Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to understand one of the ways in which the queer critique of neoliberalization intersects with David Harvey’s account of capitalism. Over the last ten to fifteen years, queer critique has problematized a remarkable change in sexual norms in the United States under neoliberalization. During this period, political, legal and cultural representations of sexual identities have increasingly become privatized, monogamous and consumer-oriented, while other non-normative ways of building and maintaining intimacy have become a target of intensified pathologization and violence. The first section of this essay will summarize the critical texts on this issue with an emphasis on the dual process of normalization and violence. Guided by Kevin Floyd’s remark in *Reification of Desire* that violence against queer sociality is itself “a form of accumulation by dispossession” (207–8), the second section will unpack Harvey’s conception of accumulation by dispossession in *New Imperialism* as an effort to make sense of the place of Marxism in capitalist imperialism. In the third section, I will elucidate how the two ways of knowing the current historical moment intersect. Harvey’s work offers a key vantage point derived from Marx’s and subsequent Marxist thinkers’ accounts of capitalism, namely, the dialectical conception of capital. Marx’s abstraction of capital as value in process
brings into focus the possibilities of the crisis of accumulation inherent in capital, as well as the interpenetration of the phenomenon of crisis and the feverish revitalization of capital flow. With such dialectical thoughts on capital, Harvey proposes the concept of accumulation by dispossession; it grasps versions of the processes Marx calls primitive accumulation, which is, however, not primitive in the history of capitalism. The concept captures processes of dispossession inherent in capital itself, recurrent in the history of capitalism and socially necessary to the survival of capitalism amid the crises of accumulation as neoliberal practices have become dominant since the 1970s in the midst of accumulation crises.

Under the dialectical understanding of capital and capitalist imperialism, queer critique’s situating the changing sexual norms in state violence can be unpacked as a way of knowing capitalism in its neoliberal phase through the scrutiny of the neoliberal state. The neoliberal state internalizes the inconsistency between neoliberalism and neoliberalization, since the presupposed disbelief at the role of the state in the neoliberal theories of economics is not consistent with “the need for a strong and if necessary coercive state” (A Brief History 21) in actual neoliberal practices including predation and expropriation. From a queer point of view, the contradictory nature of the neoliberal state is captured as the normalization of individualist sexual rights and violence against queer sociality. Harvey argues that the process of accumulation by dispossession “can actively manufacture” (New Imperialism 141) a certain outside in the geography of capitalism which is to be expropriated, and the queer critique of neoliberalization has problematized the ways in which the neoliberal state zones out and pathologizes the queer sites in the City of New York amid fiscal and urban crises, for example, as targets of expropriation to reanimate capital flow. While queer critique scrutinizes the nature of the neoliberal state, the two levels of generality in Harvey’s account of accumulation by dispossession—the level of neoliberalization and that of capitalism—underscore queer critique’s dual response to neoliberalization. An ambivalent character of queerness, which some of queer critics have pointed out in relation to U.S. imperial violence, is understood in this paper as a dialectical process for queer critique to seek to be a relational approach from a vantage point situated in
the urban spaces under neoliberalization.

1. Incorporation and Quarantining

The queer critique of neoliberalization has problematized a change in sexual norms in the United States since the 1990s. Michael Warner's *The Trouble with Normal* is one of the earliest efforts to capture this change in sexual norms, drawing attention to "the embrace of normal" by gay politics in the midst of the neoliberalization of the United States (60). According to him, mainstream gay politics during this period has reduced their agenda to the lobbying for individual-based and identity-based sexual rights secured by the state, such as the issues of same-sex marriage and military service. This normalizing shift of gay politics has become visibly confrontational against what Warner calls "queer counterpublics" (68), that is to say, socially marginalized practices which are in various ways characterized by public and collective aspects of sexuality. Lisa Duggan terms this shift of gay politics "the new homonormativity," which embraces "a dramatically shrunken public sphere and a narrow zone of ‘responsible’ domestic privacy" (179, 182). Queer critique has interrogated the homonormative shift of gay politics, for this shift does not contest but upholds neoliberal practices in the United States, including the pathologization and erosion of queer counterpublics. Corresponding to Warner’s discussion, Duggan argues that, alongside AIDS activism, "a new strain of gay moralism" has become visible, advocating monogamous marriage and advancing the strategy of lobbying “elite corporate boardrooms” (182, 183). As Duggan points out, the spokespeople of this new gay moralism criticize promiscuity as a problem of individuals who do not build monogamous relationships as “a responsible disease-prevention strategy” (182).

