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“Keep it Radical”: A qualitative analysis of  
contemporary queer discourse around gay  
pride in Thessaloniki, Greece

AIKATERINI TOMANA  
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Lund University  
Department of Political Science  
Master of Science in Social Studies of Gender  
Supervisor: Ekatherina Zhukova

## ***Abstract***

In the last 50 years the gay pride movement has gained more momentum worldwide than ever before. The increased visibility obtained from the Stonewall riots of 1969 in the US, granted queer identities agency. Almost a decade later, the gay pride movement started to flourish in Greece as well, but the country did not see its first gay Pride parade until 2005 in the capital city of Athens. Since then, the movement's political character has been a point of contestation within the country's gay pride movement. This thesis aims to explore one actor in this conversation, namely the Radical Pride group which mobilizes in Thessaloniki, Greece. Combining Alberto Melucci's conceptualization of New Social Movement Theory with Chantal Mouffe's theorization on the notion of 'the political', 11 texts published on the group's blog between 2017 and 2021 are analyzed through the three dimensional model within critical discourse analysis, to examine whether or not contemporary discussions around gay pride are political and if so, to what extent. The analysis reveals a high level of political elements in the group's discourse, revealing moreover the antagonistic qualities that contemporary queer discourse can have in order to challenge the dominant sociopolitical structures.

***Keywords:*** gay pride movement, queer, New Social Movement Theory, 'the political', Critical Discourse Analysis

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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*“Queer liberation,  
Not rainbow capitalism!”*

This slogan shouted in queer marches and gay pride parades around the world encapsulates the political debate around current notions of queerness. Since the Stonewall riots of 1969, which will be discussed in more depth in chapter 2 of this thesis, the gay<sup>1</sup> movement has gained more momentum globally than ever before. Consequently, the discourse around the gay movement and gay rights is also more prominent.

Currently, there is a portion of people who long for gay liberation and there is a portion of people who aspire to profit from LGBT lives and experiences. What these two groups have in common is the historically oppressed gay identity, which has in recent years manifested itself through the gay pride<sup>2</sup> movement. But what does being queer have to do with capitalism? The answer can be uncovered through identifying some key concepts.

Capitalism manifests itself politically through neoliberalism, which in turn has created a surface level diversity precisely to guarantee its dominance (Drucker, 2015). Society is maintaining binary divisions between individuals, ascribing them either masculine or feminine characteristics and therefore standardizing heterosexuality (Drucker, 2015; Rahman, 2020). So, when the gay experience is inserted as a variable in the existing system, it is not merely as diverse as it actually is. In fact, the construction of the homosexual by neoliberalism is a mirror image of the systemic heterosexuality, but gay. This notion, which I will discuss in more depth in chapter 3, is described as homonormativity (Drucker, 2015).

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<sup>1</sup> throughout the thesis I use the terms queer, LGBT, LGBTQ, LGBTQIA+, gay and lesbian, mostly interchangeably.

<sup>2</sup> Pride written with a lowercase ‘p’ indicates the notion, Pride written with a capital ‘P’ indicates the festival/parade.

In addition to this conceptualization of systemic heterosexuality, Judith Butler theorizes about the 'heterosexual matrix'. The 'heterosexual matrix' is defined as "[...] a hegemonic discursive/ epistemic model of gender intelligibility that assumes that for bodies to cohere and make sense there must be a stable sex expressed through a stable gender (masculine expresses male, feminine expresses female) that is oppositionally and hierarchically defined through the compulsory practice of heterosexuality" (1999, p.194). Queer identities exist outside of the heterosexual matrix and therefore they are political because they are challenging an established sociopolitical system. However, to ensure its continuation, the patriarchal system assimilates queer identities to a certain extent, creating a homonormative idea of queerness, and thus depoliticizing it.

Hennessy (2000) urges that the concept of the patriarchy is analytically and politically significant to queer lives because it provides the means to explain the hierarchies which systematize sexual and gender oppression within the capitalist structure. She therefore conceptualizes a 'capitalist patriarchy' (2000, p.25), in which the main premise is to create and maintain essentialist notions of gender and sexuality in order to maximize the production of capital and profit. In recent years, and especially after the emergence of the gay pride movement in the late '60, capitalist patriarchy has reorganized itself in some ways, in order to be inclusive of gay people. By embedding the gay experience within its structures, which is arguably limited and controlled, the capitalist patriarchy ensures its survival (Hennessy, 2000).

According to Rahman (2020), the struggle for gay rights does not revolve around attitudes and political strategies, which attack LGBT people, but should be – and is – directly targeting the whole sociopolitical system, built on essentialist notions of gender and sexuality. Because of that, queer sexualities become political due to their challenging of heteronormative ideals embedded in the capitalist patriarchy.

These notions are ingrained in all contemporary western societies and Greece is no exception. The country has a turbulent past and present, which will be explored and

analyzed in more depth throughout this project. The case study presented here is that of Radical Pride, a “[...] political collective” (2020, p.1) founded in November 2015, according to their introductory text which can be found in their blog.

Initially, their aim was to be a politicized alternative to official Thessaloniki Pride celebrations, a focus which later shifted to become a more concrete antagonistic formation, engaging with issues around LGBTQIA+ identities and queer liberation in general (ibid.). As mentioned in the same text, they see the group as interconnected with the broader antagonistic movement, “[...] against the patriarchy [...], fascism, capitalism, normativity, racism, nationalism, the exploitation of the planet, against every form of power and every system of oppression” (2020, p.2).

Given this positioning, the formation and manifestation of social movements becomes analytically relevant to the aim of this thesis. For this analysis of social movements, Alberto Melucci’s theorization on New Social Movement Theory is employed, with the additional element of ‘the political’. Many scholars have constructed theories on the latter, but Chantal Mouffe’s conceptualization is applied in this thesis.

Against this backdrop, it is necessary to examine the relationship between contemporary queer discourse and the notion of ‘the political’. Existing academic literature in the field of gay pride studies largely focuses on the touristification and depoliticization of gay Pride events (see: Johnston, 2005; Blidon, 2009; Apostolopoulou & Tsartas, 2015). Even though this aspect is examined in this project, I believe there is a substantial gap in the literature connecting the notion of gay pride to its political roots and explaining what ‘the political’ means.

More specifically, when it comes to studies around Greek gay pride in English, the literature is almost nonexistent (see: Apostolelli & Chalkia, 2012; Zervoulis, 2016). At the same time, studies on the gay movement have been largely studied through the scope of other fields, such as sociology (see: Rivera & Tilcsik, 2019; Lamusse, 2016). By situating this research in the field of gay pride studies through the lens of political



science, I aspire to expand conversations around the formation of queer movements and their political elements into other disciplines.

To briefly reflect on the initial question posed, the relationship between queerness and capitalism is a complex and multifaceted one, which cannot be examined thoroughly over this project. What this project seeks to accomplish is a contextual understanding of gay pride manifestations and to refocus attention on its political implications and significance.

### *1.1 Aim & Research Questions*

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the political basis of contemporary discourse surrounding LGBTQIA+ identities in the context of Thessaloniki, Greece. Utilizing Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as developed by Norman Fairclough, I critically examine online content published by Radical Pride on their blog the time period between January 2017 – March 2021. My intention is to explore how contemporary queer discourse is manifested through the group's online texts and to identify potential political elements at the foundation of the group's social formation and mobilization.

The aim of this thesis is therefore to investigate whether or not the idea and by extension the movement of gay pride is political and if so, to what degree. The main research question will then be:

*Whether and to what extent is the discourse surrounding the contemporary notion of gay pride political?*

In order to contextualize the main question within the specific environment of the study as a means to focus on the discourse produced by Radical Pride, the sub-question of the study is:

*How does the online presence of Radical Pride engage with the political in the LGBTQIA+ movement and identity?*

## *1.2 Delimitations of the study*

This thesis is focusing on analyzing online texts by one specific group which engages with LGBTQIA+ politics and activism in the context of Thessaloniki, Greece. Therefore, it should not be treated as a project aimed to generalize queer activism nor as a project which seeks to present all political approaches to gay pride. Moreover, limitations on time and the context of the Covid-19 pandemic did not allow me to engage with people and conduct person-centered research.

## *1.3 Positionality*

Acknowledging one's sociopolitical position is crucial and integral to the research process. It is therefore important to recognize that my own position possibly entails implicit biases and my personal experiences “[...] may influence what [I] bring to research encounters, [my] choice of processes and [my] interpretation of outcomes” (Foote & Gau Bartell, 2011, p.46).

As a queer feminist woman myself, active in the broader anti-capitalist movement, I recognize that my experiences, identity and political beliefs unwittingly influence the entire process, from the moment I came up with the topic to the moment of completing this project and making it public.

Moreover, as a native and resident of Thessaloniki for most of my life, I am familiar with the sociopolitical context to a greater extent than presented and the effects this context has had on me. At the same time, I recognize my privilege as a white, cisgender, able-bodied individual who was born and raised in my home country, never having to experience hardships in that sense. This combination of privileges and disadvantages

is what has shaped me as a person and as a researcher, and will therefore be an inherent aspect of this research.

Keeping in mind all these matters throughout the process, and recognizing that I am inclined to position myself at the center of this project. I will hold myself accountable, practice reflexivity and hope that this thesis will produce good knowledge in regards to contemporary queer discourse.

#### *1.4 Thesis Outline*

The thesis is divided into 8 chapters with the first being the introduction where I have contextualized my study, I have presented my objective and I have posed the questions motivating my study. Also, I briefly discussed crucial delimitations to the way the research has been carried out and presented my positionality within the project.

Chapter 2 presents the historical background of gay pride along with historically contextualizing gay pride parades in the US context from 1940 onwards and in the Greek context from 1974 onwards.

Chapter 3 engages with and discusses previous research done in the field of Gay Pride Studies, with a focus on queer activism, and the concepts of commodification and homonormativity.

Chapter 4 provides the theoretical framework within which the analysis takes place, which is New Social Movement Theory as theorized by Italian sociologist Alberto Melucci. An added element to this theory is the notion of the political.

Chapter 5 discusses CDA as the methodological tool and framework employed for the analysis of the empirical material. In this chapter ethical considerations connected with data collection and the research process in general are also discussed.

Chapter 6 involves the analysis of empirical material within the theoretical and methodological frameworks discussed in Chapter 3 and 4, respectively.

Chapter 7 further engages with the frameworks presented, as it examines the findings of the analysis in a discursive manner, giving way to future research but also addressing the previous research presented in Chapter 3.

Finally, Chapter 8 includes the concluding remarks and final reflections on the study as a whole and more specifically in relation to the research questions and research findings.

## **2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

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In this section I briefly present the historical context and background of the notion and expression of gay pride as a way of contextualizing and better understanding the origins and the trajectory of development of the Radical Pride in Thessaloniki, the focus of my study. The obvious starting point is the Stonewall riots, which happened in 1969 and are widely considered to be the beginning of a new era for the gay community. However, I will also summarize the years before the riots, starting from the 1940s in order to further contextualize the Stonewall riots.

Most of the historical presentation revolves around the US context, since that is where the Stonewall riots happened. Moreover, the United States have a significant influence on Greece and the western world in general.

There is a surprisingly small number of information on the history of the LGBTQIA+ community and movement in the Greek context. Nonetheless, but I provide most of what I was able to find for the period of time after the military Junta (*Metapolitefsi*), that is from the year 1974 until today.

## *2.1 The years before Stonewall in the American context (1940-1968)*

In order to understand and make sense of the Stonewall riots, it is important to look into the sociopolitical context of the years prior. Arguably, the activists at Stonewall would not have reacted the way they did, if there was no significant political background and consequently, the Stonewall riots would never have happened (Armstrong & Crago, 2006).

During the 1940s and 1950s, in the final years of the World War II and the years following the end of the war and while Europe was recuperating, gays and lesbians in the US were treated extremely poorly by the state. According to Bernstein (2002), the government was putting forward laws deliberately targeting lesbians and gay men. Consequently, many of these gay and lesbian people were arrested for “[...] solicitation, disorderly conduct and loitering laws” (Bernstein, 2002, p.540) since the public perceived them as the people who would be participating in illegal activities. Additional laws around alcohol licensing made it hard for queer people to get together and form social and political groups, since there was limited physical space for socialization.

At the same time, religious institutions were condemning homosexuality protesting that it was a sin, and the American Psychiatric Association regarded homosexuality as a mental disorder (Bernstein, 2002). In this climate, the few gay organizations of the time were more interested in trying to advocate for psychologists and religious leaders to accept homosexuality as a natural human condition, instead of directly addressing the state, the legislations, the laws and the policies. The movement was undoubtedly more concerned with assimilation than anything else (ibid.).

In the beginning of the 60's things started to change slowly but surely. The assimilationist approach was still persistent within the movement, and most homosexuals were perceiving their sexual identity as something predetermined without questioning its social impact or importance (Bernstein, 2002). At that point in time, and while political

organizing was very much still a dangerous act for gays and lesbians, challenging the norm meant proving that homosexuality was part of that norm and that people could be successful, educated and could hold high-profile jobs, despite their sexual orientation (ibid.).

The first conceptualization of a gay parade came from activist Craig Rodwell, who suggested a yearly demonstration on July 4<sup>th</sup>, the day when the United States celebrates its independence, outside Philadelphia's Independence Hall. He proposed the demonstration to be called the Annual Reminder, as a way of reminding the public that a group of people still did not have basic rights and liberties as every other citizen in the country (Duberman, 1993 as cited in Armstrong & Crago, 2006). The first one of the Annual Reminders took place in July 1965 with 44 participants (Armstrong & Crago, 2006). In a similar manner, the first public gay protests emerged in Washington that same year (Bernstein, 2002).

The mid-60s were overall a time of unrest within the gay community. Organizations across the country began forming political agendas and organizing for political mobilization (Bernstein, 2002). It is important to note that several other movements of the time, such as the civil rights movement, the student movement and the anti-war movement had a direct influence and impact on the gay movement (Bernstein, 2002; Walter, 2018).

More specifically in New York, where the Stonewall uprising later occurred, the gay scene was more vibrant and the activists more militant than in other parts of the country, due to the overall political turbulence in the city (Armstrong & Crago, 2006). This militancy of gay activists pushed them to actively pursue media coverage of their struggles in massive publications, such as the *New York Times*, which would prove to be extremely beneficial in the near future (ibid.).

