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# Hyphenations: The Other Lives of Feminist and Queer Concepts

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**SPAIN AND PORTUGAL** are two European Union countries that share some common ground, not only historically and geographically, but also in terms of their present political and economic contexts.<sup>1</sup>

Both countries are currently subject to international scrutiny within the context of the Euro crisis. While Portugal was "bailed-out" by a loan from the European Union, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund, in order to avoid bankruptcy, as the official political discourse maintains, Spain (like Portugal) is also facing brutal cuts in different sectors including health, education, science, and welfare with Spanish banks also getting "bailed-out." These sweeping cuts are masked by another name, austerity policies, and they create, what António Ferreira (2011) calls austerity societies. In such instances, these ideologies serve to deny the rights of citizens by invoking a "state of exception" (in the Benjaminian sense) alongside catastrophic economic predictions and deploying fear to install a political economy based on neoliberalism and austerity. In the larger framework, Southern European countries have been identified and labelled as PIGS (supposedly an acronym for Portugal, Italy or Ireland, Greece and Spain, but with a very obvious connotation) and held responsible for the Euro crisis.

The social contestation of these "austerity" measures has been huge throughout Southern Europe and has involved groups like the "Indignados," "Occupy," and "Que se Lixe a Troika,"<sup>2</sup> although disregarded by mainstream media. These groups organise demonstrations and other political actions to contest the prevailing strategy for dealing with the public debt crisis, and to propose political measures such as citizen audits of the debt, redistribution of wealth, taxing financial transactions, ending the cuts to welfare subsidies, education and health, among others.

Another aspect of the proximities between Portugal and Spain is that both countries experienced dictatorships throughout much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For 48 years, Portugal and the remains of the Portuguese Empire – the former colonies in Africa and Asia – were ruled by a fascist dictatorship. Similarly, Spain was subject to the Franco regime. Through different processes both countries were finally able to get rid of these regimes: a democratic transition in Spain in 1977, and in Portugal the Carnation Revolution of 1974. Furthermore, both countries entered what was to become the European Union at the same time, 1986, and everything seemed set for "modernisation" and "development" – two themes very commonly applied to describe the democratisation process in these countries.

Needless to say, these dictatorships were not particularly welcoming to feminist breakthroughs. However, the intricacies of fascist repression led to interesting feminist developments. In this paper I address some of these by telling the tale of the book *New Portuguese Letters* (Barreno, Horta and Costa 2010) which openly confronted the dictatorship with the political situation and the position of women in Portugal. This book was received more as an event than a theoretical breakthrough.

I then turn to the concept of intersectionality and the ways in which this concept gets applied in Spain, through an analysis of a recent book by Lucas Platero (2012), which I use as an example of what I call hyphenation. Examining the neoliberal perspective, I also address new research fields on homonormativity currently under development in Portugal and convey how concepts, that come from very different back-

grounds might prove to be suitable for the analysis of political and social phenomena. Such an examination highlights the multiple forms in which such concepts are adapted, thought through, and interlinked to different contexts. Rather than focusing on simply locating knowledges as discrete bodies of work, I use the concept of hyphenation (Oliveira 2010) in order to understand the relationships between different bodies of knowledge, and how they can produce hybrid forms of knowledge. These hyphenations, I suggest, bring together knowledges that have different groundings, history and political intents, but that nonetheless are invoked together to tackle, through a coalitional mode of thinking, a problem or a question that needs more complex answers. To that end, this article brings together three examples of hyphenations: the feminist reception of *New Portuguese Letters*, a case where hyphenation did not occur, intersectionality in Spanish gender and queer studies, and the case of homonormativity in Portugal, where concepts coming from different theoretical traditions were redeployed and re-thought to address local issues. These linkages show the vitality of a constantly hyphenated feminist-queer theoretical approach, adapted to specific contexts to pursue the complexity of gender and queer issues in Southern European societies. In sum, this article is grounded in, and puts to work, concepts that constitute the legacy of feminist, queer and other movements and explores what happens when they are applied to other contexts, different from the original circumstances in which they were created.

