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YugoQueer: Technologies of Spatialization, Temporalization and Universalization in Discursive Formation of Sexuality from the Late 19th Century until Today

Abstract: The aim of this paper is twofold: on the one hand I wish to venture a hypothesis of three discursive formations in the production of queer sexualities spanning the period from the late 19th century until the beginning of the 21st century, and on the other to offer a systematic overview of the literature on queer sexualities in order to gain an insight about what has been done and what needs to be done in the field of queer studies and queer theory in relation to and in a dialogue with the field of Yugoslav studies. The ultimate aim is to demonstrate that what is thought to be an ahistorical given is anything but, that it is a complex product of a multiplicity of forces shaped through technologies of spatialization, temporalization and universalization. Or, in other words, that the current state of affairs can and should be changed through a genealogy of the present.

Keywords: Yugoslavia, queer, sexuality, discourse, spatialization, temporalization, universalization

Introduction

Michel Foucault defines discursive formation in the following way:

Whenever one can describe, between a number of statements, such a system of dispersion, whenever, between objects, types of statement, concepts, or thematic choices, one can define a regularity (an order, correlations, positions and functionings, transformations), we will say, for the sake of convenience, that we are dealing with a discursive formation – thus avoiding words that are already overlaid with conditions and consequences, and in any case inadequate to the task of designating such a dispersion, such as ‘science’, ‘ideology’, ‘theory’, or ‘domain of objectivity’.¹

¹ Michel Foucault, The Archeology of Knowledge (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 41–42.

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Foucault chooses the term *discursive formation* instead of *group* or some similar term in order to stress the importance of differences compared to the similarities which unify groups. Such importance of differences for discursive formations does not, however, exclude regularities, which Foucault calls “rules of formation”:

> The conditions to which the elements of this division (objects, mode of statement, concepts, thematic choices) are subjected we shall call the *rules of formation*. The rules of formation are conditions of existence (but also of coexistence, maintenance, modification, and disappearance) in a given discursive division.²

Following Foucault’s insights, I locate three discursive formations that at the same time mark decisive breaks in the production of queer sexualities, while keeping to certain regularities which allow one to mark them as distinctive discourses. The first discursive formation is defined by the early sexologists’ works at the end of 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, as well as legislation based on German framework from the same time. The second is marked by the end of Second World War and the foundation of socialist Yugoslavia. The third discursive formation can be dated to the 1990s and introduction of (neo)liberal reforms, especially after the beginning of 21st century. Each of these formations carries a certain *novum* in conditions of existence of what we call queer sexualities today, while at the same time other layers of discursive formations have longer durations, complicating the simplifying picture of historical continuity and discontinuity. Considering that the issue is complex and warrants a book-length study, I will offer just a brief outline of the argument in the following pages.

**Spatialization: Early Sexology and the Birth of (Homo)Sexuality**

Magnus Hirschfeld, a famous German sexologist and the founder of Wissenschaftlich-humanitäre Komitee as well as the editor of *Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen*, wrote the following in his 1914 *magnum opus* *Die Homosexualitat des Mannes und des Weibes*:

> About same-sex proclivities of Montenegrins, Dalmatians and Serbs, to whom Albanians, their neighbors, are similar in custom and clothes – we know relatively little. In Belgrade, I was surprised by the relatively rich offer of Serbian soldiers for homosexual acts. Also, it is worth noting how often among Serbian students in Pest, Vienna, Berlin and Paris homosexuals are found; one particularly infamous case was a Serb Spaso

² Ibid, 42.
Kragujević, who was severely sentenced in Budapest because he tried to strangle homosexuals he shared the bed with in Berlin and Vienna. In folk songs in Sarajevo there are mentions of homosexuality here and there. In Belgrade, a society which consisted solely of men was discovered a few years ago, one half of which was ‘powdered and made up’ and wore female dresses. Arrested members admitted that there are other secret clubs of that kind in Belgrade, whose members are made not only of civilians but officers as well.  

Not much is known even today about the period as it remains heavily under-researched in relation to anything queer, but looking at what has been published in that period a certain discursive formation begins to take shape.

