

## QUEERING CIVIL SOCIETY IN POSTSOCIALIST SLOVAKIA

*Viera Wallace-Lorencová, University of Massachusetts, Amherst*

© 2003 Viera Wallace-Lorencová All Rights Reserved

The copyright for individual articles in both the print and online version of the *Anthropology of East Europe Review* is retained by the individual authors. They reserve all rights other than those stated here. Please contact the managing editor for details on contacting these authors. Permission is granted for reproducing these articles for scholarly and classroom use as long as only the cost of reproduction is charged to the students. Commercial reproduction of these articles requires the permission of the authors.

The emerging visibility of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender-identified people is a contested story in Slovakia's postsocialist transformations, one that continues to be absent from contemporary academic examinations of Eastern Europe. My task is to disrupt dominant narratives of postsocialist transformations that efface the politics of sexual difference. Based on data obtained via ethnographic research among Slovak lesbian and gay activists from the nongovernmental organizations Ganymedes, Museion, Altera, HaBio, CKKISM, Podisea, and the political initiative Iniciatíva Inakosť, my larger project is to articulate the political significance of emerging visibility of sexual difference. This paper considers nascent lesbian and gay activism as contributing to the shaping of civil society in Slovakia, simultaneously benefiting from and contesting the hegemonic and homogenizing processes of European integration and globalization.<sup>1</sup>

### **Magic Cure**

In the summer of 2000, talk about "homocilín" began to spread around Bratislava, generated by an inconspicuous postcard left on café tables, handed out in the streets, and distributed in mailboxes within the city's first district. The postcard, designed by a lesbian activist Bea Gál and printed by the Slovak advertisement agency "Boomerang," resembled ordinary junk mail. Large letters superimposed over a drawing of enlarged white tablets, reminiscent of generic aspirin, spelled the following message: "HOMOCILÍN. New! Recommended by MuDr. Ján Černokňažník. Guaranteed to cure homosexuality." A detailed explanation, printed in smaller letters, read: "Lowers temperature. Reacts within 1 minute. 10 tablets per package."<sup>2</sup> The card explicitly aimed to parody the call for medical treatment of homosexuality advocated by the Minister of Health, clinical psychiatrist Alojz Rakús. Its sarcastic tone was amplified by the fictional name of its signatory, MuDr. Ján Černokňažník (Doctor Wizard), a teasing pun

upon the name of the Minister of Justice, JuDr. Ján Čarnogurský. His infamous statement – "While I am a Minister of Justice, the registered partnership of homosexuals will not exist in Slovakia!"<sup>3</sup> – in unison with Rakús' call for a medical cure for homosexuality gained the instant attention of the Slovak print and broadcast media. In the months to follow, these assertions were echoed in parliamentary discussions of proposed legislative reforms that addressed the legal protection of individuals on the basis of sexual orientation. Relying on parody and appropriation of the mechanisms of a market economy through a simulation of advertising, "homocilín" made a playful yet sophisticated political statement -- a refusal of lesbian and gay activists to be silenced by anti-gay politicians. The email address of the gay and lesbian political initiative Iniciatíva Inakosť, the artist's name, and the Free Boomerang Cards logo printed on the reverse side precluded possible ambiguities about the card's origins or its authors' determination to talk back.

I offer this vignette from the summer of 2000 to capture the atmosphere that characterized the early phases of my fieldwork, and to exemplify the culturally situated forms of political interaction initiated by Slovak lesbian and gay rights activists. Drawing on my ethnographic data, and a variety of print, electronic, and audiovisual sources of information, I aim to discuss the effects of lesbian and gay activism on the making of civil society in contemporary Slovakia by interpreting various modes of interaction between lesbian and gay activists, other third sector<sup>4</sup> activists, the Slovak government and transnational institutions.

### **Brave New World**

A proliferation of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and political initiatives advocating legislative recognition of the human rights of all individuals – regardless of ethnicity,

nationality, race, class, sex, religious affiliation or sexual orientation – is a prominent feature of the first decade of East European postsocialist transformations. Civil society, a key signifier of the post-1989 brave new world<sup>5</sup> in-the-making, has become a project embraced in Slovakia by politicians, entrepreneurs, and thousands of civic activists, including gay and lesbian-identified activists of different ages, occupations, and socio-economic backgrounds.

