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homonationalism, Islamophobia and Western sexual exceptionalism“**

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Towards the Universal Recognition of Human Rights of Sexual Minorities:

Human rights seek to secure the inherent dignity and equal rights of all people, as a foundation for freedom justice and peace in the world. All people are therefore proclaimed to be ‘born free and equal in dignity and rights.’¹ The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) sets forth, *inter alia*, that the rights of all persons shall be respected and ensured without distinction, and that the law shall prohibit any discrimination and guarantee the equal and effective protection against discrimination ‘on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.’²

Neither the ICCPR nor the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) includes an explicit provision stating that the discrimination based on sexual orientation amounts to human rights violations. However, in 1994, the Human Rights Committee as the respective treaty body overseeing the ICCPR, in the case *Toonen vs Australia*, examined whether the “other status” referred to in Article 2, encompasses sexual

¹ UN General Assembly, ‘Universal Declaration of Human Rights’, United Nations, 10 December 1948, 217 A (III), available from <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/> (accessed 10 July 2017) Article 1

² UN General Assembly, ‘*International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*’, 16 December 1966, article 2+26

orientation as a prohibited ground for discrimination.³ ‘The Committee confines itself to noting, however, that in its view the reference to "sex" in articles 2, paragraph 1, and 26 is to be taken as including sexual orientation.’⁴⁺⁵ Additionally, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees has recognised lesbians and gays as members of the “particular social group” under Article 1(2) of the Convention⁶ since early 1990s.⁷ Although many advances have been made towards international recognition of the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, the legal framework remains fragmented and the international responses have been inconsistent.

In 2006, the Yogyakarta Principles were developed to change this situation and put in place a coherent set of international principles on the application clearly setting forth rights for LGBTI⁸ people and making an end to impunity of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity globally.⁹ The final 29 principles, guarantee that ‘human beings of all sexual orientations and gender identities are entitled to the full enjoyment of all human rights’¹⁰ and re-affirms that discrimination and violence based on ‘actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity’¹¹, constitutes human rights violation.¹²

The Yogyakarta Principles have created a discussion on the role of the framing of sexual orientation and gender identity in a traditional internationalised/universalised

³ UN General Assembly, 1966, article 2

⁴ UN Human Rights Committee, *Toonen v. Australia*, Communication No. 488/1992, U.N. Doc CCPR/C/50/D/488/1992 (1994), 25 December 1991, para 8.7

⁵ Other of the core international human rights treaties at the UN level that protect against the discrimination on the basis on sexual orientation (yet not stating so explicitly) are Convention on the Rights of the Child protecting children and also their parents and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women that protects also transgender women. It is also worth-noting that ILO Convention on Discrimination in Employment or Occupation from as early as 1956, which allows its state parties to add additional ground.

⁶ the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees from 1951

⁷ J. Weßels, ‘*Sexual orientation in Refugee Status Determination*’, WORKING PAPER SERIES NO. 73, 2011, p.6.

⁸ *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual and Intersexual people

⁹ International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), ‘Yogyakarta Principles - Principles on the application of international human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity’, March 2007, p.6

¹⁰ ICJ, 2007, p.10

¹¹ ICJ, 2007, p.18

¹² ICJ, 2007, p.6

rights-system.¹³ On the political level, they have created conflict, being rejected by representatives of all African States, the Arab League, the Caribbean States and Russia.¹⁴ The principles have not (yet) been adopted by states in a treaty and are therefore by themselves not a legally binding part of international human rights law. Nevertheless, they do function as an interpretive aid for other core human rights treaties.

1.1.2 Rights of homosexuals in the West:

In Europe, the Yogyakarta Principles have been endorsed by the European Parliament Intergroup on Gay and Lesbian Rights and clear influence has been made, where for example the Council of Europe has adopted Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)5 on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity.¹⁵

The European human rights regime (including policy and legal instruments of the Council of Europe and the EU) reflects the Yogyakarta Principles both through discourse, but also as legal standards.¹⁶ Moreover, most Western European and North American countries have recognised some type of same-sex union.¹⁷ Although there are exceptions, this development is reflecting what is largely a Western development. The percentage in the population supporting same sex marriage ranges from as much as 91 and 87 percent in the Netherlands and Denmark respectively, to 21 and 19 in Romania and Latvia.¹⁸ Additionally, Pride parades, which are (usually) public manifestations of

¹³ See for example; M. Blasius, 'Theorizing the politics of (Homo)Sexualities across Cultures', in *Global Homophobia: States, Movements and the Politics of Oppression*; 218-45, University of Illinois Press, 2013

¹⁴ United Nations General Assembly, Official Records, Third Committee, Summary record of the 29th meeting held in New York, on Monday, 25 October 2010, September 27, 2012

¹⁵ Council of Europe: Committee of Ministers, '*Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity*', 31 March 2010

¹⁶ This includes prominent cases of the European Court of Human Rights such as *Identoba and Others v. Georgia* (2015) and others which Court addressed via Article 14 of the European Convention of Human Rights. Additionally, the EU protects against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in [employment](#) and also the Article 21 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

¹⁷ With the exception of some South American states such as Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay

¹⁸ European commission, 'Special Eurobarometer 437, Discrimination in the EU in 2015' European Union, 2015, p.50

support for LGBTQIA+¹⁹, are now attracting huge crowds of locals and tourists everywhere in the West. Thus, it can be argued that homosexuality has experienced a significant increase in public support, and is today, more than ever, related to positive values of love, happiness and fun.

The increasing amount of legislation prohibiting discrimination against non-heterosexualities, represents the development of an increasing positive attitude towards homosexuality and other sexual minorities. It has forced traditional opponents of non-heterosexual relations –such as European/Western far-right parties- to rethink their position. Standing up against equal rights is very likely to decrease political support and attract negative attention. That is potentially why far-right movements all over the West are making attempts to connect liberal attitudes towards homosexuality to a far-right political agenda. By framing immigration, and especially Muslim refugees, as a threat to Western security and culture, right-wing nationalist values are attempted connected to a support for homosexuals. Based on the notion that there are significant cultural differences, the far-right is putting forward the claim that there are certain inherent values within Islam and Western culture, which cannot be reconciled. Basing this on a European and national self-understandings of tolerance and liberalism, Islam and Muslims are being presented as regressive, primitive and a threat to Western rights and freedoms. It can therefore be argued that the far-right is repositioning themselves, from a traditional position as conservative and homophobic, to representing the protection of (self)proclaimed liberal values in a narrative of an inherent gap between “us” and “them”, as for example between Westerners and Muslims. Liberal attitudes toward homosexual inclusion and tolerance, which would otherwise commonly contradict classical discourses of the far-right, thus becomes possible by positioning it in opposition to Islam, Muslims and immigration.

¹⁹ LGBTQIA+ is an abbreviation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Queer, Intersex, Asexual and other people identifying differently from heterosexuality. I am using this abbreviation since it is trying to include as many sexual minorities as possible. Throughout the text readers will also come across different abbreviations, when these are related to the work of a specific author who prefers a different abbreviation or if it is intentionally only referring to certain sexualities (for example: lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual as LGBT).

1.1.3 *The politicisation of homosexual rights by the far-right:*

An example of the far-right incorporating homosexual tolerance commonly referred to by activist and leading academics, such as Jasbir Puar and Judith Butler, is the case of Israel.²⁰ Based on perceived shared values, although not geographically located in the West, Israel, the so-called *only democracy in the Middle East*, is often (by itself and by Western countries) included in the notion of the West. Israel is commonly being criticised for concealing human rights violations by promoting itself as progressive on LGBT issues. It is a strategy, which has gotten international recognition as *Pink Washing*.²¹ An Israeli Foreign Ministry Official once told the Jerusalem Post:

‘[E]fforts to let European and American liberals know about the gay community in Israel were an important part of its work to highlight this country’s support of human rights and to underscore its diversity in a population that tends to judge Israel harshly, solely on its treatment of Palestinians.’²²

After a Muslim gunman killed 49 people in a gay club in Orlando, the Prime Minister of the far-right government in Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, issued a message in solidarity, saying that ‘[t]his week’s shooting wasn’t merely an attack on the LGBT community. It was an attack on all of us, on our common values of freedom and diversity and choice’²³, while additionally noting that Iran and Daesh are still executing people for being gay. By referring only to Muslims as hostile and violent towards homosexuals and homosexuality, Netanyahu creates a clear distinction between Muslims and “our

²⁰ See for example J. Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer times*, Duke University Press, 2007; J. Butler, ‘Queer Alliances and Anti-War Politics’, Ankara University, 15 May 2010, available from http://www.antihomofobi.org/arsiv/2010en_queer_alliance.htm (accessed 10 July 2017)

²¹ S. Schulman, ‘Israel and ‘Pinkwashing’’, New York Times, 22 November 2011, available from <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/23/opinion/pinkwashing-and-israels-use-of-gays-as-a-messaging-tool.html> (accessed 10 July 2017)

²² T. Lazaroff, ‘Foreign Ministry Promoting Israel’, Jerusalem Post, October. 26 2006, available from <http://www.jpost.com/Israel/Foreign-Ministry-promoting-Gay-Israel>, (accessed 10 July 2017)

²³ J.P. McCormick, ‘Israeli Prime Minister send strong message of solidarity with Orlando: ‘we will fight back’ (VIDEO)’, PinkNews, 15 June 2016, available from <http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2016/06/15/israeli-prime-minister-sends-strong-message-of-solidarity-with-orlando-we-will-fight-back-video/> (accessed 28 March 2017)

common values of freedom and diversity of choice”, referring to the notion of Israel as largely part of the West.

Although being one of the most prominent examples, the reconfiguration of liberal values with far-right policies is, however, far from solely an Israeli phenomenon. Another prominent and clear example is the Netherlands. Before being assassinated in 2002, Pim Fortuyn and his populist anti-immigration party Lijst Pim Fortuyn (LPF), managed to gain huge support in the Netherlands.²⁴ Fortuyn challenged both the established right and left as a charismatic, flamboyant ex-Marxist sociologist, who defined himself as a liberated gay man whose way of life and cultural gains were threatened by backward Muslim culture and leftist immigration policies.²⁵ Fortuyn successfully managed to (homo)sexualise a discourse of being Dutch as being connected to sexual liberation and secularisation as markers of modern, Western, individualistic culture opposed to Muslim alterity as a threat to society and homosexuals.²⁶ Without Fortuyn, LPF ended up dissolving in 2008, but had managed to establish a discourse in the Netherlands of much harder rhetoric of *Dutch values* and Islam as being incompatible. This grounded the way for the (at that time) newly established populist far-right party ‘Partij voor de Vrijheid’ (PVV) led by Geert Wilders. PVV and Wilders have effectively inherited the constituency of Fortuyn and have increased popularity with their extreme views on Islam.

In the United Kingdom the radical anti-Islamic group *English Defence League* (EDL), as well as the far-right *United Kingdom Independence Party* (UKIP), have both established LGBT factions. UKIP famously infiltrated the London Pride Parade, after being banned from marching, unfurling banners with the modified Stonewall Charity’s slogan: ‘Some Gays are UKIP, Get Over It.’²⁷ For the 2017 general elections UKIP had

²⁴ P. Mepschen, J.W. Duyvandak, E.H. Tonkens, ‘*Sexual Politics, Orientalism, and Multicultural Citizenship in the Netherlands*’, Sage Publications, 2010, p.968

²⁵ Mepschen, Duyvandak, Tonkens, 2010, p.968

²⁶ F. Poorthuis, & H. Wansink, ‘Pim Fortuyn: ‘De islam is een achterlijke cultuur’’, *De Volkskrant*, 5 May 2012, available from <http://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/pim-fortuyn-op-herhaling-de-islam-is-een-achterlijke-cultuur~a611698/> (accessed 30 March 2017)

²⁷ C. Godfrey, ‘Op-Ed: The Hypocrisy of Homonationalism & Pinkwashing’, *Here Media Inc.*, 6 October 2015, available from <http://www.out.com/news-opinion/2015/10/06/op-ed-hypocrisy-homonationalism-pinkwashing> (accessed 28 March 2017)

chosen candidate Alan Craig to run for the seat of Witney. Aside from having had ties to practitioners trying to *cure* homosexuality, Craig is notoriously famous for calling LGBT advocates “*Gaystabo*” and “*gay-rights storm troopers*” making clear Nazi connotations.²⁸ However, LGBT chair of UKIP proclaims a very different attitude towards homosexuals:

‘Those of us who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender may have first hand experience of how misogynistic and homophobic attitudes are tolerated in the name of ‘respecting cultural differences.’ It is important to stand up for true equality in the face of those who would dismiss it.’²⁹

Although proclaiming to stand up for “*true equality*”, while obviously not tackling homophobia within the party, there seems to be clear contradictions within UKIP. However, this is possibly explained by the focus on a threat from other cultures, which is supported by the UKIP party manifesto proposing to *test* immigrants coming to the U.K. in the name of defending proclaimed British values and ‘gay people’.³⁰

Several other examples could be mentioned of Western far-right nationalist movements, which seeks to rebrand themselves as tolerant towards, and protectors of homosexuals in order to promote a xenophobic, anti-Muslim and anti-Islam agenda. It constitutes a very real threat to otherwise legally integrated parts of Western society, inscribed in both national and international legal instruments in the field of human rights and equality. The (mis-)use of positive and mainstreaming discourses on and of (certain) sexual minorities, as a strategy intended to reject or limit the rights of religious or ethnic minorities, is fundamentally against the idea of human rights for all as declared in the UDHR and other international or regional human rights instruments. However, several political actors of Western countries such as Britain’s Prime Minister Theresa May, far-

²⁸ N. Duffy, ‘Exclusive: UKIP picks anti-LGBT ‘Gaystapo’ candidate Alan Craig for David Cameron’s old seat’, Pink News, 12 May, 2017, available from <http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2017/05/12/exclusive-ukip-picks-anti-lgbt-gaystapo-candidate-alan-craig-for-david-camerons-old-seat/> (accessed 10 July 2017)

²⁹ UKIP, ‘Britain Together: UKIP 2017 Manifesto’, UK Independence Party, 25 May 2017, p.37

³⁰ UKIP, 2017, p.34

right Danish Peoples Party and Donald Trump have questioned the fundamentality and authority of essential human rights instruments and mechanisms and even raised the possibility of a withdrawal. The European Convention on Human Rights, the UN Human Rights Council, the UN Convention on Statelessness and the UN Refugee Convention are now proclaimed as barriers to creating stricter and more rigid immigration policies.³¹ Proclaiming that discrimination against Muslims is necessary to protect the rights of homosexuals, is therefore infringing on the insurance of human rights for all people without distinction. The argument is contradicting the right of all people to be free from discrimination. That the protection of the rights of homosexuals should be an argument for infringing on the rights of Muslims is therefore not in compliance with international human rights law. However, this has not seemed to limit the effectiveness of the argument, which is, on the contrary, increasing in popularity around the West. Understanding how such an argument can be invoked, must therefore be understood outside of legal standards of human rights. One may argue that human rights have historically never sufficiently been applied equally to all people. If this is the case, human rights as legal mechanisms, might not be sufficient in securing the equal rights of all people to be free from discrimination. This however, requires a deeper understanding of the politicisation of human rights in a historical context.

1.1.4 The historical argument against the universality of human rights:

If there was ever a notion that human rights could be selectively applied, the Vienna Declaration 1993 intended to make it clear that human rights are not a matter of picking and choosing, but that all human rights are interconnected and applies to all people equally. The conference agenda included an examination of the link between development, democracy and economic, social cultural, civil and political rights. The

³¹ Ritzau, 'DF kræver opgør med konventionerne til efteråret', TV2, 10 August 2016, available from <http://nyheder.tv2.dk/politik/2016-08-10-df-kræver-opgor-med-konventionerne-til-efteraret> (accessed 30 March 2017); C. Falconer, 'Human rights are under threat – just when we need them most', The Guardian, 3 January 2017, available from <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/jan/03/european-convention-human-rights-threat> (accessed 30 March 2017); L. Elefthriou-Smith, 'US 'considers withdrawing from UN Human Rights Council'', The Independent, 27 February 2017, available from <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-un-human-rights-council-donald-trump-aides-consider-quitting-a7601771.html> (accessed 30 March 2017)

discussion obviously proved difficult, dealing with issues of national sovereignty, universality as well as viability and impartiality of the human rights instruments.³² However, a positive outcome was achieved and the final document agreed upon and endorsed by the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly (GA), reaffirmed and strengthened the foundation of human rights as well as recognising the interdependence between democracy, development and the promotion of all human rights. The final document states that: ‘All human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated.’³³

A lack of implementation of core human rights treaties, challenging the universality of human rights, still remains a challenge. With more than 400 international human rights within the main treaties, ranging from issues of rights to work, form unions, leisure, and schooling, to freedom of speech, religion, privacy, and non-discrimination, the sheer quantity and variety of rights, undeniably makes it hard for governments to protect them all equally, considering a limited capacity, which all governments inevitably face. Saudi Arabia has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 2007, but still, by law, subordinate women to men.³⁴ Child labour is similarly far from eradication in countries that have signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including Uzbekistan and India.³⁵ Although certain governments might (legitimately) not have the capacity to live up to their human rights obligations to the fullest, as well as hold interpretations of rights differently from a traditional (Western) understanding of human rights, this ambiguity has also led to examples of governments openly proclaiming a disregard for the

³² OHCHR, ‘World Conference on Human Rights, 14-25 June 1993, Vienna, Austria, United Nations Human Rights office of the High Commissioner, available from <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/AboutUs/Pages/ViennaWC.aspx> (accessed 14 July 2017)

³³ UN General Assembly, ‘Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 12, July 1993, available from <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/Vienna.aspx> (accessed 14 July 2017)

³⁴ Amnesty International, ‘Saudi Arabia 2016/2017’, Amnesty International, 2017, available from <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/middle-east-and-north-africa/saudi-arabia/report-saudi-arabia/> (accessed 17 July 2017)

³⁵ Save the Children, ‘Causes of child labour in India and how it can be prevented’, Save the Children India, 21 January, 2017, available from <https://www.savethechildren.in/resource-centre/articles/causes-of-child-labour-in-india-and-how-it-can-be> (accessed 17 July 2017); and Human Rights Watch, ‘Uzbekistan: ILO Report Confirms Forced Labor’, Human Rights Watch, 16 February 2017, available from <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/02/16/uzbekistan-ilo-report-confirms-forced-labor> (accessed 17 July 2017)

indivisibility and universality of human rights, claiming that it is necessary and more urgent to prioritise certain rights or certain people over others, which undeniably will affect people differently, thereby not only prioritizing certain rights, but also effectively prioritizing the rights of some. China for example, invokes *the right to development* to deflect criticism on their record of civil and political rights.³⁶ Many European countries justify limitations on *the freedom of speech* based on non-discrimination.³⁷ Rhetoric of *the right to security* has justified many harsh and potentially disproportionate actions, including racial profiling techniques, targeting especially minority communities, such as *stop and frisk*.³⁸ Military interventions with catastrophic results have also been justified in this way, including Vladimir Putin citing *the rights of ethnic minorities* to justify military activities in Ukraine, and George W. Bush proclaiming Saddam Hussein's suppression of human rights to justify an invasion of Iraq.³⁹ The right to be free from torture, which is at the centre of the human rights regime and considered an unnegotiable and absolute right, is in many places still considered an appropriate tool for solving a crime or punishing an enemy. One of the most recent and most prominent examples is the President of the United States, Donald Trump's proclamation to 'bring back a hell of a lot worse than waterboarding.'⁴⁰ If the right to be free from torture is less than absolute, then surely the other rights are as well. What is interesting is that Trump invoked the radical statement in a context of terrorism, ISIS/Daesh and Guantanamo, thereby implying that the use of torture is only applying to certain people, rather than a general practice equally legitimised on American

³⁶ B. Ibhawoh, 'The Right to Development: The Politics and Polemics of Power and Resistance' in *Human Rights Quarterly* Vol. 33, 2011, p.78-79

³⁷ Press Unit, 'Hate Speech', European Court of Human Rights, March 2017, available from http://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/FS_Hate_speech_ENG.pdf (accessed 17 July 2017)

³⁸ J. Ross, 'Rep. Marsha Blackburn: A 'thin blue line' is all that stands between us, order and anarchy', The Washington Post, 25 September 2016, available from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2016/09/25/rep-marsha-blackburn-a-thin-blue-line-is-all-that-stands-between-us-order-and-anarchy/?tid=a_inl&utm_term=.25ae1a31ce41 (accessed 17 July 2017)

³⁹ V. Putin, 'Transcript: Putin says Russia will protect the rights of Russians abroad', The Washington Post, 18 March 2014, available from https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/transcript-putin-says-russia-will-protect-the-rights-of-russians-abroad/2014/03/18/432a1e60-ae99-11e3-a49e-76adc9210f19_story.html?utm_term=.323bb509768f (accessed 16 July 2017); G. Bush (a), 'George Bush's speech to the UN general assembly', the Guardian, 12 September 2002, available from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/sep/12/iraq.usa3> (accessed 17 July 2017)

⁴⁰ T. McCarthy, 'Donald Trump: I'd bring back 'a hell of a lot worse than waterboarding'', the Guardian, 7 February 2016, available from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/feb/06/donald-trump-waterboarding-republican-debate-torture> (accessed 17 July 2017)

prisoners. Although some of these interpretations might seem illegitimate and to directly run counter to the indivisibility and universality of human rights, they all reflect a certain degree of ambiguity, which both strengthens and weakens the human rights regime simultaneously. Since the human rights regime is a legal system with severe challenges of enforcing the rulings and legal principles, and since countries bilaterally, only to a limited and biased degree, are willing to impose regulations on each other, human rights are very much reliant on its reputation and the general discourse around human rights, to secure compliance. From a realist perspective, it can even be argued that human rights compliance is a matter of who the government must answer to, based on its position in an international hierarchy of power. The application of double-standards by Western countries to partners who play important geopolitical roles in relation to national interests, are less likely to face constraints and get challenged on issues for not complying with human rights.⁴¹ The conditions of specific contextual power structures are thus fundamental.