### **A Book's Life**

Portuguese feminisms experienced difficult times in the 1960s and in the 1970s due to the combined influence of the fascist regime ruling the country until 1974, of a very conservative and dominant Catholic Church, and of a poor educational and scientific system (Oliveira et al. 2009). Though there were plenty of reasons to try to resurrect the republican feminisms,<sup>3</sup> that were highly active at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the prevailing political and social climate erased feminism as a relevant social movement for the struggle against fascism. We should note that feminists were very active within the broader struggle against

fascism and in the clandestine political parties (Tavares 2011). However, they did not come out of the closet as feminists but rather fought the common enemy, Salazar's and later Marcelo Caetano's dictatorship in the general opposition to the regime.

In one particularly luminescent moment, three authors (Maria Isabel Barreno, Maria Teresa Horta and Maria Velho da Costa, the three Marias as they became known as) published a collective book in 1972, *New Portuguese Letters* (Barreno, Horta and Costa 2010). The publication and the subsequent censorship and trials of the writers represent what we might call the birth of 1970s feminism – both as theory and as a movement in Portugal. The launch of the Women's Liberation Movement (Movimento de Libertação das Mulheres) in 1975 (Tavares 2011) came directly in the wake of the acquittal of the three authors (and with one of them, Maria Teresa Horta, playing a leading role).

*New Portuguese Letters*, written by these three authors without distinguishing between the contributions of each individual, is characterised by a transgression of literary genres, in particular the epistolary genre and poetry (Amaral 2001). The book took as its starting point *Letters of a Portuguese Nun* (1669), an epistolary novel (disputably) attributed to a Portuguese nun, Mariana Alcoforado, who supposedly wrote these letters to a French cavalier, Chevalier of Chamilly. These love letters were published anonymously and subsequently attributed to Mariana. *New Portuguese Letters* inter-textually applies this character, of a Mariana, alongside other women (Maria, Mónica, Maria Ana, and other combinations of Mariana) to challenge the confinement and the modes of subjectivity open to women in Portuguese society. Furthermore, this is achieved by subverting literary genres and by weaving a text that is considered queer *avant la lettre*, as detailed by Amaral (2001). Not queer in the sense of reclaiming a space outside of sexual identities – as the book does not deal with sexual identities, but rather in the sense of exposing multiple identities, denouncing dichotomies and sexual dimorphism, and with such claims transgress the social order. *New Portuguese Letters* makes recourse to sexually explicit language and claims women's sexuality as a new territory for critique, and discusses women's pleasures,

orgasms, and bodily sensations. Additionally, the book stands out as a transgression of literary genres representing something very new both in Portugal and beyond, through deconstructing both the canon and the (single) author as producer of texts. The authors adopted collective authorship to focus on themselves as the subjects and objects of the text (Macedo and Amaral 2005).

Immediately after publication, it came under attack from the fascist state. All books still in the publishing house were confiscated and the authors and the publisher were put on trial (Pena 2008), charged with spreading pornography and offending public decency. The trial began in the final days of the dictatorship with all the authors absolved at the end, already in the post-revolutionary context.

When the story of the trial became known outside of Portugal, an international movement in support of the authors started in France, the United States, the United Kingdom, and elsewhere. This movement was organised by feminist groups (Pena 2008), who were appalled by the political decision to take this book to court. More than the book itself, it was the reaction of the fascist regime, though milder than in the past,<sup>4</sup> still very conservative and moralistic, that triggered this international support. However, we may also state that the trial itself and the attention given to it, limited the scope of the questions the book was making, especially in terms of feminist theory. The book pointed to the importance of multiple identifications, that in effect already served to destabilise the category "woman," and demonstrated an awareness of the importance of sexuality and of generating connections between the situation for women, the fascist regime, and the then ongoing colonial wars. *New Portuguese Letters* deals with the position of women as a marked and sexed category inside a patriarchal structure, and with the denial of alternative subjectivities outside this relation of domination. In a sense, it thus resonates with debates about the universality of the category of women that later on would occupy the attention of feminist international fora.

