

## Editorial

# Queer Urban Movements from the Margin(s)— Activism, Politics, Space: An Editorial Introduction

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### INTRODUCTION

Cities, and in particular urban metropolitan centers, are conceived by many as sites of sexual freedom and presence, cultivating LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) and queer movements, activism and politics (Hubbard, 2012; Johnston, 2016; Johnston and Longhurst, 2010). The field of queer activism, urban and social sexuality-based movements, forms an assemblage of cultural, spatial and political aspects of LGBT and queer existence in diverse spaces, in and outside cities. This existence reveals a paradoxical position – moving between normativity, equality and radical change (Johnston, 2016, 2017; Oswin, 2004; Richardson and Monro, 2012). In this introduction we aim to review the main aspects of LGBT and queer urban movements. This special issue of *Geography Research Forum* focuses on LGBT and queer urban movements and adopts the perspective of the margins. That is, being socially, politically or geographically from the margins or acting in the margins.

Historically, the spatial presence and appropriation of spaces in the city, as identified with the gay community and its unique culture, has turned into political action (Browne and Bakshi, 2013; Brown, 2007; Misgav, 2015; Nash, 2015). Urban social movements and activism apply to a wide range of issues that are not limited to rights but also implement questions of belonging, intersections of class, gender, race and ethnicities and work to undermine current LGBT politics of homonormativity and homonationalism (Hartal and Sasson-Levy, 2017; Gross, 2015; Misgav and Hartal, 2019; Podmore, 2013; Puar, 2007, 2013; Schotten, 2016).

This special issue will continue to employ this broad focus. This focus ranges from discussions of LGBT activism, promoting liberal rights and equality for sexual minorities, to manifestations of more radical queer activism, promoting the right to

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be different, and introducing manifestations, contestations and critical discussions of queer urban social movements and activism and the politics this mobilization produces and cultivates. This special issue contributes to the growing scholarship on geographies of sexualities and urban movements and activism through in-depth analysis of movements located in the margins. While based on the growing literature on queer urban movements, politics and activism, this special issue will focus in particular on views from the margins – the urban margin, e.g. periphery versus core; socio-cultural margins; political margins; or marginality within the LGBT and queer communities themselves and political agendas. Here we are referring to the study of movements from specific locations such as the Middle-East (Israel and Turkey), India, Catalunya, and urban peripheries in Canada. It is also important to be aware of what is still missing from this discussion, and from this special issue. The issue covers some case studies from outside the Anglo-American world, when some important locations such as movements and experiences from East Asia, Australasia, Africa and Latin America, the Arab world, Russia and some other parts of the globe are still missing from this issue. This is thus only the first step to a much broader and necessary investigation.

## QUEER URBAN MOVEMENTS: BACKGROUND AND IMPORTANCE

Recently, growing geographical attention has been devoted to the spatiality and political geography of urban social movements. Some geographers focus on the spatiality of social movements and the pivotal role of place in the constitution of activist networks and contentious politics (M. Brown, 2008; Leitner et al., 2008; Nicholls, 2007; 2008; 2009). Others relate to the right to the city and new urban movements (Leontidou, 2006). In addition, certain scholars highlight the politics of networking as a crucial factor in sharing knowledge about strategies and tactics and developing political identities and alternative imaginaries, and as something that occurs through face-to-face interaction (Leitner et al., 2008). According to Leitner et al. “alliance politics is plagued by power differences, some embedded in the social positionalities subjects bring into a social movement” (2008, 164). As claimed by others, the new social movements “have crystallized around issues of regaining autonomy and control over identities and cultures” (Nicholls, 2007, 610). Our discussion of queer urban movements highlights the additional category of sexuality as pivotal in the politics of urban movements. We argue that this discussion on queer urban movements is very important and relevant these days.

