

Emergence of the Hungarian homosexual movement in late refrigerator socialism

Anita Kurimay

Bryn Mawr College, USA

Judit Takács

Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Hungary

Sexualities

2017, Vol. 20(5–6) 585–603

© The Author(s) 2016

Reprints and permissions:

sagepub.co.uk/journalsPermissions.nav

DOI: 10.1177/1363460716665786

journals.sagepub.com/home/sex



Abstract

Based on archive research and interviews with activists who were affiliated with the early homosexual subculture in Budapest, this article traces the transformation of a secretive and socially invisible subculture (that was based mainly on sexual exchange between men) to the establishment of the first formal homosexual organization and the emerging homosexual movement at the end of the 1980s. The article illustrates how the emergence of HIV/AIDS worked as a catalyst in transforming the Hungarian gay subculture into a more organized homosexual movement. Rather than state-socialism being in crisis, it was a crisis of public health and perceived danger to the members of the community that instigated the creation of the first formal homosexual organization.

Keywords

HIV/AIDS, homosexual movement, Hungary, state-socialism

All that took place following the political change, a true gay liberation movement with civil rights protections, lobbying, discussions with politicians, publications, and gay marches. Such things were of course, completely off the table during those days. And they were even impossible to imagine.

Interviewee in 2014¹

Corresponding author:

Judit Takács, Centre for Social Sciences, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, H-1250 Budapest, P.O. Box 20, Hungary.

Email: takacs.judit@tk.mta.hu

This quotation offers a mere glimpse into a world during state-socialism, which was barely known to those outside of the Hungarian homosexual community. Since the fall of communism, this world is quickly being forgotten even by those who had lived within it.² At a time when reports about lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans*, queer (LGBTQ) issues, even in East-Central Europe, have become standard features of the media and more generally public discourse, it is difficult to imagine the intense silence that surrounded the subject of homosexuality prior to 1989.³

In today's sexually fixated world where one's sexuality has become a central feature of personal identity and questions about LGBTQ rights are considered as legitimate human rights issues, it is difficult to reconstruct a world when (homo)sexuality was not necessarily a central feature of individual identity, or where the idea of fighting for (homo)sexual rights was non-existent even on an imaginary level. It is just such a world that this article aims to reconstruct: what was it like to be a homosexual behind the Iron Curtain; and what led to the establishment of the first homosexual organization in Hungary?

This article examines the relationship between late socialism and the nascent homosexual movement in Hungary during the second half of the 1980s.⁴ More specifically, by tracing the transformation of Hungary's invisible and secretive homosexual community into a more visible group, and examining the establishment of the first homosexual organization, it considers the complex relationship that existed between homosexuals and the late socialist state. In addition to archival materials, the article is based on oral interviews with activists affiliated with the homosexual subculture in Budapest during the late socialist era.

In the first section of the article we examine the life of homosexuals under socialism and address the precarious coexistence of homosexual identity and the constraints of everyday life, especially during the 1970s and 1980s. We argue that the particular lived realities under state-socialism, namely state surveillance, the lack of private space and deep-seated homophobia, played crucial roles in shaping the lives of Hungarian homosexuals and their subculture. Consequently, even as official attitudes during the 1980s became more relaxed and queerness (i.e. non-normative heterosexual sexual practices, such as being non-monogamous or seeking out extramarital and/or same-sex sex relations) was more tolerated, homosexuals continued to be constrained by both private and public realities and cultural norms. Thus, in contrast to most western European countries, where the success of gay activism and overall of gay liberation movements were intimately tied to changing public attitudes towards sexuality, including non-normative and homosexualities, the success of the first Hungarian gay organization occurred not only in an atmosphere of persisting public homophobia and disdain for homosexuality: the gay rights movement in Hungary was also affected and constrained by the particularities of late socialist realities.

Accordingly, the second part of the article contextualizes the formation of an organized Hungarian homosexual movement. We argue that it was a crisis of public health and perceived danger to the members of the community, rather than state-socialism being in crisis, that motivated the creation of the first formal

homosexual organization. Surprisingly this organization became one of the very first NGOs allowed to be established and operate under state-socialism at the end of the 1980s. The emergence of HIV/AIDS acted as a catalyst in transforming the Hungarian gay subculture into a more organized gay movement. The success of the gay movement in establishing Homeros-Lambda with official endorsement was, with the exception of East Germany, unprecedented within the Eastern Bloc, and reflected the unique pragmatism of late Hungarian state-socialism.

Hungarian homosexuals and the constraining realities of state-socialism

Until recently historians and social scientists have paid limited attention to gay and lesbian movements within the Eastern Bloc. This is particularly the case with regard to state-socialism's connection to homosexual activists and the gay movement in the period between 1945 and 1990 (notable exceptions include Essig, 1999; Evans and Cook, 2014; Healey, 2001; Kulpa and Mizielińska, 2011).⁵ Despite the growing interests in contemporary LGBTQ politics in the region, as well as the ongoing historicizing of life under socialism, gay/sexual politics and socialism are rarely examined together. The important exception is the work of Josie McLellan (2011, 2012), and there is new exciting work on Soviet Russia (Stella, 2015), Czechoslovakia (Sokolova, 2014) and Hungary (Takács, 2015), too. Simultaneously there has been a burgeoning literature on gay social movements in the West. These works underscore how gay and lesbian organizations in West Europe and North America gained new-found momentum during the late 1960s and early 1970s (Adam et al., 1999; Duberman et al., 1989). It was in the contexts of the anti-establishment and utopian ideas of the New Left, along with the anti-war, civil rights, and student movements that gay liberation activism became increasingly visible across the western world. Consequently, demands for decriminalization of homosexuality and ending the legal and social marginalization of lesbian and gay communities were embedded in the ideology of counter-culture movements (Klimke and Scharloth, 2008). While the social and political movements of the 1960s were an international phenomenon, the growing visibility of homosexual subcultures in the West was intimately tied to capitalism and a rapidly expanding consumer culture (D'Emilio, 1983; Snitow et al., 1983).

