

Chapter 5.
In Conclusion:
Borderless Democracy for the Inclusion of Alternate Sexualities

5.1 Overview of the study

My study commenced with a rather ambitious goal of understanding the concerns of justice for the alternate sexualities within a democratic framework. However, I must humbly admit that my attempt was not so much to discuss the entire spectrum of concerns of the alternate sexualities. My study is more concerned with the treatment of the alternate sexualities by the conventional heteronormative political discourse which, I believe, is responsible for a systemic outcaste of the alternate sexualities. It is this ‘out of bounds’ condition of the alternate sexualities which makes their case peculiar and worthy of introspection. In this way, my study offers to explore a dimension of the discourse which has remained hitherto unexplored. The concern has been also to engage conceptually with the legal-political and civil-political domains, in this regard.

My emphasis on the concerns of alternate sexualities does not undermine, in any manner, the concerns of other ethnic identities. The concerns of the alternate sexualities primarily deal with the issues of existentialism and identity which are misplaced, if not outrightly neglected, by our political discourse. The concerns of the alternate sexualities need to be studied beyond the scope of redistributive justice. The position of the alternate sexualities, within our discourse, is as I argue, ‘out of bounds’ and marked by a ‘coerced invisibility’. This invisibility does not allow the concerns of the alternate sexualities to be raised within the legitimate domain of the public discourse. However, this position is starting to change as the issues

raised in struggles of identity politics now question the 'normative' framework of the society itself.

The systemic neglect of the alternate sexualities from our political discourse is a major theme of my research. While such discussions has already been carried out by scholars like Butler¹ and Foucault², I have attempted to understand such systems of outcaste through the logic of a foundational presumption of the heteronormative discourse which makes the imagination of the alternate sexualities impossible. The heteronormative framework also adheres to a logic of the binary, which understands everything in terms of duality - good/bad, male/female, black/white and so on. Such framework of understanding ignores the range of possibility and plurality of human culture. This puts the whole discourse on alternate sexualities under a dark area which suffers a systemic neglect. My study offers to highlight the nuances of this unexplored area which holds the potential to broaden the horizons of our discourse and thereby commence a new chapter in the process of democratization.

The case of the alternate sexualities is also important to understand because it holds the key to an open society. While identities like caste and class are based on recognizable parameters where the identity becomes the interest, the discrimination of the alternate sexualities is complex as it is premised upon individual interest rather than a mere identity. Since it is difficult to portray an individualistic interest as the basis for an identity, the concerns of individuality of the alternate sexualities are rendered invisible. The invisibility of the alternate sexualities abrogates the democratic rights of these groups in such a manner that their political and social existence is allowed only on terms of adherence to the heteronormative norms. The concerns of the alternate sexualities entail issues of individual rights and autonomy and the extent to which the society could put restriction on them.

An enquiry into the underexplored areas, such as those concerning the alternate sexualities, only works to broaden the overall scope of the democratic paradigm which is the political plain of most of the modern states. The goal of my study is to understand and address the concerns of the alternate sexualities in such a way that leads to a conception of a ‘borderless’ democracy, wherein the identity of an individual does not become a hindrance in any deliberative process. Such conception of a borderless democracy is a major theme of my study and attempts to draw a picture of a matured democracy wherein the democratic state shoulders the responsibility of protecting and preserving the distinct identity and spatiality of different ethnic groups. I hope that my attempt to understand the identity issues of the alternate sexualities would contribute in addressing the concerns of injustice of other identity issues as well.

Major Questions and Concerns

The scope of my research has two broad aspects- metaphysical and political. The major themes and questions which I have explored during the course of my study can be divided into 4 broad areas. I have attempted to discuss and understand these four major areas as separate questions. Interestingly, the four themes come together in a coherent manner to enrich an understanding of the concerns of the alternate sexualities.