Scholars who study queer urban social movements (e.g. G. Brown, 2015; M. Brown, 2008; Castells, 1983; Nash, 2015) tend to focus on their origin, mainly in North America, their location within cities and urban centres, and the ways in which they have become a global phenomenon. These movements travel, geographically and symbolically, to places such as East Europe (Binnie and Klesse, 2010, 2013), or

the Middle-East (Misgav and Hartal, 2019). The scholarship also pays attention to the various political strategies and values the movements adopt and to state–community relationships. Some, like Gavin Brown (2015), also shed some light on the future possibilities of such movements in the era of austerity and neo-liberalization, or on the political aspect of radical agenda and modes of action (Browne, 2007; Browne and Bakshi, 2013; Di Felicianantonio, 2015; Goh, 2017; Misgav, 2015, 2016; Misgav and Hartal, 2019; Rouhani, 2012).

Although homosexual activities have been part and parcel of life in big Western cities since ancient times (Cook and Evans, 2014; Higgs, 1999), gay sexualities have been perceived in the modern West as a crime and a perverse subversion of the social order, at least until the Stonewall Riots (Frisch, 2002; Mort 2000).<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, urban historian George Chauncey (1994) demonstrated that a gay-lesbian world with clear spatial characteristics already existed in New York by the end of the Nineteenth Century, with community institutions and meeting places helping gays and lesbians to overcome discrimination and find apartments for rent, jobs, and social and romantic connections.

The spatial presence and appropriation of spaces in the city as identified with the gay community and its unique culture, soon turned into political action. In many cities, exclusion and discrimination led to a process of concentration in specific neighbourhoods and areas. This served two main purposes: avoiding hostile attitudes, oppression and discrimination by the external environment; and developing a unique culture by socializing individuals in the community and providing them with unique services. The “gayborhoods” created by this segregation (Doan, 2015; Ghaziani, 2014; Wimark and Östh, 2014) also played an important role in shaping queer urban social movements and political activism (G. Brown, 2015; M. Brown, 2008; Shepard and Hyduk, 2002). Today, as shown by Catherine Nash (2015) in her case study of Toronto, LGBT people continue to use these areas in the city but simultaneously, they also share other areas with many who have ambivalent feelings about gayborhoods (see also Lewis, 2016).

A discussion on queer urban movements is relevant worldwide. The rise of conservative if not fascist politics continues apace both locally and globally. Examples highlighting the importance of this special issue are the opposition to same-sex marriage in Australia; anti-gay and anti-trans violence in the US under the Trump administration; protests against gay pride events in Russia and Poland; or hate crimes such as the 2016 massacre at the gay nightclub in Orlando, FL. The positive developments and openness and the negative backlash toward LGBT urban communities also highlight the need to understand more in-depth the politics and spaces of queer movements, not only the current ones, but also to focus, theoretically and empirically, on LGBT and queer politics and social movements from various perspectives, including some perspectives that were previously ignored or rejected.

## THE “QUEER” AND THE “MARGINAL” IN QUEER URBAN MOVEMENTS

Recently, Gavin Brown discussed the emergence, development and diffusion of queer social movements, arguing that his study “takes a sense of movement seriously, not only studying queer as a social movement, but tracing the movement of the concept ‘queer’ activism across time and space from its development in the metropolitan centers of North America” (G. Brown, 2015, 73). In that he follows on the basic argument made by another queer and political geographer, Michael Brown, regarding social movements and sexuality: “any understanding of politics must be sensitive to multiple geographies”, and that “politics surely takes place – quite literally – in particular times and spaces” (M. Brown, 2008, 285).

We agree with these scholars on the importance of researching the politics and spatial dimensions of queer social movements, particularly within the urban context and outside its existence in the Anglo-American realm. This special issue then, applies their perspective to the marginal experience of queer urban movements from different places and contexts, in the Middle-East (Israel and Turkey), India, Canadian suburban areas, and Catalonia.

Note that in using the term ‘queer’ as part of our focus on queer urban movements we refer to the entire range of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) identities on the one hand, but on the other hand, we also use queer as a concept that rejects an essentialist understanding of identity. In other words, the term queer will be used here in the sense of its potential to replace identity politics with identification politics and as a political stance, and also as an umbrella concept for the entire range of sexual identities, preferences and practices (Gross, 2015; Jagose, 1996).