Political and social life varied widely across the Eastern Bloc during late socialism. In Hungary following the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, the communist leadership decided to appease the population by allowing limited economic privatization and greater personal freedom than most of their counterparts within the Eastern Bloc. The Hungarian Revolution in 1956 was initially an attempt to introduce reforms within state-socialism. It turned into a revolution for Hungary's independence and was promptly crushed by the Soviet forces. The years immediately following the revolution were accompanied by retaliation and terror. However, during the 1960s a new regime was gradually introduced – what came to be known as 'fridszider szocializmus' or refrigerator-socialism

(Vásárhelyi, 1998: 112). This concept referred both to the rapidly growing access to consumer goods such as refrigerators and television sets that used to be considered luxury items, and to the fact that strict totalitarian state control was replaced by a milder form of authoritarianism. This relaxation of control resulted in increased space for private life (Takács, 2014). In addition, the state also invested in social goods such as pensions and healthcare that, along with a primarily state-sponsored grey market and access to consumer products, earned Hungary the nickname ‘the happiest barrack in the Eastern Bloc’ (James, 2007: 177). People could increasingly carve out personal space and spend time in informal groups free of the strict state control. Young people were especially active in trying to create their own private space. Yet, in Hungary, as in the rest of the Eastern Bloc, the political radicalism of the 1960s’s in the West barely made an impact.

Prior to 1961, homosexuality was not only a social taboo but under the Hungarian Penal Code also a criminal activity (Kurimay, 2012; Takács, 2007a). Hungary criminalized sex between men in 1878, closely following paragraph 175 of the German Penal Code. While some countries did not criminalize homosexuality at all most outlawed only sodomy between males. Accordingly, paragraph 241 of the Hungarian Penal Code criminalized sexual acts between men, and bestiality as *természet elleni fajtalanság* ‘perversion against nature’ or ‘unnatural fornication’. They were punishable by up to one year of incarceration typically of the least severe form.

The conceptualization of homosexuality followed a general pan-European pattern. Prior to the criminalization of sex between men, homosexuality had been defined as a sin. Beginning in the 19th century, homosexuality was increasingly seen as an illness, while at the same time also being considered a form of social deviance (Takács, 2007a). Following the establishment of state-socialism, homosexuals continued to be seen as ‘unreliable elements’, and the police monitored homosexuals and their known meeting places (Kurimay, 2012). Like elsewhere in the Eastern Bloc, homosexuality in Hungary was deemed ‘a perversion, pathology or deviance’ (Herzog 2008: 76).⁶

Although the exact number of cases is difficult to pin down, it is clear that homosexuals were prosecuted in unprecedented numbers throughout the 1950s. According to the records of the Budapest Criminal Courts, which are still not entirely processed for the communist years, between 1949 and 1962 there were approximately 800 cases involving charges of ‘unnatural fornication’. From 1948 to 1956 during the Rákosi era (named for Mátyás Rákosi, the General Secretary of the Hungarian Communist Party who liked to refer to himself as Stalin’s best pupil) homosexuality was not simply a crime against morality but a crime against socialism (Pünkösti, 2004). Consistent with the terror and repression that the Rákosi system imposed on anyone who dissented from the official Stalinist line, homosexuals were deemed enemies of the socialist nation (Gyarmati 2011, Gyarmati and Valuch 2009).

The political transition which eased the grip of the communist state over society during the 1960s brought the first changes in the relationship between

homosexuality and the Penal Code since 1878. Consensual homosexual activity between adult men was decriminalized in 1961. Additionally, the definition of potential perpetrators and victims also changed in 1961. Gender equality was introduced in that both men and women could be prosecuted equally for ‘unnatural fornication’, and bestiality was no longer criminalized.

At the same time the new Penal Code held same-sex sexual relationships to a different set of ‘standards’ from those of heterosexual relationships and provided legal means for the authorities to press charges against homosexuals. The age of consent for same-sex relationships, irrespective of one’s sex, was set at 20 years of age, considerably higher than 14 years, which was the age of consent for heterosexual relationships. Furthermore, the Code introduced a special clause – ‘perversion against nature conducted in a scandalous manner’ – for which one could be sentenced up to three years in prison. In 1978 the age of consent for homosexual relationships was reduced to 18 years old. It was not until 2002 that the age of consent was set at 14 years old for all consensual sexual relations (Takács, 2007a, 2015). The differing ages of consent and the elusiveness of the definition of ‘scandalous manner’ provided the grounds for state authorities such as the police to keep those accused of homosexual practices under close control. The policing took place regardless of the fact that records in the Budapest City Archive after 1962 show a significant drop in criminal charges at the Budapest Criminal Courts. Between 1962 and 1989 there were approximately 56 cases with charges under §241 and §242 of the Penal Code. Ironically, the different set of legal standards for homosexuals and heterosexuals also provided opportunities for extortionists.

While the Kádár era (named after János Kádár, the General Secretary of the Hungarian Communist Party between 1956 and 1988) seemed to have brought a halt to the aggressive prosecution of same-sex sexual behaviour, the long tradition of specialized state surveillance on homosexuality could continue after 1961. There is evidence that decriminalization and legal changes did not prevent authorities from continuing to compile ‘homosexual inventories’, a practice that had been part of regular police work in urban areas since the early 20th century (Pál, 1927). The registering of gay men provided information on potential blackmail victims and could also serve as a method of coercion aimed at homosexual men forcing them to become police informers. Given the existence of entrenched cultural homophobia, the resulting internalized shame, and the fear of being outed, the police could use an individual’s homosexuality to pressure them into informing on their acquaintances and loved ones.

Public attitudes towards homosexuality closely followed the official view. Sexually desiring one’s own gender was considered ‘sick’, a medical aberration, by a majority of the Hungarian people (Eröss, 1984; Zombori, 1986). Popular views and beliefs about homosexuality, moreover, seemed to be gendered. Whereas female homosexuals or lesbians were still considered to be women, this was not the case for male homosexuals. Accordingly, in the eyes of contemporaries, a male homosexual was a *buzi* (‘faggot’ or ‘poof’ – Hungarian derogatory word for homosexual) and not a real man. This perception underscores the strict boundaries and

insecurities of the exclusively heteronormative scripts of Hungarian masculinity. But although the regime as well as the public seemed to show more tolerance toward lesbians, overall both male and female homosexuality was seen as despicable (Borgos, 2015).

