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Queering Exile London: Dislocations, Hidden Histories and Gendered Spaces

Burcu Dogramaci

Rodney Garland published his novel *The Heart in Exile* with the publishing house W.H. Allen in 1953. The book follows the quest of the first-person narrator and Oxford psychiatrist Anthony Page as he investigates the death of a former lover. His research takes him to London gay bars, clubs and cruising areas, all of them queer contact zones. The fictional story thus maps the British metropolis as a queer hidden city, creating an urban narrative of its own that develops parallel to London the tourist centre and parallel to London as the city of art or exile. *The Heart in Exile* significantly contributed to the visibility of gay urban infrastructure, with more than 10,000 copies sold by 1956 (Houlbrook/Waters 2006, 142).

Using Rodney Garland's novel as a starting point, the following reflections address the connections between exile and queerness in the 1930s and 1940s London – Garland himself was an emigrant and was one of the many exiles who came to the British capital from the European continent after 1933. While extensive attention has been paid to artistic and literary emigrations to Great Britain so far,¹ there have been no studies of queer emigrants to London or of London as a queer exile city to date.

This chapter is intended to be a preliminary step for such a study, and the challenges and possibilities of queer urban exile research that it deals with reach beyond London. Initial reflections on queer practices of urban experience are followed by observations on the fragmented record of queer exile stories, which leads to particular difficulties for researchers. Finally, this chapter will address the work of exiled photographer Edith Tudor-Hart who visualized the city's gendered spaces, thus discussing possible ways of accessing the topic of gender and exile.

In this text, the adjective queer does not primarily denote sexual orientation, but rather designates difference beyond normative binary assignments (Ackroyd 2017, 5). Queer is not only used as an adjective but also employed as a verb. The verb queer and particularly the active form of the present progressive, queering, refer to the scholarly practice of a resistant re-reading (Kumbier 2014, 3). Queering as a ‘queer reading’ of texts, films or – as in this case – a city, emphasizes less visible aspects of gender, sexuality and identity and calls into question heteronormative assignments.

Queer practices in the exile city

The novel *The Heart in Exile* is devoted to the homosexual infrastructure of London, the queer centre of Great Britain in the pre-, inter- and post-war period (Houlbrook 2005, 3; Cook 2003). Publications have increasingly given attention to the historic queer and/or homosexual city and thus contributed to an alternative (urban) history of the modern era (for example, Chauncey 1994; Abraham 2009). Such studies not only investigate somewhat overlooked or neglected social and sexual urban contact zones like clubs, bars, baths, streets or parks for the 19th and early 20th centuries. They also evaluate new practices of perceiving the city in the modern era, such as cruising as a queer visual confrontation in the city, which has been overshadowed by the more powerful *flânerie* (strolling). Cruising in the urban environment – “men looking at other men on the streets of modernity” (Turner 2003, 8) – may mean visual bonding (connection), a conversation or sexual contacts that occur in specific urban spaces: Preferred cruising areas in early 20th century London were Jermyn Street with its shirtmakers, cigar and wine shops that catered to a male clientele, or a Turkish bath for “men only” (ibid., 73–77). The urinals and public toilets in Jermyn Street, Waterloo Station or Hill Place, too, were popular sexual contact zones for men (Ackroyd 2017, 201f.).² In his book *Queer London* Matt Houlbrook describes historical informal places in the city, such as parks or urinals, where – mostly at night – homosexual acts took place and/or sex work was offered, as “geographies of public sex” (2005, 43–67; see also Trumbach 1999, 107).

The 19th century *flâneur*, as exemplified by the writer Charles Baudelaire or the painter Constantin Guys, is closely linked to literary or artistic productions in the urban space (in this case, Paris); *flânerie* is connoted as a creative action – mostly carried out by men – of walking, seeing and literary or else artistic appropriation (Baudelaire 1994, 290–320; Balducci 2017).³ Cruising has a decidedly physical or sexual connotation, although movement and observation can be found in artistic *flânerie* as well. Turner defines “cruising” as the “process of walking, gazing, and

engaging another (or others), and it is not necessarily about sexual contact. Sex may be the point of cruising for some, but cruising and having sex are different interactions” (Turner 2003, 60). Although cruising is a reference for contemporary artistic procedures and a subject for exhibitions,⁴ a comprehensive study of cruising as a historical artistic practice in urban space still remains to be written.

The novel *The Heart in Exile* describes cruising from a double perspective: The main character moves through urban places where sexual contact is made, which he knows from memory (and which the author, too, can address based on his own experience or on experience communicated to him), and at the same time the readers follow the story through its queer urban topographies. Beyond this, *The Heart in Exile* also articulates queer life strategies that are necessary in a heteronormative society:

The majority of the underground do not go to the queer pubs, clubs or even parties, do not linger around public lavatories, railway stations or other recognised or obvious places. There are thousands of young inverts among the millions of normal young men who live with their friends in boarding-houses, small flats, hostels, clubs, associations, sometimes under the roof of the parents of one of them. Secrecy is complete and scandals rare.

(Garland 1953/1995, 105)

Garland describes how homosexual men, behaving discreetly and living in secrecy, lead as inconspicuous a life as possible in a restrictive environment. What is more, the author himself, and his experience of exile, is rendered invisible, too. The pseudonym Rodney Garland conceals the identity of the Hungarian emigrant Adam de Hegedus (1906–1958), who emigrated to London in 1939 (Burton 1995; Simmons 1995, 297) and published specialized political books and novels under his real name.⁵ But his greatest success, *The Heart in Exile*, was written under a pseudonym. The “exile” in the book’s title can thus be read in two ways – as an existence outside heteronormativity and as dislocation referring to the protagonist’s and the author’s origin.

