**Social ‘margins’ meet spatial ‘peripheries’: the possibilities of non-majoritarian gender and sexual expressions beyond the big city**

**Cyril Blondel (cyril.blondel@univ-reims.fr)**

**Théophile Plouvier (theophile.plouvier@etu.univ-littoral.fr)**

Large cities have long been presented as places providing a better environment for expressions and fulfilment of sexual and gender minorities lives (at least under certain conditions, see: Tissot, 2018) as in the case of “gay & lesbian neighbourhoods”, which began to develop in the 1970s in some Western cities. On the other hand, “peripheral” areas (here defined as medium or small-sized cities, suburbs, rural villages, etc., i.e. what is not the metropole) appear as the counterpart of large cities: the places LGBTQI+ flees because they are usually stereotyped as more conservative and intolerant towards them; also because they offer less community support towards dedicated associations, meeting places (such as bars), health centres, etc.

At first, feminist and queer researchers have followed the same trajectory concentrating its effort on the analysis of the LGBTQI+ population in the metropolitan context, neglecting in the same time, the situation of LGBTQI+ in the “peripheries”. This is slowly changing as some are pointing the “metronormativity” of such pieces of research (Halberstam, 2005) while others are developing approaches focusing more on LGBTQI+’s ways of life, or expressions of sexual identities outside the metropolis (Gray, Johnson, Gilley, 2016; Phillips, Shuttleton, Watt, 2000).

Following this recent shift, this session invites contributions of researchers working on (and questioning the supposed specificities of) the experiences and life courses of sexual and gender minority populations outside of large cities (which does not mean without any relation to them). We welcome in particular approaches that uncover the multiscalar relationships between what is possible/authorised/tolerated by institutions/societies and what is performed/achieved/hidden by individuals in terms of non -majoritarian gender and/or sexuality expression in ‘peripheral’ spaces. For example, and in a non-exhaustive manner, the work presented could focus on the following themes:

* Institutionalisation of sexuality and gender (at any sale) and local reappropriations and applications of laws, norms and social values (from LGBTQI+phobies to, on the opposite, recognition of LGBTQI+ rights)
* The impact of the latter on the expressions, accommodations, arrangements of LGBTQI+ individuals with their gender and sexual identity;
* The ‘marginal/marginalised’ body as a locus of violence, resistance and/or emancipation of gender and sexual identity.

Gray M., Johnson C., Gilley B. (2016). *Queering the Countryside: New Frontiers in Rural Queer Studies*, New York: New York University Press, 416 p.

Halberstam JJ. (2005). *In A Queer Time And Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives*, New York: New York University Press, 213 p.

Phillips R., Shuttleton D., Watt D. (2000). *De-Centering Sexualities*, New York : Routledge, 312 p.

Tissot S. (2018). *Gayfriendly. Acceptation et contrôle de l’homosexualité à Paris et à New York*, Paris : Raisons d’agir, 328 p.

**Session chairs:**

Cyril Blondel is Associate Professor in geography at the University of Reims Champagne-Ardenne. His research deals with feminist and decolonial approaches of peripherality and marginality in Europe.

Théophile Plouvier is PhD student in geography at the University of Littoral Côte d’Opale. His research focuses on the socio-spatial consequences of homophobia on homosexual men in the north of France.

**Submission procedure:**

Please send your abstracts (maximum 300 words, 4 keys words and a brief biography) to [cyril.blondel@univ-reims.fr](mailto:cyril.blondel@univ-reims.fr) AND [theophile.plouvier@etu.univ-littoral.fr](mailto:theophile.plouvier@etu.univ-littoral.fr) before the 27th March 2022.

You can also contact us if you have any questions about the session.

More information on the conference: <https://2022.egsconference.com/>