concern (at least for the latter half of the notes) and a reconciliatory negotiation of which its teleological end. At the beginning, after exploring various theories in a mock attempt to “explain” the aetiology of homosexuality, the footnotes seem to settle for psychoanalysis, but in effect start to give it a socio-political spin by first citing Herbert Marcuse’s idea of sexual liberation (as espoused in *Eros and Civilization*). Seen in this light, homosexuality becomes a vanguard in the anti-capitalist struggle because, “in defiance of a society that employs sexuality as a means toward a useful end, perversions uphold sexuality as an end in itself; as a result, they lie outside the orbit

set-up to compel the left to feel sympathy with so as to face his problem about homosexuality. For a biographical account of this period of time, see Levine 253-69.

17 Puig 196. The note is actually quoting pioneering Australian homosexual critic Dennis Altman’s observation that, “in spite of Lenin’s concern for sexual liberty in the USSR, his rejection of anti-homosexual legislation for example, such legislation was reintroduced in 1934 by Stalin, and as a result, the prejudice against homosexuality—as a type of

of the ironclad principle of ‘performance,’ which is to say, one of the basic repressive principles fundamental to the organization of capitalism” (153). Not only this, after some further elaborations on the issue, the last footnote ends and thus can be said to conclude with the assertion of one Danish doctor named Anneli Taube, who in a book titled *Sexuality and Revolution* argues that “the primary impulse toward homosexuality” is characterized by a “revolutionary nonconformity.”¹⁸ For boys and girls who become homosexual are in effect those who have made a “conscious” choice not to follow the suppressive gender roles assigned to them, so this is in fact an “act of rebellion” that “would be a sign of undeniable strength and dignity” (207-08). In a conspicuous gesture of defense, it continues to assert that it is only due to the imposition of “a slow brainwashing in which heterosexual bourgeois models for conduct participate” that homosexuals develop certain attitudes inducing their placement, by *socialists*, “on the periphery of movements for class liberation and political action in general” (212-13). In other words, once they are liberated from such imposition, homosexuals can become the true revolutionaries.

A similar reconciliation also happens in the plot, as Molina and Valentin get on a process of mutual enlightenment in which each comes closer to the other at the end by learning to revise one’s original stance. Used to dismissing Molina’s apolitical indulgence of personal emotions (such as his love for romantic boleros), Valentin once realizes his mistake when he gets a letter from one of his comrades outside and its political message, for secrecy, is coded exactly as a romantic story: “Know something? There I was laughing at your bolero, but the letter I got today says just what the bolero says. [...] It seems to me I don’t have any right to be laughing at your bolero” (137). Obviously, what dawns on Valentin here is that, after all, a certain affinity does exist between his political desire and Molina’s sexual one. And on the part of Molina, perhaps the reason why he, despite his strong reluctance at first, eventually still promises to contact Valentin’s comrades when he is released on parole is because he now loves Valentin, i.e. still out of romantic feelings. Yet, it can also be argued that he does overcome his indifference to or even evasion of politics because he knows full well what Valentin asks him to do can only “make the

‘bourgeois degeneration’—held fast in a number of Communist parties of the world.”

18 Puig 210. Interestingly the Danish doctor is in fact an invention by and thus a disguise of the author. As Lucille Kerr points out, “Unlike the titles cited and the authors mentioned in note 5 [should be note 6 on Kerr 230, where he provides a useful list of all the authors and titles cited in the footnotes], no amount of research would discover either the work mentioned or the author named in this note. Puig admits not only to constructing ‘paraphrases’ of the work of existing authors, but also to authoring a theory of his own [...]. In our personal interview, he virtually admitted to being Dr. Anneli Taube” (235n40). For an analysis focused on these footnotes, see Balderston.

revolution happen faster” but not possibly get him out of prison right away (255). That is to say, at the end of the novel, both are indeed coming closer, if still not totally together.

However, both the negotiation argued in the footnotes and that enacted in the plot may still be deemed as wishful thinking (or possible only when the left is *out* of power), because Communist regimes, such as the Soviet and Cuba, have proved to be no less oppressive towards homosexuals.¹⁹ This explains why people have paid so much attention to *Strawberry and Chocolate*, the first ever film made in Cuba that represents homosexuality in a positive light. Based on contemporary Cuban writer Senel Paz’s short fiction “The Wolf, the Woods and the New Man” (“El bosque, el lobo y el hombre nuevo”; pub. 1991), *Strawberry and Chocolate*, rather similar to *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, is a story about the unlikely friendship between the homosexual Diego and a devoted Communist college student named David. Setting out to seduce David on a bet but not really doing it, Diego nevertheless fascinates the heterosexual and ignorant David with his highly cultured lifestyle, especially his knowledge of literature and access to foreign books. A true friendship thus develops between them, and Diego initiates David into a (self-)enlightening process in which, among other things, he gets to know what homosexuals are really like as well as learns to appreciate what Diego and “people like him” may have to offer. When, in the end, Diego is still forced to leave Cuba, it is no longer judged as an act of betrayal, but deplored as the regrettable exile of a true patriot.²⁰

In this text that also ostensibly endeavors to reconcile homosexuality with Communism (or rather a regime based on such ideology), the homosexual’s stereotypical culpability in effect persists—Diego is depicted as possessing bourgeois tastes and foreign connections—only it is now redeemed by something else, something that is attributed with a higher value as Cuba faces transformations of its geopolitical situation and thus stands for the price homosexuals still have to pay in order to be accommodated.²¹ And that something is patriotic nationalism:

19 A succinct account of the institutionalized persecution of homosexuals in Revolutionary Cuba can be found in Bejel 95-112.

