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# Identitarian Gays and Threatening Queers, Or: How the Far Right Constructs New Chains of Equivalence<sup>1</sup>

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Patrick Wielowiejski

When it comes to gender and sexuality, the political left today is associated with the fight for minority rights and anti-discrimination. At the same time, those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans\* are generally thought to lean to the left politically. This connection – whether real or imagined – is so strong that it is often perceived to be a contradiction, or a sign of downright self-hatred, when LGBT people identify with the right wing, especially with the far right. However, there is nothing inherent about being homosexual, bisexual, or trans\* that makes LGBT people more prone to the left. In fact, the association (at least discursively) of sexual and gender minorities with the left is the result of decades of political struggle. In their seminal book, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe described it as crucial for the left to recognize that the workers' movement and what were then called the “new social movements,” such as the civil rights movement or environmentalism, were fighting for a common cause and against a common political antagonist. They called this strategy of constructing a common cause and a common opponent the articulation of a “chain of equivalence” (Laclau/Mouffe 2001 [1985]: xviii). Laclau and Mouffe were acutely aware that the field of social identities was a field of floating signifiers, and that fixity was never a given but always the result of a political practice: There was no necessary connection between the new social movements and progressive socialist ideals. In order to become hegemonic, then, the left needed to actively articulate what they called a chain of equivalence between the various social movements.

In this article, I would like to argue that it is within the political right today where we can find political practices that can be interpreted as an attempt to articulate a new chain of equivalence. In particular, I am interested in how some far-right actors construct a common cause between sexual and gender minorities

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1 Parts of this article were translated from an article published earlier in *Feministische Studien* (Wielowiejski 2018). I would like to thank Gabriele Dietze and Agnieszka Pasieka for their insightful comments.

on the one hand, and conservative nationalists on the other.<sup>2</sup> This connection is anything but self-evident: After all, for traditional nationalists, homosexuals are viewed as potentially disloyal because they are suspected to undermine the patriarchal order and the central project of reproducing the nation (Nagel 2003: 163-164). But against the backdrop of a society in which “gay-friendliness” counts as a marker of modernity and “homophobia” as a label of backwardness, the far right, too, needs to find ways to counter its image as homophobic. Notions like “contradiction” or “self-hatred,” however, assume that certain political identities are fixed once and for all: that gay people *must necessarily* be left-wing or deluded. Or, for that matter, that the right wing must be homophobic or lying. By engaging with the ethnographic material I have gathered during two years of fieldwork in the right-wing populist German *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD), I will show how right-wing actors try to construct themselves as “identitarians” who are gay-friendly and in opposition to a political enemy they call the “liberal globalist elites”; who appear to be gay-friendly on the surface, but who essentially work to strip people of their identities. Thus, homosexuality becomes acceptable only *as a stable, unitary, and clear-cut identity*. Everything that questions, mixes, or hybridizes notions of identity – be it a politics of open borders or a queering of sex and gender – remains problematic in the eyes of the far right. This far-right problematization of mixture and hybridity does not mean that heterogeneity is rejected per se. In these discourses, a certain degree of heterogeneity can be accepted as an element of modern societies. What is rejected is the liberal notion of equality; Others are tolerated as long as they remain Other.

In what follows, I will shed light on two different discursive strands. The first one deals with the claim that the far right is not against homosexuals, but rather against “/g/ender”<sup>3</sup> – that is, against the purported dissolution of sexual and gender identities. The second one argues that “Islamization” is a specific threat to homosexuals, and, therefore, that “protecting” German cultural identity from Islam is tantamount to protecting gays. In the conclusion, I will recapitulate my argument and discuss whether or not these new chains of equivalence can be successful.

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2 This article develops its narrative mainly from ethnographic material, and refrains from a lengthy discussion of the theory used. For an analysis of such partial openings in the equivalential chain that engages more thoroughly with Laclau’s work, cp. Kim 2017.

3 By defamiliarizing the spelling of the word, I wish to indicate that the term /g/ender, as is used in these circles, has developed a life of its own: It does not have much to do with the term *gender* anymore, as it is used in gender studies. I believe that /g/ender is not simply a wrong interpretation of the analytical term *gender*, but rather a re-articulation aimed at vilifying the political opponent and influencing the discourse. This conceptual difference becomes visible through the alternative spelling, but also audible: Most of my informants pronounce the word with /g/ as the initial sound (as opposed to /d/), ostentatiously German. The slashes are borrowed from the way linguists write phonemes, that is, sounds that distinguish one word from another.

