


Spring 2016

A Critical Analysis of the Public Sphere: How the LGBTQ Movement Utilizes and Occupies Space in Morocco

Katherine Hirsch

SIT Graduate Institute - Study Abroad, katehirsch94@gmail.com

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A Critical Analysis of the Public Sphere
How the LGBTQ movement utilizes and occupies space in Morocco

Hirsch, Katherine

Academic Director: Belghazi, Taieb
Advisor: Ksikes, Driss

Tufts University
International Relations

Africa, Morocco, Rabat

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for MOR: Multiculturalism and
Human Rights, SIT Study Abroad, Spring 2016

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Abstract

This paper examines the nature of the LGBTQ movement in Morocco in relation to the theoretical concept of the public sphere. Specifically, it explores what spaces LGBTQ organizations, which do not have access to the public sphere in Morocco, occupy in order to pursue activism. Theory surrounding the public sphere and collective social movements is very much based on a Western perspective, despite claims of universalism. Western theory defines modern social movements by collective action, a unified movement, occupying and the public sphere as a site of resistance. However, this fails to recognize the fact that many people in semi-authoritarian and repressive states are deprived of the ability to access collective, or even public, forms of political dissent. This scholarly work will attempt to address the LGBTQ movement and how it operates separate from such Western conceptions by exploring the tactics and actions of LGBTQ organizations. Furthermore, the paper will explore if the actions of these organizations have an impact on the public sphere and discourse in Morocco.

Key Words

Public and Social Welfare

Gender Studies

Law

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the SIT: Multiculturalism and Human Rights Program and the Center for Cross Cultural Learning (CCCL) for giving me the opportunity to pursue this topic. Furthermore, I would like to thank my advisor, Driss Ksikes and my academic director, Taieb Belghazi for guiding me and providing resources to supplement my research. Finally, I would like to thank my participants and interviewees for being so cooperative, understanding and accommodating throughout this process.

Introduction

It is difficult to live openly in a country where your mere existence is a crime. It is even more difficult when you are not given access to a space to advocate for the right to exist. Such is the case for the LGBTQ community in Morocco. Article 489 of the Moroccan Penal Code states, “an indecent act or act against nature” with a member of the same sex is punishable with six months to three years in prison. In addition to imprisonment, LGBTQ individuals may have to pay anywhere from 200 to 1,000 dirhams for committing these “indecent acts” (Moroccan Government, 1962).

Officially, Article 489 criminalizes homosexual acts. Tacitly, the law also prohibits any form of collective action in support of homosexuality and rights for the LGBTQ community. This serves as a serious hindrance to the emergent LGBTQ movement in Morocco. Because LGBTQ organizations in Morocco lack the ability to operate or speak freely in the public sphere, they must seek out alternative spaces in which to do so.

The purpose of this study is to examine the nature of the spaces the LGBTQ movement occupies in Morocco. This study will also explore the ways in which the LGBTQ movement utilizes such spaces in order to engage in activism. Explicitly, this research will attempt to answer and validate the following questions and propositions:

Research Question One (RQ1): What spaces do LGBTQ organizations and occupy in Moroccan society?

Proposition One (P1): As Article 489 criminalizes homosexuality in Morocco the LGBTQ community has little access to the public sphere. LGBTQ organizations are unable to operate and protest freely. Gathering in a collective and organized fashion, therefore, must be done discretely and using alternative spaces. Such spaces can be physical, such as coffee houses or apartments or virtual, through Facebook pages, groups and online magazines.

Research Question Two (RQ2): What methods does the LGBTQ movement use in order to engage in activism and influence public discourse?

Proposition Two (P2): The LGBTQ movement pursues activism in a multitude of ways. Organizations have online magazines, Twitters and Facebook pages, which they use to disseminate information on LGBTQ issues in Morocco. Furthermore, LGBTQ groups hold private meetings to engage in discourse, create partnerships and to organize manifestations.

Research Question Three (RQ3): Do the actions of the LGBTQ movement impact public discourse and the public sphere?

Proposition Three (P3): In the past few years there activity surrounding LGBTQ activism in Morocco has increased. New groups have been formed, and discourse surrounding LGBTQ rights has increased. Such discourse has, in some ways, begun to permeate the public sphere. However, due to the semi-authoritarian nature of the Moroccan government, the ability to use the public sphere as a site of resistance is limited.

In order to answer these questions, I will first provide a brief background on the origins of Article 489, and the religious and historical discrimination of LGBTQ individuals in Morocco. Such information will serve to elucidate the reasons why public discourse surrounding LGBTQ rights is so limited, and why the LGBTQ movement is unable to occupy and operate in the public sphere.

Following this, I will outline the methods I employed to explore the LGBTQ movement. This included interviewing members of the four most prominent LGBTQ organizations in Morocco: KifKif, Mali, Akaliyat and Aswat, to see the spaces in which they operate and the tactics they employ to resist the state. In addition to interviews with these organizations, I also spoke to a number of LGBTQ identifying individuals in order to gain a better understanding of how these organizations are perceived. Finally, I interviewed Dr. Mokhtar El Harras, an academic conducting research surrounding the public sphere and social movements, in order to gain a better understanding of how modern social movements operate given the nature of the public sphere in Morocco.

I will also provide a comprehensive analysis of the theory of the public sphere, as outlined by Jürgen Habermas in “The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere.” Such a theory provides an important framework to analyze how actors occupy space as a site of resistance. However, it has garnered much criticism due to its Western-centric nature and its failure to recognize the ways in which marginalized groups are excluded from the public sphere. Scholars Nancy Fraser, Michael Warner, Asef Bayat, and Mathieu Hilgers all outline the problems with Habermas’ theory of the public sphere. However, it is important to note such issues do not invalidate the theory as a whole. By recognizing the shortcomings of the theory and employing additional terminology to mitigate these shortcomings, I will attempt to contextualize the theory of the public sphere and use it to analyze the behavior of the four main LGBTQ organizations in Morocco.

Such an analysis will show that the LGBTQ movement in Morocco is extremely limited by the inability to utilize the public sphere as a site of resistance. Because of this, the movement has to operate with relative anonymity. It occupies alternative sites, both physical and virtual, in order to resist the state and advocate for Moroccan LGBTQ rights. Such tactics have managed to impact the public discourse in a number of ways, including an increase in difficulty in convicting individuals under Article 489. However, despite this impact, whether the movement will ever be able to fully and freely operate within the public sphere remains uncertain.

Key Terms

Public Sphere

Jürgen Habermas defines the public sphere as a space in which private individuals come together to discuss public matters relating to the common good (Habermas, 1989). I will use the term to describe public spaces such as the street, schools, shops, and cafes, that the LGBTQ community does not have access to. By this, I mean they cannot speak about matters concerning the LGBTQ movement in these spaces without fear of persecution.