20 In a comparison of particular interest to the present discussion, Emilio Bejel comments, “One repressed aspect of the film [...] is the nature of the friendship between David and Diego. While it is not necessary to sexualize all such relationships, this homosocial friendship [...] does not dare to be more radical, which it would be if the characters had a sexual relationship (as occurs in Manuel Puig’s *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, for example)” (160).

21 As Peter Bush points out: “Though set in 1979, every detail [of the film] could belong to the present of the Special Period of severe austerity established to cope with the crisis

Diego is characterized as the good homosexual because he is a true patriot who entertains a deep love for the Cuban culture and would always put the nation first (even if measured against men). As the original story puts it explicitly (and crudely) through Diego's own proclamation: "There are those—I include myself in this group—for whom sex has a place in life but is not in place of life. Like heroes or political activists, we put Duty before Sex. The cause we're pledged to takes pride of place. In my case, my mission is national Culture, to which I devote the best of my intellect and time. [...] No sir, we're as patriotic and firm as the next man. If it's a choice between cock and Cuba, it's Cuba all the time."²² While the Revolution and Communism are in one stroke revamped as potentially benevolent for such oppressed groups as the homosexual (David says, "One day nobody will be more understanding than the Revolution. If not, it wouldn't be the Revolution"), the homosexual still has to earn his place by proving arduously his loyalty to the country. This brings us to the pivotal relationship between homosexuality and the nation.

An "Inverse" Articulation

So who on earth is the homosexual, the socialist/Communist or the fascist/Nazi? The simple reversibility of this very same accusation as demonstrated above clearly forbids an easy answer to the question; in fact, it cancels it altogether. What this confusing, or in fact illuminating situation leaves us to conclude is that the link between homosexuality and either Communism or fascism cannot be "thematic" (i.e. in terms of the contents/tenets of either ideology) as many have believed; rather, it is more of a "formalistic" identification, arguably of whoever is the Enemy with the Other sexuality. Thus it is astute of Dan Healey to regard the abovementioned exchange of homosexual accusations between the Nazi and the Communist parties as all part of "the international propaganda war raging during the 1930s between fascism and communism," whose legacy clearly continued in the Cold War and even

provoked by loss of Soviet subsidies, on the eve of the mass exodus of raft people" (xv). Bush is referring to the late 1980s and early 1990s.

22 Paz, "Wolf" 55-56. This is exactly how homosexuals are classified in the story by Diego himself (!): "That is, those properly called *homosexuals*—the term is commonly used because this word, even in the worst of circumstances, contains an element of respect; *queers*—dear me, also commonly used—and *queens*, the lowest category of which are the so-called *drag queens*. This scale depends on the individual's inclination to social duty or queerness. When the balance tips towards social duty, you're in the presence of a homosexual." The above quote immediately follows.

remains with us today.²³ Katrin Sieg, in an article discussing mainly the homosexual condition in former East Germany (GDR), also traces the government's official "interpretation of sexual deviance as political dissidence [...] back to Weimar communists' strategy of using the accusation of homosexuality in order to *discredit the political enemy*."²⁴ She rightly calls for an inclusive examination of *both* sides of the Cold War if a truly comprehensive picture is aimed at, because she sees in between them a "competition for political legitimation" (94). Brad Epps gives such an apt summary of the whole condition that it deserves to be quoted in full:

if homosexuality and communism have been bound together as subversive in (and of) many Western nations, homosexuality and capitalism have been bound together as subversive in (and of) a number of communist nations. Because no historical nation has ever designated itself as homosexual, a double bind obtains: capitalist as well as communist nations have deployed, and in some cases continue to deploy, homosexuality as a sort of tactical weapon whose objective is to expose and explode the opposing (national, or "international") ideology as already given to something strange, unnatural, abnormal, unstable, perverse, and deadly. The communist line, at least after Lenin, ties together capitalism and homosexuality as decadent, alienating, and unproductive, while the capitalist line ties together communism and homosexuality as, well, decadent, alienating, and unproductive. The rhetorical consistency reveals a shared anxiety that scripts homosexuality as a threat to national sovereignty. Subversive, sly, and seditious, homosexuality is *seen* as fracturing and fragmenting the integrity of society itself: a danger seen,

23 "Homosexual Existence" 350. Elsewhere Healey also says: "Accusations of homosexuality (hurled as an insult to the masculine honor of the opposition) had already become a significant new feature of this political discourse. This international homophobic rhetoric significantly elevated a modern antihomosexual discourse to the diplomatic arena for the first time in the 1930s" (*Homosexual Desire* 182).

