

The Israeli Queerhana: Time-Space of Subversion and Future Utopia

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In this article, I argue that the Queerhana parties held in the early 2000s in Israel can be seen as queer time-spaces. In the local context, this aspect of the Queerhanas was deeply subversive not only of the heteronormative order, but also of the homonormative and the homonational. In turn, I argue, that Queerhana offered new spatial forms such as erotic hybrid space, and new temporal concepts such as erotic transcendent time. These configurations offered utopian and futuristic queer embodiments of another possible social life of diversity and coexistence. The discussion contextualizes the Queerhana parties in relation to theories of queer time-space based on content analysis of the parties, as well as interviews with key former party activists.

Keywords: *queer geography, time-space, parties, activism, performance, drag, future, utopia, Israel/Palestine*

INTRODUCTION

"The idea of creating a space that will allow us to create the better/creative/free/delusional/real world that we dream of."

Queerhana Festival invitation, 2003

Queerhanas were queer parties held from 2001-2006 in Israel. Arising in protest against the agenda of the LGBT urban commodified culture embraced by the Israeli national consensus, they first emerged as free open street parties initiated by a fluid collective in a declared effort to promote queer activism. Since November 2001, several spontaneous queer parties were held, taking advantage of temporary conditions of disorders due to widespread renovation works, which preceded the parties officially named Queerhana but deserve to be considered part of that category in retrospect. The first official Queerhana party was held in June 2002 as an alternative to the official Pride events sponsored by the Tel Aviv municipality. In September of that year, a four-day Queerhana Festival was held. The parties continued in various frequencies and configurations until the last official event in August 2006.

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There are clear similarities between the spatial and social characteristics of the Queerhana parties in Israel and Queeruption, an annual international queer gathering started in 1998 where activists exchange information, draw inspiration, and challenge mainstream society with do-it-yourself (DIY) ideas and ethics. There is even an actual overlap between the two: several participants and organizers of the Queerhanas had participated in Queeruption gatherings, and Queerhana hosted the ninth Queeruption gathering in Tel Aviv in August 2006 (Brown, 2009). However, Brown himself claims that an important aspect to consider among those experiencing autonomous queer lives is the differences in local contexts and the various means of political practices. Accordingly, I will demonstrate how local Queerhanas are a unique political practice with a special meaning in subverting the Israeli ethno-national and homonormative orders.

The Queerhana phenomenon emerged in the background of the anti-globalization movement and the Second Intifada. On the one hand, local activists of Reclaim the Streets or the Free Party movement, originally formed in the UK (Brown, 2004), sought to open Israeli public spaces and give them back to the people (Lefebvre, 1991; 1992) as an alternative to commercialized and domesticated parties that dominated the gay club scene (Misgav and Johnston, 2014). At the same time, outdoor raves offering psychedelic trance experiences were initiated by Israelis returning from India, Goa particularly, as a rebellious getaway from the Israeli militarized reality (Carmi, 2013). In the spatial context, the seeds of the Queerhana parties were indeed planted in the urban sands of Tel Aviv, far from the looming shadow of the Separation Wall that was being built those days, and close to where attempts were made by gay and lesbian politicians and businessmen to establish a "pink quarter". This unique intersection between politics and culture of Queerhana is manifested in the synthesis of the infrastructure and practical tools from the world of activism and from the world of parties.

Queerhana is a portmanteau of queer and karahana. The term "queer" was reclaimed to mean a position that undermined the concept of normal, mainly in terms of sex, gender, sexuality and the relationship between them (Jakobsen, 1998). The Hebrew slang word karahana (from Arabic and previously from Turkish) literally means "brothel" and is also used (as in the French *bordel*) to describe a space characterized by disorder. As a result of a certain process of reappropriation, it most recently also came to signify a specific moment of collective euphoric transcendence, particularly during psychedelic trance raves.

The present article uses a case study to offer concrete examples for the way queer time-spaces can look like, as well as to offer theorization linking between parties and activism, following a non-essential queer approach of critical geography that includes not only sexuality and gendered social aspects of time-space, but also class, ethnicity and nationality. The article examines how Queerhana parties succeeded in undermining the boundaries of the heteronormative ordered space of the nation-state to offer transcendence beyond this present time. To do so, I examine the

Queerhanas not as an escape from social reality, but rather as performance – action for and towards the future. I argue that the Queerhana parties can be seen as an embodiment of queer time-spaces in concrete forms. Not only because sexual activities and non-normative gender performance were practiced, but because in their particular practices they violated and undermined the very control of space and normative agenda, if only temporarily and locally. In the local context, this transcendent aspect created a deep subversion not only of the heteronormative national order but also of the homonormative and homonational Queerhana parties offered new spatial forms and temporal concepts such as erotic hybrid space, and erotic transcendent time; utopian potentials for a better future.

QUEER SPACE: BETWEEN SEXUAL AND NATIONAL POLITICS

The notion of queer space appears in geography as part of the critical discussion of the construction of space as heterosexual. Geographers describe the resistance of sexual subjects to the spatial dominance of heterosexuality (Bell et.al., 1994; Bell and Valentine 1995). Relatedly, the perception of queer space in these studies is that of a concrete space created mostly by gays and lesbians as an alternative to heterosexual space.

Critical queer geography challenges the essential identification of a queer space with LGBT subjects as well as the binary identity concept of the underlying hetero/homo (Oswin, 2008). Critical studies describe gay and lesbian spaces as being homonormative in that they are also able to conform to social, gender, and class social norms (Browne, 2006; Nash, 2006; Nash and Bain 2007). The term “homonormativity” corresponds to the term “heteronormativity”: “the institutions, structures of understanding, and practical orientations that make heterosexuality seem not only coherent - that is, organized as a sexuality - but also privileged” (Lauren & Warner, 1988, 548). “The new Homonormativity” is a neo-liberal sexual politics of the Western gay community that does not challenge and even affirms and perpetuates the dominant heteronormative perceptions and institutions, while ensuring the possibility of a privatized and de-politicized life, characterized by domestication (marriage and family) and consumerism (Duggan 2003, 50). In a similar context, the process of spatialization and commercialization of party culture and in particular of LGBT party culture are described (Chatterton and Hollands, 2003).