(Subaltern) Counterpublic / Alternative Spaces

Nancy Fraser defines a (subaltern) counterpublics as “parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses, which permit them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests and needs” (Fraser, 1990, p. 67). I will use this term counterpublic, as well as the phrase ‘alternative space’, to describe the spaces LGBTQ organizations occupy as a result of being marginalized and excluded from the public sphere.

Semi-Authoritarian / Hybrid Regime

Mathieu Hilgers defines many states in the Middle East North Africa (MENA) region as semi-authoritarian or hybrid regimes. Essentially, this describes a government that maintains the façade of democratic institutions and pluralism but also has authoritarian characteristics. I will use the two phrases interchangeably when describing the Moroccan state.

LGBTQ

LGBTQ is an acronym that has its roots in the Western gay rights movement meaning “Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer.” I will use this term to describe the nature of the gay movement due to its applicability and use by gay organizations and individuals in Morocco. However, it is important to note the Western origins of the term itself and acknowledge the meaning of the term is very different outside of a Western context.

Background

Origins of Discrimination Against LGBTQ Individuals: Legal Discrimination

Much of the stigmatization of the LGBTQ community in Morocco can be attributed to Article 489 of the Moroccan Penal Code written in 1962. The article reads, “any person who commits lewd or unnatural acts with an individual of the same sex shall be punished with a term of imprisonment of between six months and three years and a

fine of 120 to 1,000 dirhams, unless the facts of the case constitute aggravating circumstances” (Moroccan Government, 1962, p. 136).

This law was not introduced into the Penal Code arbitrarily. It originated from the anti-sodomy laws introduced by the French during the colonial period from 1912 to 1956. In “This Alien Legacy”, Alok Gutpa notes that European powers, the French in particular, often implemented laws as means of control over the colonized. Although consensual homosexual acts were decriminalized in France in 1791, it imposed sodomy laws in many of their protectorates (Gutpa, 2008, p. 6-7). Remnants of the law are evident in the Penal Code, which is written fully in French.

However, this is not to say Article 489 is a complete product of French colonization. Legal restrictions on homosexuality are present in many other Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) countries that were not French colonies. In fact, with the exception of Turkey, Iraq, Israel and Jordan, every MENA country criminalizes homosexual acts (Rodgers, Martin, Rees & Connor, 2014).

The way in which Article 489 is structured makes it difficult to convict those suspected of homosexual activity, as obtaining proof involves catching individuals in an explicit homosexual act. However, being on trial for homosexuality in Morocco arguably comes with as many negative repercussions as a conviction itself. Those publically accused of homosexuality risk of loss of employment, cultural discrimination and targeted attacks. According to KifKif, the oldest organization advocating for LGBTQ rights in Morocco, more than 5,000 homosexuals have been put on trial since Moroccan independence in 1956. The latest figures made publically available from the Ministry of

Justice note that there were 81 trials involving accusations of homosexuality, although the number of convictions was unreported (“99 in prison”, 2014).

Due to pressure to conform to international human rights standards, most homosexuality trials concerning homosexuality are not publicized. Furthermore, KifKif was only founded in 2004, so convictions were widely unreported before this time. However, there have been a handful of reported incidents in recent years.

In May of 2013, two men were caught having sexual intercourse in Temara, each were sentenced to three years in prison. In 2014, six men in Fquih Ben Salah in central Morocco were sentenced to three years in prison for violations relating to homosexual acts and alcohol (“99 in Prison”, 2014). In 2015, two activists from the French LGBTQ organization Femen protesting the treatment of homosexuals in Morocco kissed topless in front of Hassan tower in Rabat. The act caused a national uproar, as well as the conviction of two homosexual Moroccan men who repeated the gesture the next day (“Femen Protestors”, 2015).

Most recently a video released online showing two men being dragged from their private home in Beni Mellal, being beaten and publically humiliated in the street, and arrested by authorities for alleged homosexual activity. One of the men was convicted for public drunkenness, sexual deviancy, and sentenced to four months in prison with an additional fine of 500 dirhams. Two of the attackers were convicted as well, but only received two-month suspended sentences. Following the videos release on social media, national and international LGBTQ groups picked up the cause. After petitions, protest and increasing international pressure, a judge released the two men that had been attacked and jailed the four assaulters (“Victims of Attack”, 2016).

Origins of Discrimination Against LGBTQ Individuals: Religious Discrimination

Aside from Article 489, discrimination against homosexuals in Morocco can be traced back to prevailing Islamic theology. Islam is the official religion of the state and is practiced by 98.9% of Moroccans (“Morocco Population 2015”, 2015). This does not mean every Moroccan practices Islam, or that all practicing Moroccans have negative ideas surrounding homosexuality. However, it is important to note the correlation between Islamic condemnation of homosexuality and the marginalization of LGBTQ individuals in Moroccan society.

Discrimination of homosexuality in Islam originates from the story of Lot in the Qur’an. The story describes two angels descending into the town of Sodom and Gomorrah. Lot accepts these two angels into his house (The Holy Qur’an, Sura 11:77). Men from the village come to Lot and insist he give them the angels, supposedly so they could have sex with them. (The Holy Qur’an, Sura 11:78) Lot offered up his daughters instead. Allah observed this sinful interaction and “rain[ed] upon them stones of layered hard clay” (The Holy Qur’an, Sura 11: 82). Other sections of the Qur’an include further condemnations of homosexuality, such as this verse from Sura 26, “do you approach males among the worlds and leave what your lord has created for you as mates? But you are a people transgressing” (The Holy Quran, Sura 26:164-5).

In addition to the Qur’an there exist a multitude of Hadiths, interpretations of the Qur’an, that are said to condemn sexuality. For example, in the Abu Dawud Book of Hadiths, it is stated that “if you find anyone doing as Lot’s people did, kill the one who does it, and the one to whom it is done” (Dawud, 3:4447). Another from Sahih Bukhari says, “The Prophet cursed the effeminate men and those women who assume the

similitude [manners] of men. He also said, ‘turn them out of your houses.’ He turned such-and-such person out” (Bukhari, 82:820).

Article 489 and religious stigmatization surrounding homosexuality means that the LGBTQ community is not accepted in Moroccan society. By extension, organizations advocating for the rights of homosexuals are also not accepted, and are unable to operate freely in public spaces for fear of persecution both from the Moroccan state and its citizens. Because of this, organizations are forced to occupy alternative spaces separate from the public sphere in order to advocate for LGBTQ rights.