At the same time, not unlike in western Europe and elsewhere, Hungarian homosexual men and women had to reckon with social and economic structural barriers that were mostly unknown and rarely experienced by their heterosexual counterparts. For example, lesbians and gay men had to navigate their life within a paternalistic state-socialist system predicated on ‘socialist (heterosexual) monogamy’ that shaped both public and private life. One of the unique aspects of Hungarian society under state-socialism in terms of shaping sexual morals and personal relationships was the lack of access to private space. Because of the severe housing shortage, only those who were married had a realistic chance of securing an apartment (Győri and Gábor, 1990; Nagy, 2014). Given the circumstances, marriage served not only as an economic and social safety net but also as a means of securing basic privacy. By the early 1980s, however, the so-called *lakáskérdés* (apartment question), which referred to the lack of access to private space even if one was married, became a nationwide social issue (Horváth, 2012). Changing demographic patterns posed an infrastructural problem for the paternalistic state that was supposed to take care of its citizens. Not only were Hungarians living longer but the children born during the Rátkó era in the 1950s were coming of age.⁷ In addition, young people’s awareness of their parent’s marital problems and unhappiness and rapidly rising divorce rates, made them increasingly less willing to marry in order to have their own space.

What these conditions meant for homosexuals was twofold. First, considering that securing an apartment had become difficult even for married couples, most homosexuals had little hope of obtaining a flat. Being single and without children put them on the bottom of waiting lists. Second, being free of the social and economic demands of marriage allowed lesbians and gay men more time to both fulfil sexual desires and to seek out others in the hope of finding a partner. Although it is difficult to obtain precise statistics, it appears that there were many homosexual men who decided to get married to a woman because of social pressure and internalized homophobia. Alternatively there were some men who recognized their homosexuality only after they were already married. For example, in 1988 Lajos Romsauer, a psychiatrist, leading gay activist, and the divorced father of a 17-year-old girl, stated that ‘two-thirds of Hungary’s homosexuals are married, which causes a lot of problems and neuroses’ (Lewis, 1988).

At the most basic level, homosexuals had to make themselves instantly recognizable to each other, and at the same time remain invisible to the heterosexuals around them (Erőss, 1984). Finding information and locating meeting places and other homosexuals were initially challenging. Yet according to both contemporary sources and also recent interviewees, once homosexuals located their clandestine subculture, they found an emotionally and materially supportive community (Zombori, 1986). This was true for both male and female homosexuals (Borgos, 2015).

Stigmatized by society as a medical defect and rendered invisible and taboo in the state-controlled media, homosexuality seemed to gain increasing visibility by the late 1970s, a reality causing concerns for the state officials (Takács, 2015). The one and only study of sexuality conducted during the state-socialist era asserted that by the 1970s 'the homosexual' lifestyle was considered as one of the 'typical' and 'widespread' forms of sexual relationships in Hungary (Heleszta and Rudas, 1978). Sociologists Heleszta and Rudas at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences ran a study between 1969 and 1971 that featured a homosexual character as one of the eight most common sexual scripts within Hungarian society. The nature of the sexual-sociological survey and the responses of the 250 university student and young workers surveyed are indicative of the perception of homosexuals at that time. By including homosexuality as one of the standard Hungarian sexual types (along with the virgin, the half-virgin, the unwed single mother, the prostitute, the womanizer and the masturbator) the researchers acknowledged the prevalence of homosexuals. The results of the survey, which was finally published in 1978, underscored the homophobia of working-class respondents and the greater acceptance of homosexuals by educated females. In addition to the perception of homosexuality as a medical illness, the responses also reflected long-held attitudes about homosexuality, namely that it was a sign of moral corruption.

The police of the time shared the belief that the increasing visibility of homosexuals was evidence of growing moral corruption. Official documents from the late 1970s reveal that state and police authorities, lacking knowledge of the origin or causes of homosexuality, worried about its spread especially among young boys and adolescents. The police view seems to have been that exposure to homosexuality would fuel immoral behaviour. This belief is explicitly stated in a report describing juvenile and adolescence crime. According to this report, young people who are exposed to contact with homosexuals (along with prostitutes and adult criminals) were not only more likely to become criminals but by 'returning to their environment they also demoralized their peers and host institutions' (BM ORFK, 1977: 12). A documentary film on prostitutes from the late 1980s dramatized that homosexuality was an infection by depicting young boys from the countryside as especially vulnerable in danger of 'catching the homosexual bug'.⁸ Consequently, while homosexuality itself was thought to be a biological or developmental 'defect', being exposed to homosexuals especially in the case of troubled youth, was seen as a gateway to criminal(ized) behaviour. Given the pervasiveness of these attitudes the chances of either public acceptance or official recognition of the homosexual community was in the words of one of the interviewees 'impossible even on an imaginary level'.⁹

State-socialism and an emerging homosexual community

In the late 1970s, police reports began to call attention to what they perceived as a visible rise of homosexual activities in the Hungarian capital. As one police report

stated, ‘according to the registries, operative data and additional information, there are about fifty thousand *known* Hungarian homosexuals, with forty-five thousands living in Budapest. The evident rise of homosexual prostitution is a new phenomenon: which in terms of its scale is comparable to heterosexual prostitution’ (BM ORFK, 1988: 4). There seemed to be an increasing number of ‘known’ homosexuals, a growing demand for same-sex sex, and, most troubling from the police’s perspective, a rising sexual assault rate among men. The fact that the police were concerned with sexual assault rates within the homosexual community is ironic considering the lack of official attention to violence within heterosexual relationships. (For instance, the same penal code that decriminalized homosexuality in Act No V of the 1961 Penal Code allowed immunity to male perpetrators of violence in heterosexual relationships: as long as the violence occurred within marriage or in relationships that would end in marriage there seemed to be very little official concern – Takács, 2007a.)

One cause of the increased number of homosexuals according to the authorities was the emergence of a new generation of gay and lesbian individuals. Unlike their predecessors the new generation no longer accepted a completely closeted lifestyle. The following is an excerpt from a 1988 police report analysing this unprecedented phenomena. It is a prescient foreshadowing of later efforts to establish a homosexual advocacy organization:

The likely prelude to this [rise of homosexuals and homosexual prostitution] has to do with the fact that in contrast to the previously closed circle of closeted homosexuals there seems to be a newer, younger generation who are open about their [sexual] inclinations and seek equal recognition and acceptance to heterosexual relationships. To this end, they leave their formal isolation and thanks to the opportunities of new multiple public forums, these younger homosexuals advocate and speak up, demanding recognition for their lifestyle. (BM ORFK, 1988: 4)

The police report also indicates that despite police surveillance, the danger of blackmailers and being stigmatized by society, homosexual men and, to a much lesser degree, lesbians cultivated a growing subculture (Borgos, 2015).