Presumably, Hegedus used the name Rodney Garland to protect himself because gay men in the 1950s still had to fear ostracism and criminal prosecution. Homosexual acts in the public *and* private spaces were punishable until the Sexual Offences Act of 1967 (Ackroyd 2017, 217). Describing the surveillance and persecution of homosexuals in interwar London, Matt Houlbrook writes:

If they [queer men] looked for partners in the street or park or simply had sex in their own home, they could be arrested, prosecuted, imprisoned for up to ten years, and – in certain cases – whipped. If they met friends in a café they could be caught

up in a police raid, their names taken, and the venue closed. The formal technology of surveillance institutionalized and embodied by the law suggested that the British state was unwilling to tolerate any expressions of male same-sex desire, physical contact, or social encounter.

(2005, 20)⁶

We may assume that the threat of prosecution forced homosexual emigrants in particular to live out their sexuality in secrecy or even to suppress it completely. Their fragile status as emigrants could not be jeopardized. Presumably, as a result of this, the record of gay or lesbian experiences of emigrants in England is fragmentary and has so far only rarely been the focus of research. Within the German-speaking migrant community in London, it is possible to identify queer actors, though we do not know whether and in how far they were active members of the city's homosexual scene. Another issue is that queer practices of appropriating the city during periods of rigid police control and criminal prosecution are designed precisely with an eye on transitoriness and invisibility (Turner 2003, 10). That is why later reconstructions are often fragmented and incomplete. Claudia Schoppmann, for example, ascribes the absence of relevant lesbian eye-witness accounts, diaries or autobiographies to discrimination. Often it was the women themselves who either 'cleansed' their literary estates before they were placed in an archive in order to eliminate compromising material, or who had these testimonies blocked all together (Schoppmann 1999, 140f.). Due to this lack of sources, there is no scholarship on case studies that could open up a different perspective on exile.

Hidden traces of queer exile

The challenges faced when researching queer exile are illustrated by Berlin writer and pacifist Kurt Hiller's exile; Hiller fought for gay rights in the 1920s and had close ties to Magnus Hirschfeld's Institute for Sexual Science. After spending the first phase of his exile in Prague, he travelled to London in 1938. During his exile and after his remigration to Germany (BRD), the writer was able to count on social democratic political contacts, but his homosexual networks were equally significant (Münzner 2015, 243). His relationship with the British musician Kenneth Dean was of vital importance for Hiller's immigration to Great Britain: Dean had contacted Hiller as early as 1934, since he wanted to acquire Hiller's book §175. *Die Schmach des Jahrhunderts* (Steegemann 1922); the two remained in contact. Later Dean vouched for the writer's political reliability to the British Home Office so that Hiller could be successfully evacuated from Prague (Münzner 2015, 244f). After his arrival in London, he spent several weeks at Kenneth Dean's home in

Hampstead (53 Fitzjohns Avenue, see Lützenkirchen 2006, 11). Although there are references to homosexual networks of contacts, Hiller barely touches upon his London exile in his posthumously published autobiography *Eros*. In it, he merely writes that he sought no contact with male sex workers in those years, for reasons of age – Hiller was 50 years old when he immigrated (Hiller 1973, 154). Moreover, it can be confirmed that Hiller did not advocate for gay rights or the liberalization of the law governing sexual offences as an activist while he was staying in London, as he had done before 1933 and after 1945. Instead, Hiller took part in cultural and political initiatives such as the founding of the Gruppe Unabhängiger Deutscher Autoren (Group of Independent German Authors) and the Freiheitsbund Deutscher Sozialisten (Free League of German Socialists).⁷ It was not until the late 1940s and particularly after his re-migration to Hamburg that Hiller once more devoted his energies to the decriminalization of homosexuality and to gay rights (Münzner 2015, 320–345). The fact that Hiller backed away from his commitment to gay rights during his London exile could be an indication that the political conditions and his status as an exile in a foreign country were the reason for his restraint.

Although lesbians in England were not directly affected by criminal prosecution (in the laws in question, women are not mentioned), to say that queer lives were invisible is presumably truer for émigré women than for men.⁸ Another reason for this invisibility of lesbian life stories is the widespread belief, reaching back to the 18th century, that sex cannot take place without a penis and that, consequently, no sexual love between women could exist (Horsley 2010, 10). It was primarily the women's movement in the second half of the 20th century that significantly contributed to making the stories of women and their same-sex relationships more visible (ibid., 9). This also pertains to gender-specific spaces and access to places and institutions, moral and/or societal conventions that restricted women more than men.⁹ Despite this, there were secluded and protected safe spaces for the lesbian community, such as the club Gateways (239 King's Road, corner of Bramerton Street, Chelsea) which had acted, since the 1940s, as a meeting place of the Chelsea Art Club, a queer night club and a favourite gathering place for Black Caribbean people (Gardiner 2003). This shows how clubs functioned as places where marginalized people or social outsiders from various different communities were able to come together.