Although it has ensued just as much, the proliferation of the LGBT subject that has been widely documented in the West has not been chronicled in some other parts of the world at the same length. Looking, for example, at the Middle East, homoeroticism underwrites the attractiveness and practices of Orientalism (Said, 1978). Boone claims that “the implication is that if sex between men occurs in the Muslim and Arab worlds, it is a foreign vice the West has exported to infect and undermine Middle Eastern culture” (Boone, 2010, 564; see also Walsh-Haines, 2012). Furthermore, Mikdashi (2016) contests “orientalist fantasies”, claiming it is coupled with war on terror, and strategically advertised for the benefit of “public good”. Previously, Joseph Massad (2002) argued that projections of lesbian and gay identities onto non-Western individuals can be dangerous. Framing a large portion of queer activism as the act of imposing Western categories not suited for localized/non-Western cultures, Massad sets the stage for a critique of homonationalism and pinkwashing claims, rendering comparisons between cultures, countries and different spaces futile (see for example Franke, 2012). In Lebanon, for example, a new generation of feminist and LGBTQ activists have formed various organizations and social movements since 2004 (Naber and Zaatari, 2014). Some writers claim that

“in this current era in the Arab world, circumstances are different. Homosexuality has become more and more problematized in discourse in all sectors of the Arab world, and one can see an epistemological shift in the Arab world from understanding homosexuality as an aggregate collection of discrete acts to understanding it as an identity” (Anderson, 2014, 58). In Lebanon, activism and movements took up a range of interconnected issues, particularly regarding the struggle to end sexism and homophobia (Naber and Zaatari, 2014). The special conditions in the Middle East are a challenge to local queer movements. As shown by Naber and Zaatari (2014), who studied queer politics and activism of nine feminist and LGBTQ organizations during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 2006, it is not another queer struggle similar to the west, but a demand for life itself, a queer movement fighting for the option to live and for the possibility for a future.

So, unlike scholarship on Anglo-American queer struggles and politics, in the Lebanese case activism ensued while activists worked within the patriarchal family, and while the state of emergency became a state of opportunity for the queer movements (Naber and Zaatari, 2014). As this special issue explores, the study of queer movements that are located at the margins has created new possibilities for activism and social movements.

Social movement theory has paid attention to the creation and negotiation of collective identities, but not enough attention has been given to the simultaneous impulse to destabilize identities from within – or ‘the queer dilemma’ (Gamson, 1995). This calls attention to a general dilemma of identity politics: fixed identity categories are the basis of both oppression and political empowerment. Thus, our analysis of queer urban movements in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem combines LGBT activism promoting legal rights and equality for sexual minorities on the one hand, and more radical queer activism promoting the right to be different on the other. As we will show, both political and spatial strategies can be conceived of as a ‘queer urban movement’.

The importance of discussing queer urban movements from the margins lies on the fact that most of the existing writings on queer geographies and queer political and spatial activism in particular are theoretically and empirically grounded in English-speaking countries. Only recently have we seen pioneering researches on the politics of sexuality from other parts of the world, such as Eastern Europe (Kulpa and Mizielińska, 2011), South America (Maria-Silva and Omat, 2016), or South Asia (Narain and Bhan, 2006; Oswin, 2019). These researches bring new and located perspectives to the current research on politics of sexuality.<sup>2</sup> These studies go hand in hand with the current trend in urban studies and planning theory to focus on cities of the Global South-East, where issues differ significantly from northern contexts (Watson, 2009, 2012; Yiftachel, 2006). We believe this perspective is highly relevant to queer urban movements, and thus we would like to shed some light on these experiences, which differ in some important respects from Western experiences.

