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eine Studie zu einem je wechselnden Schwerpunktthema. Die Fortschreibung der geschlechterbezogenen Daten zeichnet ein Bild zwischen Fortschritt und Stagnation, in Bezug auf die Gleichstellungspraktiken stand das neue Hochschulgesetz im Mittelpunkt, und die thematische Schwerpunktsetzung galt der Untersuchung der medizinischen Fachkultur aus einer Genderperspektive. Der Report kann unter folgendem Link heruntergeladen werden: http://www.genderreport-hochschulen.nrw.de/fileadmin/media/media-genderreport/download/Gender-Report_2016/genderreport_2_2016_m_anhang_ue.pdf
Zum ersten Mal liegt die Studie auch in einer Kurzfassung für eilige Leser_innen vor: http://www.genderreport-hochschulen.nrw.de/fileadmin/media/media-genderreport/download/Gender-Report_2016/genderreport_2016_kurzfassung_f_web.pdf

Hungarian Government's Attack on Central European University and its Implications for Gender Studies in Central and Eastern Europe

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On April 10th, 2017, the President of the Republic of Hungary signed into law a set of amendments to Hungary's national higher education law which make difficult – if not impossible – the continued operation of the Central European University (CEU) in Hungary, an English language graduate university with accreditation both in Hungary and the US state of New York.[2] The law was preceded by attacks on the university in the pro-government media, targeting its mission to support critical thinking as a prerogative for open societies. Among the worst of CEU's "sins" according to these critics is the existence of a Gender Studies department and the visibility on campus of initiatives intended to raise awareness about gender inequality, to advocate for LGBT rights, or denaturalize normative gender assumptions. Merely the word "gender" evidently signals to these critics that CEU is teaching students how to undermine the "natural" order of society and the traditional family, areas of key concern to Prime Minister Viktor Orban's ruling Fidesz party and others on the political right. This is embedded in an overall push for what Orban has called "illiberal democracy", and particularly their campaign to combat demographic decline among (white, Christian) Hungarians and to ward off the non-European, largely Muslim migrants they would be required to accept in limited numbers under current EU rules. Along with Gender Studies education, CEU's humanitarian support during the 2015 crisis and on-going refugee education programs are also high on the government's list of reasons to go after the university, both seen as flagship issues supported by

philanthropist financier and Hungarian Jewish émigré George Soros, the founder of the CEU.

In line with mobilization across Europe against the very idea of "gender", seen not as a social science concept but as an ideology built on the premise that gender is socially constructed rather than fixed by biological differences, conservatives in Hungary assume as a given that Gender Studies is a threat to heteropatriarchal society and thus to Hungarian and European values more generally. The CEU has not been the only place in Hungary to feel this hostility: when the intention to launch a new Gender Studies Master's Program at Etvos Lorand University (ELTE, the main state university in Budapest) was announced recently, it faced strong opposition, and another prominent Budapest university, Corvinus, pledged to form a department of Family Studies to counteract such dangerous developments (in spite of the well-established Gender Studies scholarship and teaching in Corvinus' own sociology department). Critics charge that academic Gender Studies is thinly disguised political activism rather than "real science". This past spring, as part of an anti-CEU report that played very loose with the facts, a right-wing television house sent a man posing as a prospective student with a hidden camera to the CEU Gender Studies department office in an attempt to catch a quote supporting their claim that the department requires proof of applicants' allegiance to feminist or LGBT activism rather than academic criteria in its admission process. These attacks are also embedded in a wave of hostility to progressive civil society activism, which led to the targeting of feminist, LGBT, and human rights NGOs in the last two years, and most recently to the adoption of a new law that requires NGOs receiving funding from outside Hungary to register as "foreign funded", i.e. foreign agents.

While these developments are deeply disturbing, we nevertheless take some pride in the way our Gender Studies activities have been seen as a serious threat to such a conservative, heteropatriarchal (nationalist, racist, and autocratic) agenda. More than the mere irritant of the term "gender" to right-wing essentialists, it seems we are not the only ones to appreciate the impact that CEU has had on gender scholarship and politics in the region, not only through our research and teaching but even more visibly through the activities of our students and graduates whether they stay in Budapest, return to their home countries, or pursue academic, professional, or activist futures in other places. Because politics and activism are in fact closely tied to Gender Studies as an academic endeavour, not because there is some unified political goal we are all working towards, but because research clearly demonstrates that gender roles and ideologies vary across time and space, are embedded in social relations separate from, if entangled with, biology, and are historically contingent and subject to change. It also exposes different forms of inequality based on or together with socially produced ideas about gender and sexuality, including the kind currently being put forth by right-wing forces. It should not come as a surprise, then, that the knowledge generated by Gender Studies in its efforts to unpack and understand the working of power is and has been used in support of a diverse, even sometimes mu-

tually hostile, set of activist goals that grow out of and are supported by academic Gender Studies hubs such as the one at CEU. As members of this community, then, we want to summarize the range of Gender Studies activities at CEU and reflect on their impact in Hungary, the Central and Eastern European region, and beyond.

Founded in 1991 as a US accredited, English language graduate institution where generations coming out of the collapse of state socialism in Central and Eastern Europe would be educated as future leaders, CEU has developed a distinct academic and intellectual focus, combining the comparative study of the region's historical, cultural, and social diversity with a global perspective on open society, good governance, sustainable development, and social transformation. The need for critical discussions of ideas and the freedom to scrutinize competing theories and openly evaluate government policies is at the foundation of CEU's teaching and research. The Gender Studies Department at CEU adds to this an interdisciplinary "critique of dominant patterns and global hierarchies in the construction of knowledge(s), social critique, and the development of an interrelated variety of perspectives on gender and in Gender Studies" (CEU Department of Gender Studies 2017). The department maintains expertise on Central and Eastern Europe while also focusing on other parts of the world, seeing regional specificity within global hierarchies and aiming to connect these to broader theoretical understandings of gender dynamics as they intersect with other social and symbolic categories and practices.