For queer women sporadic retreats from the city were an additional option: Just as she had in Vienna, the émigré psychoanalyst Anna Freud lived in a personal and professional relationship with the American Dorothy Tiffany Burlingham in London, although the two women never openly admitted they were in a relationship.¹⁰ In Austria, from the 1930s onwards, Anna Freud and Dorothy Burlingham had owned a country retreat in Hochrotherd, which was located 30 kilometres from Vienna and could easily be reached by car.

In England too, Anna Freud and Burlingham had a country summer cottage in Walberswick, Suffolk. It is interesting to note that a suite of antique furniture of rural alpine origin, which the two women had installed in Hochrotherd, finally found a home in the British weekend cottage after a long detour by way of the United States. Later the furniture was shipped to 20 Maresfield Gardens, Anna Freud's London residence (Johler 2015, 11). The furniture thus connects the two weekend houses in Austria and England. Their weekend getaways made it possible for the couple to lead a discreet life as a twosome – after all, as a well-known psychotherapist and the daughter of Sigmund Freud, Anna was in the public eye in Vienna and presumably in London as well. This retreat to the country can be seen as an alternative strategy for women living and loving in a same-sex relationship. Their partnership was tacitly tolerated more than male homosexual relationships, both legally and socially. However, women could not frequent queer contact zones in the city and in the public space as freely as men.

The gender segregation of 'separate spheres' that was manifest in the 19th century (Cherry/Helland 2006), when women tended to be assigned to private family space and men to professional and public space, still prevailed, at least in part, in 1930s and 1940s London. Social codes of contact inevitably restricted spaces of movement and action, especially when where nightlife was concerned.

In general, however, Claudia Schoppmann argues that lesbians had greater resilience (*Widerständigkeit*) in exile. Frequently unmarried, they were accustomed to an independent and professional life even before emigration and thus "possibly somewhat better prepared for the struggle for survival in the extreme situation of exile than their married and hitherto nonworking counterparts, i.e., women who were dependent on a husband materially and in other respects" (Schoppmann 1999, 149f.). This argument seems to hold true for Anna Freud at least, as she not only continued the professional activities she had pursued in Vienna but also developed them further and made a name for herself with her research on child psychiatry. Together with Dorothy Burlingham (and partly financed by her), from 1937 on Anna Freud had run the Jackson Nursery, a psychoanalytically oriented research facility for infants from low-income families in Vienna. (Denker 1995, 26; fig. 10.1). Together, in December 1940, shaken by the bombing of London, Freud and Burlingham founded the research and child-care centre Hampstead Nurseries (Wedderburn Road and Netherhall Gardens).

During the Blitz, families had to seek shelter in underground bunkers or spend the night in the London Underground, where makeshift accommodations had been set up. Drawings by the artist Henry Moore from the year 1941 record the claustrophobic situation in an Underground tunnel.¹¹ The War Nursery offered children a temporary home during the war years. The nursery innovated the concept of "family groups", where three or four children were combined into family units



FIGURE 10.1: Anna Freud and Dorothy Burlingham, Jackson Nursery, 1937, unknown photographer (© Freud Museum London).

(Kennedy 2016, 314ff.). The War Nursery, which ran until November 1945, was not only a care centre in wartime, but also a laboratory in which Anna Freud and Dorothy Burlingham together with their team were able to make observations and test and carry out therapeutic interventions. Their work was reflected in the publications Freud and Burlingham wrote together – *Young Children in War-Time* (1942, German title *Kriegskinder*, 1949; fig. 10.2), *War and Children* (1943) or *Infants without Families* (1943).

Their exile offered the women an opportunity to continue their joint psychoanalytical work; the Hampstead neighbourhood where they lived and where their institution was located was an important frame of reference for them. As with other exiles, in Anna Freud's case emigration was possible, and feasible, only with the support of networks. For Anna Freud, female networks, in particular, offered her

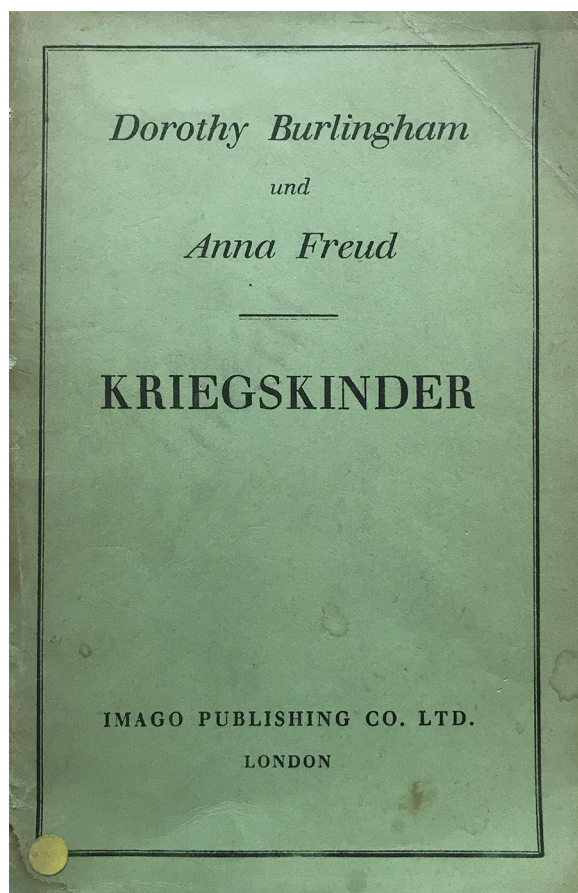


FIGURE 10.2: Dorothy Burlingham and Anna Freud. *Kriegskinder: Jahresbericht des Kriegskinderheims Hampstead Nurseries*. Imago Publishing, 1949, cover (METROMOD archive).

and her family economic and organizational help with their move from Vienna to London; her network included Princess Marie Bonaparte, who assisted the Freud family when they left Vienna (Eissler 1989, 34). But Dorothy Burlingham was able to help as well: As an American, Burlingham was not subject to the strict export regulations, and she could export moveable goods from Austria more easily, and without paying fees (Johler 2015, 20).

