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# Security, Sexuality, and the Gay Clown Putin Meme: Queer Theory and International Responses to Russian Political Homophobia

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## Introduction

International Relations (IR) has seen a substantial increase in scholarship on the politics of the visual. While this research is vast and varied, poststructuralist approaches and critical security studies have been at the forefront of engaging the visual in IR (Andersen et al., 2015; Bleiker, 2018; Hansen, 2011; Vuori and Andersen, 2018). Within this burgeoning subfield, there has been a focus on the politics of photorealistic genres, though scholars are increasingly asking how more illustrated genres—mostly cartoons and comics—relate to security (e.g., Aradau and Hill, 2013; Cooper-Cunningham, 2019; 2020; Dittmer, 2005; Dodds, 2007; Hansen, 2011; 2017; Särnä, 2018; Shim, 2017; Wedderburn, 2019). In this article, I theorise the implications of memes for IR by exploring how ‘Gay Clown Putin’ has been used in the international response to Russian political homophobia.<sup>1</sup> In so doing, I also provide an analysis that brings into IR queer theories on the politics of sexual shame, stigma, and playful delight in abjection, thereby taking queer IR in an important direction that explicitly emphasises the oppositional, anti-normative politics of early queer liberation and AIDS activism.

In Russia, queerness and LGBT rights and identities have been constituted as a national security threat emanating from the West. The Gay Clown Putin (GCP) meme, as part of the international response to that security discourse, have been added to the country’s List of Extremist Materials. In this context, the meme makes a foreign and security policy intervention, making it of central importance for the study of international politics. Moreover, looking at international responses to state-sponsored phobias around sexuality and gender is also an opportunity to further explore the connections between sexualities and international security (Leigh and Weber, 2019; Richter-Montpetit, 2014; 2018).

While part of a wave of state-directed political homophobia (see Bosia and Weiss, 2013), Russia exhibits a set of phobias that combine fears about gender and sexual expression outside heteropatriarchal structures with a national security discourse. There has been a significant international response to this, starting after the gay propaganda law was passed in 2013 and in the build-up to the Sochi Winter Olympics in 2014. Besides news coverage, foreign government reactions, and NGO reports, a number of oppositional and transnational responses take visual form—in this instance,

memes. GCP, which depicts Putin in clown-like drag, is one of the most prominent memes to emerge in the last ten years that directly intervenes in international politics. This raises important questions about how to theorise memes for IR. Can we, politically and ontologically, think about memes as critical interventions just by being produced? Is it the ways they are used, circulated, and interpreted that makes them political? Or, both?

The article unfolds as follows. I introduce the GCP meme and the circumstances around their emergence before providing the three building blocks that enable a thorough engagement with the politics they invoke. First, I show how Russian political homophobia is rooted in a national security discourse. Second, I theorise memes as critical political interventions that might challenge international security policy. Third, I outline queer theory that has a radical commitment to anti-normativity and delight in deviance; in this case, weaponising it to resist security discourse. In the main analysis, I offer three readings of the meme as: (1) constituting homophobic policies as a threat and challenging normative constructions of gender/sexuality; (2) reproducing homophobic, misogynistic power structures; and (3) as playful delight in abjection that short-circuits heteronormative power.<sup>2</sup>

I ultimately argue that memes are important sites of international politics that challenge the Russian state's discourse of queerness as national security threat, while also undermining heteronormative organisations of society and sexuality by embracing queer sex as abject and creating new possibilities for queer subjectivity, thus rearranging power relations. Rather than mere parody or mimicry that reinforces power, GCP is a symbol of the radical potential of anti-assimilationist, anti-normative, oppositional queer (international) politics invested in an endless interrogation of power.

## The Emergence of the *Gay Clown Putin Meme*

Russian state-sponsored homophobia entered international consciousness when the gay propaganda law, which prohibits the 'promotion' of 'non-traditional' sexuality and/or gender to minors, was passed in 2013. Domestically, there has been significant queer organising from community engagement and political lobbying to protest and unsanctioned pride events. Here, however, I focus on the international response and the role images have played.

As part of a campaign commissioned by Dutch LGBT rights organisation COC, [putinarainbow.com](http://putinarainbow.com) was set up to protest the gay propaganda law. The website invited people to upload images of Putin with rainbows somehow incorporated. Its purpose statement reads: "The Russian parliament has passed a new law that prohibits 'gay propaganda'. This includes a ban on the rainbow. We think that the world looks much better with more rainbows, not less. If you agree, upload or share a Putin, and spread the love".

Since its establishment, international actors have spread hundreds of images on and offline as part of a response to Russian state-sponsored homophobia. All of the images uploaded to [putinarainbow.com](http://putinarainbow.com)

use photos or drawings of Putin combined with the rainbow. Figure 1 shows the *Putin A Rainbow* landing page and a small selection of submitted images.<sup>3</sup> While the *Putin A Rainbow* collection is vast and includes various images that are part of a larger political intervention that has evolved over eight years, methodologically I focus on the GCP meme—those images following the visual patterns of Figures 2-5. These have received significant attention online and in international press, are the most widely circulated, cross genres, have provoked a significant response from the Russian government, and are now symbols of the propaganda law. Unlike other images submitted to [putinarainbow.com](http://putinarainbow.com), the GCP meme is iconic.