Methodology

In order to investigate the nature of these alternative spaces, I conducted a qualitative, descriptive study of the four primary LGBTQ organizations in Morocco: KifKif, Mali, Akaliyat and Aswat. Throughout my research, I interviewed one representative from KifKif, one from Mali, three members of Akaliyat and two members of Aswat. In addition to interviews with these organizations, I spoke with ten LGBTQ identifying individuals from Morocco. Such interviews were relatively informal and will not be officially included in my analysis as most of the discussions were not directly relevant to my research. However, I would consider them integral to my background research, as they gave me a better understanding of the nature of the LGBTQ community. I also conducted an interview with Dr. Mokhtar El Harras, an academic specializing on the public sphere in Morocco.

In addition formal interviews and informal discussions, I also pursued participant observation tactics in an attempt to further understand the LGBTQ community. This included frequenting spaces in which LGBTQ individuals were known to be, like specific

cafes, bars and houses of LGBTQ individuals and activists. Through my research in physical spaces such as cafes and bars in Rabat, I also gained access to virtual spaces occupied by the Moroccan LGBTQ community. These virtual spaces namely consisted of groups on Facebook in which LGBTQ individuals would post about issues, events and manifestations concerning the wider LGBTQ movement in Morocco.

Finally, in order to supplement my in person interviews and participant observation, I also conducted an in depth analysis of Jürgen Habermas' theory of the public sphere. In this analysis, I address the criticism surrounding Habermas' theory and the issue with applying the theory to Morocco and the LGBTQ movement. However, by employing the theory of other scholars such as Nancy Fraser, Michael Warner, Asef Bayat and Mathieu Hilgers, I expand upon Habermas' theory of the public sphere so it can more readily be applied to the LGBTQ movement in Morocco. It is my hope that by doing so, this research will contribute to the discourse surrounding the public sphere and modern social movements that go beyond Western oriented scholarship. I also wish to contribute to an increasing discussion surrounding the Moroccan LGBTQ movement and LGBTQ rights in Morocco.

Research Design

For my interviews, I compiled three general templates for academics, individuals and organizations, which are included in the appendix of this paper. Each had questions created specifically for the type of interviewee and situation. Questions directed towards academics focused primarily on the public sphere and how it related to social movements in Morocco. Questions for LGBTQ individuals and organizations, although also relating to the public sphere, were more specifically centered on LGBTQ activism and LGBTQ

experiences in Morocco. Although I had a general template, I also included specific questions relevant to the interviewee.

Before each interview, I presented participants with a standard confidentiality agreement form, also included in this paper's appendix, and required a signature before conducting the interview. For those I interviewed in person, I obtained both verbal and written consent. For those interviewed over the phone, I sent an email or Facebook inbox in which I obtained electronic consent. A number of participants consented to having their full names published in this study, while many only consented to have their first names used. For those who requested to remain completely anonymous, I will refer to them as "Aswat member" or "Akaliyat representative" in order to maintain confidentiality.

Research Sites and Subject Population(s)

Almost the entirety of my research was conducted in Rabat, Morocco. The reasoning for this was situational. As the LGBTQ movement in Morocco is relatively underground, it took a significant amount of time to both locate and gain the trust of LGBTQ identifying individuals in Rabat. Although other cities in Morocco, such as Casablanca and Marrakech, are more known for their sizable LGBTQ populations it would have been inadvisable to seek out these communities due to time constraints.

I initiated my research by exploring spaces in which the LGBTQ community occupies. Places like Café Renaissance in Rabat served as a space in which I observed individuals from the LGBTQ community. From this I was able to form relationships with such individuals and interact with them in other spaces in Rabat such as apartments, houses and bars. In addition, I was also able to gain access to Facebook groups in which

LGBTQ Moroccans use to post relevant news, information on manifestations and opinions concerning the LGBTQ movement.

Through these connections I was able to meet Ismael, a representative from Mali. After my discussion with Ismael, he was gracious enough to introduce me to and serve as a translator for an interview with two representatives from Akaliyat, which was conducted in a mix of French and Darija. Also through contacts made at Renaissance, I was able to have a discussion with a well-known LGBTQ activist and member of Aswat, who has requested to remain anonymous. As Aswat operates anonymously and is well known for its aversion to Westerners, I had not expected to be able to facilitate such a conversation. So I also had a fellow classmate, Ben Stevenson, ask Maha (another Aswat representative) questions, as he was able to arrange a formal interview with the organization. Information from Stevenson's interview will also be utilized in this paper.

Through messaging with former SIT student Bella Pori, I was able to obtain the contact information for Samir Bargachi, the executive director of KifKif. KifKif is based in Spain, so I interviewed Mr. Bargachi over the phone with the help of a translator, as Mr. Bargachi spoke in Spanish. Finally, through connections with Center for Cross Cultural Learning (CCCL) employees to Mohammed V University, I was able to set up an in-person interview with Dr. Mokhtar El Harras, conducted entirely in English.

Ethical Considerations and Limitations

LGBTQ individuals are so stigmatized in Morocco, so it is difficult to gain access to the community without first building a trusting relationship. As a result of this, the methods in which I conducted my research often blurred the line between professionalism

and genuine friendship. Many of my research subjects are also those who I would consider my friends.

In an attempt to mitigate this potential concern, I made very clear that professionalism was needed when conducting interviews with those I had a personal relationship with. These situations were restricted specifically to discussing my research and topics relevant to it. In addition, such interviews were conducted in more formal settings such as schools or libraries in order to further implement boundaries.

It is also important to address the limitations of being an American student conducting research in a foreign country in a community in which I am not a part of. I identify as a queer woman, so I could relate to my subjects in that we identified as LGBTQ individuals. However, it is important to recognize that being an upper-middle class, white, American woman puts me in a position of extreme privilege. Such a position not only affected the nature of what my interviewees revealed to me, but also in the way I thought and processed such information. While I made a conscious effort to not do so, I certainly came in with a Western centric mindset. This also somewhat complicated the fact that my research addresses the limitations of Western theory.

Furthermore, as I was only in Morocco for four months, my research was conducted on a very small scale. I spoke with some individuals, academics and organizations located throughout Morocco. However, most of my research was conducted in Rabat. While I believe these interviews provided me with a better understanding on the discourse surrounding Moroccan LGBTQ rights, this paper in no way represents of the opinions of an entire social movement and I can in no way claim to speak for the entire LGBTQ community in Morocco.

Literature Review

In order to provide a framework to discuss the ways in which the LGBTQ community occupies and utilizes space in Morocco, I conducted a comprehensive analysis of the concept of the public sphere, as outlined by Jürgen Habermas in his book “The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into the Category of a Bourgeois Society.”

