


Special Issue 1 (2025)

## Queer Multilingualisms, Code-Switching, and membra(I)nes: A Lecture

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**Abstract:** The membra(I)ne – porous, allows for exchange and interactivity, not yet traced or understood but exists in proximity to – guides the text’s content and format. This performative essay follows the author’s thoughts as she traces the figure of the membra(I)ne in an autotheoretical and informal manner intertwined with a collaborative project (with Antke Engel) on multilinguality. It revolves around migration and queerness, both as conditions that rely on code-switching to relate and navigate the world, various forms of discrimination, and the wish to connect; with other humans, with an audience, with other animals. The text is set against the backdrop of contemporary European Union geopolitics. An article that turns into a diary that turns into a lecture that turns into an article and invites participatory and interactive elements through anonymous writing allows for seemingly unedited thoughts, familiar technical mishaps, and connection beyond the standard format of the journal article and the author/reader binary.

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## Queer Multilingualisms, Code-Switching, and membra(I)nes: A Lecture

Good evening, my lecture today will focus on membranes through autoethnography and autotheory, in particular focusing on my recent curatorial and editorial work. I will try to keep it within the planned XX minutes. Please feel free to use the pirate pad <https://pad.piratenpartei.at/p/OpenGend3r> at any point to note questions, thoughts, ideas, comments you want to share and which we can discuss in the Q&A that will follow. This allows for people in the room and those online to participate in a common manner.

Asked to write about “membra(I)ns” I feel stopped, slightly glued onto a surface, arrested. I can’t go through it, but I also can’t quite walk away either. I’m engaged. I start to feel, trace, sniff. Antkek shares some brief notes with me:

“membrane(I)nes can be human or machine translators or a cyborgian combination of both. In any case, they create in-between spaces where evaluation of options, channelling and selection take place. This means that particulars will make the transit, or rather, that the transit brings about particulars. Decisions are taken, even under conditions of *undecidability* or untranslatability” (Engel in private correspondence with the author, 2024)

I feel more parts of my body sticking on the vertical surface, yet I can’t quite tell where it starts or how big it is. Are there others stuck in this pre-ness? There is going to be an entire special issue on them, so I assume many others are somewhere here, stuck close-by on other facets of it. To trace it/them I go to the conference programme and start to read, make notes, and mix:

“Vestibular [...] Philippines [...] Filipino diaspora [...] queer Chinese [...] COVID pandemic [...] trapped in Europe [...] Frantz Fanon [...] Complaints and Decolonization within/beyond German academia [...] what does it mean to ground [...] speculative/ queerness/plastics/plasticity/ sentience and the pleasure/art/situated knowledges [...] ~~membrane between the living and the seemingly dead~~ [...] waste and toxins [...] never been human (Donna Haraway) [...] being human can be a praxis that changes over time and evolves beyond colonial demands for transparency towards an alterhuman that is opaque and performative (Sylvia Wynter) [...] soil as a membrane for collective analysis [...] Decolonization [...] in Gender Studies in Germany, [...] ‘Survivor Manifesto’

[...] deep-listening sonic journey [...] historical scientific context [...] the fluid mosaic model of the membrane serves as a metaphorical conduit [...] membranes as metaphor for overcoming animal/human/plant borders, for overcoming gender roles, and for dismantling power structures within the institution and outside institutional boundaries [...] metaphor for consciousness [...] the a/Artist or the a/Academic [...] individuals who seeks to hold the microphone, aiming for audibility, visibility and access to cultural spaces of power [...] einer Wand und eines Fensters [...] trans\* vocality to illuminate gendered aspects of vocal membranes in their aural contribution 'Sounding Voice' [...] vaginal penetration [...] broken [...] glass [...] Begegnungsformen zwischen Natur, Technik, Körper und Geist an, ohne den Oktopus, durchlässige oberflächen [...] die haut als permeable grenze von körper und identität [...] sonority of the Otomí language [...] fungi [...] membra(I)nes and smooth muscles that line the human gastrointestinal and respiratory systems [...] stress a hidden injury of the neoliberal academy [...] Endo-cis-heteronormative [aber warum χρησιμοποιούμε ακόμη ελληνορωμαϊκή ορολογία για κουηρ νεολογισμούς;] [...] Tuntenhaus Forellenhof 1990 – der kurze Sommer des schwulen Kommunismus (Juli 2022–Feb. 2023 im SMU Berlin) [...] Zwischen Ost und West bestehen weiter – hin Grenzziehungen und Dis\_Kontinuitäten [...] ~~the membrane as a figure of thought that separates and connects, mediates contact and organises relationships between inside and outside~~ [...] Organised [...] Antonia Baehr, Jule Flierl und Isabell Spenglers Performance [...] Krankheit [...] Céline Sciammas Petit Maman [...] transesters [...] gate-keeping [...] how can we read historical texts as permeable membranes? [...] ‚Potential des Haptischen‘ (Harrasser 2017) [...] Künstler\_in Leman Sevdâ Daricioğlu verharret für die Performance White Roses and Pink Glitter [...] Zak Kostopoulos (aka Zackie Oh), [oh how it angers me when they misname people with 'exotic' names!] Rubbing Skin" (Duman et al. 2023)