## QUEER URBAN MOVEMENTS: VIEWS FROM THE MARGIN(S)

### *Queer Geographies as Marginal (Academic) and Activist Space*

Greatly influenced by queer theory as a post-structural and anti-essentialist discipline (Oswin, 2008), queer geography is not only a mapping of gay-lesbian phenomena and spaces – “marking dots on the map” (Binnie and Valentine, 1999) – but mostly an expansion of understanding the varied, fluid and hybrid mode in which it is possible to explore gender and sexuality, to imagine and discuss their geographical implications (Oswin, 2008). Recently, attention is paid to the political aspect of queer spaces, and even to the role queer geographers themselves play in promoting social change for LGBT and queer people, while writing and researching those changes and movements, a phenomenon that was named “activist geography” (Misgav, 2015; Ward, 2007). Activist geography is, then, “a range of ways in which geographers have set about getting involved in ‘public policy’ (Ward, 2007, 696). This is particularly relevant to queer geography and queer geographers (very much like feminist geography and feminist geographers), who are deeply involved in activism, inside and outside academia. Johnston (2016) sheds some lights on the ways in which the queer, gendered and the sexed bodies of those academics are becoming themselves a site of political and geographical knowledge. She highlights how “activist geographers have ‘come out’ in order to challenge geography’s heteronormativity” (Johnston, 2016, 2). But while queer (and feminist) activist geographers can be a powerful force for igniting positive social change and challenge heteronormativity, as claimed by Johnston (2016), geographies of sexualities is still placed at the margins of the geographical discipline in many countries, especially outside Anglo-American academia (Fenster and Misgav, 2019). This marginalization goes hand in hand with the still existing marginalization and oppression of LGBT and queer people, and the “unjust geographies” that intertwine race, class, gender, and sexuality (Goh, 2017). The marginalization, in academia and in the social and political reality, includes a marginalization of the study of LGBT and queer urban movements and their importance and/or the issues they reveal. This includes also scholarship on urban movements in the social sciences in general, and in geography in particular (Misgav and Hartal, 2019, Hartal and Misgav, forthcoming).

In their paper “Being queer feminists in Delhi: Narratives of (non)belonging”, Niharika Banerjea in conversation with Rituparna Borah explore the production and the role of emotions as they are experienced by queer feminist academics and activists in Delhi. The paper specifically takes on the position of (non)belonging in the city as an everyday emotional experience that activists live with. Banerjea and Borah ask what the limits of queer feminist-activist’s practices in urban spaces are, and do such practices hold the potential to construct and reconstruct alliances across activist and academic spaces. The paper is written in an experimental style undoing

dichotomies of academia verses activism and critically engaging with hierarchies of power in academic writing.

### *Geographical Marginalities and the Core/periphery Divisions*

Sexualities and more specifically, LGBT sexualities have been predominantly understood as an urban construction (Bell and Binnie, 2004; Connell, 2017; Ghaziani, 2014). Recent studies have questioned the assumption that non-urban spaces have traditionally been considered hostile to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) individuals, as they are prone to experience homophobia and un-belonging there (G. Brown, 2015; Gorman-Murray et. al., 2008; Gray, 2009; Herring, 2010; McGlynn, 2018). Within geographies of sexualities, the urban-rural binary is considered a formative factor in LGBT consciousness and the option of queerness is mainly an urban one, unimaginable by or rather inaccessible to LGBTs in non-urban or suburban spaces (Binnie, 2004; Nash, 2011). Thus, rurality was initially understood as a site of oppression and absence for LGBT individuals (Gorman-Murray et al., 2008) and movements.

However, Andrew Gorman-Murray (2007) calls for a peripatetic approach to the rural and urban and Nick McGlynn (2018) claims that LGBT individuals navigate urban and rural spaces for work and socializing, challenging the mechanical labeling of spaces as rural/urban. In that, he offers a critique of urban dominance in geographies of sexualities, specifically arguing that the rural “bleeds into the ‘urban’ [...] thwarting attempts to clearly distinguish between them” (p. 71). In her study on LGBT activism in urban and rural spaces in the Negev and Galilee regions in Israel, Hartal (2015a) has argued that activists have begun creating a distinct peripheral notion that diverges both from being an LGBT individual in central Israel and specifically in Tel Aviv and the framing of Israeli periphery. This is manifested by the activists’ employment of three modes of subverting the center-periphery and urban-rural rationale. First, they subvert the notion that Tel Aviv is the only space of belonging for LGBT subjects in Israel. Second, they subvert activist LGBT discourses that are being produced mainly in Tel Aviv. Finally, while they accept the power structure in which the periphery is always subject to the center’s control, they also reject such understandings of their location and deviate from the passiveness, emptiness and restrictive forms of sexuality it generates.