Gendered exile: Intersectionality and social contexts

It is impossible to address the topic of exile in London without covering gender-specific issues such as safe public spaces in the city or the struggle for survival in

and with a partnership. It is important to develop a holistic perspective on exile situations that takes into account not only social (relationship) structures but also structural disadvantages – disadvantages that, for instance, arose due to a limited public presence.¹² Researching historiographies of exile, specifically pertaining to those fleeing National Socialism, Irene Messinger and Katharina Prager find that male heteronormative perspectives were predominant. Exile, they write, is defined primarily as an experience of loss, largely based on male biographies, often written by male historians, while the category ‘woman’ was neglected, especially in the early research on exile (Messinger/Prager 2019, 14). Exclusion and inclusion in exile are closely linked to gender, age, social class or ethnic origin. In this context “doing gender” means that sex assignments and gender identities within societal processes are constantly produced and reproduced (West/Zimmerman 1987; Fenstermaker/West 1995; Gildemeister 2010; Messinger/Prager 2019, 11). Helpful in this connection are recent studies on the intersectionality that see the relation of race, gender, sexuality, social class, nationality and reduced physical or psychic abilities in a holistic way, as they investigate multiple types of discrimination (Grosfuguel et al. 2017; Dietze 2017). The concept of ‘intersectionality’ goes back to the lawyer Kimberlé Crenshaw, who sees racism and sexuality as inherently interdependent; at their intersections, she claims, it becomes impossible to separate from one another acts of violence, injuries, stigmatization and marginalization (Crenshaw 1991). Crenshaw argues against a single-axis framework that “erases Black women in the conceptualization, identification and remediation of race and sex discrimination” (Crenshaw 1989, 140). In recent years, Carolin Küppers has taken up Crenshaw’s claims by emphasizing that “intersectionality [means] the intertwining of different structural categories that generate inequality”, referring to the intertwining and interaction of forms of oppression and discrimination (Küppers 2014).

At the same time, for the historical context examined here it is difficult to establish clear causal connections; rather, there is ambivalence and plurality: in British exile, it was not always *only* a disadvantage or *only* an advantage to belong to a certain gender. Exile could mean an opportunity or a new start, but could also create backlash (Messinger/Prager 2019, 10). Thus women sometimes found it easier to get work, even though the work did not correspond to their professional qualifications (*ibid.*, 8). Immigration to Great Britain with a domestic permit was considerably easier because the restriction that no foreigner should be hired if British workers were also available for a certain position, stated in the “Aliens Order” (1920), was still in force (Bollauf 2011, 139). Potential immigrants required the authorization of the Ministry of Labour if they could not prove that they had independent means and intended to get a job (Hartig 2019, 97). In Britain, however, the demand for domestic servants and the shortage of qualified personnel was very high, so that women in particular used this opportunity to immigrate. By 1939,

20,000 German-speaking refugees had arrived in the country, with a residence permit for domestic workers in hand (Zwerger 2016, 221).

Among the immigrants with a permit to work as domestic helpers, there were numerous who had previously worked in other professions. Coming to Britain with a domestic permit were physicians and teachers (Bollauf 2011, 160f.), but also women in creative professions, such as writers, artists and photographers. One of them was Elly Niebuhr, who in February 1939 had fled to England together with her sister Ilse and who worked as a domestic and kitchen help in Cambridge and later in London, until she continued her journey to New York (Holzer 2009, 32). Some of the émigré women who worked as domestic servants were the main wage earners in the family and often had to provide for their partners and children since they could earn a living more easily than male refugees. But it was precisely the work as a domestic help and the caregiver tasks as a wife and mother that could mean regression to roles that many women believed they had left behind long ago (Messinger/Prager 2019, 8f.). As a result, they also quickly found themselves in a situation that kept them from doing their chosen work (as an artist).

The large number of female emigrants who entered the country with domestic permits demonstrates that women had an advantage when it came to emigrating since their labour was in demand. This was one of the reasons why targeted rescue operations focussed on bringing women who were at risk in Germany or Austria to England via a domestic permit. Worth mentioning here are the mediation efforts of the relief organization Council of German Jewry, which made it possible for thousands of female refugees to emigrate to England, but private initiatives have been documented as well (Holzer 2009, 31). Andrea Hammel describes how the entrepreneur and founder of the furniture company Isokon, Jack Pritchard, and his sister May Moncrieff went out of their way to bring two Viennese women – Margarethe Kohon and Emmy Epstein – to Great Britain as domestic servants. This is part of Pritchard's altruistic commitment to help persons at risk to emigrate from Germany and Austria (Hammel 2006, 28f.). Jack Pritchard continued to be an important source of support and a sponsor for those who had already immigrated, among them the Viennese photographer Edith Tudor-Hart.