The first theme is ontological and attempts to examine the nature of the conventional political discourse which is essentially heteronormative. Due to this underlying heteronormativity, the understanding of the concepts like democracy, equality and liberty turns out to be heteronormative. The resultant neglect and outcaste of the alternate sexualities is on account of, what I understand as, a ‘foundational assumption’ of heteronormativity. Through my research, I have attempted to offer a foundational critique of this underlying heteronormativity which is responsible for the injustices to the alternate sexualities. The idea of coerced invisibility and logic of ‘out

of bounds' has been used to supplement my arguments. These conceptual tools also helped me explore the prevailing gaps in the conventional discourse and offer a way to address them.

After discussing the nature of political discourse and the underlying presumptions which obscures our understanding, I shift to the second theme of my study which explores the sphere of individuality- in the form of personal space. I have understood this 'personal sphere' in contradistinction to the public and private aspects of life. Given the engagement of our conventional discourse with the public-private dichotomy,³ I have attempted to explore and excavate the area of individuality through a 'trichotomous understanding of the public-private-personal sphere'. This framework becomes instrumental in my understanding of the space of individuality and allows for a contemplation on the personal and individualistic aspects of life.

The third theme of my study relates to the nature of struggle required for a meaningful equality for queer individuals and groups. An important framework of discussion, in this regard, has been borrowed from Fraser's work on 'recognition and redistribution.'⁴ This is an important reference in my study as it accords a better analysis and contrast to the politics of identity and redistribution in the contemporary times. Such exercise helps to devise a model of political action that is suitable for political activism. I have also dedicated one section of my study to discuss the meaning and scope of the term 'Equality' in the contemporary age. My understanding of 'equality as renegotiation' attempts to make a contribution to the non-distributive aspects of justice and equality in the 21st century.

The final theme of my study involves a discussion on the role of the state as the protector of democratic rights of the individuals and groups. Given the overarching stature of the contemporary state, especially in the third

world, it becomes instrumental in affecting any change in the democratic structures and practices. Thus, I have discussed the role and impact of the state in bringing a change in the democratic practices and conventions which affect the alternate sexualities. Various aspects of my understanding of the role of state comes close to a 'structuralist' position. However, the reference to such proactive state could also be derived from Habermas's idea of a technocratic state.⁵ The democratic consciousness of the modern state is able to evoke a sympathetic attitude towards the alternate sexualities which becomes a catalyst in the democratic inclusion of the alternate sexualities.

I also argue in my study about the unfolding of the democracy towards a borderless form which, I believe, is based on pillars of deliberation and reciprocity. Such conception of democracy would be based on an ongoing balancing between the ideals for the means as well as the ends. Such conception of democracy could be found in the idea of a 'floating place'⁶ wherein the priorities and goals would be set through mutual deliberation and self-defined purposes.

My research is based on an analytical reading of the texts dealing with philosophical concepts like democracy, liberty and equality. While it is practically not possible to absolutely comprehend these values, I have attempted to understand these values in the simplest forms. I have referred to several pioneer works in these areas by celebrated thinkers such Butler, Fraser, Lefort, Habermas, Tocqueville and Mill. The decision to read these thinkers was primarily due to the appeal and logical consistency of their ideas. The analytical reading of the texts has allowed me to explore the areas which might have remained underexplored, if not unattended, by several thinkers.

As a part of my study, it is all the more important to support the structure of my understanding and arguments through concrete data and facts. Thus,

I have used, as an important source of reference, several reports published by the government and non-government organizations. These reports have been published by reliable sources and prove to be an important source of data and statistical record in my dissertation.

An important source of data has been in the form of several correspondences done with various public institutions under the provisions of the Right to Information Act, 2005 (RTI). Several of these correspondences have been an eye opener for my study and have constituted an important support to my arguments. Since an important part of my dissertation deals with the activism in the field of civil society, I have also undertaken a direct participation in one of the projects of the Lakshya Trust, wherein I participated in the Instagram campaign and volunteered for two months. In the past, I had also volunteered with the Naz Foundation (India) Trust, and got the first-hand experience of the activism by the LGBTQI+ groups. These experiences have really helped me understand the activism of the queer groups and share the feelings and perspectives of the community.

