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(English Resumé)

**Know Yourself: Write Yourself!**

***Queer Subjects and the Constructions of Gender and Sexual Identity at the Turn of the 19th Century***

The thesis examines the normative structures that shape and pre-determine the construction of the gender and sexual identities at the turn of the nineteenth century in the British context. The focus of the study is the critical investigation of the binary – heteronormative – logic that governs the formation of these identities. The concern with gender intelligibility (and the “matrix of intelligibility”) reflects the thesis’s critical engagement with the technology that subjects the possibilities of identification, and in fact forms of subjectivity, to logic of specific governance. The second overarching concern of the thesis represents the attempt to encompass the diversity of the practices that the individual *queer* selves devise in the process of self-writing and making sense of themselves.

Bringing together three diverse case studies – based upon the autobiographic texts of John Addington Symonds (1840-93), ‘Michael Field’ [Katherine Bradley (1849-1914) and Edith Cooper (1862-1913)], and Havelock Ellis (1859-1939) – the thesis explores the strategies of (gendered) self-fashioning from various perspectives. Importantly, the choice of the respective sources reflects the concern with some central issues that need to be taken into account when considering the modern constructions of sexual and gender identities. Firstly, the individual chapters reveal that the construction of the modern non-heterosexual identities has to be considered with close attention to differing discursive positions, social and other locations of the subjects. Secondly, these different subject positions will be discussed in relation to issues of epistemic privilege, as well as symbolic violence performed upon the so-called ‘queers.’ Thirdly, the sources present insights into different discursive constructs of gender/sexual identity, thus presenting a differentiated perspective into operations of power. Further, the thesis endeavours to provide an optics that would not minimize or even eliminate the ambivalences and contradictions manifested in the self-writing practice, or in the work of one’s identity. On the contrary, it has been my ambition to accentuate these moments and to discuss them in relation to the cultural construction of (gender and/or sexual) identity. Lastly, the study of the original manuscripts enhances the horizon of the thesis as it includes critical confrontation with the editorial practice and/or with the common line of interpretation of the respective source. In this way, the thesis hopes to provide space for considering issues of epistemology of sex and the relations perceived between sex/uality and subjectivity on a broader level of the cultural constructions of intelligibility.