The normalization of sexual identities and attacks on queer counterpublics are not only discernible in the moralization of sexual discourses but also at work in the reorganization of urban spaces under neoliberalization. Warner points out that the reorganization of queer sites in New York City has taken place on several different levels correspondingly, e.g., the corporate rebuilding and patrolling of areas for sexual
cruising like the Christopher Street piers, the closing down of bars and clubs under the Giuliani administration’s “quality of life” campaign, and a new zoning law to redefine and limit adult businesses. As Warner indicates, the corporate reconstruction and the new zoning bill have been patterned to attack the sites of queer sociality. What is targeted, in Warner’s view, by the corporate and governmental reorganization and policing of urban spaces “is not homosexuality per se, but public sex” (165). Samuel Delany’s account of the redevelopment of Times Square similarly points out that the shutting down of all the porn theaters in the old Time Square was promoted by the city’s policing of sex “in public (a concept left hopelessly undefined), safe or unsafe, with or without a condom” (91), critiquing the city’s overlooking grassroots efforts to maintain queer sociality through the practices of safe sex. Warner captures the dual process of the normalization of sexual identities and attacks on queer counterpublics as “pride” and “shame,” underscoring the new homonormativity’s pathologization and shaming of queer collectivity. Both Delany’s and Warner’s accounts emphasize the significant role the neoliberal state plays to zone out the urban sites crucial for maintaining queer counterpublics.

When the dual process of normalization and violence is called “incorporation and quarantining” in Jasbir Puar’s Terrorist Assemblages (47), she identifies the explicitly militarized nation state as a salient agency of the process. The neoliberal state’s violence structured through sexual and racial terms is a shared concern across various texts in queer studies especially after September 11. Puar analyzes the homonormative shift in sexual norms to incorporate certain homosexual subjects, “both legally and representationally,” into “the national and transnational political agenda of U.S. imperialism” (9). Puar influentially calls the process of normative incorporation “homonationalism,” namely, “homonormative nationalism” (10). Through the analytic term, she captures a historical collusion of the advocacy of sexual rights with the ever more militarized demarcation of national citizenship to construct consent to imperial violence. She points out that a landmark gain in legal rights by the 2003 Supreme Court decision, which made the sodomy law unconstitutional, reinforces the discourse of U.S. sexual exceptionalism. The discourse, according to her, renders
the United States as the nation of sexually liberated citizenry with sexual tolerance. At this historical moment, the discourse of U.S. sexual exceptionalism is consistent with the discourse of racial and sexual othering of the representations of Muslim sexuality in quarantine: that is to say, the discursive construction of Muslim sexuality as intolerant, homophobic yet perverse, and therefore especially vulnerable to sexual humiliation. Puar argues that the othering of Muslim sexuality in quarantine has become notable around the U.S. military torture of Muslim detainees. Similar to Puar’s argument, an article coauthored by Anna M. Agathangelou, M. Daniel Bassichis, and Tamara L. Spira, “Intimate Investments,” follows such an attempt to situate this “incorporation and quarantining” in the context of U.S. imperialism. The political attempts to decriminalize certain homosexual intimacy and to legalize same-sex marriage by mainstream organizations based on the notion of human rights in effect redefine acceptable forms of national kinship as monogamous, privatized and consumer-oriented, while “punishing those that fall outside of them, particularly those forms of racialized and classed kinship that continue to be the target of state violence and pathology” (Agathangelou et al. 122). Puar and Agathangelou argue that the political campaigns for the identitarian sexual rights in the United States help form one of the most uncritical deployments of the notion of human rights to support state violence with the militarized demarcation of the nation.

From queer points of view, the neoliberal state’s violence is notably practiced as population control in urban spaces. The queer accounts of neoliberal practices have a shared claim that social life in urban spaces under neoliberalization is not monolithic but ruptured through sexual and racial terms. Anthropologist Martin Manalansan’s “Race, Violence, and Neoliberal Spatial Politics in the Global City” highlights the issue of surveillance in urban spaces. The article traces the urban reorganization in New York City a few years after Warner’s work. The queer of color informants in Manalansan’s research feel that they have been “sequestered” into limited areas in the completely gentrified Christopher Street piers (150). In comparison with the restructured Christopher Street piers, Manalansan illustrates the landscape of Jackson Heights of Queens, in which the presence of the police has been increasing after Sep-
tember 11 around the former sites for cruising. Manalansan highlights that "quotidian images of citizenship and safety in the neighborhood" are racialized and sexualized (147). Queer critique captures the neoliberal state as an apparatus of population control of urban spaces through sexual and racial terms.