Another significant contribution to the critical queer geography literature is the attention to other intersections of race, ethnicity, and nation. Studies have pointed to how gay spaces racialize (Nast, 2002; Puar and Rai 2002; Rushbrook, 2002) and to the rise of “homonationalism”, homonormative politics that serves national and institutional ideologies (Puar 2007). Homonationalism refers to the dynamic dual processes of inclusion and exclusion. While some LGBT subgroups are marked as included by adopting hegemonic ideology that strengthens the belonging to the na-

tion, others are excluded from the public sphere. Expanding the nation's boundaries and including LGBT individuals therein portrays the state as tolerant and liberal while simultaneously marking others as intolerant, undemocratic and illiberal. This process legitimizes violent policies towards countries framed as intolerant of LGBT and other minorities.

In accordance with the critical queer geography approach, Brown's (2009) description of queer autonomous space in the international Queeruption gatherings refers, aside from gender and sexuality, to the spatial intersectional aspects of class, nation, and race, and adds emphasis to the social characteristics of queer space. "Queerness", in this context, is more of a relational process than an identity category. Brown claims that the queerness of space stems from the process of building relationships based on lack of hierarchy and mutual participation. This queerness, which celebrates diversity, is opposed to homonormativity or homonationalism as it is to heteronormativity. Although the activist networks that come together at Queeruption gatherings were most concentrated in western Europe, Brown notes other active groups in the "majority world" that do not aspire to create a space in their cultures for Western lifestyles but to experiment in their local context with different means of living autonomous queer lives. In this context, it is evident that he identifies the unique local Israeli connection between queer activism and anti-nationalist politics, in particular activism against the Israeli occupation of Palestinians.

While Brown's work is yet focused on a dedicated space of and for activism, Browne's (2008) work goes one more step behind the binary concept of politics-party. Focusing on the place and performance of 'party' in the spaces of LGBTQ Prides in Dublin, Brighton and Hove, she describes the temporary construction of pride spaces which are challenging heteronormativity. Browne conceptualizes "parties with politics"; the combination of fun and partying in the performance of queer politics that construct sexed spaces, bodies and identities.

The geographic discussion of time-space calls for the conceptualization of space integrally with time (Massey, 1994, 2005). This is because the temporal aspect is a central aspect of social relations, primarily the gender relations that shape space and the ongoing political struggles that shape its meaning. Such a conceptualization of space depicts existence as a multiplicity of overlapping, intersecting, or contradictory spatialities.

BETWEEN HETERO-NATIONAL TIME AND QUEER TEMPORALITY

Queer theory criticizes the national heteronormative construction of time. Edelman (2004) describes the rhetoric of "reproductive futurism" that uses the symbolic figure of the child. He argues that the child is understood as innocent and in constant need of protection. Acting in the name of the child results in a shared

investment in the future and thus secures the heteronormative social order in the present (see Ahmed, 2010, and Berlant, 2011, for similar claims).

Halberstam (2005) characterizes three forms of how time is structured to reproduce normative forms of life: family time, reproductive time, and inheritance time, arguing that the latter “connects the family to the historical past of the nation, and to the future stability of the family and the nation” (p. 5). Similarly, Freeman (2010) argues that time is a central paradigm for the affirmation of normative forms of gender and sexuality, or as she calls it, “chrononormativity” – the use of the time characteristic of the nation-state and capitalism to organize individual human bodies in maximum productivity. Conversely, according to Hoang (2007) there is also a “homonormative” perception of time, a temporality that organizes gay subjects in a productive order that starts with coming out of the closet and continues with consumerism and domestication. In this sense, homonormative temporality does not challenge the concept of heteronormative time but rather affirms and perpetuates it.

Queer temporality opposes dominant forms of couplehood, marriage, and family, and is therefore not synchronized with national narratives of identity and belonging (Freeman, 2007). Instead, it offers possibilities for a different life of belonging and continuity of subjects in relation to the future. While many scholars accept the critical thesis on reproductive futurism, Edelman’s (2004) claim that a queer understanding of time will exist only by a total refusal to accept the very idea of the future has been challenged. Halberstam (2005) and Freeman (2010) both describe queer temporality while focusing on the asynchronous time experience and its potential to produce other forms of time and futures. Freeman claims that queer temporality is in fact embodied in different forms of disorder, but also offers another option for life in erotic terms. Opposed to the heteronormative logic, “temporal drag” exposes the failure in the performance of historical progress, and “erotohistoriography” (or erotic historiography) points to the complex way queer relationships transcend the present. Diverse queer social practices, especially those that involve pleasurable body sensations, also produce historical consciousness, which can be involved in the material damage done in the name of the development and future of the family and the nation, and even provide alternative forms of temporal consciousness (Freeman, 2010).

Muñoz’s (2009) response to Edelman’s call for a total refusal to accept the very idea of the future is that queer means insisting that another world is possible and is therefore mainly about futurism, that is, the creation of new forms of sociality and relativity. In other words, Muñoz views the social present as what should be negated, arguing that hope does not have to be a conservative form of complacency, but can also be a way to create a space for imagination that explores alternatives to the logic of the heteronormative present. While Muñoz is deeply sympathetic to the rejection of reproductive futures, he refuses to give up utopian political beliefs and looks back at the history of various resistances for inspiration.