The first NGOs concerned with the rights of sexual minorities in the Slovak and Czech Republics were founded by a handful of gay men and lesbians only months after the Velvet Revolution in November 1989 brought closure to the totalitarian regime in Czechoslovakia.<sup>6</sup> Ganymedes, The Movement for Equal Rights of Homosexual Citizens in the Slovak Republic, founded in Bratislava in June 1990, was the first and for several years the only gay and lesbian organization in Slovakia. As Ganymedes crystallized into a contact place for a growing number of gay-identified men, in 1993 lesbian activists created Museion,<sup>7</sup> the first Slovak nongovernmental organization facilitating contact between lesbian-identified women. In the following years, a small but growing network of lesbian, gay and bisexual activists developed in Slovakia around nine NGOs: Ganymedes, Museion, Altera, and HaBio in Bratislava, CKKISM and Podisea in Banská Bystrica, Ganymedes and HaB in Košice, another branch of Ganymedes in the town of Handlová. Upon learning about the activities of these NGOs during my field research, I began to conceive of them as nodal points in a network of complex flows of power relations (e.g., between aid recipients and donors) and multiple trajectories of interaction (e.g., between local and supranational human rights organizations) that uniquely affect LGBT community formation in Slovakia.<sup>8</sup>

In response to increasing gay and lesbian visibility, the Slovak media and in the past three years, the government, have begun to pay attention to the status of sexual minorities in Slovakia. Despite the Slovak parliament's persistent rejection of the Registered Partnership Statute (*Zákon o životnom partnerstve*) and other activist-initiated anti-discriminatory legislative proposals, members of the emerging queer community perceive the last three years to have been a gradual move up from invisibility. In addition to the Slovak government and national

media, a number of transnational institutions became interested in the status of sexual minorities in Slovakia: the European Commission (EC), the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) and Amnesty International (AI) have engaged in a careful monitoring of Slovakia's progress in the area of human rights, including the rights of sexual minorities.

In the past year, these institutions have been paying close attention to the Slovak parliamentary discussion of the Equal Treatment Law (*Zákon o rovnakom zaobchádzaní* or so called *Antidiskriminačný zákon*). This has been repeatedly stalled by deputies from the Christian Democratic Movement, who vociferously oppose the Law's inclusion of sexual orientation as a basis for discrimination. Among the main arguments repeatedly presented by the Slovak parliamentary deputies who oppose special legal recognition of the rights of sexual minorities are claims that the Slovak Constitution already guarantees equal treatment to all citizens. They insist that discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation does not exist, given that no cases of such discrimination have ever been brought to the attention of the national or the regional-level courts. Some have even argued that sexual orientation is not an issue that belongs to politics. These arguments are neither new, nor surprising, given the legacy of the medical discourse on sexual deviance, the collective memory of the old anti-sodomy statutes, and the current revival of Catholicism in postsocialist Slovakia, which simultaneously reinforces the stigmatization of non-normative sexuality in Slovakia.

### **The Legacy of Religious, Medical and Legal Discourses**

The effects of discursive construction of homosexual behavior as a sin, crime, and/or mental illness, theorized by Michel Foucault in his first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, have historically had an important place in the formation and perpetuation of heteronormative and homophobic attitudes in the Western world. Condemnation of homosexual behavior by the Catholic Church has found a fertile ground in contemporary Slovakia, where 69 % of adult citizens identify as Roman Catholics.<sup>9</sup> It is not a coincidence that the key public figures reproving the non-discriminatory legislation on the grounds of sexual orientation are affiliated with the

Christian Democratic Movement, a conservative political party with a significant representation in contemporary Slovak politics. Contemporary advocates of the medical cure of homosexuality represent a reminder that century-old medical discourses categorizing homosexuality as a sexual deviance continue to play a powerful role in the stigmatization of homosexuality today. During my research, I recorded personal narratives revealing that not only religious and medical definitions of homosexuality, but also the threat of punitive consequences of homosexual behavior are still alive in the collective memory of Slovaks.