Habermas’ work was incredibly influential and is considered the foundation of the contemporary public sphere theories. He was one of the first to define space as not only physical but as an abstract concept in where meanings and ideas can be articulated, distributed and negotiated (Oskar & Alexander, 1993, p. 26). However, there exist many critics of Habermas, particularly in the context of modern social movement theory. The works of Nancy Fraser, Michael Warner, Asef Bayat and Mathieu Hilgers serve to explicate issues with Habermas’ theory in relation to the LGBTQ movement in Morocco. Nancy Fraser challenges Habermas’ claim that the public sphere is utopian and an all-inclusive space. She notes that a multitude of counterpublics exist, reserved for those excluded from the wider public sphere (Fraser, 1990). Michael Warner challenges Habermas’ stipulations that discourse in the public sphere must be conducted in a rational manner (Warner, 2002). Mathieu Hilgers outlines the limitations of the theory of the public sphere in non-democracies (Hilgers, 2014) and Asef Bayat explicates the limitations of a Western centric theory in describing modern social movements (Bayat, 2010).

In “The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere”, Habermas outlines convergence of the public and private spheres through a linguistic and historical analysis. Beginning in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, Habermas notes of the development

of a number of cultural and social conditions in Europe, such as the rise of newspapers, coffeehouses, salons, that created a context in which argument and discussion could take place. Such developments led to the formation of what Habermas refers to as the bourgeois public sphere. In this sphere the concept of the ‘public’ was no longer opposed to the ‘private’ lives of individuals but instead existed in opposition to the power of the state, and held accountable via publicity. Habermas defines the bourgeois public sphere as:

“A sphere of private people [coming] together as a public... to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the... publically relevant sphere. The medium of this political confrontation was peculiar and without historical precedent: people’s public use of their reason” (Habermas, 1989, p. 27).

Discussion in the public sphere, Habermas notes in the quote above, should be conducted in a rational-critical manner and be about issues relating to the common good (Habermas, 1989, p. 28). In his collection of essays “Publics and Counterpublics”, Michael Warner elaborates on the concept of rational-critical discourse in the context of modern social movements. Habermas, Warner explicates, conceives of “social movements [taking] shape in civil society” and arising from the “contexts of [rational] critical discussion” (Warner, 2002, p. 47).

The issue with this conception according to Warner is that modern social movements, especially surrounding gender and sexuality, do not always conform to this model of rational-critical debate. People participating in such movements “seek to transform fundamental styles of embodiment, identity and social relations” (Warner, 2002, p. 51). This is practically impossible to do in a rational-critical, disinterested manner. When fighting to change the discourse surrounding ones own identity, “the

ability to bracket one's embodiment and status is not simply what Habermas calls making public one's reason." It is an emotional struggle, "profoundly linked to education and to dominant forms of masculinity" (Warner, 2002, p. 51).

In her piece "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Democracy", Nancy Fraser elaborates on the notion of 'bracketing.' The action itself rests on the ability of individuals to disregard social status and identity when conducting discourse in the public sphere. Habermas believes this not only to be possible, but a marker of the public sphere itself. Because of the 'bracketing' of status, everyone had the ability to participate on a leveled field (Fraser, 1990, p. 63). Fraser believes the concept of bracketing is invalid in stratified societies and also notes that the bourgeois conception of the public sphere is "a masculinist ideological notion that functioned to legitimate an emergent form of class rule" (Fraser, 1990, p. 62). In other words, the public sphere as understood by Habermas was an institutional vehicle for those in power to dominate the conversation.

Fraser also goes on to describe the existence of counterpublics, spaces created by those excluded from the bourgeois public sphere, that Habermas fails to recognize in his work. These 'subaltern' counterpublics exist "in order to signal there are parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses, which permit them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests and needs" (Fraser, 1990, p. 67). Such counterpublics serve not only as "spaces of withdrawal and regroupment [but] also function as bases and training grounds for agitational activities directed towards wider publics." This dual character is incredibly important, as it "enables subaltern counterpublics partially to offset... the

unjust participatory privileges enjoyed by members of dominant social groups in stratified societies” (Fraser, 1990, p. 68).

Fraser and Warner both point out the incompatibility of Habermas’ theory of the public sphere with modern social movement theory, which fails to account for the exclusion of marginalized groups and the resulting formation of counterpublics in opposition to the wider public sphere. However, both Warner and Fraser’s critiques provide helpful vocabulary to describe the ways in which marginalized groups engage and interact with the public sphere. Fraser’s concept of subaltern counterpublics is particularly useful in articulating the ways the LGBTQ community in Morocco occupies and utilizes space. As will be further explained in the analysis section, the LGBTQ movement is excluded from the public sphere to the extent that it exists in Morocco. Due to this, the movement has retreated into alternative spaces, created counterpublics. These areas, much like Fraser describes, serve both as a safe space for discussion and to plan actions to subvert the state. Furthermore, the way in which many of these groups conduct discourse and pursue activism is not rational in the way Habermas describes. Discourse is deeply emotional, contingent to personal identity and the wellbeing of other LGBTQ individuals.

Although Fraser and Warner’s critique of Habermas’ theory provides important terminology through which to describe the LGBTQ movement in Morocco, it is also important to note both authors write from a Western perspective. This is problematic when using such theory to describe social movements in a non-Western context. In his book “Life as Politics” Asef Bayat outlines the issues with the realm of social movement theory, and notes that many perspectives are rooted in genealogies from Western society.

He notes, “given what the dominant social movement theories draw on western experience, to what extent they can help [one] understand the process of solidarity or collective building... in the non-western politically closed” (Bayat, 2010, p. 4) environment?

French theorist Mathieu Hilgers elaborates on this concept in the context of the theory of the public sphere. In the “Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere”, Habermas outlines the public sphere as it exists in Western, democratic society. In his work, Hilgers questions whether there even exists a public sphere in a semi-authoritarian context. Hilgers defines the state of Morocco, as well as many other Middle East North Africa (MENA) countries, as a “hybrid regime” (Hilgers, 2014, p. 149). Such regimes, Hilgers notes, use the rhetoric of democratic institutions while in actuality existing as an authoritarian state. These governments allow the existence of public space while minimizing the emanation of its subversive potential. In other words, those in power need to maintain the appearance of a public sphere in order to ensure its legitimacy but beyond that the public space and the discourse that occurs within it is heavily monitored and controlled by the state (Hilgers, 2014, p. 152).