## 2.2 *Stonewall Riots (1969)*

As mentioned previously, the Stonewall riots are “[...] widely credited with being the motivating force in the transformation of the gay political movement” (Carter, 2004, p.1), and the years prior presented above were, in retrospect, a preparation for this event to have the impact it had.

Even though Murray (1969, as cited in Bernstein, 2002) claims that the uprising was at the time just another one in a general environment of unrest, several other historians and academics recognize the singularity and impact of Stonewall (Armstrong & Crage, 2006; Carter, 2004; Walter, 2018). Armstrong and Crage (2006), highlight the fact that not many things changed in the way LGBTQIA+ people were treated, but the riots signaled a change in the way LGBTQIA+ people reacted to mistreatment.

Raids in bars were not uncommon during that era since, as mentioned above, there were strict laws surrounding alcohol consumption and several other legislations directly or indirectly targeting gay people and by association the places they frequented. Based upon that fact, when the police raided the Stonewall Inn during the afterhours of Friday 27<sup>th</sup> of June 1969, it was just another day. This time, however, proved to hold more weight than other similar raids, as patrons, residents and passers-by all reacted in a more violent and aggressive way than usual.

As scholars Armstrong and Crage (2006) and Carter (2004) as well as the historical context I summarized above underline, several factors played a role in this reaction. Firstly, Greenwich Village, where the Stonewall Inn is located, was a gay-friendly, vibrant and activist neighborhood in NYC (Armstrong & Crage, 2006; Carter, 2004), which was a fertile ground for the riots. Secondly, the geographical location and significance of this particular club were critical. Geographically, the location was favoring pedestrians rather than police cars and also Stonewall Inn had already been a landmark for LGBTQIA+ people in an era where most gay bars did not survive for very long

(Carter, 2004). Additionally, the aforementioned radicalization of the gay people of the city was an underlying factor (Armstrong & Cragge, 2006). Their pursuit of mass consumption media coverage was also particularly important at this time because they were able to utilize this relationship to make the news of the riots widely known (ibid.). The riots continued for a second day, reportedly gathering a crowd of approximately 2000 people (ibid.)

Consequently, the riots, which were breaking out sporadically in the period of six days, could not have happened anywhere else, under any different circumstances (Carter, 2004), making them commemorable enough for the gay movement. This commemorability stems from a series of other memorable events, but with not enough commemorable capacity (Armstrong & Cragge, 2006, p. 744). The suggestion of a parade next year to honor the events made sense due to the dramatic and politically significant nature of the Stonewall riots (Armstrong & Cragge, 2006), and the parade's success and consequent permanent status as an annual parade every June secured the riots' historical value, not only in the US but across the Western World.

LGBTQIA+ people gained a newfound awareness of themselves and their identities through the spread of the notion of gay pride (Taylor, 2014) and soon after the riots the contemporary gay movement started gaining momentum fast. For example, the first group for queer liberation was founded in Canada in 1969 and the UK Gay Liberation Front was created in 1970 (ibid.). As Peterson et al. (2018) note, the manifestations of gay pride worldwide were all part of the emerging new social movements, which were studied extensively by European theorists who developed the New Social Movement Theories, presented substantially in the Theoretical Framework of this thesis.

Overall, Pride undoubtedly launched internationally in the 1980s through InterPride, a US-based non-governmental organization (Peterson et al., 2018), which established the WorldPride in 2000 (ibid.). However, for reasons presented below, the environment in



Greece did not allow the notion of gay pride to flourish during the same historical period as most of the western world.

### 2.3 *The gay movement in Greece from 1974 (Metapolitefsi<sup>3</sup>) to 1999*

The twentieth century was a tumultuous period in the newly established Greek state. The Balkan Wars (1912-13), World War I and the Greek-Turkish War (1914-22), the interwar period (1922-40), World War II (1940-44), the Civil War (1946-49) and the coup of 1967 from the military and the ensuing military Junta until 1974, did not allow the gay movement to develop in the same way that the American movement and others worldwide had. Even though homosexuality has been legal since 1951<sup>4</sup>, it was only after democracy was reestablished that the movement started gaining momentum and developing.

Shortly after the restoration of democratic governance, the first widely known and recognized gay group was formed, the Homosexual Liberation Movement of Greece (acronym AKOE from the Greek name). AKOE was formed in 1976 in Athens (Gkeltis, 2019; Kantsa, 2000; Mais, 2015). A group of friends who had lived abroad and brought back with them knowledge of the gay movement in major European countries (France, Italy) and also the liberal principles of the May '68 revolution in France (Mais, 2015) were the ones to essentially establish the group.

The sociopolitical climate in Greece was not the most welcoming for non-cisHet<sup>5</sup> people, since it was a highly religious and conservative country, especially outside the major cities of Athens and Thessaloniki (Petropoulou, 2019). For that reason, when AKOE started publishing its magazine, AMPHI, in 1978 it was a significant development for the future of the movement (ibid.). AKOE's spokesperson and director of

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<sup>3</sup> The post-Junta period refers to the fall of the military Junta in 1974 and the consequent period of establishing democracy in Greece.

<sup>4</sup> <https://pridelegal.com/greece-lgbt-laws/>

<sup>5</sup> Cisgender and heterosexual – <http://queerdictionary.blogspot.com/2014/09/definition-of-cisHet.html>

AMPHI, Loukas Theodorakopoulos, was a well-known poet, writer and translator whose presence granted the movement with visibility and legitimacy, and the magazine was a glimmer of hope for many (Mais, 2015).

At the same time, lesbians and lesbianism also started gaining visibility. The first lesbian group, the Autonomous Group of Homosexual Women, joined AKOE during the late '70s (Kantsa, 2000). The group left AKOE in the beginning of the 1980s, joining other feminist groups in the House of Women, where they began publishing the first ever lesbian magazine in Greece from spring 1982 to summer 1983 (ibid.).

In 1981 the government submitted a bill titled 'On the protection and regulation of venereal diseases and related issues'<sup>6</sup>, which was directly targeting LGBTQ people and especially trans individuals who were working in the sex industry (Mais, 2015). AKOE sided openly with the trans community and organized a public protest in January 1981, the day when the bill was to be voted (ibid.).

Later the same year, the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) won the parliamentary elections against the more conservative New Democracy (ND) party which was ruling before. This shift seemingly signaled a new, progressive direction for gender and sexuality issues in the Greek public sphere (Gkeltis, 2019). At the same time, trans women were being aggressively prosecuted and harassed by the state and the police (ibid.) and AKOE was showing the first signs of decay (Mais, 2015).

In 1988, the Group Initiative of Homosexuals of Thessaloniki (acronym OPOTH from the Greek name) was founded in the second largest Greek city of Thessaloniki (Kantsa, 2000) and by the end of 1980 AKOE had suspended their activity (Gkeltis, 2019; Kantsa, 2000). With its dissolution, AKOE gave way to a new organization called the Greek Homosexual Community (acronym EOK from the Greek name), which operated as an NGO up until 2008 (Mais, 2015; Kantsa, 2000; Petropoulou, 2019).

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.e-nomothesia.gr/kat-ygeia/astheneies/n-1193-1981.html>

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of June 1991, members of OPOTH were roaming Thessaloniki's seafront, proclaiming to passers-by that it was the International Gay Pride Day. According to Mpatsioulas (2019), this was the first underground gay pride of Thessaloniki, a claim which has not been confirmed elsewhere but potentially ties back to the Stonewall Riots. Later, in 1995 a new group by the name Association Against Homophobia was formed in the city and published their magazine called VITAMIN O up until 2006 (Kantsa, 2000; Petropoulou, 2019).

In 1992 back in Athens, AKOE reorganized and two years later started publishing AM-PHI again, this time having Grigoris Vallianatos as the main advocate and director of the magazine (Kantsa, 2000). In 1997 Thessaloniki was named European Capital of Culture and since the city would gather a lot of attention and a lot of visitors, OPOTH organized the first big and open Gay Pride Party, which was so successful that it happened two more times, in 1998 and 1999 (Mpatsioulas, 2019).

The developments which took place in the country after 1974, such as the election of PASOK and the establishment of archetypal groups such as AKOE in Athens and OPOTH in Thessaloniki, provided the basis for further improvements during the 2000s.

#### *2.4 The development of the Greek gay movement after 2000*

The new millennium was characterized by yet another turn for homosexual politics in Greece. According to Petropoulou (2019), sexual orientation was not yet considered part of one's identity but rather a personal choice and practice, in a similar way that it was thought of in the US before Stonewall.

However, this understanding did not stop the gay movement from growing and flourishing more than ever before (Papanikolaou, 2018). OPOTH dissolved in the beginning of the 2000s (Mpatsioulas, 2019), but in 2003 the Colorful Forum was created which in turn birthed important LGBTQIA+ groups, such as the Initiative of Homosexual Citizens (acronym POP from the Greek name). The same year the Transvestite-

Transexual Solidarity Organization (acronym SATTE from the Greek name) was created (Petropoulou, 2019). In 2000 the Lesbian Group of Athens was formed, which managed to gather together many lesbians under the roof of the Feminist Center (ibid.).

Even though the first attempts at gay pride parades were made by AKOE in the '80s and by Paola Revenioti, a popular Greek trans activist, in the '90s (Mais, 2015), the first ever official pride parade took place in June of 2005 in Athens<sup>7</sup> and then more major Greek cities followed, with Thessaloniki holding its first official pride parade in 2012<sup>8</sup>.

In the parliamentary elections of September 2015, SYRIZA, the progressive left-wing party of the country won<sup>9</sup>, which was seen by many as a win for LGBTQIA+ people as well. The same-sex partnership law passed in December of the same year (Papanikolaou, 2018), granting visibility and important institutional recognition to queer people.

More laws and bills were introduced and passed after the initial Partnership Bill of 2015, such as the right to self-identification in official records and the right for same-sex couples to foster children (Papanikolaou, 2018).

Overall, the first two decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century were ultimately of considerable visibility for the Greek gay movement. From the several new formations which emerged, to important institutional recognition, LGBTQIA+ Greeks were now mobilizing in different ways than in the 80s and 90s. The groups were more organized and made more demands on the state level, an approach which was not endorsed by all. Many new groups, one of them being Radical Pride, emerged and were critical of the seemingly assimilationist strategy assemblies such as POP were following.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://athenspride.eu/istoria-athens-pride/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://thessalonikipride.com/en/about-thessaloniki-pride/>

<sup>9</sup> <http://ekloges-prev.singularlogic.eu/v2015b/v/public/index.html?lang=en#%22cls%22:%22main%22,%22params%22:{}>

## 2.5 *Summary*

The aim of this section has been to provide the historical background behind gay pride. More specifically, I briefly presented developments regarding queer mobilization from the 1940s to the 1970s in the US and from 1974 until the mid- 2010s in Greece, as a way of contextualizing queer struggle in a sociopolitical context. While many developments have been identified throughout the years, there are also several problematizations around gay pride and its manifestation. Some of those problematizations will be the focus of the upcoming chapter which consists of previous studies in the field of gay pride studies.

## **3 PREVIOUS RESEARCH IN GAY PRIDE STUDIES**

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In this section I contextualize my study by demonstrating selected previous research in the field of social movement studies and more specifically gay pride studies. This presentation serves as an introduction to the theoretical framework and as a point of departure for better understanding the queer movement and discourse in Thessaloniki.

Through this presentation, I will introduce some critical perspectives on the contemporary notion of gay pride and of gay pride parades. Since the research on pride in the Greek context and particularly in the city of interest is relatively small, there are questions and concerns which have not been substantially addressed. This chapter will therefore exemplify some of these concerns which have been raised in other countries worldwide, namely South Africa, Canada and Spain. One study done on Thessaloniki is also briefly presented.

The three major points of interest emerging from the literature to which I will draw attention to are the LGBTQIA+ movement and activism, the process of commodification and the notion of homonormativity. These matters are of particular interest in relation to the Greek case, since, as discussed in the previous chapter, there have recently

been differing views on what pride means and what purpose it serves for Greek queer people.

### *3.1 LGBTQIA+ movement and activism*

As discussed extensively in the chapter before, the contemporary gay movement and contemporary gay activism can be traced back to the Stonewall riots, a historical moment which has been almost idealized by the community (Taylor, 2014). Moreover, activism is an integral part and the foundation of the notion of gay pride (McLean, 2018).

In the South African context, for example, pride and the consequent Pride parades have been a cause of debate, especially since South Africa has been praised worldwide as the first country to constitutionally protect LGBTQIA+ people post-apartheid (ibid.). However, McLean (2018) highlights the faults and shortcomings of the LGBTQIA+ organizations, the Pride parades and the institutional aspect of gay rights. They write that, even though activism is at the core of pride, it is being overlooked and disregarded in Joburg Pride (the Johannesburg Pride parade) in favor of sponsorships and a “[...] safe “gay event” to sponsor” (ibid., p.270). Joburg Pride used to be a political event, tackling issues such as the AIDS/HIV crisis and addressing the struggle for liberation but this aspect was later overlooked in order to make Pride more profitable and appealing to a bigger crowd (McLean, 2018).

On the contrary, the Nanaimo Pride of 2016 in Canada was an event of major importance for queer locals, since the city had historically been rather hostile towards LGBTQIA+ individuals (Marshall, 2017). Many people participated and supported the event, which was ultimately successful. However, Marshall still identifies issues with this particular event, which can potentially apply to the movement as a whole (ibid.). Even though the author recognizes the importance of Pride and its capacity to be

affirming in the most political, activist sense, there are important matters such as homonormativity, which I will explain in more depth later, that need to be addressed within the community in order for Pride and the movement as a whole to be truly political and make meaningful change (Marshall, 2017).

Pride parades, as manifestations of the notion of gay pride can take one of two forms: they can be a festival, a celebration, a space for promoting equality in a joyful way; or they can be a protest with political elements and political demands of recognizing and accepting diversity in all aspects of life (Santos, 2013). These variations of Pride are highlighted by Enguix (2017) who writes about Madrid Pride, the biggest Pride celebration in Europe, and the Orgullo Crítico (Critical Pride) which ‘[...] start[s] from queer and anticapitalistic stances [...]’ (p.3). Enguix claims that these different manifestations of Pride mobilization are essential in the formation of contemporary LGBTQIA+ political activism and identities (Enguix, 2017).

