

## **Mobilising Queer Theory for a Materialist Understanding of Space and the International**

International Relations as a discipline has been and continues to be indebted to the legacies of European modernity, often at the expense of or a wholesale denial of the colonising imperatives of this particular period in history. The postcolonial critique of the discipline highlights its epistemic violence and its exclusionist ontologies, while at the same time seeking to reveal postcolonial voices and their imprint on the international. Queer theory is itself a product of a postmodern legacy, again originating in the West, but revealing in stark form the constitutive reliance of any homogenising discourse on the figure of the abject, the abnormal and the despised. Now in postmodernity, and in consequence of political struggle, we see a gradual acknowledgement of the violence perpetrated against the queer other within. Queer practice, queer experience, and queer cultural production can be seen as having generated and indeed constituted queer spaces suggestive of a materialisation of queer embodiment and culture where queer being can be articulated in all its diverse manifestations.

The paper seeks to explore the notion of the 'international' as a distinctly 'global queer space' and to ask the question; how is such a space brought into form? One element of queer theory that is vital for understanding the constitution of a global queer space is (in)visibility and its dialectics. Focussing on filmmakers from the postcolonial world, specifically Africa and India, we see the intersections of race, gender and sexuality as these find their articulations in the subjects given voice, made visible. In this productive act of rendering visible, what is revealed is a constitutive moment in the formation of queer global spaces. However, there are other constitutive moments and these emerge from every instance of homophobic violence perpetrated by a culturally and religiously sanctioned heteronormativity. This violence is implicated in the dialectics of (in)visibility, rendering visible that which it seeks to suppress and in some instances kill. Using queer theory as its point of departure, and drawing on queer postcolonial cultural production, the paper draws out a materialist understanding of the 'international' as a distinctly 'queer' space.