QUEER TIME-SPACE

Critical queer analysis of time-space appears, for example, in the discussion on homonational geopolitics (Puar 2007), which is described as facilitating the reconstruction of gay subjects as productive, linking them with life and future instead of destruction and death, and changing the perception of homosexuals as traitors, spies, communists, and spreaders of HIV. Another example is Oswin's work (2014), which portrays how heteronormativity operates through teleological narratives of progress and social reproduction, and specifically through an image of the "proper family". However, the literature on queer time-spaces remains minimal.

Brown's abovementioned work on the "performance of queer autonomy" describes it as actual political work that is "involved in experimenting with alternative modes of being and relating to each other" (2009, 200). Indeed, he focuses on different social and spatial practices in gatherings that constitute queer autonomous space. Nevertheless, he recognizes a temporal vision of future utopia within these gatherings, which he describes through the title of "experimenting with queertopia" (*ibid*). In this sense, following the concept of time-space, the queer autonomous spaces that Brown describes can be considered autonomous queer time-spaces. However, queer temporal aspects as configured in concrete spaces are not discussed in his work and in the geographic literature in general.

QUEER TIME-SPACE IN ISRAEL

While a number of studies on queer space in Israel relate to time, the discussion of queer time-spaces, and particularly subversive ones, is still in its infancy. The very perception of queer space as fluid rather than anchored in a concrete place departs from the modern connection between identity and territory at the heart of the national discourse (Blank, 2003). This detachment carries a particularly radical meaning in the Israeli context, in which the dominant Zionist discourse has for decades linked the heterosexual and macho Jewish society firmly with the land, and in which LGBT politics has developed an affinity to national politics, particularly in urban areas. Since the late 19th century, dominant Zionist discourse has tied its main project of creating a national space for Jews together with the project of inventing a Jewish masculine heterosexuality as an ideal for the so-called New Jew (also referred to as the Muscular Jew), as opposed to the diasporic European Jew, seen as degenerate, effeminate and sometimes downright homosexual (Boyarin, 1997; Yosef, 2004). Well into the 21st century, the hegemonic discourse in Jewish Israeli society seeks to maintain the boundaries of the ethnocentric national order through an ideology that is both militaristic and familistic.

Both Ziv (2004) and Hirsch (2005) describe the resistance of sexual subjects to the dominance of heterosexuality in space. Ziv describes spaces of queer socialization created in LGBT bars as sites of resistance to spatial heteronormativity in Tel

Aviv of the 1980s. Hirsch describes the city's cruising site, Independence Park, as a queer space not only because of the sexual activity taking place there, but also because of the spatial effects on people who frequented it, undermining heterosexual control of public space, if only within the narrow spatio-temporal confines of the park and the late-night hours.

Nevertheless, while queer subjects had been marked as a danger to the hegemonic order until the late 1980s, since then a chiefly urban homo-lesbian culture was allowed to develop and flourish, so long as it subscribed to the same normative order. Thus, the mainstream LGBT discourse of the 1990s and onwards focused on the legitimacy of participating in hegemonic social institutes such as the military, matrimony and parenthood (Kadish, 2005; Walzer, 2000), and went on to promote homonormative and homonational politics – as expressed in the Gay Pride Parades in Tel Aviv (Gross, 2015). Misgav and Johnston (2014) describe these changes in Israel's sexual politics and how they led to the rise of the spatialization of gay night-life scene in Tel Aviv, mostly within commercial clubs that maintain gendered and sexed spatial divisions.

Israeli studies also describe how LGBT spaces are not essentially queer, and often affirm rather than undermine national norms. Blank (2003) describes the attempt made in the early 2000s to establish a "gay-lesbian pink quarter" in Tel Aviv as promoting dynamics of domination, removal, and spatial exclusion. Hartal et.al. (2014) describe how "LGBT safe spaces" serve as mechanisms of hetero-national security. Finally, Gross (2015) discusses the rise of homonormative, homonationalist, and even the new "homomunicipalist" discourse promoting the image of a Jewish gay man who serves in the military, who is in a stable relationship and even marries his boyfriend, raises children and follows the accepted timeline of parenthood. Subject to these conditions, acceptance of certain gender and sexual expressions is made possible, for example at late-night parties, preferably on weekends or once a year at the money-making and propaganda-promoting machine of the Pride Parade, ideally in the liberal enclave of Tel Aviv.

In the margins, however, Israeli queer activism also emerged. The small group of demonstrators wearing black who marched in the 2001 Tel Aviv Pride Parade – at the height of the Second Intifada – under the slogan "no pride in the occupation" is considered a key milestone in the emergence of queer activism in Israel, one of its many diverse manifestations would be the Queerhانا parties (Gross, 2015). Ziv (2010) describes how within the queer performance practices of "creating a world" of the Black Laundry activist group of the early 2000s in Israel, sexual and gender crossing politics were linked with the struggle against the occupation. Thus, Misgav (2015) describes how even in the very heart of the institutional space of the Israeli Gay Centre, an autonomous space of subversive queer politics could be created.

Inspired by concepts like "Commonplace" (Browne, 2013), "Intimate Public" (Berlant, 2008), and "Queer Assemblage" (Puar, 2007), Hartal et.al. (2014) offer an alternative notion to the Israeli LGBT safe space in the form of multi-dimensional,

variable and non-coherent space. However, questions as to how and where these queer time-spaces are established are not addressed in their study.

Finally, Amit (2018) describes queer Jewish emigration from Israel as a temporal practice with subversive potential against the ideological and normative narrative that the Israeli nation-state imposes on its citizens. For example, being away from Israel allows emigrants to be absent from those temporal landmarks that form the national territory, and their exit from Israeli time enables them to invest their future in other spaces and times. However, as this subversive practice is contingent on physical detachment from Israeli space, the subversive queer time-spaces that exist with it remain understudied – a lacuna the present study seeks to address.