The anti-sodomy statutes adopted in 1878 in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy defined homosexual behavior a “criminal act against morality,” and those found guilty of committing sodomy faced up to one year of imprisonment.<sup>10</sup> In 1918, anti-sodomy statutes were adopted by the legislature of the newly formed Czechoslovak Republic, and became known as paragraph 129(b) of the criminal code. For seventy-two years (1918-1992), Slovaks shared the same territory, constitution and legislation with Czechs and a number of ethnic minorities, and for more than four decades of “actually existing socialism” (1948-1989), the discursive construction of a proper citizen as monogamous, married, procreative, heterosexual and allegedly asexual beyond the spousal bedroom, effectively rendered invisible any form of non-normative sexual desire and behavior. In 1961, during the post-Stalinist era of state socialism, the government’s revision of paragraph 129(b) resulted in the decriminalization of homosexuality in Czechoslovakia, and stated that consensual sex between same-sex adults had no punitive legal consequences as long as both partners were eighteen or older.<sup>11</sup>

While *de jure* homosexuality was decriminalized, *de facto* non-normative sexual desire and behavior continued to be stigmatized and thus invisible for the following three decades. On the surface, the public sphere remained desexualized, and the city’s landscape reflected the normative sexual politics fostered by dominant legal, medical, and media discourses. And yet, the discursively reinforced heterosexual imperative did not prevent men who sought sexual encounters with other men from frequenting the city’s regular cruising places. In my conversations with an older generation of gay Bratislavans I learned about

bars, parks and public bathrooms that have been, for a long time, the only public places of homoerotic desire and same-sex sexual behavior, simultaneously visible and invisible. Among the popular pre-1989 cruising places of gay men was Avion, a park near the town’s oldest bus station; the public bathroom situated nearby was one of three bathrooms known in the gay community as the Bermuda Triangle (*Bermudský trojuholník*). The Ganymedes fountain, situated in front of the Slovak National Theatre, and a small café in the nearby Hotel Carlton in downtown Bratislava, were popular meeting places frequented by gay men and some lesbians until the first openly gay bars were established in Bratislava in 1990, within a few months after the collapse of socialism. In 1990, the new postsocialist government lowered the age of consent between same-sex partners to fifteen, the same standard set for heterosexual partners.

### Interaction with Government

The post-1989 relationship between Slovak civic organizations and the government has shifted through several phases: from a period of shared enthusiasm and optimistic visions of civil society (1990-1993), to explicit antagonism between the government and the more progressive fraction of the third sector (1993-1998), to a period of renewed cooperation signaled by the government’s interest in building a partnership with civic activists (1999-2003). Despite the government’s effort to tighten cooperation with and within the third sector, my interviews and observations reveal that many civic activists remained reluctant to associate with the government in any shape or form. Similarly, the Grémium Tretieho Sektora – G3S (Gremium of the Third Sector), one of several NGO umbrella organizations established in April 1999 to foster third sector cooperation, has been met with caution by many grassroots civic activists.<sup>12</sup> The feeling of disillusionment with the G3S, echoed in many of my conversations with lesbian and gay activists, is clearly articulated in the following statement revealing the frustration by one activist:

At the beginning, the G3S was quite a strong and healthy element but today, its strength has faded and I follow their activities only through a newsletter that they force on all NGOs. [...] I perceive them as being very formal. [...] I often witness a strong resistance of NGO

activists towards their inclusion into a kind of formal centralized institution, because consequently, civil society becomes, in the eyes of public, reduced to a few individuals, and those who do not fit, who disagree, either disappear or become automatically associated with activities, interests and ideas of a big fish.<sup>13</sup>

While many activists reproach the G3S for favoring certain NGOs, my research also revealed that many have a limited knowledge of the G3S's activities and/or avoid interacting with its representatives, preferring alternative strategies of communicating their message directly to government officials. Among the first attempts of gay and lesbian activists to initiate direct interaction with the government were letters written by the coordinators of the NGO Ganymedes, requesting the government to respond to the Registered Partnership Statute draft (*Zákon o registrovanom partnerstve osôb rovnakého pohlavia*) developed by gay rights activists with the assistance of a team of lawyers (who wished to remain anonymous). The first round of letters, addressed in May 1997 to the Slovak government, and in January 1998 to the Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar, together with the representatives of eleven political parties, was ignored. After the change in the political climate following the elections in 1998, gay and lesbian activists began a new phase of political lobbying. In November 1999, Ganymedes was the first organization to publicly critique the discriminatory aspects of the draft of the bilateral treaty between the Vatican and the Slovak government. In February 2000, with regard to the government's upcoming Re-codification of the Civil Law, lesbian and gay activists from Ganymedes, Museion, Altera and HaBiO submitted a revised draft of the Life Partnership Statute (*Zákon o životnom partnerstve osôb rovnakého pohlavia*) to the chairmen of seventeen parliamentary committees formed by the new government, who responded with a prompt and polite reply that the proposal had been received and forwarded to the Minister of Justice, JuDr. Ján Čarnogurský. Months of silence followed.