Although homosexuality had been decriminalized and the visibility of homosexuals was on the rise, no gay organizations were allowed by the state and there was no officially recognized homosexual movement in Hungary. This reality was a characteristic of the entire Eastern Bloc where Communist Parties, in accordance with state-socialist rule, prohibited the formation of any kind of NGOs, including homosexual organizations. Perhaps as a result of its closeness to the West, East Germany seemed to be the only exception to this generalization. Following the decriminalization of male same-sex activity in 1968 the East German state provided increasing space for gay activism (McLellan, 2012).

By the mid-1980s in Hungary, homosexuality was regularly discussed in public forums despite continuing official and public stigmatization. Whether in the contexts of the critically acclaimed film of *Egy másra Nézve* [*Another Way*] that

featured a lesbian love story or newspaper articles on the origins of homosexuality, homosexuality was becoming part of public discourse. A 1984 Radio Free Europe report on the 'changing attitudes toward homosexuals in eastern Europe' focused on the popularity of the book *Furcsa Párok: a homoszexuálisok titkai nyomában* [*Strange Couples: Tracing the Secret Footsteps of Homosexuals*] (Eröss, 1984). Noting that the book had sold over 40,000 copies in Hungary, the Radio Free Europe report concluded that in contrast to elsewhere in the Eastern Bloc such as Poland or Czechoslovakia, in Hungary as in East Germany homosexuality was openly discussed.

As homosexuals in Europe achieved greater state and societal toleration and were more open about their sexuality during the 1980s, gay activists attempted to contact various East European clandestine homosexual organizations as well as to join existing West European ones. In 1981 the *Homosexuelle Initiative* (HOSI) Wien, a Vienna-based Austrian gay rights NGO proposed the establishment of the East European Information Pool (EEIP) at the International Lesbian and Gay Association's (ILGA) conference in Turin.¹⁰ The EEIP, which was created by HOSI Wien on behalf of ILGA in 1982, facilitated regular, albeit mainly informal, personal information exchanges between Austrian and East European activists. It also organized the first eastern and south-eastern European sub-regional ILGA conference in Budapest in November 1987. An ILGA report described the conference as a 'clandestine two-day meeting in Budapest that gathered around 35 participants from Hungary, Poland, GDR [German Democratic Republic], CSSR [Czechoslovak Socialist Republic], Yugoslavia and some western countries' (ILGA, 2001: 35).

Although these attempts at organization both nationally and regionally were important, in the context of Hungary it was the appearance of HIV/AIDS that proved to be the main catalyst for change. As early as 1985 an official report was presented to the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party on the AIDS-related international situation and the proposed Hungarian measures to address it (KB, 1985). According to the report, 'Investigation of at-risk population groups' was launched in the autumn of 1984. Until August 1985, 'these tests concluded with negative results when the blood samples of two homosexual men proved infection'. This finding led to a decision to institute regular screening among 'vulnerable populations' and 'groups at risk'. Alarmed by the possibility of a 'gay disease' epidemic in Hungary, state-socialist authorities now saw the establishment of a homosexual organization as a necessity to prevent a national health crisis. News from West Europe about the fast-spreading disease fed growing official concerns. Notwithstanding the fact that the actual numbers of Hungarian HIV/AIDS cases remained relatively low, especially in contrast to West European countries,¹¹ the perceived danger prompted Hungarian authorities to act. Paradoxically West European influence was more important for homosexual organizing by foreshadowing a national health crisis and prompting the state-socialist leadership to act than were the outreach and cultural contacts of established West European gay and lesbian organizations.

In January 1988 the Hungarian Ministry of Health issued theoretical permission for establishing a homosexual organization. When making this new policy public, a ministry official stated on Hungarian television that:

such an organization would be justified 'among other things by the fact that homosexual practices may be hotbeds of disease' . . . he was referring not only to AIDS, but also to herpes, hepatitis and syphilis. He said such a group could help reach people at risk of catching these diseases. (Radio Free Europe, 1988)

Following this announcement there was an increasing number of media reports focusing on the issue. An article in January 1988, for example, raised the possibility that a national homosexual organization would be formed, and estimates that homosexuals made up about 3–5% of the Hungarian population (Légrády, 1988). In February, an interview was published with 'Dr X', a psychiatrist and leading gay activist who later came out as the first openly homosexual person in Hungary (Délmagyarország, 1988). Another interview with 'Dr X' appeared the next month in a weekly magazine. It provided general information on homosexuality such as the fact that 'in civilised countries 5% of the population [is] considered to be homosexual' and 'usually 70 to 75% of homosexuals live in [heterosexual] marriages' (Dalia, 1988: 28).

In an interview with Lajos Romsauer, alias 'Dr X', published in the June 1988 *Los Angeles Times*, he claimed to be the only Hungarian who had found the courage to declare his homosexuality to the media. The article also reported Romsauer's statement that it had taken three years to obtain permission to form the Homeros-Lambda National Association of Homosexuals, the first Hungarian gay and lesbian organization (Lewis, 1988). This breakthrough occurred in part because of the political openness that accompanied Soviet-style *glasnost*, a development throughout the communist block that had particular effects in Hungary. It was due primarily however, to official concerns about the spread of AIDS: without this public health emergency the association would not have been allowed to form when it did. In the words of Scott Long, witness to some of the formative developments of the early Hungarian and Romanian gay and lesbian movement in person:

Hungarian communism apologized itself to death between 1986 and 1989, in a phenomenon virtually unique within the bloc . . . As part of this obliging self-annihilation, in 1988 the government promulgated a Law on Associations to allow political parties. One of the first groups to attempt to register under the law was a gay and lesbian organization, Homeros Lambda. A minor scandal was raised by those who opined that the law was meant for 'politics, not perverts' – but the group was finally allowed to register as an association devoted mainly to AIDS-prevention. (Long, 1999:251)

Taking Mikhail Gorbachev's call for *glasnost* to new heights, the Hungarian state-socialist leadership made concessions to the public to atone for the socialist

system's past mistakes and missteps. These concessions were not without critics from communist hard liners. Yet rather than interpreting the government officials' decision to grant Homeros-Lambda legal recognition as a portent of state-socialism's ultimate demise, one could also view the action as a sign of the system's pragmatism and flexibility.