The event might be seen as something inherently specific to the Portuguese context but also as subject to interpretation as it extends the

feminist critique to institutions such as the state, international law, and struggles for democracy and against colonialism. I argue that the text is extremely important as an early landmark in attempts to rethink possible entanglements that were at that time largely absent from international feminist theory.

As described by recent scholarship on this book,<sup>5</sup> *New Portuguese Letters* proved pivotal in nurturing the conditions for the emergence of a feminist movement in Portugal, contemporary to other feminisms all over the Western world and putting forward a critique of the fascist regime, the colonial wars, and the roles attributed women under fascist rule. The preface by Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo (2010, xxviii) describes it as an oeuvre of "excess, therefore, the book ends without really ending, as if such excess could not fall within the normal dimensions".<sup>6</sup>

As described by Ana Martins (2012), this book, besides political activism, advocated theoretical frameworks that pre-date, for instance, now canonical French feminist texts. Martins portrays this failure to achieve canonical recognition as a theoretical body of work, as follows:

When the Three Marias decided to send their "impossible object" to the three French feminists, they were in fact sending a Trojan horse whose form and content, wrapped in paper, had the potential to question existing feminist theoretical forms and conventions. As we have seen, feminists in France accepted the gift but kept the horse at arm's length – not without some help from Portugal – thus disallowing the movement of this text across boundaries on a theoretical level. (Martins 2012, 37)

Hence, this movement between the centre and a semi-peripheral country in Southern Europe (Santos 2002) proves to be an interesting approach to the thinking about theory produced in Portugal. Monique Wittig was one of the translators of the book in France, where it was only published in 1974. French feminists were nonetheless fighting for the freedom of the three authors without actually having yet read the book (Martins 2012).

However, it is not only the time it took to translate the book that ac-

counts for the difficulty this work encountered in reaching canonicity. Indeed, the situation highlights a clear contradiction in the text's reception: the trial ended up receiving far greater attention while attracting support for the three authors rather than taking the book itself into consideration. The three Marias' story thus became a marker for the rebellion of women against fascist rule, colonial wars, and for the creation of the women's liberation movement in Portugal, rather than conveying the book's innovativeness in terms of both theory and as a literary object. This "failure" to enter feminist theory canon also took place in Portugal with this book serving as an event, the backdrop to a story without actually attributing any theoretical and scholarly attention at the time. Thus, this is a case of how a feminist work can become an event without being hyphenated with feminist theory, and thereby failing to reach canonicity. At the time when it was published it became a *cause-célèbre*, and yet its concepts did not gather the attention of feminists.

### **A Political Grammar for Entanglements**

Hyphenated forms of knowledge in feminism and queer theory have been promoted in the incessant mediation of feminisms on the category of "women" since the late 1970s and the beginning of 1980s in the Anglo Saxon world. Taking Black feminism (see James, Foster and Guy-Sheftall 2009, for an anthology) as an example, and based upon its perspective, the concept of intersectionality emerges as a means of understanding the entanglement of oppressions experienced by Black women. That concept/analytical instrument later theorised by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) and Patricia Hill Collins (2000) is pivotal to understanding the way in which several systems of oppression/privilege may combine to create specific positionings.

Absent from the discourses of Iberian feminisms until very recently, the concept intersectionality is now gaining much greater visibility as an epistemological and methodological tool. In this regard, Lucas Platero's (2012) book on the subject represents a very important achievement in terms of the Iberian literature on sexuality and gender studies. This proves one of the first steps to address the lack of research into intersectionality.

Issues of multiple discriminations and of interlocking systems of oppression such as race, class, and gender become fundamental objects for intersectional research projects and help tackle the insufficiencies of single-issue social policies. For a long time, both Portugal and Spain, with their long colonial histories, failed to produce research that simultaneously tackled the impacts of interlocking systems of oppression. Platero (2012) defines intersectionality as the reciprocal relations between structural sources of inequality, such as gender, non-normative sexualities, and functional diversity. The metaphor Platero deploys for intersectionality is an entanglement of several threads in such a way that each becomes impossible to understand in their own right. In the luminous metaphor of entanglement, we become multiplied and correspondingly gain an understanding of our situatedness as subjects.