Overall, my methodology has remained a harmonious mix of theoretical as well as practical aspects. The insights gained through the analytical reading of the texts have been supplemented through factual data coming from various reports and RTI information shared by various public institutions. The first-hand experience of participating in an online queer campaign has been an enriching experience which got me acquainted with some of the life-experiences of the queer community.

The broader frame of my discussion has touched upon three major themes- democracy/equality, liberty and alternate sexualities. The scheme of chapterization that I have tried to follow attempts to build a logical flow of arguments through these primary themes. Thus, the schema of chapterization begins with an introductory opening of the study and links

the insights on democracy/equality, liberty and the concerns of alternate sexualities in such a manner which establishes a logical linkage between these concerns and explores the possibilities of change through them.

In chapter 1, I commence my discussion by briefing stating my primary concerns and the reasons that justify my research. The first chapter forms a background to my research and states the nature of the concerns of the alternate sexualities in detail. The chapter is divided in 5 sections, each of which deals with different aspects of my study. In Section 1.1, I give a short introduction of my study and introduce the spatiality of the alternate sexualities amidst our discourses. This builds the case for reading the concerns of the alternate sexualities. The gaps and lapses highlighted in the first section are taken up in Section 1.2 where I have attempted to do an analytical reading of the nature of the existing discourse. Here, I have tried to understand and uncover the latent heteronormativity of the prevailing discourses, which does not allow the concerns of the alternate sexualities to be addressed appropriately. Section 1.3 is a peculiarly interesting part of my research and deals with the idea of ‘coerced invisibility’. In this section, I have elaborated upon the unique aspects of the spatiality of the alternate sexualities and proposed to understand it through the logic of ‘out of bounds.’ This description of the nature of injustice done to the alternate sexualities helps to understand the issues concerning the alternate sexualities as a distinct case requiring special attention. In this section I have also discussed how the state might become a major factor in addressing the concerns of the alternate sexualities. The discussion on Habermas’ idea of technocratic state comes here to discuss the nature of such state. Section 1.4 discusses the literature review for the prominent texts used for forming the arguments of my study. These texts form an important base of my research and offers much support and justification to my arguments. A major part of my understanding of heteronormativity and gender norms has been influenced by Butler who has

important contributions to the gender theory and queer literature. Butler's work not only breaks the logic of bipolarity in our social discourses but also problematizes the conventional understanding of gender and heteronormativity.⁷ The reading of Butler has been supplemented with Foucault's understanding of various aspects of sexuality. I have further referred to Fraser's work on dilemmas of redistribution and recognition in a post-socialist democratic society. Her arguments and understanding on issues of identity politics helps to broaden the perspective and look beyond the strategies of redistributive justice. While Butler's work deals with the individual and social normative aspects; Fraser's primary concern is the macro level dynamics of society. Her proposition of plural public spheres, in the form of 'subaltern counterpublics' offers a promising vantage point for an emerging social movement.⁸

My understanding on democracy is influenced by thinkers like Tocqueville and Lefort who base the foundations of democracy in certain ideals rather than institutions. Tocqueville's description of 'equality of conditions' eloquently describes the value of equity over equality and highlights the foundational aspects of democracy. I have attempted to read these thinkers to substantiate my understanding of democracy in terms of foundational values.⁹ I have also attempted to review some feminist literature by Pateman. The reason for selecting these texts is the foundational critique of the conventional discourse attempted by her.¹⁰ This perspective helped me to expand my framework of understanding and apply it to the concerns of alternate sexualities. The first chapter closes with a discussion of the major concerns of my research along with a brief sketch of the scheme of chapterization which I have followed.