METHOD

As mentioned, Queerhana's unique connection to politics and culture is manifested in the synthesis of the infrastructure and practical tools of communication, taken from the world of activism and the world of parties. Queerhana adopted practices from pre-Facebook and Instagram party culture, such as designing, printing, and hanging posters and distributing flyers at parties, shows, bars, cafes and clothing stores. In addition, press releases were published in local newspapers with the help of reporters personally committed to these issues. Often a phone number to a voicemail appeared on the invitations, which, similarly to rave parties, provided relevant information a few hours before the actual parties. From the world of activism, Queerhana adopted practices such as running a dedicated website and mailing list, as well as publishing on local social and political activist mailing lists. In particular, using the Queerhana parties themselves as a central platform of direct action for conveying political messages and inviting participation.

The findings of this study are based on content analysis supported by referential interviews. First, content related to the Queerhana parties was collected for six months during the year 2016 in various media platforms, mostly from key former Queerhana activists. Other materials were collected from photographers. Some contents were extracted retrospectively from press and website archives as well as from the author's personal mailbox, having been included in the parties' mailing list. In the content collection process, and retrospectively in accordance with the findings of the unique temporal characteristics of the case study, there was no clarity regarding the boundaries of the beginning and end of the Queerhana. The contents included original Queerhana materials and related events (invitations, press releases, fanzines and stills and video works for the parties) and documentation of parties (still and video footage) from the year 2001 up to 2009.

Following preliminary analysis of these contents, six semi-structured referential interviews were conducted with former key activists who took a relatively long and active part in the Queerhana collective from the earliest related events in 2001 and

the first organising meetings in 2002, in order to collect details found missing in the preliminary analysis, as well as to examine the reliability of initial insights. I have learned about prospective interviewees and contacted them with help from previous interviewees, using the "snowball" method (Edwards and Holland, 2013). The interviews were conducted over the course of a month in 2016 and took 45 to 120 minutes to complete, half face-to-face and half by telephone or computer, and were all recorded and transcribed.

Finally, the content collected which was found to be relevant to the case study (from 2001 to 2006) was broken down into units of meaning that were coded. Related codes were subsequently consolidated into categories and subcategories, and finally several key themes were extracted from the categories. The questions guiding this stage of the analysis were: What characterizes the politics of Queerhana parties? How did this politics allow the subversion of the social order?

I was first exposed to a Queerhana street party as a teenager by coincidence in the early 2000s in Tel Aviv. Something I experience in the space attracted and intrigued me, so I continued to follow the Queerhanas for years. I signed up for the mailing list, was updated by the official website and attended numerous parties. This aspect of my positionality in the research field constituted both a significant advantage and a certain complexity that influenced the course of this research and its methods. On one hand, it has allowed me access to relevant knowledge and content, from dry specifications to documents like party invitations. On the other hand, I carried some experiential memories and personal opinions, the influence of which I wanted to challenge in the research process. Therefore, instead of working with a phenomenological research method, I chose to work with a method grounded in content analysis of Queerhana's materials and documentation, which gained credibility through interviews with other participants with whom I had no previous acquaintance and who took a much more active part in these parties.

FINDINGS

Queerhana Space: Between Appropriation and Hybridization

"We have a need to break through boundaries and barriers...A need to expand and multiply. A need to be as diverse as possible, more colors and more voices in more places than ever made possible, to ignore the [Separation] Wall and float through it. As if it didn't exist. Because it does not."

In this declaration of intent written by Orr Guilat at the first organizing meeting of the first 2002 Queerhana, also published in the Queerhana fanzine in 2003, queerization of hetero-national space – the idea that every space may be subject to queer appropriation by breaking boundaries of sexuality and gender – is central

to the Queerhana parties. The first, informal Queerhana took place in November 2001 as part of a series of street parties between 2001-2002 called "AllenBeach" – a practice of taking advantage of spaces of temporary disorder for holding parties. The reclaiming of public space was made possible thanks to its repaving, so that the piles of bare sand on the bustling main street were reused as a "beach". In this particular event, the "Buy Nothing Day" street party became "AllenButch" – the Queer fantasy of turning Allenby Street, a major shopping area, into a beach was replaced by the fantasy of an "invasion" of Butch women (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: "Allenbeach/Butch" flyer, "Buy Nothing Day", Tel Aviv, 2002



It almost goes without saying that the very significance of the "invasion" of queer women into the heteronormative public sphere, as it stemmed from the activities of related protest groups, is a challenge to their very exclusion (Ziv, 2010). Moreover, this connection of Butch women to the public space and precisely to the Buy Nothing Day marks how this space appropriation sought to create an alternative to the LGBT (homonormative) space as a private and commercial space. AllenBeach's infrastructure was utilized towards this direction, described by former activists, as many of the activists gathered there found increasing interest in queer issues. The activists described this interest as part of a wider awareness raising in Israel of queer issues, including the establishment of "Other Sex" (academic conference for LGBT studies and Queer Theory) and the "Black Laundry" group at the time. AllenBeach's later events, which began to address these issues, were therefore fertile

ground for the collective foundation of Queerhana, which was initially composed of AllenBeach activists who were motivated to continue similar actions.

An additional step of taking deliberate unauthorized control over a certain space by queering it, as opposed to just taking advantage of the opportunity created by the authorities, would become a central practice at the Queerhana parties. The first formal Queerhana party was held in June 2002. First, it took again advantage of the liminal margins of the park expropriated by the Tel Aviv Municipality for Pride Day, and served as an alternative to the official events. That is to say, as a queer space, it was opposed to homonormativity as it was to heteronormativity. It began in the afternoon under the Yarkon River Bridge, within a walking distance from the location of the official events. But then it moved, as happened with other Queerhanas, to a different location: an improvised hangar downtown. The migration to a new space and its appropriation became part of the party itself. This central practice can explain the main pirate theme of the first party in particular and of Queerhana in general. Queer pirate images had already appeared in the design of the invitation leaflet, and continued with Xeroxed pirate figures dangling as decorations, and the partygoers' accessories, such as eye patches (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: First party flyer, 2002.