A quick over-view of the digital catalogue of the National Library of Serbia reveals that the period before the Second World War was full of rich publishing activity when it comes to the literature concerning sexuality and sexual life, especially with literature translated from German. There are only four pamphlet-long manuscripts written in Serbian by Serbs in this period – one dating back as far as 1890 titled Kako naš đak umire. 1, Onanizam [How Our Student Dies. 1, Onanism] by Đoka Jovanović 18 pages long and reprinted in 1922 as Kako naš dak umire: poučno za dake i roditelje: preštampano U korist invalida [How Our Student Dies: for Students and Parents: Reprinted for Invalids], Seksalna higijena [Sexual Hygiene] by Laza Popović published in 1905 52 pages long, Polni život i njegove posledice [Sexual Life and its Consequences] by Milorad Savićević in 1919 36 pages long, and the last and the longest Žena-pol žena-čovek [Woman-Sex Woman-Human] by Aleksandar Kostić from 1936 which is 511 pages long.  

On the other hand, literature in translation from German included titles such as Iwan Bloch’s Das Sexualleben unserer Zeit in seinen Beziehungen zur modernen Kultur (orig. 1907) published in seven tomes in Belgrade during the 1920s as Sekusalni život našeg doba in edition called the Sexual Library, Frei Liebe by the same author in 1924 as Slobodna ljubav (83 pages) in special edition of the publishing house Napredak (Progress) named the Library for the Sexual Question, continuing with Das Versehen der Frauen in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart und die Anschauungen der Aerzte,
Naturforscher und Philosophen darüber (orig. 1899) in 1925 as Seksalni život našega doba: psihičko-seksualne razlike i žensko pitanje, sa dodatkom o polnom senzibilitetu (osećajnosti) žene (34 pages),\(^{11}\) and Die Prostitution (orig. 1912) as Prostitucija in 1925 (92 pages).\(^{12}\) Iwan Bloch is known as the first sexologist, and most importantly for the topic of this paper, he offered a theory of congenital homosexuality which he contrasted to “pseudo-homosexuality” as a learned cultural product.\(^{13}\) Furthermore, translations included a title by Havelock Ellis, a famous British sexologist,\(^{14}\) such as Ljubavna veština published in 1927 in Belgrade (104 pages),\(^{15}\) and several titles by Richard von Krafft-Ebing\(^{16}\) including Nervosität und neurasthenische Zustände (orig. 1895) as O bolesnim i zdravim nervima in 1903 (65 pages),\(^{17}\) O polnom prohtevu: (fiziološki, psihološki i biološki pojmovi) in 1927 (90 pages),\(^{18}\) and Sadizam: (sudsko-medicinska studija) in 1928 (254 pages).\(^{19}\) Krafft-Ebing’s theory of homosexuality was based on biology as well, as he claimed that the origins lie in prenatal period which influenced later brain development. There was a translation of Otto Weininger’s Misli o polnom problemu published in 1924 and reprinted in 1929 (80/63 pages),\(^{20}\) which is most probably a selection from Geschlect un Charakter (1903) in which he claims that human beings contain both male and female substance, that is a basic bisexuality.\(^{21}\) Complete manuscript was translated in 1938.\(^{22}\)

Juridical practice was under the German influence as well, and much before the flurry of publishing activity. As Vladimir Jovanović shows, Serbian Penal Code explicitly dealing with homosexuality was introduced in 1860 and was a derivative of Prussian Penal Code.\(^{23}\) Parts of Serbian Penal Code that deal with “sins against nature” were literal translation of those particular parts of the Prussian Penal Code. Jovanović further notes that “domestic experts in the field of medicine, schooled mainly in Vienna, were key vectors in transmission of current European trends, especially

\(^{11}\) Ivan Bloh, Seksualni život našega doba: psihičko-seksualne razlike i žensko pitanje, sa dodatkom o polnom senzibilitetu (osećajnosti) žene (Beograd: Štamparija ‘Tucović’, Ž. Madarević i Drug, 1925).

\(^{12}\) Ivan Bloh, Prostitucija (Beograd: Izdavačka knjižarnica Napredak, 1925).


\(^{15}\) Hevlok Elis, Ljubavna veština (Beograd: Napredak, 1927).


\(^{17}\) Rihard fon Krafft-Ebing, O bolesnim i zdravim nervima (Beograd: Štamparija S. Horovica, 1903).

\(^{18}\) Rihard fon Krafft-Ebing, O polnom prohtevu: (fiziološki, psihološki i biološki pojmovi) (Beograd: Napredak, 1927).

\(^{19}\) Rihard fon Krafft-Ebing, Sadizam: (sudsko-medicinska studija) (Beograd: Napredak, 1928).

