

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

This volume of *Barricade*, our third, is our first experimentation with a “themed” issue. In our call for submissions, we specifically solicited texts that somehow engaged the relationship between gender, sexuality, and politics. The constellation of texts that emerged in response to this call represent a variety of genres, discursive modalities, and political priorities, and it has been a pleasure to read them alongside one another and discover resonances and dissonances between them throughout the editing process.

One question that has remained present for us during the preparation of this issue is what kind of vision of “gender and sexuality” would be foregrounded through the works gathered below. Despite the aforementioned diversity of the texts, the majority most directly address in some way the experience of women and their political organizing, whether this is proclaimed as “feminist” or otherwise. This observation is not made in an attempt to

be reductive about these texts—as they themselves make clear, a focus on women as social subjects is hardly a parochializing gesture, in fact quite the opposite—nor is it meant to elide the experiences of subjects who would not identify as “women” in these texts and outside of them; it is made rather as an opportunity to reflect on the ways in which the burden of “gender” as a concept often falls upon women and feminized subjects. A direct address of “sexuality” in a fairly literal sense appears in fewer texts. The conjunction of “gender and sexuality” of course presents an enormous field of potential inquiry, and far from conceiving of this issue as any kind of definitive statement being made, we rather think of it as a rich beginning of a conversation that we hope to see continue.

Another brief observation must be made, which is that this is the most “Eurocentric” issue of *Barriade* to date—though any conception of “Europe” which may emerge

from the texts collected here is far from monolithic, instead perhaps highlighting its untenability as a simplistically deployed signifier. Indeed, many of these texts actively expose the fault lines within the ideological construct of the continent as such and the attendant elisions of divergent histories and uneven development within it. As a collective invested in publishing materials from as wide a range of perspectives—geographic, linguistic, historical, etc.—as possible, we remain attentive to the ways in which both contingency and the channels through which our call circulates affect the submissions we receive. Again, we hope that this issue spurs further and ever more expansive conversation.

Some of the texts which we wanted to include in this issue do not fit as neatly into the thematic paradigm as others, so we have decided to divide the issue into “thematic” and “non-thematic” sections: Titles in green font in the

online edition have been thematically collated. One could certainly make an argument that considerations of gender and sexuality ultimately subtend most textual and cultural production, and we certainly do not intend to suggest that the texts in the “non-thematic” section do not address gender and sexuality in any way. To that end, we hope that this organizational principle—another experiment for us—facilitates conversations between texts in both sections rather than inhibiting them. We have arranged each section so that a structural resonance provides an initial gesture toward this goal: Both begin with texts that were in some way collectively produced, and both end with transcriptions of roundtable discussions (which are taking the place of our usual interview feature in this issue). Overall, the texts gathered here stage a number of conversations and polemics from a multifaceted historical perspective, carrying a sense of urgency and provocation for our present moment.

The “thematic” section of the issue opens with a selection of collectively authored editorials from the eponymous journal of the *Mujeres Libres* [Free Women] published in the lead-up to and very beginning of the Spanish Civil War. Formed in response to the underrepresentation and sidelining of women in contemporary anarchist movements, the *Mujeres Libres* focalize the status of women in their project of imagining and shaping a future society. What these texts make abundantly clear, however, is that what one might call “women’s issues” and the place of women within social and political movements should not be treated separately as such, but as constitutive and essential parts of a greater struggle for a more equitable and emancipated future. The scope of their critique and agitation is by no means limited to concerns marked by gender; nor are their political imaginaries circumscribed by their situatedness.

Our featured work of fiction in this issue, Luisa Carnés's "Without a Compass" evocatively depicts a group of refugees fleeing the advancing forces of Francisco Franco during the Spanish Civil War, women and children sent ahead by men who remained to fight on the northern front. Carnés's imagery deftly traces the dehumanizing forces of war and the struggle to resist them as she complicates received tropes of nurturing maternity and authoritative masculinity. Written in 1956 from exile in Mexico, nearly two decades after the end of the Civil War, the story's vivid realism demonstrates that the significance of the historical circumstances that it represents is not consigned solely to this past moment, but continues to resonate in subsequent historical moments.

The next two texts in this section approach questions of gender and sexuality from more apparently theoretical and scholarly standpoints, though ones clearly moti-

vated by a deep investment with lived experience and political praxis. "Nazi-Fascism and Anal Repression," from Luciano Parinetto's 1977 tract *The Body and Revolution in Marx*, engages in a polemic with contemporary Marxist philosophy and political debates by focusing on corporeality and sexuality as central to an understanding of fascism (broadly defined) as well as the potential for actually emancipatory politics. Intensively citational, Parinetto's text draws on Freud, Deleuze & Guattari, Adorno, and others to lay bare the repression that characterizes all fascistic ideologies, including those that posit themselves as "anti-fascist."