Note: Queerhana's logo is on top left and below is a takeoff on an illustration of Mary Reed, an 18th-century female pirate who who identified for many years as a man. Design by Nathi Oh.

Additional to the centrality of the act of queer appropriation of and reuse of space for Queerhana parties is the idea of queer space which can exist anywhere even out and open in the public: main street, city park, a carpentry workshop, a bicycle tour, a single mothers' protest camp in front of government offices in Jerusalem, the desert near the border with Egypt, agricultural land, or a grove near the suburb of Petach Tikva (Figure 3). While the Israeli trance rave culture came to accept its place on the margins, holding "nature parties" in remote areas, the Queerhanas, influenced by the Reclaim the Streets movement (Brown, 2004) often occurred many times at the very heart of public space.

Figure 3: Queerhana in a grove near Petach Tikva, 2003. Photo: Oren Ziv



The idea of queer space that can exist anywhere and can be subverted through unauthorized use is also expressed in Queerhana films and invitation flyers. On the flyers, similar to the local trance raves publication practices shaped under the justified fear of legal persecution and media stigmatization as a perverse culture whose essence involves drugs and delinquency (Carmi, 2013), the party's location was often not mentioned, with only vague descriptions given, such as "unknown location" or "because as usual, we too don't know," or "somewhere in the wilderness". However, in this case, a unique perception resonated among the guests, who were accustomed to think about the possibility of a queer space existing anywhere, as well as among the organizers, who associated queer space less with a concrete place than with the performative practice of creating knowledge about such spaces. Shortly before the event, sometimes even only a few hours, the organizers would provide directions on its voicemail box and website.

The realization of the idea that queer space can exist anywhere faced major difficulties during the organization of the Queerhanas. As evidenced by the interviews with former activists, the general ambition for party locations was for them all to exist outside in the public, non-institutionalized or desegregated spaces. Even when some parties were held in clubs, following the ongoing harassment by city inspectors and police, the effort not to institutionalize and commercialize the space is evident. For example, the parties were held in anomalous spaces that are credited by the vendor with legitimacy from law enforcement, such as a club yet to be opened or having already shut down, or club frequented by migrant workers at the central bus station. Additionally, the activists describe how they refused repeated proposals from club owners to have the parties set in one permanent location.

The further element of erotization of space is evident both in a video piece made of a series of still photographs that was screened at parties (Riklis, 2004) and in a film produced to promote the Queeruption Festival (Riklis and Baron, 2006), in which drag characters take over public spaces. Most of these spaces have a distinctly national character, such as Independence House where Israel's Declaration of Independence was made. In addition, the second film contains parallel editing (cross cutting) between the drag characters who violate the spatial order in their gender and sexual behavior, and Palestinians passing through military checkpoints and the recently completed Separation Wall.

The parties were also designed as fluid hybrid spaces. They were open to a wide and diverse audience, including passers-by and neighbors. Many Queerhanas as mentioned were open in the literal sense of the word, taking place on the streets or in nature, with no doors or walls and no selection. In many of the parties, no fee was charged at all, and where there was an entry fee, only small amounts were collected to finance upcoming events. A 2006 flyer stated: "All projects organized by Queerhana are voluntary and non-profit, out of a DIY worldview – do it yourself and for yourself. All proceeds are used for events and projects for a more fabulous world". The slogan "Those who accept, will be accepted", drawn on large sheets of cloth, was often hung in central places such as the DJ's booth, and became synonymous with the Queerhana and its inclusive and non-hierarchic essence.

This state of mind was also expressed by the desire to hybridize space. On Queerhana's first flyer (Figure 2), the words "Queer-All" appear at the top, presenting queerness as something that appeals to all, rather than as an antithesis to heterosexuality. This idea was constantly reiterated, for example: "The doors are open to everyone: adults and young people, gays, lesbians and straight people, and anyone who does not need a special definition" (2004 press release); "The idea is not to create a ghetto of one group but diversity, doing our thing, and everyone who is interested is invited" (Moshe Kutner, press release, 2005).

In the winter of 2006, Queerhana even organized a concept party called "HeShe Clash", inspired by a former gay bar (HeShe) on Nahalat Benjamin in Tel Aviv and was one of the few "mixed" LGBT spaces, to invite the gay and lesbian mainstream

to “connect to the concept of transgender and transsexual identity and being” (Orr Guilat, press release, 2006). This idea that undermines the geographical segregation was also expressed in the hybrid design of the space as two spaces that simultaneously played different and changing musical genres. The space was used in ways that would indeed overturn the heteronormative order that also dominated gay spaces and that often led to the same perceptual or physical dichotomies, reproducing power dynamics. In their words, “Queerhana believes that it is possible [...] to create short circuits in the tightening panopticon network” (Tamara Schreiber, press release, 2006).

Not only were all welcome to the Queerhanas, they were also encouraged to take an active role in their design and therein challenge the hierarchic control of the space. The invitation to Queerhana was not to consume the space following a predictable script with predetermined power relations, but to actually use it. For instance, “Unlike commercial festivals, at this festival, the audience is expected to initiate a significant part of the activities and the artwork” (Queerhana Festival, 2002); “Queerhana is a cultural event that blurs the boundaries between organizers and participants” (press release, 2006).