In such a manufactured version of the public sphere, the ability of collective social movements to use public space as a way of emancipation remains limited, particularly if such movements are criminalized and marginalized by the state. If such tactics of collective action are ineffective in creating change in hybrid regimes, how do movements affect change? Bayat introduces the term “quiet encroachment of the ordinary” in order to categorize the way in which movements resist the state when they do not have the space to do so publically or collectively. Bayat describes the act as

“prolonged mobilization with episodic collective action” by “ordinary people on the propertied, powerful or the public in order to survive and improve their lives” (Bayat, 2010, p. 56). Such individuals occupy subaltern spaces, either physically in cafes and bars, or indirectly through mass media, in order to challenge the logic of power. Bayat notes that such tactics should be recognized as a legitimate form of resistance, particularly in non-Western contexts where the public sphere is not fully developed and does not allow conventional resistance tactics.

“The local should be recognized as a significant site of struggle as well as a unit of analysis; forms of struggles must be discovered and acknowledged; organized protest as such may not necessarily be privileged in situation where suppression [hybrid regimes] rule. The value of a more flexible, small-scale, and un-bureaucratic activism should, therefore, be acknowledged” (Bayat, 2010, p. 52).

Bayat and Hilgers make a crucial point; Western theory surrounding the public sphere and social movements is not universally applicable to non-Western contexts. Bayat notes this does render the theory completely meaningless. One can still use the theory to understand how Moroccans are attempting to change and restructure the public sphere through activism. However, it is necessary to recognize the prevailing theoretical grasp as essentialist and attempt to contextualize the theory based on the social, cultural and political environment of the social movements themselves (Bayat, 2010).

Such is the case when applying the theory of the public sphere and the concept of collective action to Morocco. The prevailing conception of the public sphere, as outlined by Habermas, is insufficient when trying to explain the nature of the Moroccan LGBTQ movement. The public sphere as it applies to modern social movements assumes rational discourse and a full-fledged public sphere, which is not the case in Morocco. However, by employing alternative terminology to supplement the theories shortcomings, one can

begin to contextualize and understand the ways in which the LGBTQ movement operates in a Moroccan context.

Findings and Analysis

In order to answer what spaces LGBTQ organizations and collectives occupy in Moroccan society and what methods the LGBTQ movement use in order engage in activism and influence public discourse, I will provide a comprehensive summary of my interviews with four Moroccan LGBTQ organizations: KifKif, Mali, Akaliyat and Aswat. Through these interviews, I found that these organizations occupy spaces in a way that very much embodies Nancy Fraser's definition of a subaltern counterpublic. Although organizations occupy and utilize alternative spaces as a place of retreat and consolidation, many of the actions of these organizations are directed towards the wider public.

Furthermore, each group has a variety of different tactics and ways in which they believe activism should be conducted. As a result, the ways in which they attempt to impact public discourse varies depending on the organization. The organizations KifKif, Akaliyat and Mali generally employ tactics in an attempt to increase public discourse surrounding LGBTQ rights in Morocco. Aswat, conversely, operates anonymously and separate from the public sphere. For Aswat, tactics center primarily around protecting persecuted LGBTQ individuals in Morocco.

Methods of LGBTQ Organizations

KifKif

Samir Bargachi founded KifKif, meaning "same same" in Darija, in 2004. When speaking with Mr. Bargachi on the phone, he noted that the political climate in Morocco at the time was ready for a radical shift in discourse. It had been just five years since the death of Hassan II and the new King, Mohammed VI was young and offered promise of

reform. The organization itself was founded upon two main principles. The first was to fight against the discrimination of LGBTQ individuals in Morocco. The second was to combat homophobia on a larger scale by aiming to abolish Article 489.

The NGO, now based in Spain, moved from Tétouan a few years ago in order to cooperate with the larger European LGBTQ movement and to operate without fear of persecution from the Moroccan government. KifKif does not have a formal office for similar reasons. According to Bargachi, Article 489 not only criminalizes homosexuality but also implies any formal organization in support of homosexuality is illegal as well. At this point, Bargachi says the organization is prepared to operate on a wider and more public scale, but the only real issue is the law. Due to this, the organization functions remotely and with relative anonymity, straying away from public protests or manifestations. Currently, KifKif operates at a capacity of two full time employees and ten permanent volunteers, although they have many other volunteers circulate in a non-permanent capacity. Many volunteers are based in Spain, but Bargachi notes they have a large contingency working within Morocco.

KifKif is working on a multitude of social work project to support LGBTQ youth. The organization hosts sessions to help teens cope with the negative repercussions of coming out to family members and friends. KifKif has a center in Casablanca called “Axxam” to house youth who are kicked out of their homes by unsupportive family members. In addition to social programs, KifKif also conducts larger campaigns in cooperation with international LGBTQ organizations, namely the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA) to fight for the repeal of Article

489 and against the global discrimination of LGBTQ individuals. These campaigns, Bargachi notes, are conducted mostly online through email and social media.

In terms of working with other LGBTQ organizations in Morocco, Mr. Bargachi seemed to be cautiously optimistic for the potential of future cooperation. Bargachi mentioned that he would look forward to working with Aswat and Akaliyat in the future. However, at the moment, he believes they have some fundamental differences that would prevent cooperation. Specifically, Bargachi pointed to the differences between KifKif and Aswat. Aswat, he noted, is very “Arab” oriented. They do not like to work with European or international organizations, and focus exclusively on the movement within Morocco. Bargachi also noted he will collaborate with Mali for the first time this upcoming spring, but does not consider it to be more of a feminist organization than one exclusively promoting LGBTQ rights (S. Bargachi, personal communication, April 29, 2016).

Akaliyat

In comparison to KifKif, Akaliyat is a newer addition to the LGBTQ movement in Morocco, having only been established within the last few years. Also unlike KifKif, which has NGO status, Akaliyat identifies collective and LGBTQ magazine. When speaking to two representatives of the collective, they mentioned the goal of the magazine is to educate the Moroccan public on sexual minorities and homophobia. One of the primary reasons homophobia is so prevalent, they said, is because there was a dearth of education surrounding how to discuss homosexual people. There was no official word in Arabic for gay until about ten years ago when the term “mithly” was introduced (Frosh, 2013). Even now, many people resort to slurs when referring to homosexuals or

homosexual activity. Specifically, they noted, Moroccans tended to confound the term “pervert” with “homosexual”.

Like KifKif, Akaliyat operates on a smaller scale. The organization totals to around 30 people, most of them volunteers, and they don’t have a formal office. The reason for this, one of the representatives explained, is because they have little access to the public sphere. In Moroccan society, transgressions and basic lack of human rights confine them to operating on the Internet. The paper itself is published exclusively online, but Akaliyat also has a Facebook and twitter page. Currently, their efforts are directed towards organizing a demonstration for the international day against homophobia on May 7th, and publishing another magazine before Ramadan on the topic of religious minorities.