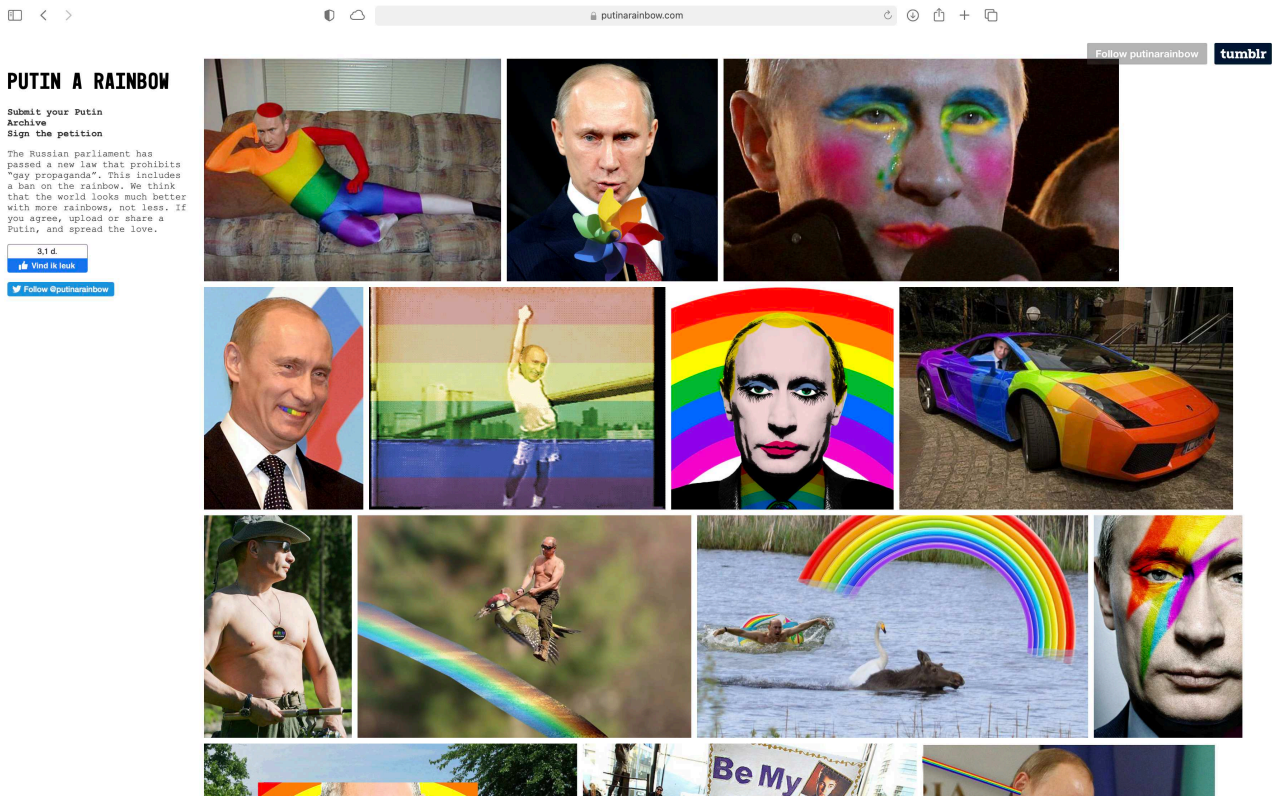


Figure 1. Screenshot of [putinarainbow.com](http://putinarainbow.com) (16 February 2021)

GCP is a group of linked images that started from Pablo El Terrible’s *Warhol* image (Figure 1). This image is a photoshopped portrait photograph of Putin shot for *TIME* magazine in 2007 by the photographer Platon. The memes follow a specific visual pattern, derived and then manipulated from El Terrible’s image—as in Figures 3, 4, and 5. This subset of queered Putins are usually devoid of text, show the president wearing make-up, and incorporate a rainbow or its colours. After the *Warhol* image was published online (9 April 2013), it became a key visual reference for global political activism on LGBT rights in Russia.

Since its creation in 2013, GCP has been used in protests against the Sochi Winter Olympics, worldwide demonstrations against the propaganda law and Chechen ‘gay purge’, and is salient in news reporting on Russian and Chechen homophobia (for examples, see Cresci, 2017; Herszenhorn, 2013). It has been turned into t-shirts, stickers, and posters. It features at pride events (Figure 7). US talk show



*The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* did a comedy feature mocking Putin based on the meme.<sup>4</sup> And, testifying to its iconicity, it was featured in the Design Museum London's *Hope to Nope* exhibition (2018), which collected images that played a pivotal role in reacting to major political moments. Recently, new renditions queering Trump have emerged (Figure 6).

**Figure 2 (L).** 'Drag Putin a la Warhol' – Pablo el Terrible (2013). Source: [putinarainbow.com](http://putinarainbow.com)



**Figure 3 (R).** Untitled – TheDavyStar (2017). Source: Reddit.

Photographs taken at worldwide protests against Russian homophobia since 2013 show how heavily GCP features over the years—mostly Figures 2 and 3. Searches in two international image databases—Getty Images and AP Images—for ‘Russia gay propaganda’ show how frequently these memes are used in political activism and how they have been used to protest the ongoing Chechen gay purge. Excluding non-protest images, 11.81% of Getty photographs (66/559) and 12.88% of AP photographs (17/132) included GCP.<sup>5</sup> Given the amount of subjects to photograph at protests and that they appear in Asia, Europe, and North America, this is indicative of the meme’s saliency.<sup>6</sup> Due to space constraints and image copyright it is impossible to show the full circulation and use of GCP in protests and media coverage about Russian homophobia.

Like the Muhammad Cartoons that Lene Hansen (2011) studies, there was a strong political reaction to Gay Clown Putin. This included banning the production and circulation of rainbowed and dragged Putin in 2017 by adding the images to the Russian List of Extremist Materials, which also includes terrorist beheading videos (Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation, 2021: §4071). This article is therefore not only ‘gay propaganda’ but ‘extremist’.

Figure 4 (L). 'The Real Hooligan' by Mandreus ([putinarainbow.com](http://putinarainbow.com))



Figure 5 (R). Untitled by Anton ([putinarainbow.com](http://putinarainbow.com))

## Security, Sexuality, and Russia

The gay propaganda law and GCP memes raise issues of security in a few ways. Classed as extremist and gay propaganda, these images are constituted as dangerous. This is part of the Russian government's political project of eliminating/invisibilising queerness. This project is rooted in the government's construction of 'the West' as 'Gayropa', a space of moral decadence and immorality that existentially threatens Russian state and society founded on 'traditional values'. These memes also articulate an alternative security discourse that constitutes the government's heteronormative, homophobic policies as threatening to queer people by legitimising their persecution.

The propaganda law was justified through a discourse constituting non-heterosexual and non-cisgender—queer—individuals as threats to the 'traditional Christian values' underpinning Russian and 'true European' civilisation (Wilkinson, 2014). As European states have increased legal protections for LGBTQ people and implored Russia to follow suit, Putin has constituted Europe as inferior, sexually deviant, encroaching on Russian sovereignty, and eroding its 'traditional' values. Labelled 'Gayropa', this decadent, meddling, queer Europe has been constructed as both a threat and civilisation in need of saving; a role Russia is happy to play as defender of 'true European values' (Foxall, 2019). Queerness, thus, emerges as an internal security threat in the form of queer people and an external ideological/cultural one emanating from 'Gayropa'.

'Security' is a particular type of discursive practice and form of identity construction—that of the Other's radical difference and threat—that is useful in suppressing particular groups of people while



establishing the coherence and superiority of the Self (Hansen, 2006). Constructing queerness as a national security threat establishes the coherence and superiority of heterosexuality and ties it to Russianness. Since security discourses legitimate certain actions in the name of the existence of a given entity (Campbell, 1992), linking 'normal' sexuality/gender to the survival of Russia and its values legitimates the elimination of queerness. Constructing queerness as a threat to national security and Russian/true European values links queerness with enmity, Otherness, and danger that needs elimination or at least invisibilisation.



Figure 6. Source: Twitter (@moceanskipper)



Foto: Gonzales Photo/Shutterstock/Ritzau Scanpix  
Imageid: 3608545a

Figure 7. Copenhagen Pride 2013. Credit: Gonzales Photo/Shutterstock/Ritzau Scanpix.