1.1.5 The politicisation of homosexual rights as an additional threat to the universality of human rights:

When the Front National, UKIP, Donald Trump, Geert Wilders or Pim Fortuyn, among others, are proclaiming Islam and Muslims to be a threat to homosexuals, they are playing into the dichotomy of either or. It is another example of challenging the universality and indivisibility of human rights, by proclaiming certain rights of some, as more important than others. Thus, potential infringement on the rights of Muslims to for example freedom of religion or asylum, is justified in order to secure the rights and freedoms of homosexuals. Although undeniably being incompatible with legally recognised human rights standards, the argument still plays into a (human) rights discourse. It is a weakness of the human rights regime, which has proven challenging to overcome since the regime was established. Understanding that the infringement on the

⁴¹ Saudi Arabia for example, has proven too important for American security and geopolitical interests to estrange, because of what can be considered idealistic principles. Although cooperation can be a way of promoting change, Western countries have remained quiet on significant systematic violations and maintained cooperation with repressing authoritarian countries and regimes, thereby effectively ignoring the rights of people affected by these regimes. There is also an ever increasing problem in the EU external human rights policy including the proper follow-up to human rights clauses.

rights of Muslims justified as protecting Western homosexuals is based on a (human) rights discourse, it becomes relevant to know how this argument is made possible, considering that it directly opposes the indivisibility of human rights. Being aware that the universal implementation of *all human rights for all* has always been a fundamental challenge to the human rights regime, it becomes clear, that a legal analysis cannot sufficiently explain how such an argument can be invoked and accepted into the mainstream. It therefore becomes necessary to look at its justification from a different approach than through the legal standards of human rights. Instead, this thesis will try to understand the phenomenon from a Queer theoretical approach which can offer an interpretation of how hierarchies and power relations are constructed, thereby potentially offering an understanding of why the rights of certain people are perceived to be more important than the rights of others. Understanding how (homo)sexuality is positioned in such hierarchies, can therefore potentially explain why the rights of homosexuals as more important than the rights of Muslims can be perceived as a logical contradiction. This should not be assumed as necessarily countering the notion of human rights, but as potentially complementing the understanding of *all human rights for all*. The following chapter will investigate how to understand power relations, and sexuality from a Queer theoretical perspective.

1.1.6 Understanding the logical contradiction:

To counter the increasing Islamophobia in Western societies and effectively promote and protect human rights, it is crucial to comprehend the complexity of the phenomenon that brought about this new reality. To challenge the development, it is essential to understand how the argument of the logical contradiction of *our rights* versus *their rights* manages to appeal to an increasing number of people. The newly established tolerance towards homosexuals as a figure of Western liberal culture, challenges the traditional alliances in politics. It is therefore necessary to understand how this reconfiguration of the homosexual has happened, as well as, how this can be used to justify discrimination of others reflected in the form of Islamophobia.

In her book *The Twilight of Equality? Neoliberalism, cultural politics and the attack on democracy* from 2003, Lisa Duggan created the term *homonormativity*, which represents the inclusion of certain homosexual subjects into a system formed by heterosexual norms. She argues that the privileges of typically White, cis-gendered, gay men allow them to integrate into the dominating structures by in return offering a depoliticised and non-radical gay community, which can thus reproduce rather than challenge the existing structures of society. Duggan's book has inspired many other books, including Jasbir Puar's *Terrorist Assemblages – Homonationalism in Queer Times*. In this book Puar investigates how political and discursive inclusion of LGBTIQ⁴² people is connected with the war on terror and the production of racialised *others*. Specifically, she investigates how the normalisation of primarily homosexual men are part of a process of alienating especially Muslims. Puar creates the term *homonationalism*, which is a contraction of Duggan's term of homonormativity and nationalism.⁴³ Rather than looking at sexuality as independent from the nation, Puar argues for a reading of sexuality through the nation. Thus, Puar sees sexuality as also constructed through normalising (state) structures.⁴⁴ Acceptance of certain sexualities can then be considered as the state attempting to foster these structures. According to Puar, homonationalism can bolster the nation on three levels: 1) it creates a homonormative, which strengthens the heteronormative institutions, 2) it creates nationalist homosexual positionalities indebted to liberalism, which then polices non-nationalist non-normative sexualities, and 3) it enables the idea of a transnational discourse of Western modernity and superiority (exceptionalism), vis-à-vis racialised bodies of pathologized nationalities.⁴⁵ In that way, homosexual inclusion can be part of enhancing or creating new hierarchies and hegemonies.

Although Puar's theory was created based on the American context with the inclusion of Israel as an obvious case often referred to, homonationalism has also become an issue, which is being discussed in several European countries. As elaborated upon

⁴² This is the abbreviation she has chosen to refer to.

⁴³ Puar p.37

⁴⁴ Puar p.50

⁴⁵ Puar p.51

above, there is a clear relevance in understanding the recent wave of nationalism in the West, through a reconfiguration of the homosexual. It becomes necessary to understand the circumstances, which might produce this tendency of increased islamophobia. Duggan's concept of homonormativity and Puar's concept of homonationalism can offer theoretical entries into exactly such an analysis. Cynthia Weber's understanding of (recon)figurations of the homosexual in relation to *statecraft as mancraft* builds upon Duggan and Puar and puts it in a context of international relations. By including her analysis, a complete framework for understanding how the inclusion of the homosexual in far-right discourses can be part of enhancing nationalist sentiments and potentially Islamophobia. If this development is to be countered, the process must firstly be understood thoroughly, including the structures which enables such a process. This is what the following thesis attempts to do.

1.2 Research question

How can discourses of Islamophobia be constructed through the inclusion of the homosexual into notions of a liberal Western culture?

1.3 Hypothesis

1: The reproduction of discourses of Islamophobia is obtained through the reconfiguration of the homosexual into representing a Western sexual exceptionalism, promoting heteronormative structures and policing non-normative sexualities.

2: This process is discursively structured by creating the exclusive categories of us - "homogenous non-problematic West" and them - "foreign uncivilised Muslims".

1.4 Limitations and method

This thesis will investigate the theoretical process of a reconfiguration of the homosexual in discourses of a proclaimed Western culture as an element in the production of Islamophobia. The geographical context of the West is defined as the normative construction based on a political notion of a shared identity and values, thereby meaning North America and Western Europe. As mentioned in the introduction, other countries can also be included into this construction, such as for example Israel, Australia and New Zealand.

Probably being the primary example of the reconfiguration of the homosexual in the production of nationalism, Israeli *pinkwashing* might seem as a natural example to include in the analysis. Although Israel can hardly be left out completely, pinkwashing as a phenomenon will not be included. This is certainly not to ignore the phenomenon, which is also why it has been mentioned in the introduction. However, besides from having already been thoroughly analysed by several prominent scholars⁴⁶, pinkwashing is also a more specific phenomenon manifested primarily as a state practice, which thereby leaves out a more complex analysis of the process that is currently happening in the West.

The primary purpose of the thesis is to understand an argument, which can potentially give an insight in the mainstreaming of Islamophobia. The thesis will repeatedly refer to this argument as the *logical contradiction*. The logical contradiction is the argument that it is necessary to infringe on the rights of some in order to protect the rights of others. More specifically, it is the argument that discrimination against Muslims is necessary in order to protect the rights of homosexuals. Understanding human rights as universal and indivisible, this argument is therefore a direct contradiction. However, it is the perception of the contradiction as necessary, which constructs it as a logical contradiction.

⁴⁶ Look at for example Puar, 2007, A. Kunstmann, 'The Soldier and the Terrorist: Sexy Nationalism, Queer Violence', in *Sexualities*; 11; 142-170, Sage Publications, 2008, T.M. Milani, & E. Levon, 'Sexing diversity: Linguistic landscapes of homonationalism', in *Language and Communication* xxx; 1-18, Elsevier Ltd., 2016

Although the logical contradiction refers to a human rights argument, the rhetoric may not necessarily directly invoke a rights terminology. However, the argument is still fundamentally founded on a discourse of (human) rights. The intention of the argument is to promote an understanding that an infringement on the rights of Muslims is necessary for securing the rights and freedoms of homosexuals. The relevant rights of Muslims proclaimed to be necessarily infringed upon are most commonly those in the field of asylum and migration. Additionally, the argument could also refer to an infringement of the rights of Muslims inhabitants in Western countries, such as freedom of religion and the right to be free from discrimination. The reference to the protection of homosexuals, relates to the rights to be free from discrimination and violence. In that sense, the logical contradiction does not merely challenge the universality of human rights by prioritising the rights of some persons rather than others. Additionally, it also potentially challenges the indivisibility of human rights, by prioritising for example the right to freedom from discrimination over freedom of religion.

The concept of “reconfiguration” is essential for this thesis. It is therefore necessary to clarify what is meant by figurations. I am taking the idea of (recon)figurations from Cynthia Weber’s book *Queer International Relations*, in which she defines figurations as clarifications of shared meanings in forms or more specific images.⁴⁷ Figurations are produced by reality, but do not necessarily reflect it. Weber defines figurations as emerging ‘out of discursive and material semiotic assemblages that condense diffuse imaginaries about the worlds into specific forms or images that bring specific world into being.’⁴⁸ I will therefore use the idea of reconfigurations as an understanding of how knowledge, practices and power creates figures, which shapes how we map our understanding of the world.

As explained in the introduction, the analysis will be based on the concepts of *homonormativity* by Lisa Duggan and *homonationalism* by Jasbir Puar. The understanding of a possible reconfiguration of the homosexual into supporting an

⁴⁷ C. Weber, *Queer International Relations: Sovereignty Sexuality and the Will to Knowledge*, Oxford University Press, 2016, p.28

⁴⁸ Weber, 2016, p.28

exclusive Western identity provides the fundamental framework on how to interpret one aspect of the mainstreaming of Islamophobia.

Although the concept of *homonormativity* is developed with the homosexual as the primary actor of the reconfiguration, *homonationalism* can be argued to have developed into a conceptual frame, which looks at reconfiguration in a broader picture. Puar describes it as follows;

‘homonationalism is an analytical category deployed to understand and historicize how and why nation’s status as ‘gay-friendly’ has become desirable in the first place. Like modernity, homonationalism can be resisted and re-signified, but not opted out of: we are all conditioned by it and through it.’⁴⁹

Additionally she finds it positive how the concept has been deployed, adapted and rearticulated, thus giving rise to generative and constructive debate, stating that her book ‘was derived not as corrective but as an incitement to debate.’⁵⁰ Although the concepts are primarily constructed around an American context and the war on terror in the beginning of the 21st century, this thesis will try to discuss the phenomenon theoretically in broader Western contexts with contemporary examples of the production of Islamophobia. The introduction has already outlined a clear trend of far-right nationalist discourses integrating homosexuality into issues of Western identity being threatened by Islam and Muslims. A few other cases will be analysed more thoroughly in the thesis, but the phenomenon as a tendency will be taken for granted. Rather than confirming its existence, the thesis seeks to create an understanding of the mechanisms and effects of the phenomenon. However, although there is very likely a connection between the far-right and the production of Islamophobia, the discussion is not merely reduced to one political wing. Rather it is an understanding of how the discourse has been mainstreamed and thereby how the production of Islamophobia has been extended to greater parts of the population than merely the far-right. It is therefore

⁴⁹ J. Puar, ‘Rethinking Homonationalism’, in *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 45:336-339, 2013, p.336

⁵⁰ Puar, 2013, p.336

not a question of whether the sympathy with homosexuals is genuine or merely a political façade. Understanding genuine intentions is an extremely difficult task, and the result is very likely not consistent. It is a theoretical reflection on the process, which has enabled the discourse, as well as its consequences, thereby trying to understand how the argument can function as a logical contradiction.

The thesis is written with a critical focus on how the logical contradiction of including homosexuals by excluding Muslims constitutes a genuine threat to human rights. By arguing that the contradiction is to a certain extent a fundamental challenge and integral to the human rights regime, which can hardly be solved through a legal approach, the relevance of considering other approaches is rationalised. The thesis will be conducted through the field of philosophy, gender studies and more specifically Queer Theory. It will be built fundamentally on the work of philosopher Michel Foucault. By attempting to merge a critical discussion of notions of equality and anti-discrimination, with a classical understanding of human rights as *universal, interrelated, interdependent and indivisible*, the thesis seek to establish a new and more critical understanding of rights and equality. Rather than seeking to challenge the human rights regime, this approach seeks to contribute to the upholding of the notion of *all human rights for all*. It combines two approaches, both analysing potential effects of discourses, as well as structural social-political inclusion of the homosexual.

In the following the outline of the thesis will be clarified, in order to give the reader a better overview of the specific intentions and arguments of each chapter.

1.5 Outline

As elaborated upon in the introduction, the homosexual is in many contexts being reconfigured from an excluded and marginalised minority, into a vital and viable identity representing Western liberal culture. This process is part of a logical contradiction, which produces Islamophobia. This raises questions of how the rights of certain groups are prioritised at the expense of the rights of others. The following thesis

investigates this topic by looking at how sexual politics are part of reconfiguring the landscape and (re)interpreting a rights discourse into a process of in- and exclusion.

The first chapter of the thesis is the introduction, which has clarified the background and gives the reader an overview over the thesis, including why a Queer theoretical approach can be argued as necessary for understanding the constructed argument for the necessity of Islamophobia. The second chapter will clarify the background of the relevant theory, which will constitute the fundament for the rest of the thesis. Foucault's understanding of power and sexuality will be interpreted, which will then be expanded by a Queer theoretical understanding of challenging binary objects and how sexuality can function to regulate populations. The chapter will conclude with an analysis of the intersectionality of privilege and oppression, which will give an understanding of how certain hierarchies are constructed.

The third chapter of the project focuses on the normalisation of homosexuality. It is an analysis which seeks to highlight the process in which certain subjects, based on a set of privileges, are tolerated or allowed into already existing heteronormative structures. Rather than challenging these structures, the normalisation of certain homosexual subjects is part of reinforcing the already existing structures, which is only to the advantage of the privileged. This analysis will be done primarily through the scope of Lisa Duggan's concept of *Homonormativity*.

The fourth part of the analysis focuses on the actual integration of the homosexual into the nation through a reconfiguration into a symbol of liberal Western culture. Based on the ideas of *statecraft as mancraft* and *Queer Liberalism* by David Eng, it seeks to create an understanding of how the figuration of the homosexual supports an understanding of Western sexual exceptionalism. Based on the previous chapters, the fourth chapter seeks to understand how a normalisation of (certain) homosexuals, can function to strengthen a notion of national identity as well as justify exclusion of people or groups, which are not perceived to share this identity. Again, the process of normalisation as part of reinforcing existing power structures and hierarchies will be investigated, with a focus on contemporary (increased) Islamophobia and Orientalised

pictures of the Muslim. It will be done through the concept of *Homonationalism* by Jasbir Puar and Edward W. Said's concept of Orientalism, and will be backed by empirical examples from political discourses.

Combined the chapters seek to give an understanding of how discourses of Islamophobia is constructed through a reconfiguration of the homosexual as supporting the notion of a Western sexual exceptionalism.

2. Reinterpreting sexuality and power

2.1 Sexuality as a regulatory construction

‘The new persecution of the peripheral sexualities entailed an incorporation of perversions and a new specification of individuals... Homosexuality appeared as one of the forms of sexuality when it was transposed from the practice of sodomy onto a kind of interior androgyny, a hermaphrodism of the soul. The sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species.’⁵¹

In his book *The History of Sexuality*, Vol. 1, Foucault is trying to challenge classical held notions of sexuality by incorporating it into understandings of power. I will use this understanding as a fundamental framework for explaining how a reconfiguration of the homosexual has taken place, as well as the consequences of it.

Foucault tries to make up with Freud’s classical notion of sexuality as solely being something repressed. Foucault rather argues that sexuality is to be understood as an instrument or *technology* of power.⁵² Sexuality is not something that has existed everywhere, always. Sexuality is a modern construction, which only dates back a few hundred years.⁵³ Of course this does not mean that people have not practiced sexual relations, but rather that the subjectification and disciplining entailed in the

⁵¹ Foucault, M., *‘The History of Sexuality. Vol 1: An introduction’*, translated by Rober Hurley, New York: Vintage Books, 1990, pp.42-43

⁵² Foucault, 1990, p.12

⁵³ Foucault, 1990, pp.42-43

conceptualisation of sexuality is new. He questions fundamental notions of sexuality as a pre-existing biological incorporation. This should not be understood as a rejection of potential biological, reproductive or behavioural patterns, but first and foremost that sexuality should be understood through words and interpretations. Sexuality is something we speak about and is constructed through discourses. It is an installed belief, which we naively adopt as an inner truth. Foucault thus writes:

‘We demand that sex speak the truth [...] and we demand that it tell us our truth, or rather, the deeply buried truth of that truth about ourselves which we think we possess in our immediate consciousness.’⁵⁴

This is a fundamental change in how sexuality has functioned as regulatory. Where, in the Victorian era, the discourse on sexuality was centred around population control and reproduction, sexuality has today turned into an individualised, incorporated understanding of sexuality as defining identity. It can then be argued, that the controlling power (of the discourse) of sexuality is to a lesser degree carried out by the state, but as relational and self-imposed or at least self-upheld. Thus, power should not be understood as simple domination or subjugation exerted by government, state or law, but rather as relational and as ‘the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organisation’.⁵⁵ Power is thereby being everywhere present, because it comes from everywhere. (Homo-)sexuality will therefore not be studied as something that should (nor could) be *freed* or *liberated*. Rather it is a study on (homo-)sexuality as the study of power and how this power can potentially be reconfigured through discourses. Additionally, the specific terminology of bio-power refers to an understanding of how a *right to life and death* is constructed and explains certain notions of population existence. Bio-power is the explicit focus on life and the forming of understandings of life. Foucault writes, that the ancient right to take life or let live has been replaced by a power to foster life or disallow it. Linking bio-power to racism, an understanding can be created of how certain groups are worth saving, while others are compensated.

⁵⁴ Foucault, 1990, p.69

⁵⁵ Foucault, 1990, p.92

For the homosexual to become a symbol representing a Western culture, a significant reconfiguration is necessary. The homosexual (and in particular the gay man) has historically been considered as a symbol of death (aids, reproductive capabilities, rights to artificial insemination and adoption). As will be argued later, this position is radically different from how homosexuality is perceived today. This reconfiguration is part of an understanding of how power functions to determine certain subjects as being worthy of life and others as not.

In *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault presents and elaborates on his concept of bio-power. For Foucault, bio-power is the management of life, the distribution of risk, possibility, mortality, life chances, health, environment and quality of living.⁵⁶ The understanding of how life and death is part of creating hierarchical systems, is an essential element for understanding the (re)configuration of the homosexual in broader contexts. Where the propagation of death was historically⁵⁷ an essential element of power of the state through the ability and recognised right to take away life in its most direct understanding, this is no longer, or at least rarely, a legitimate function of the state. This does not mean that the state does not have influence on who gets to live and who does not. Rather, the cultivating of life has become the new expression of population control. Death becomes merely reflective, a secondary effect to the primary aim of cultivating specific forms of life. Death becomes the negative translation of the imperative to live occurring as a necessary sacrifice in the pursuit of prioritised life.⁵⁸ Thus, death (supposedly) becomes something permanent, which allows for the unrestricted workings of biopolitics, understood as the social and political power of life. As sexuality is considered a key element in the (re)production and reassuring of society, sexualities demarcated as perverted or deviant are key components of the very establishment of norms that drive biopolitical interests.⁵⁹ Health, hygiene, environment, medicine, reproduction and birth rates, mortality and economics becomes key elements. The variety of factors imposing control on sexuality are obviously tools which reach out

⁵⁶ Foucault, 1990, p.147

⁵⁷ Foucault focuses especially on the Victorian era

⁵⁸ Foucault, 1990, p.135

⁵⁹ M. Foucault, '*Society Must Be Defended*', Lectures at the college de France, 1975-1976. Translated by David Macey. New York: Pantheon, 2003, pp.243-52

beyond issues of sexual practice, which is how biopolitics becomes intersected with other groups and issues such as race. As mentioned, Foucault's focus on sexuality, while developing his concept of bio-power, is due to his intention of dismantling the *repressive hypothesis* by Freudian psychoanalysis. Where Freud believed in a naturally strong instinct towards sexuality, which was then repressed by the constraints of imposed civilised life, Foucault rather looks at sexuality as a discursive object.

Although readers of Foucault as Foucault himself in *The History of Sexuality* have tended to focus on the critique of psychoanalysis and the repressive hypothesis, racial aspects to his work can be interpreted as well, especially in his other work *Society Must Be Defended*. Like sexuality, racism must be understood through a spectrum of bio-power. It is the configuration of life (and death) and the prioritisation of certain forms of life as more valuable than others. In the book, Foucault asks: 'What in fact is racism? It is primarily a way of introducing a break into the domain of life that is under power's control: the break between what must live and what must die.'⁶⁰ It is thus a control/regulation of biological processes of human beings, which makes distinctions between races and creates hierarchies, with some described as good and others as inferior. Foucault claims that this is a way of separating out groups that exist within the population, by creating subdivided species or *subspecies*, which is done through the construction of the notion of race(s).⁶¹ It reproduces the death-function of bio-power as a secondary to the cultivation of life, which then justifies the death of others as making (the right) members of the population biologically stronger.⁶² The death of *bad* races is not just protecting but is inherently understood as making the *good* race healthier, *purier* and better. Although being positioned as secondary to the cultivation of life, the consequences are evidently the same for those assumed inferior. Although being a fundamental part of nationalist formations, certain examples constitute clearer cases for the understanding of such nationalistic projects. Most obviously are apartheid South Africa and Nazi Germany, with a similar claim of the superiority of the White race being threatened by non-White populations. Although such a direct reference to

⁶⁰ Foucault, 2003, p.254

⁶¹ Foucault, 2003, p.255

⁶² Foucault, 2003, p.258

biological differences of positioning some as superior to others is relatively rare and often controversial, Foucault's understanding of a biopolitical racism is still very much relevant. The biological separation of populations can just as well, and more commonly today, be defined as a cultural distinction, which fundamentally holds the same function. This is something that has also been taken up by many others, such as for example Etienne Balibar in her text *Is There a 'Neo-Racism'?*.⁶³ The understanding of the regulating bio-power in the production of sexualities and races is essential to this thesis. It is the fundamental understanding of how certain groups are reconfigured in the nation state as simultaneously in and excluding.