When asked about the future, one representative said they are looking to grow their organization and eventually diffuse their magazine to a wider European audience in a multitude of languages, not just French and Arabic. Similarly to KifKif, Akaliyat also wishes to collaborate with other Moroccan LGBTQ organizations, but recognizes there are differences in approach that may make cooperation unlikely at the present time. For example, one representative noted that Mali’s tactics are very confrontational and aggressive. The goal of Akaliyat, conversely, is simply to make people aware of the issues surrounding LGBTQ people (Akaliyat Representatives, Personal Communication, April 28, 2016).

Mali

According to Ismael, a member of Mali, the organization defines itself as an alternative movement for individual freedoms. Founded in 2009, Mali fights against

discrimination of the LGBTQ community and for individual freedom of expression. Instead of general education, Mali operates by focusing on individual cases of discrimination within Morocco. Mali often utilizes social media platforms when campaigning for the rights of LGBTQ individuals. Recently, they used Facebook and twitter to circulate petitions to release the two men convicted of homosexual activity in Beni Mellal. They also sent representatives to protest in front of the courthouse the day of the ruling, a rare public display of solidarity. However, due to intimidation by the government, such public displays are not often possible. According to Samir Bargachi of KifKif, Mali previously attempted to organize a Moroccan gay pride parade (S. Bargachi, Personal Communication, April 29, 2016). The details of the location and how far the planning process got was unclear, but the protest never came to fruition.

Like KifKif and Akaliyat, Mali believes in the power of collective action and collaboration with other LGBTQ groups in Morocco. However, when talking to Ismael, he also acknowledged that certain fundamental differences might prevent cooperation. Ismael cited Aswat as a primary example. Awat, he noted, highly rejects European cooperation and prefers to operate with a very select groups of Moroccans, whereas Mali prefers to work with European groups in order to further their cause (Ismael, Personal Communication, April 22, 2016).

Aswat

Aswat is a collective that was founded in 2009, its mission to end discrimination against the LGBTQ community and repeal Article 489 in Morocco. Aswat, similar to Akaliyat, began as an online magazine operated by 8 people. However, over eight years, Aswat has expanded to a group of 15 individuals and the collective has diversified its

tactics to include more concrete forms of activism. Aswat operates primarily on a case-by-case basis and their tactics vary accordingly.

For example, a few years ago, a transsexual was attacked and subsequently jailed in Fes. Aswat, monitoring the situation closely, chose to send a team to Fes to work on the case. The team contacted NGOs in the area, asking for support. In addition, they circulated a petition signed by lawyers and public personalities in support of freeing the transsexual individual. Aswat also provided a comprehensive legal analysis based on Article 489 in an attempt to prove the conviction of the transsexual unconstitutional. Although Aswat was heavily involved in the case and present at the hearing, a member of the team noted they were still in contact with the victim over WhatsApp, all of their work was done completely anonymously. However, in a different case in Temara, Aswat operated in a much more public manner, posting on social media and releasing official statements, but only because the government had acted first by publicizing the names of those arrested for homosexual activity.

It is important to note that although Aswat occasionally operates in a more public capacity, they are firmly against public protest. Aswat does not believe in public protest because such demonstrations lack effectiveness. Maha, a representative from Aswat, noted that they would “never go protest about gay rights in front of Parliament... The government would not have to do anything about us, because they know that the citizens would do their harassing for them” (Maha, Personal Communication, April 29, 2016).

Furthermore, public protest can be extremely dangerous. A member of Aswat noted that government intimidation and fear of harassment is a primary barrier to public forms of activism. This member explained that she believes the government has

knowledge of every member of the organization, and will intimidate him or her should they believe any of their actions are a threat to the state. She was recently forced to move apartments due to her involvement with the case of the transsexual in Fes (Aswat Member, Personal Communication, April 30, 2016).

Aswat's tactics and beliefs are very different than any other Moroccan LGBTQ organization. A main factor of this is that they are strongly opposed to outside cooperation, particularly with European LGBTQ organizations. This puts them particularly at odds with Mali, who often cooperates with European organizations. This past summer Femen, a French LGBTQ organization, came to Morocco in coordination with Mali to protest against a recent decision by a court that resulted in the jailing of three homosexual men. Two Femen activists with "in gay we trust" written across their chests, stripped to the waist and kissed in the courtyard by Hassan tower in Rabat. The next day, two Moroccan men imitated the gesture kissing in the same spot. Their faces were publicized on Moroccan national television, eventually leading to protesters gathered outside the men's houses and videos threatening the men circulating on the internet ("Femen protestors", 2015).

An Aswat member noted that this is the problem when it comes to outside activist groups; they don't understand the context of Morocco. The actions of Femen resulted in the harassment of two innocent men, but completely disrespectful to Moroccan culture. Furthermore, the media frenzy completely derailed Aswat's progress on the case. Ultimately, the member from Aswat noted that only organizations that understand the political context in Morocco could affect change. In Morocco, she said,

anonymous acts are often more useful than public displays of resistance (Aswat Member, Personal Communication, April 30, 2016).

Summary of Methods

KifKif, Akaliyat, Mali and Aswat all have different tactics and approaches to advocating for LGBTQ rights. This often limits the possibility of collaboration between groups. However, there are commonalities in the ways in which these organizations occupy space. Article 489 makes any formal organization advocating for LGBTQ rights illegal. Because of this, organizations must operate on a smaller scale, meeting in places such as houses of members and cafes, instead of having formal offices. The spaces these organizations utilize very much embody Nancy Fraser's definition of counterpublics. They exist simultaneously as a space of withdrawal, but also a base to organize tactics and 'agitational activities' directed at the wider public (Fraser, 1990, p. 68). However, public discourse in Morocco is much monitored and controlled by the government. Often, this means that tactics such as public protest and civil disobedience are not only ineffective, as rhetoric surrounding public protest is controlled by the state, so even if organizations protest in public the state usually has a reason for letting them do so, but they are also dangerous. Exposing yourself as an advocate for LGBTQ rights not only makes you a target of the state, but also subject to harassment by other Moroccan citizens. Often because of this reason, organizations must employ alternative tactics in order to advocate for LGBTQ rights. Organizations like KifKif and Mali resort to operating outside of Morocco in order to achieve greater freedom of speech. Aswat, conversely, operates with almost complete anonymity within Morocco.

For all of these organizations, the Internet serves as a safer, more anonymous mechanism to disseminate information. With every representative I talked to, each made sure to mention the significance of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and even email in creating effective campaigns and spreading awareness. In his article “Internet and the Political Public Sphere”, Terje Rasmussen notes of the transformative nature the Internet has had on the public sphere. “With social media platforms,” Rasmussen notes, “the network of...communication is more open ended and distributed; has thus fewer central nodes, gatekeepers and agenda setters” (Rasmussen, 2014, p. 1320).