On May 6<sup>th</sup> 2000, representatives of six gay and lesbian organizations – Altera, CKKISM, Ganymedes, HaBio, H-Plus, and Museion – met in Bratislava to discuss the legal status of sexual minorities in Slovakia and to consider ways to increase acceptance of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transsexuals by the

heterosexual and gender normative majority. The participants of this meeting agreed to draft a Charter that would become a founding document of the political initiative Iniciatíva Inakosť – Spolužitie bez diskriminácie sexuálnych menšín (The Initiative Difference – Coexistence without Discrimination of Sexual Minorities). This group undertook a series of activities which contributed to heightened gay and lesbian visibility in Slovakia: they established Initiative Difference, circulated the ININ Charter (Charta Iniciatívy Inakosť), launched the first gay and lesbian monthly periodical *Atribút g/l*, lobbied the Parliament, drafted letters to the government officials, organized press conferences, and sought access to the mainstream media. In Spring 2001, Ganymedes launched a campaign “Je normálne byť iný” (It is Normal to be Different)<sup>14</sup>, that aimed to initiate a positive public discussion of homosexuality and to seek public support for the institution of the registered partnership of gay and lesbian couples, and legislative prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. In March 2001, gay and lesbian activists, in alliance with activists from other marginalized groups, participated in the March of Tolerance (*Pochod tolerancie*),<sup>15</sup> the rally against racism, anti-Semitism, fascism and homophobia. Simultaneously, public anti-gay sentiments voiced by several prominent political figures (some of which I quoted in the introduction of this article) began to proliferate.

Heated debates in the Parliament peaked in July 2001, during discussion of the amendments to the Labor Code and the laws on the civil service and public service. Representatives from the Party of the Democratic Left (SDL) proposed that “the list of explicit bans on workplace discrimination be expanded to include sexual orientation...[and] that equal social benefits rights (i.e. “maternity leave,” bereavement leave after the death of a partner, etc.) be guaranteed to employees in homosexual partnerships.”<sup>16</sup> It was in response to this proposal that the former Minister of Education, Katarína Slavkovská, voiced her discriminatory attitudes towards gay- and lesbian-identified teachers. She was joined by another parliamentary deputy, Vítazoslav Mórica, from the conservative right party True SNS (Pravá SNS), who asserted that he “prefers to speak of faggots (*buzeranti*)”<sup>17</sup> rather than gay men. After the members of the Parliament refused to support the proposals pertaining to discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation,

the activists from the Initiative Difference drafted a letter to President Rudolf Schuster, requesting that the law be returned to the Parliament for discussion.

In August 2001, Initiative Difference organized three Gay Pride marches in the Slovak cities of Bratislava, Banská Bystrica and Košice. A street performance of a wedding ceremony performed by fellow lesbian activists during the Gay Pride March in Bratislava in August 2001 attracted instant media attention. The wedding of a lesbian couple dressed up as brides, both wearing white veils covering up their faces, black shirts with the inscription “lesbian,” and white bell-bottom slacks, could be interpreted as a parody of the ritual of heterosexual marriage, as well as a parody of heterosexual subjectivity. While only several dozen gay, lesbian and bisexual activists participated in the March, the nation-wide media coverage helped to achieve the main goal of this strategic act of anti-heteronormative contestation – to arouse public discourse about the proposed registered partnership law, which was scheduled to be discussed in Parliament weeks later. Also, Gay Pride in Banská Bystrica attracted considerable attention, thanks to a visual art exhibit titled “Black-and-White Statements about the Pink World: Different Forms of Homophobia”, a collage of anti-gay statements by Slovak public figures installed in the local Art Gallery by two lesbian activists.