Queer activism has been studied in the context of Thessaloniki from the perspective of sexual politics, religion and nationalism. Eleftheriadis (2016) highlights the importance of looking into LGBTQIA+ mobilization in different social contexts, which are however not separate. For the city, the manifestation of gay pride through marches is, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, a very recent occurrence. For the majority of the 00’s, the city had only small queer groups, such as the Association Against Homophobia, which was mentioned previously, doing most of the activist work (Eleftheriadis, 2016). Queers in Thessaloniki had to face the rampant conservative religiosity and nationalism, and, according to Eleftheriadis (2016) the study of the city’s movement is important in understanding how sexual politics progress and develop in a geopolitical setting such as this, since the city is both part of the Balkans and of South Europe.

A concern which has been apparent for most of the authors mentioned in this section, and for many within the movement, is that of the commodification of the Pride parades and the idea of gay pride in general. I will now go into more detail on this concern.

### 3.2 *Commodification*

A key part of LGBTQIA+ mobilization is and has always been activism. However, this part of the community seems to be left out in contemporary Pride manifestations. Many queer activists recognize the shift from a revolutionary, politicized demonstration to colorful celebratory parades as a shift in the political direction of the movement as a whole (Taylor, 2014). Activists view these parades as “[...] orderly and corporatized displays of consumerism and ‘homonormativity’” (ibid., p.28).

In McLean’s (2018) study of the Joburg Pride, the author focuses on a disrupting campaign by a group called One in Nine Campaign. The group’s main reason for demonstrating at the event was what they saw as commodification, a move away from the radical roots of Pride. According to McLean, an increased depoliticization and a shift towards commercialization in social movements in general and in Pride specifically, serves to attract sponsors and financial aid instead of making these events a space for radicalization and political change (McLean, 2018).

A concern for Spanish LGBTQIA+ people as well, commodification of Pride was the reason why the aforementioned Orgullo Crítico was established (Enguix, 2017). The Pride parade in Madrid is a prime example of commodification, considering the fact that the parade started to grow in numbers and participation since 1996, when the first float was displayed (ibid.). From that moment onward, the demonstration turned into a festivity, a celebration instead of a protest. Queer activists and LGBTQIA+ individuals have opened up a discussion on representation by openly criticizing the parade and the fact that it does not depict nor serve queer realities and struggles, but rather it only manages to display a fun and enjoyable event with no real significance (Enguix, 2017).

As already discussed, Pride in Greece is still in its infancy, with the first ever parade taking place in Athens in 2005 and in Thessaloniki only 9 years ago. However, based on the literature discussed, Prides quickly become commodified and depoliticized. The



emergence of queer groups like Radical Pride illustrate that this is already a reality for the Greek case as well, since the main premise for its creation, as displayed in the introductory chapter, was to oppose the increasingly commercialized Thessaloniki Pride.

An additional point of interest to commodification is that of the concept of homonormativity. These two matters appear to be interconnected for many of the authors presented in this chapter and for critics of contemporary gay pride in general.

### 3.3 *Homonormativity*

Taylor (2014) identifies the emergence of homonormativity as the direct effect of ‘increased visibility’. Homonormativity basically paints the portrait of a gay person who is modest, white, middle-class and, by all means, male (Taylor, 2014; Enguix, 2017). This image is contradicting the diversity of actual queer presentation and experience. It denies the existence of the “[...] sexual dissident” (Taylor, 2014, p.34), a queer person who is considered a threat to societal order and neoliberal ideals.

Marshall (2017) recognizes homonormativity as one of the main problems of Nanaimo Pride and by extension pride celebrations in general. She highlights how a highly political event such as Pride is now commercialized through homogenizing queer people and their experiences (ibid.). She moreover adds that through commodification, as presented above,

Pride is losing legitimacy in the diverse circles of actual LGBTQIA+ people, and gaining more funding from corporate and government agencies (Marshall, 2017). Another significant point is that this homonormativity is inextricably linked to sexism; female sexuality both in Canada and in the broader global North has been conveniently silenced throughout the years, making male sexuality more tolerable, even if that sexuality deviates from the heterosexual matrix (Marshall, 2017).

In studying Madrid Pride and Orgullo Crítico, Enguix (2017) also identifies this notion of homonormativity, as one that is doing more harm than good to LGBTQIA+ people and communities. The normalization of such a representation for queer people is damaging because it ignores diversity and creates new and more forms of discrimination towards queers who do not meet the criteria of being the idealized gay person (ibid.). In Enguix's view, as in Marshall's view, this conception of gay people perpetuates the rejection of queer diversity (Enguix, 2017).

### 3.4 Summary

This chapter exemplified some of the issues identified by several scholars in relation to gay pride in different parts of the world. By locating the same problems in different areas, I intended to highlight their prominence and fast-paced emergence in gay pride movements. There have been no studies on gay pride in Thessaloniki that I am aware of thus far, except for the study by Eleftheriadis which I mentioned in this chapter. Moreover, queer discourse in general has mostly been studied within other fields and within different frameworks. For these reasons, I believe that this thesis will fulfill a gap in the literature of gay pride studies, and more specifically contemporary queer discourse in the Greek context.

I will now present the theoretical basis of this thesis, starting from New Social Movement Theory and ending at the notion of 'the political'.

## 4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

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In order to critically examine the research questions and to contextualize my study, I will utilize New Social Movement Theory (NSMT). More specifically, I will focus on Melucci's conception of the theory, based on writings by Steven Buechler, who first identified this new collection of theories in his 1995 article, *New Social Movement*

*Theories*, and Melucci's own work. Additionally, I intend to present the notion of 'the political' as an added element to Melucci's conceptualization of social movements.

By adding the notion of the political to NSMT, I wish to understand the formation and progress (or lack thereof) of social movements in relation to political aspects which potentially gave rise to them but later declined. Similarly to the previously studied cases of South Africa, Spain and Canada, the Pride organization in Thessaloniki is quickly showing signs of commodification and depoliticization.

Therefore, the objective of this chapter is to provide the theoretical tools in understanding Radical Pride and its discourse as a formation created to address declining political aims and claims of the official manifestation of Thessaloniki Pride. Moreover, these tools are also used to connect Radical Pride with previously researched Prides, as presented in chapter 3.

#### *4.1 New Social Movement Theory*

Firstly, it is important to note that there is not one concrete and established New Social Movement Theory. Rather, it consists of several conceptions by several scholars, whose main premise is that contemporary social movements are different in formation and manifestation to older social movements (Buechler, 1995,2013; Crossley, 2002; Flynn, 2014). For that reason, I will refer to New Social Movement Theory (NSMT) as New Social Movement *Theories* (NSMTs).

According to Buechler (1995), who first collected and identified the NSMTs, this tradition is rooted in European academic thought demonstrated by four major theorists: Alain Touraine, Jurgen Habermas, Alberto Melucci and Manuel Castells. The main premise of NSMTs is a step back and away from Marxist thought, which dominated the studies of social movements until the '50s (Buechler, 1995; Flynn, 2014).

Marxist theorists were analyzing social movements through a class lens, centering the study of the labor movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, which was not deemed useless but rather outdated in its initial structure by so-called ‘post-Marxist’ scholars (Crossley, 2002). This does not mean that NSM theorists do not account for class in their theories and analyses, but that they instead adopt an intersectional lens which identifies more aspects of social movements, including race, gender and sexuality. (Buechler, 1995).

There are several strands within NSMTs which are conceptualized by the four aforementioned major theorists. Castells is not abandoning but building on Marxist discourse. He understands identities as additional and not as substitutes to class relations and approaches social movements as both political and sociocultural mobilizations (Buechler, 1995). Touraine is developing an observation and critique on postindustrial society. For him, social movements exist in between two points, one being the society’s need to increase profit and power and the other being the individuals’ desire to advocate for their individuality (Buechler, 1995). Furthermore, Habermas is theorizing within the school of critical theory, identifying new social movements as a vehicle for sociocultural change. He also suggests that since new social movements are concerned with real life issues, political parties and institutions are not able to address and resolve them (Buechler, 1995). Melucci, whose theorization is the main focus of this chapter, adds postmodern factors in his analysis (Crossley, 2002; Flynn, 2014), for example by identifying “[...] the *contingent* and *indeterminate* nature of social existence” (Hewitt, 1993, p.56, emphasis in original).

Since my project is largely based on queer identity and mobilization, I find that Alberto Melucci’s approach to collective identity building and collective action are useful analytical tools. Moreover, the element of solidarity which will be presented is also crucial for LGBTQIA+ identities and their internal relationships and those with other groups of people. Additionally, the notion of ‘the political’, which I argue is absent

from Melucci's theorization is important for analyzing the ways in which Radical Pride's discourse is produced and manifested.

## 4.2 *Alberto Melucci*

According to Crossley (2002), Melucci's main suggestion is that NSMTs focus on the problems and issues surrounding the emergence of social movements, therefore they focus on the 'why' question, rather than the 'how' social movements are formed. Moreover, Melucci identifies the importance of the cultural orientation of NSM, highlighting that they can still have political claims and clash with dominant institutions even though they operate more like vaguely identified groups rather than militant political formations (Buechler, 2013).

Through their formation, new social movements achieve more than meets the eye (Melucci, 1985). The formation acts both as a means of communicating the movement's aims and is also the aim in itself; the participants perform the systemic change they seek, "they redefine the meaning of social action for the whole society" (ibid., p.801). What these new social movements express is not identified only in their advocacy but mostly in their action of coming together and building their collective identity and their collective action (Melucci, 1985) while simultaneously utilizing solidarity, concepts I am developing promptly.

### 4.2.1 *Collective action and collective identity*

These two distinct but interconnected concepts are crucial in understanding contemporary social movements. Past analyses, such as Marxist and functionalist, approached the formation of movements in a dualistic sense, ascribing them either as a reaction to systemic failures or a demonstration of mutual interests (Melucci, 1985). Melucci looks past this dualism by explaining his two main concepts and identifying them as crucial parts of social mobilization.

Change is both the objective and result of collective action, in the sense that collective action has the power to shape, change, alter and even overturn an entire political system through the own system's reforms and transformations as ways of handling the collective action which is manifested through social mobilization (Melucci, 1980). Looking at the organization of movements through an analytical lens is essential because movements are socially constructed in that they occur within existing sociopolitical boundaries set by the political system (Melucci, 1985).

Collective action can essentially be defined as the interconnection and interaction between goals, means and constraints through affiliations between members within the boundaries of a system with restrictions and possibilities (Melucci, 1985; 1995). Social movements are, subsequently, action systems (Melucci, 1985;1989). The collective action is produced by unified actors and these actors are located "[...] within a multipolar action system" (Melucci, 1989, p.26). As seen in Figure 1, the members of a movement constantly reevaluate three pillars in relation to their action: their goals, the means they deploy to achieve their goals and the social environment in which they act (Melucci, 1989).

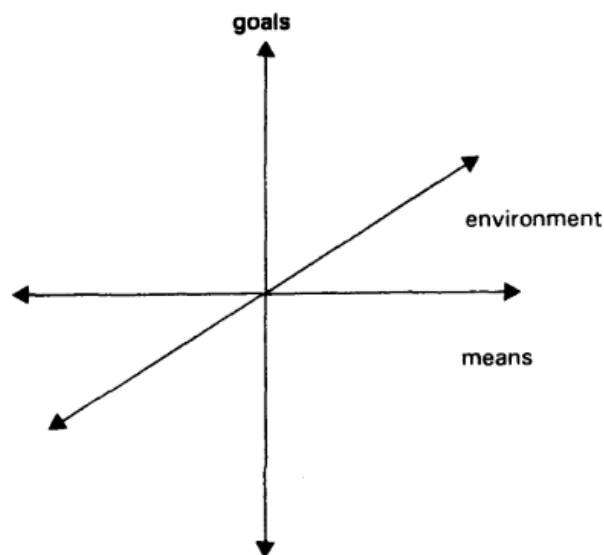


Figure 1: Multipolar Action System (Melucci, 1989, p.26)

Collective action, however, cannot be substantial if not for collective identity and vice versa (Melucci, 1995). Melucci recognizes identity not as a set and permanent condition but rather as an interactive process which in turn produces an action system (1995). The formation of the collective identity, much like the formation of the collective action needs constant reevaluation and reassessment, which in the case of an informal formation such as Radical Pride means that it operates as a process of constant activation for collective action to happen (Melucci, 1989; 1996).

Melucci identifies three levels of defining collective identity; firstly, the process of identity building includes cognitive interpretations of the field of intervention and the reasons why action takes place. Secondly, it refers to the interpersonal relationships among the individuals who communicate, collaborate, connect and affect each other. Finally, the definition of collective identity entails emotions and feelings to a significant extent, since these are an integral part of all social organization (Melucci, 1995). As he puts it, ‘there is no cognition without feeling and no meaning without emotion’ (ibid., p.45).

#### **4.2.2 Solidarity**

As described previously, the dualism that past analyses were built on was criticized by Melucci who identifies social movements “[...] as a form of collective action based on solidarity” (1985, p. 795). Solidarity is then defined as the sense of unity between people with common interests and goals and the recognition that all members of a particular group are participating in the same social structures. (Melucci, 1985).

The notion of solidarity is interwoven with collective action and identity and is described as one of the determining features of new social movements by Melucci (1980), who claims that these new movements materialize as “[...] solidarity networks with potent cultural meanings” (Melucci, 1995, p.52).

The end goal of the movements is essentially the protection of the collective identity which would not be possible without the element of solidarity (Melucci, 1995). Moreover, this notion is fundamental for social movements in order to distinguish them from other forms of collective behavior driven by personal interests and targeted only against external factors (Melucci, 1989).

As stated previously, Melucci's premise is that NSMs shift the focus of collective organization and mobilization from the economic to the cultural domain (Melucci, 1985; 1995). Moreover, he claims that this cultural shift is what distinguishes NSM from official political structures and actors (Melucci, 1995). In the next portion of the chapter I want to discuss why I believe the political aspect is an integral part of all social mobilization.

### *4.3 The notion of the 'political'*

As noted by Santos (2013), Melucci does not consider the political as an essential aspect of social mobilization claiming that the "[...] political level is just one of the possible fields for collective action" (as cited by Santos, 2013, p.20). He moreover criticizes the analytical focus on the political, calling it "political reductionism" (Melucci, 1989, p.43). By adopting this stance, Melucci reduces 'the political' to its formal manifestation as merely political institutions (Vahabzadeh, 2001) and separates the notion from the rest of the society (ibid.).