24 Sieg 94; my emphasis. However, GDR's position on homosexuality was much more strained. As Sieg describes it, the regime was drawn between, on the one hand, a call "for the rehabilitation of homosexuals as victims of the Nazi regime" because that would signify "a radical break with the Third Reich's misogynist and homophobic ideology and social practice, including that regime's persecution and eradication of sexual deviants," and on the other, the need to designate "them as 'enemies of the state'" because "the socialist society's adversarial relationship to the capitalist Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) determined the configuration of a socialist subject as heterosexual" (94).

but not seen [*sic*], as coming from the *other* side.²⁵

Therefore, all the way through, the problem with the Other's "homosexuality" has less to do with the specific identity of the enemy (which either happens to pertain or is inbuilt with a special link to sexual perversion), than with the enemy *per se* (i.e. some Other existence which is regarded as the negative mirroring of oneself), for this is exactly the place assigned to homosexuality by heteronormativity. And this homosexualization of the Other/Enemy only gets exasperated by the nationalization of the heteronormative subject as the situation becomes even more overdetermined by certain inbuilt make-ups of the modern nation. However, before that, it is useful to trace back to its historical precedents, for as Jonathan Dollimore puts it:

The mythology which [...] connects sexual deviation and political subversion is very old. It is typically inflected by other kinds of fears, especially religious and racial ones. [...] Such associations of sexual deviance and political threat have a long history sedimented into our language and culture. The term "buggery," for example, derives from the religious as well as sexual non-conformity of an eleventh-century Bulgarian sect which practiced the Manichean heresy and refused to propagate the species; the *OED* tells us that it was later applied to other heretics, to whom abominable practices were also ascribed. (236-37)

The last comment refers precisely to the confluences surrounding the overcharged figure of "sodomy/sodomite." Indeed Dollimore is coming to that in no time, but the best summary of the situation with the present polemic fully mind is provided by L. J. Moran in his analysis of the use of homosexuality for national security purposes. Despite his disclaimer that "[a]ny connection that is made between archaic incidents and a current conjunction is often problematic and at best tenuous," Moran nevertheless regards the present-day "association between homosexuality, character defect, and threat to national security" as having been "deployed periodically in different contexts over at least a 400-year period" (150-51).

²⁵ Epps 210-11. This brilliant passage appears in an article which critically dissects Spanish writer Juan Goytisolo's conflation, in his 1990 novel *Paisajes después de la batalla* [*Landscapes after the battle*], of homosexuality and communism in the "terrorist" figure of "Red Fags." For Goytisolo, idiosyncratically "they [homosexuality and communism] are bound to a form of terrorism that aims, symbolically speaking, not for disruption, fragmentation, and dispersion, but for such things as order, truth, integrity, identity, and collective action. Beneath the wild and crazy appearances of the Red Fags lies a dogmatic and uncompromising will to unity (workers of the world, queers of all colors, unite!) that is at odds with what is here depicted as the free, creative play of the imagination" (199).

The best demonstration of this is “the offence of sodomy”:

The sodomy/State connection [in Henry VIII’s England] was forged as a conjunction within Protestantism for an anti-Catholic politics. Furthermore, it is important to note that the use of sodomy for religious struggles did not emerge within the politics of the Protestant ascendancy in England. It is perhaps ironic that its deployment within this Protestant dynastic politics was an appropriation and modification of an association which had been forged and used in the strategies of the sacral empire of the Catholic Church. For example, it had been used in promoting and securing the Catholic empire against external invasion; the Islamic invaders were condemned as sodomites. From at least the 11th century it was deployed against those who sought to break away from the canon of the Catholic Church within Europe and thereby destabilise the Catholic empire; the Gnostics and Albigensians were not only condemned as heretics, but also as sodomites. [...] Within a politics of the Protestant ascendancy in England, the sodomy/heresy association was reinvested. [...] [I]n the course of this appropriation it gained a different inflection as buggery was made treason, and in doing so the sodomy/heresy/State conjunction was put to the service of a contemporary and future politics of the new Protestant state.²⁶

Of course Moran is right to insist on the huge distance between the pre-modern sodomy/state association and the post-World War II situation which is the real subject of his essay. Yet despite these drastic differences, the striking similarities between them prove a certain transhistorical consistency when it comes to the politicization of sexuality, which only gets exasperated by the nation’s modern constitution. First and foremost, the modern nation’s inherited hostility towards homosexuality is reinforced by its assignment as the prime apparatus for what Michel Foucault describes as the “bio-power” (140), by which he means the modern regime of disciplining the body and regulating the population, both to the effect of gaining optimal performance for capitalist development.²⁷ With this new regime of

26 Moran 152. For a more comprehensive discussion of the signification of “sodomy,” see Bray; Goldberg. A modern-day case of using this antiquated offence as political weapon can be seen in that of Anwar Ibrahim, who used to be the deputy to Malaysia’s Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad and wait to succeed him as the leader of the nation, but was suddenly jailed in 1998 and accused of, among other things, of “sodomy” with men.

27 Even though Foucault almost never mentions “the nation” in this theorization (this is a curious elision also noticed by Doris Sommer [35]), its agency is all too detectable, for

“bio-power” intent on reproducing a “healthy” population to enhance (national) competitiveness, homosexuality certainly would not fare too well in it. Concerned with the same transformation, another French thinker Etienne Balibar also notes the appearance of a

family policy of the state, which projects into the public sphere the new notion of population and the demographic techniques for measuring it, of the supervision of its health and morals, of its reproduction. The result is that the modern family circle is [...] the sphere in which the relations between individuals are immediately charged with a “civic” function and made possible by constant state assistance, beginning with relations between the sexes which are aligned to procreation. This is also what enables us to understand the *anarchistic* tone that sexually “deviant” behaviour easily takes on in modern national formations. (101; my emphasis)