The months of intensive lobbying resulted in a regular dialogue between gay rights activists and several progressive parliamentary deputies. However, most government officials were still reluctant to engage in interaction with gay rights advocates, despite the attempts of G3S to include civic activists in the ongoing legislative reform. In this context, the conference on the Registered Partnership Statute in Spring 2001 that brought together NGO activists, lawyers and government officials proved more productive than previous lobbying efforts. In October 2001, for the first time in the history of the Slovak Parliament, a group of eight parliamentary representatives presented a proposal of the Life Partnership Statute pertaining to same-sex partners, calling for equal status of same-sex partnership and heterosexual matrimony in all aspects, with the exception of child adoption. In the following months, gay rights activists began to lobby also for the legal amendments of the Constitution of the Slovak

Republic,<sup>18</sup> the Labor Code and Laws about Public and State Service, pertaining to discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

Another example of government initiated interaction with gay and lesbian activists was a workshop organized in Bratislava in the Spring 2002. At this workshop, gay rights activists, along with the coordinators of anti-racist, women’s rights, environmentalist, and other civic organizations were invited to comment on the Equal Treatment Law. The purpose of the workshop was to develop a strong proposal to be presented in the upcoming Parliamentary discussion, however, in June 2002, a majority of Parliamentary deputies voted against the inclusion of the proposal. Lesbian and gay activists who participated in the workshop were extremely disappointed, and after a prompt mobilization of supporters from various NGOs, and with the help of a pro-active journalist, the daily newspaper *Sme* published a petition, demanding that Parliament hold a discussion about this important proposal. In addition to queer activists, many straight supporters, including some well-known writers and artists, signed the petition. The signatories of the petition organized a press conference, followed by a rally in front of the Parliament. The events received national media coverage, yet no response from the Parliament. The deputies voting at the Parliament’s session in June 2002 against the proposal calculated that the next discussion would not be scheduled until after the upcoming elections in September 2002. While the deputies from the SDL (Social Democratic Left) and SMK (Hungarian Coalition Party) attempted to bring the Equal Treatment Law proposal back to the Parliamentary discussion, no other political parties were willing to discuss this contested issue until after the elections. In February 2003, the proposal of the Equal Treatment Law has been finally resubmitted for comments, and was expected to be included in the Parliamentary discussion by Fall 2003.

From the perspective of lesbian and gay activists, the Parliament’s compromise in the newest amendment of the Labor Code (instituting a “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy in employer-employee relations), its rejection of the Life Partnership Statute pertaining to same-sex partners, its ongoing attempt to exclude sexual minorities from the Equal Treatment Law, and its passing of a controversial “Declaration on the Sovereignty of EU Member States and Candidate

Countries Regarding Cultural and Ethical Issues” clearly signal that while legislative reform continues to be in a state of flux, the Slovak government continues to fail to improve the legal rights of sexual minorities.

### **Interaction with Transnational Institutions**

In Slovakia, as well as other EU accession countries, a key point of reference in the area of human rights is “The Treaty of Amsterdam,” which came into force on May 1, 1999.<sup>19</sup> A subject of heated debates is a recognition of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, stated in the Treaty’s Article 13 EC:

Without prejudice to the other provisions of this Treaty and within the limits of the power conferred by it upon the Community, the Council, acting unanimously on a proposal from the Commission and after consulting the European Parliament, may take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion and belief, disability, age and sexual orientation.<sup>20</sup>

The implications of Article 13 EC for the needed legislative reform triggered a series of interactions between Slovak legislators, politicians, and civic activists in national as well as transnational contexts. In the summer of 2001, Slovak lesbian and gay activists participated in a public hearing on the position of lesbian women and gay men in the EU accession countries, organized by the Intergroup on Gay and Lesbian Rights, an informal body of the European Parliament. They also initiated a meeting with a representative of the European Commission Directorate-General for Enlargement (ECDGE), in order to bring attention to the status of sexual minorities in the ECDGE’s assessment of Slovakia’s readiness for EU membership.