The Second Chapter focusses upon the idea of democracy and equality. The section 2.1 draws an understanding of the nature of democracy and tries to trace the evolution of the idea through different ages. Such revisit to the

idea of democracy helped me understand the foundational aspects of democracy and the cardinal values which are essential to it. During such revisit to the different perspectives on democracy, I could also find some reasons and areas which might have led to the outcaste of the alternate sexualities. This uncovering of the reasons for exclusion of alternate sexualities also forms the *foundational critique* of the political discourses. In section 2.2, I have discussed the idea of equality and how it is one of the founding pillars of a democracy. This section also discusses the idea of the ‘people’ as the constitutive component of a democracy, and defines the category of the ‘people’ as a dynamic element which undergoes change and transformation. Thus, the idea of equality is proposed to be read as a dynamic ideal which cannot be understood as a static congregation of individuals. The arguments and inferences drawn from this discussion on equality materializes in section 2.3 where I elaborate upon the idea of ‘equality as renegotiation’. This section proposes the idea that equality need not be understood as a state of ‘sameness’; rather, equality is a condition of renegotiation between equally capable actors/groups to mold their conditions. Such idea could also be found in the works of Fraser and Lefort, which I have referred to throughout my study. Chapter 2 closes with an understanding of the idea of democracy and equality as free-floating ideas that cannot be bound in norms of fixity.

Having discussed the meaning and nature of democracy and equality, I move to Chapter 3 which focusses on the idea of Liberty, and tries to explore the extent of individual liberty in contrast to the claims of the society. In section 3.1, I tried to explore some of the interpretations and perspectives on the idea of liberty. The primary aim to discuss liberty is to build a foundation of understanding to discuss the debates about the self/other regarding actions of the individual and how far the society could put restrictions on such liberty. While doing so, I have referred to Mill’s framework of understanding the meaning and scope of liberty.

The section 3.2 is the logical unfolding of the discussion on liberty and explores the domains of the conventional public-private dichotomy. This section exposes the misunderstandings and confusions attached to the nature of the private sphere, and tries to uncover the cause of stereotype of the alternate sexualities. I have attempted to highlight the gaps in the prevailing understanding of the public-private domain so as to be able to offer a better alternative. My approach while studying the public-private domain has been a synthesis of the traditional and modern perspectives which combines the view on distinctiveness of the two spheres while also accepting an overlap between the two.

The insights developed from section 3.2 finally materialize in section 3.3 where I attempted to offer my interpretation of the trichotomy of ‘public-private-personal.’ Such trichotomization is necessary in order to secure the sacred sphere of individuality and the subsequent set of rights which belong to the individual. The proposed personal sphere is an aspect of individual life where the individual is the sovereign and the concerns of public norms and social conventions become irrelevant. This aspect of individual life, I believe, has been the most neglected and misunderstood part of our political discourses. This reinterpretation of the public-private dichotomy helps to secure a safe-zone for the individual and allows the expression of one’s sexuality.

The fourth chapter commences the empirical aspects of my study and puts to test the arguments and inferences drawn so far. Thus, in chapter 4 I take up the case of alternate sexualities, with reference to the Indian state and examine the nature of injustice and the process of change that is underway. I start my discussion in section 4.1 by drawing an outline of the legal provisions in India concerning the alternate sexualities. This section also outlines observations on some International and national reports that have had significant influence on the fate of alternate sexualities in India. Here,

I have tried to briefly trace the changes in the legal-political framework in India with respect to the alternate sexualities.

In section 4.2, I have done a case study of Lakshya Trust and its experience in mobilizing the popular opinion regarding the alternate sexualities. I have discussed several projects managed by the Lakshya Trust and also my experience in having participated in one of such projects. The various projects and strategies used by such civil society organizations are an important source of mobilization of public opinion about issues such as sexuality. Also, a greater collaboration between the state institutions and NGOs such as Lakshya Trust are instrumental in bringing the change to the alternate sexualities.

In section 4.3, I examine and assess the impact of the social and political reforms and activism by different actors. Here, I have also attempted to prove my argument that the state performs an instrumental role in securing the democratic rights of the alternate sexualities. This section also examines the impact of different strategies adopted in the political and social sphere, and suggests a future trajectory of the movement of alternate sexualities.

I draw my study towards conclusion in chapter 5 where I have summed up my observations and inferences. However, before offering such conclusions, I have above offered an overview of the study to revisit the framework of my understanding. Such revisit to my study is necessary in order to have a better understanding of the conclusions I propose to draw in the next section. Through these conclusions, I hope to offer a probable redress to the concerns of the alternate sexualities. I also try to offer a proviso that would lead towards a borderless democracy as understood in my framework of understanding. And which would address the concerns of the alternate sexualities in a visible just manner.