Yet the national aversion to homosexuality, or in a simpler form, the *national homophobia* is much more than a technological must for population management. In my previous essay, I have thus theorized the tropology of homosexuality with regards to the nation:

If heterosexual love in fiction acts as the *naturalizing* mechanism that legitimates the post-monarchical nations, what figurative position could homosexuality—the prime embodiment of the “unnatural”—possibly fulfill in those postcolonial/national narratives except the ones that are the exact opposites of those represented by heterosexuality? Namely the trope for *negative associative behavior* and for the *Un-natural* in general. (416-17)

Therefore, the inverse positionality, or op-positionality, of the two in terms of

example in the following description of the “bio-power”: “This is the background that enables us to understand the importance assumed by sex as a political issue. [...] Sex was a means of access both to the life of the body and the life of the species. It was employed as a standard for the disciplines and as a basis for regulations. [...] But one also sees it becoming the theme of political operations, economic interventions (through incitements to or curbs on procreation), and ideological campaigns for raising standards of morality and responsibility: it was put forward as the index of a society’s strength, revealing of both its political energy and its biological vigor” (145-46). Incidentally, this may be regarded as the theoretical basis for George Mosse’s pioneering articulation between nationalism and respectability/sexuality, of which Mosse provides abundant instances but insufficient theoretical explanations.

associative (in the sense of imagination as well as that of human relation) politics is in effect more entrenched than we thought. This brings us to the affective dimension to the nation, for nation/alism itself is always already (hetero)eroticized. As Parker, Russo, Sommer, and Yaeger declare in their introduction to the significant collection of essays *Nationalisms and Sexualities*: “Whenever the power of the nation is invoked [...] we are more likely than not to find it couched as a *love of country*: an eroticized nationalism. The reverse is also true, for [...] this commerce between eros and nation can run in the other direction as well.”²⁸ And Parker et al. illustrate the latter with the illuminating instance of the US National Endowment for the Arts targeting homoeroticism as one of its “funding restrictions,” demonstrating that, as Jyoti Puri succinctly puts it, “nationalisms have sexualities” and they are unmistakably heterosexual (142). In an interesting article on the recent Scottish devolution and its connection to “our romantic desires and sexual relations” (241), Lynne Pearce deploys the even stronger “discourse of *desire itself*,” which she sees as “most inevitable when attempting to understand the enduring affiliations of people to their nations or homelands. Prevailing (Western) ideology decrees that such peoples love (and are expected to love) their countries with a passion which is comparable to romantic or sexual passion” (242-43).

Hence only one question remains, that is: why does the national object of aversion always tend to be articulated as “foreign,” as “coming from somewhere else,” as, namely, “un-American” or “un-African” *tout court*? The reason, I believe, lies in the obsession with *boundary*, and as a corollary, with *exclusion* that is ingrained in the very conceptualization of the nation—which, as many critics have already noticed, is in fact one of its defining characteristics. To cite one succinct exposition here:

Nationalism is a system of values and a code of honor that defines who

²⁸ Parker, Russo, Sommer, and Yaeger 1. Unsurprisingly it is again Benedict Anderson who first touches upon this connection between nation/alism and love in his classic *Imagined Communities* (though, according to Cindy Patton, the emphatic “affect argument” made in the first edition has been redirected and thus obscured in the now current second edition: see “Stealth Bombers” 216n14). Speaking of patriotism, Anderson says: “In an age when it is so common for progressive, cosmopolitan intellectuals (particularly in Europe?) to insist on the near-pathological character of nationalism, its roots in fear and hatred of the Other, and its affinities with racism, it is useful to remind ourselves that nations inspire love, and often profoundly self-sacrificing love” (141). However, he does not theorize much about where this “political love” comes from until a later article entitled “The Goodness of Nations,” where he enumerates “three interlinked locations of guaranteed national Goodness” as in “the unborn,” “the dead,” and “the living”—which obviously form a seamless *heterosexual* lineage.

is and is not a *real* American or German or Korean or Brazilian or Iranian. [...] The margins of nations—ethnic frontiers, gender frontiers, sexual frontiers, ethnosexual frontiers—are all locations where rules about citizenship and proper national demeanor are tested and contested. National symbolic boundaries, like all moral boundaries, are sites for the creation and enforcement of the rules of citizenship, the surveillance, apprehension, and punishment of national deviants or “traitors,” and the formation of revised or new definitions of loyalty to the nation. [...] Identifying “outsiders” in the nation is part of the process of designating “insiders” and “citizens,” and thus of defining the nation itself. (Nagel 146-47)

That is, to think like a nation is always to distinguish what it is and is not, and to constantly draw a self-circumscribing boundary by excluding everything abject outside.²⁹

No wonder national homophobia is often expressed in the form of *xenophobia*, especially at times of crisis, i.e. when the nation is threatened by “enemies”—such as the abovementioned Communist-Nazi struggle in the 1930s’ Europe and the Cold War confrontation two decades later.³⁰ And the many real incidents of “disloyalty”

²⁹ Which leads to the basic thesis of Lee Edelman’s often cited essay—“Tearrooms and Sympathy”—on Cold War anti-Communist homophobia, which claims that homosexuality poses a threat to the nation (and family) because “it is seen as enacting the destabilization of borders” (168). Without Edelman’s elaborate theorization, Kathryn Conrad, in her discussion of a similar issue in the case of Ireland, also opines: “Like gender, sexuality does not confine itself within the borders. Any identity category potentially troubles the national border, but homosexuality in particular threatens the stability of the narrative of Nation: the very instability and specific historical contingency of the definition of homosexuality makes the category more fluid than most, and thus brings into question the fixity and coherence of all identity categories” (125).