Fighting AIDS was a top priority in the founding charter of Homeros-Lambda. It emphasized that some 6% of the Hungarian population is gay or lesbian and

[w]hile the inclination of such a considerable minority to separate or even to hide itself from the rest of society is far from desirable in any event, it is definitely dangerous in the present situation, since in western civilization it is precisely in the ranks of this minority that AIDS has surfaced. (Vermes, 1989: 54)

In Hungary providing a platform for a degree of public homosexual visibility went hand in hand with government efforts to enhance the 'supervisability' of homosexual activities in epidemiologically dangerous times. In the (homo)sexual political landscape of the late 1980s we can also witness the strategic use of the 'layering of stigma' (Mill et al., 2010: 1471) – stigmatization deriving from fear of HIV virus transmission and contracting a disease as well as from the social disapproval of homosexual behaviour and lifestyles.

From the party leaders' perspectives, allowing the establishment of an official homosexual organization was a pragmatic solution to two pressing problems: the spread of HIV/AIDS and the rising numbers of 'out' homosexuals. By allocating the responsibility of sexual education to an explicitly gay organization, state officials hoped to reach a wide spectrum of the homosexual community and prevent an AIDS epidemic. At the same time, having one organization representing the gay and lesbian community made surveillance of this community more efficient for the authorities.

From the perspective of gay and lesbian activists, while the fear of AIDS was a valid concern, it was seen principally as providing an opportunity to create a gay organization, like the ones already existing in East Germany and the West (McLellan, 2012; Weeks, 1981). Although the fear of HIV/AIDS primarily concerned gay men, lesbians were active in the emerging homosexual organization. Homeros-Lambda intended to include both male and female members, even if from the onset it was clear that the organization would serve gay male interests over lesbians. Gay male primacy was reflected in the content of their short-lived magazine, *Hom-Eros*, as well as in the first unofficial issues of the only Hungarian gay magazine, *Mások* in 1989.¹² Nevertheless, lesbians looked to the founding of the organization as an opportunity to establish visibility and to identify each other. During the 1990s Hungarian lesbians established the Labrizs Lesbian Association, an organization exclusively for women. Ultimately, the principal factors motivating the leadership of the gay movement were: the creation of protected and safe communal places for gay men and lesbians, providing and

disseminating information, and representing members of the community within the larger society.

While the formal recognition of the first homosexual organization was contingent on the state-socialist authorities' fear of the public health threat posed by AIDS, the leaders of Homeros-Lambda rather than the state played the decisive role in creating the organization. Manipulating fears about a potential national public health crisis was essential in order to gain the approval of the authorities. A founding member and former secretary of Homeros-Lambda concurred:

In Hungary there was not a big panic about AIDS, but for what other reasons could have the [Homeros-Lambda] organization have asked for legitimacy from the authorities? It [AIDS] was a good point of reference because allowing the establishment of our organization would play an important role in the prevention of AIDS. The founders of the organization did not take seriously the notion that the sole and most important purpose for the establishment of our organization would be to fight against HIV. Instead we/I believed that while it was a very important but overall marginal question, we were going to make it a large issue for the authorities, something that we could bait them with. But for us, the most important matter was to make the organization a gay liberation movement – equality, information exchange and to create a space for the gay community.¹³

The homosexual community was to manage the opportunities that arose during the late 1980s and gradually were emboldened to ask for things formerly unimaginable in state-socialist Hungary. The fact that the president of the Homeros-Lambda sent an official letter to the Chairman of the Presidential Council of the Hungarian People's Republic about on-going police harassment of the gay community is only the most conspicuous indication of the self-empowerment of the gay community:

Our association is the legal representative of the largest Hungarian minority. Those of us who have undertaken a thankless role against all prejudices in order to help the social integration of members of such a large and heterogeneous number [of people] and to take up the fight in the interests of society against a dangerous disease, as well as in order to make the democratization of the Hungarian People's Republic more credible, we object to our association being constantly harassed as criminals by the Hungarian police. We seek your help in order to curb these illegal actions of the police. (Homeros-Lambda, 1989)

Conceptually, most members of the homosexual community as well as the leadership of its organization envisioned a Hungarian homosexual movement that existed within the confines of state-socialism. Their aim of achieving greater societal and official acceptance for homosexuals was seen as concomitant with and firmly embedded within the on-going liberalization of the state-socialist political system. Achieving greater freedom and social acceptance for the community and

demanding protection instead of harassment from the police, were to be accomplished by allying with reform-minded authorities of the Hungarian state.

The majority of Hungarian homosexuals, like their heterosexual counterparts, were unlikely to challenge the existing political system. Many were probably unaware of the structural discriminations that existed against same-sex relationships and, therefore, unprepared to articulate dissenting arguments. The following short excerpt from an interview with the former secretary of Homeros-Lambda illuminates the self-perception of homosexuals within state-socialist society:

I believe that we [Hungarian gays] did not feel too badly, because we were not aware of the oppression we had been under . . . We accepted that homosexuals were secondary citizens. It was natural that we could not get married or that we could not have children. Perhaps not everybody, but the great majority, including myself, believed that this was self-evident . . . while that the entire country was oppressed was a fact: the fact that we [gays] had even fewer rights than the rest of society was just not evident.

This striking post-1989 assessment of gay consciousness during the period of state-socialism illuminates how the homosexual community could coexist with the rest of mainstream society without feeling explicitly marginalized. It was only the introduction of western liberal ideas and a new vocabulary of rights leading to the democratic changes after 1989 that ultimately fuelled widespread feelings of marginalization among the LGBTQ community. The statement of the former secretary also sheds light on why Hungarian gay men and lesbians having grown up in a society that was deeply homophobic and strictly heteronormative could accept institutional and structural discrimination against same-sex couples and relationships and view it as natural and self-evident.