In this section, however, I want to argue that the notion of 'the political' is indeed a fundamental part of social movements and more specifically in the queer movement. I intend to do that through distinguishing between 'politics' and 'the political' and moreover conceptualizing what the political means and why it is important in this thesis.



### ***4.3.1 'Politics' and 'the political'***

There have been several attempts over the years by scholars to distinguish between the two notions and the role they play in society. Ricœur, for example, discussed what he called the 'political paradox' (Marchart, 2007; Swyngedouw, 2018). The self-sufficient sphere of the 'political' (*du politique*) includes two seemingly opposing traits, that of the relations of coexistence outside socioeconomic conflicts (*le politique*) and that of 'politics' (*la politique*), which refers to the more tangible and concrete field of policy and decision making by governing actors, providing the material grounds for political participation and mobilization (Marchart, 2007; Swyngedouw; 2018). Melucci seems to disregard this conceptualization of 'du politique' and thus diminishes it to just institutional politics, which he later accurately recognizes as only one of the possible arenas for social action, as mentioned previously.

There are differences between scholars who adopt this initial conceptualization by Ricœur. Mouffe (2005) makes a distinction between 'the political' and 'politics' departing from Carl Schmitt's conceptualization of the 'friend/enemy discrimination' (*ibid.*, p.11), moving away from Hannah Arendt's approach of the political as a site of freedom and civil discussion. She considers 'the political' as the fundamental antagonistic field of society and 'politics' as the organizational institutional relations which ensure stability and provide the grounds for political antagonisms, a conceptualization adopted also by Marchart (2007) and Swyngedouw (2014, 2018). I will now briefly explain the friend/enemy discrimination in relation to the political.

### ***4.3.2 Friend/ Enemy Discrimination***

Similarly to how Melucci conceptualizes collective identity, Schmitt is talking about a collective 'we' and a collective 'they', where the field of antagonisms is central and claims that 'the political' can only be realized within this context (Mouffe, 2005).

Even though Mouffe claims that the we/they distinction is not essentially antagonistic, she moreover asserts that it can certainly become antagonistic “[...] when the ‘they’ is perceived as putting into question the identity of the ‘we’ and as threatening its existence” (ibid., p.16). This antagonistic nature of social movements is obvious if we consider the gay pride movement in particular.

Queer individuals belong to a ‘we’ which is jeopardized historically in all forms of life and its existence is questioned on a daily basis by a ‘they’ which is hateful and hostile. In this environment, it is crucial for the movement to adopt an antagonistic strategy to ensure its own survival.

Moreover, through the commodification and the homonormalization of queer identities, the ‘we’ is becoming more marginalized and thus more endangered than before. ‘We’ are now positioned against a broader ‘they’ which also includes people who share identity characteristics with ‘us’. Through this process, the remaining ‘we’ are constructing an even stronger and more militant collective identity with more powerful political claims.

Therefore, the added notion of ‘the political’ expands and strengthens Melucci’s conception of how and why collective social mobilization emerges and sustains itself. In the case of Radical Pride, as I already mentioned in the introduction, the group immediately identify themselves as a “political collective” (Radical Pride, 2020, p.1). This self-definition indicates that, even though they are clearly a group with “cultural stakes” as Melucci (1985, p.797) calls the NSMs’ demands, they are nonetheless political in nature, based on the definition discussed in this section.

#### *4.4 Summary*

This chapter introduced New Social Movement Theory, as it was initially identified by Buechler in 1995, focusing on Alberto Melucci’s theorization within the collection of

theories. I identified the concepts of collective action, collective identity and solidarity as key principles for the organization and mobilization of Radical Pride.

Furthermore, since Melucci is considering NSMs as purely cultural formations, I argued for the understanding of ‘the political’ as a central notion to social mobilization, by distinguishing between ‘the political’ and ‘politics’ and introducing the ‘friend/enemy distinction’ as developed by Carl Schmitt and later by Chantal Mouffe.

Additionally, there is a connection to be made between the notions and concepts presented in this section, and the concepts derived from Chapter 3. In that previous chapter I discussed how gay pride becomes commodified and how heteronormative ideals invade queer spaces and result in homonormativity. What led to these issues was the decline of political essence which, as demonstrated in Chapter 2, was an integral part of the Stonewall Riots and the early manifestations of gay pride in Greece.

Due to this lack of the political, the notion of collective identity and action, manifested on the basis of solidarity, are being compromised in the gay movement, which appears to not be interested in its own people anymore but is being hijacked by capitalist ideals of financial benefits and profit. Thus, it is of utmost importance to reintroduce the notion of ‘the political’ into analyses of the LGBTQIA+ movement and discourse.

I will now proceed to present the methodological tools utilized in the process of data analysis.

## **5 METHOD**

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As a means to collect, categorize and analyze my empirical material I intend to apply Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a methodological and analytical tool. While there are several theoretical and methodological approaches within Discourse Analysis (DA), CDA is one of the most prominent and most frequently used. I will draw upon Norman Fairclough’s work, the most notable scholar who has theorized extensively on CDA.

In this chapter I set out the methodological framework of my project. To begin with, I explain why I believe that CDA as theorized by Fairclough is the approach best fitted for studying the contemporary queer discourse articulated by Radical Pride in Thessaloniki, Greece. Then, I define a number of elements that are crucial to the three-dimensional model of analysis I present right after. At the end of the chapter I express some of the ethical implications of the analytical process.

### *5.1 Critical Discourse Analysis*

Before diving into the more practical and analytical aspects of CDA, it is essential to define it. What makes this approach critical, is its attempt to display and critique features and traits of texts in relation to social processes which are not apparent to the producers and consumers of said texts (Fairclough, 1995).

Later in his work, Fairclough identifies CDA as a theoretical approach to semiosis as part of social processes which are consequently the basis for analyzing semiosis through analyzing the social processes within which semiosis exists (Fairclough, 2001).

In addition, Jørgensen & Phillips (2002) maintain Fairclough's approach as one where discourse is powerful enough to transform identities and social relationships, while at the same time it is being influenced by said relationships and structures. This dimension of CDA is of particular importance for the purpose of this project, since it revolves around identity building and social systems and their relationship with each other.

The choice of the specific CDA approach was motivated by the research question and the overall aim of this project, which seeks to discuss and analyze Radical Pride's discourse around contemporary notions of queer identity and activism, using the notions of collective action and identity, solidarity and the added element of 'the political'.

I now briefly introduce three important components of CDA, namely semiosis, interdiscursivity and intertextuality and finally, orders of discourse.

### *5.1.1 Semiosis*

Semiosis is a crucial part of textual analysis in the social level, since it includes virtually all that creates meaning – visuals, physical movement and also spoken and written language. (Fairclough, 2001). Language is moreover part of every social structure and practice, at every level of it (Fairclough, 2003) and if that is the case, then semiosis is an integral part of the social (Fairclough, 2001).

Every social level is part of the production process, a process which refers to the production of knowledge and identities, in the social, political, cultural and economic societal sphere (Fairclough, 2001). The various elements of which semiosis is a part of, such as the production of identities mentioned above, are not distinct, but they are all a part of social practice (ibid.).

Semiosis is manifested in three different ways in social practice. It is a part ‘of the social activity within a practice’ (ibid.). It is also a part of representations of and within social practices, which influence and determine social processes. Lastly, it is evident in the performance of certain actors in certain social positions. Identity plays once again a crucial role, since it influences the way people perform based on differences of culture, gender, sexuality (ibid.).

The understanding of the semiotic concept is important in relation to the research problem because the purpose of the project is to demonstrate whether and to what extent Radical Pride’s discourse is politically significant. In order to achieve that it is crucial to understand that texts have a social dimension and are not reduced to just their technical characteristics.

### *5.1.2 Interdiscursivity & Intertextuality*

An additional element to this approach of CDA, interdiscursivity refers to the process of several different discourses being present in the same conversation (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). There are two distinct ways in which interdiscursivity can influence social order; first, innovative discursive practices have the power to alter language and therefore bring about social change. Secondly, discursive practices which are combined in standardized ways work to maintain and preserve the existing linguistic and thus social order (ibid.). Interdiscursivity is a manifestation of intertextuality (ibid.). Intertextuality is an equally significant tool in analyzing Radical Pride's discourse.

In the broader sense of the word, intertextuality is 'the condition whereby all communicative events draw on earlier events' (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). More specifically, intertextuality refers to the explicit mention of other texts in a text, for example, quotes or references (Fairclough, 2003).

What is important to note about intertextuality is that a text is always connected to other texts through assimilating parts of these other texts, either explicitly or indirectly (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Fairclough, 2003). Intertextuality can have one of two effects on social order, similarly to interdiscursivity. A text can either change or maintain the existing dominant social order, it can signal a transition to a new sociocultural era or it can support the existing one (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002).

Through examining these aspects of the texts analyzed in this project, I look into the altering capacity that Radical Pride has of the existing dominant discourse by identifying varying discourses and preexisting textual elements introduced through their texts.

### *5.1.3 Order(s) of Discourse*

Finally, an important definition for the analytical portion of this thesis, is that of the order(s) of discourse. The orders of discourse, a term which Fairclough has borrowed

from Michel Foucault, can be roughly defined as “[...] the sum of all the genres and discourses which are in use within a specific social domain” (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). This definition encapsulates the essence of the function of an order of discourse, which virtually includes and is included in all discursive practices.

More specifically, the orders of discourse include characteristics of linguistic practice such as “[...] discourses, genres and styles” (Fairclough, 2003, p.25). All social structures are constitutive of language and all language is part of a discourse.

Several different discourses can be intertwined within a given social structure simultaneously, which moreover constitutes the order of discourse. However, not all of the different discourses are of equal importance or are given the equal amount of agency and legitimacy. This, then, leads to certain orders of discourse to be more socially acceptable and popular, hence granting them dominance over other ways of making meaning.

The purpose and function of orders of discourse is essentially to arrange and establish social order through linguistic and non-linguistic processes (Fairclough, 2003). Nevertheless, they do not constitute a closed and impermeable system, but rather an open and flexible one. That means that people can affect and influence a dominant order of discourse either by introducing elements from other orders of discourse or by using the existing elements of the dominant order of discourse in new and creative ways (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002).

What makes this component of CDA important for this project is that it contains the basis of what antagonistic discourse and practice can achieve. Radical Pride, through their existence and the content they produce, challenge the dominant order of discourse. The analysis will then look at whether they challenge it by utilizing it or by introducing marginal elements in their discourse production.

### 5.1.4 Three-dimensional model

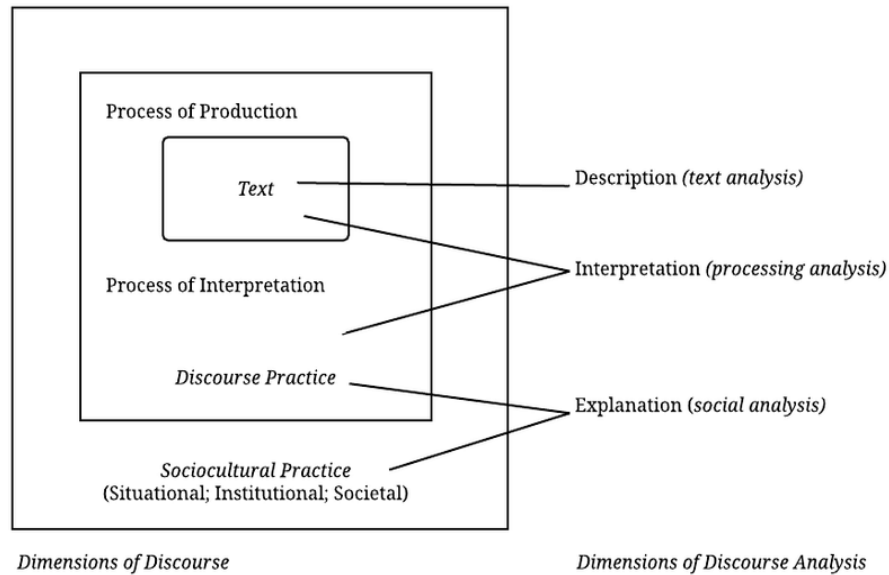


Figure 2: Fairclough's Three-dimensional model (Fairclough 1995, p.98)

This illustration makes visualization of Norman Fairclough's model of critical discourse analysis simple. Language operates at three different (but not distinct) levels (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002).

First, as a text, which is the center for analysis with a focus on description (text analysis). For the purpose of this project, the analysis on the textual level focuses on identifying linguistic elements of discourse which point towards and antagonistic political discourse and argumentative strategies, due to the nature of *Radical Pride*'s discourse production.

Secondly, language functions as the discursive practice through which it is produced and consumed focusing on interpretation (processing analysis). In my case, I will focus on the interdiscursive elements of the texts. *Radical Pride* largely functions as an opposing actor to dominant and popular discourses around gay identities. Hence, the texts have high interdiscursive capacity, in order to present their own counter-discourse.



Lastly, as sociocultural practice, the historical context within which a linguistic practice is produced, having explanation (social analysis) as the focal point. In this context, Radical Pride mobilizes in a specific sociopolitical environment, and incorporates elements of this environment. The focus is then on whether and to what extent Radical Pride challenges the existing orders of discourse on a social level.

What is distinct about this model of analysis is that the discursive practice operates as the link between the text and its social context (Fairclough, 1995; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). There is, however, analytical distinction between the three levels. The focus of analyzing discourse practice is on authors utilizing previous texts and discourse in their writing and also on readers bringing in their own perspectives when consuming a text (interpretation) (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002).

Textual analysis is centered around the technical aspects of the text, such as vocabulary and grammar (ibid.). Since the discursive practice works as the ‘middle ground’ for textual and social practice, it is only through the discursive level of analysis that the relationship between the two is understood (ibid.). Moreover, the text, whose author draws on other discourses and whose reader understands through interpretation, has specific linguistic features that influence ‘[...] both the production and consumption of the text’ (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p.69).

## *5.2 Ethical Considerations*

Having presented my method and application, I will now highlight important ethical considerations related to the study, specifically concerns around internet-based research on LGBTQIA+ identities.