Foucault's analysis highlights the bio-power as assigning some groups as worthy and some which are assigned to be symbolically dead. Foucault dedicates his focus to the lives of the worthy and to how they are disciplined through the dead. However, this leaves out the groups that have been positioned as symbolically dead. In elaborating on Foucault's bio-power, Achille Mbembe, presents her concept of *necropolitics*, which seeks to understand the position and the consequences of the *dead*. It neither an analysis of the casualties, nor the function of actual loss of life, but rather an understanding of the consequences for people who, although still alive, are positioned as dead. Through an analysis of the Israeli occupation of Palestine, as well as apartheid South Africa, she shows how *death* is created to respectively Palestinians and Blacks, and how necropolitics are constructed as an understanding of how the sovereign power is creating *death-worlds* inhabited by *living dead*.⁶⁴ Through this understanding, Mbembe shows how bio-power functions by dividing people into those who must live and those who must die in order to protect and optimise the life of the living. Drawing on the analysis of Foucault, Mbembe argues that this process is allowed through the symbolic positioning of a fictional notion of *the enemy*.⁶⁵ Importantly, Mbembe notes that by dividing people into the living and the dead, the sovereign right to kill is not subjugated to any rule, because the subject is already dead. Biopolitics is thereby not only

⁶³ E. Balibar, 'Is There A 'Neo-Racism'?', in 'Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities', Verso, London, New York, 2010

⁶⁴ A. Mbembe, 'Necropolitics', *public Culture* 15(1):11-40, Duke University Press 2003, p.40

⁶⁵ Mbembe, 2003, p.16

optimising life, but is also marginalising what is not considered life. This can partly explain why depictions of death in for example the Mediterranean Sea or in Syria can be met with a different reaction than casualties of White people in Europe. Although these examples concern explicit depictions of *actual* death, it is more the marginalisation and the symbolic death of the ones considered as living dead, which is essential for the understanding of necropolitics. Death itself is neglected and thus not given additional value or attention, unless it holds a specific function for the living. Who is considered worthy of life and who is not is thus an important and politicised matter.

The notion of bio-power and necropolitics has also influenced recent intersectional studies on configurations of sexuality. One of the leading scholars on the topic is Jasbir Puar. Puar argues, that although Queer Studies have sometimes overlooked racial issues, post-colonial studies have tended to overlook issues of non-normative sexual identities.⁶⁶ Puar writes that by understanding bio-power as something everywhere present affecting everything, it becomes possible to read for example race and sexuality simultaneously in the production of relations of necro- and biopolitics.⁶⁷ This relation underlines the necessity of understanding the multiple spaces of death as understood through Mbembe's concept of necropolitics. It highlights the direct involvement of bio-power in death, which makes it possible to see how biopolitics produces both sexualised and racialised groups and subjects. Additionally, when assigning certain groups as living and some as dead, there is a potential of a repositioning of certain groups from dead to living. It is in these spaces of movement between death to life, that the difference between Queer subjects that are folded (back) into life and the racialised Queerness that emerge through the naming of populations, is found.⁶⁸ As such it is possible to deconstruct or modify the poles of bio- and necropolitics. It will inevitably lead to a confirmation and reproduction of the normative institutions, thereby leaving certain (potentially new) groups increasingly decayed.

⁶⁶ Puar, 2007, p.34

⁶⁷ Puar, 2007, p.35

⁶⁸ Puar, 2007, p.35

The History of Sexuality has been major influential in discussions on sexual orientation and the construction of hierarchies. This has also been part of shaping Queer Theory. In the following I will elaborate on the relevant elements of Queer Theory and how it can be part of understanding power relations.

2.2 Queer Theory – challenging the binary objects

*‘The contemporary mainstreaming of gay and lesbian identity – as mass-mediated consumer lifestyle and embattled legal category – demands a renewed queer studies ever vigilant to the fact that sexuality is intersectional, not extraneous to other modes of difference, and calibrated to a firm understanding of queer as a political metaphor without a fixed referent.’*⁶⁹

Queer Theory as a concept dates back to a conference in 1989 where Teresa de Lauretis suggested using the term as a common definition for the radical theories, which was mainstreamed in the 1980’s as critical to former understandings and categorisation of gender, sexuality and race.⁷⁰ In line with the critique Foucault had raised of Freud’s *repression theory*, it was the intention of Lauretis to study homosexuality, not as marginal to a stable and dominant form of heterosexuality, in which it would be defined as either in opposition or in contrast with.⁷¹ Rather it was an attempt to;

‘make explicit, compare, or confront the respective histories, assumptions, and conceptual frameworks... from there, we could then go on to recast or reinvent the terms of our sexualities, to construct another discursive horizon, another way of thinking the sexual.’⁷²

⁶⁹ D.L. Eng, J. Halberstam, E. Munoz, , What’s Queer about Queer Studies Now?’, in *Special issue of Social Text* 23(3-4):1-17, 2005, p.1

⁷⁰ T. de Lauretis, ‘Queer Theory: Lesbian and gay sexualities: An introduction’, in *differences*, 3(2); iii-xviii, 1991, p.iv

⁷¹ De Lauretis, 1991, p.ii

⁷² De Lauretis, 1991, p.iv

Thus, it was the intention to look at homosexuality in a way, which did not presume predetermined or fixed categories, but rather to study how constructed categories were/are (re)produced in relation to other categories, such as gender or race. Lauretis's attempt to conceptualise Queer Theory can be seen as the first attempt to create a *subjectless* Queer Theory, as proposed by Eng, Halberstam and Munoz in *What's queer about queer studies now?*. Queer Theory has not inherently been intersectional, but after significant critique from especially queers of colour, contributing to the development of the field, Queer Theory today is often being applied intersectionally. An intersectional queer approach can therefore offer a much more nuanced perspective and a comprehensive understanding of the investigated issue. As described by prominent feminists, women of colour, activists and scholars Audre Lorde and Kimberle Crenshaw, ignoring intersectionality tends to overlook and reproduce structures of oppression, by only looking from a perspective of the relatively privileged position within the group.⁷³ Thus, white homosexual's risks looking at homophobia as an isolated phenomenon, rather than interconnected with issues of race and class among others. Equally, women's studies risk overlooking issues of sexuality, as studies on sexuality overlooks issues of gender. This can be interpreted as a fundamental reproduction of normative understandings of gender and sexuality as two separate instances. Rather than being a stigma or a label, gender should be considered a normative institution, which potentially regulates sexual expression and maintain social structures and hierarchies. In order to understand the complexity of these hierarchies, sexuality cannot be understood as a single issue separate from other issues, but must be understood intersectionally and include issues of gender, race, religion, etc. This means that Queer Theory can never be completed, but must constantly be a questioning of new constructions and regulating mechanisms. This is essential for this thesis, where the interconnection between sexuality, gender, race and religion is being translated as fundamental for the understanding of the construction of (a new) Western culture. By

⁷³ See for example: K. Crenshaw, 'Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics', in *The University of Chicago Legal Forum Volume: Feminism in the Law: Theory, Practice and Criticism*; pp.139–167, 1989; or A. Lorde, 'Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference', in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*; pp.114–123, Berkeley 1984, p.115

investigating and building on the understanding of the intersectionality of oppression, it is an analysis of the excluding mechanisms understood through the reconfiguration of sexuality as a singular issue rather than part of an intersectional system of oppression. This is possible through the scope of a *subjectless* Queer Theory.

To be *queer* has been used with negative connotation by producing a subject through repeated shaming interpellation.⁷⁴ In general terms queer refers to what is outside of what is considered *normal*.⁷⁵ Although often associated with a sexual practice it is not limited to neither a specific practice nor orientation. According to Judith Butler, who is a leading scholar and has been part of shaping and mainstreaming the concept, queer is not a fixed term. It is to be a site of constant contestation and can therefore ‘never be fully owned, but always and only redeployed, twisted, queered from a prior usage and in the direction of urgent and expanding political purposes’.⁷⁶ Thus, the term must never purport to give a complete definition of those it seeks to represent since it is constantly being revaluated. Rather than focusing on a collective or subjective identification as queer, this thesis is using Queer Theory as an epistemological framework of understanding relations.

In my understanding of Queer Studies, and the notion of *subjectless* Queer Theory I refer to a particular discussion, which Eng, Halberstam, and Munoz have initiated in 2005. They are creating a *subjectless critique* of queer studies through an interpretation of Michael Warner in his book *Fear of a Queer Planet*, where he clarifies that queer rejects, among other things, aggressive impulses of normalisation and ‘rejects a minoritizing logic of toleration or simple political interest-representation in favor of a more thorough resistance to regimes of the normal.’⁷⁷ Rather than a strict focus on the homosexual as the subject of investigation, a subjectless approach investigates the process of normalisation, which seeks to question inclusion into normalising institutions

⁷⁴ J. Butler, ‘Endangered/Endangering: Schematic Racism and White Paranoia’, in Reading Rodney King/Reading Urban Uprising, Vol. 1;17—32, Routledge, 1993 (b), p.17

⁷⁵ Not to be confused with Queer Theory, which, as previously stated, goes beyond this conceptualization

⁷⁶ J. Butler, ‘Bodies That Matter: on the discursive limits of “sex”’, Routledge, New York & London, 1993, p.288 (a)

⁷⁷ M. Warner, ‘introduction’ in *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993, p.xxvi

or communities. A subjectless Queer Theory is an epistemology which requires queer theoretical analysis conducted from a position which is not fixed, in order to focus on a wide field of normalisation as the site of social violence. It disallows any positioning of a proper subject *of* or *for* the field in order to focus on hegemonic social structures of the normal.⁷⁸ This is inherently an intersectional approach of analysing relations, which mobilises a broad social critique based on race, gender, class, nationality, religion and sexuality. This includes an understanding of geopolitics and international relations and how these are part of national manifestations of sexual, racial and gendered hierarchies. This requires critical attention to discourses of migration, citizenship, democracy, community, culture and family to understand how hegemonic structures are manifested and upheld.

As Michael Warner and Lauren Berlant explain, Queer and queer culture can be defined as a world-making project in which *world* and *public* differs from communities and groups.⁷⁹ The diversity of groups, subjects, spaces and feelings is too broad to be mapped out into a singular understanding of (sexual) identity. Instead, Queer suggests an unsystematised approach of acquaintance. Queer requires no necessary relation to fixed spaces, identities narratives, countries or nations. Queer can therefore be argued to challenge the notion of a homogenous and fixed identity or culture within, especially defined by a geographical location. This will be analysed in order to create an understanding of mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion in the claim of a specific Western culture. However, to understand how certain norms are more dominant than others, thereby potentially imposing normalising standards, it is necessary to understand the role of privilege and how privilege is part of creating invisible hierarchies outside of the rights regime. The following will clarify the importance of privilege and intersectionality in a context of oppression and socially constructed hierarchies.

⁷⁸ Eng, Halberstam, Munoz, 2005, p.3

⁷⁹ L. Berlant, & M. Warner, 'Sex in Public', in *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 24, No. 2:547-566, 1998, p.558

2.3 Understanding privilege, oppression and intersectionality

*'privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was 'meant' to remain oblivious.'*⁸⁰

*'For we have built into all of us, old blueprints of expectation and response, old structures of oppression, and these must be altered at the same time as we alter the living conditions which are a result of those structures. For the Master's tools will never dismantle the master's house.'*⁸¹

2.3.1 Privilege:

Racism, Islamophobia and heterosexism have one essential thing in common. They are belief systems of structural hierarchies, which seeks to privilege certain people more than others, based on how well they apply to the believed norms of the system. To understand how certain people can be placed higher than others within such constructed hierarchies, it is necessary to understand the function, as well as the construction of privileges as a way of prioritising certain characteristics over others.

I very much agree with the frustration of, Kim A. Case, Jonathan Iuzzini and Morgan Hopkins and their article in the *Journal of Social Issues* named *Systems of Privilege: Intersections, Awareness, and Applications* from 2012. It was written out of frustration that, although social issues and issues of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination, are increasingly being addressed from an interdisciplinary perspective, issues of privilege are very often overlooked.⁸² Privilege can be defined 'in relational terms, and in reference to social groups, and involves unearned benefits afforded to powerful social

⁸⁰ P. McIntosh, 'White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women's Studies', 1988, p.1

⁸¹ Lorde, 1984, p.123

⁸² K.A. Case, J. Iuzzini, M. Hopkins, 'Systems of Privilege: Intersections, Awareness, and Applications', in *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol.68, number 1;1-10, 2012, p.1

groups within systems of oppression'.⁸³ Through behavioural measures, prejudice and other means of discrimination, privilege can be considered as opposing to an idea of equality, which assumes that no one is positioned differently because of where they are born or who they are born as. The meaning of privilege as being *unearned benefits* is what inherently defines that system as a construction. It means that it is neither static, nor ultimate, meaning that it can (and should) be challenged. There is usually a strong unwillingness to recognise privilege from the ones holding it. This can be argued to be inherent to privilege as a normalising or naturalising mechanism. When (re)producing differences within a society or a nation as something normal or natural, the privileged position becomes obscured as something indisputable. Justified through argumentation of (pseudoscientific) socio-biology, psychology or even personal experiences, a claim of (male or White) superiority as natural is often constructed.⁸⁴ Even the ones who do recognise privilege are often not willing to give it up. It is part of an understanding, which obstructs the notion of the privilege as being unnatural or unfair. Peggy McIntosh explains that;

‘whites are taught to think of their lives as morally neutral, normative, and average, also ideal, so that when we work to benefit others, this is seen as work that will allow “them” to be more like “us.”’⁸⁵

Privilege can be based on several factors; ethnicity, race, physical capability, class, gender, sexuality, etc. It thus categorises people into certain groups of social identities based on these factors. However, privilege is neither granted through biology, nor through socio-economic conditions. It is important to understand that privilege is based on a system of oppression or inequality, which in its existences proclaims social rankings of less or more *worthy*. Privilege is therefore a construction rather than a fact. However, this does not mean that privilege is artificial and should not be considered. Systems of privilege are often organising societies in manners that make arbitrary characteristics preferable to others, due to societal formations and norms.

⁸³ Case, Iuzzini, Hopkins, 2012, p.3

⁸⁴ McIntosh, 1988, p.2

⁸⁵ McIntosh, 1988, p.2

Already in 1988 Peggy McIntosh wrote an essay in which she explored the interconnection between White and male privilege. She explored different aspects of privilege and found that there is a clear interconnection between privilege and oppression.⁸⁶ Privilege gives one cultural permission to ignore, or at least not equally consider, the voices and the interests of people with lesser privilege than oneself. Confidence and obliviousness very often comes at the expense of the confidence and comfort of other groups through differentiation and alienation. McIntosh argues, that; 'since sexism, racism, heterosexism and other forms of oppression are not the same, the advantages associated with them should not be seen as the same.'⁸⁷ This is relevant for the understanding, that although holding certain privileges, there are still structures, which potentially limit one's opportunity to affect discourses and structures. Additionally, the advantages which derive from being part of more privileged social identity groups of for example class, race, religion, sexuality, etc. cannot be isolated from one another. Since different social identities seek to sustain or improve their position of privilege, through already existing modes of privilege, privileged aspects of identity tend to overlap. The more homogenous a group is, the easier it is for the dominant social identity groups to exceed and expand their privilege from one identity of for example religion or colour, to another, such as class. Contrarily, lesser privileged (minority) groups, such as refugees or im groups (usually) at the expense migrants holding distinct ethnicities and religions, are in higher risk of being negatively positioned as *less worthy* in socio-political hierarchies, thereby reinforcing structural challenges in for example the labour market. Thus, McIntosh argues, 'oppressions are both distinct and interlocking'.⁸⁸ What makes the knowledge of privilege so essential is that it obscures our understanding of opportunity. 'One's life is not what one makes it.'⁸⁹ The understanding of opportunity, achievement and socio-economic and political position is highly shaped by predetermined privileges or lack thereof. Privilege is considered something desirable that everybody (should) want. We are taught to take advantage of the privilege given to us. However, since privileges

⁸⁶ McIntosh, 1988, p.6

⁸⁷ McIntosh, 1988, p.9

⁸⁸ McIntosh, 1988, p.9

⁸⁹ McIntosh, 1988, p.5

work to over-empower certain groups (usually) at the expense of others, privilege confers dominance, arbitrarily gives permission to control and allows for certain people to be, at best thoughtless and at worst murderous.⁹⁰ This should not be considered as a desirable attribute from a point of view of the general interest of society. Rather than looking at individual acts of cruelty, the purpose of recognising privilege is to recognise the invisible structures of dominance.

Focusing on privileges related to sex and race, McIntosh highlights that men do not have a great deal to lose in supporting Women's studies, but that they do not have a great deal to lose if they oppose it either.⁹¹ With this perspective, she finishes her essay with an important reflection, raising the question of whether White women will use their unearned racial privileges to challenge the invisible structures of domination or whether they will reproduce them.⁹² This is exactly the point that reaffirms the necessity of an intersectional approach, taking into consideration the multiple aspects of oppression, which is constituted through privilege.

2.3.2 Intersectionality and oppression:

There is a great deal to lose by ignoring the intersectionality of privilege and oppression. In the text *Age, Race Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Differences*, Audre Lorde argues, that too often energy is either focused into pretending that differences are insurmountable, or that they even do not exist, rather than exploring and recognising the differences to form alliances and learn from each other.⁹³ What she defines as the *mythical norm*, is the norm or socially constructed identity of constructed ideals, thus determining privilege, which, she claims, in America, is the White, thin, male, young, heterosexual, Christian and financially secure.⁹⁴ This is a representation, which can be argued as also applying to the rest of the West. This mythical norm is not just part of privileging and empowering some through the creation of hierarchies, but it is also part

⁹⁰ McIntosh, 1988, p.6

⁹¹ McIntosh, 1988, p.7

⁹² McIntosh, 1988, p.9

⁹³ Lorde, 1984, p.115

⁹⁴ Lorde, 1984, p.116

of organising those who stand *outside* the power often to identify in one specific way in which they stand outside. This can for example be the notion that all oppression experienced by a person is due to that person being either for example Muslim, Black, female or homosexual, rather than a combination of several factors. Thus, a singular reason is perceived as being the primary cause of all oppression. Although potentially creating in-group alliances, it is also part of obscuring the complexity of power, privilege and oppression, which functions on innumerable levels. It can be part of distorting differences and oppressive hierarchies, which is practiced within otherwise perceived alliances. Refusing to see differences can thus make it impossible to see the diverse problems and pitfalls.⁹⁵

With her essay *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics*, Kimberle Crenshaw has, in many ways, manifested and revolutionised the way we look at intersectional oppression and antidiscrimination politics. Through legal cases in the U.S., Crenshaw exemplifies how conceptions of discrimination condition us to think of subordination as disadvantage on a single categorical axis.⁹⁶ It is this single-axis framework, which obstructs an intersectional analysis, by limiting inquiry to the experience of more privileged members of the identified and conceptualised groups. Focusing specifically on racial and sexual discrimination, Crenshaw shows how cases of racial discrimination tends to be viewed in terms of sex- or class privileged Blacks, and in cases of sex discrimination, the focus is on race- and class privileged women.⁹⁷ By constantly maintaining focus on the most privileged group members, multi-burdened members, such as Black women, are additionally marginalised. It is impossible to sufficiently address structures of oppression without taking an intersectional approach to privilege and discrimination because; ‘the intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism’.⁹⁸ An intersectional approach thus looks at discrimination unidirectionally. Multi-burdened group members can experience discrimination in ways

⁹⁵ Lorde, 1984, p.118

⁹⁶ Crenshaw, 1989, p.140

⁹⁷ Crenshaw, 1989, p.140

⁹⁸ Crenshaw, 1989, o.140

that are both similar and different from other group members. A Black woman can for example experience discrimination similarly to White women and to Black men, yet she can also experience double-discrimination for being a Black woman. It is not the sum of racial and sexual discrimination, but discrimination of being a Black woman. Crenshaw argues that anti-discrimination is understood from a top-down strategy of using a singular “but for” analysis, which looks at the people who are privileged *but for* a singular characteristic, thus positioning women as white and Blacks as men. As we shall see later, this is exactly the same mechanism, which positions homosexuals as White and Blacks as heterosexual, thereby ignoring homosexuals who are multi-burdened, as well as ignoring the intersecting reality of oppression.