## First Discursive Strand: Not against Homosexuals, but against /G/ender

It is December 2016 and I am in the house of a student fraternity that is known to be part of the radical right wing in Berlin's posh Southwest, attending a meeting for people interested in joining the *Junge Alternative*, which is the youth organization of the *AfD*. There are six young people from the *AfD* in the room, one of them a woman, and about ten potential new members, all of whom are men. It is my first time in the field. Until now, I had only been in touch with *AfD* politicians via email. Faded pictures of the previous generations of fraternity members adorn the walls, alongside a portrait of Frederick II (the Prussian king Germans still refer to as "The Old Fritz"), and a large poster of *Windhoek Bier* complete with the image of a colonial equestrian statue. Above the bar, the original street sign of *Reichssportfeldstraße* points into the room, the Reich's Sports Field Street that was renamed in 1997. In the background, music of the folk punk band *Dropkick Murphys* is playing. We are drinking beer, the only appropriate choice if you do not want to seem odd in the room. Igor<sup>4</sup> and Julia are talking about social justice as I join their conversation, a topic that seems to be important to them. Julia says that she considers the leftist party *Die Linke* unelectable given their attachment to "Multikulti." Igor adds that *Die Linke* is in favor of same-sex unions, which to him is a no-go. I act a little surprised: "But the *AfD* is not against same-sex unions, are they?" "Well, everyone should be able to live as they please," Julia answers. "It's not true that the *AfD* is a homophobic party, but what is important to us is that same-sex couples shouldn't be given special treatment, they shouldn't be privileged in any way, and marriage between a man and a woman should be our guiding principle." Noah, who works for an MP, joins in on the conversation: "There's actually quite a lot of gay men in leading positions in the party! The parliamentary secretary of the *AfD* group in Berlin's House of Representatives is openly gay. And he's totally cool. Also, one of the chairmen of the *Junge Alternative* is gay, Sven Tritschler." And Julia adds: "And Alice Weidel, who is a party executive, she's lesbian."

Conversations like this one are typical in the *AfD*. The argument is not openly homophobic, but rather heteronormative: Homosexuals are "okay" (as one informant of mine put it) as long as they do not demand equality. My interlocutor Johannes, in his late 20s and gay, told me about his doubts prior to joining the *AfD*. He had consulted the leader of his local *AfD* chapter and asked him, if they would have a problem with him being gay. "Not if you don't rub it in our faces," was the answer that Johannes found acceptable. What is more, some of my informants openly embrace the definition of homosexuality as "abnormal," arguing that being abnormal – that is, deviant, uncommon – does not mean bad. They agree that in order

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4 To maintain anonymity, all names have been changed and some descriptions altered.

to ensure the reproduction of the nation, “normal,” heterosexual families should be promoted, while the existence of homosexuality can be tolerated as long as it remains marginal.

We could argue about the exact definition of heteronormativity and homophobia, and object that homophobia is always based on heteronormativity. However, what I find striking here is the absence of the common topoi of homonegative discourse. What happened to the ‘perverts,’ the ‘sick,’ and the ‘sinners’?

Consider a speech given by Björn Höcke, the leader of the *AfD* group in the state parliament of Thuringia and the most prominent figure of the *völkisch*, extreme right wing of the party. In this speech, given at a Christmas party of the party’s youth organization, Höcke talks about an “old friend” of his, “a talented artist” who, Höcke says, is homosexual and has told him “that for homosexual people, sexuality is all that matters, it takes center stage.” Sexuality, Höcke continues, is something wonderful and “doubtlessly forms part of the synthesis of man and woman.” However, the polarity of man and woman is about more, namely, the “eternal principles” of life itself. Interestingly, Höcke then goes on to say that he wants to carry this “spirit” into the *AfD* and promises: “We will expel the mental illness called /g/ender mainstream from our schools and universities!” (Höcke 2014, from 00:41:14, my translation) What I find remarkable is the way in which Höcke simultaneously constructs and neglects a connection between homosexuality and /g/ender: On the one hand, homosexuality seems to have its legitimate place in society, not coincidentally in the arts. That is a common benevolent conservative stereotype of homosexuality: Homosexuals might not have children, but at least they make great art. But on the other hand, Höcke implicitly calls anyone “mentally ill” who claims that hetero and homo are equal (because this is what he means when he refers to “/g/ender mainstream”: the claim of equality). So, the accusation of insanity remains the same, but it no longer refers to homosexuality per se. Rather, the new antagonist is called /g/ender. I am now going to illustrate what this idea of /g/ender means to the people in my field by presenting the case of Andreas.