So much variety and breadth. I don't feel less stuck but perhaps all these actors who are also trying to grasp and I could support each other in tracing it, not necessarily going through it as the membrane might reject us anyway. At least those of us who are not under the "I" of the self.

Am I stuck on it or is it stuck on me? Am I going inside-out or outside-in?

I think of my book manuscript, ah! Sorry! Cats, what can you do! (An experimental speculative fiction text set in the Mediterranean that I recently submitted to my publisher). I think of [fortress] Europe. It's April 2024 and the European Union parliament has just passed legislation, making it less possible for people

to reach the shores of Europe/the EU (Civil Rights Defenders 2024). It's 2024 and wars are waged within and without its borders. All of them about borders. "Porosity", according to one's skin colour, origin, and tax bracket. Truly stuck. Aren't membranes supposed to keep one's interior protected from harmful invaders? Then this metaphor is a profoundly failed one! A truly dangerous one! So there must be other factors that could determine the ethics of a membra(I)ne's role. Is it the psychoanalytical parenthetical "I"? Is the I apriori in opposition to the Other? An I-priori of a normative self? Is it always from the interior/protected core, of whatever the membrane is protecting, that speech is uttered? Is there a mic or bullhorn outside the membrane? It's probably the periphery that uses the bullhorn in an attempt to be heard by the centre.

Am I the only one in this part of the membrane? Where are the others? Pardon? Oh, the Piratenpad doesn't load? Does anyone else have the same problem? Tut mir leid, just a second, let me see what I can do... OK, I'm sending out a new pad <https://pad.piratenommer.de/p/OpenGend3r>. Perhaps you, Frieda, would be so kind as to share with those in the room if the link is not visible? Thank you!

It's now May. I'm skimming through the English translation of Chi Ta-Wei's "The Membranes" (by Ari Larissa Heinrich 2021) to figure out how he describes the aesthetics and functions of the various membranes in subaquatic 2200. Protecting living things from ultraviolet radiation, keeping the protagonist both connected and separate from others, allowing the protagonist to feel what other people feel, connecting as an emotional voyeur through second skins and second-hand feelings. In the novela the shift to subaquatic living is referred to as "migration". Living underwater in peace under the protection of the membrane that is the ocean while lesser creatures wage war on the surface.

Membranes as gatekeepers/protectors versus membranes as facilitators of exchange. Hierarchy versus cross-cultural communication and creation. Migration, expulsion, detention, deportation, conditional admittance, fees for courses, fees for the test, fees for lawyers, fees for "good clothes", stress, fear (not for me, I'm an EU citizen!). Rejections, looks, stares (not for me, I'm an EU citizen) (I'm kidding, these can and do happen just way milder than to those who are not from Europe) (Agence France-Presse 2018; CBC 2018; Schuetze/Hauser 2018; Der Standard 2023; ORF 2023; Syal 2023). Voices that carry get looks, foods that activate olfactory responses get head shakes, clothes, hair, and accessories that stand out, get exhibitions of entitlement into public space. Then get commercialised. And still get stares.