Crenshaw uses the analogy of a basement with all the disadvantaged people, based on less privileged sex, race, class, sexuality, age, etc. These people are standing on each other’s shoulders, with those in the bottom being disadvantaged on the full spectrum of privileging factors, and those on the top only being disadvantaged by single factors. Their ceiling of the basement is also the floor above for the privileged, who are not in any way disadvantaged. In efforts to correct some aspects of domination, those above admits from the basements only those who can say that “but for” a single factor, they would be admitted to the upper room. Those placed immediately below the ceiling, due to the singularity of their burden of an otherwise privileged position, can crawl to the upper floor, and the multi-burdened are left behind.⁹⁹ The analogy of the basement exemplifies how protection can only be received to the extent that the experiences are recognisably similar to the more privileged parts of society. Thus, by focusing on singular issues, failing to embrace the complexities of discrimination on multiple intersecting levels, is part of reproducing oppression and reinforcing the status quo. If there is a proclaimed concern in alleviating oppression and discrimination, it is ironic that such a top-down approach should be taken, rather than addressing the needs of the most disadvantaged, which would inevitably also benefit other people. However, it is an effective strategy to resist efforts to compartmentalise experiences and thus undermine potential collective action. Thus, addressing the interests of the most privileged parts of

⁹⁹ Crenshaw, 1989, pp.151-52

otherwise marginalised groups reinforces the existing structures and minimises potential threats from coalitions seeking to overturn broader systems of oppression. Crenshaw finishes her text with a statement which, although written in 1989 is (sadly) still highly relevant today:

‘It is not necessary to believe that a political consensus to focus on the lives of the most disadvantaged will happen tomorrow in order to recenter discrimination discourse at the intersection. It is enough, for now, that such an effort would encourage us to look beneath the prevailing conceptions of discrimination and to challenge the complacency that accompanies belief in the effectiveness of this framework. By so doing, we may develop language which is critical of the dominant view and which provides some basis for unifying activity. The goal of this activity should be to facilitate the inclusion of marginalized groups for whom it can be said: ‘When they enter, we all enter.’’

Reading oppression through privileges has been essential within feminism and later also Queer Theory. It is the fundamental understanding of discrimination and inequality as largely based on socially constructed identities. Since these constructed identities are given attributes and different levels of privilege, they create hierarchies among people. Understanding the socially constructed identities is therefore an essential element when attempting to understand discrimination and the normalisation of oppression, which can be hard to recognise. As Audre Lorde states: ‘the true focus of revolutionary change is never merely the oppressive situations which we seek to escape, but that piece of oppressor which is planted deep within each of us, and which knows only the oppressors’ tactics, the oppressors’ relationship.’¹⁰⁰ The next chapter will look into the normalising effects of the reconfiguration of homosexuality, as well as Lisa Duggan’s intersectional analysis on homosexual privilege of in- and exclusion.

¹⁰⁰ Lorde, 1984, p.123

3. The problem with normal

*'To be legitimated by the state is to enter into the terms of legitimation offered there and to find that one's public and recognizable sense of personhood is fundamentally dependent on the lexicon of that legitimation. And it follows that the delimitation of legitimation will take place only through an exclusion of a certain sort, though not a patently dialectical one. The sphere of legitimate intimate alliance is established through producing and intensifying regions of illegitimacy.'*¹⁰¹

In 1969, after provocations from consistent discriminatory police raids, guests of a gay bar in Greenwich Village in New York, took to the streets and rioted. Stonewall Inn was known to be popular among the poorest and most marginalised people in the gay community, including drag queens, transgender people, and people of colour. What has become known as the 'Stonewall riots' managed to gather support and repeat the riots on several evenings, organise into activist groups, and focus efforts on establishing spaces for homosexuals where one could be open about sexual orientation without the fear of being arrested. The Stonewall riots are commonly referred to as the most influential event in the gay liberation movement and commemorated through pride marches/parades annually worldwide.¹⁰² Importantly, Stonewall was also the start of a new discourse and the emergence of new movements of multi-issue progressive politics, where gay politics interacted intensely with feminist, countercultural and antiracist

¹⁰¹ J. Butler, 'Is Kinship Always Already Heterosexual', in *A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, 13.1;13-44, 2004 (a), p.17

¹⁰² E.A. Armstrong, S.M. Cragg, 'Movements and Memory: The Making of the Stonewall Myth.' *American Sociological Review*, vol. 71; 724-51, 2006. p.724

rhetoric and strategies.¹⁰³ It thus replaced a discourse which focused more on single issues, making existence more tolerable. Although discussions and internal conflicts over assimilationist versus confrontational strategies have always existed, the rhetoric was significantly changed with an expansion of the notion of sexual or personal privacy to include, not only sexual relations between consenting adults behind closed doors, but also freedom from surveillance and entrapment in public (a so called right to privacy in public), and efforts to expand the allowable scope of sexual expression in public.¹⁰⁴ The notion of the private therefore got increasingly challenged with the notion of the right to privacy increasingly as a confinement protecting *the public* from deviant behaviour. Considering the history of the Stonewall riots, and how ground-breaking they have become for LGBTIQ+ societies globally, it is obvious that a remapping of sexual politics is quite a difficult task and that a tendency to move away from intersectional struggle defining the post-Stonewall movements has changed to a more (homo)normative strategy, working within, rather than against, the neoliberal order. It is a re-coding of the struggle from a political project to an individual question, where sexuality is increasingly (re)privatised in the search for *equal* rights.

3.1 Heteronormativity

An understanding of a “normal” in relation to sexuality is commonly studied through the understanding of *heteronormativity*. Heteronormativity is a concept, which covers an understanding of a culture or belief system in which heterosexuality is assumed as the norm. It is an institutional and structuralised understanding and practical orientation that both positions and makes heterosexuality seem privileged. It produces a set of expectations, demands and constraints on a society. As other norms, heteronormativity functions quite subtly and pervasively, taking up various forms. Although not necessarily seeking a completely homogenous society, heteronormativity functions to reproduce itself as the dominant culture by normalisation and naturalisation of hetero

¹⁰³ L. Duggan, ‘*The Twilight of Equality? Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics, and the Attack on Democracy*’, Boston: Beacon Press, 2003, p.52

¹⁰⁴ Duggan, 2003, p.52

norms, as well as (hetero)sexist suppression or marginalisation of people who do not *fit in* with heterosexual norms.¹⁰⁵ This is typically understood to be homosexuals, but of course also includes other people stigmatised as different, or identifying differently from heterosexuality, such as bisexuals, intersex people, transsexuals, or people who in any other way deviate from commonly-held understandings of sexuality and/or gender identity. Heterosexist ideology involves a (symbolic) order of hierarchical dichotomies, which codifies sex as biological difference between male and female, gender as masculine and feminine subjectivity, and sexuality as heterosexual or homosexual identification.¹⁰⁶ Heterosexism, which is discrimination based on the notion of heteronormativity or heterosexuality as being superior, is normalised through multiple discourse, religious dogma, and reification of *the family* as something pre-political and natural.¹⁰⁷

The hierarchical dichotomy of gender is a foundational symbolic ordering and discursive practice. Heteronormativity is thus not about actual sexual practices and in this way distinct from heterosexuality. Heteronormativity is rather about the construction of identities and narratives of the social, the normal and the natural.¹⁰⁸ It is however more than just prejudice and identity. It is produced in almost every aspect of social life, such as nationality, state, laws, medicine, education, television, news fairy tales, etc. Understanding the effects of heteronormativity is therefore essential for understanding how hierarchical structures of the nation of in- and exclusion are constructed and how some people are considered worthier than others.

3.1.1 The normalizing function of inclusion:

Michael Warner published a book in 1999 called *The Trouble With Normal: Sex, Politics, and the Ethics of Queer Life* arguing against gay marriage. It is a critical

¹⁰⁵ A. Pandya, 'Voices of Invisibles: Coping Responses of Men Who Have Sex with Men', in *An International Psychology of Men: Theoretical Advances, Case Studies, and Clinical Innovations*, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, LLC, 2011, p.249

¹⁰⁶ V.S. Peterson, 'Political Identities/Nationalism as Heterosexism', in *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 1:1, 34-65, Routledge, 1999, p.40

¹⁰⁷ Peterson, 1999, p.40

¹⁰⁸ Berlant & Warner, 1998, p.548

discussion on the role of same-sex marriage as a goal for gay rights activists arguing that gay marriage is not only bad for gays, but for everyone. Such *moves towards normalcy*, he argues, creates a division of *good gays* and *bad queers*.¹⁰⁹ The good gays are to be understood as the (mostly White) homosexual men who do not challenge the norms of straight culture. By expanding the realm of the *normal* through this sort of inclusion, monogamy and other hetero norms are reproduced and strengthened. It creates new hierarchies of respectability of which the lowest level is 'the bad Queer, the kind who has sex, who talks about it, and who builds with other queers a way of life that ordinary folk do not understand or control.'¹¹⁰ By the creation of these new hierarchies, where certain people are included and others excluded, gay marriage is part of embracing these standards and 'throws shame on those who stand further down the ladder of respectability.'¹¹¹

Warner's critique has been hugely influential. However, it can be criticised for reproducing the repressive hypothesis, which was criticised by Foucault. Queerness becomes a category of identity, which can then be repressed or liberated. According to Warner, queerness is oppressed by both heterosexuals, as well as the *good gays*. One can thus argue that Queer thereby becomes synonymous with promiscuous uncontrollable homosexuals who do not want to get married. A kind of equivalent to a punk for sexuality, defined by being in opposition to the norm.

Judith Butler agrees with Warner on the issues of gay marriage as creating new hierarchies in which certain people are recognised at the expense of others. However, Butler sees the production of these hierarchies, not only through a discourse of legitimate and illegitimate, but also through a reconfiguration or a circumscription of the sexual field. It is a sexual field that is not thought through the discourse of legitimacy, which is not exhausted by the legitimate or the illegitimate and thus is outside of the struggle.¹¹² Butler thereby avoids looking at queer sexuality as merely

¹⁰⁹ M. Warner, *The trouble with normal: sex, politics and the ethics of queer life*, Harvard University Press, 1999, p.66

¹¹⁰ Warner, 1999, p.114

¹¹¹ Warner, 1999, p.60

¹¹² Butler, 2004 (a), p.17

oppressed, while still recognising that 'various sexual practices and relationships that fall outside the purview of the sanctifying law become illegible or, worse untenable, and new hierarchies emerge in public discourse.'¹¹³ A support for gay marriage thereby creates a reality in which (heterosexual) relations are recognised, certain (*good* homosexual) relations can be potentially recognised and certain practices and relations, which cannot live up to the expectations in the constructed framework, disappear from the inclusive political discourse with the possibility of discursive death. However, rejecting state recognition of homosexual relationships, as in the case of gay marriage, is according to Butler also problematic. The AIDS epidemic and the many casualties it brought, is a reminder of the severe consequences a lack of social and judicial recognition can have. Considering the victims of aids, it therefore makes sense that the lesbian and gay movement would turn to the state for recognition. The drive for gay marriage is, according to Butler, therefore in some ways a shamed response in which the homosexual community seeks to disavow its so-called promiscuity and appear healthy, *normal* and capable of sustaining lasting monogamous relations.¹¹⁴ At the same time the arguments against gay marriage also risks falling under the terms which have been set by a heteronormative discourse, thereby indirectly recognising the premise for the discussion. Butler thus argues that rather than looking at the question of gay marriage as a matter of being *for* or *against*, it is a matter of creating a critical practice, which is mindful of both.¹¹⁵ It is essential to lay claim to intelligibility and recognisability, but, at the same time, politically, it is crucial to maintain a critical and transformative relation to the norms that governs the premise of intelligibility and question the assumption that the state furnish these norms. Thus, it is a matter of discussing why and how marriage has become the question that defines what will and will not be qualified as meaningful political discourse.

The discussion on gay marriage raises the question of the function of legislation and the struggle for legal recognition. It stems from an understanding that only through legal recognition can homosexual couples be recognised as equal to heterosexual couples.

¹¹³ J. Butler, '*Undoing Gender*', Routledge, New York & London, 2004 (b), p.106

¹¹⁴ Butler, 2004 (a), p.26

¹¹⁵ Butler, 2004 (a), p.28

Two aspects can be read from this; gay marriage provides an opportunity for homosexual couples to assimilate themselves with *normal* couples, and it is part of sending a signal of normalisation of homosexuality to society. Obviously, there is the issue of only targeting a very limited part of non-heterosexual orientations and identities. Additionally, rather than providing inclusion or acceptance, gay marriage is only offering the opportunity for assimilation, which thus demands adherence through integration in heterosexual structures.

3.1.2 The depoliticization of homosexuality:

In 2015, the U.S. supreme court ruled in favour of marriage equality and Obama declared that ‘Love is love’.¹¹⁶ Referring to a similar event in Denmark, former Danish Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs proclaimed that the introduction of equal marriage meant that ‘love was victorious’.¹¹⁷ Both of these statements are part of playing into an understanding that marriage is synonymous with love. The legalisation of same-sex marriage is thus a legalisation of same-sex love relations. As Puar shows, homophobia is in many contexts related to sexual intercourse, especially through depiction of anal sex, not as something enjoyable, but as a punishment, torture and generally something unpleasant that should be avoided.¹¹⁸ Sending a signal of homosexuality as merely being a relationship of love (for the subjects willing to assimilate through marriage) does therefore not address issues of homophobia, nor necessarily accept homosexual intercourse. It merely reproduces the public/private dichotomy, allowing for (heteronormative understandings of) love to be included in the public, but leaves the deviant sexual practice in *the closet*. This does not mean that homosexuals will return to be considered as *sodomitic* outlaws when they engage in sexual intercourse. Homosexuals are merely civilised and domesticated limiting sexuality to the private.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ B. Jacobs, ‘Love is love’: Obama lauds gay marriage activists in hailing ‘a victory for America’, The Guardian, 26 June 2015, available from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/jun/26/obama-gay-marriage-speech-victory-for-america> (accessed 10 July 2017)

¹¹⁷ E. Christensen, ‘Manu Sareen slæbes i retten for at indføre homovieiser’, TV2, 3 February 2016, available from <http://nyheder.tv2.dk/2016-02-03-manu-sareen-slaebes-i-retten-for-at-indfoere-homovieiser> (accessed 10 July 2017) (translated from Danish)

¹¹⁸ Puar, 2007, see for example p.37, 72 or 85

¹¹⁹ K.M. Franke, ‘Commentary: The Domesticated Liberty of Lawrence v. Texas’, in *Columbia Law Review*, vol. 104;1399;1399-1426, 2004, p.1417

This is why Colombia University law professor, Kathrine M. Franke, has claimed that equal marriage 'is a project devoted to celebrating our relationships; it is not a project of sexual rights or the politics of sexuality.'¹²⁰

Equally, in the *The Trouble With Normal*, Michael Warner argues that the assimilationist approach of normalising homosexuality, is a project that seeks to divorce homosexuality from firstly sex, and then from politics.¹²¹ It is a reconfiguration of the meaning of *being gay*, which moves from a sexual to a social identity, which is more digestible for the nation. It effectively takes away the provocative and political elements otherwise connected to homosexuality. Franke finds it remarkable that established LGBT groups and leaders interpret equal marriage rights as official recognition, since she sees it merely as a reconfiguration of desire to be regulated by the state, which play no role in contemporary gay political discourses.¹²² It risks going into a zone equal to what in racial equality context is termed *colour blindness*, which is fundamentally the claim that racial background has no (positive nor negative) relevance and can thus be ignored - a claim, which ignores broader contexts of discrimination and privilege. What Franke calls *orientation-blindness*, underwrites normative projects by claiming that people across sexual orientation are treated equally.¹²³ However, this of course only works to the extent that the orientation mimics heteronormative relationship.

Diane Richardson has also investigated the interconnection between citizenship and sexuality, as well as the consequences of a rights based approach in her text *Locating Sexualities: From Here to Normality*. She starts off with the commonly held notion that *normal* citizens have largely been constituted as heterosexual and thus heterosexuality is necessary for full citizenship.¹²⁴ The rights-oriented assimilationist agenda, which has been especially dominant since the 1990's, thus seeks normalisation and citizenship as its primary goal. This positions the homosexual as an oppressed minority, which seeks recognition through access to marriage, family and military, equal to other *normal*

¹²⁰ Franke, 2004, p.1416

¹²¹ Warner, 1999, p.60

¹²² Franke, 2004, p.1418

¹²³ Franke, 2004, p.1419

¹²⁴ D. Richardson, 'Locating Sexualities: From Here to Normality', in *Sexualities* 7(4);391-411, Sage Publications, 2004, p.392

citizens. Recognising the critique of the assimilationist approach as reproducing for example marital-style sexual coupledness as privileged over other forms of relationships, Richardson also criticises this critique for not putting enough emphasis on how the historical role of heteronormative construction of marriage has been part of maintaining racial orders and divisions.¹²⁵ Having been positioned as abnormal, inferior, unequal, subordinate, as *other*, it is not surprising that homosexuals might desire to be understood as *normal*. However, the understanding of normal must be understood within a broader context of the dominance of the notion of citizenship. Richardson links this emphasis on equal rights as being a result of neoliberalism. In extension of nationalist notions of the nation, central to governance is the normalisation, understood as an encouragement and reproduction of norms within the population favourable to the existing system. Neoliberalist governance thus seeks 'to establish a self-regulating citizen, who has internalised the norms and goals of new neoliberal governments.'¹²⁶ In this respect, the assimilationist agenda can be interpreted as fulfilling the neoliberalist agenda of self-regulating and self-reproduction of institutionalised structures.

Certainly, gains have been made all over the world in relation to healthcare, rights associated with social and legal recognition of domestic partnership, immigration and refugee status, parenting, etc. However, these achievements have been questioned due to the significant continuance of homophobia, discrimination and marginalisation and general hostility in even the most homosexual friendly countries of the world.¹²⁷ Legal recognition and institutional integration does not necessarily translate into acceptance from family, friends, bosses and co-workers. A critique can thus be raised that development is uneven and slow and (without neglecting the tangible results that have been made) that only an imaginary equality has been established.

If homosexuals are being included into an understanding of *normal* citizens, then naturally some obligations must follow. To be considered normal, certain elements, such as cultural values and norms must be expected. Steven Seidman agrees that

¹²⁵ Richardson, 2004, p.393

¹²⁶ Richardson, 2004, p.393

¹²⁷ Richardson, 2004, p.394

normalisation of homosexuality ‘neutralize all critical aspects of the gay movement’.¹²⁸ He argues that the homosexual can only be accepted, as long as all other aspects are in accordance with the *normal*, thereby meaning in accordance with heteronormativity. Homosexual citizenship therefore requires a *normal* understanding of gender (meaning binary and cis), family structure, integration in the labour market, but also *normal* national values and pride in the country.¹²⁹

3.2 Homonormativity

Expanding on this understanding of inclusion of the homosexual through normalisation, in her book *The Twilight of Equality? Neoliberalism, cultural politics, and the attack on democracy* (2003), Lisa Duggan investigates a normalisation and depoliticization of social and gay movements. In her analysis she emphasises the emergence of neoliberalism as the primary driver for this development. The following will try to clarify some of her main arguments.

Part of realisation of the *Washington Consensus* constituted the creation of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade organisation. These have become bastions both symbolically and practically of neoliberalism. With the claimed objective of promoting peace and prosperity through pro-corporate guarantors of private property relations, these institutions have, with a significant economic leverage, operated autocratically to implement policies of fiscal austerity, privatisation and market liberalisation, creating ‘peace in some places and war in others, prosperity for some and ecological destruction and poverty for others’¹³⁰ in a fundamentally undemocratic manner. Such initiatives have been justified through a rhetoric of long-term benefits, even for the people who must suffer the most in the short term. This is a claim, which bears little weight, considering that no security is being offered to the marginalised. The primary strategy of promoting and implementing neoliberalism is

¹²⁸ S. Seidman, ‘From Identity to Queer Politics: Shifts in the Social Logic of Normative Heterosexuality in Contemporary America’ in *Social Thought & Research*, 2002, vol.24 1&2;1-12, 2002, p.6

¹²⁹ Seidman, 2002, pp.6-8

¹³⁰ Duggan, 2003 p.12

thus *privatisation* in a manner of transferring wealth and decision-making from public bodies to individual or corporate hands. This notion of *a private world* appears as an imaginary construction, rather than a historical reality. Certain private market industries are not just subsidised, but are fundamentally dependent on subsidies, lower paid workers or state-sponsored bailouts. It is, rather, a western ideal, which exists mainly in contrast to the post-World War Two totalitarian communist regimes of the East. According to this ideal, benefits for private corporations are considered positively and social security is considered to be intrusive and negative.

As has been mentioned earlier, the construction of a private has been essential for how sexuality has been understood. In a correspondence with Nancy Fraser, Judith Butler elaborates on the notion of the private as a ruse of capitalist liberal discourse, which obscures the complex entanglement of race, gender, sexuality and class in the institutions of capitalist modernity.¹³¹ Although interconnected for obvious reasons of opportunity and materialistic exclusiveness, status and class are rhetorically disarticulated from capitalism in order to protect it from criticism. Accepting the very distinction of class and political economy versus status and identity (fundamentally understood as the distinction between public and private), is thereby reproducing the structures of the neoliberalist hierarchy. Class politics and anti-capitalism is therefore fundamentally an issue of recognition and challenging the construction of the private versus the public.

This construction of the private also spilled over into the discourse of rights. As the private becomes the symbol of freedom and liberty, practices considered deviant from the mainstream perceived the newly constructed notion of the private as an opportunity to obtain recognition or at least acceptance at a legal and/or social level. The agenda for civil rights was abandoned for a more libertarian approach of access to institutions of

¹³¹ J. Butler, 'Merely Cultural,' in *New Left Review* I/227;33-44, 1998, p.38; and N. Fraser, 'Heterosexism, Misrecognition, and Capitalism: A Response to Judith Butler,' *Social Text* no. 52, 1997, p.268

domestic privacy, the *free market* and patriotism. Duggan dubs this new neoliberal sexual politics as ‘the new homonormativity’¹³² and describes it as:

‘a politics that does not contest dominant heteronormative assumptions and institutions, but upholds them, while promising the possibility of a demobilized gay constituency and a privatized, depoliticized gay culture anchored in domesticity and consumption.’¹³³

Homonormativity should not be understood as the opposite of heteronormativity, but rather as an expansion. Homonormativity is a political strategy and discourse seeking assimilation through inclusion into heteronormative institutions reinforcing and reproducing norms of class, gender and race.¹³⁴ Duggan refuses the paralleling or equalising of homonormativity to heteronormativity, pointing to the dominant political, economic and social structures of heteronormativity as being too manifested and thereby ultimately impossible to trump regardless of homonormative privilege.¹³⁵ By looking at the historical development of sexual politics, Duggan analyses how the attitude towards normalisation versus a radical Queer approach, has changed over time within the LGBTIQ+ communities.