Actually there is also a possibility for a historicist explanation of the othering of homosexuality as foreign if the situation in point has colonial experience: in this case, “homosexuality” as a modern conceptualization would be regarded as an import by the colonizer, and colonization itself may be experienced by the colonized male as “castrating,” “feminizing,” or just “homosexualizing”—also an overdetermined situation that would only be reinforced by any literal acts there have been of colonial homo-sexploitation.

³⁰ Examples of this in fact abound and cannot be listed in full. But I would like to mention just one instance that happened in post-Suharto Indonesia, where, according to Saskia E. Wieringa’s highly informative research, the communist women’s organization *Gerwani*, despite its highly conservative gender/sexuality ideology, was accused of “promoting

in which homosexuals did betray their nation out of *pragmatic* considerations can only reconfirm and reinforce this overdetermined stereotypical association.³¹ With the general hostility towards homosexuals being an everyday reality, they are always already compelled to forsake their original nation and go on exile (i.e. to become an ex-patriate) in another of their own adoption. And it only gets worse in such dire times as national confrontation, when the intensified hostility and its exasperated consequences (in the form of scandal or even criminalization) can indeed be conveniently utilized by the enemy as an effective ploy to pressure, or to be more specific, blackmail the targeted homosexuals into cooperation. For instance, Karlinsky mentions that in post-Stalin USSR: “As they had done under Stalin, the Soviet political police still used homosexuals as informers and for recruiting foreign gay men for espionage. [... There were] instances where straight KGB agents were required to participate in gay sex for purposes of *entrapment*.”³² After the Cuban Revolution in the late 1950s, the US was doing the same; according to Arguelles and Rich: “The CIA targeted the homosexual intelligentsia and worked to persuade its members to defect, promising generous academic grants and publishing contracts.

lesbianism” (441) and thus banned, with its members even being massacred. The key, Wieringa thinks, lies in the ambience where “the ‘charge of sexual immorality was an extremely effective weapon for discrediting communist party organizers’ [... and] women’s political autonomy can be compared to women’s sexual autonomy” (453; Wieringa is quoting Gilmartin 224). A pattern—of homosexuality being used as weapon and trope—clearly emerges here, as has been traced in my previous essay and the present one.

- 31 An alternative line of argument, which has been explored earlier in the previous essay but is not adopted here, is to establish the propensity of homosexuality to submit itself to what I call “the allegorical economy” (Chu 417) and get translated into a whole series of negative things. As Moran theorizes, “It is within the terms of the iconic repertoire set up in the idea of the Männerstaat [“the state as an expression of manliness”: Mosse 43], that homosexual is produced through a particular chain of associations; the emotional, effeminate, weak, subversive, conspiratorial, rebellious, revolutionary, corrosive, dark, dangerous, sensuous, irrational, unstable, and corrupt. It is through the production and deployment of this specific regime of representation that homosexual is produced as a threat to the state, the nation, national security” (161). However, as I have said earlier, the specificity of these associations in fact remains unexplained in this “line of formalistic theorization” (Chu 415-16).
- 32 Karlinsky 362; my emphasis. An interesting hearsay of relevance here is that, in the McCarthy years, two Republican senators, Everett Dirksen and Kenneth Wherry, “claimed that, in 1945, Joseph Stalin had captured a global roster of homosexuals, compiled earlier by Adolf Hitler, which Moscow planned to use in its drive to conquer the world” (Geoffrey Smith 319).

The more cost-effective ploy of blackmail was also used, especially against those gays less willing to leave, in the hope that political anxiety would force victims into exile.”³³ Ironically enough, almost all nations mentioned here have fantasmatically accused their homosexual compatriots as being foreign agents, while it is they themselves who helped making this into a reality by recruiting homosexuals of the enemy nations through any means necessary.

The Homosexual (Im)Possibilities of Postcolonial Nations (with Quebec and Canada as Examples)

There are, however, cases in which the nation’s relationship to homosexuality seems not only less adverse, but positively predicative—i.e., extraordinarily enough, it looks even possible for homosexuality to stand as a vehicle of articulation for national identity. The prime example that has received the most analytical attention is Quebec and, in an ironic juxtaposition, Canada as a whole. Robert Schwartzwald, our main informant on this issue who is critically sophisticated and insightful, speaks of the appearance of a “discourse of decolonization” in the early years of Quebec’s Quiet Revolution that “gave new value to the metaphorical, sometimes allegorical, often sentimentalized conscription of homosexuality in Québec popular culture.”³⁴ Schwartzwald continues to give one of the most talked-about instances, a play written in *joual* (“the particular variety of street French or slang commonly used in Quebec”: Pigeon 27):

Michel Tremblay’s *Hosanna* (1972), for example, was embraced as powerful declaration of Québec’s right to “be itself.” When Hosanna (the character) removes her Elizabeth-Taylor-as-Cleopatra drag at the end of the play and, naked, receives her lover’s embrace, we are meant to understand that she has really abandoned a masquerade in order to draw nearer to the essence of her homosexual “truth.” Here, transvestism was legible as the “fantasy” of an alienated, oppressed national collectivity that needed proudly to acknowledge and assert its *spécificité*