Gender and sexuality come together to produce normal/abnormal sexual practices and gender categories within a culturally specific heteropatriarchal matrix (Butler, 1990). For example, those sexed male at birth are expected to behave in masculine ways and to solely desire and have ‘normal’ sex with those who are sexed as female and are considered feminine (Warner, 2000: 37). Sexuality and gender are also tied to the state: “state-making processes are singularly important for constituting and normalizing binary sex differences and heteropatriarchal ‘family’ relations...*making states makes sex*” (Peterson, 2014: 390). As Essig writes: “‘Being’ Russian, like ‘being’ a man, depends not only upon geographical and cultural boundaries, but lines of class, gender, ethnicity, education, and of course, sexuality” (1999: 123). Sexuality, gender, and nation are entangled, coming together to produce and discipline appropriate bodies that have appropriate sexual desires/behaviours. Here, this is fortified through security discourse.

The production of the ‘Russianness’ happens by marking non-heterosexual and/or non-cisgender bodies as abject, foreign, Gayropean, pedophilic, bestial, and backward. These bodies, marked as non-Russian because of their divergence from ‘traditional,’ ‘normal’ sexual practices and gender performances co-constitute what ‘Russian’ is through normal/abnormal, hetero/homo, Russian/Gayropean dichotomies. In a bid to eliminate the ‘queer threat’, the propaganda law prohibits the public representation of sexual and gender deviance. This is about invisibilising those who deviate from and call into question the desires and practices prescribed by ‘traditional family values’.

Such explicitly homophobic policies are always connected with visibility. They produce competent and failing bodies/citizens and delineate the subject positions available to non-/conforming people. Queer individuals, from the government’s perspective, should not be part of ‘the people’ nor are they to be visible in Russia, which has historically encouraged ‘correcting’ same-sex desire through surgery that purports to align the gendered body with heteronormative expectations about the object of desire (Essig, 1999: 36,45-46). Domestic policies like the propaganda law and foreign policy discourses constructing a sexually immoral, queer-loving ‘Gayropa’ establish a national image founded on ‘traditional values’, heterosexuality, and adherence to gender norms.

This coalesces into a sexualised (in)security, announced through a series of practices including banning queer visibility, constituting Europe as a queer civilisational Other in need of correction, and classifying GCP as extremist material. These are efforts to regulate which bodies appear in public, how they are seen, and to delineate the boundaries of Russian identity; concomitantly constituting Russia as superior to ‘Gayropean’ nations and carving Russia’s place in the world. This is a project of making ‘appropriate’, ‘normal’ bodies visible and ‘inappropriate’, ‘abnormal’ bodies non-existent. Memes challenge this. And they appear to be successful in troubling the government, given its reaction.



## Mememes as Visual Political Intervention

Like many social concepts there is no widely agreed conceptualisation of a ‘meme’, meaning there are no clear boundaries as to what exactly memes are. The many definitions in sociology, cultural studies, and media and communication scholarship include anything from musical notes to catchphrases, hashtags to still images, hand gestures to widely replicated dances (Denisova, 2019; Hamilton, 2016; Shifman, 2014). For the purposes of theorising memes for IR, I start from the social use of the term ‘meme’. Most memes emerge on the internet and are images that “may contain a punchline (aphorism quotes, movie catchphrases or any witty slogans) or make a statement without added text” (Denisova, 2019: 9). Since most memes are visual and this article is about Gay Clown Putin, when referring to memes I mean *visual memes*, which I define as: *a series of deliberately created, widely circulated, and remixed or imitated images linked by content, composition, and iconological location.*<sup>7</sup>

What distinguishes memes from other images is that they are appropriated, modified, and widely shared: they are viral images that “proliferate on mutation and replication” (Denisova, 2019: 10). To be a meme an image must be part of a corpus of widely shared, visually linked images “based on imitation, in which numerous participants create new versions...preserving and altering various elements in the process” (Gal et al., 2016: 1701) (e.g., Figures 2-5). A single image that circulates widely without modification would be a viral, perhaps iconic, image. Identifying memes and studying them therefore involves examining how they are positioned in relation to other images both within and outside the corpus; how they reference older images and the politics that invokes. The main reference memes usually make is to a founding image: the image that gets remixed and modified by others (Figure 2 in the case of GCP). There is an intervisuality and internal coherence to the memetic corpus; the images build on and reference each other.

Mememes are sometimes compared to iconic images, which have been theorised as interventions into foreign policy discourses (Hansen, 2015), but there are some important distinctions. Hariman and Lucaites define iconic images as:

images appearing in print, electronic, or digital media that are widely recognized and remembered, are understood to be representations of historically significant events, activate strong emotional identification or response, and are reproduced across a range of media, genres, or topics. (Hariman and Lucaites, 2007: 27).

Their strict definition means that not all images meet the criteria of iconicity. While memes are copied, imitated, satirised, and variously appropriated—key indicators of iconicity according to Hariman and Lucaites (37)—the high threshold for iconicity is not one all memes meet. By definition, memes are widely shared and some individual memes or the visual patterns constituting a memetic corpus are highly recognisable. However, memes vary in reproduction across media, genres, or topics; representation of significant historical events; and generation of an emotional response.

The distinction between iconic images and memes is important. Some but not all memes are iconic. Some but not all icons are memes. This is even more complicated as some iconic images become memes, which could be argued of the Alan Kurdi images (Adler-Nissen et al., 2019; Olesen, 2017). Depending on chronology, we might therefore speak of *iconic memes* and *memeified icons* that are “widely circulated, emotionally responded to, and seen as representing significant historical events...found across a variety of genres, produced and reproduced by a range of media, and...frequently appropriated and thus inserted into genres beyond the one in which they originated” (Hansen, 2015: 287). *Iconic memes/memeified icons* become important for IR and security studies when they make, or are appropriated to make, interventions in foreign or security policy; as Gay Clown Putin was.

The political status of memes is as much about the images themselves as the texts and practices constituting them as a/political (Adler-Nissen et al., 2019; Hansen, 2011). Whilst most memes do not circulate offline, GCP is found in a variety of genres across social, print, and textile media: t-shirts, posters, mugs, stickers, for example. It has been discursively linked to, and is thus representative of, a significant event: the passing of the propaganda law, rise of Russian political homophobia, and policy discourses about ‘Gayropa’. It generated a political and emotional response when it was constituted as threats and added to the List of Extremist Material, but also in its emergence from emotionally charged experiences of social annihilation and heteronormative oppression.<sup>8</sup> Thus, GCP can be considered iconic: the *Warhol* image is iconic in its own right; the other memes have a more generic iconicity that follow its iconic visual pattern.