Andreas is a gay cis man in his 40s, and he is a member of a West German state parliament. He was a member of the *CDU* for many years, but his views were often considered too conservative or too far to the right. When he first heard about a new anti-Euro party being founded by an economics professor back in 2013, he was immediately interested, and he then became one of the founding members of the *AfD*. When I met him for the first time, I felt both surprised by his openness and uncomfortable with his eccentricity, in one moment playing around with a cuddly toy that he carries around at all times, and in the next moment losing his temper over Angela Merkel’s alleged plans to do away with the German people. Andreas has a strong desire to portray the *AfD* as gay-friendly to the outside world, but also to convince his fellow party members that one can be gay-friendly, while also fiercely opposing “/g/ender ideology.” Sitting in his one-bedroom apartment one

afternoon, when I was officially his intern in parliament as part of my fieldwork, we argued over an action plan that the state government had commissioned to tackle homophobia, transphobia, and interphobia. Andreas claimed that, in the *AfD*, it is undisputed that the legal situation of gays and lesbians, trans\* and intersex people could be improved. I, in turn, objected that the *AfD* reacted quite adversely to the constitutional court's decision that the government introduces a third legal sex. Andreas then went on to explain (my translation):

“The third sex is out of the question because there are only two sexes. Intersexuality and transsexuality, all of these things, are clearly not ideas of /g/ender, at least not for us. They are rather clear decisions for being a man or a woman. For transsexuals, it's even clearer, that's even a decision for being a man or a woman against their biological being. In other words, we're not mad about transsexuals, we're mad about /g/ender! These people [people who promote “/g/ender”, PW] twist our words and completely misjudge transsexuals. We don't believe that transsexuality is /g/ender, just because they know, against their biological being, to be something different. It is precisely this knowledge to be a woman in a man's body or vice versa that proves that there are only two sexes, and the identity of transsexuals is so unambiguously clear that it doesn't make sense to conflate these things with /g/ender. And with gays and lesbians it's even more absurd: to love a man when you're a man is a double decision for manliness.”

The word /g/ender here can be interpreted as a cipher for a range of things that Andreas opposes (cf. Grzebalska et al. 2017). Intersex and trans\*, he explains, are not dismissed per se, because they are not “ideas of /g/ender.” He describes the identity of trans\* people as “unambiguously clear,” and the same goes for gay men: “a double decision for manliness.” Having an “unambiguously clear” identity is precisely the opposite of what /g/ender stands for, and it is also what makes trans\* people and gay people acceptable for the far right. But of course, Andreas' notion of trans\* is limited to the idea of a transition from one sex to the other, of the cliché of being “trapped in the wrong body,” which is reinforced by the word “transsexual,” a pathologizing term that most trans\* people reject. So, according to Andreas, trans\* and gay people, while deviating from the norm, affirm the gender binary even more clearly than does the norm itself. That is why he thinks that “these /g/ender people” misjudge homosexuality, trans\*, and intersex, because they believe that these things “are /g/ender.” As a gay man, he feels offended by this conflation of his own identity with /g/ender.

Again, /g/ender, as it is used here, does not mean gender. Andreas associates the word with ambiguity, uncertainty, with the idea that gender is a social construct, with gender fluidity and the deconstruction of binarisms, with a skepticism towards biological determinism and with ways of being beyond the gender binary.

It is therefore /g/ender, and not homosexuality or trans\*, that threatens a stable and unambiguous binary sex-gender system.