\(^{20}\) Oto Vajninger, Misli o polnom problemu (Beograd: Štamparija Prosveta A. D. – Horovic i Dimić, 1924, Napredak, 1929).


\(^{22}\) Oto Vajninger, Pol i karakter: načelno istraživanje (Beograd: Geca Kon, 1938).

when it comes to homosexuality,” and together with the literature in translation I analyzed above it leads to the conclusion that construction of Serbian homosexuality was heavily influenced by German scholarship, juridical practice and sexology in the late 19th and at the beginning of 20th century. Hence, one can claim that homosexual becomes a particular species in Serbia as well as in Europe, as Foucault claimed. A step in that direction was an attempt to reform the Penal Law just before World War I, where “according to §251 only those cases which go beyond the classical homosexual relation, those who lead astray and hurt the under aged, would be persecuted”, which reflects the same movement in German-speaking territories where sexologists fought to repeal Paragraph 175. World War I prevented the reform, but the category of the homosexual or the pederast remained a particular means of differentiation within the human species, as Svetozar Pešić shows in his book on forensic medicine for doctors and lawmakers from 1921 claiming that “it is confirmed that inverted sexual feeling and unnatural sexual instinct indeed exist from the birth.”

The period from the end of 19th century until the end of World War II was marked by the internal differentiation and spatialization of the human through biopolitics. What I mean by this is that certain categories of the human were produced through what Foucault calls individual anatomo-politics and biopolitics of the population. Namely, the biopolitical horizon of the 19th and a significant portion of the 20th century was marked by production of the norm for the purposes of (re)production of population, and thus by what was produced as abnormal. Internal differentiation produced the human through sex, gender, sexuality and race as either female or male (for example, hermaphrodites as the abnormal), man and woman (non-binary genders as the abnormal), heterosexual (homosexual as the abnormal), white (racially different as less-than-human, racially mixed as abnormal), etc. The main technology for internal differentiation was spatialization – panoptic distribution of power through space, which as a consequence had normalization of a single image of the human while every other form of life was ontologically essentialized, epistemically pathologized and socially marginalized. This is the reason we are still talking today about public space as being predominantly heterosexual space, that is not being a ‘neutral’ space. The public space is deeply marked by the strategies of spatialization, which produce heterosexuality as the norm, while non-heterosexual sexualities and

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24 Ibid, 53.

25 Although one has to be careful to note specificities of the Serbian context considering that Serbia was under Ottoman rule for a few centuries. Ottoman rule also influenced constructions of sexual and gender categories, and in this particular case same-sex sexual acts were considered “Turkish vice” in a move to secure Serbian national identity. Cf. ibid, 45–47; Michel Foucault, The Will to Knowledge; History of Sexuality Volume 1 (London, Penguin, 1998).


27 Ibid, 42, emphasis mine.

non-binary genders are erased from the public view and silenced in public space relegating them to the private sphere.\textsuperscript{29}

\textbf{Temporalization: Self-Governing Socialism and the Horizon of (Repro)Futurity}

The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) was formed after the end of World War II, and it marks the formation of the second discursive strategy in the production of queer sexualities. Self-governing socialism was introduced in 1950, after Josip Broz Tito’s famous ‘no’ to Stalin and the USSR’s form of government. As a critique of the Stalinist version of socialism, a self-governing form was based on debureaucratization, democratization and decentralization, with workers’ councils as governing bodies in every cooperative. According to Vranicki, self-governing socialism is a permanent revolution, that is, self-governing “is not one of the paths of socialism’s development but its essence. That is the reason why socialism cannot be built, because it is not a closed system, but an open, transitional period”.\textsuperscript{30} Moreover, “the higher form of self-governing development of contemporary society, and thus Yugoslav, is in actualization of self-governing organization of working class together with other self-governing structures of society – from basic production self-governing units to the highest spheres of governing the society”.\textsuperscript{31} Self-governing socialism was a utopian project that never fully actualized, even although Yugoslav states had it as a form of government since the beginning of the 1950s. In other words, the form of self-governing socialism that was conceptualized by Vranicki was only a passing form of what is to come in the future through the process of permanent revolutionizing the people toward the classless society.\textsuperscript{32}

Within this framework and as far as juridical practice is concerned, queer sexualities were first criminalized as “crime against nature” in 1951, while in 1977 this particular paragraph of Penal Code was abolished (although only in Slovenia, Croatia, Montenegro and Vojvodina).\textsuperscript{33} Medicine and popular medical and sexological discourse was “functioning as synecdoche for global sexual modernity, and not at all as endemic phenomenon which would be defined by Yugo-socialist ideological


\textsuperscript{30} Predrag Vranicki, Samoupravljanje kao permanentna revolucija (Zagreb, Centar za kulturnu djelatnost, 1985), 8, emphasis mine.