The queer politics the images themselves invoke; the legal, press, social media texts ascribing them meaning; the repeated use of the images at protests since 2013; their longevity as symbols of queer resistance; and their iconicity combine to constitute GCP as more than entertainment or funny apolitical internet images. They are visual political interventions, albeit playful ones. This is a complexity and politicality not present in all memes.

## Queering (Queer) IR: Playful Delight in Abjection

Queer IR has demonstrated how sex(uality) connects to international politics, identifying for instance the sexualised logics through which international security works and how security discourses often rest upon gendered-sexualised-racialised constructions about what/who needs protection and what/who is a threat (Cooper-Cunningham, 2020; Leigh and Weber, 2019; Richter-Montpetit, 2014; 2018). Here, I (re)turn to queer theory through the politics of sexual shame and stigma to move beyond the identification of heteronormative power structures underpinning international politics. I bring into IR a queer politics that is explicitly anti-normative, delights in sexual difference, revels in abjectness, and embraces the disruptive force of queerness that flouts rigid and punitive norms around sex, gender, and sexual desire.

Queer theory acknowledges the deep connection between gender and sexuality. They intertwine in the sense that desire for the opposite sexed/gendered body is assumed natural and 'normal' whereas desire for the same breaks with normative sexuality and gender. We can therefore speak of a gendered heterosexual/homosexual dichotomy that is powerful, ordering, and hierarchical. Heteronormativity—the structures of understanding that privilege heterosexuality—ensures that “If you deviate at any point from this program, you do so at your own cost” (Warner, 2000: 38).

All dichotomies privilege one side of the divide and thereby produce a hierarchical relationship between juxtaposed terms. Opposite-/same-sex sexual desires and behaviours have been constituted in hierarchical opposition as normal/perverse, natural/deviant. Consequently, those practicing sexual behaviours that deviate from the heteronormative programme “are subjected to a presumption of mental illness, disreputability, criminality, restricted social and physical mobility, loss of institutional support, and economic sanctions” (Rubin, 2011: 149). This has led to the persecution and securitization of supposedly deviant sexuality and gender performances.

Queer theorists have shown that stigma, shame, and moralism about appropriate sexual behaviour and erotic desire are essential in upholding this powerful dichotomy of sexual and gender difference. Michael Warner's work on the politics of sexual shame is instructive: stigma is “a mark on the body” that constitutes “the person, not the deed, as tainted” whereas shame is linked more to the act (Warner, 2000: 27-28). To deviate from normative sexuality—which names appropriately gendered objects of desire and types of sex—is to engage in shameful acts. When these desires/acts are constituted as identities, as the essence of one's being, they invite stigmatisation.

Destroying deeply entrenched and resilient systems of oppression such as patriarchal gender and heteronormativity is not as simple as pointing to their discursive, socially (re)produced, contingent nature. Destabilising powerful discourses and showing their reliance on obedience, repetition, and fear of transgression is only one step. On this, Cathy Cohen (1997) makes an important point: power and hierarchies can be rearranged and transformed but never fully eliminated. A queer politics that invites radical transformation of society and politics is itself eternally oppositional, anti-assimilationist, deliberately antisocial, attendant to every relation to power, and adopts an ethics that “cuts against every form of hierarchy” (Warner, 2000: 36).<sup>9</sup>

Queer is therefore distinct from an identity-based LGBT civil rights agenda. It is a more radical and transformative politics that short-circuits the “hierarchies that allow systems of oppression to persist and operate efficiently” by not only challenging how people understand sexuality but creating oppositional space against all forms of domination and marginalisation (Cohen, 437, 440). Queer is intersectional, coalitional, and rejects LGBT identity politics that turns sexual and gender 'deviance' (acts) into identities and assimilates lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and trans people into heteronormative institutions that perpetuate cisheterosexuality as the norm. Identity-based politics fails

to interrogate the politics of sexual shame and stigma that operate to quash deviance; how they are used to punish individuals for failing to conform to cisheteronormative demands, often in the name of the nation's health (Rubin, 2011; Warner, 2000).

A liberatory queer politics refuses to sanitise or morally legitimise sexual difference and instead takes delight in shame (Bersani, 1996; Warner, 2000). This is not the same as perpetuating discourses of queerness as 'abnormal' in insidiously phobic ways since queer does not work through a heteronormative epistemology (Sedgwick, 2008; Warner, 1993). In its refusal of normativity, queer is anti-assimilationist, oppositional, non-proscriptive, and, in rejecting society, takes "fierce pride in bucking political, emotional, and sexual norms" (Gould, 2009: 264). Queer is therefore attentive to all those who endure the penalties of divergence from cisheteronormative culture.

Its radical politics lies in its revelry in stigmatic and abject associations; its delight in flouting rigid and punitive norms around sex, gender, and sexuality in ways that are constituted perverse, immoral, unthinkable, or fundamental threats to children, society, the common good, and national security (see: Bersani, 1996; Edelman, 2004; Gould, 2009). If being abject—generally a negative thing—is to stand outside of and/or fail to conform with dominant identities, systems, and orders—in this case normative sexuality and gender—then queerness, which works through a different epistemology, delights in abjection by deliberately flouting heteronormative demands. To be abject is favourable. Queer is therefore a political commitment to never being nor wanting to be constituted 'normal' for all the power that entails. It is an outlaw existence that is antisocial in its perpetual, unapologetic anti-normativity.

Identifying and destabilising oppressive regimes of ab/normalisation that constitute particular bodies and their behaviours as normal/perverse is important (Butler, 1990; Warner, 2000). However, Bersani demanded more of queer theory and politics:

we may discover, within the very ambiguities of being gay, a path of resistance far more threatening to dominant social orders than vestimentary blurrings of sexual difference and possibly subversive separations of sex from gender. There are some glorious precedents for thinking of homosexuality as truly disruptive—as a *force* not limited to the modest goals of tolerance for diverse lifestyles, but in fact mandating the politically unacceptable and politically indispensable choice of an outlaw existence (1996: 76).

He suggested that "*the value of sexuality is to demean the seriousness of efforts to redeem it*" for "if the rectum is the grave in which the masculine ideal (an ideal shared—differently—by men *and* women) of proud subjectivity is buried, then it should be celebrated for its very potential for death" (1987: 222, emphasis his; see also: 1996: 19). Problematising how anal sex has been constituted as the aberration that 'feminises' the 'passive' man—where the rectum is the sanctum where masculinity resides—Bersani proposes embracing queer abjection and using it as a force for: shattering masculine/feminine ideals and attendant power structures that constrain erotic pleasure and subjectivity to rigidly gendered



sexuality; short-circuiting heteronormative sociality by taking pride in deviant sex(uality); and liberation from repression.