Along with deep-seated cultural homophobia and police surveillance and harassment, the gay community suffered a number of other structural and institutional barriers many of which they took for granted or did not recognize as particularly oppressive. The fact that homosexuals were denied the right to a legally recognized relationship, or to have a family, or even to cohabit in the same apartment, was accepted as a part of life. Empirical findings on the value orientation of Hungarian gay men indicated that even by the late 1990s the accepted heteronormative definition of family along with the practical difficulties involved in creating a family convinced many that family-like arrangements were unobtainable (Takács, 2007b). Perhaps as a consequence of these challenges to the establishment of intimate relationships and family life, gay men especially developed other ways of coping and meeting emotional needs.

As the processes of liberalization accelerated during the 1980s, it became possible to 'drop out' from socialist society even if it was only temporary and took place under surveillance. Consequently, the creation of private and ultimately of safe gay (male) public spaces facilitated an alternative way of life for homosexuals. Members of the community described it as a 'hedonistic' culture that became central to gay male life in Hungary and elsewhere.

Conclusion

In social movement literature 20th-century West European homosexual movements are often pictured as internally oriented. Their aim is the '(re)production of a collective identity that is primarily constituted in within-group interaction' and thus not too responsive to changes in the political opportunity structure (Kriesi, 1995: 95). This is why early movements usually followed rather than preceded the liberalization of opinions within society and politics. Certainly this is what happened in Hungary at the end of the 1980s as well. In contrast to social movements in the West in the 1960s and 1970s, it would not make much sense to distinguish 'between politicized identities (constituting a movement) and purely subcultural identities—often formed in the commercial subculture—that do not challenge the outside world' (Kriesi et al., 1995: 165).

The Hungarian homosexual community did not oppose or attempt to fight to undermine the state-socialist system. Nor did they necessarily even envision a socialist society in which homosexuals would have the same civil and social rights as their heterosexual counterparts. Most Hungarian homosexuals and their organization sought only to function within existing structures of late socialism. Based on original archive and media documents and interviews with activists who were affiliated with the emerging homosexual movement in Budapest, this article has attempted to analyse and explain the precarious coexistence of the constraints of everyday life during the late socialist era and the longing for membership in an underground subculture. Lack of private space, the surveillance of public spaces and private lives along with the widespread stigmatization of homosexuality imposed serious burdens on men and women attracted to members of their own sex. However, according to police documents from the 1980s, there was a new generation of self-declared homosexuals who gradually became more comfortable in being open about their lifestyle. This was particularly the case in Budapest, where from the late 1970s, men could increasingly find places not *just* for sex with other men but also for social interactions.

Furthermore, our research found that the establishment and increasing visibility of the Hungarian homosexual movement was not primarily a result of democratization or a crisis within socialism. Instead, we argued that it was the emergence of HIV/AIDS that worked as a catalyst that transformed the Hungarian homosexual subculture into a more organized gay and lesbian movement and how the strategic use of layered stigma (of homosexuality and HIV/AIDS) and a certain degree of calculated self-stigmatization proved to be useful in facilitating these developments. Rather than socialism being in crisis, it was a crisis of public health and the perceived danger of AIDS that instigated the creation of the Homeros-Lambda National Association of Homosexuals, the first formal gay and lesbian organization. Seen in this light, the prompt reaction of state-socialist authorities in allowing the establishment of a formal gay organization was less of a sign of late state-socialism's 'inevitable' demise than of its flexibility and effectiveness in dealing with a potential national health crisis. That other countries within the Eastern Bloc denied similar requests by homosexual organizations, despite the growing

international concerns about HIV/AIDS supports our view of the unique flexibility of late Hungarian state-socialism.¹⁴

The potential of a national health epidemic created a relatively open opportunity structure within late socialism that the leaders of Hungarian homosexual movement could take advantage of. Relaxing official attitudes were key for Homeros-Lambda's official recognition. At the same time, our article has concluded that the establishment of Homeros-Lambda in 1988 and the initial politicization of the homosexual subculture took place not necessarily in opposition to state-socialism. Working within the system did not mean however, that the homosexual community was at the mercy of authorities. The article highlights the considerable agency of Hungarian homosexual activists in navigating space within late socialist Hungary. Reinforcing official fears of an impending public health crisis, the leaders of the homosexual community began to request previously unimaginable freedoms and were eventually granted them.

Funding

The research leading to these results has received funding from the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund under grant agreement no. 105414 for the research project Social History of Homosexuality in 20th-century Hungary before 1990.

Notes

1. Research interview conducted by the authors in 2014.
2. A note on terminology: throughout the article we use state-socialism and socialism interchangeably to refer to the political system between 1948 and 1989 during which, under the leadership of the Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt (Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, Hungary was part of the so-called Eastern Bloc.
3. We use the contested term 'homosexual(s)' to denote same-sex attracted people (mainly men though) in a historical context when homosexuality served more often as a reference point for external attribution (by authorities) than internal identification – even though the term was originally coined in the context of political resistance (Takács, 2004), from the late 19th century it became heavily medicalized, reflecting a pathological perception of homosexuality and people labelled by others as homosexuals.
4. There are hardly any historical studies that address the relationship between Hungarian state-socialism and non-normative sexuality. The few recent exceptions include a book on *Sex and Socialism* (Tóth and Murai, 2014), and articles including the 'Secret years. Hungarian lesbian herstory, 1950s–2000s' (Borgos, 2015), 'Disciplining gender and (homo)sexuality in state-socialist Hungary in the 1970s' (Takács, 2015) and one about the role of the 'Neurology Committee' in the 1961 decriminalization of homosexuality in Hungary (Takács and PTóth, 2016).
5. In addition there have been some publications in native languages within the respective East-Central European countries – see, for example, the Hungarian life-history collections based on the documentary films, 'Secret Years' and 'Hot Men, Cold Dictatorships', directed by Mária Takács (Borgos, 2011; Hanzli et al., 2015).
6. The exception is East Germany where authorities from the 1960s showed much greater toleration towards homosexuality. However, even in East Germany as McLellan (2011)