### *5.2.1 Online ethics on LGBTQIA+ research and Reflexivity*

All the material collected and used in this project was obtained from Radical Pride’s blog, without the group’s consent, knowledge or collaboration and even though I intend

to share this thesis with them after its completion, there are still questions on ethics that I need to address.

First of all, it is important for me to state that the nature of the research question motivated the choice of research material and not the other way round, meaning that the group's discourse is not merely the focus of the thesis but rather an attempt at expanding current knowledge and understanding of queer discourse and experience in general. That is not to say that the group's input would not have been important and valuable yet I did not actively pursue it for the reasons stated.

As Bassett and O' Riordan (2002) note, 'LGBT identities and communities are underrepresented in traditional print and broadcast media. [...] Academic discussion of subcultural groups can potentially add to their cultural capital, legitimize and increase acceptance of the diversity of culture, challenging the monolithic and dominant conceptualization of society as structured through the heterosexual matrix' (p.243).

Therefore, bringing forward and centering queer discourse in academic research is of utmost importance, especially since queer voices have been downplayed for so long. Additionally, the self-expression through publicly accessible online texts and writings is a political choice that queer individuals and groups make in an effort to gain visibility within an overall hostile environment (ibid.).

Earlier in this project I positioned myself and mentioned the notion of reflexivity, on which I now wish to expand further. As Mason (1996) put it, reflexive research is the process through which the researcher should not only critically examine and analyze the hard data but also their own position and performance throughout the research.

Building on that idea, Guillemin and Gillam (2004) note that the whole research process – from the choice of research question, material, theory to the way the researcher interprets and presents the results – reflexivity is a dynamic procedure between the researcher and the research. In this sense, the notion of reflexivity moves away from epistemological concerns and closer to ethical concerns (ibid.).

Having these matters in mind, I will now proceed to the analytical part of this thesis, presenting and closely examining the selected data.

## **6 ANALYSIS**

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The entire data collection process was conducted online. Even though printed materials are potentially available, me being away from the country of interest prevented me from having access to them. Additionally, I chose to explore the content on the group's online platform based on their mobilization, outreach and use of said platform. Therefore, all the data was gathered from the blog of Radical Pride.

Out of the 50 texts published between January 2017 and April 2021, I selected 11 which I consider better reflect the group's discourse. Most of the texts I eliminated from my study were calls to action or 'invitations' to events, parties and demonstrations.

Moreover, throughout the process I always had my research question and general topic in mind, meaning that I was mainly looking for texts with political elements and/or texts where the notions of identity, action and activism were expressed or implied.

Moreover, since I was raised in Thessaloniki, the city in which Radical Pride is located and Greek is my mother tongue, my familiarity with both the social context and the language were important factors in me choosing the topic and therefore the data. Only one out of the 11 texts was written in English, while the other 10 were in Greek. Throughout the analysis I will present the quotes as they have been translated by me. All of the original texts are in Appendix 1.

The analysis follows the outline presented below:

The analysis is divided into five general categories or themes. These categories are:

- Pride
- Murder of Zack Kostopoulos/Zackie Oh!
- International Women's Day

- International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
- Equality & Freedom.

These themes were chosen as a way of grouping together texts written around the same concern, reason or motivation. The ‘Pride’ section consists of five texts, while the sections ‘Murder of Zack Kostopoulos/Zackie Oh!’ and ‘International Women’s Day’ contain two texts each. The remaining two sections include one text each.

The analysis will then take place under the five sections where I will identify the discursive, textual and social levels of portions of the texts and analyze them through CDA.

## 6.1 *Pride*

As mentioned above, five texts will be presented and analyzed in this section. Three of them were published in the span of three days between 27-29 January 2017. The fourth text was published on the 19<sup>th</sup> of May of the same year and the last one on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 2020.

### Discursive Level

Four of the five texts in this section reference back to the Stonewall Riots of 1969, as presented in the Historical Background chapter of this thesis. For example,

*“Pride festivals started as a continuation of the Stonewall uprising which erupted spontaneously. It was the LGBT individuals themselves who rose against police violence and exploitation by owners of LGBT bars. The first Prides in the USA and elsewhere were organized as a commemoration of this uprising”* (2017c).

The other three texts (2017a; b; e) echo this sentiment, providing a high level of both intertextuality and interdiscursivity. Interdiscursivity is apparent in the sense that this

quote draws on discourse around the origins of Pride and the reasons why Stonewall was significant.

As seen in chapters 2 and 4 of this thesis, Stonewall was significant because of its political essence, and Radical Pride consistently utilize the event in their discourse as a way of bringing this political element back to the Greek pride. There are also parallels drawn between the quote and the general sentiment of LGBTQIA+ movement, activism and identity.

Moreover, discourse surrounding the organization of Pride in the specific context of Thessaloniki is important in three of the five texts:

*“We have noticed so far that Prides focus more on male homosexuality, although the central slogans formally included more aspects of the LGBTQIA+ issue. For example, in the floats ‘homonormativity’ is emphasized, displaying stereotypical beauty standards, commodifying in this way the human body”* (2017a).

*“In Thessaloniki, even though the 1<sup>st</sup> Pride began with open meeting procedures, it ended up being a restricted organizational structure in last year’s 4<sup>th</sup> Pride excluding, in fact, groups who wanted to co-organize it. Simultaneously, the visibility and demands were rather limited around certain identities and consequently lived experiences of lgbtqia+ people, leaving the rest out”* (2017c).

These quotes very clearly show the group’s disappointment with how the official Pride organization is dealing with the setup of Pride. More specifically, what Radical Pride is mentioning in the second quote is directly related to Ricœur’s political paradox and how Thessaloniki Pride fails to recognize the element of ‘le politique’ in the sociopolitical sphere.

Moreover, there are clear indications of homonormativity (“*certain identities*”, “*male homosexuality*”, “*stereotypical beauty standards*”, “*commodifying the human body*”)

and even the explicit use of the word which is considered by the members of Radical Pride to be problematic, leading more ‘deviant’ identities in the margins.

When talking about the commodification of the body it is also important to go back to Melucci’s conception of the body under capitalism where he is talking about the ‘body as an object [...] a resource for use in the production of merchandise and in social reproduction’ (Melucci, 1980, p.221). The parallels between the way the body is used under capitalism and the way it is used in the official Pride parade are clear in the sense that the official Pride parade subscribes to the norms put down by capitalism, something that Radical Pride strongly disagrees with, as seen also by their discourse around commodification of Pride:

*“Why should the planning of Pride go through small organizational committees and companies? Why, since Pride concerns all of us, are we excluded from almost all decision-taking processes related to it? Why should companies, embassies and consulates have a place in Pride and not actual lgbtqia+ individuals and allies?”* (2017d).

Once again, Radical Pride takes issue with the existing structures and organizational processes of Thessaloniki Pride, by criticizing the decision-making actors (“*companies*”, “*embassies*”, “*consulates*”). They speak of “*exclusion*” which has been a point of concern related to commodification for several authors in the Previous Research in Gay Studies chapter (Taylor, 2014; Enguix, 2017; McLean, 2018). By bringing that point forward they emphasize the need for alternative manifestations of Pride, ones that are free of the aforementioned problems and embedded within a broader movement for sociopolitical change:

*“Self-organized pride is not just a contribution to the struggle for LGBTQIA+ liberation but also a space of expression, discourse and organization for actions against all forms of oppression. Against fascism, racism, patriarchy, class divisions”* (2020a).

Change, through the lens of collective identity and action, is an integral part of social mobilization and its desirable result. Radical Pride expresses this sentiment through

recognizing their position as part of “*the struggle for LGBTQIA+ liberation*” but also as taking action against certain oppressive actors (“*fascism, racism, patriarchy, class divisions*”).

On a discursive level, all of those actors seem to represent a discourse which is directly opposed to everything Radical Pride stands for and that is why they make their political stance explicitly clear through their writings:

*“In a society that ‘conveniently’ puts people in boxes, us homosexuals, lesbians, trans [folks], bi [people], intersex [people] and queers know how to get rid of it”* (2017b).

They are evidently not engaging with societal norms, they are using their personal and collective identity as a vehicle for change, a change which will only come if they unsubscribe from the “*boxes*” society has in place for them. The change they seek is also inherently political, since the element of the political is not distinct from the rest of the society, as Swyngedouw (2018) asserts based on his conceptualization of the political paradox.

### Textual Level

Before I move on to the textual level of analysis, it is important to note that Greek is a heavily gendered language. There are three sets of pronouns and consequently three ways of identifying linguistic elements. However, the neuter gender is only used to refer to objects and not people, which means that there is no direct equivalent of the they/them/theirs pronoun, which, in English is widely used to identify individuals whose gender falls under the non-binary umbrella<sup>10</sup>, people whose gender is unknown to the author or more generally when referring to groups of people of various genders.

For that reason, many contemporary groups within the queer movement use the symbols ‘@’ or ‘\*’ as a way to overcome the obstacles mentioned above. Radical Pride is no exception to that: “[...] *όλες, όλ\* και όλοι*” (2017b), translates to “everyone”.

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<sup>10</sup> [http://www.safehomesma.org/gender\\_alphabet.pdf](http://www.safehomesma.org/gender_alphabet.pdf)

“[...] ερχόμαστε αντιμέτωπ@” (2017c), translates to “we are confronted with”, “[...] έχουμε όλ@ ίσο λόγο” (2017e), translates to “we all have equal say”.

These are just a few examples of how the symbols are utilized in an attempt at inclusivity. This inclusivity is both an answer to the exclusion identified in the discursive level of analysis and also a way of further expanding the notion of collective identity within the movement.

Moreover on a textual level the political positioning of the group becomes even more obvious through phrases such as: “[...] we **fight** for a world where we will live, move and express ourselves **freely**” (2017a). They realize their collective identity as a struggle against a world which oppresses and suppresses them, which then makes the we/they distinction discussed in Chapter 4 evident and reinforces the political agenda of Radical Pride. They stand directly and clearly against the existing sociopolitical system, implying that Thessaloniki Pride does not do the same but rather contributes to this system.

In the text from May 2017, the group uses quotation marks in the words “*normality*”, “*dominant- masculine*”, “*experts*” when referring to Thessaloniki Pride. Yet again they bring forward the issue of homonormativity and commodification within the gay movement, clearly indicating with the use of the quotation marks that these words are not their own and that they oppose these notions.

Radical Pride does not support the norms and beauty standards upheld by society and reproduced by Thessaloniki Pride for LGBTQIA+ people, neither do they believe that the individuals and teams behind the official Pride setup hold the authority to make decisions for the entire community. In the same text the slogan ‘*Keep it Radical*’ appears throughout, as a call to the reader to not conform and comply with what is expected by society and to not accept the few institutional changes as wins but to keep up and fight and to ‘keep it radical’.



## Social Level

The context within which the texts are produced can be derived from the texts themselves, adding more nuance to the levels previously studied.

In two of the four texts produced in 2017 there appears to be a general climate of restlessness and instability, especially in relation to the refugee crisis: “[The EU] *violates fundamental human rights, condemning migrants and refugees to drown in the Aegean or be trapped in their homeland*” (2017a).

“[...] *a Greek government that keeps people trapped behind closed borders, leaves the Evros border fence standing – a disgraceful symbol of a miserable era*” (2017b).

In the last text of 2017, there are mentions of Donald Trump’s election as the President of the US, the French public’s support of Marine Le Pen, the rise of the European far-right, attacks on marginalized peoples by fascists, the economic crisis and the refugees being locked up in camps and attacked by fascists.

All of these elements paint a picture of the sociopolitical context within which Greek queer people and members of Radical Pride mobilize. These descriptions give an understanding of an environment that is not welcoming to anyone who does not fit certain characteristics and does not fulfill certain societal roles.

It is in this climate that Radical Pride choose to take action and create something different and diverse which celebrates difference and fights for equality and inclusivity, by essentially utilizing the friend/enemy political distinction. According to the group, those are only some of the reasons why this radical manifestation of pride is necessary. The group does not clearly mention Thessaloniki Pride, but it can be assumed, based on the previous analyses as well, that Thessaloniki Pride does not take these social issues into consideration.

The 2020 text paints a similar and even more complicated picture. There are two elaborate sections, one on the quarantine imposed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which is

describing the social situation on the national level and one on the Black Lives Matter and LGBTQIA+ struggles worldwide which is describing the situation on an international level. Briefly, the first section refers to police brutality in the country, femicides during quarantine, the national healthcare crisis and harsh circumstances queer people were faced with, to name a few. On the international level the author(s) talk again about police brutality, systemic racism in the US, multiple oppression faced by black queer people and the black trans women of Stonewall.

All of these intersecting issues are happening within a political context, which can be described as *du politique* which Ricœur established. It is the environment where ‘the political’ and ‘politics’ clash. In this case, it is where Radical Pride’s political discourse addresses and criticizes institutional political structures which appear to oppress and marginalize queer people once again.

Overall, the sociopolitical context within which Radical Pride are situated and create their discourse is an oppressive one, not only towards LGBTQIA+ Greek people, but marginalized peoples in general. Pride is necessary, not only as a manifestation of diverse sexualities and gender identities but as an integral part of a wider political movement for liberation and equality.

## *6.2 Murder of Zack Kostopoulos/ Zackie Oh!*

There are two texts presented in this section. The first is from the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September 2018 and the second from the 18<sup>th</sup> of October 2020.

### Social Level

In order to understand and comprehend the texts in this section it is important to contextualize them. It is essential, then, to present and analyze the social level first and then move on to the discursive and textual.

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of September 2018, a man was beaten to death in central Athens in broad daylight. As the news spread the man was identified as 33 year old Zack Kostopoulos, a well-known LGBTQIA+ activist and drag performer by the stage name of Zackie-Oh!<sup>11</sup>. The timeline of the events is not clear to this day, but according to media sources<sup>121314</sup> and live CCTV footage, in the afternoon of the 21<sup>st</sup> of September, a man is captured by the security camera of a jewelry store bursting inside the store looking disorganized, panicked and terrified. When he is seen looking around confused, he realizes that the security door has locked behind him and he proceeds to grab a fire extinguisher to try and break the door but with no luck. He then tries to break the window glass and he succeeds but is now covered in glass and blood, even more disoriented than before. At once, two infuriated men start kicking and punching Zak, even though he is laying on the ground almost unconscious. The police and ambulance were called immediately, with the ambulance arriving first. Sources claimed that the medics did not try and stop Zak's beating and other sources claim that policemen joined the two men in the attack. After these events, police handcuffed Zak and put him in the ambulance where he eventually succumbed to his injuries and died.