33 Arguelles and Rich 451. For the homosexual situation in Cuba, see Note 19 above.

34 “‘Symbolic’ Homosexuality” 265. The so-called “Quiet Revolution” of Quebec was a period of rapid modernization and state formation that happened in the 1960s. Schwartzwald describes its *Zeitgeist* thus: “Determined to break with conservative nationalism, and the clerical and petit-bourgeois elites that espoused it, the new nationalists maintained their aim was to have Quebec *join* the world rather than turn in upon itself” (“From Authenticity” 503). For a succinct account, see Bill Marshall 46-52.

as a necessary prelude to taking its place among the universal community of nations.³⁵

Although this is a reading endorsed by the author himself, what is really interesting remains to be the cultural/political context that accepts this figuration of homosexuality as articulating Quebec's (problematic) nation identity.³⁶

A decade later, Leonard Cohen's 1966 novel *Beautiful Losers*, another Canadian literary classic with homosexual contents (between the Anglo-Canadian I-narrator and the French-Canadian F. character), also got readily interpreted by two eminent Canadian critics, Linda Hutcheon and Sylvia Söderlind, "as an allegory of 'the history and political destiny of the Canadian nation'"—without, as Peter Dickinson reminds us, seriously discussing "how same-sex desire, as presented in *Beautiful Losers*, both accedes to and resists this inscription, how, in other words, homosexuality is in/an excess of (not to mention, inaccessible to) the national narrative of self-identification."³⁷ And noticing "the remarkable variety of Canadian

35 This clearly reflects the play's historicity, as what lies behind this final act of homosexual authentication is of course the masculinization of gay culture in the 1970s. As Schwartzwald accurately expresses it through his personal remembrance: "an important aspect of that coming out as represented by Tremblay was its message that being gay didn't mean you had to be effeminate or a drag queen" ("From Authenticity" 500). From today's point of view (especially after the transgender movement), this is clearly done at the expense of transvestism and reeks misogyny. However, in a later, much publicized new production of the play in 1991, this aspect has been considerably revised: "In the new production, Hosanna removes neither her make-up nor her briefs in the closing moments, and her final line—"Chus t'un homme [I'm a man]"—resembles less an affirmation than an interrogation charged with ambivalence" (Schwartzwald, "From Authenticity" 501).

36 Tremblay's own endorsements seem to appear in many occasions. Just to cite two for reference here. First: "although *Hosanna* concerns two homosexuals ... it is really an allegory about Quebec. In the end they drop their poses and embrace their real identity ... [W]hen Hosanna kills Elizabeth Taylor and ... appears naked on stage and says he is a man[,] [s/he] kills all the ghosts around him as Quebec did" (qtd. in Dickinson 110; ellipses and interpolations by Dickinson). Second: "[Hosanna] always wanted to be a woman who always wanted to be an English actress in an American movie about an Egyptian myth in a movie shot in Spain. In a way, that is a typically Québécois problem. For the past 300 years we were not taught that we were a people, so we were dreaming about being somebody else instead of ourselves" (qtd. in Gilbert and Tompkins 263).

37 Dickinson 23; the quote within it comes from Hutcheon 28. However, as Dickinson describes it, Hutcheon's and Söderlind's readings should be situated as "part of the project of Canadian literary postmodernism [...] to render forever ambivalent the received narratives of nationhood," and this project is simply extended to those of sexuality

queer films” that have appeared since New Queer Cinema in the early 1990s, James Allan also wonders: “Is there some kind of cultural affinity between Canadian and queer subjects or positions, or is there a shared history of outsider status, of indefinable identity that makes Canadian film and queer subjects such frequent bedfellows?” (139). He answers this question with an affirmative optimism that seems to be shared by a lot of other critics (for example, Dickinson 37-38): “In fact, the clichés of Canadian identity—which is always uncertain, impossible to identify, existing only in opposition to other identities, primarily American—also resonate deeply with [... the] concept of queer identity. It seems very Canadian to be queer, and very queer to be Canadian” (Allan 144).

Although in the above Canada is discussed along with Quebec without much distinction, the latter does deserve special attention here because, as early as 1977, Quebec “became the first jurisdiction in North America to specifically outlaw discrimination based on sexual orientation by both public and private sectors [...] in its provincial Charter of Rights and Freedoms” (Stychin 90). And even more intriguingly, “this amendment to the Charter was introduced and passed by the then newly elected *nationalist* and separatist Parti Québécois (PQ) government.”³⁸ Hence not only does Carl Stychin arguably see in this case a way in which “sexuality has proven central to the construction of national identities” (90), but Schwartzwald also opportunely reminds us that “received ideas about the disciplinary and necessarily *exclusionary* aspects of nationalist ideology cannot be applied in unmediated fashion” (“Fear” 180; my emphasis)—both seem to contradict my general theorization of the op-positionality between the nation and homosexuality. However, I consider the case of Quebec less as amounting to a downright refutation than as belonging to a special category that has suggested itself only recently, as a result of the new complex interactions between what Patton calls “emergent democracies” and the gradual formation of *global* governance (“Stealth Bombers”). As this deserves a separate treatment (to which I will devote my efforts in another essay), suffice it to say that, in such mutually informed global/local (or in short *glocal*) cases as these, homosexuality, rather contrary to expectations, may instead serve the paradoxical function of “shoring up national projects, since increasingly some

without any “political commitment to interrogating normative assumptions about masculinity” (23). For a detailed reading of the novel, see Goldie, *Pink Snow* 92-113.