- illustrates, the thawing of official attitudes towards homosexuality did not necessarily translate into greater visibility or less homophobic attitudes until the 1980s.
7. The ‘Ratkó era’, named after Anna Ratkó, Minister of Welfare 1949–1950, Minister of Health 1950–1953, is a reference to a period in the 1950s (especially between 1953 and 1956) when abortion was strictly prohibited.
 8. Expression used in *KI – film a prostituáltokról* [*KI – Film about Prostitutes*] (1989) directed by György Dobray.
 9. Research interview conducted by the authors.
 10. The authors are grateful to Kurt Krickler and Andrzej Selerowicz for providing valuable first-hand information on HOSI Wien and EEIP activities in East Europe in the 1980s.
 11. For example, in the UK by the mid-1980s HIV diagnoses reached 2000 cases. Source: www.avert.org, 2015.
 12. *Mások* was published by the Lambda Budapest Association (established by founding members of the Homeros-Lambda who had reservations about its functioning) between 1991 and 2009. Though in theory *Mások* was open to lesbians, in practice it became an almost exclusively gay magazine, made almost exclusively by gay men primarily for a gay male audience.
 13. Interview with ‘Misi’, the former secretary of Homeros-Lambda in 2014.
 14. For instance the Polish government in 1988 denied the official registration attempt of Warszawski Ruch Homoseksualny – Warsaw Gay Movement (Kostrzewa and Urban, 2010).

References

- Adam BD, Duyvendak JW and Krouwel A (eds) (1999) *The Global Emergence of Gay and Lesbian Politics: National Imprints of a Worldwide Movement*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Borgos A (ed.) (2011) *Eltitkolt évek: tizenhat leszbikus életút* [*Secret Years: Sixteen Lesbian Lives*]. Budapest: Labrisz Leszbikus Egyesület.
- Borgos A (2015) Secret years. Hungarian lesbian herstory, 1950s–2000s. *Aspasia* 9: 87–112. DOI: 10.3167/asp.2015.090106.
- Dalia L (1988) Szorongó szeretők [Distressed lovers] *Képes* 7(5 March): 28–29.
- D’Emilio J (1983) *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940–1970*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Délmagyarország* (1988) Homoszexuálisok Egyesülete. Várják az engedélyezést [Association of homosexuals. Waiting for permission]. *Délmagyarország*, 10 February, 21.
- Duberman M, Vicinus M and Chauncey G (eds) (1989) *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*. New York: New American Library.
- Erőss L (1984) *Furcsa párok: a homoszexuálisok titkai nyomában* [*Strange Couples: Tracing the Secret Footsteps of Homosexuals*]. Budapest: Editorg.
- Essig L (1999) *Queer in Russia: A Story of Sex, Self, and the Other*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Evans J and Cook M (eds) (2014) *Queer Cultures: Europe since 1945*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Gyarmati G (2011) *A Rákosi-korszak: rendszerváltó fordulatok évtizede Magyarországon, 1945–1956* [*The Rákosi era: the decade of transitional turns in Hungary, 1945–1956*]. Budapest: Allambiztonsági Szolgálatok Történeti Levéltára – Rubicon.
- Gyarmati G and Valuch T (2009) *Hungary under Soviet Domination: 1944–1989*. Boulder, CO and New York: Social Science Monographs.

- Györi P and Gábor L (1990) Ipi-apacs enyém a lakás! [Got you, the apartment is mine!]. *Esély* 1990(6): 67–86.
- Hanzli P et al. (eds) (2015) Meleg férfiak, hideg diktatúrák. Életútinterjúk (Hot men, cold dictatorships. Life-history interviews). Budapest: Civil Művek Közművelődési Egyesület.
- Healey D (2001) *Homosexual Desire in Revolutionary Russia: The Regulation of Sexual and Gender Dissent*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Heleszta S and Rudas J (1978) *Munkásfiatalok és egyetemisták szexualitása* [Sexuality of young workers and university students]. Budapest: MTA Szociológiai Kutató Intézete.
- Herzog D (2008) East Germany's sexual evolution. In: Pence K and Betts P (eds) *Socialist Modern: East German Everyday Culture and Politics*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, pp. 71–95.
- Horváth S (2012) *Két emelet boldogság. Mindennapi szociálpolitika a Kádár-korban* [Two stories of happiness. Everyday social politics in the Kádár era]. Budapest: Napvilág Kiadó.
- ILGA (2001) Equality for lesbians and gay men – a relevant issue in EU accession process, 2001. Brussels: ILGA-Europe.
- James B (2007) Falsifying history in Janos Kadar's Hungary: Early cinematic representations of the revolution. *Hungarian Studies Review* 34(1–2): 177–201.
- Klimke M and Scharloth J (eds) (2008) *1968 in Europe: A History of Protest and Activism, 1956–1977*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kostrzewa I and Urban M (2010) *Queer Warsaw: Historical and Cultural Guide to Warsaw*. Warszawa: Stowarzyszenie Lambda Warszawa.
- Kriesi H (1995) The political opportunity structure of new social movements: Its impact on their mobilization. In: Jenkins JC and Klandermans B (eds) *The Politics of Social Protest: Comparative Perspectives on States and Social Movements*. London: UCL Press, pp. 83–98.
- Kriesi H, Koopmans R, et al. (1995) *New Social Movements in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis*. London: UCL Press.
- Kulpa R and Mizelińska J (eds) (2011) *De-Centring Western Sexualities: Central and Eastern European Perspectives*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Kurimay A (2012) *Sex in the 'Pearl of the Danube': The history of queer life, love, and its regulation in Budapest, 1873–1941*. PhD thesis, Rutgers University, USA.
- Légrády E (1988) Homoszexuálisok – országos egyesületbe? [Homosexuals – into a national organization?]. *Magyar Hírlap*, 16 January, 22.
- Lewis D (1988) Hungary becomes first East European nation to permit a gay group. *Los Angeles Times*, 5 June. Available at: http://articles.latimes.com/print/1988-06-05/news/mn-6451_1_gay-group (accessed 7 October 2016).
- Long S (1999) Gay and lesbian movements in Eastern Europe. Romania, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. In: Adam BD, Duyvendak JW and Krouwel A (eds) *The Global Emergence of Gay and Lesbian Politics: National Imprints of a Worldwide Movement*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, pp. 242–265.
- McLellan J (2011) *Love in the Time of Communism: Intimacy and Sexuality in the GDR*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- McLellan J (2012) Glad to be gay behind the wall: Gay and lesbian activism in 1970s' East Germany. *History Workshop Journal* 74(1): 105–130.
- Mill JE, Edwards N, Jackson RC, et al. (2010) Stigmatization as a social control mechanism for persons living with HIV and AIDS. *Qualitative Health Research* 20(11): 1469–1483.