As mentioned, the organizers themselves were a fluid collective. This was a group of about twenty activists with varying levels and forms of responsibility, often joined by ad-hoc partners for a particular party and even during a party. On many occasions, before the parties were held, public calls for organizers and performers were made, from designing the decor, through contributing videos or live performances, to helping with guiding partygoers to the selected venue. This fluidity was manifested in the design and experience of the parties themselves: a variety of gender and sexual expressions, dance styles, performances, films, acquaintance and discussion circles, creative or learning workshops, cooking, smoking, and drinking, and much more. Thus, the Queerhanas did not provide “a homogenous product for queer consumers”. Rather, they were queer parties with an active non-commercialized participation of all sorts of individuals. In this respect, Queerhana spaces performed a concrete alternative to the homonormative recreational spaces characterized by institutionalization and consumerism.

The fluid mood of the Queerhana was also manifested through a hybrid design of the parties themselves. Various unrelated objects would be erected, hung, or attached in seeming disorder. As Ziv (2010) argues, queer performance practices of “creating a world,” which she finds also within the Queerhana parties, subverted the accepted view of nationalism and sexuality as two distinct identity constructs, with the former being hierarchically privileged over the latter. The Queerhana parties closely linked the effort to shatter boundaries, reclaim space, and open it for everyone, with the struggle against the occupation, particularly the Separation Wall.

Palestinian-Arab visibility and voices played a major part in the Queerhanas from the very beginning. The parties had a wide variety of participants and performers, including Palestinians. At the parties, queer visibility was combined with Palestinian

and radical left-wing activist visibility: dresses, corsets, and binders mixed with kefiyehs, as well as t-shirts bearing anti-occupation slogans and flyers inviting to demonstrations by Anarchists Against the Wall. At the first Queerbana party, an Arab rapper called Ibrahim Taste of Pain performed. A few years later, in a party held during days filled with hate, violence and internal strife – in the summer of the 2006 Second Lebanon War – Arab drag queens such as Bride of Palestine (Raafat Hattab) performed songs of protest and longing for the lost homeland.

This link was most clearly expressed in the 2004 Queerifada party, a name obviously linking the queer project that seeks to break up binary positions, particularly in the context of gender and sexual orientation mostly, with the Palestinian struggle against the occupation and particularly the Separation Wall. Among other performances, an Arabic pop song was performed by Sally, a transsexual Filipino migrant worker who was a member of the Paper Dolls drag troupe and the heroines of the documentary film *Paper Dolls* (Levin et.al, 2006), 2006) (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Francisco "Cheska" P. Ortiz Jr. in a hybrid outfit created from various dolls. Queerbana, 2002. Photo: Nathi Oh.



Another example of this hybridity of the space that undermined binary structures not only of the heteronormative but also of the national order can be found in the 2003 Queerbana party in a park outside Tel Aviv (see Figures 5 and 6). The setting included limbs of mannequin dolls erected from the ground and artificial blood-soaked bandages that some of the participants used for their performance (design and concept by Nath Rogea, Yael Magic and Lila Lilith). Instead of design-

ing a protected "safe space", the décor highlighted the ongoing violent reality of suicide bomber attacks, occupation and Intifada integral to the spatial reality of Israel/Palestine as a whole. This stood in direct contrast to the perception shared by many Israeli Jews of suicide bomber attack as events that violated the normative, spatial order of safety and rather demonstrated the view that as long as the violence of the occupation persisted, none of us were safe, Israelis and Palestinians, heterosexuals, cisgenders and LGBTs. The Queerhana concept of not recognizing only one concrete space as queer actually allows the queerization of all spaces, just as the refusal to participate in homonational performative construction of an LGBT safe space, and the very recognition of the general spatial insecurity offers the release from the security mechanisms of the heteronormative national order that generates and reproduces that insecurity.

Figure 5 and 6: Queerhana under the Bridge, Tel Aviv, 2003. Photos: Shay Ben Efraim.



QUEER(HANA) TIME: BETWEEN ANACHRONISM AND UTOPIAN FUTURITY

"We want to continue to hold and create this alternative environment again and again as a being. (...) It is important to be, even for a few hours, in a place that is ours, no matter who we are today and how we want to be tomorrow (...)"

Queerhana activism emerged, as previously mentioned, at the historical fault line after the rise of the anti-globalization movement and the Second Intifada. It is against this backdrop that the Queerhana parties breached the barriers of the heteronormative and homonormative national space, and constructed an alternative queer spatial perception. The Queerhana parties repeatedly broke not only the boundaries of the spatial order, but also the boundaries of the temporal order. They created an experience asynchronous to the heteronormative and homonormative

national timeline and even new and unfamiliar forms of time that acted as a sort of proto-utopia that transcended the present and revealed how a queer future may look like, as formulated in the manifesto of the first organizing meeting in 2002 quoted above. These words, like the parties themselves, were deeply influenced by the concept of temporary autonomous zone (T.A.Z.) coined by the anarchist Peter Lamborn Wilson (Bey, 1991) to refer to the political tactics of creating temporary islands of freedom and experimental short-term uses of space in the vast sea of control.

The very fact that the parties created temporary and transient spaces, repeatedly and in alternating locations, is a distinctly queer temporal aspect of deviation from the heteronormative agenda, which binds the family and the nation in a linear narrative of belonging to the concrete domestic space. In addition, many parties were held during the day, sometimes just a “regular work day” or even over the course of a number of days, thus obscuring the limits of the day-night work-rest binary time and deviating from the homonormative agenda, which tolerates certain gender and sexual expressions for a few hours a night, or an annual pride parade. Indeed, after the police officers demanded the immediate stop and dispersal of the 2003 Queerhana party, which had continued after the end of the official pride event, the DJ - “Michelle Le Histerik” (Moshe Kutner) stated: “Pride is always limited in hours. You're allowed to be proud in society only for a few hours and then no more” (video, Queerhana party 2003, Claudia Levine's archive).