Dr. Mokhtar El Harras from Mohammed V University also supports this claim. For the past year, Professor Harras, along with two colleagues, has been researching the reconstruction of public space as a way of political socialization and participation. In an interview with Professor Harras, he noted that “the mutual relationship between virtual and physical space” is becoming increasingly important factor when looking at social movements in Morocco. Based on his research Harras postulates, “we cannot fully understand what happens in the public space without knowing what is happening in social media and social networking sites.” Networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, he says, “play an important role in expressing the needs and gains” of a collective group of people. When it comes to online activism, it is important to realize not everyone has the ability to access physical space. Some social movements act on a dual level, within the virtual and the physical space, while some are only able to exist in the virtual” (Dr. Harras, Personal Communication, April 26, 2016).

Such is the case with the LGBTQ movement in Morocco at the present time. Through publishing magazines online, photos and hashtags supporting campaigns on

Twitter, or circulating petitions on Facebook, the Internet allows LGBTQ organizations in Morocco to bypass the medium of physical space by connecting and mobilizing individuals in the sphere of the web. These can be conducted with greater anonymity and with less personal accountability than a street protest or other forms of public civil disobedience.

According to Harras, one does not need to occupy physical space in order to impact discourse. Although this is a logical claim, it is difficult to quantify, particularly in the context of the LGBTQ movement in Morocco. In the next section, I will explore to what extent LGBTQ organizations have an impact on the discourse of the wider public sphere in Morocco. Based on the work of Mathieu Hilgers, as well as opinions from Professor Harris and Akaliyat, Mali, KifKif and Aswat representatives, I will conclude the tactics of the LGBTQ movement have had a somewhat measurable affect on public discourse.

LGBTQ Organization's Effect on Public Discourse

As previously mentioned, Mathieu Hilgers outlines the existence of public spaces in semi-authoritarian contexts in “Espaces publics liminaires en contexte semi-autoritaire.” Semi-authoritarian regimes, Hilgers notes, give the appearance of a thriving public sphere and civil society in order to maintain the façade of a democracy while simultaneously monitoring public discourse. In recent years Hilgers suggests that “the multiplication and mutation of public spaces suggests the possible existence of a slow but powerful transformation” of the public sphere in semi-authoritarian regimes, particularly after the Arab Spring (Hilgers, 2014, p. 158).

Dr. Mokhtar El Harras' research certainly supports this claim. He notes, "before [the Arab Spring] the public space was a space that was forbidden, it was almost fully occupied by the state." However, after the February 20th movement in Morocco, "there has been a reconstruction of the meaning of space." Not only are counterpublics becoming more developed as sites of resistance but also the public sphere itself is expanding. Now, Harras notes, "more and more people are allowed to speak and participate" (Dr. Harras, Personal Communication, April 26, 2016).

It is evident that both alternative spaces and the people that use as sites of resistance to the state are growing, particularly in Morocco. However, Hilgers notes that the extent to which those operating in these alternative spaces can have an effect on the wider public sphere varies. According to Hilgers, the ability to challenge and change discourse depends on the consistency of the authoritarian regime in regulating the activities of actors within these counterpublics (Hilgers, 2014, p. 158).

Within the context of the LGBTQ movement in Morocco, the state has a good handle on the regulation of activity in the public sphere. Based on my interviews with KifKif, Akaliyat, Mali and Aswat, state intimidation seems to be effective in silencing the voice of the LGBTQ movement within the wider public sphere. KifKif was forced to relocate to Spain in order to operate with more freedom, Mali directs a lot of its efforts to foreign protests supporting international LGBTQ rights because it is unable to do so in Morocco. Akaliyat is unable to collectivize and move beyond publishing an online magazine, and Aswat is forced to operate with complete anonymity for fear of persecution by the government.

However, the state is much less effective in controlling these alternative spaces the LGBTQ movement has carved out for itself. These alternative spaces are unregulated by the government, so much so that LGBTQ organizations are able to collectivize and are relatively free to engage in actions directed at the wider public sphere. Such spaces of resistance mostly exist in the virtual sphere. KifKif, Mali, Akaliyat and Aswat all have a strong online presence. Mali, Akaliyat and Aswat in particular have thriving Facebook and Twitter pages where they regularly post articles and news updates. Such a presence allows each organization to conduct full campaigns and circulate petitions, all entirely online.

According to Samir Bargachi, such tactics are affecting the public sphere in a noticeable way. Ten years ago, there was no discourse surrounding homosexuality in Morocco and only one organization advocating for LGBTQ rights. Now, there are four. Bargachi believes that forms of media are now much more neutral when covering homosexuality. Politically, he believes it is much less possible to detain people for being homosexual than it was a decade ago. The recent ruling in Beni Mellal is an example of such a change. The two men convicted for homosexual activity were released, and all attackers received convictions. In addition, efforts to release the two men garnered international support and media coverage. Even five years ago, Bargachi says, this would not have happened (S. Bargachi, Personal Communication, April 29, 2016).

A representative of Akaliyat also noted a change in discourse over the past few years. The most evident difference has been the shift in terminology. Five years ago, people still referred to homosexuality as “perversion.” Now, with the introduction of the term “mithly” directly translated to mean ‘like me’, people are referring to LGBTQ

individuals in a less offensive way. Although this is a small change, she says, it is an important step in the right direction (Akaliyat Representative, personal communication, April 28, 2016).

These factors point to a small change in discourse surrounding homosexuality in Morocco. There are now four organizations working towards Moroccan LGBTQ rights, terminology about homosexuality and how it is being discussed in media is becoming more neutral, and the ability for the government to detain individuals suspected of homosexual activity is decreasing. It is important to note that these changes are most likely not only a result of the work of LGBTQ organizations in Morocco. Other geopolitical factors, such as the increasing pressure to conform to international human rights standards, should also be taken into consideration, especially when looking at the success of cases like Beni Mellal. However, this should in no way undermine the accomplishments of the LGBTQ movement in Morocco that has undoubtedly grown within the past ten years.

Conclusion

Due to Article 489 and a variety of other social, religious and cultural factors, the LGBTQ community is a marginalized one in Morocco. Because of such discrimination, these individuals in Morocco cannot freely occupy public spaces. The same applies for LGBTQ organizations and the greater movement LGBTQ Movement. LGBTQ organizations in Morocco do not have access to the public sphere and are forced to exist in alternative spaces in order to engage in activism and advocate for the rights of LGBTQ individuals.