Gendered spaces and the social eye of exile photography

In Edith Tudor-Hart's photographic oeuvre, gender-specific perspectives overlap with an enduring interest in social structures, mechanisms of social exclusion and the lives of marginalized people, the socially deprived, working-class families. At the same time, Edith Tudor-Hart's socio-critical observations were closely linked to urban spaces.

As early as 1931, even before she came to England, Tudor-Hart (née Suschitzky) photographed the hustle and bustle at the Caledonian Market in London and published the report under the headline “Der Markt des nackten Elends” (The marketplace of sheer misery) in the Social Democratic magazine *Der Kuckuck*. In her photographs she shows weary vendors sitting in front of the wares they had spread out on the ground, waiting for an equally precarious clientele – a “trading place for the poorest among the poor”, a hub for the most wretched among the city’s inhabitants (Suschitzky 1931, 15; see also Holzer 2009, 43).

Even after her emigration, Edith Tudor-Hart continued these photographic observations in urban neighbourhoods, paying special attention to the living conditions of children and women. Tudor-Hart’s photos from the backyards of Gee Street in Finsbury/London are devoted to children between roughly one year of age and adolescence. They stand crowded together, among clothes lines and old pots, surrounded by high walls. The older girls take care of the youngest, carry them in their arms, and sometimes one cannot really tell whether these are young mothers or siblings. There is a closeup portrait of a little girl with a dirty face looking dreamily off into the distance while an older child smiles at her (fig. 10.3). The



FIGURE 10.3: Edith Tudor-Hart, *Gee Street*, Finsbury, London, c.1936 (Tudor-Hart 1986, 78; © Estate of Wolfgang Suschitzky).

series of pictures shot in the backyard conveys a sense of relaxation that almost seems inappropriate in this dreary place and at the same time shows how natural the interaction of the photographer with her models was and how – conversely – those she photographed allowed her to come close to them.

Tudor-Hart published her photographs in various contexts that altered their meaning and interpretation: A photo in the series from Gee Street appeared in Wal Hannington's book *The Problem of the Distressed Areas*, which was published in 1937 in a Left Book Club Edition (fig. 10.4). Hannington was the founder of the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) in 1920 and was part of the organization National Unemployed Workers' Movement, which wanted to raise awareness for the situation of the unemployed.¹³ *The Problem of the Distressed Areas* intended to make visible the issues of the poor, underprivileged and unemployed by directing attention to housing conditions, slums and impending political radicalizations.¹⁴ Before her emigration Tudor-Hart was a member of the Communist Party of Austria and presumably was put in touch with Wal Hannington through the Communist Party of Great Britain.¹⁵ Moreover, Edith Tudor-Hart was already involved in working on a pamphlet, dated 1935, of the National Unemployed Workers Movement (Forbes 2013, 69).

The photograph reproduced in Hannington's book shows the backyard with the children from above, with the persons below looking, for the most part, into the camera (fig. 10.5). This photograph makes visible the living conditions in Gee Street, with few open spaces and little light and ventilation. Architecture and urban space stand for a precarious existence; urban life does not imply participation – rather, it is associated with segregation and exclusion. Tudor-Hart's photograph is subtitled “‘Living’ Conditions in 1937” and can be read as an accusation against living conditions that are hostile to life – that is why the word “Living” is put in quotation marks. It is precisely the tightly packed crowd of children and young women that is supposed to get to the heart of the problem and show that a precarious existence in the London slums has serious consequences for the younger generation. Admittedly, this empathetically photographed picture does not work as a *pars pro toto*; the children in their mutual harmony and with their cheerful expressions look remarkably stable in their otherwise dismal surroundings. Unlike what is suggested by the caption, they seem to have retained a fundamental trust in themselves and in the photographer.

The same photograph from the backyards of Gee Street was published in the magazine *Lilliput* along with another photo by Tudor-Hart (fig. 10.6) that shows a dog salon. In this beauty salon, a bulldog is in the process of being groomed by two women. As paired images, the two photographs juxtapose hedonistic lifestyle with bare survival in poverty and show them as existing side by side in the city. Rich and poor, man and beast, cosmetics and hunger

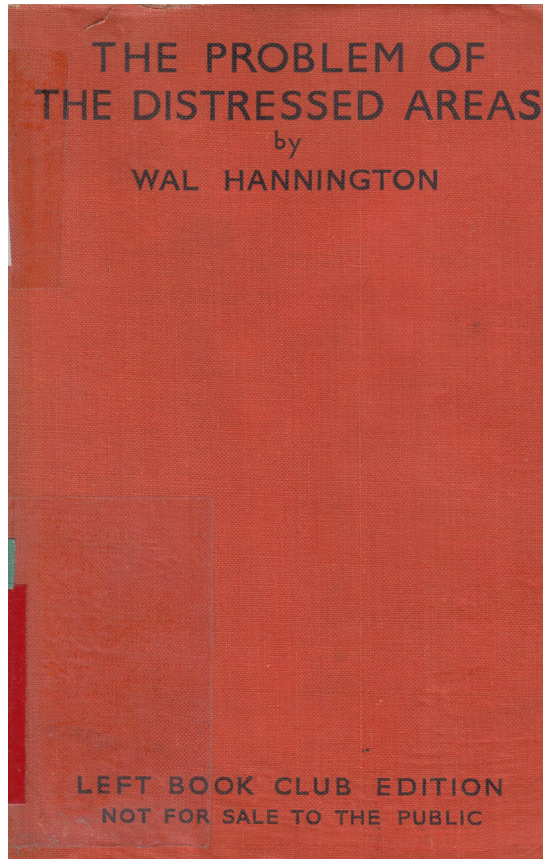


FIGURE 10.4: Wal Hannington. *The Problem of the Distressed Areas*. Left Book Club Edition, 1937, cover (METROMOD archive).

collide in *Lilliput's* visual logic. The caption below the “beauty parlour for dogs” asks, “Should we have this?” and asks a similar question about the backyard photo from a “London slum”: “Must we have this?”. The readers are thus addressed and actively included in the “we”; each of them can join in deciding whether a beauty salon for dogs – in the sense of the photographic statement – is a necessity and whether a society should tolerate the existential hardship of children.