What ensued was a media frenzy and a public outcry. Due to his multiple identities as an HIV-positive, left-leaning, drag performer and queer activist, queer collectives and groups rallied around the demand for justice for his death, pointing out multiple levels of exclusion and marginalization, especially since it was first implied that Zak was under the influence of drugs at the time of the incident, even though the ensuing toxicology report stated that there was no alcohol or drugs in his system<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.kar.org.gr/2018/09/23/o-aktivistis-antifasistas-zak-kostopoylos-itan-o-antras-poy-pethane-sti-listeia-sto-kosmi-matopoleio/>

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2018/09/24/gay-activist-zak-kostopoulos-lynched-to-death-in-greece/?utm\\_source=Twitter&utm\\_medium=Buffer&utm\\_campaign=PN](https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2018/09/24/gay-activist-zak-kostopoulos-lynched-to-death-in-greece/?utm_source=Twitter&utm_medium=Buffer&utm_campaign=PN)

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.out.com/news-opinion/2018/9/26/gay-activist-drag-queen-zak-kostopoulos-lynched-greece>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.ekathimerini.com/news/232906/forensic-report-on-death-of-lgbtq-activist-inconclusive/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.ekathimerini.com/news/234822/tests-on-dead-lgbtq-activist-do-not-point-to-drugs/>

The long-awaited trial for Zak's murder was set to begin in 2020 but postponed indefinitely due to covid restrictions<sup>16</sup>. There are six defendants, two of them are the men captured on camera beating Zak and the other four are policemen. All six of them face charges of fatal bodily harm.

It is in this environment that Radical Pride chose to publish their two texts regarding Zak and his murder. Again, the group operates within a specific political context which cannot be overlooked. As previously mentioned, queer collectives made exclusion a point of conversation regarding the murder, which, as will be presented in the following level of analysis, was important for Radical Pride's discourse as well. It is through the lens of exclusion that the friend/enemy distinction appears analytically once again, demonstrating that 'the political' is always inherently present in all social environments.

### Discursive Level

There are several points throughout the texts which point towards a dominant discourse reproduced by popular media outlets:

*"We were informed by systemic Media that on Friday afternoon an "armed" "drug addict" attacked a jewelry store in Omonoia, in order to rob it. But the security door locked him inside. In his attempt to escape, he broke a glass with a fire extinguisher and "was injured by the fragments of glass until his death" (2018b).*

They moreover write that Zak was murdered not only by his actual killers but also by "[...] a deeply intolerant society, unable to comprehend the multiple oppressions in the lives of those around it" (2018b).

The discourse surrounding Zak's killing, as presented by Radical Pride, shows that the 'systemic media' portrayed Zak not only as a 'drug addict' but also as a thief whose cause of death was the shattered glass for the window. At the time the text was written

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.lifo.gr/now/greece/zak-kostopoylos-anaboli-ep-aoriston-sti-diki-logo-lockdown>

and also when popular media were reporting on the incident, the toxicology report was not yet released and the events that transpired were still unclear, so was any potential motive that Zak had to enter the store.

This information leads to the dominant discourse being questioned and challenged by Radical Pride and it also leads to the group deeming the society 'intolerant' of anything different, in this case Zak himself. Compared to the previous texts studied on Pride, there is a noticeable connection between what society considers acceptable and tolerable and what Radical Pride stands for when it comes to all people they consider as marginalized.

When describing the incident two years later and with more knowledge the group states in relation to the police officers accused of causing fatal harm on Zak:

*"According to the President of the Union of Police Officers of Athens, Demosthenes Pakos, the police officers in question did "an excellent job" and "exercised the absolutely necessary violence" because "this is the practice, whether you like it or not"* (2020c).

The dominant discourse is not only protecting the police officers but also directly praising them for their actions. By quoting several headlines produced by unnamed media the group further distances themselves from the popular discourse:

*"An aspiring thief injured himself and lost his life trying to get out of a jewelry store he was robbing."*

*"The robber in Omonoia is a well-known HIV-positive homosexual!", "An activist and Drag Queen, the robber of the jewelry store", "According to the police, he was a drug addict", "Frantic aspiring robber" (2020c).*

These are just some of the headlines Radical Pride is mentioning, stating moreover that even if he was indeed a thief and a drug addict, it should still not make a difference on

his treatment by the police and the media. The group undoubtedly oppose the hegemonic view reproduced by the headlines when later in the text they proclaim:

*“GAYS, TRANS [PEOPLE], LESBIANS, PRIESTESSES OF DISGRACE WE ARE PROUD TO BE THE NATION’S SHAME”* (2020c).

LGBTQIA+ people are presented as shameful in national discourse. By using this slogan, Radical Pride reclaim their identity and try to give a different interpretation to their collective identity, one that stands politically against social exclusion by utilizing shame. As stated previously, the political sphere is inherent to society. In the case of Zak, this means that the members of Radical Pride engage in the we/they distinction by employing it to their advantage.

#### Textual Level

On a textual level, the group make use of bold and daring statements and words to express their solidarity with Zak. This solidarity lays at the foundation of the group’s organization and expression:

*“That’s why we’re here today. Because Zackie was one of us. She was perverted, she was a faggot, she was an antifascist, she was a tranny, she was HIV-positive, she was a slut...*

*She was.*

*And any of us could have been in her position”* (2020c).

The use of words like *faggot*, *tranny*, *slut* is widely considered to be offensive and degrading. Radical Pride uses these words as a way of reclaiming them and also to add shock value to their writing. They identify as all of those things and they are not afraid to proclaim it. Moreover, they refer to Zak as *one of us*, with the ‘us’ being these

shocking identifying words. All of those identities are separate but also intertwined into one collective identity that the members of the group subscribe to.

Writing about the wider public's perception of the event they use phrases such as: "*the monster of social cannibalism*", "*moral vindication*" (2018b). It is apparent once again that their values and beliefs do not align with those of the vast majority, which was quick to attack Zak's reputation online shortly after his death. Rather, they are condemning the society's response and make their position abundantly clear.

They moreover refer to his death and its aftermath as a '*lynching*' (2018b), a strong word used to accuse his actual killers and also the people online who made cruel and insensitive comments on his murder. There is a high level of interdiscursivity identified here, between Radical Pride's discourse and that of the popular media and general public.

To reiterate, 'the political' can be observed through the discrimination between the two broad groups standing opposite to each other; one is the people who violently attacked Zak to cause his death and post mortem to offend his character and the other is those who stood by Zak's side, defending and supporting him throughout his life and death. This second group is where Radical Pride position themselves, demonstrating their solidarity.

### 6.3 *International Women's Day*

In this section two texts are presented. One was published on the 7<sup>th</sup> of March 2020 and the second on the 14<sup>th</sup> of March 2021.

#### Discursive Level

Radical Pride poses the question of who the celebrated women are. Are the "*trans*", "*refugees*", "*poor*", "*sex workers*", "*drug addicts*", "*tortured*" (2020b) women, to give

some of the examples the group mentions in a lengthy paragraph, celebrated, or is it only a selected few? They answer this question in their 2021 text, by presenting the national discourse which sees the women being celebrated as “*the holy uteri of society*” and as “*productive but also mothers, assertive but obedient, companionate, loyal, seductive*”. This is the “*paradigm*” that the nation presents as a “*milestone for emancipation*” (2021).

But to Radical Pride this is not what this paradigm represents. The group believes that there cannot be true liberation if women still have to perform certain roles to fit into what the nation and society in general expects from them. The women they refer to in their first text are not therefore celebrated by society, but the group still stands by the side of “[...] *all women who are being oppressed daily and constantly by the patriarchy*” (2021). As demonstrated before, women are oppressed but so is everyone else existing outside of the heterosexual matrix. The members of Radical Pride are considered to be outsiders and so their solidarity connections to women are even stronger.

The issue of the patriarchy is present once again as part of a generalized dominant system which works to oppress marginalized people, in this instance, specifically women. This dominant system is mainly constituted by the interconnection of the patriarchy, capitalism and neoliberalism. Hence, the political realm is once again implicitly present through the patriarchal notions which operate in oppressive ways towards feminine presenting individuals.

In the text, they write that IWD is an “*institutional celebration*” (2020b) implying that the day has been commodified within the cultural norms, similar to how Pride has been commodified by corporations, companies and institutions. Initially, IWD was a revolutionary socialist celebration, established by socialist women as a way of advocating for gender equality in all domains of life.

There are parallels drawn between the struggle for the emancipation of all women and the struggle for gay liberation. These parallels are also clear through the group



explicitly stating that “*Our struggles are intersectional*” (2020b), further establishing a sense of solidarity through collective identity.

In relation to the social context presented in the following section is the slogan: “*Witches, sluts, lesbians, hysteric [women] we will smack and kick the rapists*” (2021). The words used in the slogan have been utilized as a linguistic tool by society to belittle and shame women for centuries. Radical Pride are reclaiming these words and use them proudly to refer to themselves and encourage other women to reclaim them as well, as a way to undermine the words’ derogatory essence.

### Social Level

The first text mentions that the 8<sup>th</sup> of March of this particular year was a day when “*fascist formations and ‘pure Christians’*” called for “*‘a rally against illegal immigration’*” (2020b). This refers to the call from the Association of Greek Citizens for Macedonia and the Union of Greek Orthodox Forces for people to attend a public gathering and march in relation to the immigration crisis<sup>17</sup>. In this context Radical Pride proclaim: “*Solidarity with every individual beyond the limits of gender/sex, race, kind!*” (2020b). This comes as a powerful response to the people who label other people as illegal and assemble to announce this belief publicly.

Next year’s social context was one of general unrest and discontent. The Me Too movement started getting traction in the country after Sofia Mpekatorou, a Greek Olympic athlete and champion, came forward on an article published on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December 2020 alleging her sexual harassment by her coach and former vice president of the Hellenic Sailing Federation<sup>18</sup>. This allegation encouraged more women in the sports sector, the arts and entertainment industry and even in academic circles to speak about

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<sup>17</sup> <https://www.thestival.gr/eidiseis/koinonia/507986-thessaloniki-sygkentrosi-kai-poreia-gia-to-metanasteutiko-stis-8-martiou/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.marieclaire.gr/celebrities/news-celebrities/i-olimpionikis-sofia-bekatorou-mila-sto-marie-claire-ke-gia-proti-fora-gia-ti-sexoualiki-parenochlisi-ston-choro-tou-athlismou-vinteo/>

their own experiences of sexual harassment, abuse and rape by men in their professional spheres.

Under these circumstances, Radical Pride express their solidarity with the victims, but also affirm that “*The patriarchy won’t collapse if survivors start talking*” (2021). This statement references to the public discourse at the time surrounding the obligation of sexual abuse survivors to come forward and share their experiences.

The popular media, according to the group, were not fully supportive of the victims, “[u]nder the pretext of the presumption of innocence and the logic of impartiality” (2021). In several instances, alleged rapists and abusers were indeed invited on TV shows to tell their side of the story<sup>19</sup>, prompting the group to accuse these TV channels of wanting to just “[...] *increase their profits through ratings*” (2021).

In this context the we/they political distinction can be deciphered if we take a closer look at the actors involved. The Association of Greek Citizens for Macedonia, the Union of Greek Orthodox Forces and the popular media all seem to be upholding a sociopolitical order which penalizes human beings for fleeing their unsafe countries or speaking their truth publicly. Radical Pride resist this dominant order and discourse through solidarity with those affected and collective action.

### Textual Level

On a textual level, given the circumstances presented above, the group uses harsh language targeted towards the alleged offenders, ascribing them the labels of “*violators*”, “*abusers*”, “*trash*” (2021). These offenders are described to be leading “[...] *sick lives*” (ibid.). These terms and expressions are first of all used to add shock value. Moreover, they are utilized to display the group’s opposition to the offenders’ alleged actions, claiming that these actions are not separate from the offenders’ overall existence and identity, but rather embedded in their psyche through patriarchal hegemonic structures.

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<sup>19</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sj2hrhaYxUI>

As in every other text studied, the symbol “@” is once again employed to express inclusion. However, the texts in this section use, for the most part, the female genus and pronouns, presumably because the texts are written around IWD. The attempt at inclusion is in any case apparent, since male pronouns are only clearly used and utilized when referring to the perpetrators, as an indirect way of addressing the male dominant order within the patriarchy.

#### 6.4 *International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women*

The text presented in this section was published on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November 2019. The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women is celebrated on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November every year.

##### Discursive Level

Society seems to “conceal”, “reproduce” and “normalize” violence against women in everyday life, and the “bourgeois democracy” seems to not only “tolerate” but also to take advantage of it (2019). This situation only gets worse if one considers the “stereotypes of the gender roles” (ibid.). It is evident, then, that the popular societal discourse around women and their position in society is heavily misogynistic, by forcing women into vulnerable and precarious positions.

This discourse does not only include women however, but “[...] all feminine and LGBTQIA+ individuals” (ibid.). All of these identities are being inadequately treated by the dominant actors, according to Radical Pride. By opposing and condemning this rhetoric, the group stands openly in solidarity, as conceptualized by Melucci, with all the oppressed feminine presenting individuals.

Moreover, “physical, verbal, psychological abuse, femicides, rapes the overall gender and sexist violence” (2019), are framed as one-time incidents, “[...] a series of random bad moments” caused by “[...] sick or unstable” (ibid.) individuals. The group

disagrees, identifying this violence and these violent incidents as products of the capitalist patriarchy which systemically and systematically “[...] *produces and reproduces forms of oppression*” (ibid.), cultivating and sustaining patriarchal conceptions of the world. Consequently, the struggle against gender violence and sexism is part of a “[...] *broader struggle against patriarchy and capitalism*” (ibid.).

Through this understanding, there is a clear opposition to hegemonic dominant discourse. This opposition creates, in turn, a strong counter-discourse which utilizes parts of this dominant discourse to emphasize its immorality and hypocrisy. This discourse/counter-discourse dynamic can also be understood through the lens of the friend/enemy distinction, which places these discourses in opposing sides of the political sphere.