5.2 The Politics of Inclusion of Alternate Sexualities

When I started my research on issues of alternate sexualities, I believed that the major problem rests in the stereotypical bias against queer groups. However, as I got acquainted with the issues and underlying concerns of the alternate sexualities, I realized that the fault lies in our foundational understanding and the heteronormative perspective. My engagement with the nature of discourse has allowed me to better understand the heteronormativity present in our beliefs and understandings. The study of various reports and narratives on alternate sexualities have offered compelling evidence which supports my understanding of a foundational prejudice within our discourse. This heteronormativity is so deeply entrenched that it takes the form of ‘normal’ or natural. It is in such context that the tradition of neglect and exclusion takes birth.

Through my study, I have attempted to explore the nature of the political discourse and find the areas from where the tradition of heteronormativity flows. The works of scholars like Butler, Fraser, Foucault, Habermas, Lefort and several others have helped me maintain the trajectory of my beliefs and simultaneously provide a firm support to the framework of my understanding. Several of these thinkers have already ventured upon the areas which I have tried to explore but my study seeks to link the disconnected joints and offer a picture which might prove to be more helpful to the alternate sexualities as well as the contemporary democracies.

I have tried to discuss the three broad themes of my research - equality, liberty and alternate sexualities - separately and in connection to each other. The primary purpose of this exercise is to be able to derive an understanding of a ‘borderless’ democracy which would facilitate a democratic inclusion of the alternate sexualities. In this section, I attempt

to put together the different aspects of my study and arrive at a conclusion which suggests a possible future course for the alternate sexualities as well as for the inclusive potential of our democratic polities.

Needless to mention in this regard that the problem at hand does not have a definite solution, and thus any argument is, but one of the several possible solutions. It is my belief that a better understanding of our democratic ideals would help to correct the inequalities, especially in a society like India, where such injustices flow through the social and political life of individuals and institutions. The purpose of a borderless democracy is to end the subjugation and suppression of individuals in the name of tradition and pride. The idea of a borderless democracy has nothing to do with physical borders but seeks to dissipate the ones that create unequal statuses between individuals.

In what follows, I have attempted to discuss, what might be treated as, the conclusions of the different sections of my study. I have attempted to offer my insights on- the nature of political discourse and injustice to alternate sexualities; the ideals of democracy and equality; the ideal of liberty and personal sphere; and the democratic struggles of the alternate sexualities. I would close my discussion by bringing these insights together and contemplating upon the further course of the trajectory of activism by alternate sexualities.

[Out of Bounds: Coerced invisibility of alternate sexualities and nature of political discourse](#)

The primary engagement of my research has been with the nature of political discourse and the spatiality of the alternate sexualities. I have understood the concerns of the alternate sexualities through the logic of out of bounds and the idea of coerced invisibility. While this area has already been explored by scholars like Butler and Foucault, my work has

attempted to recognize the peculiar position of the queer politics within our political discourses. I have also attempted to understand the underlying bias against the alternate sexualities in terms of a foundational presumption of heteronormativity which tends to make our understanding prismatic. This heteronormative perspective which we have imbibed since childhood portrays the alternate sexualities as a pathological aspect of humanity. The norms of heteronormativity are internalized in such a manner that the neglect and subordination of the alternate sexualities is normalized.

Amidst such framework of exclusion and subordination, the key to redressal of the concerns of alternate sexualities is through a revisit to the foundational understanding of the political ideals that motivate us. This foundational understanding might pertain to the ideas of democracy, liberty, equality and justice. Such revisit and re-understanding are urgently necessary so as to realign our means and ends in such a manner that no individual or group is excluded. Such revisit to our stated ideals would also ensure that the decision-making processes as well as understanding of the founding ideals remain a deliberative process.

Scholars, such as Fraser, Lefort, Gutman and Thompson, have discussed different frameworks through which such revisit to the common ideals might be possible. Democracy, being an ongoing process of deliberation, needs to have this process of revision as its defining feature at all times. This is not something which is not known to the academic groups but this fact is often ignored when the concerns of the alternate sexualities are discussed and explored. A neglect of this principle of revision often leads to several presumptions which might deviate the trajectory of progress and might create several unintended consequences, having the possibility of long-term malicious effects.