Tudor-Hart’s interest in gender-specific themes is reflected in her contributions to the book *Working-Class Wives: Their Health and Conditions* (fig. 10.7) by the British social reformer Margery Spring Rice, which was distributed in 1939 as a cheap Pelican Books paperback by Penguin Press, accessible to

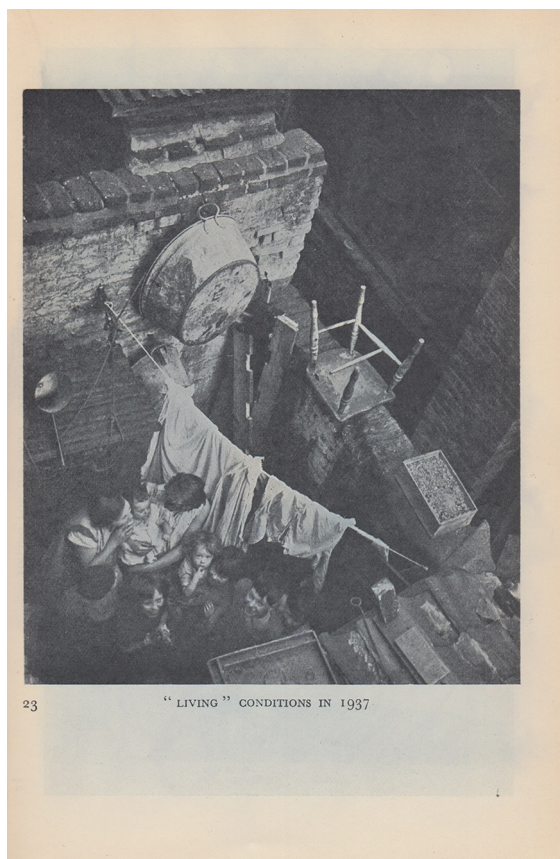


FIGURE 10.5: Edith Tudor-Hart, *Gee Street*, Finsbury, London, c.1936, in: Wal Hannington. *The Problem of the Distressed Areas*. Left Book Club Edition, 1937, pl. 23 (© Estate of Wolfgang Suschitzky).

a wide readership. Spring Rice's publication was based on a survey of 1200 working-class women examining their state of health and government relief measures, which in the book are described as being unsatisfactory and in need of improvement. However, Edith Tudor-Hart's photos are less accusatory, generalizing or homogenizing than the text in the book. Spring Rice's arguments concerning young working-class mothers are quite paternalistic, and, at the same time, she disregards gender-specific constellations, such as the position of the family fathers (Forbes 2013, 68).

Tudor-Hart's photographs develop an agenda of their own and pose a counter-narrative by emphasizing people's individuality: in close-up portraits, everyday

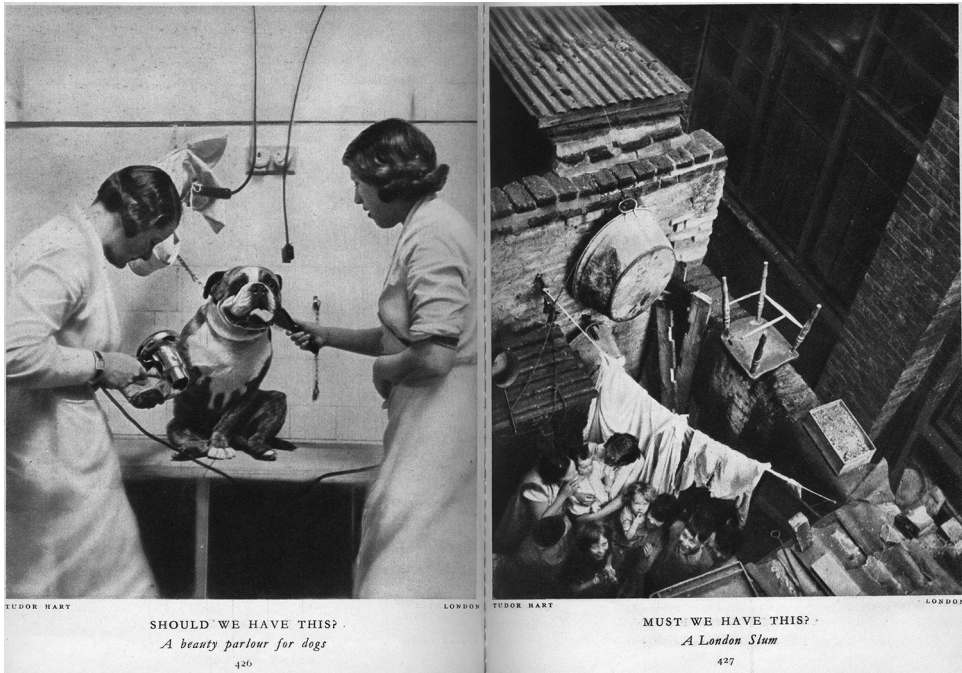


FIGURE 10.6: Edith Tudor-Hart, *Beauty parlour for dogs*, c.1937 (left) and *Gee Street*, Finsbury, London, c.1936 (right), in: *Lilliput*, April 1939, pp. 426f. (© The Estate of Wolfgang Suschitzky).