Augmenting discussions and critiques of the rural-urban binary (G. Brown, 2008; McGlynn, 2018), the perspective of the periphery within geographies of sexualities enables a different engagement with the way LGBT power structures are produced. In that, it develops conceptualizations of how LGBT experiences and discourses are spatially constructed. Sara Ahmed argues that spaces constitute disciplinary mechanisms for LGBTs, serving as “straightening devices” (Ahmed, 2006, 563). Considering current understandings of the periphery, Ahmed’s claim is particularly applicable to LGBTs experiences of space. This special issue contributes to the discussion of LGBT and queer urban movements from a peripheral political

perspective. Such a perspective views the periphery not as a straight space, but rather as a space that through its ontological and epistemological otherness and marginality has the potential to produce a nuanced power relation to capitalism and hetero/homonormativity. The periphery is used here as a relational and political term, centering on LGBT and queer urban movements in India (Banerjea), colonized spaces (Rodó-Zárate), the suburbs (Podmore and Bain) and the margins of urban spaces (Atalay and Doan; Rachamimov; Rogel; Shtang). These are often neglected in research and attract less attention from scholars.

In their paper “On the edge of urban ‘equalities’: Framing millennial suburban LGBTQ+ activism in Canada” Julie A. Podmore and Alison L. Bain discuss three cases of Canadian suburban activism during the transition to the current Canadian equalities era. Through an analysis of print media, the paper considers newspapers’ framings and focus on misplacement of LGBTQ+ activism, the idealization of suburban landscape, the myth of LGBTQ+ impossibility within suburbia, and the anti-urban suburban institutions. Podmore and Bain argue that even though the newspaper framings of LGBTQ+ suburban activism differed in each case, the stories all present discrimination in suburban institutional spaces. This, they argue, calls for more attention to suburban queer activism and to the city’s peripheries. In this, this paper focuses on “the production of suburbia as the periphery of the queer urban”.

In her paper “From lesbian radicalism to trans-masculine innovation: The queer place of Jerusalem in Israeli LGBT geographies (1979-2007)” Iris Rachamimov uncovers the roots of the largest lesbian organization in Israel and the trans-masculine group that laid the foundation for trans organizations and advocacy that followed. Focusing on Jerusalem, which can be framed as a peripheral space for LGBT activism and belonging, she argues that the specific heightened political awareness that is forged in Jerusalem leads to a formation of specific queer urban configuration of movements. That is, the urban socio-political structure required the emergence of marginal queer groups, which from the vantage point of gay Tel Aviv seemed marginal, conservative or peripheral, revealing that “the vector of activism and change has been more complex and multi-directional than is usually recognized” (this issue, p.21).

### *Gender and Political Marginalization*

The research on Lesbian geographies has developed focusing mainly on lesbians in public and private urban space (see for example: Browne, 2007; Browne and Ferreira, 2015; Browne et.al., 2016; Valentine, 1995; 1997; 2013; Nash and Gorman-Murray, 2015; Nash and Bain, 2007; Podmore, 2001, 2006; Podmore and Chamberland, 2015). Browne and Ferreira (2015) explained that the field of lesbian geographies contributes an important critique of the intersections of patriarchy, sexism, homophobia and heterosexism. Making lesbians lives visible, lesbian geographies aim to challenge both the masculinity of geographies of sexualities and present a challenge to feminist geographies, as these reproduce heterosexism (Browne and

Ferreira, 2015). In exploring the marginalization of lesbian women, lesbian geographies aim to challenge the Anglo-American bias in the field of geographies of sexualities. When discussing LGBT and queer urban movements, lesbians suffer from homonationalist discourses (Hartal, 2015b) which position them at the margins, favoring national discourses that silence and exclude lesbian, bisexual women and transgender activists.

Brown (2012) reviews the ways in which geographies of sexualities have referred to intersectionality. While outlining the connections between geographies of sexualities and other identities and structural oppressions, Brown argues that it is “un-surprising that sexualities’ intersection with gender has been the most consistent trend in the literature” (2012, 2). He claims that trans identities have complicated geographies of gender and sexualities, and furthermore that this recent trend challenges our assumptions about the stability of gender while gender and sexuality are intersected. Following his review of the intersection of sexuality, gender and other categories (e.g. class, race, religion, dis/ability etc.) this special issue partly focuses on gender marginality and on the role of gender issues in the constructions of LGBT and queer urban movements, mainly when it comes to lesbian or transgender issues and politics. Both are still very marginal within queer geography and in particular within the study of social movements and activism.