Importantly, for Platero's collaborators (2012) intersectional analyses are varied and chapters focus on a range of concerns; non-normative sexualities and functional diversity, butch/femme, bear cultures and HIV, the experiences of gay Roma, the treatment of LGBT citizens by Immigration Centres, the articulation of LGBTI experiences with other sources of discrimination and imprisonment, alongside with historical research on feminine section of the Francoist Falanges.

Such conceptual and empirical diversity, implying recourse to concepts from feminism, queer theory, crip theory, critical studies of race, post-colonialism and among others, render this book highly important, and especially so in a time of crisis and recession. This is a period when right-wing, neoliberally bent governments, seem on the verge of taking back the rights that were so arduously conquered, leaving our democratic constitutions seemingly mere abstractions. Platero's (2012) work demonstrates the complexity of our situatedness and is certainly a gain in reflexivity, directed at praxis and possible activisms, actively hyphenating intersectionality with theory produced in the Spanish state. Therefore this work is not only relevant for the context of the production of knowledge, but can be used as a political tool, trying to provide a theoretical basis for tackling the positions of subjects that are trapped in multiple systems of oppression and privilege. Also, as noted by Maria

Bustelo (2009), in public gender equality policies, Spain lacks a focus on intersectionality. Works on intersectionality might prove to be important tools to promote such public policies, especially in a time of economic crisis.

In order to understand how feminism interweaves other bodies of knowledge, I will now expand the idea of hyphenation (Oliveira 2010), deploying the idea of the hyphen as a punctuation mark to convey how some knowledge stems from the joint efforts by two different theoretical traditions. In the case of Black feminism, this field might easily be conceived as an example of such a hyphenated form of knowledge, drawing on both anti-racist activism and feminism. The same might be applied to queer(-)feminism, a form of knowledge and activism that finds its origins in both points of departure. From my perspective, this hyphenation process is vital to understanding the variegated forms of feminisms that have appeared since these fields of knowledge first began to emerge. Therefore, this framing also generates fruitful ways to think about feminist theories, and the ways they become enmeshed with other bodies of knowledge to create multiform incarnations of feminism. This is, in my view, a much more promising way of tackling the shrinking of our rights and social benefits, our collective impoverishment – while corporations grow ever richer – alongside the governmental actions aimed at disparaging social policies seeking to foster the conditions necessary for meaningful equality, rather than systematic recourse to single-issue politics for equality. Furthermore, such a process of hyphenation might also prove helpful to understand how the Anglo-Saxon forms of feminism became pivotal to generating local hyphenations of feminisms in some contexts. However, hyphenation is different from intersectionality, since it is focused on articulations between theories or bodies of knowledge. Intersectionality relates more to subjective positionings, marked by multiple entanglements from different systems of oppression and privilege. Even if these concepts are interconnected, in terms of epistemology, they refer to different fields of application.

In this case, redeploying intersectionality as a methodological and theoretical tool is necessary to understand certain configurations of in-

equality, and to make the accumulation of oppressions in certain social locations, or the interaction between privilege and oppression in others more visible. This importation, as Platero work (2012) shows, is able to become more hybrid and contextually relevant by casting light on some previously hidden situations.

This said, a question arises from this recent usage of intersectionality that has to do with a certain notion of belatedness in using a conceptual tool that was increasingly gaining attention in international feminist fora.

I do not subscribe to the tales of backwardness and belatedness that some scholars apply when discussing gender studies in Portugal.<sup>7</sup> In a sense, we are dealing with a very different context compared to Anglo-Saxon feminisms, since gender studies and feminist and queer theories are quite recent and still lack institutional recognition (Oliveira et al. 2009; Pereira 2012). As the work of Maria do Mar Pereira (2012) identifies, these fields of knowledge in Portugal (and also elsewhere) tend to get classified as an in-between space between acceptance and dismissal, a dismissive recognition revealing the ambivalent acceptance of feminist work in the academia. Moreover, even the social sciences themselves are a product of democracy, and a very recent one.

The problem with comparisons between Portugal or Spain and other parts of the Western world lies in the historical differences, making such comparisons more difficult to understand. In Portugal and Spain, the legacy of the dictatorships, the lack of feminist debate throughout that period (whereas in other countries, such as the United States or the United Kingdom, feminism was at its height), underlies the troubles stemming from these comparisons.