And this brings us inevitably to the issue of membra(I)nes and languages/translatability. When Antkek invited me to co-edit an issue of the queer studies journal "InterAlia" (Engel/T. 2023) focusing on multilinguality I first thought of the

inextricable way in which my queerness and my migrationship have merged.

Queer slangs, embodied languages, boundaries, borders. Membrane is a term from the **haptic** and I connect it most with a term from the **visual**: opacity (Glissant/Wing 1997; T. 2020). The trait of being agentially inaccessible and irreducible to those above.

Are there others? How big is this membrane?

## InterAlia

### (migration)

It's already June. Co-editing the multilingual issue for "InterAlia's" 18th issue with Antkek Engel was a process of examining multilingualities in their diverse translational and non-translational transnational manifestations. Queerness as audiovisual, haptic, and corporeal inventory of gestures and coded messages, a language speakers go in and out of, queerness and queerlessness expressed through different registers and proximities to different entities. An obvious question was about the nature/background of queer studies, as an "uninterrogated and unmarked version of American Studies" according to David L. Eng and Jasbir K. Puar, and how it might be translated/taken up/interpreted in this issue (Eng/Puar 2020). We entered the sticky territory of working within and without a field inviting people who work within, adjacent to, or against it. How do you identify your contributors when they are from here and there, have lived here and there, and are working in there and here? Binarisms once again fail to encapsulate the sticky and murky territories many of us inhabit. Do we occupy them? Use them or make use of them? Are we transitory? "The Translated," writes Sylvana El Khoury is "hybrid, pluralistic speech / linguistic self that pertains to the historical accumulation of collective and individual subjectivities" (El Khoury 2022, 88). The contributors – almost all of them migrants – exhibit complex, pluralistic, and messy articulations of multilingualities and un/translatabilities. Social and political theory (post-colonialisms and imperialisms, ableisms, feminisms) biographical elements, fiction, and storytelling are blended with scholarly staples (like citations and authorship) which we saw as another iteration of code-switching that challenges the "prescriptivist violence of monolingualism, linguistic terrorism, and linguistic – and accent – normalcy and ideas of language as a tidy organised category. Through mixing languages, dialects, slangs, translations, mistranslations, and untranslatability the collection of contributions illustrates the need for always expanding, borrowing, crafting, and open-source systems of imperfect communication through reaching out for connection." And that, is a citation. Page 6 of the issue. Written by Antkek

and me. The contributions were written in Bosnian-Croatian-Montenegrin-Serbian, Brazilian Portuguese, Creole, Damiá, English, Finnish, German, German Sign Language and International Sign Language, Lubunca, Russian, Spanish (various varieties), Surzhyk, Swedish, and Ukrainian, to varying extents.

We hosted contributions that spoke of migration; how migration is about speaking in more than one language, often code-switching, and about the disciplinarian function of non-migrants' insistence on what is linguistically good for migrants. Migration and its connection to pedagogy and gender were also the focus of a series of diary entries in which thoughts danced together around a fictional/-ised self. What grammar do you apply to your languages when you live between them? One of the contributors examined applying Portuguese and Turkish grammar into English as part of an academic text. Is the membra(I)ne the interface of multilinguality? What happens to languages in the liminality? What happens to one's brain when dwelling in the membrane (see Figure 1, 2 and 3)?

Figure 1: Excerpt from "The Carving & Healing of a Wound: Linguistic homelessness and disidentification as survival" by Daniela Rodríguez A.



Source: InterAlia A Journal of Queer Studies #18, The Multilingual Issue: Untranslatability, linguistic multitudes, embodied speech, edited by Antke A. Engel and Anna T., 2023

Figure 2: Excerpt from "fucking with grammar" by Mariana Aboim

Similarly, in Portuguese the preposition following the verb "to dream" is *with*, as opposed to the English "of" or "about". To dream *with* always made more sense [to me], because when one is dreaming one is embedded in a *withness* that "of" or "about" cannot account for. The use of *with* became a mistake I often made when writing and speaking in English; it was a mistake that would often be corrected when someone would read my writing.