The excerpt from Lilijana Burcar's *Restoration of Capitalism: Repatriarchalization of Society* delineates the impact that the fall of the Soviet Union, and the subsequent socioeconomic restructuring of formerly socialist states, has had on the legacies of and conversations around Marxist feminisms in

these contexts. Burcar argues that the erasure of the theoretical and practical achievements of socialist feminisms, resulting from both ideological maneuvers and the material removal or destruction of libraries and archives, has led to an uncritical embrace in leftist circles of what she calls Western European Marxist feminism. For Burcar, this tradition of Marxist feminism has been “overdetermined” by a fundamentally flawed dual-systems theory which understands capitalism and patriarchy as separate regimes. An alternate genealogy of Marxist feminism with its own critical tradition (Lenin, Kollontai, Zetkin, etc.) and history of lived practices under socialism rather shows that patriarchy is, in fact, a constitutive part of the capitalist system. Feminists must turn toward these legacies, Burcar argues, in order to resist the consolidation of neoliberal interests and the (re)patriarchalization of society in post-socialist contexts and beyond.

This first section of the issue concludes with a roundtable discussion among founding members of the Feminist Autonomous Centre for Research (FAC Research) in Athens, moderated by Julia Tulke. FAC Research was created as a space for activists, scholars, artists, and other community members to gather, collaborate, and organize. Its autonomy—from the state and from the neoliberal university—allows it to deploy varying models of knowledge production in the interest of democratizing “research,” engaging various publics, and resisting the ossification of language in discourses of “crisis.” The conversation is wide-ranging, addressing numerous aspects of how the Centre works to build awareness of histories of feminist practice and theory and to act within current and emergent feminist and queer spaces in Athens. Acts of translation across languages and discourses subtend much of this work—acts which are understood as fundamentally

transformative of both site of origin and site of reception, in aesthetic, epistemic, and political terms.

The “non-thematic” section of this issue opens with a selection of texts from *COUP: Anthology-Manifesto*, a collectively organized work which circulated online before being published in print. Produced in response to the de facto coup d'état in Brazil in 2016, *COUP* seeks to reframe the state's own narrative—that former President Dilma Rousseff was legally impeached and removed from office—and to explore the kinds of speech and actions that remain possible and politically effective under these conditions. The texts gathered here demonstrate a particular interest in poetics and the potential resonances of both speech and silence.

Zlatomir Zlatanov's “Digital Shit Missiles” also deploys the poetic to interrogate the contemporary moment and the limitations of available discourses in a comprehension of it. Zlatanov engages a vast range

of philosophers, cultural phenomena, and current events to launch a critique of the digital world-order, its post-factual discourses and alliances with fascistic ideologies. The text's fragmented structure and highly defamiliarizing style disorients the reader by design, demanding attention and reckoning while simultaneously withholding any explicit messages or meanings.

“Rebellious Postulations,” an excerpt from François Laruelle's 1978 *Beyond the Power Principle*, was written prior to his later exposition of “non-philosophy” for which he is best known, but a characteristic resistance to the discursive confines of a long tradition of Western continental philosophy and its fundamental precepts is already evident here. In this text, Laruelle polemicalizes with the contemporary, predominantly post-structural philosophical scene, theorizing minoritarian power and the possibility of new relations of power that break from dualistic paradigms.

The final texts in the issue, a curators' introduction and roundtable discussion taken from the catalog for the Wien Museum's 2019 exhibition *Red Vienna 1919-1934: Ideas, Debates, Praxes* reflect on the period of Social Democratic rule of the city, its achievements, its curtailed potential, and the way that it has been remembered and commemorated. The role of the museum as a space for the interpretation of contested histories is interrogated: In what ways do "museification" processes ossify complex and dynamic histories according to the needs of changing presents, and how is one to understand the relationship between the historical and the living city? According to historian Marie Jahoda, the Austro-Marxism under consideration here was not so much a theory as the realization of a new way of living, working, and learning for the modern, urban working class—a way of life that speaks in myriad ways to the express progressive desires of the present.

It bears remarking that the latter stages of the editing of this issue unfolded during a global pandemic, resulting in shifts in our ways of, and capacities for, thinking and working together. The Editorial Collective is deeply grateful to our wonderful contributors and editors-at-large whose labors and accommodations made the release of this issue possible.