Another tension in comparisons lies in the comparative referent. On what grounds should we compare the situation of Portugal or Spain with the European or Anglo-Saxon context? In the case of Portugal or Spain, history only complicates this referent. In any such comparisons, queer and feminist theories in Portugal or Spain seem to be in a queer temporality (Freeman 2010), when compared with those aforementioned comparative referents. Therefore, conceptions such as belatedness

and backwardness need to be absolutely rejected, not only due to the very difference in historical temporalities, but also because the mode of comparison actually identifies some countries or groups of countries as central, while others get labelled as peripheral or semi-peripheral. In a sense, making such a comparison only perpetuates this semi-peripheral position (Santos 2002) in terms of the production of knowledge, while labelling other countries as the progressive and most advanced, using a coloniality of degrees of modernity (Lugones 2007). As we saw with the case of *New Portuguese Letters*, this semi-peripheral position worked against hyphenation. With the case of intersectionality, this semi-peripheral position might introduce a geopolitical dimension that can highlight the problems with neoliberal policies in Southern Europe, and theories based on hyphenation seem to be well equipped to deal with this sort of analysis, as explained in the next section.

### **Neoliberal Times, Homonormative Times**

Taking the forms of government imposed on us seriously, such as shrinking the state down to some minimalist and non-intervening role, represents an important objective within Southern Europe and elsewhere. This involves contemplating the ongoing neoliberal revolution and its long march, as Stuart Hall (2011) puts it.

Looking at the various critiques of neoliberal forms of political economy, one keeps wondering about the effects on people's lives, and the modes of subsistence that neoliberalism greatly imperils. However, the definition of neoliberalism is of course both difficult and non-consensual. We may perceive it as a form of political economy, an ideology, or look at it across its multiple social and economic applications. Identifying the many faces that neoliberalism might assume, proves no real help even if its usage may take on a political meaning within the framework of resistance (Hall 2011), especially in those countries most afflicted by its implementation. According to Stuart Hall (2011), neoliberalism is based on a founding opposition between the oppressive and tyrannical state, and freedom possessing individuals. This opposition implies that the states should neither regulate markets, nor determine how free in-

dividuals use their property and their profits, therefore further disavowing the regulation of economic activities. The welfare state is especially criticised by neoliberalism as a sort of absolute enemy, and seen as the promotion of individual irresponsibility. As argued by Ronen Shamir (2008), these processes are part of an economisation of the social, and are now an integral part of neoliberal imagination.

Pierre Bourdieu (1999) argues that there is an ongoing systematic discursive replacement in neoliberal thinking, a process where certain words acquire an entirely different meaning, such as taking state intervention as a form of totalitarianism, to see private companies as synonyms of efficiency, and to equate modernisation with the transfer of the more profitable services to the private sector.

The adoption of discursive processes of ideological replacement, undertaken by neoliberalism is certainly an important tenet of neoliberalism alongside the privatisation of public goods. One effect, especially in countries under bail-outs and subject to austerity measures, is to limit the scope for state intervention designed to prevent and eradicate poverty, even at a time when the meagre "solutions" for the crisis lie in burdening the work force with higher taxes, lower incomes, and a rising unemployment rate (Hall, Massey and Rustin 2013). Thus, in one real sense, austerity measures are in fact minimising the state and its ability to intervene through welfare, all the while handing down additional economical hardships to the work force. In addition, multinational corporations garner vast profits and the rich and super-rich continue to accumulate capital, with the gap between rich and poor ever widening (Hall, Massey and Rustin 2013).

Now, in the context of Southern European societies, generalised austerity has created impoverishment, disguised by the trope of "crisis," This "crisis" actual derives more from the application of austerity measures, job losses and the undermining of the welfare system, as there are fewer workers contributing to making the system sustainable, than from the financial crisis itself. It would rather seem that the problem lies more in the measures to solve the "crisis", than in the crisis itself. This subservience to the markets and their allegedly invisible hands legitimises the

financial crimes being committed against Southern European countries on a daily basis, where the debts of the banks became nationalised and public goods become privatised. The contemporary political jargon now extends to include the "There is No Alternative"-discourse, creating figurations of politicians that can only cut and create still more austerity.