Queer is more than resistance to heteronormativity by showing how it works. It is more than mimicry, parody, troubling, or a camp reworking of hegemonic forms of the social—the compulsory practice of heterosexuality—and is instead “a potentially revolutionary inaptitude...for sociality as it is known” (Bersani, 1996: 75). It unapologetically embraces deviation and uses it as a vehicle for social transformation. This antisocial version of queer is tied to the politics of gay shame, stigma, and respectability. Recognising gay shame in deviance from the heteronormative programme, queer people/theorists/activists argued for pride in sexual difference. This is rooted in recognition that even the most morally defended sex is perverted: we are all subject to the spectre of desire and its uncontrollable, unpredictable workings (Bersani, 1987: 222; Warner, 2000: 2-3,36-38).

This queer pride differs from that associated with the ‘politics of respectability’ that emerged in the 1980s and remains central to the LGBT political project (Gould, 2009: 245). Instead of downplaying sexual difference for a shot at inclusion in “an oppressive and exploitative society” (cue sanitised slogans like ‘love is love’)—a strategy that ironically achieves the phobic goal of eliminating difference—pride in sexual deviance ‘weaponises’ the constitution of queer sex as abject for “righteous rebellion” against sociopolitical norms (Gould, 2009: 249). It resists the trap of effusing moral justifications for sexual tastes and practices—as if erotic pleasure has to be defended.

To playfully delight in abjection is to take joy in being abject and to tease those who take sex too seriously by attempting to moralise it or control desire. To celebrate queerness by taking endless, playful, ridiculing delight in it, rather than hiding what might hamper social acceptance, is political. In the case of Russian political homophobia, sex is geopolitical. Celebrating queerness is recognition that bodies are the battleground upon which geopolitical struggles are fought (Russia vs. Gayropa) through control of gender performance, sexual freedoms, and bodily pleasures.

Rather than resignifying transgressive sexual desire or gender performance as ‘normal’ and allowing it to be subsumed—accommodated, disarmed—into dominant society, queer short-circuits the power of heteronormativity by embracing its abject label, refusing to (be made) conform to cisheteronormative standards of social and political life, and finding joy from the trauma of the normal imposed. This refusal does not dissolve the hierarchical straight/queer, normal/abnormal binary as such but short-circuits their power. Acknowledging the hierarchical constitution of sexual practices/desires and certain erotic pleasures as perverse, queer challenges heteronormativity and homophobic hierarchies by rejoicing in queer aberrance, delighting in it, and claiming dignity in supposedly shameful erotic pleasures. Ultimately, laying the groundwork for new forms of (queer) subjectivity that challenge what is deemed shameful.

## Reading Gay Clown Putin

Ontologically, images do not have their own ‘voice’ (Barthes, 1977). They are multivocal in that audiences determine what they say through their interpretations (Cooper-Cunningham, 2019: 389).

While all images are polysemous, memes are particularly susceptible to competing interpretations. They usually circulate without extra-image textual anchoring such as captions. Their continuous reinvention also makes their meaning unstable: does the new rendition of GCP with Trump alter their meaning? This leaves memes vulnerable to use in social and political projects beyond—even contra to—those they were envisioned to serve: Pepe the Frog started as an innocent comic book but is now tied to the alt-right.

Below, I provide three interpretations of GCP for readers to engage with. Each brings out a different possibility for how the meme works politically. This is valuable because it demonstrates the complexity of images and how different interpretations operate. My epistemological approach is not to identify *the* definitive interpretation of GCP but to consider the different politics emerging from different readings of these images; the meme’s polytics. Not all interpretations are of equal quality and do not merit equal status. The reading of GCP as homophobic and misogynist, advanced by Wiedlack, while possible, relies on an assumption that divergence from cisheterosexuality is undesirable; it adopts a cisheteronormative epistemology. Nor does it attend to their intervisual/intertextual anchoring in queer activism.

Hence, I privilege the third reading, which draws on queer theory and praxis to show how GCP reconfigures queer subjectivities beyond victimhood and oppression towards agentic delight in abjection. Drawing on the version of queer outlined above, I move beyond readings of GCP that destabilise the hetero/queer binary or show how it is reproduced—as in readings one and two—thereby adding complexity to our theorisations of identity, political homophobia, and political activism.

## Challenging Homophobia, Flipping the Threat

GCP can be understood as challenging idealised masculinities and heteronormativity through parody and the subversive resignification of gender. The Russian state closely controls Putin’s image, which is clear from the Kremlin’s website and other carefully curated images of Putin.<sup>10</sup> As his image is carefully crafted to be the embodiment of national masculinity and that which all Russian’s ought to emulate and admire (Foxall, 2013; Sperling, 2014), the contrast between state-crafted images of Putin and the satirical, criminalised GCP images is striking.

The public images of ‘macho’ Putin are designed to emphasise his embodiment of the *muzhik*, the ‘real man’ who proves he is not a woman or homosexual but instead sturdy, tough, strong, and ‘sexy’ (Sperling, 2014: 36). By dragging Putin, GCP targets this glorified masculinity and parodies the idea of natural, *a priori* gender that flows from sex assigned at birth and determines erotic desires. Revealing how gender relies on imitation and repetition, how fragile the gender order is, the meme

destabilises Putin's position of (moral) authority by causing a dissonance between the curated macho public image and the GCP parody. This puts hegemonic orderings of society into deep water by exposing the fragility of norms around sex/gender/sexuality and their susceptibility to endless resignification. Not only does GCP destabilise notions of fixed binary gender by showing just how easily they can be transgressed, but also norms around appropriate sexuality and the power Putin derives from embodying the (now unstable) *mużhik* image.

From within the heteropatriarchal matrix, drag Putin reads as abnormal. Operating outside sex/gender norms, questions arise about whether Putin is represented as man/woman, gay/straight, and so on. GCP does not 'fit' into these binaries. In an inversion of power, queer activists force Putin to genderfuck—that is, confound expected gender norms. This is closest to what Butler calls “subversive and parodic redeployment of power” (Butler, 1990: 124). Mimicking the way the heterosexual matrix disciplines bodies into performing cisgendered heterosexuality, queering Putin troubles the ontological stability of gender norms using parody and satire. This move scrambles the coherence of the cisheteronormative structure and starts to destabilise entrenched regimes of heteronormative sexuality and patriarchal gender.

The destabilisation of normal/abnormal, hetero/homo dichotomies happens through different stylisations of Putin's body that subvert gender norms. Normative constructions around sex, gender, and sexuality become fragile, are cracked open, and thus become susceptible to resignification. The meme, thus, confronts heterosexualised power structures that discipline bodies into appropriate (heteronormative) performances of gender and sexuality.

Read alongside the curation of Putin's hypermasculine image, GCP undermines and subversively caricatures Putin's authority, his hypermasculinity, and the discipline of heteropatriarchal structures. The government's balking at both GCP images and queerness more generally only reiterates how much terror goes into maintaining compliance and the appearance of a natural, stable gender binary. As the embodiment of Russian masculinity and gender order, the contrast between state-accepted and queer satirical, criminalised GCP is vital.