In the Fall of 2001, in coordination with the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA), Slovak gay and lesbian activists began to conduct the first community survey on forms of discrimination against gay men, lesbians and bisexuals. The purpose of the survey, already completed in many other European countries (EU member as well accession states), was to document the forms of existing discrimination against sexual minorities in Slovakia, and to provide a basis for comparison of the status of

sexual minorities across Europe.<sup>21</sup> The findings of this survey were circulated among the representatives of the EP Intergroup on Gay and Lesbian Rights, ILGA-Europe, Slovak government, media and interested NGOs.

In 2002, in compliance with “The Treaty of Amsterdam” and other ECDGE guidelines and recommendations, the Slovak government began to draft a proposal of the Equal Treatment Law (the so-called anti-discrimination law). In June, after the Parliament turned down the cabinet’s first draft with a request to exclude sexual orientation from protection, the coalition of gay, lesbian and other civic activists responded with The Open Letter to Members of the Slovak Parliament, demanding a parliamentary discussion of the original proposal.

“Without us, you will never make it to the EU!”

In June 2002, I had an opportunity to observe the impromptu formation of a coalition of activists fighting for the rights of sexual minorities, to attend a press conference that brought instantaneous media attention to the Open Letter, and to participate in the Rally Against Discrimination staged in front of the Slovak Parliament, both organized by the newly formed coalition. As a participant in the Rally Against Discrimination, I had an opportunity to observe grassroots activists’ awareness that strings attached to Slovakia’s EU membership could work in favor of LGBT activists. As one of the key speakers put it in the conclusion of her speech addressed to the Parliamentary deputies, “Without us, you will never make it to the EU!”<sup>22</sup>

This statement reveals the idiosyncrasies of the brave new world in-the-making: the contested nature of the interaction between transnational institutions, Slovak government and civic activists, fueled by the awareness that successful integration of Slovakia into EU is contingent upon its speedy implementation of anti-discriminatory legislation. Despite the ECDGE’s expectations that the Slovak Parliament will ratify the Equal Treatment Law by the second half of 2003, Christian Democratic Movement deputies continue to argue against the inclusion of sexual minorities in the Equal Treatment Statute. And yet, Slovak lesbian and gay activists expect that

the pressure to bring Slovak legislation in line with EU standards will continue to trigger radical shifts in domestic legislative reform.

I believe Slovakia's impending EU membership gives reasons for optimism, yet, it is important to caution that the adoption of anti-discriminatory laws, combined with a re-channeling of foreign aid to politically less stabilized regions, might potentially have a regulatory and even a numbing effect on the gay and lesbian NGO activism. However, the effects of unruly politics of sexual difference remain unpredictable.

### References

- After Amsterdam: Sexual Orientation and the European Union. A Guide. 1999. Brussels: ILGA Europe.
- Cornwall, Mark. 2002. "Heinrich Rutha and the Unraveling of a Homosexual Scandal in 1930s Czechoslovakia," *GLQ*, Vol. 8 (3): 319-347.
- Daučíková, Anna, Bútorová, Zora and Wallace-Lorencová, Viera. 2003. "The Status of Sexual Minorities." In: Mesežnikov, G. (Eds et al). *Slovakia 2002: Global Report on the State of Society*. Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs.
- Demeš, Pavol. 2001. "The Third Sector and Volunteerism." In: Mesežnikov, G. (Eds et al). *Slovakia 2000: Global Report on the State of Society*. Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs.
- Fanel, Jiří. 2000. *Gay historie (Gay History)*. Praha: Dauphin.
- Foucault, Michel. [1976] 1990. *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1: An Introduction*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Huxley, Aldous. [1932] 1998. *Brave New World*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.
- Jójárt, Paula, Marianna Šípošová, and Anna Daučíková et al. 2002. *Správa o diskriminácii lesbických žien, gejov, bisexuálov a bisexuálok na Slovensku/ Report on Discrimination on Lesbians, Gay Men and Bisexuals*. Bratislava, Slovakia: Q Archív.
- Mesežnikov, G. (Eds et al). 2001. *Slovakia 2001: Global Report on the State of Society*. Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs.

### Endnote

<sup>1</sup>My data include drafts of anti-discriminatory legislative proposals, parliamentary discussions, media reports and commentaries, press and broadcast interviews with NGO coordinators, hybrid examples of media representation of non-normative sexuality published in Slovak media, and a variety of visual and audiovisual artifacts. Some of these artifacts are located in *Q Archív, Documentary and information center*, established in Bratislava in January 2002. I am grateful for an ongoing support during my fieldwork to all people from the emerging Slovak LGBT community who made this research project possible.