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid, emphasis mine.


**differenta specifica**, claims Jovanović. Moreover, popular sexological works consisted of multiple discourses based on earlier research, even from the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, as noted previously, including the works of contemporary European and other foreign, mostly Western, authors. However, as far as cultural production goes, there is very little of either direct or full representation of queerness, and even less of works done by queers for queers. According to Jovanović, the first film that presented an unambiguously coded homosexual character is Fedor Hanžeković’s *Bakonja fra Brne*, released in 1951. Such representations were most present in the Black Wave films from the 1960s and early 1970s – Živojin Pavlović’s *Budenje pacova* from 1967, Ljubiša Kozomara and Gordana Mihić’s *Vrane* from 1969, for example – but even there homosexual characters represent only a very small and episodic part of a marginalized group of characters. Films from the 1970s and, especially, the 1980s which include representations of queers are usually comedies where homosexual characters are mostly used for comedic relief.

On the other hand, the first gay and lesbian film festival in Yugoslavia, and apparently in the whole of Europe, called Magnus was organized in Slovenia in 1984. Much was happening in the 1980s in Ljubljana, and partially in Zagreb and Belgrade as the largest cities in Yugoslavia. According to Željko Serdarević, talking about the Zagreb scene in an interview with Carol Radziszewski:

> a couple of individuals shaped the Zeitgeist, bringing gay culture into the mainstream through a kind of soft media activism […] *Start* also published important writing on gay culture. Cvitan interviewed activists like Guy Hocquenghem, and personalities like *Querelle* star Brad Davis (who insisted on doing the interview in the hotel sauna), and wrote informative pieces on the AIDS crisis.

Serdarević continues the interview discussing Slovenia, which had a considerable queer underground scene during the 1980s, mentioning *Viks* magazine, the first gay magazine in Yugoslavia, connecting it to the whole cultural climate that brought forth Neue Slowenische Kunst and Slovenia’s independence in early 1990s.

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In conclusion, the period following World War II was marked by the technology of temporalization and the utopian horizon of futurity produced through the technologies of temporalization. What I mean by the term temporalization includes the ‘straight line’ as described by Ahmed\(^{40}\) – following the line of the good life by reaching certain milestones such as going through various levels of education, securing a job, marrying, having children, retiring, dying – but also it points to the wider strategy of governing the biopolitical body of the population. Namely, it points to the production of certain horizon of futurity that guarantees the reproduction on the ontico-ontological level through the figure of New Man (disalienated, liberated, classless man), which can be read as the Child in Edelman’s sense of the term. What Edelman means by the figure of the Child is the heteronormative horizon of organization of politics and society in general which is based on the future and, especially, on securing the reproduction in the future. Such horizon based on reproductive futurism:

impose[s] an ideological limit on political discourse as such, preserving in the process the absolute privilege of heteronormativity by rendering unthinkable, by casting outside the political domain, the possibility of a queer resistance to this organizing principle of communal relations.\(^{41}\)

The ideology of self-governing socialism of Yugoslavia was founded on the conception of temporality that was based on (repro)future, and as such it occluded those who did not want or refused to replicate such a form of life. As I have shown, queer art and cultural production clearly appeared only when the self-governing socialist ontico-ontological structure was called into question during the 1980s.