In a viewpoint article “Intersectionality for and from queer urban activism viewed through lesbian activism in Barcelona”, Maria Rodó-Zárate outlines the importance and the obligation to undertake intersectionality in the analysis of geographies of sexualities. Focusing on the case of lesbian activism in Barcelona from the 1970s to the 1990s, she argues that activists established intersectional discourses and practices. Rodó-Zárate claims that as a spatial mode of social movements in urban space, queer urban activism is pivotal to understanding current intersectional thought. Two other papers in this issue take intersectionality seriously. Niharika Banerjea’s paper addresses the subject of lesbian political activism, and the intersections between the academic, activist and gender identities, and their place in Delhi’s urban space. Iris Rachamimov, too discusses the lesbian movement’s place and history as well as transgender advocacy roots in Israel, and reveals the ways in which gender, sexuality, political and ethno-national identities intersect

Another marginal issue that this special issue sheds some light on is the radical versus mainstream politics of LGBT and queer urban movements. Kohler and Wissen (2003) claimed that radical queer activist networks break and challenge the bureaucratically planned spaces of the neoliberal city. They argued that these activist practices open up a discursive space in which social and political alternatives become thinkable. According to Brown (2006), these spaces do not exist outside the capitalist social relations and the commercial gay scene infrastructure of mainstream service organizations. Brown also claims that radical queer spaces “are important because they provide a constructive and practical attempt to offer a non-hierarchical, participatory alternative to a gay scene that has become saturated by the commodity.

They offer more than empty transgression. They are experimental spaces in which new forms of ethical relationships and encounters based on co-operation, respect and dignity can be developed” (Brown, 2007, 205). Jeppesen (2010) adds that there are two anti hetero-normative strategies used by activists: intervening in heteronormative spaces and creating queer counter-publics engaged in spaces like gay bars and villages, thus facilitating queer activism. Migsav (2015, 2016) coined the term “spatial activism” to articulate the potential of spatial activism of LGBT and queer movements to radicalize conservative and semi-hegemonic institutional space, promote social change and facilitate public visibility and discussion by working from within the institutional arenas. Spatial activism serves also to examine LGBT spatial activism as a form of activist civil and sexual politics, unveiling a silenced reality and dialogical exchanges among community members as well as between members and the broader public (Migsav, 2015; 2016).

In their paper “Reading LGBT movement through its spatiality in Istanbul, Turkey”, Ozlem Atalay and Petra L. Doan focus on the important role space plays in the construction of LGBT urban movements. They discuss LGBT activism and pride parades in Istanbul through the lenses of neoliberal politics and practices of restructuring and urban redevelopment. Their paper presents the history of the LGBT movement in Turkey and argues that spatiality is key to understanding LGBT organizing and to the construction of resistance against displacement caused by the neoliberal city.

More recent discussions acknowledge the value of civil rights granted by the state and, at the same time, resist state politics and pinkwashing manipulations (Gross, 2015; Misgav and Hartal, 2019). This complexity challenges known dichotomies between assimilationist and radical spaces and politics enabling the emergence of distinct local understandings of queer communities and spaces and their workings with/against urban and national politics and space. Some of the papers in this special issue add an important contribution to this discussion on radical queer activism and in particular on its role in constructing LGBT and queer urban movements.

In his paper “The Israeli Queerhana: Time-space of subversion and future utopia” Avner Rogel presents a discussion of Queerhana parties in Tel Aviv, which are analyzed as a space of urban activism which subverted the heteronormative time-space order. This subversion is an assemblage of critical epistemology and queer ontology that occurred within urban space and at its borders. It is created via the formation of a temporary utopic space that offered an alternative to the Israeli militarized reality, as well as an alternative to the commercialized and domesticated gay party scene. Rogel argues that Queerhana parties can be seen as the embodiment of queer time-space, revealing non-normative gender performances and transcending the heteronormative and homonational control.