Duggan’s analysis highlights and conceptualises the interconnection between homosexual inclusion in the mainstream and neoliberalism. She argues that the new sexual politics are anchored in the neoliberal notion of economic freedom, where the individual can prove its worth through hard work and through acts of consumption. Not only does this fundamentally reverse the necessity of challenging heteronormative neoliberal structures. Structural marginalisation is thereby exchanged for the opportunity of the privileged few to disappear into the mainstream. Understanding privilege is thus fundamental for understanding Duggan’s concept of homonormativity and homosexual inclusion.

¹³² Duggan, 2003 p.50

¹³³ Duggan, 2003 p.50

¹³⁴ Duggan, 2003, p.50

¹³⁵ Duggan, 2003, p.50

Duggan analyses the appearance of neoliberalism in the 1970's and its victory march on the international scene with special emphasis on the 1990's. One of the major achievements of neoliberalism has been its ability to position economic policy primarily as a matter of neutral, technical expertise. Neoliberalism therefore does not have political accountability and becomes free of socio-political critique. By creating a discourse of economic policy as being apolitical, issues of for example economic inequality can thereby be rejected as *class warfare* and *left-wing ideology*, while issues of race, gender and sexual inequality are dismissed as merely cultural or private, thereby not belonging in a discussion on neoliberal policy. Duggan argues that, although often claimed by especially Anglo-European liberalism, the social life categorisation of economy, state and family as separate from practices of racial apartheid, gender segmentation and sexual regulation, both practically and analytically, is an illusion.¹³⁶ 'Contemporary neoliberal policies have been implemented in and through culture and politics, reinforcing or contesting relation of class, race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, or nationality'.¹³⁷ Although alliances across these different issues have developed and changed over time and locales, the overall impact has been the upward redistribution of resources and the reproduction of patterns of social inequality. What has made the book so ground-breaking is not only her analysis and critique of neoliberalism, but her critique of the progressive-left. The main purpose of the book is the argument that as long as the movement represents and reproduces itself as divided between culture and economics, it will defeat itself by playing on the premise of neoliberalism. By focusing on single-issue politics, framing struggles of equality based on economy, sexuality, race, gender, etc., as separate rather than interrelated, it is only possibly to ameliorate, but never reverse the persistent overall inequalities of global neoliberalism, sacrificing a potential new strong social movement for a 'stripped-down notion of equality'.¹³⁸

Heidi J. Nast wrote a text called *Queer Patriarchies, Queer Racisms, International* in 2003, which investigates how gay White patriarchies coexist, and sometimes even

¹³⁶ Duggan, 2003 p. XIV

¹³⁷ Duggan, 2003 p. XIV

¹³⁸ Duggan, 2003 p. XX

displace heteronormative patriarchies. Similar to Duggan, Nast supports the understanding of a clear connection between heteronormative and capitalist hierarchies of wealth accumulation.¹³⁹ According to Nast, in Western industrial contexts, the White mother was ideologically pivotal - she was to bear the children and raise them in a manner that reproduced the norms of society, while the father had the responsibility to instil a sense of law, order and “natural” hierarchy through family-directed violence, structures and coercion.¹⁴⁰ The reproduction of the family and the relationship between mother, father and children was thus perceived as a biological, natural necessity, thereby reinforcing the hetero-patriarchy. The non-White was viewed as animalistic and childish and was therefore not part of the ideal (White) family.¹⁴¹ Today, Nast argues, rather than being focused on a biologized procreation, the norms of the ideal family is targeted towards commodities and purchasable values of identity and representation.¹⁴² It is the ability of the social identity to become integrated into the capitalist structures of wealth accumulation that determines the opportunity to integrate into the mainstream. Naturally, not all are able to take advantage of this opportunity. It requires certain privileges, which can position the subject or the group as attractive to the market. Nast thus says that;

‘certain gay men have been *colonized* by the market, their buying powers representing a potential niche that businesses are eager to cultivate. At the same time, these men would not be targeted if not for their potential as investors and consumers. Moreover, many elite (mostly white) gay men have access to the means by which to consolidate and shore up previous rounds of patriarchal white privilege accumulation, predicated in part upon such images. Considerable profits are made from circulating these restricted representations, begging larger questions as to how and why these images are desirable and who benefits.’¹⁴³

¹³⁹ H.J. Nast, ‘Queer Patriarchies, Queer Racisms, International’ in *Antipode*; pp.939-979, 2003, p.940

¹⁴⁰ Nast, 2003, p.942

¹⁴¹ Nast, 2003, p.942

¹⁴² Nast, 2003, p.945

¹⁴³ Nast, 2003, pp.945-46

According to Nast it is racial, economic and gender privileges that allows for corporate wealth accumulation and integration. It is by presenting only small and selective parts of gay men's lives that a glorified and attractive representation is created, which can then be cultivated for profitmaking. The portrayal of homosexual couples as well-trained, beautiful white men is part of creating a new idealistic picture of a Western identity and/or culture. When these pictures are used to represent or reflect a Western tolerance to diversity, it raises serious questions of who potentially benefits from this perceived tolerance. These images give a falsified picture of queer people, who of course come in all colours, shapes and sexual orientations and gender identities. In accordance with Foucault's concept of bio-power, it is not necessarily clearly determinable where the power lies or who has the agency to create these new constructions of market and identity. However, it is clear that the discourse is part of producing a very narrow understanding of which forms of diversity are tolerated.

So far it has been established that the perceived liberal Western culture, figured through the inclusion of the homosexual, is potentially a very narrow understanding of tolerance with clear limitations. Not only is the tolerance primarily applying to certain people, who are willing and able to assimilate or integrate in already existing normative structures, but these structures might also reproduce an exclusion of other non-hetero sexualities. Where Duggan originally focused on the white gay man, as the primary actor, the following chapter will seek to expand the understanding of the excluding nature of the logical contradiction, by looking into a broader reconfiguration of the homosexual in discourses of national and international sexual politics.

4. Excluding by including: the creation of a logical contradiction

Lisa Duggan's concept of homonormativity explains how issues of homosexual recognition are being (re)written into a neoliberal understanding of freedom and individualism as an accepted part of mainstream culture. However, this process gives an understanding of how such inclusion simultaneously is part of establishing new hierarchies, especially towards other people identifying as LGBTIQ+ through constructions of *good gays* and *bad queers*. The following chapter will investigate how the mainstreaming of the homosexual is not only part of reproducing the heteronormative neoliberal order, but also how it has been part of reconfiguring and enhancing a national and/or Western identity. Based on the understanding of homonormativity and the consequences of normalization, this development will be understood through David Eng's concept of *Queer liberalism* and Puar's *homonationalism*. Queer liberalism will be used to connect Duggan's concept of homonormativity, with a broader understanding of intersectionality, with a particular focus on race, which can then be used to understand how Puar connects homonormativity to the idea of national identity and the production of Islamophobia. However, before this analysis is possible, although having been touched upon loosely, it is necessary to create an understanding of the meaning of the homosexual as a figure and the role of figurations in relation to the nation. This is necessary for the understanding of how a reconfiguration of the homosexual into an included part of

discourses of liberal Western culture can take place. This will be done through Cynthia Weber and the concept of *Statecraft as Mancraft*.

4.1 (Re)configuration of the homosexual and 'statecraft as mancraft'

*'If medieval statecraft was in part an art of fixing an interpretation of God that the king could mirror and serve... then modern statecraft is in significant measure an art of fixing a paradigmatic interpretation of sovereign man that the state can mirror and serve'*¹⁴⁴

When Cynthia Weber wrote her book *Queer International Relation*, she wrote it because of frustration over a lack of overlap between scholars of international relations and queer studies, who, although claiming to be interdisciplinary, tend to overlook each other's work.¹⁴⁵ What has been overlooked is how sexualities functions as sovereignties producing identities, which claims authority over national and international orders, which functions to make international games of power possible and impossible.¹⁴⁶

Weber interprets sovereignty as referring 'to practices that attempt to craft an agent in whose name a political community governs by investing that agent with legitimate political authority.'¹⁴⁷ This practice, referred to as *statecraft as mancraft*, is a way of the state or other political communities to present its sovereign foundation, through an exceptionally extraordinary sovereign man, as a singular, pre-existing, ahistorical existence, which authorise political decisions.¹⁴⁸ Said differently, it is an artificial construction presumed to be real, which simultaneously represents as well as functions as ideal for society, which can justify different actions as being in his interest. However, what is important is that the figure of the sovereign man is neither singular nor

¹⁴⁴ R.K. Ashley, 'Living on Borderlines'. In *International/Intertextual Relations*:259-321. Lexington, MA: Lexington, 1989, p.303

¹⁴⁵ Weber, 2016, p.2

¹⁴⁶ Weber, 2016, p.2

¹⁴⁷ Weber, 2016, p.3

¹⁴⁸ Weber, 2016, pp.3-4

ahistorical. Rather he is a product of specific histories and contexts making him 'impossibly plural'.¹⁴⁹ It is this (or these) impossibly plural sovereign subjectivities, which makes it almost impossible to define him. Ironically, although the construction of the figure is constructed with the purpose of being definite and singular, it is simultaneously the impossibly plural, which gives him strength through adaptability to the purpose. It is this interconnection between the statecraft as mancraft as impossibly plural queer subjectivities, which is challenging the classical notion of thinking international relations and national identity. Since he is always produced as the normal in relation to the perverse, the knowledge of sovereignty or the sovereign man is what establishes binary subjectivities of citizens vs. foreigners and good citizen vs. bad citizen, as well as sovereign orders of Us and Them and the West vs. the rest.¹⁵⁰

4.1.1 *The homosexual as a figure:*

Part of what Weber seeks to understand, is how the homosexual (man) is figured as/or in relation to the sovereign man. She argues, that the figure of the *normal homosexual* in relation to the modern statecraft as mancraft, has become possible through a nationalisation of homonormativity, which she relates to the concept of homonationalism in a national and international context.¹⁵¹ Still it does not mean, that there are still not homosexuals who are figured as perverse. This *perverse homosexual* in the contemporary discourse is figured as irrational, unruly and a threat to the sovereign man. This complies with the previous analysis of an inclusion of only certain homosexuals into the national or Western self-understanding.

Weber builds on the understanding of Foucault that the homosexual was not born until the Victorian times. As mentioned, this does not mean that same-sex practices did not exist before, but that it was less about the type of sexual relations, but rather the 'quality of sexual sensibility, a certain way of inverting the masculine and the feminine in oneself'.¹⁵² What Foucault refers to as the emergence of the homosexual as a species

¹⁴⁹ Weber, 2016, p.4

¹⁵⁰ Weber, 2016, p.4

¹⁵¹ Weber, 2016, p.9

¹⁵² Foucault, 1990 p.43

happened by discursively implanting the perverse into individual bodies of a perceived new population of homosexuals, in abomination to “normal” sexuality.¹⁵³ It was not until (same) sexual practice was categorised in relational hierarchies, as well as subjected to scientific study and biopolitical management, that it emerged as a figure. Thus, the homosexual was not a something that could be discovered as an empirical reality, but something that was brought into being as examined as sexually deviating. This is important for the understanding, that the figuration of the homosexual in relation to the *normal* and the *perverse* is neither true nor forever fixed. To understand the reconfiguration of the homosexual in a discourse of Western culture requires a fundamental understanding of the figurations.

Figurations are clarifications of shared meanings in forms or more specific images. Although being a product of certain realities, they do neither represent nor misrepresent the world, since this would imply the world as a fixed pre-exist to them. Weber defines figurations as emerging ‘out of discursive and material semiotic assemblages that condense diffuse imaginaries about the world into specific forms or images that bring specific world into being.’¹⁵⁴ By being evoked as if they represent pre-existing worlds, figurations are powerful signifiers. Reading Donna Haraway, Weber identifies four key elements through which figurations take specific forms: tropes, temporalities, performativities, and worldings.¹⁵⁵ Tropes are the symbolic references to expressions we understand. It expresses a form of figure of speech, representing something we understand and can identify the meaning of, without actually representing it identically. This is what makes figurations simultaneously possible and inexpressible in its literal sense.

Temporalities are what positions the figure in relation to time. A Western Christian figure for example for example embody a progressive, eschatological temporality because of the understanding of salvation in the afterlife.¹⁵⁶ Important to note though is that the temporal figuration does not apply equally in the same way. For the homosexual

¹⁵³ Foucault, 1990, p.36

¹⁵⁴ Weber, 2016, p.28

¹⁵⁵ D. Haraway, ‘*Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium.FemaleMan_Meets_OncoMouse: Feminism and Technoscience*, New York: Routledge, 1997, p.11

¹⁵⁶ Haraway, 1997, p.12

figure, being equally placed in figured temporal discourses of racism, it is thus relevant who and where it is, meaning the white Western homosexual is figured very differently from the Arab homosexual in terms of opportunities of being understood in a progressive relatable discourse. Contrary, as we shall see later, it is also the positioning of homosexuality as a temporally static figure, which allows for a universalising rights claim.

Performativities can be related to how Judith Butler explains how sexes, genders and sexualities comes forward as normal, natural and true. The term performativity expresses how constant repetition constitutes a performing function. For example, as positioned in a dualism, the enactment of gender makes it appear as if sex is natural and normal. Believing that sex is also a social construction, Butler questions if sex is not also interpreted through performative acts.¹⁵⁷ It is through the everyday enactments that figurations are inhabited into performative images. Interestingly it means that every single subjective enactment is part of performing the figure. Thus, the figure is only frozen as long as it is not reworked or resisted, although the likelihood of reconfiguration might decrease the more *normalised* the enactment becomes. The performative is though not just enacted upon oneself, but can equally be performed upon others, such as in the case of the perverted homosexual, who most likely would not, at least willingly performatively inhabit such a figuration. As shown previously, performativities, such as the act of marriage, can be especially relevant when it comes to the inclusion of the homosexual subject into hetero-/homonormative structures. What is clear is that figurations are hardly ever stable, since every figuration depends upon an innumerable amount of particularities differently interpreted in specific geographical, political, historical, social and psychological contexts. Since figurations are enacted through subjectivities, no re-enactment can possibly be completely identical to another or to the previous one, meaning that the figuration can never be completely frozen. It is though the perceived similar understanding and shared figuration, which is creating the worlding of the figure. The tropes, temporalities and performativites are part of creating a specific figuration of the homosexual, which, although being fundamentally the same reference point, is so differently figured that it is politically

¹⁵⁷ J. Butler, '*Gender Trouble*' Routledge, 1990, p.viii

mapping. These mappings produced by worlding practices are naturally as contestable as the figurations themselves. Since the figuration cannot be understood as frozen, the networks of power and national and international relational systems cannot either, since these are undeniably interconnected.

With this understandings of how figuration functions and how it is applied to the homosexual, it can be put into relation with *statecraft as mancraft*. What can then be interpreted is how, in an international (and to a certain degree also national) power struggle, states attempt to freeze figurations of the homosexual in order to construct a desirable sovereign man. It is to distinguish or make exceptional the state, which can then justify or constitute specific (international) orders. The sovereign man is positioned in an international anarchic system, in which the domesticated figure is threatened by the outside. This can then function to justify international (or domestic) policies and provide legitimacy to the dualistic hierarchies of the civilised vs. the uncivilised as us vs. them.

With this understanding of the figuration of the homosexual in relation to the *statecraft as mancraft*, it becomes important to understand, not the right (nor most progressive) figuration of the homosexual, but rather the consequences of the figuration of the homosexual on hierarchical structures imposed by nationalism. It is the understanding of how a reconfiguration of the homosexual into discourses around Western culture is part of creating or legitimising sexualised orders nationally and internationally, based upon racialised, classed, gender and sexualised understandings of *civilised* and *normal* versus *uncivilised* and *perverse* hierarchical arrangements. It is the understanding that the sexual politics of reconfiguring the homosexual reaches far beyond perceived isolated homosexual interests.

4.2 Queer liberalism

In line with the thought of homonormativity, David Eng has been analysing how the homosexual has been included into the mainstream and the *normal* in contemporary United States of America. Being an expert on critical race theory and queer studies, Eng has written, *The Feeling of Kinship: Queer Liberalism and the Racialisation of Intimacy*, which analyses the neoliberal reconfiguration of freedom in relation to a collective oblivion of race. Eng criticises what he understands as a refusal to see differences and acknowledge the continued influence of race on both the public sphere and private space of family and kinship relations, in the name of freedom of progress.¹⁵⁸ Eng builds a lot of his understanding of the interconnection of neoliberalism and homosexuality on the writings of John D'Emilio, in his text *Capitalism and Gay Identity*. D'Emilio argues that homosexuality is a historical construction, where social and economic circumstances defines opportunities and possibilities. He argues that it was not before the individual homosexual started being acknowledged on the labour market that it became possible for the homosexual desire to coalesce into a personal identity outside of the heterosexual family.¹⁵⁹ Similarly, Eng argues that through industrialisation, urbanisation and the emergence of contract work, the classical family structures were challenged, which created space for new structures of kin- and relationship structures.¹⁶⁰ Of course this did not mean that traditional family structures were eradicated, but rather that other structures emerged. However, what was continuous, was the understanding that the family, maybe to an increasing extent, was the institution that produced emotional satisfaction and happiness.¹⁶¹ In order to justify and protect this function, the family was increasingly placed in the private, sharply distinguished from the public world of work and production. By separating the (neoliberal) market as the public and traditional family values as the private, the appearance of the homosexual on the market was therefore perceived not to constitute a

¹⁵⁸ D.L. Eng, *The Feeling of Kinship: Queer Liberalism and the Racialization of Intimacy*, Duke University Press, Durham and London, 2010, p.2

¹⁵⁹ J. D'Emilio, 'Capitalism and Gay Identity', in *Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality*; pp.100-113, New Feminist Library, 1983, pp.103-104

¹⁶⁰ Eng, 2010, p.27

¹⁶¹ D'Emilio, 1983, pp.103-104 and Eng, 2010, p.27

threat to the traditional family. In that sense, the homosexual could be included or tolerated into the normal through an integration and an enhancing of the structures of neoliberal society. Especially in the 1980's and 90's was the homosexual established as a tolerated visible identity as a function of the market and as a political movement for rights and recognition. This is what Eng refers to as *queer liberalism*. It is the inclusion, recognition and rights of particular subjects willing and able to comply with the normative mandate of neoliberalist capitalism.¹⁶² Eng argues that today homosexuals are in growing numbers publicly seeking increased inclusion in the private structures of family and kinship, through the identity which was enabled through the market. In line with Lisa Duggan, Eng argues that rather than standing in contrast to the traditional family structures, this is an acceptance of these structures and an appeal to be integrated into them. In that sense, queer liberalism is a process of *heteronormativisation* of queer relations.

What makes Eng's concept of queer liberalism so important, is the way he connects the neoliberal reconfiguration of freedom and rights and connects the homosexual struggle for recognition to issues of race. His criticism is especially centred around the neoliberalist notion of *colour blindness*, which has been mentioned earlier. By moving issues of race, sexuality and gender to the private, neoliberalism can remove these issues from the discourse and claim that they are no longer issues to be confronted in the political and public discourses. Additionally, prominent politicians, activists and others are often equating homosexual struggles for civil rights in the present, to historical Black civil rights movement, thereby effectively rejecting the continued presence of racism.¹⁶³ Eng calls this phenomenon *the racialisation of intimacy*.¹⁶⁴ It can occur in legal and economic structures, as well as political discourses. It is a way of undermining the influence of race on society and the privilege that certain groups hold over others. Issues of sexuality and race are equally being positioned as something to be

¹⁶² Eng, 2010, p.24

¹⁶³ See for example: Clinton, H., 'Hillary Clinton On Gay Rights Abroad: Secretary Of State Delivers Historic LGBT Speech In Geneva (VIDEO, FULL TEXT)' Huffington Post, 6 December 2011, available from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/12/06/hillary-clinton-gay-rights-speech-geneva_n_1132392.html (accessed 10 July 2017)

¹⁶⁴ Eng, 2010, p.12

dealt with in the private, rather than issues caused by greater structures in society. It thereby rejects the continued relevance of the civil rights movements working on the different issues of discrimination. Eng argues that the racialisation of intimacy is affecting queer liberalism in two crucial ways. Firstly, homosexual struggles for civil rights are constructed as a white project which has nothing to do with racial issues. It suggests that 'all gays are white while all Blacks are heterosexual.'¹⁶⁵ In that sense issues of race becomes irrelevant for issues of sexuality and vice versa. The racialisation of intimacy refuses to recognise that issues of race, gender, class, sexuality, and the nation, are articulated in relation to one another in the struggle for equality and social belonging.¹⁶⁶ Secondly, the racialisation of intimacy operationalises the homosexual figure in the story of the nation both nationally but also globally. By framing the antiracist struggle as being a (successfully) completed chapter positions racism as something which does not exist in the West anymore. This is part of creating or support a notion of a progressive liberal West. Secondly, as having positioned the struggle for rights as a *white* project, and having positioned issues of homophobia as related to a culture of the private, it becomes possible to renounce and transmit responsibility for homophobia in Western societies. Eng claims, that the responsibility has shifted away from *ourselves* to a 'racialized immigrant homophobia'.¹⁶⁷ He claims that neoliberal policies have removed opportunities for racialised immigrant and racialised poor to engage in the market, as well as obtain social services. Instead, the family must take the up public and institutional obligations. Thereby the family becomes increasingly important. Eng claims that immigrant communities, through both economic constraints and policies of family reunification increasingly dependent on heteropatriarchal relations.¹⁶⁸ Immigrant workers brought under family reunification programs have been forced to depend on family ties for accommodation, employment and other services. Heteronormative community structures become necessary for accessing welfare provision for new immigrants, by attaching the provisions to the

¹⁶⁵ Eng, 2010 p.x

¹⁶⁶ Eng, 2010, p. x

¹⁶⁷ Eng, 2010, p.33

¹⁶⁸ Eng, 2010, pp.32-33

family unit.¹⁶⁹ Ironically, the immigrant communities are then blamed for ‘monocultural deficiencies and pathological cultural values brought with them from abroad, for being particularly homophobic’.¹⁷⁰ Not only does it remove responsibility from official institutions and civil society. It additionally manages to transfer homophobia from ethnic nationals to other ethnic minorities with migration backgrounds, who are not perceived to fit into the national community.