- Nagy Á (2014) *Harc a lakáshivatalban. Politikai átalakulás és mindennapi érdekérvényesítés a fő városban 1945–1953* [*Struggle at the housing authority. Political transformation and everyday lobbying in the capital 1945–1953*]. Budapest: Korall.
- Pál G (1927) *A homoszexuális probléma modern megvilágításban* [*Homosexual problem in a modern light*]. Budapest: Mai Henrik Kiadó.
- Pünkösti Á (2004) *Rákosi, Sztálin legjobb tanítványa* [*Rákosi, Stalin's best pupil*]. Budapest: Európa Könyvkiadó.
- Snitow A, Thompson S and Stansell C (eds) (1983) *Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Sokolová V (2014) State approaches to homosexuality and non-heterosexual lives in Czechoslovakia during state socialism. In: Havelková H and Oates-Indruchová L (eds) *The Politics of Gender Culture under State Socialism. An Expropriated Voice*. London: Routledge, pp. 82–108.
- Stella F (2015) *Lesbian Lives in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia. Post/Socialism and Gendered Sexualities*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Takács J (2004) The double life of Kertbeny. In: Hekma G (ed.) *Past and Present of Radical Sexual Politics*. Amsterdam: Mosse Foundation, pp. 26–40.
- Takács J (2007a) *How to Put Equality into Practice? Anti-discrimination and Equal Treatment Policymaking and LGBT People*. Budapest: New Mandate.
- Takács J (2007b) 'It is only extra information.' Social representation and value preferences of gay men in Hungary. In: Kuhar R and Takács J (eds) *Beyond the Pink Curtain: Everyday Life of LGBT People in Eastern Europe*. Ljubljana: Peace Institute, pp. 185–197.
- Takács J (2014) Queering Budapest. In: Evans JV and Cook M (eds) *Queer Cities, Queer Cultures: Europe since 1945*. London: Bloomsbury, pp. 191–210.
- Takács J (2015) Disciplining gender and (homo)sexuality in state socialist Hungary in the 1970s. *European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire* 22(1): 161–175. (DOI: 10.1080/13507486.2014.983426).
- Takács J and PTóth T (2016) Az 'Idegbizottság' szerepe a homoszexualitás 1961-es magyarországi dekriminalizációjában [The role of the 'Neurology Committee' in the 1961 decriminalization of homosexuality in Hungary]. *Socio.hu Social Science Review* 6(2): 207–223. (DOI: 10.18030/socio.hu.2016.2.207. Available at: http://socio.hu/uploads/files/2016_2/takacs_ptoth.pdf (accessed 7 October 2016).
- Tóth EZ and Murai A (2014) *Szex és szocializmus* [*Sex and socialism*]. Budapest: Libri Könyvkiadó.
- Vásárhelyi M (1998) Megszámláltattunk – Összeállítás az 1970-es népszámlálási adatok alapján [We have been counted – Compilation of 1970 census data]. *Beszélő* 3: 112–115.
- Vermes (no first name given) (1989) A minority at risk. *Hungarian Digest* April–June, pp. 54–56.
- Weeks J (1981) *Sex, Politics, and Society: The Regulation of Sexuality since 1800*. London and New York: Longman.
- www.avert.org (2015) Available at: <http://www.avert.org/uk-hiv-aids-statistics.htm> (accessed 16 October 2015).
- Zombori A (1986) *Szexpiaci körséta* [*A stroll across the sex market*]. Budapest: Idegenforgalmi Propaganda és Kiadó Vállalat.

Archive sources

- BM ORFK – Ministry of Interior, National Police Head Quarters – (1977) *Előrejelzés a fiatalkori bűnözés problematikájának, tendenciáinak az 1977–1981 közötti időszakban lehetséges alakulására [Prognosis for potential developments of juvenile delinquency for 1977–1981]*. Budapest: Magyar Országos Levéltár (National Archives of Hungary).
- BM ORFK Bűnüldözési Osztály – Ministry of Interior, National Police Head Quarters, Criminal Department – (1988) *Jelentés a nemi erkölcs elleni bűncselekmények alakulásáról és jellemzőiről, különös tekintettel a prostitúcióra [Report on the changes and characteristics of sexual offenses and crimes, with special attention to prostitution]*. Budapest: Magyar Országos Levéltár (National Archives of Hungary).
- Homeros-Lambda (1989) Letter to Brunó F Straub, Chairman of the Presidential Council of the Hungarian People's Republic from the president and secretary general of Homeros-Lambda – 29 March 1989. Budapest: Magyar Országos Levéltár (National Archives of Hungary).
- KB – Central Committee – (1985) Tájékoztató a szerzett immunhiányos tünetegyüttesrel (AIDS) kapcsolatos nemzetközi helyzetről és a hazai intézkedésekről. A KB Tudományos, Közoktatási és Kulturális osztályának tájékoztatója [Report on the AIDS related international situation and the Hungarian measures Scientific, Public Educational and Cultural Department of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party] – *Magyar Országos Levéltár* (National Archives of Hungary).
- Radio Free Europe – Hungarian Unit (1984) Changing attitudes toward homosexuals in eastern Europe. Budapest: Open Society Archive.
- Radio Free Europe – Hungarian Unit (1988) CN072 A-wire 17-JAN-88: East – Health Official Supports Founding of Homosexual Group. Budapest: Open Society Archive.

Anita Kurimay is an Assistant Professor at Bryn Mawr College (USA), where she teaches modern European history. Her research interests include the history of sexuality, women's and gender history and the history of sport in modern East-Central Europe. Currently she is working on the *Sex in the "Pearl of the Danube": The History of Queer Life, Love, and its Regulation in Budapest, 1873–1941* book manuscript.

Judit Takács is a Research Chair at the Institute of Sociology, Centre for Social Sciences, Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Her research interests include measuring homophobic and genderphobic social attitudes, social history of homosexuality, family practices and childlessness. Her most recent publications include *Homophobia and Genderphobia in the European Union* (published by SIEPS, Stockholm) and an article on Disciplining gender and (homo)sexuality in state socialist Hungary in the 1970s (in the *European Review of History*).