situations and through mutual affection. At the same time, things that are wrong are not ignored; rather, Tudor-Hart's photographs attribute autonomy and agency to the women and mothers in spite of (or precisely because of) their harsh living conditions. The captions of the pictures, which look for the general in the specific – “The abiding maternal personality” or “The typical afternoon ‘rest’” –, barely capture what Edith Tudor-Hart is focusing on. Her photo of an afternoon break (fig. 10.8) showcases four generations at once, with the grandmother on the right, the middle-aged woman in the middle, the young mother on the left and the baby in a pram – taking a break outside in the sunshine and having a cup of tea. Accordingly, the message of this photograph could also be that no matter how adverse a precarious existence may be, interpersonal relationships between people of different ages have not fallen by the wayside.

All three publications mentioned here in which Tudor-Hart's socio-critical photos appeared addressed different audiences: *The Problem of the Distressed Areas* addressed a politically left-wing public, *Working-Class Wives: Their Health*

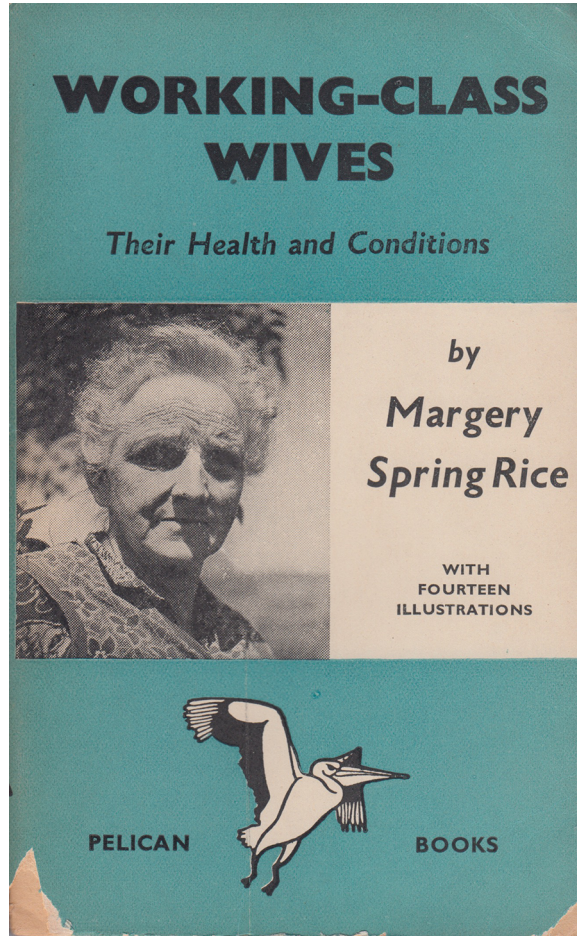


FIGURE 10.7: Margery Spring Rice. *Working-Class Wives: Their Health and Conditions*. Penguin Press, 1939, cover with photograph by Edith Tudor-Hart (© The Estate of Wolfgang Suschitzky).

and Conditions spoke to readers who at least were interested in (and perhaps also had sympathy for) the living conditions of socially marginalized people. But *Lilliput* reached a wide newspaper audience of different ages, genders and social origins. It was precisely in this spectrum of publications that Tudor-Hart's photographs were able to affect diverse social strata and sensitize them for the cause of disadvantaged people with a particular focus on gender-related issues (McGrath 2013, 123).



FIGURE 10.8: Margery Spring Rice. *Working-Class Wives: Their Health and Conditions*. Penguin Press, 1939, pl. 2–4, photographs by Edith Tudor-Hart (© The Estate of Wolfgang Suschitzky).

Queering exile studies – Challenges and perspectives

This chapter has put to the test various ways of accessing the topic of exile, urbanity, queerness and gender, while also pointing out some key challenges for future research on the topic. The very fact of exile is accompanied by loss: The exiles' personal property and artistic creations must often be left behind in their places of origin, for all too often flight means limiting oneself to what is necessary or essential for survival. As a result, parts of the emigrants' own history are lost. At the places of exile, the problem of preserving records and cultural heritage continues, for refugees in the 1930s and 1940s not only exchanged their home countries for but also frequently relocated within a city due to their uncertain economic situation. The exiles were also constantly haunted by the worry that compromising material could be discovered, for example by a potentially invad-

ing German army. The result was that often private documents were gotten rid of: a fact described, for instance, by Julia Eichenberg who refers to the private address books of emigrants; as everyday items, due to the scarcity of resources and size limits of luggage in emigration or remigration, address books were often discarded (Eichenberg 2019).¹⁶

The documentation of life in exile becomes even more fragmentary when it comes to queer emigrants: For here the need for an inconspicuous life that would not provoke the attention of authorities at the places of exile was particularly vital. Homosexuality was prosecuted, not only in London. Therefore it can be assumed that a homosexual life could take place only in secrecy, beyond heteronormative rules, and that any evidence of it had to be carefully eliminated. For there was undoubtedly serious concern that if an immigrant was arrested, their already uncertain residency status could be at greater risk. The challenge for research in exile studies is that hardly any source material is available. Naturally, there are exceptions: The preserved exile guest-book of German sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld is an important source delineating the routes and different stages of his emigration history. At the same time, the document offers valuable and rare insights into Hirschfeld's exilic networks, including queer networks (Bergemann et al. 2019).