Jürgen Habermas' theory of the public sphere provides a framework through which to describe how LGBTQ organizations exist and operate in such spaces. However, the theory on its own is insufficient and cannot adequately explain the nature of the Moroccan LGBTQ movement. There are three main problems with Habermas' theory of in the context of the LGBTQ Movement in Morocco. The first is Habermas' lack of acknowledgement of marginalized groups, such as the LGBTQ community, that are excluded from participating in the public sphere. The second is assuming all discourse conducted in the public sphere is rational-critical and free of emotion, when discourse surrounding the Moroccan LGBTQ movement is incredibly personal and emotional. Finally, the theory itself is based upon Western conceptions of democracy, making its applicability to non-Western contexts limited. However, using the concepts and terminology of Habermas' critics such as Nancy Fraser, Michael Warner, Mathieu Hilgers and Asef Bayat to address the problems with and expand upon the concept of the public sphere creates a more comprehensive way in which to analyze the LGBTQ movement and how they occupy space in Morocco.

Ultimately, such an analysis shows that LGBTQ organizations utilize alternative physical spaces like specific cafes, houses and bars, and virtual spaces like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to engage in discourse and promote LGBTQ rights. Such spaces, both virtual and physical, very much embody what Nancy Fraser refers to as a subaltern counterpublic. LGBTQ organizations use these spaces both as sites "of withdrawal and regroupment" and as "bases and training grounds for agitational activities directed towards wider publics" (Fraser, 1990, p. 68).

According to representatives from Morocco's four LGBTQ organizations: KifKif, Mali, Akaliyat and Aswat, such 'agitational activities' are succeeding in impacting public discourse. This can be seen in the changing terminology on homosexuality, the increasing neutrality in media depiction surrounding LGBTQ individuals, as well as the difficulty to detain those suspected of homosexual activity.

While it is clear that the LGBTQ movement in Morocco has an increasing impact on public discourse, the future impact of the LGBTQ movement on the public sphere is uncertain. Will the LGBTQ movement gain enough collective agency to fully occupy the public sphere, or will they continue to develop, exist and resist in these subaltern counterpublics?

According to Samir Bargachi of KifKif, the organization has the resources to operate on a more grand and public scale; the only obstacle is Article 489 (S. Bargachi, Personal Communication, April 29, 2016). Other organizations expressed similar sentiments. A representative from Akaliyat noted that the goal of the organization is to eventually attain the public space, but legal repression from the state is the main obstacle to this at the present time. Bargachi noted that ten years ago, it was difficult to imagine this law ever being abolished the idea of it is becoming more and more plausible.

Unfortunately, there really exists no surefire to predict when Article 489 will be abolished in Morocco. At the present time, LGBTQ organizations are operating on a very small scale, and disagreements amongst organizations serve as a barrier to potential cooperation. It is clear that the LGBTQ movement has many obstacles to overcome before it can gain enough agency to seriously challenge the state in the public sphere.

However, for the purpose of future studies, it would be useful to continue to map the trajectory of the LGBTQ movement in Morocco and begin to develop a more concrete framework through which to analyze how the opening of public spaces leads to the ability of critical actors to influence the state. As Mathieu Hilgers notes in “Espaces publics liminaires en contexte semi-autoritaire”, in order to truly analyze this phenomenon, one must “establish a public private continuum that goes beyond the dichotomy of the Western philosophical tradition to better reflect the variety of publics and the multiplicity of spaces” and “describe the collective control models specific to these sites and identify the processes by which they are built up as collective spaces.” Ultimately, such methods “will determine whether [one] sees a real transformation of categories... or if [critical actors] can make change in these semi-authoritarian societies” (Hilgers, 2014, p. 163).

Appendix A

Interview Questions for Organizations

1. When was your organization founded?
2. Why was this organization founded?
3. What is the organizations mission?
4. What is the organization doing to achieve this mission?
5. What are your methods?
6. What current projects are you working on right now?
7. Where is your organization based?
8. In what capacity does your organization operate?
9. Does your organization have a formal office?
10. In the future, would you see your organization operating on a wider and more public scale?
11. What do you believe the goals of the LGBTQ movement in Morocco are?
12. How do the goals of the wider LGBTQ Moroccan movement differ from the goals of your organization?
13. Do you think it is possible for these goals to be achieved in the near future?

Appendix B

Interview Questions for Academics

1. What is your name?
2. What is your profession?
3. What current projects are you working on?
4. Does a full-fledged public sphere exist in Morocco?
5. What specific characteristics does the public sphere embody in Morocco?
6. How has public space been reconstructed in Morocco?
7. How has this reconstruction expanded civilian participation in the public sphere?
8. How do those without access to the public sphere operate?
9. Do you think counterpublics exist in Morocco?
10. What do you think defines the success of a social movement in Morocco?
11. Do you know anything about the LGBTQ movement in Morocco?
12. If so, what can you say about the movement and how they utilize the public sphere?

Appendix C

Interview Questions for Individuals

1. What is your name?
2. Where are you from?
3. How old are you?
4. How do you identify?
5. Are you open to your friends and family about your identity?
6. Does your sexual identity affect your ability to navigate public spaces?
7. Do you feel like you can freely express your sexual identity in public spaces?
8. What spaces do you feel most comfortable expressing your sexual identity?
9. Are you happy embodying these alternative spaces?
10. What do you know about the LGBTQ movement in Morocco?
11. Are you involved with the LGBTQ movement in any way?
12. If so, what is the nature of your involvement?
13. What do you think the goals of the LGBTQ movement in Morocco are?
14. Do you think these goals will be realized in the near future? Why or why not?

Appendix D
Participant Consent Form

1. Brief description of the purpose of this study

The purpose of this study is to learn more about LGBTQ identifying individuals and the LGBTQ movement in Morocco.

1. Rights Notice

In an endeavor to uphold the ethical standards of all SIT ISP proposals, this study has been reviewed and approved by a Local Review Board or SIT Institutional Review Board. If at any time, you feel that you are at risk or exposed to unreasonable harm, you may terminate and stop the interview. Please take some time to carefully read the statements provided below.

- a. *Privacy*** - all information you present in this interview may be recorded, by hand, and safeguarded. Your interview will not be tape recorded. If you do not want the information recorded, you need to let the interviewer know.

- b. *Anonymity*** - all names in this study will be kept anonymous unless the participant chooses otherwise.

- c. *Confidentiality*** - all names will remain completely confidential and fully protected by the interviewer. By signing below, you give the interviewer full responsibility to uphold this contract and its contents. The interviewer will also sign a copy of this contract and give it to the participant.

Participant's name printed

Participant's signature and date

Interviewer's name printed

Interviewer's signature and date

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