The influence of Turkish derives from the way the language is structured through formulas applicable to the stem of each word; these "formulas" can transform any stem into nouns, verbs, adjectives, or adverbs. Having this logic internalized affects how one deals with language, possibly leading to non-consciously shaping words through those internalized grammatical possibilities.

Mariana Aboim

Source: InterAlia A Journal of Queer Studies #18, The Multilingual Issue: Untranslatability, linguistic multitudes, embodied speech, edited by Antke A. Engel and Anna T., 2023





Figure 4: Excerpt from “В этом смысле да [V etom smysle da] An Intersectional Play” by Ju Bavyka and Masha Beketova

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**The Hierophant/Narrator**

speaks firstly English, addresses researchers' gender and language / говорят, какие они умеренные.

As the play progresses, starts to speak Russian, German and Ukrainian.

**The Fool/Raw Data**

wears a pink cloud, is supposed to sing in Ukrainian, Surzhyk and Russian, and to report on how language, spirituality, and queerness intersect when one's first language is shadowed by other languages / скромно говорят о гендере и сексуальности с периферии производства знания.

Source: InterAlia A Journal of Queer Studies #18, The Multilingual Issue: Untranslatability, linguistic multitudes, embodied speech, edited by Antke A. Engel and Anna T., 2023

Language is not always available or accommodating to minorities who either have to reclaim pejorative terms or invent neologisms to speak (or not speak) of queerness. One of the authors focuses on the term “deh” which is used in Berbice, Guyana by WLW that borrows from the **spatial** to refer to desires and ways of living (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: Excerpt from “We Deh’: Women-Loving Women, Rurality, and Creole Linguistic Potentials”

by Preity Kumar

Every colonized people-in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality-finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is, with the culture of the mother country. The colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country's cultural standards. (1986: 18)

Coloniality continues through the usage of the English language, although colonialism has ended. Language preserves colonial structures as a tool of control and domination as it is the medium through which colonial ideas, belief systems, and ideologies were implemented throughout colonial societies. Making Indigenous languages illegal, forbidden, and marked as “uncivilised” has led to the loss of many languages, histories, and cultures. In *Decolonising Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o writes:

Berlin of 1844 was affected through the sword and the bullet. But the night of the sword and the bullet was followed by the morning of the chalk and the blackboard. The physical violence of the battlefield was followed by the psychological violence of the classroom. (1986: 9)

Preity Kumar | “We Deh’: Women-Loving Women

Source: InterAlia A Journal of Queer Studies #18, The Multilingual Issue: Untranslatability, linguistic multitudes, embodied speech, edited by Antke A. Engel and Anna T., 2023

## (translatability)

A collective who translated Gloria Anzaldúa’s “Borderlands/La frontera” into German focuses on two things: they address their position as responsible creators of meaning while exploring her particular multilingual/cultural style of writing and its significance within queer studies before the advent of the field. In that



contribution the translators want to make the text more accessible and available to a broader linguistic market and navigate the challenges of that (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: Excerpt from “Brücken schlagen: Queering durch Multilingualität, Ambiguität und Widersprüche.Über die Übersetzung von *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* // Multilinguality, Ambiguity, Contradictions as Means of Queering. About Translating *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* into German” by Chaka Collective (Claudia Frih-Khar, Nina Höchtl, Verena Melgarejo Weinandt)

*Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* ist ein vielstimmiger Text – nicht nur unterschiedliche Sprachen (Standardenglisch, englischer Slang, Tex-Mex, Standard-spanisch, Chicano-Spanisch, Mexikanisch, Nahuatl ...) kommen darin vor, auch verschiedene Textarten (historische Diskurse, Theorieproduktion, Gedichte, Liedtexte, Anekdoten, Mythen und Geschichten ...) verschmelzen zu einer neuen und ganz eigenen Textform. Er ist zwar in einen Prosateil *ATRAVESANDO FRONTERAS / GRENZEN ÜBERQUEREN* und einen konvergent verlaufenden Gedichtteil *UN AGITADO VIENTO / EHÉCTAL, DER WIND* gegliedert, doch auch der Prosateil ist von lyrischen Elementen durchzogen und die Gedichte enthalten prosaische Teile. Anzaldúa beschreibt ihre Art der Textproduktion folgendermaßen:

Die Sprache, das Code-Switching und die Weise, wie ich schreibe, sind nicht leicht zu verarbeiten. Ich schreibe über besondere, spezielle kulturelle Dinge. Einige sind schwer zu schlucken. Obwohl sie [die Lesenden] einige der Problematiken ignorieren, stellen sie sich durch meine Arbeit anderen Problematiken. Ich schreibe nicht wie eine weiße Person. Ich schreibe nicht wie eine Akademikerin. Ich verstoße gegen alle Regeln.<sup>4</sup>

Wie also, haben wir uns gefragt, kann so ein Werk übersetzt werden, dessen Form und Sprache keinen etablierten Regeln folgt? Von Beginn an war klar, dass die Übersetzung von *Borderlands/La Frontera* nicht als Einzelperson gemacht

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Source: *InterAlia A Journal of Queer Studies* #18, The Multilingual Issue: Untranslatability, linguistic multitudes, embodied speech, edited by Antke A. Engel and Anna T., 2023

## (embodiment)

The embodiment of language in its varying expressions runs through the entire issue but in three contributions this acquired audiovisual modalities. Two artists blended their respective languages while using a lingua franca and performed in front of their computers/cameras. They speak/motion of permeability and porousness, the doors behind them both open. They discuss proximity (“to be next to”) and feeling like oneself for the first time as a non-binary person. They hide behind transparencies and frosted glass and discuss danger and happiness. They both reside in the body.

Maybe I am stuck in something gooey that will with time harden and imprison me.

Another embodied exploration comes in the form of sign language neologisms to address evolving conceptualisations of genders and sexualities indicating at once the lack of accurate and neutral/positive available signs. This

contribution, written in German with short clips featuring the discussed signs is also available in International Sign.

The third audiovisual embodied language contribution puts the viewer down the artist's throat courtesy of a commercial dildo camera. She is reciting a manifesto written from the asshole but articulated through the throat. We see the mucous membrane in the mouth, around the uvula, and down the throat. Saliva foams and forms through contact with the camera. Knowledge acquired through the skin (theory) and life (practice) goes through the body and is expelled. Viewers are spat out. Knowledge from anthropophagy is shat out (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: Still from "Talking to You" by Ančan Daučíková, 03:04



Source: *InterAlia A Journal of Queer Studies* #18, The Multilingual Issue: Untranslatability, linguistic multitudes, embodied speech, edited by Antke A. Engel and Anna T., 2023

Oh! Sorry, I will restart it and will have my mic off again. Tell me if you can't hear the video sound. Let me restart the player. Sorry for the delay.

Ach! I'm sorry, just give me a minute and I will share the VLC screen. It should be able to play without a problem. I tested it a few minutes before we started. Apologies, again (see Figure 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13).

Figure 8: Still from “Talking to You” by Ančan Daučíková, 03:04



Source: InterAlia A Journal of Queer Studies #18, The Multilingual Issue: Untranslatability, linguistic multitudes, embodied speech, edited by Antke A. Engel and Anna T., 2023

Figure 9: Excerpt from “Sprachwandel in Tauben Queeren Communities in Deutschland // Language Change in Deaf Queer Communities in Germany” by Martin\*a Vahemäe-Zierold and Maria Kopf