The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against women is a celebration introduced by the United Nations (UN), an institutional organization, which, based on Radical Pride’s political positioning, is reproducing the dominant discourse and hegemonic order. The group’s call to action and recognition of this International Day, is not therefore an acknowledgement of the work of the UN but rather “[...] *another reason to take to the streets*” (2019).

By bringing forward their collective identity as “[...] *lesbians, homosexuals, trans, queer intersex, asexuals +*” (ibid.), they further distance themselves from the central discourse and closer to those affected by gender-based violence. Their sexual and gender identities are not a monolith, but they are connected in a collective solidarity, manifested through antagonistic political discourse.

### Textual Level

On a textual level, the content is corresponding to all of the texts previously examined. The “@” is once again utilized as a symbol of inclusivity for all gender identities that constitute the collective and the audience who will consume the text.

The word “*dismal*” is used to describe everyday life, a word carefully chosen in this context to attract attention to the violence feminine identities endure, which makes their everyday life miserable and depressing. The group moreover ascribe the word “*courage*” to women who have stood up against the violence they have been subject to, thereby prompting more women to come forward and act courageously.

The overall sentiment of the text is encouraging, supportive and reassuring towards women and all victims of gender-based violence. In addition, it is also empowering, calling everyone to attend the march on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November.

### Social Level

The social context can be developed through the text. The specific period in the country was turbulent, especially regarding actions against women. The group refers to “[...] *the recent incident in the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki Library*”, where a woman reported that an unknown man ejaculated on her back while she was studying<sup>20</sup>.

In the same climate, the group proclaims their support for “[...] *our murdered sisters in Rhodes and Corfu*”, most probably referring to the murder of Eleni Topaloudi by two men on the 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2018<sup>21</sup> and the murder of Angelica Petrou by her own father on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2019<sup>22</sup>, respectively.

By mentioning these cases, the group’s intention is to highlight that these are not isolated incidents, as the dominant discourse make them up to be. Rather, these events are manifestations of the deeply rooted misogyny and sexism of patriarchal society which is inseparable from the capitalist neoliberal state politics. This understanding brings us back to Ricœur’s political paradox. In the domain of ‘*du politique*’, ‘the political’ is antagonistically placed against ‘*politics*’. The latter is in this case manifested through

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<sup>20</sup> <https://www.iefimerida.gr/ellada/salos-aph-tin-sexoyaliki-parenohlisi-foititrias>

<sup>21</sup> <https://tomov.gr/en/2018/12/05/21-year-old-eleni-topaloudi-gang-rape-and-murder-in-rhodos/>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.enikos.gr/society/616967/me-sideroverga-htypise-kai-skotose-tin-kori-tou-o-paidoktonos-ti>

the hegemonic discourse which works to conceal the incidents of sexual assault, violence and femicides.

## 6.5 Equality & Freedom

The text presented in this section was published under the title “*The world of equality and freedom of expression against the world of conservation and hatred*” on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May 2018. It is the only one of the texts originally written in English.

### Discursive Level

The notion of justice and its expression through the hegemonic discourse is being heavily debated by Radical Pride. In 2016, nine self-identified homosexuals filed a lawsuit against prelate and Metropolitan, Amvrosios, citing incitement to hatred and abuse of ecclesiastical office. Their lawsuit was provoked by an article Metropolitan Amvrosios wrote in 2015. In the article, he called for people to spit on gay individuals when they see them on the street, among other hateful and offensive characterizations against LGBTQIA+ people<sup>23</sup>. It was reportedly the first time that a high-ranking public official was tried with these charges<sup>24</sup>. His trial took place on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2018, where he got acquitted.

In the present text, Radical Pride mention Amvrosios’s acquittal and counter-argue that “[...] *justice strikes the weak*” (2018a), giving the example of LGBTQIA+ refugees who are being sent back to their home countries by the Greek state, “*even if sending [them] back to their country is a synonym for death*” (ibid.). Against this discourse, Radical Pride propose “[...] *a world of equality and freedom of expression*”, offering solidarity with “*the weak*” (ibid.).

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<sup>23</sup> <https://www.news247.gr/koinonia/se-diki-gia-ypokinisi-misoys-parapempetai-o-amvrosios-ton-minysan-ennea-omofylofiloi.6525506.html>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.vice.com/el/article/7x75qz/osa-tromaktika-kai-omofobika-akoysthkan-sth-dikh-poy-a8ww8hke-o-ambrosios>

As previously discussed, solidarity is one of the main characteristics of NSMs according to Melucci, who identifies it as “the capability of recognizing and being recognized as a part of the same system of social relationships” (Melucci, 1985, p. 795). In this instance, solidarity is expressed through a counter-discourse aimed at disrupting the dominant rhetoric and establishing a sense of unity.

The discourse surrounding the problematic organization of Thessaloniki Pride is again displayed. Radical Pride claim that they “[...] *want to go further than just creating a pride festival*” (2018a), implying that Thessaloniki Pride views queerness as a commodified product which should only be exhibited once a year. Moreover, Thessaloniki Pride is “[...] *dependent on the political influence that aims at the systemic incorporation of movements*” (ibid.). This phrase is of particular interest, as it encompasses virtually everything that Radical Pride considers is wrong with the official Pride organization.

More specifically, Radical Pride are highly critical of Thessaloniki Pride precisely because they believe that Thessaloniki Pride commodifies pride and consequently attempts to assimilate the movement within the existing sociopolitical structures. The official Pride organization receives financial support from “[...] *businesses as sponsors, consulates, or the European Union*” (ibid.). Radical Pride imply that all those actors have a political agenda which is promoted through Thessaloniki Pride and seeks to integrate gay pride within the current capitalist patriarchal system, an action which would deprive gay pride from its revolutionary potential and roots.

The rest of the text is written in an argumentative manner. The group expresses what the city of Thessaloniki means to them, opposing the nationalist slogan “*Thessaloniki – A Greek city*” (2018a). The conception of collective identity and action is manifested through the phrase “*LGBTQIA+, refugees and migrants, we all stand united. And we mean it.*” (ibid.). Radical Pride does not only stand in solidarity, but has essentially

formed a type of alliance with immigrants which against the people who proclaim Thessaloniki's purity as a 'Greek' city.

*“And exactly because it is our city as well we will NOT give it to them and we do NOT want them to speak on behalf of it”* (2018a). ‘They’ are the “[...] racists, sexists, homophobics, transphobics, biphobics, polyphobics and fascists” (ibid.). These people reproduce a nationalistic discourse which leads to exclusion and marginalization, prompting people who do not fit into this discourse to be and feel isolated. This is something that Radical Pride seeks to prevent by offering their solidarity and support. The group's desire for inclusivity, solidarity and collectivism is once again manifested through the phrase *“Thessaloniki for us means... a city for him, for her, for them”* (ibid.).

The political notion is demonstrated throughout the text. As it has been evident from the analysis, the text aims to clash with the popular discourse by utilizing solidarity and exclusion. A more thorough examination of the utilization of exclusion will be presented in the textual level of analysis. What this section demonstrated, however, is the antagonistic political nature of Radical Pride's discourse, as exemplified through Mouffe's theorization of 'the political'.

### Textual Level

As mentioned previously, this is the only one out of all the texts presented which was originally written in English. There are two more version on the blog, one written in Greek and one written in Spanish. It can be assumed that this was a deliberate choice made by the group as a means to reach a wider audience and place the group in connection with international antagonistic queer discourse more overtly.

The text is written in an us/them manner, ascribing several characteristics to each of the groups. This categorization, which is usually employed by nationalistic discourse, is not used here to highlight the importance of national purity, but the exact opposite.



In this case, it is a distinction which enhances the antagonistic political nature of the discourse, demonstrating the friend/enemy distinction discussed in chapter 4.

Diversity and difference are celebrated and the nationalistic religious discourse is put into question. The *us* is utilized as a linguistic tool throughout the text to indicate an identity constructed through exclusion, an identity which is not concrete but rather fluid. This identity does not only include LGBTQIA+ people, but everybody who has been positioned as an outsider through the dominant discourse.

The category of *them* includes the '*fascists*', the '*racists*', the '*men from the orders of repression*', the '*people who get thrilled by the idea of war*' and those who '[...] *use the word "country" in their everyday life*' (2018a). The *us* includes '*workers and the unemployed*', '*straight couples who choose to have children or not*', '*colorful families*', '*Greek women and refugees*' (ibid.).

The idea of gay pride now includes everybody who wants to be included, it is no longer limited to homosexual people. Queer activism is therefore part of a broader movement, a broader idea of what collective identity and action is and should be, away from commodified manifestations and celebrations only one day of the year.

### Social Level

The social environment is chaotic and tumultuous and Radical Pride is describing it in the presented text. There is a general surge in hate speech not only in the city, but in the whole country. The period between 2017 and 2018 was a troubled one since the country was faced with the dispute between Greece and the now North Macedonia over the name 'Macedonia'.

Put briefly, the name 'Macedonia' has been an issue between the countries since North Macedonia gained its independence from Yugoslavia in 1991. Especially for residents of northern Greece, where the border with North Macedonia is, the dispute was a pressing matter. Citing political and historical reasons the Greek government aimed for years

to prevent the neighboring country from using the word in their official name. North Macedonia pointed out similar points to allow them to include the word in their name. The then Greek government was once again attempting negotiations to reach an agreement. This whole dispute has always been a fertile ground for nationalistic discourses to take over and dominate popular discussion, precisely due to its historical and political implications.

At the same time, talks between the government and privately-owned businesses about building gold mines in the Chalkidiki region of northern Greece also began. Several environmental and anti-capitalist activists protested against the mines, arguing that the mines would be an environmental disaster and that they would only profit the companies involved in the building and maintaining of the mines and not the locals or the natural environment of the region.

This climate of contestation, uncertainty and sociopolitical division was at the foundation of this text produced by Radical Pride. As demonstrated through the previous portions of analysis of this text, the we/they distinction is the main focus of the text. This distinction moreover highlights the antagonistic political nature of the discourse produced and the environment it was produced in. The group are yet again siding with those affected by the national political discourse and policy, and display Thessaloniki as an inclusive city on every level and of everybody.

In the next portion of the thesis the results of the analysis will be discussed according to the theory and the concepts mentioned and developed in previous chapters, namely chapters 3 and 4.

## **7 DISCUSSION**

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The assertion of identity as a collective characteristic and that of collective action as a necessary tool for systemic change have been evident throughout the analyzed texts.

The aspect of solidarity between actors perceived as marginalized was pronounced in many instances, more so when the discussion was around the immigration crisis. Overall, the results point towards a significant level of political engagement of Radical Pride in relation to activism and identity through antagonistic discourse.

As demonstrated in the introduction of this project, queer identity is not essential and moreover it is not essentially politicized. What forces it into politicization is the existing sociopolitical structures, namely the patriarchy and institutionalized heteronormativity/heterosexuality in relation to capitalism as an economic and political system.

When queer people find themselves in between these constructions, they are faced with two broad options: either be assimilated or be excluded. But these two options, just like everything else, contain a variety of choices. In the case of assimilation, not everyone can achieve it, no matter how much they want to.

I have explained in chapter 3 of this thesis, that only people with certain characteristics (gay, able-bodied, white, middle-class, cisgender, man) can hope for a successful integration within the existing sociopolitical system. These characteristics, then, create a mirror image of the institutionalized heteronormativity, effectively named homonormativity. This partial assimilation affects, in turn, all other queer identities and people, pushing them into further exclusion.

When this happens, then, LGBT people are left again with one of two choices, this time either to keep pushing towards assimilation or rise against and question the interconnected systems of oppression. What Radical Pride choose to do is go with option number two, and option number two is inherently political.

The notions of inclusion and exclusion can be as powerful tools for the dominant order as they can be for those against it. One can reclaim and utilize exclusionary language and practice to substantiate their sociopolitical position and that is exactly what Radical Pride are doing. They employ the language of exclusion as a way of pointing towards the multiple oppressions they, as queer marginalized peoples, face.

Additionally, the conceptualization of a 'we' as opposed to a 'they' becomes political because it is based on exclusion. As Mouffe (2005) highlighted, the antagonistic nature of the 'we' becomes distinct when the 'they' is constantly and perpetually doubting the experiences and political claims of the 'we'. In the context of gay pride, this distinction is further perpetuated by homonormative tendencies within the movement, as discussed previously.

The homonormativity in the gay movement is supported and is supportive of the notion of commodification since both elements play the role of depoliticizing queerness and position it within existing heteronormative structures. Through the institutionalization of the Pride parades and celebrations, gay identities also become institutionalized and deprived of their transformative capacity. As demonstrated by the previous research in chapter 3 in this project, official Pride organizations tend to do just that. Interestingly, this tendency is echoed by Radical Pride as well in their approach to Thessaloniki Pride.

More specifically, what Thessaloniki Pride does is that it further eliminates already marginalized identities from its decision-making processes. As a result, this organization further maintains the historical sociopolitical exclusion of LGBTQIA+ identities, while at the same time proclaiming that it gives voice to these identities. This claim has been disputed by Radical Pride throughout their texts which engage specifically with gay pride discourse.

This exclusion by deciding actors is what initially prompted Radical Pride's decision to come together, and it still is a point of interest for the group. However, through this process the members realized that the exclusion is not only happening on the organizational level of Pride, but is a reality for them throughout their everyday lives. Given this understanding the group decided to extend their discourse to include a critique of the broader sociopolitical structures they identify as oppressive.

It is at that point when change became both the objective and an integral part of the group's formation. This aligns with Alberto Melucci's (1980) conceptualization of

what change means for social movements. Moreover, once this potential for change was realized, so was the transformative dimension of the group's identity and action.

These notions are then materialized through the friend/enemy distinction, which is utilized to strengthen the group's detachment from the dominant discourse and its connection with disenfranchised voices. Built on systems of solidarity, the comradeship between queer identities and other marginalized peoples, such as women and refugees, is further strengthening the distinction between 'us' and 'them'.

Attacking EU's policies regarding immigration, condemning the Greek government's attempts at keeping refugees outside of the country, criticizing the popular media's rhetoric around issues of murder, sexual assault and opposing nationalistic discourses around what is and what is not 'Macedonia' are just some of the ways that the group realize their collective queer identity as one included in a broader antagonistic movement.

What is particularly interesting is the way in which the group's discourse is realizing its polemic character through linguistic means. Many semantic elements, traditionally used to attack and diminish deviant identities, are now deployed to support and build up those same alienated identities.