Rather than the *classical* notion of racism as based on proclaimed biological differences, colour-blind queer liberalism is part of reinforcing racism based on perceived cultural differences and values. It creates a narrative of a Western modernity versus a non-Western lack of modernity.¹⁷¹ Considering the transfer of homophobia from the public to the private, the proclaimed Western modernity and tolerance additionally becomes a question of how well the homosexual is assimilated into the neoliberal, heteronormative order.

4.3 Homonationalism

Puar’s concept of homonationalism is very much in line with the ideas of Eng. However, where Eng is aiming at a critique of neoliberalism and capitalism and the heteronormative structures of in- and exclusion of race, gender and sexuality, Puar is taking her point of departure in the inclusion of homosexuals in the post-9/11 war on terror and how this is affecting different queer subjects.

Puar focuses especially on the construction of a world order. The world order of which Puar focuses on, is an order primarily defined and centring around the U.S. as the leader of the free world. It is an order which seeks to create a clear distinction between a developed and civilised West and classical Orientalist understanding of the Middle East. There is an essential difference between Eng’s concept of queer liberalism and Puar’s

¹⁶⁹ Eng, 2010, p.33

¹⁷⁰ Eng, 2010, p.33

¹⁷¹ Eng, 2010, p.6

concept of homonationalism. Where queer liberalism focuses on the inclusion of the homosexual into neoliberal social and economic structures, Puar is focusing on the inclusion of the homosexual into the nation state. This does not mean that Puar is rejecting queer liberalism. On the contrary Puar is rather using the understanding of homosexual inclusion into the mainstream, in order to understand the mechanisms allowing for a similar process of incorporation into the nation state, through racialised *others*.

Homonationalism is a contraction of Duggan's *homonormativity* and *nationalism*.¹⁷² It is especially the aspects of homonormativity of a depoliticised gay culture, which is emphasised. It is the culture and politics, which does not seek to challenge dominant heteronormative structures, but rather upholds and sustains them. Puar additionally connects this process of depoliticising a radical sexual culture, to an incorporation into an inherent political self-understanding conceptualised as U.S. (sexual) exceptionalism.¹⁷³ Puar states, that while currently both seeing a fortification and the propagation of sexualities that mimic, parallel, contradict, or resist normative heterosexual coupling, the dichotomous implications of the nation as only supportive of heteronormativity and always repressive and disallowing of homosexuality, becomes complicated.¹⁷⁴ As discussed earlier, homonormativity gives an explanation on how, the acceptance of the homosexual into the sphere of what is considered normal, does not necessarily indicate a support for homosexuals and other groups commonly considered queer or *outside*.

Puar builds on Edward Said and Derek Gregory's idea of *imaginative geographies*. In line with Weber's worlding and performative figurations, the essential idea of the imaginative geographies is that they are performative, meaning that they produce the reality which they name and describe, thereby reconciling otherwise irreconcilable truths.¹⁷⁵ It is the understanding that certain desired truth become lived truths, by producing evidence of the desired, while rejecting counterevidence. This is an essential

¹⁷² Puar, 2007, p.38

¹⁷³ Puar, 2007, pp.38-39

¹⁷⁴ Puar, 2007, p.39

¹⁷⁵ D. Gregory, 'The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq', Oxford: Blackwell, 2004

factor in understanding how homonationalism manages to create or uphold the obvious contradiction of an idealised tolerant and open society, which simultaneously excludes and discriminates against groups which fall outside of what is tolerated by the norms of the nation.

Puar argues that homosexuality is today no longer in the situation of being positioned as excluded from national formations beforehand. On the other hand, '(some) nations are productive on non-normative sexualities.'¹⁷⁶ This is because of the potential of a reconfiguration and construction of imaginative geographies, potentially functioning to exclude unwanted identities from the national community. Thus, Queer subjects might potentially be included or absorbed in contexts where it might be deemed advantageous for the nation state. Certain queer subjects which are deemed suitable to fit into (or become invisible within) the heteronormative structures might be tolerated as part of the national project. In that sense, homonormativity can allow for certain *good* homosexuals to be exposed to certain audiences if they are thought to be able to bolster the nation. Functioning within the imaginative geographies, thereby being performative rather than descriptive, the homosexual can be absorbed in the narrative of the nation state in both past, present and future.

4.3.1 The nationalist politics of “sexual exceptionalism”:

Although Edward Said implemented the idea of *imagined geographies on the Orient*, a topic which shall be elaborated upon later in this chapter, the construction can equally be turned around. The perception of an Orient as holding fundamentally different characteristics than the Western world, must to a certain extent be based on a specific perception of the West itself. One perception is what is commonly referred to as *American exceptionalism*. This is the idea that the U.S. is fundamentally different from the rest of the world, commonly understood as being superior to other nations.¹⁷⁷ It is a notion that can be used to justify foreign and domestic policy including military intervention, based on the perception of the U.S. holding a higher level of development

¹⁷⁶ Puar, 2007, p.50

¹⁷⁷ Puar, 2007, p.5

and position, thereby holding a more legitimate opinion of given situations. Although being the most commonly recognised, American exceptionalism is far from a unique example of a self-proclaimed position of exceptionality. It can potentially be claimed as inherent in nationalist formations to claim some sort of uniqueness justifying a special (superior) status of the country/nation. Different countries have used different terms to express this notion; the Danish *frisind*, the French *Grandeur*, the German *Sonderweg*, etc. Positioning within this framework of understanding, the idea of a liberal Western culture as incompatible with foreigners and especially Muslims and Islam, is playing into a similar notion of an exceptional self-understanding.

Exceptionalism is understood as two-folded both laying claim to uniqueness, while simultaneously reaching out to universality. The uniqueness, understood as the singularity of the exceptional, is referring to the country as being incomparable to anything else, thereby being extraordinary. The universal is the claim that this is something so admirable that it should be implemented universally, which thereby lays a responsibility on the country. A responsibility which has historically been conceptualised as *the white man's burden* or *mission civilisatrice*. Ironically, the universal is justified by the exceptional through the narrative that the universal telos achieved by the self-proclaimed exceptional country, functions as beacon, thereby rationalising egregious violence in the name of advocating and protecting a certain way of life deemed more worthy than another.¹⁷⁸ Puar supports this notion through the understanding of biopolitics, noting that the state of exception is neither external nor internal to the juridical order, which makes it so problematic to define or scientifically lay claim to.¹⁷⁹ This is essential to the understanding of how bio-power functions, because the inside and the outside is not excluding, but rather supporting of each other. Exceptionalism is thereby not merely created through the acts of the exceptional, but equally through the notion of what is considered *outside* of the perceived exceptional. In that sense, the state of exception becomes dependent on the *outside* to conceal itself. The *outside* becomes a threat necessary in order to justify the exceptional, as well as its

¹⁷⁸ Puar, 2007, pp.8-9

¹⁷⁹ Puar, 2007, p.9

expansion. In the state of exception, the outside is just as much the inside, and the exception thereby becomes the rule, which is normalised as a regulatory ideal.¹⁸⁰

When a nation state is deemed exceptional, exceptional means can be taken to protect it.¹⁸¹ In the context of the war on terror, the West is constructed as the democratic, free and morally sane, which is threatened by communities, countries or cultures deemed undemocratic, primitive, violent and dangerous. Tools which are then otherwise considered undemocratic, such as torture, killing of civilians and increased surveillance, is justified for the protection of the exceptional.¹⁸² Thus, what would otherwise seem an obvious contradiction, becomes justified through the notion of the state of the exceptional.

Reading nationalism through a scope of sexual politics, Puar develops the term *sexual exceptionalism*. Puar describes sexual exceptionalism as ‘a contemporary version of Foucault’s repressive hypothesis’.¹⁸³ By referring to the repressive hypothesis as Foucault’s rather than Freud’s, Puar is of course referring to the critique of the repressive hypothesis, thereby being critical to the understanding of an exceptionally free sexuality as considered something that is commonly repressed and should be freed. Like American exceptionalism, sexual exceptionalism is the perception that sexuality (in the West) is being dealt with more progressively than anywhere else. The case of the Western sexual exceptionalism is then, that although sexuality was previously repressed, it has now (exceptionally) been set free. Sexuality in other non-Western countries is then simultaneously positioned as continuously repressed, thereby needing liberation. In some cases, this can lead (and has led) to imperialist politics, including military interventions, killing of civilians and the use of torture. Again, it is important to understand the sexual exceptionalism as performative rather than descriptive. Rather than attempting to define what the West contemporarily represents, it is a matter of disciplining the citizens into becoming what is desired. Sexual exceptionalism functions as a narrative for producing a national community, which establishes the ones who

¹⁸⁰ Puar, 2007, p.9

¹⁸¹ Puar, 2007, pp.7-8

¹⁸² Puar, 2007, p.81

¹⁸³ Puar, 2007, p.9

belongs and the ones who threatens the community. By applying this understanding to an analysis on Hillary Clintons speech, where she claims; “gay rights as human rights” it is possible to see how a self-proclaimed sexual exceptionalism is part of creating binary understanding of *us* and *them* as *good* and *bad*.

4.3.2 *Exceptional gay rights as universally regulatory:*

On December 6th, 2011, at that time Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, held a speech in relation to the International Human Rights Day. The speech got a lot of international attention and recognition for its simple, but direct message, that ‘gay rights are human rights, and human rights are gay rights.’¹⁸⁴ Calling for the recognition of the importance of rights for sexual minorities, Clintons speech was interpreted as highly progressive and was met with standing ovation from the crowd. What is interesting about the speech is, that the issue of gay rights was reconfigured from the realm of the particular to the realm of the universal. In the following, I will analyse how Clinton’s speech proclaiming *gay rights as human rights* functions on three interconnected and mutually reinforcing levels: The positioning of Clinton and the Obama administration as progressive in terms of domestic policy; the reinforcement and positioning of gay rights in the global configuration of human rights; and a justification of an international hierarchical system, justifying imperialism and military intervention.

Holding the speech in the context of the UN-sponsored Human Rights Day, Clinton was speaking in a framework of a human rights discourse. A human rights discourse is a discourse, which, although often claimed otherwise, is intrinsically political and part of a larger system and structure of power and dominance.¹⁸⁵ A human rights discourse is a measure positioning specific rights as *universal*, which means that the issue is moved to a position which is to concern all of us rather than the people involved in the specific context. When Hillary Clinton thus talks about gay rights as human rights, she moves the issue from the particular to the universal. By referring to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Clinton proclaims that since all human beings are born

¹⁸⁴ Clinton, 2011

¹⁸⁵ D. Spade & C. Willse, ‘Sex, Gender, and War in an Age of Multicultural Imperialism’, in *QED: A Journal of GLBTQ Worldmaking*;5-29, 2014, p.8

free and equal in dignity and rights, rights are not conferred by government and therefore it ‘does not matter what country we live in, who our leaders are, or even who we are.’¹⁸⁶ This is a way of justifying the international validity of a global system of human rights. Additionally, this is a way of obscuring the concrete geopolitical contexts, both when the UDHR was first drafted in the aftermath of the Second World War, but also of the contemporary context. The performative worldings of the homosexual as a figuratively creating hierarchies, is part of reinforcing a neo-imperialist understanding of some as more developed and others as less, which makes the former more qualified to dictate right from wrong. Clinton continues, stating that:

‘In many places, racist laws have been repealed, legal and social practices that relegated women to second-class status have been abolished, the ability of religious minorities to practice their faith freely has been secured.’

Clinton is thereby contextualising gay rights with women’s rights and anti-racist struggles, but simultaneously separates them as three distinct things. The distinction is suggesting that issues of sexism and racism is a thing of the past, which can then be perceived as successes of human rights. Although claiming gay rights as universal, Clinton refers to discrimination and persecution as happening only in some (although too many) parts of the world, rather than all parts, thereby insinuating an understanding of a world order of progressive and regressive societies/countries based on the treatment of homosexuals. It insinuates that the U.S. and other Western countries can declare equality achieved in their home countries and thus legitimately operate as global leaders on human rights. Additionally, it also serves to function a domestic political agenda of promoting Clinton herself, as well as the Obama administration, as progressive and liberal. It is a way of distinguishing Obama from opposition candidates, with whom he had to compete in the 57th presidential election less than a year after the speech was held. Additionally, it was a way in which the administration could refocus the attention from a lot of public criticism on military activities around the globe such as

¹⁸⁶ Clinton, 2011

Afghanistan, Libya and Iraq.¹⁸⁷ By rebranding the U.S. as freedom fighters for gay people, the administration attempts to frame imperialistic racist state violence as somehow progressive.¹⁸⁸

As clarified in the beginning of this thesis, already since the adoption of the UDHR in 1948, human rights have been used as a political tool to paint political oppositions as the next big threat to humanity. Applying a human rights discourses can be part of creating an evil, which requires military responses. When Clinton glorifies that ‘President Obama put into place the first U.S. Government strategy dedicated to combating human rights abuses against LGBT persons abroad’¹⁸⁹, she thus plays into such discourse of human rights as legitimising international intervention. Additionally, she supports an understanding that the persecution and the need for protection of LGBT persons is a problem, which exists in other countries than the U.S. Dean Spade and Craig Willse has looked at the language of Clintons speech and have found that her use of words such as, “strategy”, “combat”, “engaged”, “respond swiftly” and “fight”, have moved the issue to a realm of war, meaning that: ‘to be pro-gay is not only to be pro-military, but gay affirmation is militarized and anti-gayness is posed as not just culturally backwards, but a security threat.’¹⁹⁰ This imperialist construction of Western progress versus the simple and traditional Middle East, which is in need of external help for development, is based on a discourse of Orientalism. Throughout history an Orientalist dichotomy has been used to make clear distinction between the West and *the Orient* in discourses justifying colonialism and imperialism. Focusing on the current emergence of Islamophobia, Edward Said’s book *Orientalism* becomes fundamental to understand how militarisation of sexual politics is part of (re)producing the construction of the orient as the *monster*. It is this construction which allows for the *war on terror* and the reconfiguration of the homosexual to produce a picture of the nation as fundamentally different from the orient.

¹⁸⁷ See for example: Washington Times, ‘EDITORIAL: Obama, warmonger’, The Washington Times, 15 June 2011, available from <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/jun/15/obama-warmonger/> (accessed 10 July 2017)

¹⁸⁸ Spade & Willse, 2014, p.9

¹⁸⁹ Clinton, 2011

¹⁹⁰ Spade & Willse, 2014, p.12

4.4 Orientalism and the construction the Middle

Eastern *other*

‘There is nothing new about colonialization, military occupation and empire-building requiring and producing systems of gendered racialization and racialized sexualization and gendering.’¹⁹¹

As elaborated above, the understanding of people as backwards and in need of correction from (self-proclaimed) civilised nations, is a tool which can justify imperialist practices and warfare. Throughout history this has often had fundamental sexualised aspects. As earlier exemplified, women, and in recent times homosexuals, have been portrayed as in need of saving, from their own families and cultures. In his book *Orientalism* from 1979, Edward Said argues that this is part of a process, which he terms *imaginative geography*. As presented in the earlier, imaginative or imagined geographies are the discursive constructions of perceived spaces and/or communities. It is a way of creating a preconceived understanding, which seeks to empower or construct (self-serving) structures, within or in-between societies. It positions certain communities or cultures as being superior to others, which can thereby justify structures and actions as being *necessary*.¹⁹² Although imagined, it does not refer to a fictional understanding. It is referring to a biased construction through subjective interpretations of reality, which is then ordered in a manner, which constructs the intended understanding. Said refers to the process of imagined geographies in relation to the books overall theme of analysing the Western construction of Orientalism. Where the Orient usually refers to what is east of Europe, Said applies the term more specifically to the Arab and Islamic worlds and the attitude that shaped the Western understanding of these.¹⁹³ Orientalism is thus the stereotyping of Muslims, Arabs and the Middle East in Western discourses. Popularised through Oriental academic studies, travel writings, and anthropology, the West has managed to produce a particular colonial view of *the Orient* through a process

¹⁹¹ Spade & Willse, 2014, p.12

¹⁹² E. Said, *Orientalism*, New York, Vintage Books, 1979, p.39

¹⁹³ Said, 1979, p.26

of *othering*.¹⁹⁴ Orientalism is a preconceived notion of the Middle East, its people, what they believe and how they act. It is a matter of how we come to understand people who are different from ourselves, based solely on the colour of their skin or the religion they practice. It is the telling of the Orient as an object of study, rather than subjects, which creates the culture for the entirety of the Orient.¹⁹⁵ This positions the Orient as non-active, non-autonomous and non-sovereign in regard to itself, thereby being in need of outside influence in order to change practices. Not only are Orientals a homogenous group, which mean that they are the same in all countries, which thereby effectively neglecting the diversity of personal and collective history and culture. Additionally, Orientalism creates an image of the Middle East as outside of history, meaning that it does not develop. Orientalism is in that sense a creation of an eternal ideal *other*.

Orientalism is not an innocent or objective phenomenon, but a discourse which is by its performance permanently (re)negotiated. It is a result of a process, which reflects certain interest, which consequently distorts our view of the Middle East. Said claims that especially three things, have been part of politicising even the simplest perception of Arabs and Islam; a history of popular anti-Arab and anti-Islamic prejudice in the West; the struggle between Arabs and Israeli Zionism and; an almost total absence of any cultural position on Islam and Arabs, making it possible to identify with, or dispassionately discuss them.¹⁹⁶ Additionally affected by real politics of power and resources in the region, it has been possible to construct a picture of the evil, totalitarian and terroristic Arabs, which stands in contrast to the freedom-loving and democratic Israel and Western countries.¹⁹⁷ Muslims are depicted as inferior and only understanding of the language of force and violence. Constant depictions of Muslims and Arabs in relation to villains, war and terrorism, inevitably forms our perception of these people in ways that makes us think of words such as fanaticism, extremism and violence. Said writes that ‘the essence of Orientalism is the ineradicable distinction

¹⁹⁴ Said, 1979, p.117

¹⁹⁵ Said, 1979, p.97

¹⁹⁶ Said, 1979, pp.26-27

¹⁹⁷ Said, 1979, p.27

between Western superiority and Oriental inferiority'.¹⁹⁸ The Eurocentric prejudice against Arabs and Islam thus creates a form of fictional understanding of both the places and the peoples of the Orient, which reinforce the inaccurate and racist perception of the *other* as part of establishing or justifying Western imperial domination. The West therefore fundamentally understands more about the Orient than the Orient itself. The homogenous world of the Orient is depicted oppositely to the West by its irrationality, silent indifference, backwardness, feminine penetrability, and supine malleability, contrary to the strong, rational and masculine West.¹⁹⁹ The binary relationship between the Orient and the West is thus also gendered and sexualised, depicting the West as superior due to its perceived masculine abilities and thus able to penetrate the feminised Orient. In this sexualised dichotomy, Said identifies the Orient in two very interconnected ways; firstly, the orient is perceived as exotic and bizarre in its offensive peculiarity and queerness; and secondly, as a space that needed to be domesticated, disciplined and normalised.²⁰⁰ What is important to understand is, that the construction of the Orient is more than just conceptual and cognitive. It is part of a process which has dictated the basis for several wars and direct and indirect military interventions throughout history. Imperialistic culture and constructions of the Orient is thus not merely ideologies and narratives, which masks imperialism, but is also expressive and constitutive, along with economic and political powers in imperial formations. It is thus relevant to understand who holds the power to fabricate or shape the narratives of *others*, how this production is constructed and what the impacts are. It forces upon people a narrative and takes away their right to make their own history. It is done through what Derek Gregory calls *Colonial Amnesia* which is the degradation of other cultures as *other*, and *Colonial Nostalgia*, which is the idealisation of other cultures as *other*.²⁰¹

Where Said focuses more on a historical aspect, thereby trying to exemplify and legitimise his concept, Derek Gregory has applied it to a contemporary context of

¹⁹⁸ Said, 1979, p.42

¹⁹⁹ Said, 1979, p.206

²⁰⁰ Said, 1979, pp.103 + 60

²⁰¹ Gregory, 2004, p.9

Western imperialism. Having published his book, *The Colonial Present* in 2004, Gregory naturally has a strong focus on 9/11 and the Western response. He argues, that the war on terror should be understood with a self-perception of *boundless superiority*, which will inevitably, even for the well-intended, produce atrocities.²⁰² 9/11, as the perceived roots of the current global crises, can be argued as a result of colonial experiences and the post-colonial imperial system, which succeeded them, which can only be tackled by contesting *amnesiac histories* of brutal Western imperialism.²⁰³ Throughout the book, Said investigates the war on terror and how it is a reproduction of the Orientalist dichotomy of us/them, East/West, civilisation/barbarism, good/evil.²⁰⁴ Due to the dichotomies, as much as the understanding and discourse is part of constructing an *other*, it is equally constructing a representation of the West itself, as standing in contrast to the Orient. The process of othering through the construction of the Orient is thus a vital element in understanding the excluding function of a nationalisation of the nation.