#### 4.2 Diskriminierende und nicht-diskriminierende Ikonizität

Wie bereits erwähnt, führt die ikonische Nähe zur Gebärde für ‚Vielfalt‘ im Kontext von queeren Gebärden häufig zu einer positiven Wahrnehmung dieser Gebärden. Wir führen dies auf einen Sprachwandel zurück, der von einer Veränderung im Verständnis von Geschlechtern beeinflusst ist. Wie bereits erwähnt, wurde die Gebärde für ‚trans‘ früher mit zwei aktiven Fingern ausgeführt (s. Video: [TRANS1a](#)). Mandel (1981: 82) vergleicht die aktiven Finger einer Handform mit dem Vordergrund eines Bildes. Das vordergründige an der Gebärde für ‚trans‘ sind so gesehen die zwei aktiven Finger, die wiederum einen ikonischen Bezug zum binären Geschlechtersystem entstehen lassen. Das mentale Bild eines Systems, das nur zwei Geschlechter umfasst, wird mit der phonologischen Form der zwei aktiven Finger assoziiert, denn auch die Gebärde für ‚binär‘ (s. Video: [BINÄR1](#)) wird mit zwei aktiven Fingern ausgeführt. Diese Gebärde für ‚trans‘ wird also negativ wahrgenommen bzw. als diskriminierend bewertet, da sie einen ikonischen Bezug zum binären Geschlechtermodell entstehen lässt. Die neue Gebärde für ‚trans‘ wird hingegen mit der gesamten Hand ausgeführt, genauer gesagt mit fünf aktiven und gespreizten Fingern, die sich während der Drehbewegung schließen (s. Video: [TRANS1b](#)). Auch die Gebärde für ‚Vielfalt‘ (s. Video: [VIELFALT1](#)) wird mit der gesamten Hand ausgeführt, hier öffnen sich die fünf aktiven Finger während der Seitwärtsbewegung. Dadurch entsteht ein ikonischer Bezug zwischen der neuen Gebärde für ‚trans‘ und dem Konzept der Vielfalt der Geschlechter. Das mentale Bild

Kopf | Sprachwandel in Tauben Queeren Communities in Deutschland

Source: InterAlia A Journal of Queer Studies #18, The Multilingual Issue: Untranslatability, linguistic multitudes, embodied speech, edited by Antke A. Engel and Anna T., 2023

Figure 10: Still from the article's interpretation in international sign by Mandy Wystorek



Source: *InterAlia A Journal of Queer Studies* #18, *The Multilingual Issue: Untranslatability, linguistic multitudes, embodied speech*, edited by Antke A. Engel and Anna T., 2023

Figure 11: Accepted “trans\*” sign by Martin\*a Vahemäe-Zierold



Source: *InterAlia A Journal of Queer Studies* #18, *The Multilingual Issue: Untranslatability, linguistic multitudes, embodied speech*, edited by Antke A. Engel and Anna T., 2023

Figure 12: Excerpt from “Leo cie lo ... A Series of Artefacts from the Near Future” by ONCE WE WERE ISLANDS

2a.

ප්‍රභූතියට්‍ර ඔත්තෑනා වූ ලද්දෙකු තුළින් කුඩා ප්‍රදේශයක් ලෙස ඔහු  
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k'h'e' nok'h'e' mozar ze 'jadaz t'h'ōn t'h'e' 'k'h'arēb jō 'mo wai 'əbt'amar  
ast daz k'h'of' mar t'h'ōn jō 'wānza mī 'haik'h'a ge

ඔත්තෑනා ලෙස ඔහු ප්‍රදේශයක් ලෙස

jōnzar wa 'no'ma ast daz 'p'omar

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'nōn'ōm'e' e' na 'k'h'akset nī 'c'atē p'ō' lo  
zān' 'sa' e'be' no' t'h'ōn 'jō' d' k'h'adēn' j'm'e' p'h'o' gān' na 'k'h'arēb' e'be' no' 're'et' wai  
o' 'k'h'arzak'h'arza' e'be' 'k'h'akset' na  
n' 'k'h'arēb' e'be' no' mozar' ge' 'jadaz' wa  
7' jōn' e'be' 'k'h'ard' t'h'ai' 'maegola' t'h'ai' 'k'h'arēb' lo' na  
't'h'ōn'na' gān' 'wos' 'k'h'arēb' lo' na  
'ēwa' t'h'ōn' jō' 'k'h'arēb' e'be' no' na  
'ēwa' t'h'ōn' jō' 'jar' e'lo' 'ask'h'a'ask'h'a' 'damana' mozar' ze' jai' mōn' sames' bai' 'moro' na  
ast' ze' t'h'ōn' na' 't'h'ēledze' 'jona' wa  
t'h'a' 'ad'zav' mom'h'ōn' ek'h'a' t'h'ōn' jō' 'jav'h'a' e'be' lo' 'dosana' 'k'h'akset' ze' na

Source: InterAlia A Journal of Queer Studies #18, The Multilingual Issue: Untranslatability, linguistic multitudes, embodied speech, edited by Antke A. Engel and Anna T., 2023

Figure 13: Still from “To talk as if they had a manifesto in their mouth” by Pêdra Costa



Source: InterAlia A Journal of Queer Studies #18, The Multilingual Issue: Untranslatability, linguistic multitudes, embodied speech, edited by Antke A. Engel and Anna T., 2023

It's now 2034 and we're still debating what constitutes violence and erasure. We still debate over colonialism and appropriation.