As I have summarized above, since at least a decade ago, queer critique has elucidated the change in sexual norms and violence against sexual cultures which are variously characterized by the public and collective aspects of sexualized lives. Though queer critique conceives of the dual process of normalization and violence as being remarkably intensified, the accounts also have in common their efforts to articulate a certain historically continuous process of which the dual process of normalization and violence is a part. Floyd's claim that the erosion of queer counterpublics can be understood as accumulation by dispossession is one of such efforts of queer critique, in relation to the explicitly militarized neoliberal state, to articulate a certain historically continuous process of which normalization and violence under neoliberalization is a part. As we will see in the third section, some of queer accounts after September 11, such as Puar’s, consider queerness to be emphatically ambivalent in relation to U.S. imperialism. The field of knowledge once again seeks to be a relational approach, as Agathangelou claims that the question we should pose is not whether anti-imperialism "is pertinent to queer struggles, but how and why it is" (139). In the following sections, I will discuss how Floyd's remark encourages queer critique to rearticulate the ambivalent character of queerness as a dialectical process vis-à-vis the fiscal and urban crises. Through the rearticulation, I will trace the way in which queer critique grasps its relation to other anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggles in a dialectical manner, articulating the relations as at once unified and differentiated.

2. A Perspective on Capitalist Imperialism

A key to understanding the erosion of queer counterpublics both within the history of sexuality and within the history of capitalist imperialism is to understand queer studies’ discussion of sexual norms in relation to the discourse of regulation
theory. In this section, I will summarize at first how the account of sexual norms is associated with regulation theory, and then explicate how the discourse of regulation theory is employed in Harvey’s account that tries to make sense of the place of Marxism in capitalism at the current historical moment. Floyd’s work introduces the discourse of regulation theory into queer critique as a field of knowledge about capitalism with an emphasis on the role of institutional practices, which secure the accumulation of capital in the history of capitalism “from corporate and governmental forms of regulation to a normalization of everyday social practices” (33). The theory recognizes that in a capitalist society lies the threat of accumulation crises, and that it is necessary for institutional regulatory practices to forestall or mitigate the crises. The history of capital is, from the viewpoint of regulation theory, understood through inherently unstable negotiations between the regime of accumulation and the mode of regulation. The regime of accumulation indicates a historically formed circuit of capital accumulation, while the mode of regulation includes social strategies to secure the condition of accumulation. Floyd argues that sexual norms can be understood as a part of what regulation theory conceptualizes as the mode of regulation, which is not superstructural or cultural, but rather is “potentially infrastructural” in the history of capitalism (35).

How, then, do the accounts of the history of capitalism informed by regulation theory understand the regulatory practices of capitalism at the current historical moment? One of the ways in which the discourse of regulation theory critiques neoliberalization is in capturing the role of the state and the process of territorial differentiation. The 1995 article “Social Regulation after Fordism” coauthored by Adam Tickell and Jamie Peck explores how regulation theory can be used as an analytic tool when the formation of post-Fordism has been widely discussed. Regulation theory understands, according to the article, the mode of regulation after Fordism as a response “to the imperatives of globalized accumulation” (366). This does not mean, however, that regulation theory assumes that the regime after Fordism is formed as the exact opposite of Fordism. Indeed, the article proposes that a way of using regulation theory after the era of Fordism is to critically interrogate, rather than legitimate,
a view on post-Fordism characterized by the “‘hollowed-out’ nation-state” in contrast to the central role of the nation state under Fordism (359). The discourse of regulation theory can be used to investigate “the incipient ‘spatial logic’” after Fordism, rather than assuming the defining feature of the territorial politics after Fordism as already identifiable (359). The article suggests that the account of capitalism after Fordism informed by regulation theory should be used to emphasize the conditions of instability produced by and negotiated between the globalized circuits of capital accumulation and regulatory practices to stabilize the process of accumulation as “temporary institutional ‘fixes’” (364).

If, as Tickell and Peck argue, the critical capacity of regulation theory in the midst of neoliberalization can still be characterized as a way of analyzing the history of capitalism as ever more unstable negotiations between the accumulation crises and “temporary institutional fixes,” we find that this line of analysis is pursued by David Harvey in his *New Imperialism*. An important starting point of Harvey’s analysis is that the chronic and persisting problems of the overaccumulation of capital have become evidently threatening since the 1970s. Overaccumulation is a situation in which capital is idle and cannot find profitable ways of employment. It causes accumulation crises in such a way that it functions as a point of blockage of capital flow. A historical expression of this sort of accumulation crisis can be found, for instance, in stagflation that was characteristic of the economic crises in the capitalist nation states in the 1970s, in which capital flow became stagnant with accelerating inflation. The crises of overaccumulation, in which capital cannot form profitable circulation within the state, have become the imperative to globalize capital flow, and at the same time have generated pressures for imperialist practices. Harvey proposes that capitalist imperialism should be considered as “a contradictory fusion” of the territorial politics of the state and the logic of capital (*New Imperialism* 26); the logic of capital and the territorial politics are unstably intertwined as negotiations between the crises of overaccumulation and what he terms “spatio-temporal fixes” (108).