4.4.1 Orientalism as regulatory:

A prominent critique of Western Orientalism is Joseph Massad. In line with the previous analysis of Clintons proclamation of *gay rights as human rights*, Massad criticises how human rights is being appropriated to position *gay rights* on an international scale. It is the implementation of gay rights into a universalised realm of human rights, which he finds problematic and reproducing of some of the structures imposed in classical Orientalist constructions. What is interesting, is that he moves the discussion away from a far-right or conservative focus and targets the *gay movement* itself. Massad thus claims that the gay movement is today following in the footsteps of the white Western women's movement, which has attempted 'to universalize its issues through its own colonial feminism on the women's movement in the non-Western world.'²⁰⁵ Similarly, white Western males are now adopting what he terms a 'similar

²⁰² Gregory, 2004, p.10

²⁰³ Gregory, 2004, p.10

²⁰⁴ Gregory, 2004, p.11

²⁰⁵ J. Massad, 'Re-Orienting Desire: The Gay International and the Arab World' in *Public Culture*, Vol. 14.2;361-85, 2002, p.361

missionary role²⁰⁶ by proclaiming to be the defenders of gay and lesbians all over the world.

Similar to Said, Massad states that the Orientalist construction of the Muslim is created through firstly academic literature written mostly by white male European or American gay scholars, with the purpose of *explaining homosexuality* in the past and present Arab and Muslim worlds. It seeks to unravel the mystery of Islam and the orient to the Western audience. Secondly, journalistic accounts seek to create an understanding of the reality of the lives of primarily gays in contemporary Muslim and Arab worlds, which functions to inform the Western gay sex-tourist about the areas. The main purpose of this, Massad claims, is to liberate Muslim and Arab gays from oppression, by transforming them from practitioners of same-sex contact, into subjects who identify as homosexual and gay.²⁰⁷ It is an understanding of white gay Westerners who try to impose or produce homosexuals in places where they do not necessarily exist, while simultaneously repressing same-sex desires and practices, which reject assimilation into a specific sexual epistemology. Applying Western norms of sexuality to a different historical and cultural context, a perceived instability will almost inevitably be constructed. It is exactly this perceived instability in the desires of Arab and Muslim men that is sought to be stabilised when a role as saviour is taken up by the West. It is the understanding of (Western) sexual freedom as transcending culture, thereby adding to the universalising language of human rights.

The Arab worlds have historically been sexualised as a homosexual paradise. Massad notes that this picture is though being claimed to be obscured by Islam, which enforces the patriarchal sexual privilege of men at the expense of women, and that a transformation might either lead the Arab culture into a more secularised Western model or become increasingly affected by religious militancy.²⁰⁸ Thus, the Western secular model is proposed as the only possible, as well as universally applicable, order for sexual liberation. The sexual understanding being placed upon the Orient, although

²⁰⁶ Massad, 2002, p.361

²⁰⁷ Massad, 2002, p.362

²⁰⁸ Massad, 2002, p.365

also sometimes being positive, is still problematically idealised as all that the West does not contain. It is however typically nonegalitarian sexual relations, oppressive rule of men, gender-based sexuality, patriarchy, etc.²⁰⁹ It is the reproduction of the dichotomy of *them* and *us*, which becomes the organising principle for our understanding of the *other*. Simultaneously, the positioning of gay rights (as well as the definition of being gay) in the universal, the dichotomy of *for* or *against* is created. There is no epistemological questioning of what might lay in between, and it allows for an interpretation of gay rights as being a simple political struggle with the ones who are opposed and the ones who are for gay rights. This is additionally what creates the understanding of the saviours and the ones who needs to be saved.

Besides from being potentially undermining individual agency as well as culturally insensitively ignoring or underestimating relational structures, which does not necessarily translate into Western contexts of understanding, the reproduction of Orientalist dichotomies can even be counter intuitive. The political work conducted by gay rights movements in a universalised human rights framework or discourse, seeks to add pressure to primarily political structures in order to implement a specific understanding of good practice. As elaborated upon earlier, it both directly and indirectly creates a dichotomy of superior and inferior, which justifies Massad's aforementioned missionary role. However, the dichotomy cannot be understood unilaterally. Depending on opportunities and power structures, the vilification might function both ways. Thus, Massad has claimed that the vilification of certain countries, cultures or practices has sparked a reaction of counter vilification of campaigns for gay rights as imperialist plots, justifying even more stringent legislation or treatment of both gay people (and other deviant sexualities), but also advocacy work.²¹⁰ This can be seen for example, when Uganda's president Museveni was signing a controversial anti-gay bill in 2009, stating: 'There's now an attempt at social imperialism, to impose social

²⁰⁹ Massad, 2002, p.370

²¹⁰ Massad, 2002, p.383

values. We're sorry to see that you (the West) live the way you live but we keep quiet about it'.²¹¹

Massad argues that by imposing categories of “gay” or “homosexual” on cultures, which have not necessarily historically related to such conceptual distinctions, the Western gay rights advocates ‘are in fact *heterosexualising* a world that is being forced to be fixed by a Western binary.’²¹² Ironically, by contextualising gay rights in the universal, heterosexuality and professing anti-homosexual stances becomes a nationalist and political issue. When people are then positioned as either heterosexual or homosexual, one must either must lose one’s (homo)sexual relations or fall victim to social and legal persecution. A change in the nationalist discourse on homosexuality transforms a practice into an identity, which most likely will target poor, nonurban men who practice same-sex contact, but does not necessarily identify as homosexual or gay.

4.4.2 The construction of sexualised monsters:

In the text *Monster, Terrorist, Fag: The War on Terrorism and the Production of Docile Patriots* from 2002, Jasbir Puar and Amit Rai did a research on the sexualisation of the (at that time) newly conceptualised war on terror. Based on the notion of Orientalism and othering from Said, they elaborate the understanding of the terrorist with the use of Foucault’s understanding of the *monster*. When Theresa May refers to the London Bridge attackers on 3rd of June as being ‘bound together by a single evil ideology of Islamic extremism’²¹³, or when the British newspaper ‘Daily Mirror’ refers to the ‘Islamic State monsters’²¹⁴, it is part of creating an absolute morality, which separates good from evil. It depicts the terrorist-monster as the inherent evil, which must be

²¹¹ Biryabarema, E., ‘Ugandan president signs anti-gay bill, defying the West’, Reuters, 24 February 2014, available from <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-uganda-gaybill-idUSBREA1N05S20140224> (accessed 11 July 2017)

²¹² Massad, 2002, p.383

²¹³ J. Stone, ‘Theresa May: London terror attack shows Britain too tolerant of extremism’, The Independent, 4 June 2017, available from <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/london-bridge-terror-attack-theresa-may-tolerance-of-extremism-terrorism-islam-a7771836.html> (accessed 11 July 2017)

²¹⁴ J. Shammas, ‘Paris terror attacks: French teenagers ‘allowed to smoke on school grounds so they can’t be attacked by ISIS’, The Daily Mirror, 3. February 2016, available from <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/paris-terror-attacks-french-teenagers-7299600> (accessed 11 July 2017)

destroyed, rather than understood or helped. It removes all possible sympathy and creates a clear distinction between the terrorist-monster and *Us*. Thus, in relation to nationalist formations, the use of *monsters* is a way of defining what is *normal* and what is *abnormal*. Puar and Rai pulls on Foucault's formation of the abnormal in Western discourses of normality. Foucault defines the monster as half animal and a hybrid gender (hermaphrodite), which disturbs the juridical regularities and combines the impossible and forbidden.²¹⁵ Importantly however, according to Foucault, the monster is also one that needs to be quarantined, but simultaneously corrected. It is a correction, which can function outside of the law due to the monster's position as 'incorrigibles'.²¹⁶ Puar and Rai interpret Foucault as enabling an analysis of monstrosity within a broader history of sexuality and uses it to explain the interconnection between the terrorist-monster and heteronormativity. In their analysis, they investigate how the sexualised monster potentially applies in a context of *terrorist studies*. They find that there are two dominant interpretations of the terrorist mindset, which is the understanding of terrorism as a result of defects and disorders in one's personality structure, or, as a form of political ideology, which does not have sufficient military capabilities to carry out conventional forms of political violence.²¹⁷ The understanding of defected personality structure comes from an understanding of damaged sense of self and rejection of unconscious forces of hatred, which is based on childhood abuse and thus adolescent rebellion.²¹⁸ Acts of terrorism is thus understood as frustration and rebellion against external enemies, based on suppressed hatred to (commonly) the father figure, due to insufficient upbringing and potential abusive relations. When British Secretary of State, Boris Johnson, states that terrorists are motivated by the belief that martyrdom will bring them 72 virgins, when the Orlando attacker is framed as "confused" and repressive of homosexual attractions, and when the Daily Beast writes about how Muslim immigrant fathers are driving their sons into joining ISIS by abusing them and suppressing their sexuality, they are all playing into this understanding of terrorism as

²¹⁵ Foucault, M., '*Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth, Volume 1*', translated by Robert Hurley and others, The New Press New York, 1994, p.51

²¹⁶ Foucault, 1994, pp.52-3

²¹⁷ Puar & Rai, 2002, pp.122-3

²¹⁸ Puar & Rai, 2002, p.123

being a result of a failed heterosexuality.²¹⁹ Focusing on the sexuality of the terrorist, is a way of belittling possible socio-political factors as potential motivation. The discourse of terrorism can thus be part of simplifying complex political, economic and historical dynamics into a pseudo-scientific understanding of trauma from childhood abuse and suppressed sexuality due to perceived cultural and/or religious norms. It removes a complex analysis, which would inevitably require a reflection on international power relations, imperial- and colonialism, economic injustice, etc. An Orientalist understanding of inferior cultures and repressed sexuality requires a lot less explaining. Besides from being sexualised, the terrorist-monster is thus highly racialised as well.

What Puar shows in *Terrorist Assemblages* is how homosexuality has been incorporated into the notion of the American nation through the narrative of sexual exceptionalism. By establishing a narrative of the U.S. as a gay-friendly, the institutionalised heteronormative structures are downplayed or hidden and issues of homophobia are being transferred to non-Western communities. Several authors have shown how the construction of Western sexual exceptionalism is created especially through the narrative of the Arab (which is constructed synonymously with Muslims and Islam) as the primitive and dangerous threat to the sexual exceptionalism.²²⁰ An explanation for the incorporation of homosexuality in the national community, is the construction of a world order of fundamental contradicting dichotomies of friends vs. enemies, democracy vs. dictatorship, freedom of expression vs. censorship, sexual liberation vs. oppression of sexuality, etc.²²¹ Puar highlights the paradox of sexual exceptionalism as being narrated as a transnational Western phenomenon standing in opposition toward

²¹⁹ J. Taylor-Coleman, 'Did internalised homophobia spark Orlando nightclub attack?' BBC News, Washington, 15 June 2016, available from <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-36534693> (accessed 11 July 2017); Press Association 2017, 'Mayor wants 'Jihadi John' killed', Worcester News, 24 August 2014, <http://www.worcesternews.co.uk/news/national/11429762.print/> (accessed 11 July 2017); and N. Hines, 'Domineering Dads and Sexual Frustration Driving Kids in the West to ISIS', Daily Beast, 15 May 2015, available from <http://www.thedailybeast.com/domineering-dads-and-sexual-frustration-driving-kids-in-the-west-to-isis> (accessed 11 July 2017)

²²⁰ See for example: Puar, 2007; Massad, 2002; L. Peroni, 'Religion and culture in the discourse of the European Court of Human Rights: the risks of stereotyping and Naturalising' in *International Journal of Law in Context*, 10,2;195-221, Cambridge University Press, 2014; or J. Haritaworn, 'Loyal Repetitions of the Nation: Gay Assimilation and the 'War on Terror'', in *3-Postcolonial Sexuality*, 2 May 2008

²²¹ Petersen, M.N., 'Somewhere over the Rainbow: Biopolitiske rekonfigurationer af den homoseksuelle figur', Det Humanistiske Fakultet, Københavns Universitet, 2012, p.85

Muslims, although simultaneously being a lone-standing (exceptional) singularity justifying exceptional means for defence.²²² It is through the dichotomy of ‘them vs. us’ as the Muslims vs. the West, which allows for this otherwise contradictory narrative.

4.4.3 *The Oriental Terrorist other:*

As mentioned, no great distinction is placed on the Muslim, Arab or Islam. What defines the terrorist as the *other* is thus his, ethnicity, geographical location and/or his religious belief. He is commonly depicted as a man and commonly depicted as wearing stereotypical garments related to Muslims and the Middle East, such as the keffiyeh, turban or other forms of headscarf and/or as a typical Arab/Oriental looking. This can be seen in portrayals of terrorists in anything from election videos, articles and movies.²²³ This is part of creating the picture of the Muslim as terrorist as Middle Eastern. Rather than being independent examples of different representations of terrorists (which of course would raise some questions of the representation of female, white and Western subjects), these three factors become the symbols of the interconnection of all three factors being mutually supportive and inseparable from one another.

The problems with creating generalisation of who is and who is not a terrorist are self-evident. Especially when the criteria are of a (more or less) unchangeable nature. The abovementioned stereotypical depiction of the terrorist, proclaims that the motivation behind terrorism is not political nor economical. The primary cause of terrorism is religion, more specifically Islam. This builds into the rhetoric of Muslims hating the West for their freedoms. In a speech on the 20th of September 2001, in response to the 9/11 attacks in New York, at that time, President George W. Bush stated:

²²² Puar, 2007, pp.7-8

²²³ See for example: Dansk Folkeparti – valgvideo 2007 [online video], 2007, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jBSoMiG94Es> (accessed 11 July 2017); Video Muhammad Cartoons – Geert Wilders (English Subtitles) [online video], 2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wck3hCNyuTM&bpctr=1498144045> (accessed 11 July 2017); or K. Lippert-Rasmussen, ‘Det er ikke svært at definere terrorisme’, Politiken, 26 November 2014, available from <http://politiken.dk/debat/profiler/filosofferne/art5554485/Det-er-ikke-sv%C3%A6rt-at-definere-terrorisme> (accessed 11 July 2017)

‘Americans are asking ‘why do they hate us?’ They hate what they see right here in this chamber: a democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms: our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other.’²²⁴

Although Bush should be credited (in this particular speech) with attempting to disassociate the majority of Muslims with terrorist, the dichotomy of *them* versus *us* was, and is today, a significant part of how Muslims and Arabs are depicted. The newly elected president of the United States, Donald J. Trump, has not only continued this dichotomy, but made it a fundamental part of his presidential campaign. Besides from proclaiming that: ‘We are not exactly loved by many Muslims’²²⁵ (referring to “we” as the U.S.), and ‘when you get these terrorists, you have to take out their families’²²⁶, he is also particularly famous for his call ‘for a complete and total shutdown of Muslims entering the United States’²²⁷. Although many other good examples could be raised, the mentioned quotes should give a sufficient picture of the discourse and dichotomy Trump is trying to play into.

In the first three quotes, Trump clearly supports the dichotomy of *them* versus *us*. He is creating a clear understanding of the U.S. (and to a certain degree the West), as a unified homogenous entity. As analysed in chapter one, Trump is thus using nationalism to hide internal separation and differences, which obviously does exist in contemporary U.S. In a presidential race highly affected by issues of economic inequality and racial discrimination (particularly with a focus on the *Black Lives Matter* movement and

²²⁴ G. Bush, ‘Text: President Bush Addresses the Nation’, The Washington Post, 20 September 2001. Bush, 2001, available from http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/nation/specials/attacked/transcripts/bushaddress_092001.html (accessed: 10 July 2017)

²²⁵ D.J. Trump, ‘Trump: ‘We are not loved by many Muslims) [online video]’, MSNBC, 2015, <http://www.msnbc.com/morning-joe/watch/trump--we-are-not-loved-by-many-muslims-576202819729> (accessed 11 July 2017)

²²⁶ T. LoBianco, ‘Donald Trump on terrorists: ‘Take out their families’’, CNN Politics, 3 December, 2015, available from <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/12/02/politics/donald-trump-terrorists-families/index.html> (accessed 11 July 2017)

²²⁷ J. Johnson, ‘Trump calls for ‘total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States’’, The Washington Post, 7 December 2015, available from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2015/12/07/donald-trump-calls-for-total-and-complete-shutdown-of-muslims-entering-the-united-states/?utm_term=.a173250f14f8 (accessed 11 July 2017)

police violence against Black men), focusing on the nation as unified through the creation of an external *other* is part of a typical nationalist strategy. Secondly, Trump similarly positions Muslims as a homogenous group. Expanding on Bush's question of "why do they hate us", Trump clarifies by eliminating the questions stating clearly and in generalising language, that 'Islam hates us' ²²⁸ and we can therefore legitimately call for a "complete and total shutdown of Muslims", being a de facto collective discrimination against all Muslims. Rather than narrowing the focus to a small number of violent individuals or at least commonly condemned organisations such as Daesh/ISIS or Al Qaeda, Trump stigmatises an entire religion and positions them as potential terrorists. It is again reinforcing a nationalist dichotomy of *them* versus *us* and helps foster a national identity because of, and despite of differences.

Puar shows how even psychoanalysis is making results of the terrorist as having experienced inadequate or absent mothering, which has caused depression, hypochondria, dysphoria and finally violence.²²⁹ Additionally, Puar uses the example of Abu Ghraib and the following reactions to highlight a fundamental conception of a primitive attitude towards sexuality from Arabs. It is by showing how the argument was constructed that the treatment of the prisoners of Abu Ghraib amounted to torture because of their cultural and historical positions rather than despite it.²³⁰ A lot of the torture had sexualised intentions from the perpetrators, including rape, leashing and stacking people naked on top of each other, but the torture was over-identified in this manner. Rather than focusing on the violence executed on the victims, the torture was interpreted as torture through a notion of a homophobic nature of the victims, due to their religious and ethnic background. The discourse that followed showed a clear understanding that since homosexuality is taboo in Islamic cultures, it was the worst possible form of humiliation for Muslims to endure.²³¹ This naturally assumes that other cultures or religious groups, which are supposedly less homophobic, would experience less grievance from the form of treatment that happened in Abu Ghraib, thereby

²²⁸ T. Schleifer, 'Donald Trump: 'I think Islam hates us'', CNN Politics, 10 March, 2016, available from <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/03/09/politics/donald-trump-islam-hates-us/> (accessed 11 July 2017)

²²⁹ Puar, 2007, p.56

²³⁰ Puar, 2007, p.111

²³¹ Puar, 2007, p.111

diminishing the actual act of bodily torture executed. It further works to completely discount the existence of homosexual Muslims in the Middle East. This analysis is not trying to diminish the certain psychological damage, which has been done to the victims, but rather to put focus on how the discourse which followed is disproportionately centring the perceived sexuality of the victims.

Although creating a narrative of the national community as progressive and past issues that could cause significant flaws in social cohesion, sexual exceptionalism does not necessarily challenge or contradict existing heteronormative structures. Rather it obscures these structures through the performative narrative, which reproduce and supports it. The integration or absorption into the nation, is part of the process of in- and exclusion. Inclusion in the nation thereby indirectly affirms the existence and exclusion of the *other*. The repositioning from dead to living is an acknowledgement of the system creating this form of dualistic division. Additionally, by reproducing the system of in- and exclusion, new queer subjects are produced. As elaborated above, the Muslim has been the target of this reconfiguration of acceptable and unacceptable queers. It has been part of creating a narrative justifying actions, which was potentially otherwise deemed unacceptable in the public and political discourse. An example of this is the war on terror and its consequences of military invasions, huge number of civilian casualties and systematic torture. Sexual exceptionalism has in that sense been part of (re)stigmatising huge amounts of people across borders, religions and ethnicities.

To sum up the previous analysis on the reconfiguration of the homosexual into a symbol of liberal Western culture, the following chapter will look into the reactions of the Orlando Shooting, which can be claimed as reflecting the previously analysed process of creating a logical contradiction.

4.5 The Orlando Shooting

The Orlando shooting was an attack in the morning of 12 of June 2016, where a young American man with Muslim background went to a gay night club and killed 49 people. It was not just a tragic massacre of an exceptional large amount of happy young people, but it was also one of the worst violent attacks on LGBTIQ+ people in modern Western history. Grief, public sympathy and extensive media coverage was therefore all that could be expected. However, it was also instantly identified as a unique opportunity to reach out to parts of society, which had otherwise traditionally not identified with Islamophobic sentiments. Only two days after the massacre, a White nationalist and proud homophobe, proclaimed on a website of the Alt-Right, a far-right organisation with relations to neo-Nazis and white supremacists, that;

‘This shooting [is] a very valuable wedge issue. ... We simply need to hammer this issue ... Spread this meeting. Drive this wedge. Smash their coalition. Make it cool to be anti-Muslim because Liberalism.’²³²

It was followed by pictures of the U.S. flag in rainbow colours as well as other rainbow flags with words written on them, such as “fuck Islam”, “Trump” and descriptions such as “Daddy’s gonna build a wall and keep you safe”, building on sexualised language and symbols used to show support for non-heterosexual identities.²³³ Trump as well utilised the Muslim background of the attacker to mobilise an understanding of the evil being someone different to the “normal” American, meaning that the threat was not something stemming from the U.S., but rather being from the *outside*. This allowed him to create an understanding of *pro-immigration* as equivalent to *anti-gay* thereby saying that the extreme anti-immigration attitude related to being *pro-Trump* equals being *pro-gay*. The day after the attack Trump thus declared:

²³² B. Leghorn, ‘Wedging Gays and Muslims’, The Rights Stuff, 14 June 2016, available from <http://therightstuff.biz/2016/06/14/wedging-gays-and-muslims/> (accessed 11 July 2017)

²³³ Leghorn, 2016

‘Hillary Clinton can never claim to be a friend of the gay community as long as she continues to support immigration policies that bring Islamic extremist²³⁴ to our country and who suppress women, gays and anyone else who doesn’t share their views or values.’²³⁵

He continued stating that; ‘its an assault on the ability of free people to live their lives, love who they want and express their identity’.²³⁶

Although Trump’s commitment to support women and non-hetero sexualities can be seriously questioned, which potentially could add another aspect to the understanding of his intentions, this is not the purpose of this thesis. What is relevant is how Trump is directly connecting American national identity to progressive sexual politics and tolerant attitudes towards non-hetero sexualities. Trump defines the “*free people*” as us through the creation of an immigrant *other*, which, contrary to us, “*suppresses women and gays*”. The sexuality of the victims becomes a symbol of a supposed flawless American tolerance towards deviant sexualities and their ability “*to live their lives, love who they want and express their identities*”. Simultaneously depicting the Muslim as fundamentally opposite, opposing our freedom and tolerance and any other “*views and values*” than their own. He simultaneously manages to portray his political opponent, Hillary Clinton, as being against the nation, due to alleged liberal migration policies. Thus, the enemy of the nation not only becomes the Muslim *other*, but also the people who seek to allow increased diversity. Consequently, the security of the nation is only maintained by ensuring national homogeneity.