38 Stychin 90-91; my emphasis. For a less positive view on the lesbian and gay situation in Canada (including Quebec), see Kinsman. In fact, Stychin himself has provided a gruesome picture of what it was like right before the amendment (92-93). So what the 1977 amendment really represents is “to repudiate a history of discrimination as part of the process of creating a new, open, rights respecting, and inclusive society”—i.e. what

nations have sought to define themselves by publicly claiming particular versions of homosexuality rather than always by straightforwardly repudiating it.”³⁹

Yet is the case of Quebec (and Canada as well) really as optimistic as the above picture looks? Schwartzwald has alerted us to another, much more reactionary aspect of it:

One of the most salient features of modern intellectual (self-)representation in Québec turns out to be that the homophobic elements of its *learned* discourse on identity are largely inconsistent with both liberal legal discourse and popular attitudes. [...] In learned discourse, intellectuals determined to bring Québec “into” the world as a modern national community have been more apt to adopt the homophobic assignation of homosexuality as *arrested* development, and to rely upon this diagnosis to buttress explanations of Québec’s long, halting progress toward self-determination.⁴⁰

That is, from the heterosexist perspective of developmental psychologism embedded in this discourse, the Quebecois articulation of its national identity through the figure of homosexuality may just indicate its problematic status. Which would make the play *Hosanna* yield a totally different reading:

It is not difficult to see how the play’s construction of homosexual and national identity as adequate metaphorical substitutions for each other could seem scandalous to those nationalist ideologues who saw independence as the goal in a developmental narrative deployed around a trope of infantilism and maturity. Such a framework becomes easily inflected by the homophobic assignation of homosexuality as *arrested* development. More pertinent, though, is the seeming paradox that Hosanna’s rapprochement with his homosexual essence permanently marginalizes him as a sexual minority even as it authenticates him. To

Stychin acutely calls “a new nationalist founding myth” (91).

39 Martin 18-19. One anonymous reader of this essay is quick to point out the similarities between Quebec and Taiwan, which I totally agree and plan to discuss more thoroughly elsewhere. In fact, the essays from which I take Patton’s and Fran Martin’s quotes are both to do with Taiwan’s *tongzhi* movement as their subject. For a preliminary discussion about the status of homosexuality in nations of “emergent democracies,” see Binnie 20-26, 28-30.

40 “‘Symbolic’ Homosexuality” 266-67. For a detailed critique of three such theorists (Jacques Lavigne, Gilles Thérien, and Jean Larose), see 270-89; for that of certain imaginary expressions of this discourse, see Schwartzwald, “Fear.”

the extent that it was precisely the intolerable minoritizing dynamic of Quebec's relation to Canada that fueled a good part of the nationalist argument, it is not surprising that many for whom a minority status was synonymous with abnormality chose not to embrace a metaphorical relation that seemed to cast Quebec as a permanently countercultural society, as stabilized in its radical difference to the rest of anglophone North America as homosexuals seem to be in relation to a putatively heterosexual majority. (Schwartzwald, "From Authenticity" 504-05).

Not only this, in fact Quebec's "colonial" relationship to the English Canada has also impelled a homophobic articulation of colonization as castration, feminization, or downright homosexualization (see the latter half of Note 29 above)—so much so that anyone who support the Canadian Confederation are mocked as *fédérastes* (a combination of "federal(ist)" and "pederast"), i.e. "the victims" as well as "the corrupted perpetrators of what is figured as a permanent violation by a salacious 'fully grown' Canada against the waifish, innocent Québec" (Schwartzwald, "Fear" 179). Similarly, when noticing the peculiar phenomenon that "Canadian cinema is [...] curiously full of images of the nude male body," Lee Parpart also attributes it to "the effect of a particular version of 'colonial masculinity' that has been part of the discourse of nationhood in Canada for many years," which is expressed as "a willingness to reveal the nude male body in contexts that either tend to interrogate phallic power or express anxiety about its loss."⁴¹ This can never be good for homosexuals in their relation to the nation.

Coda

So the overall op-positionality between the two still stands. And this explains why Salman Rushdie, in his postcolonial familial-national narrative *The Moor's Last Sigh*, chooses a homosexual (Aires da Gama, the great-uncle of the narrator "Moor") to stand for the maternal, anti-independent side of the great Indian family, in contrast to the paternal side, represented by his heterosexual brother (and the narrator's grandfather) Camoens, who is a vehement nationalist—despite the narrator's positive view on Aires's homosexuality. Speaking of the family legend about his great-uncle Aires's "gowned adventure"—he notoriously fled from his wife on the

41 Parpart 169, 173; my emphasis. Another case that strikes as very similar to Quebec/Canada in its still colonized status and thus its ambivalent facilitation as well as stigmatization of a homosexualized national identity is Puerto Rico; for a discussion along this problematic, see Cruz-Malavé.

wedding night and, in his bride's wedding dress, ran away with a young man—Moor says: “in the image of his queenliness, where many back home (and not only back home) would see degradation, I see his courage, his capacity, yes, for glory” (13-14). Nevertheless, when it comes to the nation, the homosexual's belonging can only retreat to where it is supposed to be, i.e. the opposite of the heterosexual: “Aires, defying his father, took his mother's side; Epifania and he were for England, God, philistinism, the old ways, a quiet life. [...] It was in the younger boy, Camoens, that Francisco [their father] found his ally, inculcating in him the virtues of nationalism, reason, art, innovation, and above all, in those days, of protest” (18-19). Indeed, given that colonization is figured as castration/sodomization, what could better symbolize the willing colonized than the effeminate homosexual, who even refuses to be a man when granted the opportunity?