According to Harvey, in order for capitalism to “fix” the condition of accumulation crises, stagnant capital needs to be managed by some combination of temporal or
spatial displacements, such as investing in long-term projects, exploring new commodity markets, or searching for possible circulations of capital somewhere outside the territory.

As regulation theory regards negotiations between accumulation crises and institutional "fixes" as inherently unstable, the spatial and temporal "fixes" in Harvey’s account are also notably unstable. When spatially and temporally displaced, the problems of overaccumulation may cause more serious crises, which are often accompanied by the territorial devaluation of assets. In order to consider the place of Marx’s account of capitalism at the current historical moment characterized by frequency of crises, Harvey revisits Marx’s illustration of original or primitive accumulation. In the part of his work entitled “So-Called Primitive Accumulation,” Marx illustrates the violent processes of the transitional centuries from feudalism to capitalism, including the expropriation of land and the enclosure of the commons, the proletarianization and commodification of labor-power by tearing it from the means of subsistence, and state violence to discipline the proletariat for their new conditions of living. Harvey argues that the process of accumulating wealth by institutionally orchestrated violence to vitalize capitalism happened not only in the pre-history of capitalism but has taken place consistently within the history of capitalism. Accumulation by dispossession is the term Harvey proposes to indicate this sort of accumulation process by which capital flow is to be revitalized.

3. A Queer Account of Accumulation by Dispossession

Some of queer arguments have regarded queerness as saliently ambivalent amid U.S. imperial violence. A notable example is Puar’s work, in which she defines "queerness as an assemblage" to emphasize "contingency and complicity with dominant formations," especially to underscore the discursive formation of U.S. exceptionalism in her discussion, rather than to theorize queerness "exclusively as dissenting, resistant, and alternative (all of which queerness importantly is and does)” (205). One of the key arguments in her work is the articulation of an ambivalent
character of queerness through queer lens in order not to “provide ammunition to chastise, but rather generate greater room for self-reflection, autocritique, and making mistakes” (24). She regards queerness as worth holding as well as slippery at this historical moment, in such a way that queerness, as far as it implies being transgressive of norms, forms various discourses which are implicated in U.S. imperial violence. The discourses Puar variously terms, such as queer liberalism, queer metrosexuality, and queer transgressive subjecthood, can consolidate U.S. sexual exceptionalism. With the ambivalent character of queerness in the midst of U.S. imperial violence, Agathangelou proposes that the question queer critique should pose is not whether, but how and why anti-imperialism is “pertinent to queer struggles” (139) as we saw in the first section. If, as Floyd argues, the erosion of queer counterpublics—the process in which certain queer sites have become “less queer” (207)—is a variation of the processes of accumulation by dispossession, how does his remark enable us to reconsider the ambivalent nature of queerness amid U.S. imperial violence? In what way can we articulate queer struggles as being related to anti-imperialism? How do queer ways of capturing the change in sexual norms which uphold state violence intersect with the account of capitalist imperialism elaborated by Harvey?

In order to examine the questions posed above, I would emphasize that Harvey’s account of capitalist imperialism is dialectical, as Marx abstracts capital itself. Marx’s definition of capital exemplifies an important feature of dialectical analysis of capitalist society; dialectical analysis puts an emphasis on the understanding of processes. Critiquing classical economics’ conception of capital, Marx abstracts capital as the process of circulating value, in which commodities, money, and the means of production are understood as particular forms that value assumes in the process of circulation. Marx’s definition of capital as “value in process” leads to the question of the origin of surplus value, which constitutes and enables the process of circulation (256). As the answer to the question of the origin of surplus value, Marx’s Capital Vol. 1 provides the use of the commodified labor-power, whose use-value functions as a source of value. Prioritizing the understanding of processes in Marx’s dialectical
analysis entails the problematizing of what kind of processes constitute and maintain seemingly compartmentalized things. In this way, Marx’s Capital Vol. 1 highlights the use of labor-power as the origin of capital.