Although, it was a gay night club that was attacked and the majority of the victims were male, Trump manages to extent the use of the term “gay” to represent a lot more than just the victims. In his speech, Trump uses “gay” not only to describe the victims of the attack, but also when he describes the people included in the American tolerance.

²³⁴ The distinction between radical Islam, Islamic extremists and Islam as a religion is very unclear for Donald Trump, and he has previously stated that “it is very hard to separate” (Schleifer, 2016)

²³⁵ R.T. Beckwith, ‘Read Donald Trump’s Speech on the Orlando Shooting’, Time Inc., 13 June 2016, available from <http://time.com/4367120/orlando-shooting-donald-trump-transcript/> (accessed 11 July 2017)

²³⁶ Beckwith, 2016

Additionally, he uses “gay” to describe a broader community, which is threatened by a barbaric Islamic culture. Although most of the victims were men, to depict the victims as gay is not necessarily accurate, since the sexual orientation of each individual is unknown. Being at a gay club does not necessarily mean that one identifies as gay. However, it allows Trump to create a broader focus, which serves his political interests. Another representative feature of the victims, is the fact that over 90% of the victims were Hispanic.²³⁷ This is not to undermine the attack as targeting the LGBTIQ+ communities, but to highlight that the victims had more identities than just being gay, and that the Hispanic community was also deeply impacted by the tragedy. It is interesting because Trump does not refer to Hispanics nor Latinos a single time in his speech.²³⁸ He does mention the umbrella term LGBT three times (although struggling a bit on how to order the letters), as well as referring to the assault as being an attack on individuals’ ability to love who they want and express their identity. This is significantly less than the eight times he refers to “gay’s” and the five times he refers to “women”.²³⁹ Several things can be read from this overrepresentation of the term “gay”. Firstly, underlining a specific sexuality of the victims and defining it as an attack on a group, it becomes a way of identifying, tolerating or at least sympathising with the group by including them into the nation. It normalises the gay man by making him a symbol of American culture. Trump often applies the term “gay” in a context with other more *accepted* identities, such as women, children, straights, and Christians. He thereby sends a clear signal of gays as being comparable or like *normal* people. Secondly, it signals a unique and exclusive position of the gay man as especially threatened by the *other*. It indicates that the gay man is different from other deviant sexualities and thereby limits the understanding of who deserves our sympathy and tolerance. Trump is supporting a reconfiguration of the gay (White) man, including homosexuality or maybe more accurately a perceived tolerance towards, and the freedom to openly be gay, as an essential part of the nation and culture of the U.S. He thus plays in to the understanding

²³⁷ K. Sullivan, & A.R. Hernández, ‘Orlando’s Latino community hit hard by massacre at nightclub’, The Washington Post, 13 June 2016, available from https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/among-the-dead-in-orlando-massacre-many-from-the-latino-community/2016/06/13/8192e3a4-3186-11e6-8758-d58e76e11b12_story.html?utm_term=.31102424a944 (accessed 11 July 2017)

²³⁸ Beckwith, 2016

²³⁹ Beckwith, 2016

of the homosexual as white and the *other* as straight as claimed by Puar. By becoming a symbol of American liberal culture, or more specifically as supporting an American liberal culture based on what the *other* identity is not, the homosexual is attempted included into the nation as part of a nationalistic anti-immigration and anti-Muslim discourse. The few references to LGBT could be understood as reaching out to other people who do not identify as heterosexual. Not only is the term LGBT itself excluding of other non-heterosexual identities (although not always considered in daily speech), but the limited reference also signifies a significantly lower interest and respect for these people. Looking at this through the dichotomy of the public and the private gives an understanding of how the proclaimed inclusion functions. The (symbol of the) White cis-gendered homosexual man has been accepted into the public as part of the nation through a commercialisation and a depoliticization of *gay culture*. However, this also includes a privatisation of acts or expressions considered perverse and/or incompatible with mainstream hetero-culture. Therefore, privilege is of significant importance to take into account when understanding the reconfiguration of the gay/homosexual. Being a White, Christian, cis-gendered gay man offers one the possibility to *stand out* much less than for example a transgendered Muslim woman of colour. The criteria in which one can potentially be identified as deviating are limited to a sexual orientation of which cannot (necessarily) be identified merely by the way one look. One's ethnic background, possibly determining one's name, religion, economic background and colour of one's skin, further gives one easier access to public and private institutions, education and labour market.²⁴⁰ Thus, although originally considered deviating because of a sexuality, certain subjects can be included into the nation, due to their ability to assimilate with the premise established through the heteronormative society. Reading this understanding in Trump's speech makes clear an understanding of why gays are overrepresented in the rhetoric and why Trump is trying to include the homosexual into an understanding of the nation. Thus, Trump is part of performing a reconfiguration of the homosexual, into becoming a symbol of liberal Western culture. This can then function to redirect potential problems of homophobia in the U.S. towards an

²⁴⁰ K. Lawrence, & T. Keleher, 'Structural Racism', Race and Public Policy Conference, available from <http://www.intergroupresources.com/rc/Definitions%20of%20Racism.pdf> (accessed 11 July 2017)

Orientalised figuration of the illiberal homophobic Muslim, which simultaneously obscures other potential issues and problems.

Muslims have potentially suffered disproportionately from the reconfiguration of sexual politics. However, as we have seen earlier, other groups are also affected by stigmatisation by the reconfiguration of the sexual politics. The reconfiguration of the homosexual into producing a notion of a Western sexual exceptionalism, reproduces and normalises already existing structures of discrimination. What the analysis has proven, that there is no fixed object of either in- nor exclusion. It is therefore important to look at the process of creating regulating norms in a general context. Although the previously presented ideas of Queer could potentially proclaim to do that, it does not necessarily have to be so. The following and final chapter will therefore elaborate on this process and the understanding of how Queer itself can potentially also become a disciplining and regulating factor.

4.6 Queer as regulatory

Puar highlights her notion of *queer as regulatory*, in order to give an understanding of how the perception of queer, in some cases, has been reconfigured and, according to Puar, misunderstood.²⁴¹ The notion of queer as being free from norms in the context of Western exceptionalism is part of creating an ideal. Rather than functioning as a counter to normality, queerness is being positioned as a specific practice. It creates a form of identity category, which is less about normativity and more about sexuality. Being queer therefore becomes a category of people who are different from heterosexual practices and the categorisation of a queer ideal that becomes a regulatory.²⁴² It is especially in a context of White Western self-proclaimed progressives, which idealises certain forms of resistance, which can be part of creating such a categorisation. Queer ideals and gay liberation then becomes associated with emancipation and liberalisation from traditional values in accordance with especially white, liberal values. It is through

²⁴¹ Puar, 2007, p.24

²⁴² Puar, 2007, p.22

such constructions of an ideal queer, that narratives have been constructed of greater homophobia connected with stricter family values in immigrant and Muslim communities.²⁴³ Queerness therefore becomes an idealised movement through the distinction and exclusion of others who are perceived as less free or progressive. It is through this centring of queer as exclusively liberating and exclusively transgressive that creates queer as regulatory. In that sense, transgression and assimilation is positioned as choices, neglecting other factors influencing on individual situations and positions. Ironically, an idealisation of queerness as exclusively transgressive and liberating is part of reproducing the neoliberal notion of individual freedom as being a matter of choice. Access to queerness thus becomes a matter of material, cultural and social capital and resources in order to live up to the ideal. It potentially makes queerness an elitist (white) cosmopolitan formulation, only permitted in specific spaces. Ironically, the people who have such required capital and privileges to access queerness, are the same people who have the capacity to engage in assimilatory normativising culture, thus making queer something apolitical and in compliance with neoliberalist and heteronormative structures. To be free of norms becomes a matter of subjective preferences determined by life-style, consumerism and individualism over for example traditional family bonds. Issues which are all offered by capitalism and neoliberalism. Individual agency becomes legible only through resistance to some norms, not taking into account potential complicity and reproduction of other.

Defining queerness as the opposition to tradition and conservatism, religion and religious communities are thus disproportionately targeted as being in opposition to queerness. This is how queerness is established as fundamentally secular. This does not only create a division and stigmatises religious communities, but it makes it very difficult for religious subjects to relate to and acquire a queer identity. Muslim communities can easily fall victim to this stigmatisation, due to religious practices being less common and less visible in Western communities, thereby more obviously standing out as religious. Islam and homosexuality is thereby constructed as contradicting. It becomes very difficult for people to belong to both communities at the same time, since

²⁴³ Puar, 2007. p.22

one is being constructed at the expense of the other. Comparable to discussions of Muslim women depicted as suppressed for wearing a veil, which have existed in several Western countries, homosexual Muslims are similarly depicted as in need of saving.²⁴⁴ This is an example of how certain groups are stigmatised when queer becomes regulating and it explains how Muslims are positioned as contradicting homosexuality. This is why Puar states that ‘the homosexual other is white, the racial other is straight.’²⁴⁵

There is an obvious challenge in the notion of queer as regulatory, which is the strict requirements being put on people identifying as queer, to be overly reflected upon normalising forces. A queer identity is required to be an impossible transcendent subject who will constantly be ready to subvert, resist and transgress. Puar highlights that it is easy to point to conservative elements of any political formation and to albeit a failure of being radical, resistant and progressive.²⁴⁶ It is a lot more difficult to understand ourselves as accomplices to such normalising processes. Rather than being rejecting and excluding, queerness must create room for self-reflection, making mistakes and constructive critique, with the understanding that it is a process of resistance, which is in constant movement and reformation.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁴ See for example: Poorthuis & Wansink, 2012; Outrage!, Muslim Cleric Says: death to gays and Jews’, Indymedia, 9 July 2004, <https://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/regions/world/2004/07/294601.html> (accessed 11 July 2017); or S.M. Fetteh, ‘Muslim: Mange ikke-muslimer respekterer ikke kvinder iført tørklæde’ religion.dk, 19 March 2014, available from <https://www.religion.dk/synspunkt/muslim-mange-ikke-muslimer-respekterer-ikke-kvinder-if%C3%B8rt-t%C3%B8rkl%C3%A6de> (accessed 11 July 2017)

²⁴⁵ Puar, 2007, p.32

²⁴⁶ Puar, 2007, p.24

²⁴⁷ Puar, 2007, p.24

5. Conclusion

This thesis has intended to shed a light on and grasp a considerably new and ever-growing phenomenon of the discursive inclusion of the homosexual into the process of producing and mainstreaming Islamophobia in Western societies. The argument of protecting the rights of homosexuals as requiring the infringement of the rights of Muslims is *a priori* a contradiction from a human rights perspective. It is directly in conflict with the human rights principle set forth in the Vienna Declaration and the UDHR defining human rights as *universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated*. Directly contradicting human rights, it can be hard to understand how the argument has managed to increase in popularity and reach the mainstream. The problem formulation of this thesis was therefore to understand *how discourses of Islamophobia can be constructed through the inclusion of the homosexual into notions of a liberal Western culture*.

This thesis has looked upon sexuality as something that has not existed everywhere and always. Sexuality can be argued to be a construction, which appeared through disciplining figurations. Rather than looking at (homo)sexuality as a pre-existing biological incorporation, which should or could be freed, it should be interpreted as regulatory and constructed through discourses. What is essential is that these figurations are non-permanent constructions, which means that reconfigurations are possible. This understanding is taken up by Queer Theory, which looks at how constructed categories are (re)produced in relation to each other. Through a *subjectless* Queer Theory, which rejects normalising impulses or political-interest representation, it is possible to look at oppression intersectionally as interrelated constructed hierarchies. This interpretation of Queer Theory as constituting the epistemological framework for understanding relations can function to explain how certain groups are constructed as more important than

others, which thereby gives an understanding of how the logical contradiction can operate.

The first part of the hypothesis stated that: *The reproduction of discourses of Islamophobia is obtained through the reconfiguration of the homosexual into representing a liberal Western culture, promoting heteronormative structures and policing non-normative sexualities.* Through the concept of homonormativity, an understanding was created of how the normalisation of the homosexual into the mainstream, was made possible through neoliberalism and privatisation of sexuality. This form of inclusion is part of reproducing heteronormative structures, which therefore does not necessarily signify a tolerance for diversity. It is rather a tolerance, which allows certain privileged homosexuals to integrate into already existing heteronormative structures, based on their ability to live up to certain norms. This form of inclusion is part of creating a norm of what is a *good* and *normal* homosexual as well as *bad* homosexuals. Being included as a *good homosexual*, which is part of an inclusion into a notion of a national community, is therefore dependent on one's ability not to deviate too much from the norms. This therefore effectively excludes other sexualities as well as people who are multi-burdened. It is part of disabling a radical and intersectional movements fighting against normalizing structures, by only including certain privileged subjects. Since inclusion based on adaption and assimilation is part of reproducing the existing structures, the inclusion of the (good) homosexual into the mainstream is therefore more likely to be accepted or supported by the mainstream. Additionally, it can also be part of creating or supporting a notion of a liberal Western culture, which respects diversity, based on a notion of a Western *sexual exceptionalism*, which leads to the second part of the hypothesis.

The second part of the hypothesis states that the process of constructing the homosexual as a symbol of liberal Western culture, *can construct a notion of a Western sexual exceptionalism, which is discursively structured by creating the exclusive categories of us - "homogenous non-problematic West" and them - "foreign uncivilised Muslims".* There are two parts of this statement; the construction of an exclusive dichotomy based on Western sexual exceptionalism; and the positioning of Muslims as the counterpart.

The idea of sexual exceptionalism, builds on a notion of a liberal Western culture, in which sexuality is exceptionally liberated and tolerated. Proclaiming exceptionalism creates a dichotomy of the outside and the inside as constructing each other. The notion of the outside is what defines the inside. Thus, the notion of the liberal Western culture is dependent on the homophobic outside for concealing itself as tolerant. Without the outside, the state of the exceptional could not exist. Through performative acts such as repetitive discourses, as well as normalizing acts such as marriage, it becomes possible to perform the homosexual as a figure of the nation. Thus, the homosexual becomes a perceived stable and pre-existing figure of the West. However, since this construction is performative, it means that it produces the reality which it names and describes. This is what allows for reconciliation of otherwise irreconcilable truths. An essential part of the logical contradiction is that the desired truth becomes the lived truth through the performative. Thus, as long as it is claimed to be reality, the notion of *sexual exceptionalism* and *a liberal Western culture* does not necessarily have to reflect the actual situation. As long as the figuration is convincing, the claimed contradiction will not be a contradiction. The figuration of the homosexual can therefore function as both policing other non-hetero sexualities as well as producing Islamophobia, while simultaneously representing a liberal Western culture, without being perceived as contradicting itself. Thus, the state of exception allows for exceptional means to be taken to protect itself. Undemocratic illiberal means are justified to protect the exceptionally liberal and democratic. The notion of the exceptional thereby supports the excluding dichotomy of the liberal and the illiberal, which, in a national context can be translated to those who belong and those who do not.

Essential for the understanding of the dichotomy is that it removes all nuances and positions both the *us* and *them* as completely static and homogenous groups. Thus, mainstreaming of the dichotomy of Muslims versus *us*, becomes effective through the obscuring of differences within the two groups. It supports a notion of the West as fundamentally superior to the Middle East, Arabs and Muslims, which then justifies discrimination and the production of Islamophobia. The dichotomy of the liberal West and the homophobic *other* is based on a discourse of Orientalism. It is a performative construction of Muslims as outside of history, meaning that not only do they not

develop, but they are additionally in need of outside influence to progress. It is based on a construction of an extraordinary exceptional Western agent, representing and functioning as an ideal for the nation, which separates the nation from everybody else. It is by positioning the homosexual figure and the notion of a liberal Western culture in temporal discourses of Orientalism and racism, that an understanding of Western *sexual exceptionalism* becomes possible. It builds on a proclaimed *colour blindness* of neoliberalism, which is expanded to the idea of *orientation-blindness*, thus proclaiming that issues of racism and homophobia are no longer issues in Western culture. By proclaiming a sexually exceptional liberal Western culture, issues of homophobia are transferred to a racialized immigrant, such as the Muslim. This removes responsibility for homophobia from state institutions, civil society and the native population, to Muslims, based on an Orientalised notion that they do not fit in with the liberal Western culture. By blaming homophobia on the dichotomy of Islam as an *outside* and regressive culture as opposite to the progressive *inside* Western culture, Islamophobia is thereby produced through the discourse of sexual exceptionalism.

By confirming the hypothesis, an understanding has been established of how discourses of Islamophobia are being created through the inclusion of the homosexual into a construction of a liberal Western culture of proclaimed sexual exceptionalism. By reproducing already existing structures, the inclusion of (certain) *good* homosexuals is thereby part of policing other non-normative sexualities as well as creating exclusive categories of the liberal West and the homophobic Muslim.

Although the thesis concludes on an understanding of how the increase in Islamophobia in the West today is happening, it is not to be understood as the end of the discussion. The thesis has sought to give critical perspective into the potential causes of this development. There are therefore many factors which can be interpreted differently and thereby get a different outcome. This thesis is thereby giving one interpretation of how the inclusion of the homosexual can be part of creating a justification of the exclusion of Muslims. Rather than challenging human rights, this thesis has therefore sought to support an understanding of *all human rights for all* without any discrimination.

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7. Abstract

7.1 English

Keywords: Homonationalism, Islamophobia, Homonormativity, Sexual Exceptionalism, Queer Theory

Abstract:

There is an increasing trend in the West of arguing for the infringement of the rights of Muslims as necessary for the protection for homosexuals. Although the argument is a contradiction in relation to the principle of universality of human rights, it is being presented as a necessary or logical contradiction. However, this has not prevented the argument from gaining support, which is why this thesis instead intends to understand the logical contradiction from a queer theoretical approach. It intends to analyse the phenomenon as part of constructed hierarchies, which dictates the rights of some as more important than the rights of others. Thus, the thesis seeks to understand how the inclusion of some can be part of excluding others. Using the concept of *homonormativity*, the thesis analyses how certain homosexuals can be included into an accepted part of the mainstream, based on the ability and willingness to assimilate and support excluding heteronormative structures. This can construct a division of *good* and *bad* homosexuals, which polices other non-hetero sexualities. Through the concept of *homonationalism*, the inclusion can be argued to be part of a reconfiguration of the homosexual as a symbol of a Western sexual exceptionalism. Through a classical Oriental perception of the Middle East and Muslims, this is part of creating an Islamophobic dichotomy of a liberal Western culture and a homophobic Muslim. Such a dichotomy can therefore work as justification for the logical contradiction.

7.2 Deutsch

Schlüsselwörter: Homonationalismus, Islamophobie, Homonormativität, Sexueller Exzeptionalismus, Queer-Theorie

Zusammenfassung:

Es wird zunehmend argumentiert, dass Muslime eine Bedrohung für die Rechte von Homosexuellen darstellen. Diese Darstellung spielt eine wesentliche Rolle im Mainstreaming der Islamophobie in den westlichen Ländern. Obwohl das Argument im Widerspruch zum Grundsatz der Universalität der Menschenrechte steht, wird es als notwendiger oder logischer Widerspruch dargelegt. Da die Behauptung dennoch Zuspruch findet, beabsichtigt diese Masterarbeit den logischen Widerspruch mittels eines queer-theoretischen Ansatzes zu verstehen. Das Phänomen soll hierbei als Teil der konstruierten Hierarchien analysiert werden, welche bestimmen, dass die Rechte mancher wichtiger sind als die Rechte anderer. Somit versucht diese Arbeit zu verstehen, wie die Inklusion einiger Teil davon sein kann andere auszuschließen.

Mittels des Konzeptes der *Homonormativität* wird in dieser Arbeit analysiert, wie Homosexuelle akzeptierter Bestandteil des Mainstreams werden können, sofern sie sich in die ausgrenzenden heteronormativen Strukturen assimilieren und diese unterstützen. Dies kann zu einer Unterteilung in *gute* und *schlechte* Homosexuelle führen und somit zur Regulierung von Menschen mit nicht heterosexuellen Lebensweisen.

Anhand des Konzeptes des *Homonationalismus* kann argumentiert werden, dass die Inklusion Teil der Rekonfiguration des Homosexuellen ist. Sie stellt das Symbol eines westlichen sexuellen Exzeptionalismus dar. Durch eine klassische orientalistische Auffassung des Mittleren Ostens und von Muslimen, ist die Inklusion von Homosexuellen Teil einer islamophoben Dichotomie von liberaler westlicher Kultur und dem homophoben Muslim. zu erzeugen. Solch eine Dichotomie funktioniert deshalb als Rechtfertigung für den logischen Widerspruch.