Another crafts a hybrid scholar/personal essay about sexual slang that goes in and out of Bosnian (one of the varieties of BCMS – Bosnian/Croatian/Montenegrin/Serbian) to trace intercultural expressions of queerness (see Figure 14).

Figure 14: Excerpt from “How to Say ‘Bussy’ in Another Language? Sociolingvistička rasprava i lični osvrt” by Denis Ferhatovic

In the Serbian slang of Belgrade, *bulja* has served for making (derogatory) terms about gay men, associated as we predominantly are with anal sex. A dictionary from early in this century records expressions like *buljaš*, *buljaroš* (ass-fancier, ass-bandit) for “homosexual” and *buljokolj* (ass-slaughter, mASSacre – see how quickly we turn homophobia into camp, darling!) for “homosexual activity” (Gerzić & Gerzić, 2002). The same borrowing exists in French as *boule*, familiar to me from Fatal Bazooka’s 2007 song “J’aime ton boule” that contains homoerotic lyrics and mocks homophobic rappers.<sup>9</sup> *Bul* features in the Czech jargon *Hantýrka* (Fałowski, 2013: 100), as well as in Spanish (via the Iberian Para-Romani language *Caló*), in the same form and as *bullate* (Krinková, 2015: 283). Finally, *bul* appears in Kaliardá in the form *puli*, glossed by Montoliu as “arse” (307); it forms compounds in the queer Greek variety as *pulo-* (308). An example of such compound is *πυλομουσάφιρο*, meaning “κλύσμα” (enema, anal douche), literally “ass-guest,” from *pulo-* and the Turkish borrowing *misafir* (Πετρόπουλος, 1971).

Denis Ferhatović | The Multilingual

Source: InterAlia A Journal of Queer Studies #18, The Multilingual Issue: Untranslatability, linguistic multitudes, embodied speech, edited by Antke A. Engel and Anna T., 2023

To submit this ~~essay~~ ~~artistic contribution~~ ~~poem~~ lecture I have to pick keywords (preferably the ones already registered with the journal). The list is in German only.

I choose a letter and scroll. I copy/paste the following in order to make a selection:

Ableismus

Affekt

Agency

Antirassismus

Ästhetik

Behinderung

C (there’s “Ableismus” and “Behinderung” but not Crip Theory or critical disability studies)

Cyborg

Diaspora

Europäische Union

Genozid

Interdisziplinarität

Islam

Kolonialismus

Konflikt

Körper

Krise

Kritik



Kritische Theorie  
 Kultur  
 Kunst  
 Lebensform  
 LSBTIQ  
 Marginalisierung  
 Migration  
 (why did I copy/paste "Islam"?)  
 Ontologie  
 Performativität  
 Postkolonialismus  
 (maybe that's why)  
 Postmoderne  
 Poststrukturalismus  
 Prekarisierung  
 Queer Theory  
 Rassismus  
 Subjektivierung  
 Xenophobie  
 (ah, yes)

Which five do I choose? I'm considering choosing five on things I'd like to further work on but haven't yet in this text. But maybe that would be too confusing and disorientating. I don't want you to get stuck.

Their name was Zak Kostopoulos. Their drag name was Zackie Oh!. Yes, with the exclamation point!

Thank you for your time and attention. I'm happy to have a discussion, but perhaps first let's take a brief break to jot down some thoughts or questions.

Yes, I can show you my cat properly this time! This is Mia Gata.

## Notes

"Native" no longer suffices to refer to a non-migrant.

(How to tell which membra(I)ns are racist and classist)

This lecture was never given and is not a lecture.

The membrane has fully enveloped me.



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