The discussion of the exploitation of surplus value is part of the interrelated implications Marxist thinkers have derived from the dialectical conception of capital. A key aim of Marx’s argument of exploitation in Capital Volume 1 is considered in Harvey’s view as deconstructive in such a way that it reveals the exploitation of surplus value in the sphere of production even when, in terms of commodity exchange, the equivalence of purchase and sale is established. In order to deconstruct classical economics’ narrative of the equivalent relation between capital and labor-power in an open market with a suitable institutional climate in its own terms, however, Marx needs to put aside the possibilities of capital accumulation pursued by explicit violation of the principle of equivalent exchange of commodities such as “predation, fraud, and violence” (New Imperialism 144), which are foregrounded in the chapters on primitive accumulation in Marx’s work. As Bertell Ollman points out, the dialectical conception of capital encourages one to consider capital’s historical processes, including primitive accumulation, “as part of what capital is” (Ollman 12). Although Marx, while discussing the notion of exploitation, excludes the violent processes of accumulation in order to critique a theoretically assumed capitalist society in a perfectly closed condition, Ollman suggests that the chapters on primitive accumulation should not be read as merely supplementary. Ollman’s remark brings into focus an important implication of the dialectical abstraction of capital, that is to say, expropriation as historical origins of capital.

The dialectical conception of capital implies another important character of capital that is relevant to our discussion, namely, the interpenetration between the phenomenon of crises and the revitalization of capital flow. In History and Class Consciousness, György Lukács critiques non-dialectical ways of analyzing things in that they fail to capture the processes by which seemingly unproblematic things and systems come into being and pass away into other ones. Lukács argues that a feature characteristic of non-dialectical analysis, namely, a tendency to overlook the problems
of historical origins and transformative processes, is exemplified by classical economics’ failure in capturing the immanent possibilities of crises in capitalism. In Lukács’ view, “the very success” of classical economics by which compartmentalized economic activities are captured with “an abstract and mathematically orientated system of formal ‘laws’” marks “the methodological barrier to understanding the phenomenon of crisis” (105). For Lukács, however, the non-dialectical feature of considering the phenomenon of crisis as compartmentalized can also be found in a version of Marxism-informed partisan politics in Europe in his time, losing its critical capacity over capitalism. Following Rosa Luxemburg’s argument of imperialism, Lukács critiques the idea that the economic impossibility of accumulation automatically results in “the ‘cessation’ of capitalism,” an idea assuming an infinite progress (182); dialectical analysis assumes qualitative changes in the phenomenon of crisis, in which the blockages of capital accumulation express themselves by “actions such as feverish colonialisation, disputes about territories providing raw materials or markets, imperialism and world war” (182). In response to the non-dialectical ways of considering capitalism only as a quantitative progression, Lukács underscores the capacity of dialectical analysis to regard the phenomenon of crisis and the possibilities of qualitative transformation as being inherent in capital.

If we hold that dialectical analysis brings into focus capital’s historical origins and the interpenetration of the phenomenon of crisis and the revitalization of capital flow, Harvey’s argument of accumulation by dispossession can be placed in this strain of dialectical understanding of capital and capitalist imperialism. Similar to Lukács’s remark about the accumulation crises and their consequences in the first half of the 20th century, Harvey’s dialectical analysis of accumulation crises since the 1970s captures the feverish revitalization of capital flow. As I explicated in the previous section, by referring to the vocabulary of regulation theory, Harvey conceives of accumulation by dispossession as ways of mitigating, forestalling, and managing the crises of capital accumulation for the survival of capitalism. Bringing into focus the phenomena of speculative investments, the predatory devaluation of assets, and the privatization of natural and social wealth, he introduces accumulation by dispossession as “the sinis-
ter and destructive side of spatial-temporal fixes to the overaccumulation problem” into the discourse of regulation theory (New Imperialism 135). At the same time, Harvey also underscores that accumulation by dispossession as the sinister side of institutional “fixes” takes place not only as pure coercion but also as consensual and appropriative processes. Revisiting Marx’s account of primitive accumulation, Harvey points out, for example, that the process of proletarianization in the era Marx illustrates as emphatically violent, according to his survey of subsequent historical studies, actually contains the “appropriation and co-option of pre-existing cultural and social achievements as well as confrontation and supersession” (New Imperialism 146). Conceptualizing accumulation by dispossession as variations of primitive accumulation, which have consistently taken place within the history of capitalism, Harvey’s account attempts to bring into focus the process of construction of consent to dispossession as well as of coercion.