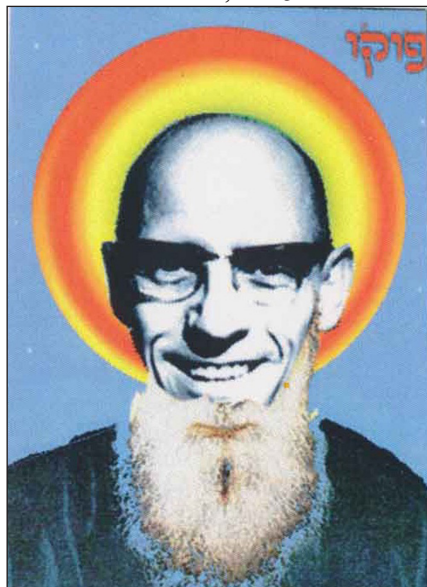
The temporal deviation at the Queerhanas was also manifested in the fluid frequency of the parties, similarly to the complex and non-linear heritage of the Queeruption (Brown, 2009). The 2002 Queerhana Festival, for example, lasted four days, but despite the fact that it was already within the first year of the Queerhana activity, it took place only once. And for a long period prior to the 2006 Queeruption Gathering, there were no parties at all. This event, as well as other Queerhanas, was first published under the vague title of “sometime it will be” (Shani 2006), promoting a perception that Queer time can happen at any time. Queerhana parties have often been described in publicizing materials and by activists as the result of spontaneous impulses: “once the energy dissipated or it became something else, there was no point in continuing” (interview with former activist, 2016).

Queer time has also been created through temporal drag or queer anachronism, already recognizable in the images of 18th-century female pirates Anne Bonnie and Mary Reed who identified much of their lives as men, used at the first 2002 Queerhana party (see Figure 2). It was also evident in the Queer Saints cards distributed at a 2003 Queerhana party with queer characters such as Michel Foucault, Brandon Teena and Devine, designed as medieval Christian saints (see Figure 7). Brandon Teena was a young transgender murdered in a transphobic hate crime and immortalized in the film *Boys Don't Cry* (Swank et.al, 1999). Divine is an American camp drag character played by actor Harris Milstead, who is associated especially with the film *Pink Flamingos* (Waters, 1972). In both cases, the past is reread in

a queer manner to reveal the artificial construction of heteronormative history. As written in the *Queerhana* fanzine in 2003,

"Millennia of institutionalized religion and culture, science and logic, millennia of incitement, humiliation, persecution, guilt and self-hatred, no more! [...] Today we reclaim our spirit back! And proclaim a new religion. A religion with no name, no institutions, without God. In our religion there will be only saints! For it is easy, for everyone is a saint!"

Figure 7: Queer Saint Foucault card. Created by Moshe Kuttner, designed by Shiri Atzmon, 2003.



Temporal drag and erotohistoriography also take a direct aim at the biblical heroine of the Jewish Purim festival, the reason or excuse for the party titled "Ahasuerus is raving wild: Many faces to the scroll" ("QueerCore" musical, 2002, concept by Lila Lilith). The Book of Esther, written several centuries before the Christian era, tells the story of an attempt to exterminate the Jews of the Persian kingdom during the reign of King Ahasuerus, and of their miraculous rescue. According to Jewish Law, the scroll or Book of Esther must be read in full and in exact order. The QueerCore version of the scroll disrupts its temporal order completely, however, and thus queers it. The version that began after the opening words "Far away somewhere in another time (...)" presented a number of characters absent from the biblical story with great anachronistic excess. Instead of presenting the Jewish Queen Esther, who, guided by her uncle Mordechai, succeeded in thwarting the anti-Jewish plot, the musical focused on Vashti, the queen replaced by Esther after refusing to flaunt her beauty in front of his guests at a feast. Moreover, there are two Vashti characters in this ver-

sion, and they are lesbian lovers and avid users of the GHB party drug. Mordechai is recast as a Palestinian terrorist, and the head of the anti-Jewish plot, the chief minister of the kingdom, is now dressed as a Jewish ghetto prisoner equipped with a strap-on. The anachronism deviates from the heteronormative historical axis and expresses an alternative temporality of excluded sexual and gender possibilities. This temporal disruption also deviates from the national narrative of the biblical story and many others mobilized to justify the binary perception of persecuted Jews against evil enemies and the violence of the latter. It even proposes, by a carnivalesque role reversal (Bakhtin, 1984), political identification with those marked as the “other” and the “enemy”.

Finally, temporal drag and erotohistoriography is also expressed in films created and exhibited in the context of Queerhana’s activity. As mentioned above, both a video piece made of a series of still photos screened together at parties (Riklis, 2004) and the film produced to promote the Queeruption event (Riklis and Baron, 2006) depict drag characters taking control of public spaces, mostly of a distinctly national character, through their queer eroticization. Here as well, there is also temporal disturbance. Most of these spaces are known national museums and major historical sites such as Independence House. In addition, the presentation technique of the first work simulates a slide projector and the second film is accompanied by a soundtrack of the official military march – two artistic choices that continue to characterize the nation’s historical time. However, the drag characters are far from synchronizing with these crucial moments in the establishment of the state or integrating into the national time axis of Israel’s military past. In the video work there are grotesque figures of a femme queen, head shaved and wearing a Victorian dress and crown (Liora Lopian), and a man in a colorful clown suit (Yishai Mishori), photographed each time standing alone in a different theatrical position, with a changing static background where it seems time has stopped; for instance, the iconic table of the Declaration of the State of Israel (see Figure 8). The characters seem to be smiling and amused by the irony and the degree of their incompatibility with the imagined national collective.