Sivan Rajuan Shtang, in her paper “Queer urban social movements and the Zionist body: National erection parades” discusses the National Erection Parades – sporadic urban parades that were placed as a protest against the Israeli Occupation

of Palestine and against Pinkwashing. She argues that the embodiment of the parade can be read as a visual and spatial protest in which activists' bodies create a flow of messy movements of queer feminist desire. Through the exposure of the Zionist body's violence, this movement blurs the boundaries of the political, redefining meanings and potentials of subject formations under the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

### *Homonationalism and Marginalization within LGBT and Queer Movements*

Some of the current discussion on spatial politics of LGBT and queer urban movements focuses on the politics of the movements with the LGBT and queer community as well as the ways in which this activism is facing the broader heterosexual society. Without marking the borderline between the LGBT community and broader society or the borders within the LGBT community, which are elusive and sometimes fluid, it is still important to pay attention to this spatial aspect of LGBT and queer movements and activism (Browne and Bakshi, 2013; Misgav, 2015). In some movements, rather than working 'inside', toward the LGBT community or 'outside', toward the wider society, the activism operates in a dialectic mode that keeps both inside and outside political aspects in constant tension, and therefore acts as a queer politics (Misgav, 2016).

Homonationalism is a crucial dimension relevant for this inside-outside dialectic discussion. Rights claims in Western politics is connected to homonationalist politics mainly because this is not always a claim to human rights based on humanist grounds but, in some cases, it is anchored in nationalist discourses. LGBT struggles for rights and recognition are anchored in understandings of sexual citizenship (Bell and Binnie, 2004; Cossman, 2010; Evans, 1993; Hartal and Sasson-Levy, 2017; 2018), and their ubiquity and current critique via the concept of homonationalism (Puar, 2007, 2013; Schotten, 2016). Homonationalism refers to dynamic binary processes of inclusion and exclusion in which specific groups are marked with the "correct" belonging and are deemed legitimate, while others are distanced from the public sphere and deemed perverse. In other words, inclusion in mainstream society also involves exclusion by ignoring inequality towards sections of the LGBT community.

Homonationalism has been widely criticized in different contexts. Schotten (2016) argues that homonationalism transitioned to become a diagnostic international-relations tool, undermining its critical capacity. Zanghellini (2012) warns that the imprecise or excessive use of homonationalism as an analytical category may lead to inaccuracy and to the imposition of racist constructions onto events instead of their criticism or subversion. Similarly, Ritchie asserts that homonationalism has been problematically transformed from a local and specific argument into a "totalizing framework that depends on a dangerously simplistic construction of reality" (Ritchie, 2015, 6). Finally, Joseph Massad (2002) claimed that while understandings of sexuality are presumed to be universal, in actuality they are culturally based. Taking this into consideration, a focus on LGBT and queer urban movements and

their locations entails a subtle use of homonationalism as a local cultural and political prism, revealing the ways in which some situated bodies and politics are negotiable, limited, and occasionally disciplined.

Sivan Rajuan Shtang presents in this special issue the queer critique to Israeli Zionism and homonationalism and Avner Rogel too, even though his discussion is timed earlier than Israeli homonationalism, discusses the queer movements' disapproval of the Israeli occupation of Palestine.

To conclude, LGBT and queer urban social movements have been a significant and diverse social phenomenon which received some attention, but hardly enough to address its complexity, particularity in different locations and connections and relations between places and times. While this special issue addresses some major questions and conceptualizations of LGBT and queer urban social movements, as we have outlined here, it is also important for us, as issue editors, to note that we see this only as a point of departure. Further discussions on the subject, and ones that examine multiple scales, are still needed. Hopefully, this issue can serve as an outset and help initiate such wider discussions.

## NOTES

1. The raid on the Stonewall Bar in New York on 27 June 1969 marked the beginning of the gay-lesbian movement. Until then, the police used to harass queer entertainment venues in the US on a regular basis, including press outing of detainees. On that evening, the police raiders faced unusual resistance by the bar patrons, followed by three days of riots. This event became an icon of gay-lesbian pride and transformed the politics of sexuality in Western urban centres (Kenney, 1998).
2. Another growing body of research is dedicated to non-Western experience, but the researchers are Anglo-American (e.g. Dutta, 2013; Oswin, 2014; Ritchie, 2015; Schulman, 2012), or based in Anglo-American Institutes (e.g. Puar, 2007; Rouhani, 2016). For a review of the writing on sexuality in the Global South, see Brown et al., (2010).

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