Considering that, in order to analyze the processes of neoliberalization, Harvey’s work inserts the account of predatory violence into the discourse of regulation theory and at the same time highlights consensual and appropriative processes in addition to coercion in the illustration of dispossession, we can see a point of convergence in Harvey’s account of capitalism and the queer accounts of neoliberalization. As I explicated in the first section, the queer critique of neoliberalization is a field of knowledge, which persistently offers the accounts of sexual norms in relation to violence, especially violence employed by the state. Overlapping with Harvey’s account, Puar’s analysis of the new homonormativity’s collusion with the militarized demarcation of the nation in the U.S. and Agathangelou’s provocative phrasing of the homonormative turn as “a process of seduction to violence” (121) can be read as the accounts of the process of constructing consent to violence especially orchestrated by the state apparatuses with its authority to define citizenship and legality both within and outside of the United States.

With this point of convergence kept in mind, it is important to note that Harvey’s account brings into focus the characteristics of capital in a dialectical manner. While Harvey’s account does recognize the significant role the state apparatuses play
in the process of neoliberalization, his perspective puts an emphasis on crisis-prone
tendencies as inherent in capital itself, and argues that the predatory revitalization of
capital accumulation is at one with a manifestation of the crises of accumulation.
Thus, Harvey's analysis of the processes of neoliberalization in the history of capitalism
emphasizes that neoliberal practices since the 1970s are situated in the interpenetration
of the crises of accumulation and the revitalization of capital flow. He regards
the processes of privatizing social achievements in New York City amid the urban
and fiscal crises as "an iconic case" of the neoliberalization of the U.S. in that "the
management of the New York fiscal crisis pioneered the way for neoliberal practices"
(A Brief History 44, 48). The fiscal crisis of the city was followed by investment
bankers' refusal to roll over the debt of the city, and the "coup by the financial institu-
tions" against the government of the city has resulted in "corporate welfare" (45,
47), including the retrenchment of the social infrastructure and the mobilization of
the city's institutions to promote the city "as a cultural centre and tourist destination"
(47). Among the ramifications of the process, one that Harvey's account does not
describe in detail is the reorganization of certain urban spaces significant for queer
sociality, as we saw in the first section. As Delany illustrates, the porn theaters in
Times Square were shut down by the Forty-second Street development project,
whose "best-known and most visible member" is the Walt Disney Company (7).
The spaces crucial for what Warner terms queer counterpublics, such as the Christo-
pher Street piers, have become the targets of the corporate and governmental policing
in the redevelopment of the street. According to Harvey, the neoliberal state internal-
izes the contradiction between neoliberalism and neoliberalization. The "supposed
distrust of all state power" of the neoliberal theories is, as I mentioned at the begin-
ing of this paper, not coherent with "the need for a strong and if necessary coercive
state that will defend the rights of private property, individual liberties, and entrepre-
neurial freedoms" under neoliberalization (A Brief History 21). From a queer vantage
point situated in the crisis-riven urban spaces, the contradictory nature of the neolib-
eral state is captured as the normalization of sexual identities with the individualist
rights secured by the state and the policing of maintaining queer sociability including
public sex.

The queer critique of neoliberalization and Harvey’s account of capitalism share their attention to the “outside” delineated under neoliberalization. Harvey points out that accumulation by dispossession requires a certain outside. In his argument, the outside can be non-capitalist social formations and wealth, like the environmental commons, or can be a sector or territorial entity that is seriously devalued to mitigate the accumulation crises and to reestablish “a fresh basis for capital accumulation” (New Imperialism 115). As much as the concept of accumulation by dispossession opens up a discussion on the process of primitive accumulation, which has consistently taken place within the history of capitalism, it also enables us to grasp the process of expropriating a certain outside within the geography of capitalism. According to Harvey, “regional crises and highly localized place-based devaluations emerge as a primary means” by which “valuable assets are thrown out of circulation and devalued . . . until surplus capital seizes upon them to breathe new life into capital accumulation” (151). With the vantage point the concept of accumulation by dispossession opens up kept in mind, queer perspective against neoliberalization can be understood as a close scrutiny of the neoliberal state which produces the devalued outside within the geography of capitalism. Warner’s argument, for example, gives an account of the expropriation of queer sites with “an ideology of space” or “a geography of shame” (187, 192), delineated by, for example, the legal redefinition of adult businesses by the Giuliani administration’s zoning amendment, which was “driven by real estate interests” (161). Queer critique has offered detailed accounts on the ways in which the neoliberal state produces the queer sites of the city, such as the old Times Square and Christopher Street, as the targets of expropriation, or as the devalued outside in the midst of capitalist geography, in order for the city to become a center of cultural and tourist industries with waterfront residential areas.