I have also argued during my earlier discussion that the 21st century is the age of democratic unfolding. This process of democratic unfolding would remain incomplete unless the hitherto suppressed groups are allowed the opportunity to voice their concerns on an equal footing. For this, it is all the more important to revisit and revise the terms of engagement between different groups and normative perspectives. This context makes my argument of a revisit to the foundational understanding of our political discourses a relevant and urgent exercise. The subsequent parts of my study are nothing but an attempt to explore the foundational meaning of some of our ideals.

Equality as Renegotiation

Democracy is undoubtedly the most accepted form of organizing the society in the 21st century. I have discussed the various interpretations and perspectives on democracy and concluded that the meaning and nature of a democracy cannot be fixated. While there is a vast encyclopedia of information available on the idea of democracy, I have focused my attention to the understanding of the founding principles which determine the purpose and scope of a democracy. This understanding of the founding principles is necessary in order to be able to evaluate the meaning and efficacy of our means and ends. Such understanding is also necessary to be able to understand the coerced invisibility of queer groups.

My understanding of a borderless democracy is based on a floating position with regard to the democratic ideals and their meaning. Such perspective could also be found in Gutman and Thompson as deliberative democracy and in Mill as harm principle. However, several of these conceptions turns out to be restrictive due to the limitations of understanding of the foundational values. I have, thus, tried to develop an understanding of a democratic framework on the basis of an understanding of its founding ideals, that is, equality and liberty. Such strategy has allowed me to

maintain the sanctity of the means and ends while formulating a conception of democracy. Like Tocqueville, I understand equality and liberty as the founding ideals of a democracy. The reasons for such belief unfold during the course of discussion and establishes a coherent framework linking democracy with its founding ideals.

The notion of equality, under my scheme of understanding, is a result of an ongoing negotiation among the different groups and individuals. I have attempted to discuss it in terms of equality as renegotiation. Such understanding opens up broader vistas of deliberation and participation in a democracy. Such re-negotiation takes a consideration of viewing one's interest as identity rather than treating an established identity as an interest in itself. Such strategy has a great impact on the way the deliberation process is seen in the contemporary times and might also challenge a few parameters of identity. Equality as re-negotiation becomes a prerequisite for a borderless democracy and ensures that no group suffers from the coerced invisibility.

The notion of equality as re-negotiation is particularly apt for the 21st century democratic regimes as it relies upon the notion of people as a kaleidoscopic congregation. The notion of 'people' carries multifarious meanings and attributes but is delimited by the condition of interest which sets the purpose for different groups and individuals. When such diverse groups interact and deliberate with each other on an equal footing, an image of Fraser's radical democracy emerges. Such situation ensures that each group and individual enjoy the maximal extent of liberty without disturbing the terms of equal engagement.

[Trichotomizing the Divide](#)

To realize the maximal extent of liberty is not to enjoy a license over others. Liberty constitutes the other founding value of democracy. My

discussion on the meaning and extent of liberty is premised around finding the true expression of individuality. This expression of individuality is multifarious and includes sexuality as an inherent and essential expression of personhood. While there are several works and debates over the meaning and dimensions of liberty, the under-attended domain of individuality often becomes an easy prey to the aggrandizing domain of social norms. This necessitates the examination of the ideal of liberty from a different angle. My discussion on liberty unfolds towards exploring the personal sphere of individuality. This personal sphere of individuality needs to be seen and contemplated in contradistinction to the conventional public-private spheres. Thus, I have proposed a trichotomization of the aspects of life into- public-private-personal spheres. This attempt is necessitated by the urgent need to rescue the personal domain of individuality which is otherwise suffocated and suppressed by the burden of social norms. While the private aspects of life are still shaped and constrained by the social norms and conventions, the sphere of individuality is to be seen as a sphere of unhindered self-interest. Sexuality, in this sense, is a constitutive aspect of the sphere of individuality. Any manipulation and constraining of sexuality constitute a coercive act which cannot be justified in any sense.