In the film, two drag queens (Liad Kantorowicz and Romm Lewkowicz), again in historical dresses, perform oral sex on dolls set up in different spaces of the IDF Museum dressed as enemy Arab soldiers. They attach dildos to the loins of the dolls and to barrels of rifles and insert them into their mouths. Thus, the films produce a blatant temporal deviation from the Zionist metanarrative through the creation of a drag of queer anachronism. This evokes the lack of synchronization with the heteronormative and homonormative national agenda and creates a new time being of erotic historiography that exchanges arms for queer desires between Arabs and Israelis.

Queer temporality was embodied also in the general utopian time promoted by the parties. In the winter of 2006, for example, it was declared that “Queerhana takes a breath and goes down to Atlantis” (Queerhana Press Release, “Going down on Atlantis”, 2006). The reference here is to Atlantis as the ideal state envisioned by

Plato, and the concept of utopia it inspired. Precisely because the story of Atlantis does not fit well into the historical axis or the normative time forms, as it is not clear whether it happened in the past or would happen in the future, or neither, it is the ideal platform for the idea of a futuristic queer utopia. The invitation to go down to/on Atlantis not only offers the idea of queer futurism but also the experience of what such a time experience involves. If indeed "Atlantis is a queer utopia in which everything is fluid: body, language, identity and preference" (Avrahami 2006), then what is left is to start experiencing it.

Figure 8: Liora Lopian at the House of Independence, Tel Aviv. Photo: Tammy Riklis, 2006.



Finally, a general queer utopian future experience was created at parties not only by the planned initiatives but also by a mixture of unrelated performances, various temporal disturbances of the national heteronormative and homonormative timelines, which created a sense of transcendence, conveying the feeling of lack of time itself and the queer potential embodied therein. This sense of transcendence, especially vis-à-vis the here and now, out of devotion to disorder and disruption, which can be termed "queer karahana", can be identified especially in the 2004 Queerifada and the 2006 Queerhana in Queeruption. These parties offered diverse performers and performances, devoid of linear-circumstantial order of the family and nation time. At times, they even occurred spontaneously and simultaneously, offering different possibilities for belonging and continuity, or, in other words, offered an early embodiment of queer utopia.

CONCLUSION

Based on analyses of content from and about the Queerhana parties held in the early 2000s in Israel, this article demonstrated an emphasis on the appropriation of public space by holding queer activities in various locations, and the very act itself of appropriating space by non-normative use. Appropriation is coupled with erotic queerization of the space, as well as with hybrid queerization of the space, through the parties' design, challenging social boundaries of sexuality, gender, class, ethnicity, and nationality. At the same time, the parties involve temporal deviation and appropriation of public time – claiming more queer time in the year, week, or day, creating different durations and frequencies, as well as asynchronous and anachronistic contents. Appropriation is coupled with erotic queerization, as well as with an experience of time transcendence in the parties themselves promoted by particular themes and in general the mixture of unrelated performances, thereby once again challenging social boundaries.

Queer and geographical theories enable to explain how these practices have constructed queer time-spaces. These practices created a drag of tempo-spatial divergence which exposed the failure in the performance of the dominant time-space, such as the failure in the historical progress and in the stable unity of territory. Thus, these practices challenged the local heteronormative national order. Moreover, these practices deny temporally-demarcated constructions of a commercial, separatist and seemingly "safe" LGBT space, and instead celebrate diversity, thus opposing homonormativity as they oppose heteronormativity. In turn, they proposed utopian-futuristic time-spaces that transcended the existing reality and celebrated queer erotica and new forms of social hybridity in general. In this respect, the geographical study of queer time-space often relates its construction to the use of sexual subjects that undermine heteronormativity, but also their essentialist identification with LGBT subjects. While there is rich literature that critically discusses LGBT spaces that do not undermine and even promote the hegemonic norms, alongside with studies that describe queer politics of spatial subversion, the discussion of queer time-spaces remains lacking. This paper addressed this lacuna in the Israeli context.

The central use of time-space appropriation and suggestion in the Queerhana parties is consistent with the claim that queer culture, particularly parties, can be a special kind of political activism. This use not only teaches us how queer time-spaces may appear and form, but also how parties can promote tempo-spatial politics of resistance and hope. Often parties are perceived as contrary to political activism, marked as an expression of escapism with some personal consumptive meanings. Pure pleasure is not a bad thing, and in local contexts such as the one described above can have a political dimension in itself: the very lingering on pleasure is subversive in a violent chrononormative context. However, as this case study illustrates, parties can also offer time and space politics with a great optimistic political significance. In fact, contrary to many forms of activism that mostly focus on protesting the injustice of the hegemonic agenda, precisely because of the possibility of

creating an autonomy of space and time, parties may focus also on actually creating alternatives.

Beyond the political potential of parties to serve as some kind of activism, this case study suggests geographical research should address the time dimension in studies far beyond the historical context of the space in focus, and include analysis of the temporal politics in all its manifestations. In addition, this case adds to the queer theory of time that mostly focuses on narrative, through a discussion that examines time by focusing on the space and on the social practices that form it. Given the current research based on a case study from the early 2000's, one possible direction for future research is to examine the feasibility of queer time-space production in the age of virtual social networks and when the processes of spatialization, institutionalization and commercialization of LGBT culture have intensified. Given the current focus on a case study of deliberate queer time-space activism as an alternative to the private and commercialized homonormative space, another possible direction for future research can examine the potential for subversive time-spatial politics manifesting itself precisely at the heart of the mainstream gay party culture. Should such a study use methods in addition to those used in the current study, such as ethnography, it could also shed light on the participants' phenomenological processes in constructing queer time-spaces. It could also address key vehicles of collective transcendence in the party culture, including physicality, movement, contact, secretions, drugs, light, and of course music. Finally, future studies could examine how queer time-spaces are constructed outside the party scene, in various social time-spaces of culture, politics, and education.

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