While queer critique scrutinizes the processes of expropriation especially in relation to the neoliberal state’s zoning, Harvey’s dialectical conception of accumulation by dispossession emphasizes that the processes of expropriation amid the crises of accumulation are not just situated in the process of neoliberalization but are also
inherent in capital itself, recurrent in the history of capitalism and socially necessary as far as capitalism continues. Harvey’s conception of accumulation by dispossession in capitalist imperialism leads to the understanding of the ambivalent character of queerness through the two levels of generality of neoliberalization and capitalism in which neoliberal violence is situated. The ambivalent character of queerness can be found in Warner’s text, for instance, as a dual voice of queer critique in the midst of neoliberalization. When threatened by the neoliberal state’s intensified zoning, the queer critique against neoliberalization contains an immediate defense of a landscape within what Warner calls the geography of shame. That is to say, “a principled defense of pornography, sex businesses, and sex outside the home” in the queer sites of New York City (vii). At the same time, the queer account of neoliberalization includes an interrogation of capitalist constitutionality from a vantage point situated in the urban spaces that are regarded as the target of expropriation. Critiquing the corporate and governmental policing with “the principle of dispersion” of queer soci-ality (187), Warner argues against the City Planning Commission’s assumption that “the right to the city” is exclusive to property owners (190). Here, queer critique does describe a process of dispossession of social wealth evolved in urban spaces, which is crucial for queer sociality, and which is not secured by the rights of “planners, builders, owners, or rulers” (Warner 197). Thus, the two levels of generality in Harvey’s conception of accumulation by dispossession foreground the dual voice held by the queer critique of neoliberal violence in the history of capitalism: an immediate defense of an inside-outside of capitalist landscape, including queerly non-normative businesses in urban locales threatened by the neoliberal state’s policing, and, at the same time, an interrogation not only of neoliberalization but also of capitalist constitutionality which has authorized accumulation by dispossession.

The ambivalent character of queerness in relation to the history of capitalism, inscribed as the duality in Warner’s argument, can be grasped by a dialectical category of immediacy and mediation. According to Lukács, immediacy is a limited perspective situated in a capitalist society, a perspective that captures change as external rather than immanent. As he puts it, “[t]he undeniable fact of change must … appear
to be a catastrophe, a sudden, unexpected turn of events that comes from outside” (154). In a dialectical analysis, immediacy is an essential aspect, which should be bound to mediation so as to enrich and enlarge “the net encompassing the ‘relations’” (154). Through the dialectical process, “change will cease to be impenetrable and catastrophic” and “it will become comprehensible” (154). When Warner’s work interrogates capitalist constitutionality amid “the politics of moral panic” of pathologizing and policing of the queer sites of New York City (17), the ambivalent character of queerness in relation to capitalism at the current historical moment can be understood as the dialectical process of immediacy and mediation vis-à-vis the ongoing crises.

Underscoring not only the level of generality of neoliberalization but also the level of generality of capitalism, Harvey’s discussion brings into focus the dual voice of the queer critique of neoliberalization in the history of capitalism. This entails that the dialectical process of immediacy and mediation is inherent in the queer account of neoliberalization, as inscribed in Warner’s work. Indeed, Harvey’s abstraction of the achievement of neoliberalization as accumulation by dispossession is, notably, a practice of mediation, namely a relational approach. The conception seeks to articulate various practices of predatory violence as being related to each other in the way that is characteristic of dialectical research. Ollman points out that dialectical analysis enables us to articulate sameness and difference at the same time. In response to the discourses of classical economics which “stop after describing the obvious differences between profit, rent, and interest” (Ollman 13), Marx articulates their relation in a dialectical manner, arguing that they are different as well as identical as forms of surplus-value. Considering Ollman’s remark on dialectics, Harvey’s analysis exemplifies the feature of dialectical analysis. Harvey’s emphasis on capitalist imperialism as a contradictory fusion of globalizing capital flow and spatial specificity that capital generates and/or appropriates encourages us to situate various practices of dispossession in the nexus of the crises of accumulation inherent in capital as well as of various place-bound crises. In addition to the relation of various kinds of dispossession, Harvey’s account also considers a relation of exploitation and dispossession to be at once
identical and different. In his account, both exploitation and dispossession are different as well as identical as the ways of capital accumulation. Exploitation is at work with relatively stable institutional arrangements for commodity exchange, while accumulation by dispossession entails the obvious violation of the principle of commodity exchange, such as predation and expropriation, to revitalize capital flow. Both "are organically linked, dialectically intertwined" in the crises of accumulation (The New Imperialism 176). When we understand that the queer account of neoliberalization, through the dialectical operation of immediacy and mediation, interrogates capitalist constitutionality that has authorized various processes of dispossession, the dialectical relations between queer struggles over dispossession and variously formed other struggles over dispossession in the historical geography of capitalism, as well as between queer struggles over dispossession and labor struggles against exploitation, are not external to the queer vantage point situated in the crisis-riven urban spaces.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper is to understand how the queer critique of neoliberalization and Harvey’s account of capitalism speak to each other. We see that Harvey’s account of capitalism emphasizes the dialectical abstraction of capital as a key vantage point he derives from Marx’s work. Marx’s dialectical definition of capital as value in process leads to the question of the origin of surplus value, which constitutes and enables the process of circulation of value. While Marx’s Capital Volume 1 highlights the use of labor-power as the origin of capital, Harvey unpacks Marx’s discussion of the exploitation of surplus value in the sphere of production as part of the interrelated implications derived from the dialectical abstraction of capital. Surveying Ollman’s argument of primitive accumulation and Lukács’ discussion of dialectics, I emphasize that Harvey’s analysis brings into focus the phenomenon of crisis as being inherent in capital and the interpenetration of the crisis and revitalization of capitalism.