I do not claim to propose a new dimension to the understanding of liberty. I believe that there has been much discussion and exploration with regard to the understanding of liberty and its interpretations. However, I do feel and argue that liberty cannot be celebrated under coercion. There is an urgent need to identify and protect the areas where the individual might be left unhindered to express oneself. While the individual is left free to explore the private goals, such freedom is often defined in terms of social conventions and norms. The problem emerges when the expression of freedom begins to contradict the prevailing sets of social norms. Such contradictions are very common during the pursuit of expressions of individuality. A sphere of personal space safeguards the expression of

individuality and sexuality. It also becomes the plinth upon which project of further reforms could be raised.

[Alternate Sexualities and/in a Borderless Democracy](#)

The activism by the alternate sexualities shows several distinct characteristics. In fact, Fraser identified the activism by alternate sexualities as an instance of politics of recognition which marked a break from the conventional focus on redistributive justice. The case of alternate sexualities has impressed me due to its unique spatiality and response to the dynamics of democracy. Given the place of alternate sexualities within our discourses, a pursuit of redistributive justice alone might not lay results. The primary struggle of the alternate sexualities is for recognition, acceptance and inclusion.

The democratic struggle of the alternate sexualities has two major channels: one, the activism in the civil society through NGOs and other interest groups; and two, through the deliberation with the state institutions. While I have tried to briefly discuss instances of activism in both- the civil society as well as the state- my prominent argument has been that the activism of the alternate sexualities would gain on account of the gradual democratic unfolding. This democratic unfolding could be seen in the civil society as well as the state.

A major argument in my study relates to the role of the state in securing the democratic rights of the alternate sexualities. This role is particularly prominent in democracies like India where the state is involved in an on-going task of redefining the constitutional morality. This channel of reform, I have referred to as, the 'top-down' approach of change. The instrumental role of the state surfaces due to the examination of the democratic values and their interpretation by the state. A democratic state finds it difficult to ignore the appeal of the founding ideals of a democracy

and thus, have to facilitate the demands and interests of the alternate sexualities. In doing so, however, it is challenged by the deep-rooted heteronormativity of the system as well as society. This struggle between the two sets of norms makes for the dynamics of queer politics. The challenges set by the heteronormative conventions often make the trajectory of change riddled. But given the distinct nature of the queer politics, the trajectory of redemption is supposed to be a heuristic affair.

I do not claim that the role of the state is more instrumental than the activism of civil society organizations. The two are counter-distinct but equally instrumental in imagining any possibility of change. The contemporary age might not be a radical democracy as imagined by Fraser but it certainly is experiencing a continuum of change with regard to the unfolding of democratic rights and inclusions. The voices raised in the civil society are to be evaluated on lines of democratic ideals. Such evaluation becomes a part of the revisit to the foundational aspects of a democracy and helps to sustain the life-force of our discourses. The alternate sexualities, though diversified and dispersed, represent a struggle to redefine the foundational meaning of our discourses. Their unique spatiality in our democratic spaces opens up new horizons of inclusion and acceptance which further radicalize the democratic process.

Coming together

To offer a conclusion, it is possible to form a logical flow chart of my understanding and present it in terms of inter-connected themes. My discussion takes off from the nature of political discourse and explore the issues of exclusion and neglect of the alternate sexualities. It identified the areas where the alternate sexualities are denied their existential rights. This exercise builds a platform to justify the study.

I started drawing the framework of my understanding of democracy through its constitutive elements, that is, the people and the guiding ideals of equality and liberty. I have argued that the 'people' is a hollow category which cannot be ascribed with fixed characteristics. It is ever-evolving and ever-changing. This is the reason why it is problematic to view identity as an interest. The conventional view of redistributive politics tries to view identity as an interest rather than the other way around. Such views crystallize the notion of people and becomes redundant. The idea of people is a dynamic idea and should be understood as a continuum. A dynamic understanding of the idea of people also imparts a revisionary character to democracy.