Autobiographies such as by Kurt Hiller and Charlotte Wolff, both of them queer and exiled in London, provide an additional important point of access. Admittedly here, too, we need to stipulate that these should be read critically, including against the grain. After all, these are life stories that were meant for publication and which were probably carefully edited. An examination of the photographs of Edith Tudor-Hart has shown how important works or objects in particular are for a queer or gender-specific reading of creative work produced in exile. They point to continuities in the work of the photographer, who had already addressed social issues at a young age and continued to deal with them in emigration as well. At the same time, the photos also reveal a keen eye for London-specific themes and a familiarity with urban structures. Tudor-Hart's photos from London's East End backyards are full of empathy for the lives and living conditions of socially marginalized people. In them, Tudor-Hart primarily approaches young women, girls and children, whom – despite their adverse circumstances – she portrays as hopeful people who support each other.

Exile studies need to be more open to queer readings – a queering that not only critically questions conventional perspectives but one that also reveals gaps and absences which have hitherto not been the focus of research.

NOTES

1. Worth mentioning here is the *Insiders/Outsiders* Arts Festival, www.insidersoutsidersfestival.org. Accessed 1 April 2022, organized by Monica Bohm-Duchen, which is

- representative for many additional and preceding research activities on artistic exile in Great Britain.
2. “Cottaging”, i.e., sexual acts in public toilets, is discussed in the 1937 guidebook *For Your Convenience: A Learned Dialogue Instructive to all Londoners and London Visitors* (Pry 1937).
 3. In this context, it is important to say that the flâneur also evokes sexual connotations: In feminist scholarship on the flâneur and female flâneuserie, the figure of the male flâneur is described “as the embodiment of the male gaze”, who is able to observe and ‘consume’ women. See Elizabeth Wilson. “The Invisible Flâneur”. *New Left Review*. 191, pp. 90–110, here p. 98. I would like to thank Jennifer Leetsch for this valuable information.
 4. On the artistic or curatorial contemporary perspective see, for instance, www.thisisliveart.co.uk/opportunities/diy-15-2018-liz-rosenfeld-un-doing-cruising-practices/ and www.cruisingpavilion.com. Accessed 1 April 2022.
 5. Adam de Hegedus published such books as *Hungarian Background* (1937), *The State of the World: Reflections on Peace and War in Our Time* (1946) or *Home and Away: Notes on England after the Second World War* (1951).
 6. On police surveillance practices see also Ackroyd 2017, 213–217; Tamagne 2004, 392.
 7. I would like to thank Harald Lützenkirchen of the Kurt Hiller Gesellschaft for this and additional information and for supporting my research on Kurt Hiller.
 8. In 1921, there was an unsuccessful attempt to add a clause to the “Criminal Law Amendment Act 1885” that defined sexual relationships between women as a criminal offence. Cf. www.bl.uk/lgbtq-histories/lgbtq-timeline. Accessed 29 May 2020. To this day there has been no separate study on lesbians among the emigrants who came to London. However, Tamagne writes that many lesbians left National Socialist Germany and mentions, among others, the Jewish Berlin physician Charlotte Wolff, who came to London by way of Paris (Tamagne 2004, 395; see also Wolff 1982). There is an article on queer networks around Erica Anderson by Brunner 2019.
 9. Matt Houlbrook argues that his gay history of “Queer London” cannot automatically be applied to lesbians (2005, 10). Turner, too, points out that “women’s cruising”, for instance, is a different matter (2003, 9).
 10. Cf. Sibylle Duda. “Anna Freud.” *FemBio*, www.fembio.org/biographie.php/frau/biographie/anna-freud/. Accessed 12 December 2020. On the relationship of Burlingham and Freud, see Burlingham 1989; Denker 1995, 44f.; Schmölzer 2009, 190–217.
 11. www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/moore-tube-shelter-perspective-n05709. Accessed 1 April 2022.
 12. Jutta Vinzent points out that while women artists were certainly regularly represented in the group exhibitions of the Free German League of Culture, an emigrant association founded in London, they hardly ever had solo exhibitions (Vinzent 2006, 113). In recent years, the studies and publications of the working group Frauen im Exil (Women in Exile) in particular have been devoted to the life and work of émigré women. www.exilforschung.de. Accessed 1 April 2022. Jutta Vinzent’s research was fundamental not only to the study

- of the Free German League of Culture. Her passing in 2021 is a great loss for exile research. She will be greatly missed by all colleagues.
13. On Walter “Wal” Hannington, see www.spartacus-educational.com/TUhanington.htm. Accessed 1 April 2022.
 14. The book was part of a series by the Left Book Club and was distributed to the members of the club by the London publishing house of Victor Gollancz Ltd.
 15. It was not until later that it became known that Edith Tudor-Hart spied for the Soviet Union in England and played a key role in setting up a spy ring (Jungk 2015).
 16. On address books as sources see Julia Eichenberg’s article in this book.

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