Gender studies was part of the CEU from very early on, starting in 1994 with Summer University courses and a Program in Gender and Culture, to become the Department of Gender Studies a few years later. The Department now offers four different Master's Programs (one-year and two-year MA, the two-year Erasmus Mundus MA, GEMMA, and Matilda, a two-year consortium based Master's Program in Women's and Gender History offered in conjunction with the CEU's History Department), and since 2001 a PhD in Comparative Gender Studies. Each year it welcomes 50 to 60 MA students and five to seven PhD students from around the globe. Gender is also present in the curricula and expertise of other CEU departments, including History, International Relations, Legal Studies, Sociology and Social Anthropology, and Political Science, as well as the School of Public Policy. While CEU has been attracting people from more and more countries around the world in recent years, students from Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union still make up a large part of the community. Therefore, while global in its reach, Gender Studies and CEU in general remain important nodes in regional academic, activist, and labour networks.

Gender Studies teaching at CEU contributes not only to the formation of academics specializing in Gender Studies, but also to the training of gender equality experts, activists, and policy makers sensitive to gender equality and intersectionality. Various practical elements of Master's Programs, such as internships and applied policy projects, or involvement with CEU initiatives such as the Human Rights Student Initiative, the Roma Access Program, or OLIve refugee programs provide skills and

experiences beyond academic theory. Regardless of their focus while at CEU, our alumni have been leaders in activist and academic activities throughout the region and beyond. They set up Gender Studies programs in their home countries, work for international organizations on gender equality issues, form and join NGOs, and engage in the work of applying the academic knowledge they gain to "real world" endeavours. In addition, many affiliates of feminist and LGBT rights groups around the region have had some connection with CEU in the last decades, as exchange or visiting students, or even as visiting practitioners in classrooms. They often participate in the many conferences, lectures, workshops, and other events organized by CEU, many of them open to the public as another community resource that frequently provides a platform for discussion of gender related topics affecting the region and beyond. And scholars from or working on the region have been among those spending time at CEU as visiting scholars, either linked to various departments or as fellows at the Institute for Advanced Studies.

CEU also serves as an important repository of resources. CEU's library, used by current faculty and students as well as alumni and other guests, is the largest English language library in the region with the richest Gender Studies related holdings. Here a simple search for the keyword gender turns up 4156 hits ranging from books and the main Gender Studies journals from around the globe to an ever-growing list of MA and PhD theses written on gender related topics in and across many disciplines and departments at CEU. As much of this research was conducted on or in the context of Central and Eastern Europe and countries of the former Soviet Union, this collection is also a major concentration of primary research on gender in the region.

Producing high quality, rigorous and contextually embedded research on post/state socialist countries is another fundamental contribution of CEU to Gender Studies as a whole. In a context in which gender issues in Central and Eastern Europe are still under-researched and under-theorized compared to other parts of Europe or North America, much less considered as a place from which to advance theory rather than only provide regional specificity, research produced by CEU scholars and students who are both trained in mainstream theory and understand well the region's languages and contexts emerges as fundamental. Faculty from Gender Studies and other departments and research centres such as the Center for Policy Studies have produced an extensive body of primary research on the region including women's and LGBT movements; gender and national politics; histories of women, gender, and feminism particularly under state socialism; gender and literature, film, and media; the politics of gender-based violence; gendered aspects of labour markets; law and bioethics of reproduction; migration issues; and the role of gender in the region's armed conflicts and their aftermath. Countries of the region have been researched in large scale comparative projects at CEU, thus addressing the critical absence of the region from many comparative research projects that focus on the "west" and/or the "global south." This is produced in parallel with gender and sexuality research on other parts of the world through philosophical, postcolonial, and critical theory

lenses. In this perspective CEU emerges not only as a hub for gender research and data production but also as a formative institution which prepares researchers to contribute to enhancing research on the region in the future. CEU Gender Studies alumni and research networks have thus complimented and added to long existent feminist networks from the region.

Finally, more recently, CEU has made strides towards fulfilling its ambition to become a truly gender equal institution, as such a possible model for other institutions in the region and beyond. Institutional practices aiming for a more gender equal employment and study environment such as the Equal Opportunities Policy (based on gender but also a series of other categories), the Policy against Harassment, and the Policy on Gender Equity in Events have emerged as institutional practices developed and promoted with the support of the faculty Senate's Equal Opportunities Committee. Gender equality work within the institution, though in its early stages as far as implementation is concerned, offers the potential for co-operation between CEU's equality practitioners and gender experts from other universities in the region, as long as CEU continues on this path.

On top of and together with the ever growing global coverage of the institution, CEU's legacy and contribution to Gender Studies and gender research in the region is part of the critical assets the university brings to Central and Eastern Europe and Hungary. The threat to the continued existence of the CEU in this important Central European capital city of Budapest is not only a threat to academic freedom and resources in Hungary, but also a threat to Gender Studies teaching and research, and to gender equality more generally, both symbolically and materially. At the same time, it also prompts CEU and the Gender Studies community in the region to both appreciate our achievements and to reflect on the mission and what we might do more effectively in these difficult political times.

Notes

1 Editors' note: The present text reflects the opinion of the authors and is not an official statement of the CEU.

2 For a summary of legislative changes and their impact on the CEU see: https://www.ceu.edu/sites/default/files/attachment/basic_page/18010/summaryoflegislativechangesandimpact7.4.17.pdf (last accessed: 28.8.2017).

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