Gender scholars such as Sabine Hark and Paula-Irene Villa (2015), or Roman Kuhar and David Paternotte (2017), have coined the term “anti-genderism” (or, as I prefer to spell it, anti-/g/enderism) to denote both the anti-feminist discourse I have just outlined, and the social movements associated with it. According to these movements, “/g/ender ideology” is a political strategy employed by a conspiratorial transnational liberal elite that aims to eradicate essential differences between men and women, a totalitarianism more dangerous than Marxism or fascism. The following quote from one of the most well-known anti-/g/enderist authors, Gabriele Kuby, contains many of the most common tropes of this discourse:

“For the first time in history, power elites are claiming authority to change men’s and women’s sexual identity through political strategies and legal measures. They had previously lacked expertise in social engineering. However, today this is happening before our eyes on a global scale. The strategy’s name: gender mainstreaming. The battle is being fought under the banner of equality of men and women, but that has proven to be a tactical transitional stage.” (Kuby 2016: 42)

Of course, I am not trying to say that anti-/g/enderism is a gay-friendly endeavor. Rather, I want to argue that some anti-/g/enderist actors claim that the charge of homophobia is unfounded, and that it is what they call the “globalist Left” that paints a distorted picture of the reality of gay men and women, exceeds common-sense understandings of gay-friendliness, and eventually even harms homosexuals. In claiming that /g/ender aims at changing or even eradicating “men’s and women’s sexual identity,” anti-/g/enderism tries to appeal to those gays and lesbians who do not subscribe to, or who might even feel threatened by, a radical queer politics that questions sex and gender binaries. The contours of a new chain of equivalence begin to emerge: conservative gays and lesbians sharing a cause with the anti-/g/enderist right.

## Second Discursive Strand: Protecting Homosexuals from Islam

But it is not just gender and sexual identity that is under threat in the eyes of national conservatives. Most of the time, the notion of “identity” in far-right discourse refers to ethnicity.<sup>5</sup> The accusation of “social engineering,” that is, of want-

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5 The most visible example of this reference to identity is the so-called Identitarian Movement. One of their mottos in German, “Wir sind die Jugend ohne Migrationshintergrund” (“We are the youth without migration background,” cf. *IBD* Redaktion 2015), alludes to the term that is

ing to forcefully transform society into some kind of liberal or leftist utopia, is omnipresent in this discourse. During the electoral campaign of the *AfD* for the Bavarian elections in 2018, I heard a speaker at a campaign event say: “There have always been so-called social engineers who [...] wanted to create the ‘new human being’: first the racially pure, then the uniform socialist human being, and now they’re trying to create the ethnicity-free human being.” The charge is that these social engineers do so by opening up borders and introducing Islam in Western Europe.

Now, in the second discursive strand that I examine, the opening of borders and introducing Islam in Western Europe are framed as specific threats to homosexuals. *AfD* politicians, in their views, bravely declare a truth that liberals dare not say because it does not fit into their worldview: that the biggest threat for homosexuals today is the violence committed by homophobic migrants. In this way, homophobic violence is both addressed and silenced because it is only ever raised as a topic if the perpetrators are (perceived as) refugees, Muslims, and Arabs. Eliminating German national identity by opening borders, then, becomes tantamount to eliminating homosexuals.

A lot could be said about the rejection of both Muslims and Islam, which is seen as a “political ideology.” The most common theme that one finds in this discursive strand is the incommensurability of Islam with the liberal values of the West. The embrace of liberal Western values in the name of imperial and exclusionary national politics has been discussed under terms such as homonationalism (Puar 2007, 2013), sexual nationalism (Mepschen et al. 2010), and femonationalism (Farris 2017). These phenomena are powerful narratives in which LGBT and women’s rights are invoked in order to legitimize the so-called “war against terror” or the isolation of “Fortress Europe.” Homonationalism and femonationalism are in no way exclusive to the far right; in fact, as concepts, they are meant to shed light on the current state of hegemonic Western liberalism. To the extent that the far right proposes a neo-nationalist alternative to this hegemony (cf. Blyth 2016), homonationalism and femonationalism could even be interpreted as being at odds with a far-right political agenda. After all, as I argued above, heteronormativity plays a crucial role in the *AfD*. However, I would argue that this agenda is composed of a host of divergent ideas and goals, and labels such as “liberalism” or “national conservatism” cannot fully grasp the paradoxical diversity of discourses and practices active in a party such as the *AfD*. In any case, homo- and femonationalism

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most commonly (and problematically) used in German discourse to name Germans of non-German descent (*Menschen mit Migrationshintergrund*, ‘people with migration background’). In this article, I use the word *identitarian* in a wider sense, not restricted to the Identitarian Movement. My argument is based on the premise that the recourse to identity, this ‘identitarianism,’ is one of the central ideologemes of the contemporary far right.

can certainly be employed as political strategies: They function as vehicles into the political mainstream. As Gabriele Dietze has suggested, we are dealing with a “dynamical paradox” (Dietze 2018: 35) that might be *constitutive* of the current successes of right-wing populism, rather than contradictory.