Ultimately, identity building and identity formation is not an essentialist project. Identities are constantly reevaluated and reinforced and it would be a mistake to ascribe them naturalistic characteristics and describe them merely as naturally occurring and pre-fixed.

## **8 CONCLUSION**

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Through the theoretical lens of Alberto Melucci's conceptualization of new social movement formations and manifestations, I argued that the element of 'the political' is crucial, since Melucci considered NSMs as merely cultural formations with a capacity of having limited political claims.

Specifically, the cultural domain refers to conflicts which have a direct impact on identity and motivate action based on individual characteristics (Melucci, 1985). He moreover discusses that the claims that NSMs have on a political level are primarily symbolic (ibid.), rather than a substantially political antagonistic discourse, which is the definition of ‘the political’ I have adopted throughout my analysis, basing it on Chantal Mouffe’s conceptualization of the notion.

Using this combined framework, I attempted to address and highlight whether and to what extent ‘the political’ is integral and constitutive of discourse around queerness today. In order to achieve this understanding, I utilized Radical Pride’s online material, since I considered the group to be a prime example of both the manifestation of the contemporary gay movement and an example of polemical discourse against dominating sociopolitical systems.

In addition to the theoretical framework, I employed concepts derived from previous research on gay Pride manifestations, namely the notions of queer activism, commodification and homonormativity. These concepts were helpful in identifying underlying problems with Thessaloniki Pride and contextualizing Radical Prides action and discourse.

The aim throughout this research has been to discuss contemporary queer discourse through the texts of Radical Pride and investigate whether or not this discourse has political elements. The analysis conducted in the previous chapter demonstrates a correlation between queer discourse, as produced by Radical Pride, and the notion of ‘the political’. Throughout the 11 texts presented and analyzed, there were indications or clear displays of political arguments of antagonistic nature, especially so on the discursive level.

## 8.1 *Future research*

Research always has limitations, and this project is no exception. As I mentioned in the introductory chapter of this thesis, there are certain restrictions that I now wish to expand more on. It is impossible and impractical to generalize the analysis and the ensuing results, due to the specificity of the research subject.

Additionally, because of the particular theoretical and methodological choices, only certain aspects of political queer activism have been studied and analyzed, leaving much of it still in the dark.

For these reasons, my suggestion for future research would be to potentially explore more aspects of political queer activism, for example the ways in which it might affect and bring about sociopolitical change or the reasons behind the movement's commodification and hijacking by capitalist interest.

Moreover, for the Greek environment, and more specifically for the context of Thessaloniki, a suggestion would be to conduct interviews or field studies involving the people engaged with the movement and its activism as a way of bringing their voices further within academic circles and conversations.

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## 11 APPENDIX

Date	Translated	Original
2017a	“We have noticed so far that Prides focus more on male homosexuality, although the central slogans formally included more aspects of the LGBTQIA+ issue. For example, in the floats ‘homonormativity’ is emphasized, displaying stereotypical beauty standards, commodifying in this way the human body”	“Έχουμε παρατηρήσει ότι τα μέχρι τώρα Pride εστιάζουν κατά κύριο λόγο στην ανδρική ομοφυλοφιλία, αν και τα κεντρικά συνθήματα συμπεριλάμβαναν τυπικά πολλές πλευρές του ΛΟΑΤΚΙΑ+ ζητήματος. Για παράδειγμα στα άρματα υπερτονίζεται με ποικίλους τρόπους η «ομοκανονικότητα» προβάλλοντας στερεοτυπικά πρότυπα ομορφιάς, εμπορευματοποιώντας με αυτό το τρόπο το ανθρώπινο σώμα”.
	“[...] we fight for a world where we will live, move and express ourselves freely”	“[...]αγωνιζόμαστε για έναν κόσμο όπου θα ζούμε, θα κυκλοφορούμε και θα εκφραζόμαστε ελεύθερα”.
	“[The EU] violates fundamental human rights, condemning migrants and refugees to drown in the Aegean or be trapped in their homeland”	“[Η ΕΕ] παραβιάζει θεμελιώδη ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα, καταδικάζοντας μετανάστριες και πρόσφυγες σε πνιγμό στο Αιγαίο ή σε εγκλωβισμό στις χώρες τους”.
2017b	“In a society that ‘conveniently’ puts people in boxes, us homosexuals, lesbians, trans [folks], bi [people], intersex [people] and queers know how to get rid of it”	“Σε μια κοινωνία που τακτοποιεί τους ανθρώπους της σε “βολικά” κουτάκια, εμείς οι ομοφυλόφιλοι, οι λεσβίες, οι τρανς, οι αμφί, οι ίντερσεξ και οι κουίρ ξέρουμε ότι την ξεβολεύουμε.”
	“[...] a Greek government that keeps people trapped behind closed borders, leaves the Evros border fence standing – a disgraceful symbol of a miserable era”	“[...]μια ελληνική κυβέρνηση που κρατάει ανθρώπους εγκλωβισμένους πίσω από κλειστά σύνορα, που αφήνει τον φράχτη του Έβρου να στέκει ορθωμένος-αισχρό σύμβολο μιας θλιβερής εποχής”.
2017c	“Pride festivals started as a continuation of the Stonewall uprising which erupted spontaneously. It was the LGBT individuals themselves who rose against police violence and exploitation by owners of LGBT bars. The first Prides in the USA and elsewhere were organized as a commemoration of this uprising”	“Τα Pride festival ξεκίνησαν ως συνέχεια της εξέγερσης του Stonewall, που ξέσπασε αυθόρμητα. Ήταν τα ίδια τα ΛΟΑΤ άτομα που εξεγέρθηκαν ενάντια στην αστυνομική βία και στην εκμετάλλευση από τους ιδιοκτήτες των ΛΟΑΤ μπαρ. Τα πρώτα Pride στις ΗΠΑ και αλλού διοργανώθηκαν ως ανάμνηση αυτής της εξέγερσης.”

	<p>“In Thessaloniki, even though the 1st Pride began with open meeting procedures, it ended up being a restricted organizational structure in last year’s 4th Pride excluding, in fact, groups who wanted to co-organize it. Simultaneously, the visibility and demands were rather limited around certain identities and consequently lived experiences of lgbtqia+ people, leaving the rest out”</p>	<p>“Στη Θεσσαλονίκη, ενώ το 1ο Pride ξεκίνησε με ανοιχτές διαδικασίες συνελεύσεων, κατέληξε σε κλειστό σχήμα διοργάνωσης στο περσινό 4ο Pride και μάλιστα με αποκλεισμούς ομάδων που ήθελαν να το συνδιοργανώσουν. Ταυτόχρονα, η προβολή και οι διεκδικήσεις περιορίστηκαν αρκετά γύρω από ορισμένες ταυτότητες και κατ’ επέκταση βιώματα των λοατκια+ ατόμων, αφήνοντάς τα υπόλοιπα εκτός.”</p>
2017d	<p>“Why should the planning of Pride go through small organizational committees and companies? Why, since Pride concerns all of us, are we excluded from almost all decision-taking processes related to it? Why should companies, embassies and consulates have a place in Pride and not actual lgbtqia+ individuals and allies?”</p>	<p>“Για ποιο λόγο ο σχεδιασμός ενός Pride να περνάει μέσα από ολιγομελείς κλειστές οργανωτικές επιτροπές και εταιρίες; Για ποιο λόγο, αφού το Pride αφορά όλες και όλους εμάς, να αποκλειόμαστε από τη λήψη σχεδόν του συνόλου αποφάσεων που σχετίζονται μ’ αυτό; Για ποιο λόγο να έχουν θέση σε ένα Pride οι εταιρίες, οι πρεσβείες και τα προξενεία και όχι τα ίδια τα λοατκια+ άτομα και όσες/όσοι στέκονται αλληλέγγυες/οι σε αυτά;”</p>
2018b	<p>“We were informed by systemic Media that on Friday afternoon an "armed" "drug addict" attacked a jewelry store in Omonoia, in order to rob it. But the security door locked him inside. In his attempt to escape, he broke a glass with a fire extinguisher and "was injured by the fragments of glass until his death”</p>	<p>“Ενημερωθήκαμε από συστημικά Media πως το μεσημέρι της Παρασκευής “οπλισμένος” τζοκιομανής” επιτέθηκε σε κοσμηματοπωλείο της Ομόνοιας, με σκοπό να το ληστέψει. Η πόρτα ασφαλείας όμως τον έκλεισε μέσα. Στην προσπάθεια του να ξεφύγει έσπασε μια τζαμαρία με πυροσβεστήρα και “τραυματίστηκε από τα θραύσματα γυαλιού μέχρι θανάτου”.</p>
	<p>“[...] a deeply intolerant society, unable to comprehend the multiple oppressions in the lives of those around it”; “the monster of social cannibalism”; “moral vindication”.</p>	<p>“[...]μια βαθιά δυσανεκτική κοινωνία, αδύναμη να κατανοήσει τις πολλαπλές καταπιέσεις στις ζωές των ατόμων γύρω της”; “το τέρας του κοινωνικού κανιβαλισμού”; “ηθική δικαίωση”</p>
2019	<p>“physical, verbal, psychological abuse, femicides, rapes the overall gender and sexist violence”; “[...] a series of random bad moments”; “[...] produces and reproduces forms of oppression”; “[...] another reason to take to the streets”.</p>	<p>“[...]σωματική, λεκτική, ψυχολογική βία, οι γυναικοκτονίες, οι βιασμοί συνολικά η έμφυλη και σεξιστική βία”; “[...] μια σειρά από τυχαίες κακές στιγμές”; “[...] παράγει και αναπαράγει μορφές καταπίεσης”; “[...] μια ακόμη αφορμή να βγούμε στο δρόμο”.</p>
2020a	<p>“Self-organized pride is not just a contribution to the struggle for LGBTQIA+ liberation but also a space of expression, discourse and organization for actions against all forms of oppression. Against fascism, racism, patriarchy, class divisions”.</p>	<p>“Το αυτοοργανωμένο pride δεν είναι μόνο μία συμβολή στη μάχη για τη ΛΟΑΤΚΙΑ+ απελευθέρωση αλλά και ένας χώρος έκφρασης λόγου και οργάνωσης πράξεων κόντρα σε κάθε μορφή καταπίεσης. Ενάντια στο φασισμό, το ρατσισμό, την πατριαρχία, τους ταξικούς διαχωρισμούς”.</p>
2020b	<p>“Our struggles are intersectional”; “fascist formations and ‘pure Christians’” called for “a rally against illegal immigration”;</p>	<p>“οι αγώνες μας είναι διαθεματικοί”; “ φασιστικά μορφώματα και “αγνοί χριστιανοί” να δηλητηριάσουν την πόλη με τις κραυγές τους κατά της ζωής, καλώντας σε “συγκέντρωση ενάντια στη</p>

	“Solidarity with every individual beyond the limits of gender/sex, race, kind!”	λαθρομετανάστευση” ; “ Αλληλεγγύη σε κάθε ατομικότητας πέρα από τα όρια του φύλου, της φυλής, του είδους!”.
2020c	“According to the President of the Union of Police Officers of Athens, Demosthenes Pakos, the police officers in question did "an excellent job" and "exercised the absolutely necessary violence" because "this is the practice, whether you like it or not”.	“Σύμφωνα με τον Πρόεδρο της Ένωσης Αστυνομικών Υπαλλήλων Αθηνών, Δημοσθένη Πάκο, οι εν λόγω αστυνομικοί έκαναν “άριστα τη δουλειά τους” και “ασκήσαν την απολύτως απαραίτητη βία” γιατί “αυτή είναι η πρακτική, και σ’ όποιον αρέσει”.
	““An aspiring thief injured himself and lost his life trying to get out of a jewelry store he was robbing.”” "The robber in Omonoia is a well-known HIV-positive homosexual!", "An activist and Drag Queen, the robber of the jewelry store", "According to the police, he was a drug addict", "Frantic aspiring robber".	““Επίδοξος ληστής αυτοτραυματίστηκε και έχασε τη ζωή του στην προσπάθειά του να βγει από κοσμηματοπωλείο το οποίο λήστευε.” ; “Πασίγνωστος οροθετικός ομοφυλόφιλος ο ληστής στην Ομόνοια!” ; “Ακτιβιστής και Drag Queen ο ληστής του κοσμηματοπωλείου” ; “Σύμφωνα με την αστυνομία ήταν τοξικομανής” ; “ Αλλόφρων επίδοξος ληστής”
	“GAYS, TRANS [PEOPLE], LESBIANS, PRIESTESSES OF DISGRACE WE ARE PROUD TO BE THE NATION’S SHAME”	“ΓΚΕΙ, ΤΡΑΝΣ, ΛΕΣΒΙΕΣ, ΙΕΡΕΙΕΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΙΣΧΟΥΣ ΕΙΜΑΣΤΕ ΠΕΡΗΦΑΝΑ Η ΝΤΡΟΠΗ ΤΟΥ ΕΘΝΟΥΣ”
	“That’s why we’re here today. Because Zackie was one of us. She was perverted, she was a faggot, she was an antifascist, she was a tranny, she was HIV-positive, she was a slut... She was. And any of us could have been in her position”	“Γι’ αυτό είμαστε και σήμερα εδώ. Γιατί η Ζακι ήταν μια από εμάς. Ήταν ανώμαλη, ήταν αδερφή, ήταν αντιφασιστρια, ήταν τραβεστί, ήταν οροθετική, ήταν τσούλα... Ήταν. Και στην θέση της θα μπορούσε να είναι οποιαδήποτε από εμάς”.
2021	“Witches, sluts, lesbians, hysteric [women] we will smack and kick the rapists”; “The patriarchy won’t collapse if survivors start talking”; “Under the pretext of the presumption of innocence and the logic of impartiality”; “[...] increase their profits through ratings”.	“Μάγισσες, τσούλες, λεσβίες, υστερικές στους βιαστές θα ρίχνουμε σφαλιάρες και κλωτσιές” ; “ Η πατριαρχία δε θα πέσει αν αρχίσουν οι επιζήσασες να μιλάνε” ; “ Με πρόσχημα το τεκμήριο της αθωότητας και τη λογική των ίσων αποστάσεων” ; “[...] η αύξηση των κερδών τους μέσω την τηλεθέασης”.