<sup>2</sup> *Homocilín* © Bea Gál, 2000. The original Slovak text: "Homocilín. Spoľahlivo odstraňuje homosexualitu. Znižuje teplotu. Účinkuje už po jednej minúte. 10 tabliet. Novinka! Odporúča MuDr. Ján Černokňažník."

<sup>3</sup> Jan Čarnogurský, the Press Conference of the Christian Democratic Party, Aug. 17, 2000.

<sup>4</sup> The term "third sector," commonly used by the development scholars, donors and activists, refers to the formally registered, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations, foundations, and non-investment funds, mostly funded by the Western European and Northern American development agencies (the "first sector" refers to the state, the "second sector" to the market).

<sup>5</sup> I appropriate the phrase "brave new world," coined by William Shakespeare in his play *The Tempest*, in a sarcastic venue similar to Aldous Huxley's novel *Brave New World*, to refer to the vision of a new world-in-the-making, following the 1989 transformations in Eastern Europe.

<sup>6</sup> In Czechoslovakia, the first NGOs concerning sexual minorities were *Ganymedes*, The Movement for Equal Rights of Homosexual Citizens in the Slovak Republic, founded in Bratislava in June 1990,

and *SOHO*, The Association of Homosexual Citizens in the Czech Republic, founded in Brno in June 1990.

<sup>7</sup> *Museion*, established in Bratislava in 1993, was officially registered with the Ministry of the Interior in May 1994. See Hana F., www.lesba.sk

<sup>8</sup> This paper is limited to the analysis of the effects of NGO-affiliated gay and lesbian activists on the formation of civil society in Slovakia. An in-depth analysis of the emerging Slovak LGBT community formation is the objective of my dissertation.

<sup>9</sup> According to 2001 Census, Slovaks claimed the following religious affiliation: 69% Roman Catholics, 7% Protestant, 4% Greek Catholic, 2% Reformed, 1% Orthodox, 1% Other, 13% Atheist, 3% did not declare. See Mesežnikov, G. Eds et al (2001:17).

<sup>10</sup> See Jiří Fanel (2000); also Mark Cornwall (2002:331).

<sup>11</sup> The revision of the paragraph 129(b) was discussed as early as 1937. See Mark Cornwall, 2002: 345. The Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia and consequent political development during and after WW II disrupted the 1930s discussions about decriminalizing homosexuality in Czechoslovakia.

<sup>12</sup> In the year 2000, Slovak NGO umbrella organizations included: G3S, regional gremiums, Ekofórum, and the Donor's Forum. See Pavol Demeš (2001:471).

<sup>13</sup> Monika C., February 2003.

<sup>14</sup> The campaign "Je normálne byť iný" had a financial support from the Slovak foundation NPOA (Nadácia pre podporu občianskych aktivít), with funding from the EC program PHARE.

<sup>15</sup> *Pochod tolerancie (The March of Tolerance)*, a rally against racism, anti-Semitism, fascism, and homophobia, has been organized by the NGO Ľudia proti rasizmu (*People Against Racism*) in Bratislava on March 14, 2001.

<sup>16</sup> See Daučíková, Anna, Bútorová, Zora and Wallace-Lorencová, Viera (2003:751).

<sup>17</sup> See *Nový Čas*, July 4, 2001.

<sup>18</sup> The proposed amendment concerns the Article 12, Paragraph 2, of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, known as anti-discriminatory clause.

<sup>19</sup> "The Treaty of Amsterdam," Article 13, covers discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, together with sex, racial or ethnic group, religion, belief, disability and age. See *After Amsterdam: Sexual Orientation and the European Union. A Guide* (1999:6).

<sup>20</sup> See *After Amsterdam* (1999:16).

<sup>21</sup> See Jójárt, Paula, Marianna Šipošová, and Anna Daučíková *et al.* 2002.

<sup>22</sup> Anna D., in her speech at the rally in front of the Parliament, Bratislava, June 27, 2002, paraphrasing the statement "Europe will be Europe for all, or it will be nothing at all" quoted in *After Amsterdam* (1999: 8) and elsewhere.