Consider the following example from a debate in the *Landtag* of North Rhine-Westphalia. In this debate, the *Landtag* discusses the rehabilitation of homosexual men who were convicted pursuant to Section 175 of the German Criminal Code, that is, the law that made sex between men a punishable offence after the Second World War. The *AfD* parliamentarian Sven Tritschler, at the time head of the *Junge Alternative* and himself gay, argues in favor of rehabilitation, but he adds:

“When this is done, you can now start caring for the lives of those homosexuals who are not dead yet, and who would like to continue living for a while. As a result of your completely misguided migration and integration policy, you are exposing these people to a danger that makes a conviction according to Section 175 appear harmless. / (Applause from the *AfD*) / That is to say, your tokenism [*Symbolpolitik*] does not help the gay couple that gets beaten to a pulp by a horde of refugees because the two don't want to adapt to the ideals of their mullah. And your tokenism does not help the homosexual pupil who gets bullied by his newcomer [*zugereisten*] classmates.” (Landtag Nordrhein-Westfalen 2017: 71; my translation)

Being strict on immigration and asylum policy, Tritschler implies, is gay-friendly policy-making. Everything else is *Symbolpolitik*. This is a typical, hyperbolic motif of this discourse: Homophobia among (white, non-Muslim) Germans is over or plays a marginal role, the bigger problem is the “imported” homophobia that overshadows even the state repression of previous decades.

My interlocutor Johannes, whom I met for the first time at a three-day meeting of the *Alternative Homosexuals* in Upper Franconia, argued in a similar vein. The *Alternative Homosexuals* are a small group of mainly gay men (and individual lesbians and trans\* women) who are members of the *AfD* or the *Junge Alternative*. I worked with them ethnographically for two years between 2017 and 2019. While most of them are committed to the national conservative far-right wing of the *AfD*, simply called “The Wing” (“Der Flügel”), Johannes calls himself a “liberal conservative.” He is in his late 20s and studies public administration at a midsize university in the Southwest of Germany. It is his first time with the *Alternative Homosexuals*; he had met one of their members online on a gay dating website. However, he is not timid about calling out “nationalistic bullshit” in conversations or to denounce the others’ “*völkisch* vocabulary.” The others, in turn, ridicule Johannes as a “liberal.” On the third day, he and I are sitting in the back seat of a car, talking. Johannes tells me that he is surprised and annoyed by the fact that the *Alternative Homosexuals* are proper far-right nationalists. For him, the *AfD* is not the best political solution, but a necessary corrective to the political system. As a “militant gay”, as he calls

himself, he considers the *AfD* to be the strongest weapon against a reactionary Islam that, in his view, threatens his liberal lifestyle. Once a year, he goes to the gay summer camp that is organized by the German Federation of Trade Unions. Naturally, he meets a lot of leftists there, and he is puzzled: Why do they not see that it is precisely their dear Islam that endangers the freedoms they have fought for themselves?

## Identitarian Gays and Globalist /G/ender Ideology

Martin Lichtmesz and Caroline Sommerfeld, two authors who belong to the intellectual movement of the “*Neue Rechte*” (“New Right”), have an answer to Johannes’ questions. Their book “*Mit Linken leben*” (“Living with leftists”) was quite a success in far-right circles and stirred controversy at the Frankfurt book fair in 2017. It claims to offer an insight, from the perspective of a self-confident intellectual right, into what leftists think and how to live with them – presupposing that the culture of the left is hegemonic and that, if you are on the right, you have no choice but to live with them. Not surprisingly, it thereby constructs a sharp political distinction between those who are on the left and those who are on the right, and, in my view, it tells us much more about the right than about the left. Johannes’ puzzlement can be paraphrased like this: Why do leftists want to let in all those refugees who threaten their very own leftist values? Lichtmesz and Sommerfeld claim that one of the greatest dividing lines between left and right today is being “globalist” or “identitarian”:

“Another often mentioned dividing line [between left and right] is the one between *globalism* and *nationalism*, patriotism, populism, separatism, sovereignty – or however you want to call the ‘identitarian’ counter-movements that are likely to gain traction in the coming decades. They are a consequence of the exaggerated globalist claim to power.” (Lichtmesz/Sommerfeld 2017: 46; my translation)

According to this view, every political difference, every opinion if you will, falls neatly into one of these two antagonistic categories: either “identitarian” or “globalist.” All existing political differences, the plurality of opinions, become absorbed by this antagonistic relationship: The right is discursively constructed as the anti-left, *tertium non datur*. In the words of Laclau and Mouffe, what Lichtmesz and Sommerfeld are trying to do is to articulate two chains of equivalence, two different logics that oppose each other. I want to suggest that these chains of equivalence might look like this: On the one hand, we have the “globalists,” the liberal elites, the cosmopolitans who are against borders and nations, the social engineers who want to create a genderless, “ethnicity-free human being” without an own identity, the constructivists who believe that one can change one’s gender like one changes

clothes, the EU technocrats, but also the “*Gutmenschen*,” the politically hyper-correct do-gooders, most of them women who are very often just politically naïve. On the other hand, there are the “identitarians,” the common people, the conservative patriots who defend borders and nations, ethnic identities and also the gender identity of men and women, the essentialists who defend the “common sense,” the “true Europeans,” the men who are brave enough to utter, against the hegemonic status quo, that migration and mixture are the root cause of society’s problems.

To wrap up, where do homosexuality and gay-friendliness fit into this picture? As became clear in my interview with Andreas quoted above, homosexuals and binary trans\* people can very well be accepted as respectable representatives of a static gender binary. As such, they fit into a far right that is fixated on identity. The appropriation of a gay-friendly discourse by national conservative actors is therefore not per se a contradiction. My thesis is that, in this discourse, the dividing line between ‘healthy’ and ‘mentally ill,’ between ‘normal’ and ‘perverted,’ does not run between hetero and homo, but rather between forms of life that affirm identity and those that are critical of identity. The more homosexuality is integrated into national conservative narratives, the more a new enemy image is constructed. This new enemy image includes queerness, feminism, non-binary trans\*, drag queens and kings, and rainbow families, under the umbrella term /g/ender. And I believe that it is precisely for this reason that emancipatory movements should avoid reproducing this divide into ‘conservative’ homosexuality and ‘progressive’ queerness, but instead accept a wide spectrum of forms of life, no matter how binary or deconstructivist they are. Rejecting ‘friend vs. enemy’ antagonisms means rejecting the worldview of the far right. The embrace of complexity opens up a space for conflict in which the other’s right to exist is not disputed, as difficult as this may often be. The undeniable differences between LGBT identity politics and queer critiques of identity should therefore be debated based on the democratic values they share, and as an alliance that cuts across the frontiers of identity.

Laclau’s and Mouffe’s theory of the political has helped me to connect some of the bits and pieces in my data. This theoretical lens is admittedly one that emphasizes antagonism and conflict; it is one way to look at the data. I do not want to generalize my findings and say: This is what “the *AfD*” is doing. I am also not saying that “the far right” is gay-friendly. Rather, my point is that some far-right actors, the ones I have come to know, construct a certain version of gay-friendliness, and a version of themselves as gay-friendly in opposition to “liberal elites.”

To end on an optimistic note: establishing new “chains of equivalence” is hard work.<sup>6</sup> Stuart Hall in particular has emphasized the powerful ways in which history structures the ideological terrain (Hall 1986: 41). The idea of anti-heterosexism has

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6 Thanks to John Clarke for raising this observation after I presented a paper at a conference in Göttingen on October 27, 2018.

been so consistently articulated by the left that it is difficult to conceive how it could be given a socially regressive, conservative meaning. Given that the gender and sexual politics of the right are all but unequivocal, it is at least doubtful that a chain of equivalence between conservative nationalists and sexual and gender minorities will take hold of the political imaginary anytime soon. But if we take democracy seriously, that is, if we take the political moment of the social seriously, we must also accept its radical openness. Or, to say it in the words of Laclau and Mouffe: “[W]e must understand in all their radical heterogeneity the range of possibilities which are opened in the terrain of democracy itself” (Laclau/Mouffe 2001 [1985]: 168).

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