Situated against this signification background, it would be nothing but difficult, tortuous, and implausible—i.e. *unnatural*, in a word—for any national narratives to seek to assimilate the homosexual in a positive way. One illuminating instance can be found in Filipino American writer Jessica Hagedorn's novel *Dogeaters*. With its focus set on the Philippines in the Marcos's years (up to 1986) when the revolutionary power is sizzling all over, this national narrative is considered by many critics to be progressive because it unusually “focuses upon female desires and homosexuality.”⁴² That is, the novel has as its protagonists not only women (straight as well as lesbian) but a gay rent boy named Joey, most all of whom join the nation-building process at the end by becoming anti-government guerrilla fighters. While it seems “natural” for the female protagonist Daisy Avila, the daughter of an opposition senator, to devote herself to the cause after her father was killed and herself arrested and tortured, it is never so readily “consequential” for the homosexual Joey. Serving mainly Western customers and himself being half African-American, Joey no doubt embodies the neocolonial homo-sexploitation from which he must get out in order to achieve national “awakening.”⁴³ However, interestingly Joey becomes what Rachel Lee sees as the novel's “*gay nationalist* [...] hero” (101) only (this point has been overlooked by most critics) by *deus ex*

42 Lee 82. Rachel C. Lee explains: “for Hagedorn, ‘revolutionary consciousness’ in a postcolonial context involves not only nationalist but also feminist and gay awakening” (74). Viet Thanh Nguyen goes even further in arguing that the author “by placing the queer body at the center of the anti-dictatorial movement, transform[s] that movement into a sexual revolution that displaces the importance of heterosexual identity and marriage found in many constructions of nationalist revolution” (126).

43 For a reading of the novel's revolutionary movement as “awakening”—both literal and metaphorical—for its main characters, see Nguyen 137. The term is also used by Lee (see last note).

machina, i.e. through a series of accidents which irresistibly compel and unwittingly lead him to the guerrilla group, from which he simply has no way of returning to his former way of life.

He first accidentally witnesses the assassination of the opposition Senator Avila, then he runs away in panic, eventually seeking help from his old friend Boy-Boy, who arranges his pick-up by the guerrillas without really informing him in advance. In other words, Joey's joining the guerrilla is never a voluntary act derived from due consciousness-raising about his own exploited status but a willful narrative act of authorial command.⁴⁴ In fact, Lee admits: "Both plots [of the homosexual characters Joey and Rio] overlook the narration of these characters' sexual identities and therefore cannot begin to account for the subtleties, whereby queer subjectivity 'goes underground' when Joey escapes to the hills and lesbian desire—because it is attached to and allegorized by transnational feminist subjectivity—cannot 'out' itself in a nationalist context" (103). Apparently the nation still cannot reclaim homosexuality in a gesture as simple as this, for the inbuilt antagonism between the two requires much more for a convincing reconciliation, especially on the part of the nation.⁴⁵

44 As to Rio Gonzaga, another homosexual (or more specifically, lesbian) character in the novel, Lee has made some interesting point: "Hagedorn negotiates with the (nationalist) structures of violence by crafting a *feminist and heterosexual nationalist* protagonist and by displacing 'queer' radicalness onto the *gay nationalist* character Joey, rather than by wholly embodying it in her transnational female subject, Rio" (101). This displacement, according to Lee, is due to "the dilemma of defining a subversive practice for the Third World woman whose conditions of necessity (her abjectest of abject identities) take her out of 'radical' consideration. That is, female subjects moving from necessity to extravagance are not considered to be making a 'radical' choice but are considered passive objects moving by constraining circumstances."

45 Another relevant text that may come to mind here is Timothy Mo's *The Redundancy of Courage*, whose homosexual protagonist also gets involved in the nationalist struggle mainly by accident and remains more or less an outsider in it; for a brief analysis from this point of view, see Chu 407-11.

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同志叛國？

同性戀 vs. 國家之對立性析論

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摘 要

這篇論文一開始先提出冷戰時期美國政界視同性戀者為共產黨的現象，隨即指出類似的指控其實也發生在一九三〇年代歐洲共產主義 / 社會主義與納粹法西斯的鬥爭之中（前者當時亦攻擊後者為同性戀），因此在同性戀與這兩種意識形態之間應該並不存在任何本質上的關聯，而毋寧是同一個「將敵人視為性相它者」的政略運用。本文試圖解釋這種政略運用，以理論化同志與國家之間的對立性。然而，兩者的關係最近又似乎有一些正面的例子（譬如魁北克與加拿大），因此本文也加以分析，以解決與上述說法的衝突。同時在整個論述過程中，均穿插虛構文本，以為理論分析之印證說明，這些文本包括：《蜘蛛女之吻》、《草莓與巧克力》、《和散拿》、《摩爾的最後嘆息》，以及《咬狗族》。

關鍵詞：共產主義 / 社會主義 納粹 / 法西斯 敵人 拉丁美洲 魁北克 / 加拿大

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