Wendy Brown (2005) claims that neoliberal rationality dismantles liberal democracies (elections, individual freedoms and rights, etc.), since they do not serve the competitiveness of neoliberal modes of government and governmentality. Brown uses the Foucauldian concept of governmentality (forms of governing that exceed state action that orient subject's actions and existence) to counter-argue this extension of liberal democracies into neoliberalism, showing the chiasm between those two forms of rationality. I prefer to identify this ongoing process as a rationality, a form of social and political organisation of the economy and the society, but also a guide for individual action, to create specific subject positions whilst eroding the welfare state through transfers of public goods to the private sector. This rationality is acted out with specific intents and with specific actors, governments, states, corporations that have very much contributed to this state of affairs. However, this rationality has specific effects on specific subjects. It is through these effects of neoliberalism on governmentality that we can start to understand the creation and convocation of a specific neoliberal figure: the gay and lesbian married couple (see Oliveira, Costa and Carneiro 2014).

These forms of normalisation usually fall below the radar of the types of work I have been discussing (with exception of Brown). The efforts by LGBT movements to attain more formal rights began being acknowledged by states, and gradually more formal rights were ascribed to these groups. In the case of Portugal, Cristina Santos (2013) describes the process of a gradual attribution of rights as a quick and radical response (as in Spain) to the demands of LGBT movements, as well as anti-discrimination EU policies. A strong investment in the juridification of rights was made by the Portuguese State (Santos 2012), especially in the periods when the Socialist Party was in power. A quick chronology illustrates this:

2001 – Cohabitation law extended to same-sex couples
2004 – Constitutional prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation
2007 – Aggravation of penalties in law on hate crimes involving homophobic crimes
2010 – Same-sex marriage with prohibition of adoption
2011 – Gender identity law provisions

**Table 1. Chronology of the juridification of LGBT rights in Portugal (based on Santos 2013)**

As seen, the changes in laws have been effective in guaranteeing formal rights. However, most of these laws are based on relational claims, as Santos (2012; 2013) puts it. This juridification serves to incorporate the space for recognition into the juridical framework, while seeming to fail to guarantee these rights outside that framework. In fact, as my own research has shown, Portuguese LGBT citizens still experience discrimination and exclusion, and are especially distrustful of public institutions due to the unequal treatment they face (Oliveira 2013).

As Santos (2013) argues, these laws are very important and in no way does our research diminish their importance. However, they are simply unable to tackle the individual, psychosocial, societal, and experiential side of LGBT discrimination. Furthermore, their commitment to the relational dimension of discrimination is questionable in the sense that these laws convey a proper, coupled way of being gay or lesbian with various effects in terms of sexual citizenship (Santos 2012; Oliveira 2013). As shown by Cooper (2006), three specific, although inter-related aspects reflect the changes in contemporary societies regarding LGBT individuals: the attribution of legal rights and responsibilities, the acquisition of status and social recognition, and the inclusion in society. This process has been shaped not only by policies of containment in gender expressions and sexual dissidence (Santos 2013), but also by processes of sameness and normalisation within a neoliberal framework (Richardson 2005). Therefore, sexual citizenship implies both the

recognition of rights and normalisation and assimilation, revealing the limits of the citizenship framework as simultaneously "medicine and poison", a *pharmakon* (Derrida 1981), that displays its own ambivalence (Oliveira 2013). This dimension of sexual citizenship is also analysed in relation to its limits in terms of Western exceptionalism, its bolstering of homonationalisms (Puar 2007), and the way in which it establishes the difference between the democratic and tolerant West vis-à-vis the perceived "backwardness" and "fundamentalism" of other countries, especially orientalised Islam.