This dynamic idea of people gives freedom to each individual to voice one's concerns and beliefs. The expression of the self becomes an inviolable aspect of the individuals. While exploring the realm of such individuality I have observed that the conventional reading of the public and private spheres of life fails to secure the personal aspects of the individual. Thus, I proposed a trichotomous reading of the aspects of individual life as-public-private-personal spheres. While this trichotomized view might appear only as a metaphysical device to understand the different aspect of life, such understanding allows for a sphere of individuality which is otherwise neglected and suppressed. It is only when such sphere of individuality is allowed that an individual is able to find the truest of self-expression and self-realization. Such view of freedom and individuality ensures that the constitutive 'people' remain free and unhindered when it comes to expression of their interests and beliefs. Such context helps in keeping the democratic system abreast with the changing aspirations and interests of the people.

A society constituted by free individuals becomes a site of deliberation and renegotiation. The meaning of equality, under such circumstance, acquires

greater meaning and transcends the limitations set by tradition and conventions. My understanding of equality as renegotiation welcomes the emerging voices from different nook and corners of the society and allows them to be discussed and deliberated on equal terms. Such equality takes interest as an identity and, in this way, puts aside the conventional parameters of identity politics. It also accepts that the deliberation over an identity issue is not a perpetual flow but subsides with time and changing interests.

The logical unfolding of the themes, I have discussed, unites coherently into a conception of a borderless democracy. The conditions and terms set by my framework of understanding leads towards a conception of democracy which is open to deliberation and devoid of conventional identity politics. The requirement of identity politics is more need-based rather than being a result of past tradition. When the constitution of a democratic society is based on a broad conception of ideals of liberty and equality, the resultant order becomes a harbinger of justice. To continue with the rigid definition of a democratic order is not plausible in the 21st century. While it is not possible to overlook the political frontiers between different democratic states, it is certainly a positive goal to shatter the intrinsic borders that create rift between different groups and individuals.

I have also highlighted the instrumental role of the state in addressing the concerns of the alternate sexualities. The contemporary state has gained a fair degree of maturity when it comes to the understanding of democratic ideals. As a result of this maturity, there has emerged a consciousness of the state which helps it to evaluate things on the parameters of democratic justice. This autonomous consciousness allows the state to recognize the democratic injustices. In this manner, the state is forced to come to the rescue of such subordinated groups. This recognition by the state addresses the out of bounds position of the alternate sexualities and bring them to the

deliberative grounds. This political inclusion becomes a foundation to the further inclusion of the alternate sexualities and kickstarts a process of change.

I attempt to bring my research to a conclusion by summarizing it in a few lines. The nature of politics of the alternate sexualities is peculiar as no other instance of identity politics carries an injustice which raises existential questions. However, the trajectory of the queer politics would be benefited if it would stay close to the process of democratic unfolding of the contemporary democratic states as the democratic consciousness of the contemporary state is able to recognize the foundational injustice done to the queer groups. While such process of change is a gradual one, it is able to bring positive changes through a top-down reform. While it might be difficult to do away with the different sets of identities within a democracy, it is possible to ensure that no identity or group is outcasted or suppressed due to sheer personal choices. Put differently, it is desirable and perhaps imperative to work towards a borderless democracy which includes and diffuses the 'identity' of the alternate sexuality, and perhaps other equally out of bound and coerced invisible identities.

¹ Butler, *Gender Trouble- Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*; Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex."*

² Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction*.

³ Mahajan and Reifeld, *The Public and Private: Issues of Democratic Citizenship*; Splichal, "Publicness–Privateness: The Liquefaction of 'The Great Dichotomy.'"

⁴ Fraser, *Justice Interruptus- Critical Reflections on the PostSocialist Conditions*.

⁵ Held, "Part 2: Critical Theory Habermas."

⁶ Lefort, *Democracy and Political Theory*.

⁷ Butler, *Gender Trouble- Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*; Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"*; Butler, *Undoing Gender*.

⁸ Fraser, *Justice Interruptus- Critical Reflections on the PostSocialist Conditions*.

⁹ Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*.

¹⁰ Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*.