This is not simply the manipulation of Putin's face on a rainbow flag. It represents the inversion of a system that privileges cisgendered heterosexuality and disparages queerness. Thus, giving the meme a clear political dimension that challenges state homophobia, cisheteronormative organisations of society, and establishes queer visibility. Using symbols like the rainbow, these images play a pivotal role in dissenting against legislative moves to make queer bodies conform and invisibilise queerness. They stake a claim to public space by combining the media grabbing tactic of using leader's faces with queer and feminist symbolism; the rainbow in Figure 2 and Pussy Riot-style balaclavas in Figure 3.

Since discourses and practices around images attribute meaning to them, adding GCP to the List of Extremist Material because it 'promotes' queerness is important to its signification. That it is

constituted as promoting non-traditional sexuality imbues it with that status, thereby giving it political power as a challenge to the government's policy position. The images provoked an authoritarian government to strengthen its homophobic politics, to enforce its propaganda law on a set of images. This reaction constitutes the meme as critical political intervention. Any association of Putin with queerness had to be muted not just because it undermined his hypermasculine image and the propaganda law but because it confounded the cisheteronormative discursive foundations upon which Russian identity and security is built: it triggered an ontological dislocation, ontological insecurity. If, as we know from Hansen (2006), that security is an ontological necessity for the state, then queer(ness) and these memes threaten that.

GCP is politically potent because its content visualises and making present that which is deemed illegal. GCP images challenge the construction of queerness as anti-Russian and reorder the arrangements of visibility imposed by the propaganda law that sought queer bodies invisible. The meme challenges sovereign power by redrawing the lines that distinguish types of subjectivity and determine individuals' place inside/outside the community, and by articulating an alternate security discourse. One where the threat-threatened relationship is inverted and re-configured: the Russian government and heteropatriarchal hypermasculinised society, which is so deeply tied to so-called 'traditional values', is constituted as *threatening to* queer people not as *threatened by* them.

## Homophobic

Another reading of the GCP meme is that it is homophobic and patriarchal; that in seeking to challenge Putin's anti-queer politics it reproduces the hegemonic heteropatriarchal system by attacking his masculinity and sexuality. In Russia, political opponents frequently challenge each other's masculinity and heterosexuality in a bid to undermine political legitimacy (Sperling, 2014). These tactics constitute the opposition as insufficiently or inappropriately masculine, a subordinate form of masculinity, thus reproducing the hegemonic heteropatriarchal gender order and heteronationalist discourse.

GCP is neither the first instance of clowning and dragging the political opposition nor the first (visual) attempt to impugn another politician's masculinity.<sup>11</sup> This is symptomatic of patriarchal structures, which not only differentiate 'men' from 'women' but between masculinities (Connell, 1995). As such, one might interpret GCP as following established heteronormative tactics. While undertaken with professed liberatory intentions, it is undergirded by and reproduces a sociopolitical system that privileges a particular type of virulent heterosexual masculinity, the *muzhik*.

This would make GCP the visual manifestation of 'nationalism as competing masculinities' (Slootmaeckers, 2019). Instead of destabilising the heteropatriarchal system and heteronationalism through which sexualised-gendered internal and external enemy Others are produced—as in reading one—GCP supports and reproduces those hierarchies as well as homophobic



nationalism. When read against the declaration of intent on [putinarainbow.com](http://putinarainbow.com), this suggests that the images backfire and fail to move beyond heteronormativity.

Katharina Wiedlack (2020: 67) argues that GCP reproduces phobic discourses by using visual cues of “feminization and gender transgression” to disparage Putin. Read as such, while these images undermine the hypermasculine, macho image the Kremlin curates, they do so using the very structures sought destabilised (Wiedlack, 2020). Wiedlack contends that these images do not make sense without the tacit knowledge that a particular way of being a ‘man’ is privileged; that divergence from cisheterosexual masculinity is undesirable. Hence, the joke only works by denigrating queerness as inferior and abnormal.

Through this lens, the meme is not a critical intervention but the reproduction of norms around sex, gender, and sexuality. It fails because the very target of domination that it supposedly resists—heteronormativity—is what makes it offensive, disparaging, and potentially politically powerful. It does not challenge gender norms but reproduces them by delegitimising gender transgression and poking fun at drag, genderfucking and/or trans\* and/or ‘deviant’ sexual desire. All of which are abject in a heteronormative structure that constitutes transgression of sex, gender, and sexuality norms as dangerous and deviant. This meme reproduces the powerful and oppressive homosexual/heterosexual hierarchy and glorifies ‘normal’ performances of gender. Thus, the matrix through which bodies are made to fail and/or succeed, to be constituted part of or excluded from the nation, is not undone but strengthened.

In this second reading, the GCP images might not follow the national security logic of Putin’s construction of ‘Gayropa’ to reinforce Russia’s dominant gendered position in a ‘masculine hierarchy of nations’ (Slootmaeckers, 2019: 258) but they do disparage feminine masculinities and target queer Putin for punishment. In the context of Russian hyper-masculinity and its historical practices of surgically forcing gender transgressive bodies into their ‘correct’ sex, the implication that Putin is queer facilitates a reading that his gender failure needs fixing or elimination to save Russia. The product of this reading is strikingly similar to Putin’s homophobic project: GCP does not successfully challenge homophobia since it re-inscribes vilified queer subjectivities.

However, this reading overlooks the historicity of queer images of dissent. GCP follows common visual tactics in queer political activism and has an intervisuality with previous images.<sup>12</sup> The way the memes are used at protests harks back to a form of AIDS activism imbedded in a radical queer politics of unapologetic delight in abjectness as opposed to a homophobic one (Gould, 2009). At protests in Madrid (23/08/13) several protesters had bloody hands and in London (10/08/13) some used a bloody handprint poster linking GCP to the activist groups ACT UP and Gran Fury and their *The Government Has Blood On Its Hands* campaign. On other occasions the pink triangle is used alongside GCP and ACT UP’s famous *Silence = Death* slogan (Madrid, 25/04/17; Hong Kong, 07/02/14).

This is not just a historical but genealogical point. It puts the historicity of queer activism and past practices into the present, enabling a vitally important reading of these images that shows how they work through a queer logic rooted in AIDS activism and gay liberation that embraces deviance. This necessitates a third reading using queer theory about shame, stigma, and abjection.