In order to analyze the processes of neoliberalization, Harvey’s works highlight
violence in the discourse of regulation theory and at the same time insert consensual and appropriative processes, in addition to coercion, into the illustration of dispossession. At this point, one can see a point of convergence of Harvey’s account of capitalism and the queer critique of neoliberalization. Overlapping with Harvey’s account, queer critique problematizes a remarkable shift of sexual norms in relation to violence, especially that orchestrated by the state. The argument of homonationalism, for example, can be seen as a detailed critique of the construction of consent to violence by the state apparatuses with its authority to define citizenship and legality. In relation to Harvey’s remark that accumulation by dispossession produces a certain outside in the geography of capitalism that is to be devalued, expropriated and seized for reanimating capital accumulation, the queer critique of neoliberalization offers a close scrutiny of the neoliberal state that produces the devalued outside as the targets of expropriation, such as the old Times Square and Christopher Street. While queer critique scrutinizes the nature of the neoliberal state, Harvey’s account underscores the two levels of generality where violence of neoliberal practices is situated, namely, the level of neoliberalization and that of capitalism. The two levels of generality enable us to understand an ambivalent character of queerness at this historical moment as a dialectical process of immediacy and mediation vis-à-vis the change in sexual norms and violence against queer counterpublics. As embodied in Warner’s work, the queer critique of neoliberalization has included an immediate defense of a devalued landscape of capitalist geography against the neoliberal state’s zoning, as well as an interrogation of capitalist constitutionality that has legalized dispossession. Considering that the queer version of struggles over accumulation by dispossession is articulated through the dialectical process of immediacy and mediation amid the ongoing crises, the relations between variously formed struggles over dispossession and struggles over exploitation in the historical geography of capitalism, that is to say, the relations to which Harvey characterizes as at once identical and differentiated, are not external to the queer vantage point situated in the crisis-riven urban spaces.
Notes

(1) For example, Puar argues that the discursive construction of the American nation as sexually liberated subjects vis-à-vis the representation of Muslims as the population of the sexually repressed is "the trenchant replay of what Foucault termed the ‘repressive hypothesis’" (Puar 93). Critiquing the idea that the history of sexuality is the process of liberating the repressed, Foucault emphasizes that the history of sexuality in bourgeois society should be understood as the process of constructing sexuality as an administrative matter, a process in which "a centrifugal movement" (38) to construct sexual norms has been accomplished by putting marginalized perversions under intense scrutiny. Following Foucault’s remark, Puar interrogates the discursive construction of U.S. sexuality as being open and exceptional maintained through the process of othering Muslim sexuality. In her view, the discourse of U.S. sexual exceptionalism enabled by the process of othering is situated "in the history of U.S. nation-state formation, from early immigration narratives to cold war ideologies to the rise of the age of terrorism" (5).

(2) Puar defines metrosexuality as a sexual "modality … that tentatively queers (and to some extent, effeminizes and emasculates) straight men" in association with metro and urban sexual culture. She argues that the decontextualized way of assuming queerness as transgressive of norms is "a symptom of the pervasiveness of homonationalism, in that queerness has already been assimilated into the homonational" consolidating U.S. sexual exceptionalism (69). The discourse of queer metrosexuality, with its narrow focus on "a cosmopolitan, urban (metro) formation of sexual laissez faire," fails to register spatial differentiation within the United States "in favor of a unified singular impression" of U.S. sexual culture (69, 70).

Works Cited


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