

12. Ringvorlesung Gender Studies
Biopolitiken aus queer-feministischer und
postkolonialer Perspektive
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Kateřina Kolářová: 'Biopolitical Situation' of Empire and Self-Technologies of Life and Death

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This paper uses Foucault's conceptualization of bio-politics to first attend to recent discourses of optimization and rationalisation of death/life 'choices' of the Western subject and to second juxtapose 'the politics of life/death' against forms of the (abled) 'Empire'. First, I attend to discussions regarding end-of-life decisions that manifests specific rationality of the 'purposeful conduct which involves [...] a strategic choice of means, ways and instruments' (Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 2010: 269) and supposedly emancipatory politics of life/death. Making use of Foucault's concept of *homo oeconomicus* I read critically the recent regulations and public discussions on assisted dying (Britain) and living wills (Patientenverfügung) in Germany. Second, I contrast the critical reflection on the discursive practices that reframe the end-of-life decisions in terms of civic right, suffrage and emancipation of rational, self-agent *and* disabled subject with practices that displace (the) other disabled (and irrational, incompetent) subject onto the global South. In the concrete examples of German care-tourism that dis-locates the care of the elderly and people with Alzheimer into Thailand, I discuss what Jasbir Puar has coined as the 'ascendance of whiteness'.

Kateřina Kolářová is Assistant Professor for Cultural Studies at the Department of Gender Studies, Charles University, Prague. Her research, teaching and engagement interests cover feminist cultural studies and the intersections of gender, disability and queer studies. Her recent essays appeared in *Import –Export–Transport. Queer Theory Queer Critique and Activism in Motion* (2012), *Hegemony and Heteronormativity: Revisiting 'The Political' in Queer Politics* (2011), *Review of Disability Studies. International Journal*. (2010) and *Körperkonstruktionen und Geschlechtermetaphern. Zum Zusammenhang von Rhetorik und Embodiment* (2009). She is currently working on a project that concerns the neoliberal usages of disability (supported by Grant Agency of Czech Academy of Science), as well as on a book project with a working-title: *HIV/AIDS: Biopolitics and Imaginations of Immunity in Czech(oslovakia) 1980s-2010s*.