## Gay Clown Putin as the Productive Embrace of Deviance

Queer can never sever its connection with shame, stigma, and denigration. It always names that which has been considered abject in some way. In this case, queer sexuality and gender performance constituted as an abject threat to Russian state and society. If labelling something ‘queer’ marks its sexual and gendered impropriety, vulgarity, perversity, and shamefulness then, following the queer work above, queering can work as a political praxis that embraces abjectness and transforms it into a site of joy, culture, and liberation. GCP queers Putin by marking him with the same shame, stigma, and abjection that queers are subject to. Instead of marking him for correction and extermination, GCP celebrates queerness by taking endless, playful, ridiculing delight in recasting Putin.

The memes are playful and they draw on humour to demean the seriousness of the Russian government’s attempts to control the unpredictable, wayward nature of desire by constituting anything outside the heteronormative ordering of sex, gender, sexuality—or ‘traditional values’—as a national security threat. They satirise the ridiculous, albeit incredibly powerful, attempts to manage sex. By taking delight in that which is supposed to be abject and celebrating it—a queer epistemology—GCP not only destabilises hierarchies but short-circuits the power derived from constituting something abject and threatening.

Starting from a queer politics that rejects deviation from cisheteronormativity as undesirable and instead holds it as joyous, desirable even, GCP is part of an oppositional queer politics. One that challenges cisheteronormative hierarchies not by saying ‘we are normal’ or ‘love is love’ but by adopting a negative sociality. That negative sociality—contempt for heteronormative society—embraces deviation and challenges the political power invested in ordering sex, gender, and sexuality through stigmatisation of the ‘abnormal’. Starting from this place, GCP is neither a homophobic nor misogynist attack on an imaginary queer Putin. Rather, GCP is first and foremost a refusal to accept dominant modes of organising the social and political that encourage the neutralisation of queerness for its deviation from state sanctioned practices and desires.

Rather than attacking queerness, GCP embraces the shame, stigma, and abjection attached to queerness and radically alters its relation to power. To queer Putin is not to show contempt for difference and deviation from the norm. It is camp in its contempt of the contemptible and highlights how so few people perfectly align with the socially imposed sex and gender norms governing us all, highlighting how all moralising about sexuality is ultimately arbitrary but infused with power. This underlines the

hypocrisy of the propaganda law and politics of sexual shame that works upon bodies to control desires and behaviours by stigmatising ‘deviant’ desires and acts.

Rejoicing in the very abjectness of queer sexuality, GCP expresses a particular part of queer culture that “doesn’t pretend to be *above* the indignity of sex” but instead teases and abuses until it is clear that sex (and gender) is “as various as the people that have it” (Warner, 2000: 35). This involves an ethical relation to people that starts with the acknowledgment that all sex is indignant, perverted in some sense. Warner (2000: 35) writes that “Queers can be abusive, insulting, and vile toward one another” but “abjection is understood to be the shared condition” and so leaning into that abjection and ridiculing Putin by marking him with the same stigmatisation reflected onto queers is a way of re-orienting queers’ relation to heteronormative sociality. This pride in sexual deviance weaponises the constitution of queer sex as abject for righteous rebellion against sociopolitical norms.

In its attempt to contain, deny, and suppress queerness as immoral, foreign, and threatening, the government is attempting to contain the uncontainable: sexual desire and the ways people (refuse to) perform gender. By infringing the propaganda law, GCP is a refusal to hide queerness or to acquiesce to state power. Acknowledging the hierarchical constitution of sexual practices and pleasures GCP challenges heteronormativity and homophobic hierarchies by rejoicing in queer aberrance, delighting in it, and claiming dignity in supposedly shameful desires. Ultimately, laying the groundwork for new forms of (queer) subjectivity that challenge what is deemed shameful.

Queering Putin breaks down the distinction between ‘normals’ and ‘queers’ and puts Putin into the firing line by subjecting him to perversity as much as anyone else. We are all threatened by the spectre of desire and its uncontrollable and unpredictable workings. By queering Putin, GCP demeans the government’s immense efforts to moralise about appropriate ‘traditional’ sexuality not just on a domestic but international stage. Refusing the invisibility mandated by the propaganda law and plastering Putin with make up and rainbows, the meme uses deviance to carve out new ways of being that stand in direct opposition to and challenge the ‘normal’ sexuality delineated in the ‘traditional values’ project.

Celebrating the queer in GCP moves us away from a heteronormative to a queer epistemology that disrupt phobic logics. A move that mandates the political unacceptability of queerness, its outlaw existence. Queering Putin is, thus, not disparaging in the phobic sense but a radical and productive move that creates new forms of the social and political that repeatedly question hierarchies and relations to power. This short-circuits the power of homophobic, cisheteronormativity by shifting queer from its association as something awful and insidious to something that, even in all its abjectness and antisociality, is joyous, liberating, and revolutionary.

Queerness is about (delight in) violating cisheteronormative social norms of the proper and best way to be and to live. It is a transgression that threatens to disrupt or even destroy the current social order and,

consequently, results in punishment, stigma, violence, and even death upon those who dare to transgress. In that sense, this meme is about challenging domination, not about assimilation or seeking out ways to integrate by destabilising normative orders. They do more than destabilise the queer/straight dichotomy, focusing instead on the *power* of heteronormativity to turn every body in society into a battleground upon which gendered, sexualised politics plays out.

The creation, circulation, and mobilisation of GCP at protests are acts of dissent not only against the propaganda law but heteronormativity more broadly. The meme explodes homophobic, heteronormative logics by embracing and taking playful joy in those subject positions cast as ‘negative’ or ‘less than’. Consequently, new queer subjectivities emerge from embracing alterity and abjectness in ways that short-circuit the oppressive power structures trying to contain them. The memes deny heteronormativity its *disciplinary* power: by embracing difference rather than disavowing it, queer refuses to secure normativity’s identity and privilege thereby undermining its power.

To argue that GCP is homophobic and upholds cisheteronormativity would be to accept that divergence from cisheterosexuality is undesirable; a position that is at odds with queer politics and praxis that celebrates such divergence. The images are embedded in a hegemonic sociopolitical context where divergence from cisheterosexuality is constituted as undesirable but they work through a queer epistemology and arguably move us closer to a vision of queer life rooted in teasing, humour, and antagonism where “shame is bedrock” and moralism about sex and gender go out the window (Warner, 2000: 35-37). To read GCP as homophobic is to inadvertently accept cis-hetero norms where deviance is undesirable and thus secure the dominance of the homophobic structures. It assumes they work through heteronormative logic where deviance is deplorable, rather than a queer one.

As a political refusal to acquiesce to the propaganda law which attempts to invisibilise queerness, the meme is representative of a broader refusal of queers to be folded in to society as some kind of inferior but acceptable citizen. Instead, queer deviance becomes dangerous and extremist. In that sense, queerness *is* a threat to hegemonic cisheteronormative organisations of society that politics reproduces—in and beyond Russia—but not in the way the Russian government targets it for extermination. Rather than a political system built on oppression, domination, and control of every body, queer as a transformational and revolutionary politics is: an alliance of the marginalised that perpetually questions and opposes concentrations of power; that radically reimagines (international) political and social orders; that does not oppose sexual difference or try to hide, justify, or moralise it but instead delights in queer inaptitude for hegemonic social and political arrangements.