**Universalization: Towards the (Neo)Liberal Human of Universal Rights**

Homosexuality was decriminalized in some parts of the SFRY in 1976, except in Serbia, Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was finally decriminalized in Serbia in 1994 (in Macedonia in 1996; Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1991), but the period of the 1990s was marked by several wars which left their mark on all former Yugoslav republics. Specifically in Serbia, the period under Milošević’s regime was marked by anti-war and NGO activity focused on creating an opposition scene in both cultural and political aspects. During the war years, queer cultural production was mostly enacted within the anti-war and feminist frameworks, becoming visible as queer only in late 1990s and at the beginning of 21st century. The alternative cultural and artistic scene during the 1990s was deeply influenced by the activities of non-governmental


sector funded by the West, and in such a way that Šuvaković coined the term “Soros Realism” to depict the state of affairs during that time.\footnote{Miško Šuvaković, “Ideologija izložbe: o ideologijama Manifeste,” http://www.ljudmila.org/scca/platforma3/suvakovic.htm, accessed May 30, 2017.}

I would argue that it was not only the alternative artistic and cultural scene that was shaped by the Western models, but LGBT activism as well,\footnote{For more on activism in Serbia and Croatia cf. Bojan Bilić and Sanja Kajinić, eds., Intersectionality and LGBT Activist Politics: Multiple Others in Croatia and Serbia (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).} leading to the introduction and acceptance of the Western model of what queer desire, queer sexualities and LGBT identities mean and how they are supposed to be lived in the early 21\textsuperscript{st} century. Such model, present in all former Yugoslav republics, is based on the universal human rights wedded to the (neo)liberal market economy.\footnote{For more on issues of universal human rights and LGBT activism in global perspective cf. Kelly Kollman and Matthew Waites, “The global politics of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender human rights: an introduction,” Contemporary Politics 15, 1 (2009): 1–17. For more on relations between the NGOs, gender and sexual politics and neoliberalism cf. Victoria Bernal and Inderpal Grewal eds., Theorizing NGOs: States, Feminisms, and Neoliberalism (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2014). On forms of capitalism after socialism cf. Dorothee Bohle and Béla Greskovits, Capitalist Diversity on Europe’s Periphery (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2012).} The universal human rights discourse was uncritically accepted without paying attention to local specificities by most LGBT activist groups, eliminating the possibility of creating different ways of sociality and being. Namely, instead of the queer struggle for revolutionizing society,\footnote{For one among many approaches to revolutionary queer desire cf. Guy Hocquenghem, Le désir homosexuel (Paris: Fayard, 2000).} LGBT activism based on the discourse of universal human rights insists on legislative procedures devoid of insight into broader social issues. That lack of insight into broader social issues is what makes the LGBT activism based on universal human rights wedded to the (neo)liberal market economy. To be precise, it is exactly their lack of interest in other social issues than human rights that makes them blind to more explicit and deeper social engagement. Within that framework, freedom as the basic human right is also a freedom to participate in the (neo)liberal market economy, or freedom of the (neo)liberal market economy, and in that sense queers become one group among multitudes of consumers, especially during the first decades of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century.\footnote{Consumer aspect of being queer in Serbia at the beginning of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century is tightly related to participating in clubbing scene and other aspects of culture industries such as occasional LGBT art exhibitions, LGBT film festivals, and other ways of production of symbolic and real capital.}

Implosion of space and time in the age of contemporaneity and the technology of universalization marked the period after the fall of Berlin Wall and the violent dissolution of socialist Yugoslavia. On the one hand, space and time imploded under the strain of (neo)liberalization, globalization and digitalization although certain elements of spatialization and temporalization were retained in relation to the governing of the population. On the other hand, a certain image of the human as the subject of universal human rights appeared and quickly spread across the globe and especially...
across the republics of former Yugoslavia. Universalization through participation in universal human rights and the (neo)liberal market economy is what guarantees social relations between queers, who are differentially defined by their race, class, desire and gender in the conditions of contemporaneity and the changing experiences of space and time.

**Conclusion**

The main purpose of this paper was to describe three discursive formations of Yugoqueer sexualities from the late 19th century to today. I have shown that there are three main technologies in creation of such discursive formations, namely spatialization, temporalization and universalization. As such, these establish the scene for **diagrammatization**47 of discursive production of sexualities and potentialities for becoming-otherwise. What I mean by diagrammatization and becoming-otherwise is that there opens up a possibility for different politics and for the production of different forms of life once all the strata and planes are mapped. Since I have demonstrated that technologies of spatialization, temporalization and universalization create specific space, time and image of the human, one can use this diagram to invent new forms of becoming that would attempt to complicate the current state of affairs. This is also where the potentiality of changing the society lies when it comes to the studying of production of sexualities. It is not only important to see how ‘minorities’ are produced, but also how to change the society in general through the insight into how forms of life can become-otherwise than they are in the current state of affairs.

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Article received: May 5, 2017
Article accepted: May 13, 2017
Original scholarly paper