Lisa Duggan (2003) shows how these politics are marked by homonormativity, that is, a system of norms inside the LGBT community that does not oppose heteronormativity and instead sustains those norms by making them acceptable inside the community. There are many ways of producing acceptable homosexuals, through politics of passing (Rosenfeld 2009), by focusing claims on family and marriage rights (Duggan 2003), while remaining within the charmed circle of long-term and monogamous relationships (Rubin 1984), to conform to gender norms (Stryker 2008), and all concurring to depoliticise sexual dissidence. These works were crucial to trigger the reflection on homonormativity in the Portuguese context.

These theoretical contributions were interrelated to produce a critique based on the effects of the laws, and the silence about their effects on the LGBT community. As demonstrated by Santos (2012), this silence incorporates strategic reasons, the LGBT movement engages in what she terms syncretic activism, by simultaneously claiming relational rights such as marriage, while also putting forward a critique of its assumptions to groups otherwise ambivalent about the effects of the claim. This description of the LGBT movement strategy to lobby for same-sex marriage proves interesting because it points out the need for politics of containment:

As the approval of same-sex marriage in Portugal proves, the state has pushed its normative boundaries in order to accommodate and contain new subjects willing to be read as "normal." This investment in newly

”respectable” citizens, however apparently radical, destabilizes power relations within previously oppressed groups, contributing to further processes of exclusionary othering. (Santos 2013, 8)

My argument follows a similar approach whilst looking at this from another angle, the effects of the law on individuals and groups. Taking into consideration several strategies for passing as straight to avoid discrimination, while disavowing these strategies as a form of discrimination, this homonormativity also serves a purpose of adaptation to a strong heteronormative context (Oliveira, Costa and Nogueira 2013). Therefore, we may perceive how in Portugal what Rosenfeld (2009) calls the post-war homonormativity (the politics of passing) and what Duggan (2003) terms (neoliberal) homonormativity do in fact coexist (Oliveira, Costa and Nogueira 2013). This neoliberal homonormativity seems however to be much more closely connected to purchasing power and social class, thereby revealing how we must apply intersectional inquiries to understand their effects on different individuals (Oliveira 2013).

What is more, the same-sex marriage law that did get approved came with a twist: it explicitly forbids same-sex married couples from adopting, and thus discrimination was inscribed into the law. Therefore, all these equality measures simply did not prove strong enough to counteract these effects. These laws are powerful instruments of normalisation and of containment, and disavow the constitution of queer parenting through adoption. Additionally, at a time of crisis, with a neoliberal political economy wreaking havoc, this call for the privatisation of same-sex couples follows suit, making the couple more secure financially and better equipped to deal with the adversity created by the aforementioned destructive policies, disguised as austerity.

In particular, research guided by intersectionality is able to understand the effects of such laws, which, viewed cynically, represents the moderate left saving middle class gays and lesbians from homophobia and the country from backwardness<sup>8</sup> – with the blessings of mainstream lesbian and gay groups and without ever recognising that the effects of these policies have generated increased inequalities within oppressed

groups, hierarchies within the LGBT community and the effects of homonormativity. Such an intersectional approach might help in thinking through single-issue LGBT politics in much more complex ways. Intersectional studies of these laws seem much more integrated and better designed to help one understand the interrelationship between systems of oppression. This is an important aspect of the proposal I am making on hyphenation, since it allows the linkage between works that are apparently on certain specific fields, but might be broadened with feminist queer proposals to incorporate and describe other forms of political and economical domination, by describing specific forms of governmentality, an integral part of this neoliberal revolution.

### **Other Political Grammars**

These accounts of the exportation, importation and re-elaboration of feminist and queer theoretical contributions is another way of telling feminist stories (Hemmings 2011). In the case of Southern European feminisms, positioned outside the canon of feminist theory, as shown in the first section, other tropes need to be applied to understand the debates, the contributions, and their shortcomings. Hence, it is more a tale of hybridity, re-elaboration, and appropriation that I address here, one of crossing borders (Anzaldúa 1987) in order to co-construct and reconstruct feminist queer hyphenations that can be used in other times and spaces. This paper is based on that crossing. Portuguese and Spanish queer feminist theories are recent bodies of work that have been receiving influential and relevant concepts that are simultaneously reworked in new deployments by contextuality and locality.