GCP is a divestment from hegemonic social and political orders and is, thus, a reimagining of political subjectivity that threatens cisheteronormative power by refusing to submit to it and offering an alternative queer futurity that delights in its deviance from the normative order. Queer as refusal circumvents state power that is so invested in gendered, racialised, heteronormative arrangements of



society, and reorients the queer's relation to it. In so doing, the GCP meme provokes fundamental ethical questions about who/what should be constituted as a security referent/threat.

## Conclusion

This article theorises memes as visual interventions in international politics through the case of the Gay Clown Putin meme. I argue that Gay Clown Putin, which target Russian political homophobia and anti-queer security discourses, is a political intervention that works through a queer epistemology where deviance is celebrated rather than penalised. To enable this reading, I bring into IR queer theory that is explicitly anti-normative, delights in sexual difference, revels in abjectness, and embraces the disruptive force of queerness that flouts rigid and punitive norms around sex, gender, and sexual desire. As the playful embrace of abjection, GCP short-circuits heteronormativity's ordering power and create new forms of visibility and subjectivities that are distinctly queer and anti-normative.

In Russia, queer gender and sexuality have been constituted as a security threat, evidenced in practices that include banning queer visibility through the gay propaganda law, constituting Europe as its queer civilisational Other in need of correction ('Gayropa'), and classifying GCP as extremist material. The Gay Clown Putin meme has succeeded in troubling the Russian government and its promotion of a heteronormative 'traditional' values system, as exemplified by its securitizing reaction to the images. GCP plays a crucial role in representing and contesting state-sponsored homophobia and generated international attention. Its use across the world as a symbol contesting Russian homophobia is testament to the meme's salience and politicality.

While the GCP images can be read as articulating queer (in)security and resisting demonisation, the way they are received is a more complex story that invokes different types of politics. That memes can be variously interpreted is part of the fraught nature of visual politics. As such, my analysis demonstrates: the polysemic politics ('polytics') and complexity of images; how security is visually enacted and challenged; and how memes intervene in international politics. To bring out the different politics of the images, I offered three readings of the memes as: (1) constituting homophobic policies as a threat and challenging normative constructions of gender/sexuality; (2) reproducing homophobic, misogynistic power structures; and (3) as playful delight in abjection that short-circuits heteronormative power. While not all readings are equal, here all three are political. Thus, pointing to the significance of GCP for international politics broadly and the study of political homophobia specifically. This is not something that be said of all memes.

Ultimately, I argued that GCP playfully delights in abjection and contest the hegemonic heteronormative system that disciplines bodies into a gendered heterosexual/homosexual binary. It takes pride in queerness and its inaptitude for heteronormative society and politics. It weaponises heteronormative ideas about queer sex as abject for righteous rebellion against such powerful sociopolitical norms. As such, it is part of a visual struggle for presence, space, and the ordering of

society and politics that provokes questions about which bodies get to be visible and what subjectivities are allowed to exist in Russia. Rather than mere parody or mimicry, Gay Clown Putin is a symbol of the radical potential of anti-assimilationist, anti-normative, oppositional queer (international) politics invested in an endless interrogation of power.

Gay Clown Putin is one the most iconic memes of the last decade to directly intervene in international politics. This iconic image has been used globally in protests and has sparked an intense political reaction from the government it targeted. It is not production alone that makes memes political but their use, circulation, intervisualities, genealogies, and relations to other texts (legal, press, social media) and practices (protests). All of which *must* be part of our analyses. While not all memes will make a political intervention in the same way as GCP, we must address those that make foreign and security policy interventions as more than mere play. Especially those *iconic memes/memeified icons* that gain huge attention and political traction internationally. Memes do immensely political work and we must give them due attention if we are to fully understand the dynamics and rhythms of international politics in the age of the (digital) image.

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<sup>1</sup> As I use the term, political homophobia refers to state-directed hostility towards, stigmatisation, and persecution of individuals who deviate from cis-heteronormative demands; essentially, it is fear of the queer, that which is at odds with straight culture, and which crosses the line between good and bad sexual practices and gender performances (see Warner, 2000). This builds on Michael Bosia's definition of state homophobia as "the totality of strategies and tools, both in policy and in mobilizations, through which holders of and contenders over state authority invoke sexual minorities as objects of opprobrium and targets of persecution" (2013: 31).

<sup>2</sup> Heteronormativity is: "the institutions, structures of understanding, and practical orientations that make heterosexuality seem not only coherent—that is, organized as a sexuality—but also privileged." (Berlant and Warner, 1998: 548 fn. 2).

<sup>3</sup> See: [putinarainbow.com](http://putinarainbow.com) and [yuriveerman.nl/Putin-a-rainbow](http://yuriveerman.nl/Putin-a-rainbow) to explore the memes and reactions to them.

<sup>4</sup> See: [https://youtu.be/Rj\\_pS8du9R8](https://youtu.be/Rj_pS8du9R8)

<sup>5</sup> Search conducted 20 February 2021.

<sup>6</sup> GCP appears at protests in Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Hungary, Italy, Spain, UK, and USA but not in Russia. News outlets where the meme is published include: the Guardian, Independent, Daily Mail, ITV News, Moscow Times, South China Morning Post, New York Times, Washington Post, CNN, Boston Globe, NBC, and [TheJournal.ie](http://TheJournal.ie)

<sup>7</sup> *Iconological location* is the symbolism of the image: what it is understood to argue/show; which ideas are being made visible and how are they framed.

<sup>8</sup> See Gould (2009) on emotion and affect in queer politics; Adler-Nissen et al. (2019) on emotion and images.

<sup>9</sup> I understand 'antisociality' as the refusal to be subsumed into the norm or easily coalesced into a neat and tidy organisation of society; it is contempt for dominant organisations of society (Bersani, 1987; 1996; Edelman, 2004).

<sup>10</sup> See Kremlin photobank ([en.kremlin.ru/multimedia/photo](http://en.kremlin.ru/multimedia/photo)) and CBS gallery ([www.cbsnews.com/pictures/vladimir-putin-doing-manly-things/](http://www.cbsnews.com/pictures/vladimir-putin-doing-manly-things/)).

<sup>11</sup> For example, street murals like 'The Kiss', which features Leonid Brezhnev and Erich Honecker kissing (Berlin Wall), and 'Make Everything Great Again' which features Putin kissing Trump (Vilnius, Lithuania).

<sup>12</sup> Examples manipulating politicians' faces:

<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e3-53aa-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>,

<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e3-1c8f-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>,

<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e3-1cac-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>,

<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e3-1c9e-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>.