The examples of intersectionality and homonormativity show how these concepts were introduced to analyse specific situations in specific contexts. At the same time, they create a new political grammar subject to appropriation and application in different parts of the world by detailing the context of usage, and the limits to such utilisation. Deploying situated knowledges (Haraway 1991) already implies such epistemological clarity. These concepts also prove very useful in the sense that they enable other forms of connections with other feminisms around the

globe. This creation, not of a common language, but of a heteroglossia (Haraway 1991), that requires certain forms of mutual understanding, might help in the process of fighting neoliberalism, global inequalities, and discrimination by making possible an understanding incorporating concepts that are appropriated in variegated ways, and according to specific contexts, as I sought to convey within the context of the usage of hyphenation.

My argument for the concept of hyphenation aims to understand this flux of knowledges that are constructed in different locations and historical contexts, but nonetheless come together as tools to build other theories, a critique that concatenates knowledges coming from different traditions, building more complex and hence more complete explanations of the situations. In a sense, this hyphenation is akin to intersectionality, but its aim is to address the specific issue of hybridisation of knowledge, with a focus on contextualising and localising its use.

The limits of this multiplicity lie in context, rather than in any a priori foundationalism that warrants claims of conceptual purity. An example might be the different levels of appropriation of homonormativity that I used here to show how in a small European country the same concept is applied to describe relationships between the state and LGBT movements (Santos 2012), and simultaneously to account for the effects of laws on individuals and communities (Oliveira 2013; Oliveira, Costa and Nogueira 2013), and thereby exposing how neoliberalism shapes and constricts queers and other non-gender conforming people, their communities and social movements.

In this article, I have tried to give a sense of how hyphenated knowledges might be applied in the context of Portugal and Spain, and how these hybridisations are creating specific grammars to understand the complexity of political and social situations. Thus, in one sense, theories become part of other vocabularies and grammars. The political grammar of feminist and queer theories correspondingly becomes a troubled grammar allowing for different translations and hyphenations.

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## NOTES

1. The author thanks the two anonymous reviewers for their very useful comments.
2. A movement in Portugal [Screw the Troika! We want our lives back].
3. Interlinked with the First Republic that was proclaimed in 1910. In 1926, a *coup*

*d'état* created the conditions for a dictatorship lead by Salazar and after by Marcelo Caetano. Only in 1974, democracy was proclaimed.

4. The Marcellist Spring, as it was then known, was the period subsequent to Salazar's government and through to the democratic revolution.
5. See the website of the New Portuguese Letters project, <http://www.novascartasnovas.com/bases.html> for a complete bibliographic reference list on this topic.
6. My translation.
7. See Pereira 2014 for a discussion of such accounts
8. Always an important political mantra for Southern European governments.

## SAMMANFATTNING

Med kontextuell utgångspunkt i den nuvarande åtstramningspolitiken i Portugal och Spanien, studerar artikeln tre teoretiska bidrag genom att belysa hur begrepp har utvecklats på alternativa sätt och därigenom nått bortom de ursprungliga teoretiska hemvisterna. Tanken med *hyphenation* ("bindestreckande", att sätta bindestreck mellan), med begrepp och teorier som har olika ursprung men som länkas ihop för att förklara komplexiteten i olika situationer, är att hitta sätt att förstå feministiska och queerteorier som härrör från Portugal och Spanien. Texten belyser fallet med de tre Mariorna och visar varför deras ansats i boken *Novas Cartas Portuguesas* [*De tre Mariornas bok: Nya portugisiska brev*, övers. Kristina Fernandes, Forum 1976] inte kom att ingå i den feministiska teorikanonen, trots den internationella uppmärksamhet boken fick. Dessutom hävdar jag att sammanbindandet av feministiska och queerteorier visar hur begrepp som uppstått i andra sammanhang, såsom intersektionalitet och homonormativitet, numera används för att utforska förhållanden i det portugisiska och spanska samhället. Denna sammanbindningsprocess gör det möjligt att formulera en ny politisk grammatik för att hantera den nuvarande, bekymmersamma situationen i Sydeuropa.

**Keywords:** intersectionality, queer, feminist theory, Portugal, Spain